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RIVER CITY CHAPTER - GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Wild Ones promotes environmentally-sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration, and establishment of native plant communities and is a not-for-profit environmental education and advocacy organization.

For more information, please contact:

Amy - 616-308-8176 or president@rivercitywildones.org

Officers

President - **Amy Heilman**
VP - **Mike Bruggink**
Membership - **Gretchen Zuiderveen**
Outreach - **Carol Phelps**
Treasurer - **Harriet Bromberg**
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Garden Chair - **Sue Bouchard**
Hospitality - **Rhonda Reider & Barb Olson**
Newsletter - **Kim Davidson**
Ways & Means - **Meribeth Bolt & Sue Bouchard**
Web - **Roland Bouchard**

Advisory Board

Melanie Manion - Natural Resources Manager Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission

Steve Mueller - Environmental Education Consultant and Award Winning Interpreter

Patricia Pennell - Environmental Consultant, Photographer, Botanist, Eco-friendly Landscaper

August Program - 8/19/2013 - 7:00 PM

Exploring the Outdoor Discovery Center in Holland

Program Manager Jamie Krupka will be our guide as he leads us through a portion of this 110 acre education center. If you are not familiar with this facility or the surrounding diversity of habitats - prepare to be amazed!

Our hike will begin at the educational building and from there we will have many opportunities to view and discuss a variety of native plant species as we travel through remnants of tall and short grass prairie and dune ecosystems. Scattered forests, meadows and wetlands and even a re-created Native American Village are all a part of this property. The program begins at 7 PM but you may want to arrive earlier so you can explore all there is to see here since we will not have time to see it all during our program!

As usual, we will follow the program with some light refreshments and socializing.

Please consider carpooling to the location which is: 4214 56th Street, Holland 49423.



September Program - 9/16/2013 - *This program will start at 6:30 PM*
Guided Hike Through a Coastal Plain Marsh Ecosystem
Five Lakes Muskegon Nature Sanctuary - Located near Fruitport
with Nick Gressick, GVSU Professor & Botanist

Directions will be sent out as the date gets closer!

The 7th Annual Not So Silent Auction is October 21st - 1 Month Earlier!
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, at Calvin College Bunker Interpretive Center, 1650 East Beltline Avenue SE, Grand Rapids

It's time to think about what we can procure for our fast approaching auction. A few ideas are gift certificates or products from businesses that you already frequent - salon/spa, bakery, yoga studio, gym, craft brewery, restaurant, art gallery, sports shop or golf course, garden center or nursery. Your own handcrafted items such as art, jewelry, soap, candles or canning from your garden bounty. Potted houseplants or perennial plant divisions and bargains from garden center clearance sales. Is there a service you can provide such as garden design, garden help, computer consulting or home organizing? We also welcome gently used garden or nature themed books. Use that creative imagination that so many of you have shown for past auctions.

If you have an item not quite up to auction quality but still useful please remember we'll have another "Tailgate Garage Sale" next spring.

If you have questions or need to have an item picked up, contact Ways and Means Co-Chairs Sue Bouchard at 616-450-9429 / sue@bouchard.com or Meribeth Bolt at 616-450-3001 / meribethbolt@aol.com

Again, we are asking members to help in reaching out to local businesses for an auction donation. Everyone knows a business owner or frequents a favorite salon, hardware store, book store, garden center, bakery, coffee shop or gym that might to donate to a great tax-deductible cause like River City Wild Ones. Attached on Page 3 is a letter that will help when you

talk with a business owner. Please read through the bullets points - they will help you explain the who, what, why reason for donating to RCWO when you approach a perspective donor. Also attached on a Page 4 is a letter that will serve as a thank you and receipt for their donation.

Feel free to print a few copies of these and carry them into your favorite business' with an enthusiastic smile - be sure to mention the proceeds go back into the community for educational workshops and gardens. The company will also be getting free advertising through our group and on our website! Ask them for a few business cards too that we can provide next to their donated item or service - they will appreciate that!

Thank you everyone for your help on this important (and fun) event!!



Photo Courtesy of michigan .gov

**Let's work
together to
make this
auction the
best one yet!!**



River City Wild Ones is the Grand Rapids Chapter of the national Wild Ones organization. We are a 501©(3) non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization. Please visit our website at www.rivercitywildones.org

- We Advocate Native Plants in Natural Landscapes - We promote the establishment of native plants around homes, schools and businesses using ecological practices.
- We Help Preserve and Restore Native Plant Communities - Through preservation and restoration of our natural areas, we are dedicated to the conservation of biodiversity.
- We Promote Environmental Education - We organize and support community efforts to establish natural areas of learning. Through our Plant it Forward Grant Program, we award funds for educational projects using native plants.

We invite you to participate in our Seventh Annual Mostly Silent Auction. Please consider a donation of products or services to help us increase the number of our education programs and grants and to further expand our community outreach. It's also a positive way to promote your business.

Our auction is open to the public & will be held on Monday, October 21, 2013 from 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm, at Calvin College Bunker Interpretive Center, 1650 East Beltline Avenue SE, Grand Rapids.

One hundred percent of the proceeds will be used for education right here in West Michigan.

River City Wild Ones provides education, planning, resources and installation of native prairies, rain gardens, butterfly gardens, native plant gardens, invasive plant removal and native plant rescue. Ongoing assistance for the success of the gardens we install is provided as needed. We also provide speakers to various organizations including garden clubs, schools and environmental organizations and events.

Below is a partial list of schools and community organizations we have recently helped along with a list of our collaborative partners.

School Programs • Palmer School, Grand Rapids

- East Grand Rapids Middle School, E. Grand Rapids • Pinewood Middle School, Kentwood
- Forest Hills Eastern, Grand Rapids
- East Rockford Middle School, Rockford • Sparta Elementary & High Schools

Community Outreach • Ada Park, Ada

- Roselle Park, Ada
- The Dominican Center at Marywood, Grand Rapids
- Prairie Wolf Park, Gaines Township
- Collins Park (Reeds Lake), E. Grand Rapids
- Sunrise Park, Hudsonville
- Sand Lake Library • Inner City Christian Federation (ICCF), Cherry Street, Grand Rapids - Phase I of our Native Plant Demonstration Garden
- Native Plant Rescue – Various Locations in West Michigan

Collaborative Partners • Calvin College

- West Michigan Cluster of the Stewardship Network • Michigan Nature Association
- Grand Rapids Audubon Club
- Kent County Parks
- Ottawa County Parks
- MSU Master Gardener Program
- MSU Master Naturalist Program
- Michigan Butterflies, Inc.



Thank you for your donation to the River City Wild Ones (RCWO) Seventh Annual *Mostly Silent Auction* fundraiser. RCWO is a 501(C)(3) non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization. RCWO is dedicated to the conservation of biodiversity through preservation and restoration of our local West Michigan natural areas.

Profits from our auction will help benefit RCWO community projects right here in West Michigan, such as local school native gardens, our *Plant it Forward* grant program, invasive plant education, community outreach and educational workshops.

Items you donated are as follows:

Value \$_____

Thanks again for your donation!

X_____

Received by RCWO Member

Date

We hope you can join us for our
Mostly Silent Auction
Monday, October 21, 2013
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Calvin College Bunker Interpretive Center
1650 East Beltline Avenue SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

River City Wild Ones Hand Tool Fundraiser

All tools offered in our fundraiser are from A.M. Leonard Horticultural Tool & Supply Company – Established in 1885 in the USA. Please visit the website www.amleo.com

Tools will be available for inspection & order at the upcoming Meeting & Hike at the Outdoor Discovery Center

Last day to order is 8/19 for pick-up at the meeting & hike on 9/16/13 at the Five Lakes Muskegon Nature Sanctuary

Last day to order is 10/7/13 for pick-up at our “Not So Silent Auction” on 10/21/13

Payment by cash/check is due when tools are received, non-members are asked to make payment with their order. Notification will be emailed when we have the tools & you may make arrangements to make an early pick-up.

❖ [Leonard Traditional Bypass Pruners - #1286; Retail \\$31.99 Wild Price \\$27.00](#)

Tested head-to-head with two national brand pruners, Popular Mechanics magazine declared the Leonard #1286 “best all-around pruner”! Popular Mechanics magazine put three top pruners through their paces, going far beyond what you would normally expect from a bypass pruner. They chopped everything from celery to rope and even chicken wire. The A.M. Leonard pruner clearly rose to the top with the sharpest blades and the most precise cuts.

Designed for all-around use, the chrome-plated blades resist rust, corrosion and sap for easy cleaning and keep a keen edge. Anvil blade is riveted to the forged aluminum handles for extra strength. Has a pivot-locking mechanism and solid forged handles with anti-slip grips. Vinyl coated handles, 8.5 inches overall length, 10 ounces. Lifetime warranty. Replacement parts are available. Made in Italy.

❖ [Leonard Traditional Bypass Pruner #1286 \(described above\) & a Leather Sheath Combo #4752COM Retail \\$39.99 Wild Price \\$34.00](#)

Keep your pruners close at hand wherever you roam with this cool combo kit.

❖ [Leonard Deluxe Soil Knife - #4752; Retail \\$20.99 Wild Price \\$18.00](#)

The Deluxe Soil Knife is the one gardening tool you can't do without! Lifetime warranty. Use it to: divide plants, plant bulbs, flowers and herbs, dig out weeds, remove rocks, cut through roots, plant in pots, clean out cracks, cut twine and ties and so much more. Manufactured from the highest quality, rust-resistant Swedish stainless steel. The blade is engineered to withstand over 300 lbs. of pressure for a lifetime of use. The 6-inch stainless steel blade has a tapered slicing edge, plus a very sharp, deeply serrated side made for fast root cutting. Comfortable one-piece molded composite handle offers a more rounded grip and molded thumb rest for all day digging comfort. The bright orange color means you won't lose it in the garden. Blade is 1.75 inches wide, 11.75 inches overall length.

❖ [Leonard Deluxe Soil Knife - #4752 \(described above\) & a top grain Leather Sheath made in the USA. Combo # 4752 COM Retail \\$29.99 Wild Price \\$26.00](#)

Highly Recommended Combo – The serrated edge is sharp!

❖ [Fully Equipped! - Leonard Leather Sheath Combo with Deluxe Soil Knife & Traditional Bypass Pruner \(tools described above\) #PKCOM Retail \\$65.99 Wild Price \\$55.00](#)

Keep the two most popular & important tools at your side in the NEW Leonard dual case combo. You'll be prepared to tackle pruning, flower planting, weeding, garlic mustard wrestling & more! Top grain leather sheath is made in the USA. Attaches by metal clip or belt slots. This combo is coveted by plant geeks everywhere. You're guaranteed to get that raise when wearing this gear- it says, “I can do it all” without you uttering a word!

Questions or to order by phone/email please contact:

Meribeth Bolt, 616.450.3001 – meribethbolt@aol.com - please type “Wild Tools” in subject line.

June Program Recap

Brian Majka, Operations Manager, Cardon JFNew took us on a tour of a unique 25 acre wetland restoration site that is located 10 miles inland from Lake Michigan in Muskegon next to the SCA Independent Landfill. In his usual laid back style Brian showed us rare coastal plant species that germinated after an ancient see bed was excavated in 2006. Not only were we treated to the site of Sweet Fern, Dew Berry, and many sedges and rushes, but also to a show above us as mother nature brewed up wonderful storm clouds that didn't erupt until after the program was over!



Photos courtesy of Amy Heilman & Kim Davidson

July Program Recap

It was during the only HOT week we had all summer that Steve Allen with Geum Service Ecological & Native Plant Consulting lead us on a tour of the green space at Amway's Spaulding Plaza. He is the Land Management Consultant for the unique site and works closely with Eric Van Dellen, the Sustainability Program Manager- Environmental Health & Safety for Amway. They told us about the history of the area and how it benefits the employees of Amway as well as the fauna that utilizes its various ecosystems. We were able to view many breathtaking natives in full bloom such as: Butterfly Weed, Nodding Milkweed, Red Milkweed, Common Milkweed, Horsemint, Goats Rue, & Buttonbush. We even discovered the shell of a box turtle (which was somewhat sad) and some owl pellets! All in all it was a great tour and we all survived the humid evening!



*Photos courtesy of Valerie Lindeman,
Patricia Pennel, & Kim Davidson*

Natives to Know - by Joyce Tuharsky

Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

Buttonbush is a deciduous, multi-stemmed, loose shrub or small tree in the [coffee](#) family ([Rubiaceae](#)). Generally reaching no more than 12 feet in height, the plant is frequently wider than it is tall. It is native to North America from Nova Scotia and Ontario south to Mexico. It is found in the Florida Everglades.

A key characteristic of the Buttonbush is its flower heads which consist of fragrant, tiny, tubular, white flowers compacted into 1-inch diameter spheres. Each flower has a projecting style which gives the flower head a pincushion-like appearance. The long-lasting blooms (June – August) give way to hard, spherical clusters of nutlets that resemble old-time dress buttons; hence its common name. The fruit matures in fall and can stay on the plant through winter, providing interest for the garden and food for wildlife.

The beautiful dark green, glossy foliage is another ornamental feature of Buttonbush. The leaves, which emerge late in spring, are opposite or in whorls of three, ovate in shape, 2-6 inches long, 1-3 inches wide, with a smooth edge and short [petiole](#). The leaves turn yellow-green in the fall.

Other identifying features of Buttonbush are prominent lenticels on coarse stems, absent terminal buds, and pith that is solid and light brown.

Buttonbush occurs as a non-dominant [midstory](#) species in mixed riparian forests, pond or stream margins, and swamps. They prefer moist, humusy soils and full to partial sunlight. Buttonbush in the wild is an indicator of an area's wetland status. The plant will tolerate water depths up to three feet and long durations of flooding. It is suitable for wetland restoration and erosion control along water edges.

Buttonbush brings more than its sweet scent, charming blooms and ornamental leaves to a garden.... It is also a magnet for wildlife! More than 50 species of waterfowl and other birds are known to feed on the nutlets. [Wood Ducks](#) use the shrub for brood-rearing, and many small birds/animals use the plant for nesting and cover. [Deer](#) browse the foliage. The flowers provide ample nectar to hummingbirds, honey bees and other beneficial insects. Butterflies attracted to plant include [Painted Lady](#), [Silver-spotted Skipper](#), [Delaware Skipper](#), [Zabulon Skipper](#), [Hoary Edge](#), [Horace's Duskywing](#), and [Lorquin Admiral](#).

In the garden, Buttonbush will adapt to a range of soils except dry ones. The plant suffers no serious insect or disease problems. Prune in early spring to shape, or cut back near to the ground to revitalize. The plant regenerates easily by seed without pretreatment. Collect seeds when the nutlets have turned reddish-brown. Buttonbush can also be propagated by cuttings. Buttonbush is poisonous to humans and livestock.

More information and photos at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/shrub/cepocc/all.html>

<http://www.fcps.edu/islandcreekes/ecology/buttonbush.htm>

http://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=CEOC2



*Photos Courtesy of
Valerie Lindeman*

Got Milkweed Seeds?

This Fall River City Wild Ones will, once again, be on site at the Roselle River Festival to chat with folks about the importance of native plants. The event gets larger each year and is a great educational opportunity. This year our focus is on the Save the Monarch campaign which includes...planting milkweed in our landscapes! We are asking our members to help by providing us with milkweed seeds to offer to the public at this event in Ada on Sept. 28.

Below are collecting and cleaning instructions taken from the national Wild Ones website. Please help us with this effort....if we get enough donated seed, we will use some for various school gardens in our area too.

Collecting

Steps for collecting: If you are not collecting from your own property, please obtain permission to collect milkweed from the owner of the property or the manager of the roadway. Do not over-collect in one area. This ensures that you get a genetic diversity and you leave seed for wildlife and self sowing. Pick no more than 33% of one plant and no more than 33% from each site. Safety Note: Take care, milkweed sap can harm eyes. Do not collect near busy highways.

1. Collect clean mature pods (as they begin to split) from native wild plants only. Paper bags work well.

2. Each species of milkweed needs its own bag. The three species we desire are *Asclepias syriaca* – Common Milkweed, *Asclepias tuberosa* – Butterfly Milkweed and *Asclepias incarnata* – Swamp Milkweed.

Please clean the fluff off the seeds and pull or shake seeds off (please do not burn).

Cleaning

The Milkweed seed pod has very light fluff attached to each seed. At first, trying to corral the escaping seed and removing the fluff can be extremely exasperating. However, here are two ways we recommend to accomplish the “defluffing” without too much effort or mess.

Scraping the seed from the pod. If you can get the mature pod just before it pops open on its own, you can split it and scrape the seed off the white fluff. Watch this short (1 ½ minute) video which shows that this is easier than it sounds. http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk2i0dSJhkuAUaIQkTjWQEQ?feature=em-share_video_user

Shake but not bake – You’ll hear that many people burn the fluff off. We don’t recommend this for several reasons: 1) it can be dangerous; we’ve heard of several cases where the person got burned, and 2) there is some evidence that burning greatly reduces the germination rate. We do see great success with putting a fair amount of “fluffy seed” into a paper bag and shaking hard, real hard. But first, make sure you’ve got the top closed securely. And we recommend you do this outside in case some seed escapes. After shaking for a little bit, cut the bottom corner of the bag off. Don’t cut too large a piece. You will now be able to pour the separated seed out of the bottom while containing the fluff inside the bag.

Packaging / Labeling

Consolidate seeds of each species into individual bags. Lunch type paper bags seem to work well. Label with the milkweed species name. Give the seeds to Amy Heilman by Sept. 21. Email her at president@rivercitywildones.org.

Growing

If you are interested in planting seed directly into the ground for your own garden, here is an article with an embedded video of how to do this: http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2012/10/bring_on_the_milkweed_to_bring.html

Other websites with instructions:

<http://monarchwatch.org/milkweed/prop.htm>



Marywood Prairie Habitat Open House

LITTLE PRAIRIE IN THE BIG CITY

Monday, September 23: 6:30-8:30p.m. (Rain date, Tuesday, September 24: 6:30-8:30 p.m.)

Presenters: Dominican Sisters ~ Grand Rapids Prairie Subcommittee

[Michael Bruggink](#), Landscape Architect; **[Chris Muldoon](#)**, Master Gardener; **[Lucille Janowiak](#)**, OP, Master Naturalist in process; **[Joyce Tuharsky](#)**, Naturalist and Teacher; and **[Dee Versluis](#)**, Artist

Cost: \$15.00. * **CFD:** Spirituality of the Catechist

Info/Register: [Click Here](#)

Look & Learn Recap

We looked and we definitely learned during the tour of the Izzak Walton League Clubhouse native garden on August 6. It is obvious that Tammy, Barb and Gordon have dedicated a huge amount of effort and time to create this habitat oasis. Thank you all three for hosting the chapter and for all your hard work creating this educational site! Now remember Wild Members - work days in this garden are every Tuesday -please consider lending a hand on occasion!

The lovely photo collage was provided by Sue Bouchard.

