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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:

Sue – 616-450-9429 or membership@rivercitywildones.org

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

April 19th Program: Kelly Rice - Urban Lawn to Native Prairie

Don't miss our next Wild Ones monthly program on Monday, April 19th at 7 PM. Our speaker will be Kelly Rice, Professional Wetland Scientist and Senior Resource Specialist with JF New (www.JFNew.com) an ecological consulting, restoration and native plant nursery firm. Kelly will visually guide us through the process of transitioning her rural lawn to a sustainable native prairie and wildflower habitat. She will also discuss how she has addressed local and outdated weed ordinances in many communities which are being incorrectly applied to native plant landscapes.

Kelly has a strong interest in supporting environmental education and integrating sustainable concepts into our public education programs – a goal she shares with Wild Ones. She works with schools to help design native plant gardens and was recently

featured as a “Champion of Sustainability” in the Grand Rapids publication *MiBiz Triple Bottom Line*.

Kelly recently became a member of River City Chapter. You may also have noticed the great article she wrote in the current issue of the *Wild Ones Journal* where she outlines her lawn to native project. This is sure to be an informative and entertaining program. Come ready to ask questions and take notes!

Location: The program will be held at 7 PM at the Bunker Interpretive Center – Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve at 1750 East Beltline Ave S E, Grand Rapids, 49546

Remember to come prepared at these meetings for hiking, possible inclement weather and bring your water or sport drink. As always, some tempting goodies will be provided.

Officers

President—**Amy Heilman**
V. President—**Rebecca Shilt**
Membership—**Sue Bouchard**
Outreach—**Carol Phelps**
Treasurer—**Nancy Hoover**
Secretary—**Betsy Ford**

Planning Chairs

Newsletter—**Rachel Ford**
Hospitality—**Bonnie Randall**
Webmaster—**Kory Manion**

Advisory Board

Mark Fitzpatrick —Director
Ada Parks and Recreation
Dept.
Julie Francke—Director of
Horticultural Education—
Frederik Meijer Gardens &
Sculpture Park
Steve Mueller—
Environmental Education
Consultant
Patricia Pennell —Director
of Rain Garden Program, West
Michigan Environmental Ac-
tion Council

River City Wild Ones Plant Exchange Following May Program

The purpose of the Plant Exchange is to foster natural landscaping with native plants. We favor native plants, but others are OK except for invasive exotics. The RCWO Spring Plant Exchange will take place after the May 17th meeting in the parking lot, rain or shine.

Plant Exchange Rules of Etiquette:

1. **Respect Plants** – give them a chance of survival!
 - Plants might not get planted immediately. Pot them up so they can survive.

- Please provide species labels for plants.
- Get started now gathering seed, either to bring to the exchange or to germinate yourselves for the future. Get started digging and potting up surplus plants or unusual specimens.

2. **Respect Yourself.** Just starting out? Don't have plants to bring? Of course you may take plants. In fact, that is one of the main purposes of the Plant Exchange. We all had to get started somehow, and when native plants start doing really well in your yard, bring some back.

Volunteer/Learning Opportunities

Check out this
web resource:

**Michigan State
Native Plants Website**
<http://nativeplants.msu.edu>

Find information on:

- Enhancing beneficial insects with native plants
- Native plant fact sheets
- Pollination and bees
- Steps to creating your own native planting



Garlic Mustard



Monarch Butterfly on Milkweed

Kent Conservation District Annual Tree Sale

Dates: April 12—16th **Time:** 9 a—12 p **Location:** Various

Volunteers are needed by Kent Conservation District to help sort and pack trees (many of them are natives) for the annual tree sale. This year will sort and pack orders in Grand Rapids and we could use your help the week of April 12-16 with pickup in Grand Rapids on April 16 from 3-6:30 pm at our office, 3260 Eagle Park Dr 49525. Packing and sorting will be done on the Kent Intermediate School District campus located at 2930 Knapp NE 49525 during the day beginning Mon, April 12 at 9 am until 4 every day. If you live north of Grand Rapids, please volunteer for the following day, Sat April 17 from 9 am to 12 pm for tree pickups at Howard Christensen Nature Center in Kent City. If you are interested, please call Connie Redding, Kent Conservation District Project Coordinator and Wild Ones member, at 616.942.4111 ext.100.

Ada Parks and Garlic Mustard

Dates: April 17, 23, 27, May 4, 8 **Time:** mornings **Location:** Ada Parks

Mark Fitzpatrick – Director of Ada Township Parks and Recreation Dept. and Wild Ones Advisory Board Member, has posted the following garlic mustard pull dates for the parks he oversees – please consider helping this year. All pulling efforts count towards the Garlic Mustard Challenge! Contact Mark with any questions or to RSVP at 616-676-0520 or email mfitzpatrick@adatownshipmi.com.

Saturday, April 17 – 10:00 am – noon at Ada Park

Friday, April 23 – 9:00 – 11:00 am at Leonard Field Park

Tuesday, April 27 – 9:30am – noon at Ada Park

Tuesday, May 4 – 10:00am – noon at Roselle Park

Saturday, May 8 – 10:00am –noon at Ada and Seidman Parks

Garlic Mustard Challenge!

Dates: Sat., May 8th **Time:** 10 a — 12 p **Locations:** Seidman, Johnson, Fallsburg Parks

Garlic Mustard is a pesky invasive plant that out-competes native flowers and trees, damaging the environment and causes loss of natural biodiversity. Our best defense is to keep this "alien" out of our most sensitive environments, such as our parks and nature preserves!

Volunteers are needed to join forces to pull as much Garlic Mustard as we can!!! It's easy to pull so no special tools are required, just as many hands and hearts as we can get together!!! This event is part of a fun regional competition taking place all over Southern Michigan, so do your part to help make our Southwest region the Garlic Mustard Challenge champions!!! Go to www.stewardshipnetwork.com and click on "Garlic Mustard Challenge" in the lower left corner for more information about the plant and the competition!

Butterfly Garden Trail

Dates: Sat., June 12th **Time:** 9 a — 12 p **Locations:** Townsend Park

The monarch butterfly population has been declining in recent years, largely due to habitat loss. Volunteers will rake, spread seeds, plant milkweed and more to help create an "International Waystation" for monarch butterflies!

PLEASE RSVP to park.volunteers@kentcountymi.gov as **space is limited for this event!!!**

-Andrea Dunne-Sosa, Volunteer Services Coordinator of Kent County Parks Department

Community Events

Calvin College Annual Native Plant Sale

Date: Sat., May 1st **Time:** 10 a—12 p **Location:** Calvin College

Save the date to attend the 5th Annual Native Plant Sale on Saturday, May 1, at Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve Bunker Interpretive Center. This is a good opportunity to purchase some great native plants for your gardens. The plant sale runs from 10 am to noon but make sure you come early as favorite plants species generally sell very quickly. As the date draws closer, watch the website(<http://www.calvin.edu/academic/eco-preserve/newsandevents/>) for a list of plants for sale and garden walks that will be offered. All proceeds from the sale support the Wetlands and Woodlands Summer Camp Program.

Kent Conservation District Spring Native Plant Sale and Workshop

Date: Tues. May 25th **Time:** 6—8 p **Location:** 3260 Eagle Park, Grand Rapids

If you are looking for a resource for native plants, don't miss the Kent Conservation District's Spring Native Plant Sale and Workshop. We will be sending the order form along with this newsletter. It can also be found at the Kent Conservation District's website at: <http://www.kentconservation.org/treesale.php>.

They will have over 50 varieties of native wildflowers, 10 native grasses and 4 themed garden flats, with prices ranging from \$5.50 to \$6 per quart and \$45 to \$60 for 38-plug flat. They also will have a rain barrel available. Please note that the order form is two pages—make sure you print and return both pages to KCD.

The order deadline for this year's sale is Monday, May 17, 2010. Pick up will be on May 25th from 6 to 8 pm. Extra plants may be available the day of pick-up, but the quantity will be limited so make sure to submit your order by the deadline!

In addition, the grower, Vern Stephens of Designs by Nature (a former RCWO speaker) will be offering a Native Plant Workshop from 3:30 to 5:30 the day of the plant pick-up. The workshop will cost \$5. If you are interested in attending the workshop, please email or call Kent Conservation District to pre-register. Call the office at (616)942-4111 ext. 100 or email administrator@kentconservation.org.

DISCOVER! Pickerel Lake

Date: Sat., May 15th **Time:** 10 a—3 p **Location:** Pickerel Lake

Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 15th for a free and fun discovery program at Pickerel Lake/Fred Meijer Nature Preserve! Just pull on your comfortable shoes, gather the family and make your way to one of Kent County Park's hidden gems, Pickerel Lake.

This experiential family event for kids of ALL ages runs from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. It includes a scavenger hunt where kids get a trail guide to be stamped and entered into a drawing for a free "Discover! Pickerel Lake" t-shirt—along with "discovery" trail walk to learn about a truly interesting ecosystem and things like:

- The birds and beavers that make their home Pickerel Lake
- The variety of native and non-native trees and plants around the lake
- The tamarack swamp and the turtle dock and local reptiles and amphibians
- The history of the area and the stories of Indian Joe

Go to www.stuckongardening.com to get more information on this event and the MSU Extension **Master Naturalist** program.

This event qualifies as a WildCard choice in the *Connecting Families with Nature Passport* program which you can learn more about at <http://kentconservation.org/families/> and find out where you and your family can enjoy more outdoor adventures.



Golden Alexanders



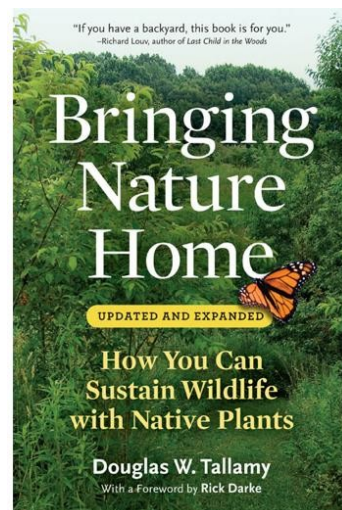
RCWO News and Notes

Roosevelt Park CRC "Care Fair"

We were invited to share our information at a Care Fair at Roosevelt Park CRC on 3/21/2010 where the church presented information on ways to help the environment. Other organizations were present with information about rain barrels, green cleaning and clean up of Plaster Creek. Sue Bouchard staffed the table handing out brochures, talking about the benefits of using native and answering questions. Our new power point program was placed on a continuous loop and drew much interest. Several new names were added to our mailing list.

Author Tallamy "Brought Nature Home" to West Michigan

RCWO also helped host the lecture by author Douglas Tallamy on March 29th at the Ladies Literary Club in Grand Rapids. Dr. Tallamy discussed the research he wrote about in his book "Bringing Nature Home" offered convincing arguments for the inclusion of natives to our home landscapes and how the choices we make as gardeners can strongly influence the population and diversity of wildlife in our communities. The event was well attended with close to 300 people in the audience, some traveling over 130 miles! A big thank you to the following RCWO members who helped staff book sale, information and refreshment tables: Carol Phelps, Nancy Hoovler, Bonnie Randall, Meribeth Bolt, Betsy Ford, Sue Bouchard, Chris Baer, Amy Heilman. This event brought much recognition to our chapter so a huge thank you also goes out to Melanie Good of GR Audubon Club, Land Conservancy of West Michigan and the Stewardship Network for having the foresight to bring this popular author and his message to us!



New RCWO Brochures

Take a minute to check out our new RCWO brochures and bookmarks. Ruth Oldenburg, graphic artist and member kindly put her talents to use and revamped the look for us. The design is now more clear, more informative and also displays her beautiful plant photos as well. Thank you Ruth for your skill and for the great program you put on for us in March. We are looking forward to seeing your gardens for our August field trip!

New Look for the RCWO Newsletter

Do you like the fresh new design of our newsletter? We can thank Rachel Ford, RCWO member, for developing the format and taking on the monthly newsletter responsibility. After three dedicated years of putting out the newsletter, Sue Bouchard was ready to hand over the reins so she could just wear one hat for RCWO – that of Membership Chair. Thanks Sue and Rachel! Please send any newsletter items you would like to see included in upcoming issues to Rachel at recford@yahoo.com. We are interested in local environmental issues, nature-related quotes, interesting websites, community events, book reviews, short but informative descriptions of native plants or invasive plants. Plant photos would be great too! Hey – we would even put in some poetry or line drawings if you are really feeling creative! Lets have some fun with this!

In all things of nature, there is something of the marvelous.
-Aristotle

Book Review: *Wicked Plants – The Weed that Killed Lincoln’s Mother and Other Botanical Atrocities* (by Amy Stewart)

If the title alone doesn’t pull you in, the cover of fiendish green, black and gold will (it’s in the ten finalists for Amazon’s cover of the year award!) When you take a peek inside, you will find gorgeous but menacing copper etchings of plants and some amusing drawings. Brown detailing on the pages gives the appearance of an heirloom.

This little, 5.5” x 7”, 223 page book packs a wallop I didn’t think existed in garden reading material. It takes you on an enlightening and entertaining look at hallucinogenic, convulsive, intoxicating, irritating, dangerous and downright deadly plants.

Most of us view plant life as inherently innocent, despite the fact that thousands of Americans are poisoned annually by plants. Author Amy Stewart comments, “There has to be a body count.these are plants you do not want to meet in a dark alley.” This entertaining book mixes the oddities of

plant life with both tragic and humorous stories. There are stories of plants associated with Russian spies, and the KGB, with the Greek philosopher Socrates, the explorers Lewis and Clark, an 1856 Scottish dinner party gone deadly wrong, and, of course, Nancy Hanks Lincoln.

You will enjoy reading all about the wicked deeds of the plants you know and love. But beware, just when you thought it was safe to go back in the garden you may find more than a few evildoers innocently planted in your own front yard!

With no section more than a few pages long, this wicked book is not a serious study of botany with exhaustive details or lists. It is simply written, funny and short-winded without skimping on magical, historical, botanical or literary details; I give it two green thumbs up.
 -Meribeth Bolt

Even More Wicked

-See a video interview with Amy Stewart and tour her Poison Garden at the following URL:

<http://www.northcoastgardenin.com/2009/08/wicked-plants-book-review-garden-tour>

-Check out Amy Stewart and some of her wicked plant victims at the following URL:

<http://blog.amystewart.com/2009/01/wicked-plants-the-trailer.html>

2010 River City Wild Ones Calendar

All programs (unless otherwise specified) will begin at 7 pm on the 3rd Monday of each month, March – November. Non-members are always welcome! Find more information for each event on our website.



Grand Rapids Chapter
River City Wild Ones

rivercitywildones.org

www.for-wild.org
(National Headquarters)

Date	Speaker/Topic	Location
Apr 19th	Kelly Rice/Urban Lawn to Native Prairie	Bunker Interpretive Center 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Calvin College, Grand Rapids
May 17th	Melanie Good/Ecosystem Tour and Native Orchids	Lamberton Lake Preserve Near I-96/Plainfield exit Carpooling Suggested!
Jun 21	Ranger Steve Mueller/Property Tour and Insect Collection	13010 Northland Dr. Cedar Springs, MI 49319
Jul 19* (6:30 start)	Cheryl Tolley/Native Ferns	Sandhill Farm 11250 10 Mile Road, Rockford, MI 49341
Aug 16	Ruth Oldenburg /Native Meadow	7485 Cloudberry Lane NE Belmont, MI 49306
Sep 20	Rebecca Shilt/Rain Gardens	TBD Carpooling Suggested!
Oct 18	Nancy Hoovler/Plant Rescue	Bunker Interpretive Center 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Calvin College, Grand Rapids
Nov 15	River City Wild Ones Fourth Annual Auction	Bunker Interpretive Center 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Calvin College, Grand Rapids