



Inside this issue:

Upcoming Events 2
Natives to Know 3
Community Stewardship 3
Photos Needed 4
Calendar 4

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

April 18th Program: Herald in Spring with a Visual Feast of Wildflowers

Tiny Treasures

**Featuring writer and photographer:
Mary McKinney Schmidt.**

Tiny Treasures is the story of a woman in her mid-fifties who packs her car with hiking shoes, a hodgepodge of camping gear, and a bicycle, and sets off alone to explore the eastern coastline of Lake Michigan. Formerly an executive of a Fortune 500 company, accustomed to the luxurious amenities of five star hotels, she transitions to the rugged, often hilarious, life of one surviving early spring in campgrounds stretching from the Indiana Dunes to Sleeping Bear. Always with her, poking their colorful faces through the drab remnants of winter, were wildflowers. Curious, longing to greet these traveling companions by name, she began photographing them to research their identities. Squatting, kneeling, often crawling along the earth's floor, she heard them whispering lyrics to accompany the music of her soul. Their smiles

would become treasures in the new life she is creating.

Formerly President of Customer Partnerships for Baxter Healthcare, the author moved to western Michigan in 2005. Through her writing, photography, and public speaking, she advocates for protecting Lake Michigan and all life along its shores. Her story, "Discovering Tiny Treasures," and photographs were featured in the spring 2010 issue of *Michigan Blue* magazine.

Special note: the author will be displaying wildflower notecards and flashcards available for purchase. Proceeds benefit the Gillette Sand Dune Visitor Center at P.J. Hoffmaster State Park, the last state park in Western Michigan providing a year-round, full time park naturalist to connect our children and grandchildren with this special place on the planet.

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

Officers

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

Planning Chairs

Newsletter—**Rachel Ford**
Hospitality—**Bonnie Randall**
Web—**Roland Bouchard**

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 —
Environmental Consultant,
Photographer, Botanist, Eco-friendly Landscaper

RCWO Candidates Come Forth

After four years of dedicated service, two of our chapter's officers are ready to explore new paths. Sue Bouchard and Rebecca Shilt (Membership Chair and Vice President respectively) have worked hard to create good foundations for these positions. Now it is time for a few good members to volunteer as candidates for these roles. We verbally made this announcement at our last meeting but since some of you may not have been at the program, we wanted to make sure everyone

was made aware of this opportunity to help our chapter continue to move forward. Fresh eyes, a positive attitude and willingness to work together are the qualifications we ask for. We will hold the election the night of this month's program on April 18. Please contact President, Amy Heilman (308-8176 or aheilman@rivercitywildones.org) with any questions pertaining to position descriptions.

Upcoming Events

Ada Parks and Recreation Nature Lecture Series with Guided Walks

Date(s): April 27, May 4, 18 **Time:** 10 a—11:30 a **Location:** [Ada Park Learning Center](#)

Nature presentations inside the Learning Center at Ada Park followed by a short walk outside.

Local Birds—Wednesday, April 27 MI Wildflowers—Wednesday, May 4 Invasive Plants—Wednesday, May 18

Pre-registration requested by contacting the Park office - call 616-676-0520 or email Mark mfitzpatrick@adatownshipmi.com (cell 616-862-0584) or Linda lgary@adatownshipmi.com. Class fee is \$3/person - snacks & handouts provided.

Be A Naturalist in “The Know”

Date(s): April 30, June 4, Aug 27 **Time:** Various **Location:** Various

This is a GREAT chance to learn more about the natural world around us! The Kent MSU Extension Master Naturalist program is offering three different Supplemental Classes which are open to any interested person as long as space is available. You do not have to have taken the MN program to be eligible to register for these classes. The first class is **Frogging for Michigan Amphibians** on Saturday, April 30 from 7:00-11:00 PM taught by Professor Ray Gates. The second class is **Dune Ecology** on Saturday, June 4 taught by 30 from 1:00-5:00 PM taught by Professor Ray Gates. The third class is **Latest News on Invasive Plants** on Saturday, August 27 from 8:00-12:30 taught by Ottawa County Parks Resource Manager Melanie Manion. Contact Ginny Wanty, Kent/MSU Extension Master Naturalist Program Coordinator wanty@msu.edu or call 616-336-3108 for class fees, locations and registration.

Calvin College 6th Annual Native Plant Sale

Date(s): Saturday, May 7 **Time:** 10 a—12 p **Location:** [Bunker Interpretive Ctr](#)

Save the date to purchase some hard to find native plants for your gardens. The plant sale runs from 10 am to noon but make sure you come early as we generally sell out fast of the favorite plants species. As the date draws closer, watch the [web-site](#) for a list of plants for sale. All proceeds from the sale support the [Wetlands and Woodlands Summer Camp Program](#).

Signs of Spring Discovery Hike at Calvin College

Date(s): Saturday, May 7 **Time:** 1:30—3:30 p **Location:** [Bunker Interpretive Ctr](#)

Spring wildflowers are blooming, the birds are singing and the sun is shining. Join Jeanette Henderson, Program Manager of the Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve on **Saturday, May 7, from 1:30 to 3:00 pm**. Meeting place is the Bunker Interpretive Center ([map](#)). Jeanette will help you discover more signs of spring on a walk through the Ecosystem Preserve. Admire the beauty of Mayapples, listen to green frogs call, explore a vernal pool, and delight in fact that warmer days are ahead. This program is great for adventurous adults and families with children of all ages. Come dressed for the weather and for walking on the trails. The program will take place in light rain. No registration is required. For more information contact Jeanette at (616) 526-7601 or jmh46@calvin.edu.

Birding 101 and Owl Prowl

Date(s): Friday, May 13 **Time:** 7 — 9 p **Location:** [Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve, meet at Bunker Interpretive Ctr](#).

Whether you've never birded in your life or want to better your skills as a birder, this program is for you. We will go over some of the basics of how to identify birds, what equipment and books to use and where to go. After the program we will search and call for owls on the preserve. This program is recommended for adults and youth ages 12 year old and older. Limit 20 people. Registration for this program opens April 1, 2011. Led by Curtis Dykstra, Naturalist. Cost: \$5 per person.

Spring Birding Hike

Date(s): Sat, May 14 **Time:** 7:30—9:30 a **Location:** [Calvin College Ecosystem Preserve, meet at Bunker Interpretive Ctr](#)

As a follow up to our Birding 101 class, join experienced birder Curtis Dykstra as he leads participants on a bird hike through several different habitats on the preserve including the wildlife refuge section during the height of spring migration. You are sure to see and hear a vast array of birds from the local Chickadees and Cardinals to migrant Warblers, Flycatchers and much more. Bring your listening ears, your fullest attention and don't forget your binoculars too! Limit 12 participants. Binoculars will be available to use if you need them. This program is recommended for adults and youth ages 12 year old and older. Registration for this program opens April 1, 2011. Cost: \$5 per person.

Natives to Know: Spring Beauty (Claytonia virginica)

Spring Beauty, one of our earliest spring wildflowers, often pushes its delicate blossoms up through the dry leaf litter that covers the woodland floor from the previous fall.

A low-growing perennial, Spring Beauty features clusters of star-like flowers, 3/4" wide, with 5 white to pinkish petals, darker pink veins, 5 stamens, and pink anthers on thin stems. These flowers welcome sunshine, but close and nod downward at night and during cloudy weather. Emitting a pleasant scent, this flower is spectacular in large patches.

The leaves of Spring Beauty are dark green, opposite and narrow (grass-like), with a single mid-rib. The plant is to 4-6" tall at bloom time (March –May), but continues to grow after blooming, reaching 9-12" before disappearing as it goes into dormancy in early summer. The root system consists of small round tubers (corms) and secondary roots. The corms are edible, having a sweet, chestnut-like flavor which was relished by Native Americans.

Establishment of this native plant in a new location can be somewhat difficult. Each fertilized flower produces a short 3-valved capsule containing several tiny seeds enclosed by 2 sepals. When ripe, the seeds are propelled with a force that carries them several inches from the parent plant. Therefore, to collect seeds, the seed heads must be wrapped before the seeds are propelled to the soil. Then, the freshly harvested seed must be immediately sown, since stored seeds have a tendency to rot. Another tactic

is to dig up and transplant the corms as the plants go dormant.

Once established, Spring Beauty naturalizes easily by bulb offsets and self-seeding, and typically suffers no serious insect or disease problems. It fits well in rock gardens, woodland or wildflower gardens, and naturalized meadows. It may also be naturalized in lawns in a similar manner as spring crocuses. Spring Beauty prefers dappled sunlight during the spring, tolerating a variety of soils, but with abundant organic matter.

Spring Beauty is found throughout much of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan and in some areas of the Upper Peninsula. In the wild, it grows in rich, moist woodlands and valleys, meadows, and somewhat dry upland woods. The flowers are sought by various kinds of bees, butterflies, flies, and skippers for nectar and pollen. The flowers and leaves are eaten by deer and elk. The presence of Spring Beauty is a sure sign that local woodlands are full of wildflowers. When conspicuously absent, the area has likely been subjected to plows or bulldozers at some point in the past.

Claytonia caroliniana which often goes by the name of "Carolina Spring Beauty" is very similar to *Claytonia virginica* and is also native to Michigan. However, *Claytonia caroliniana* has broader, oval to oblong leaves. The scientific name *Claytonia* honors John Clayton (1694–1773), an early American botanist who supplied material for an eighteenth-century book on the flora of Virginia.

-Joyce Tuharsky



Claytonia virginica, also known as Spring Beauty (photo: U of M Herbarium)

More Spring Beauty

More information and photos on Spring Beauty are available at:

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=CLVI3>

http://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=CLVI3

http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/woodland/plants/spring_beauty.htm

Community Stewardship Opportunities

Show Your Wild Support for Ada Park - **Participate!** in Community Service/Learning Days

Many work days will include stewardship work on invasive plants, habitat restoration, backyard habitat demonstration sites and the gardens plus some facility development like split rail fences, chipping trails and other projects. Please call the park office 616-676-0520 or let Mark mfitzpatrick@adatownshipmi.com or Linda lgary@adatownshipmi.com know a day ahead of the days you can help so they can plan for you.

Volunteer Workdays in Ada Parks: 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., various Tuesdays

- April 12, Ada Township Park (*lunch/program from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.)
- April 26, Ada Township Park
- May 3, Roselle Park
- May 10, Leonard Field (Covered Bridge)
- May 17, Carl Creek Preserve (new work site)
- May 24, Ada Township Park
- June 7, Roselle Park
- August 16, Location TBA

Needed—Photos of Good Plants for Bees



Photo - Honey bee on New England Aster, *aster novae angliae* - was donated by Kelly N Rice who is a member of River City Wild Ones in Grand Rapids, MI - an organization dedicated to preserving, protecting and promoting native plants and natural landscapes. Many members of *Wild Ones* have donated photos to the "Photos of Plants Good for Bees" project.

A website, www.NetworkBees.com, that is dedicated to helping bees has started a project called Photos of Plants Good for Bees. Here is a link: http://www.networkbees.com/photos_of_plants_for_bees.html

The goal of the project is to create photo collections of bee-friendly plants for all eco-regions of the continental United States. People wishing to plant bee-friendly gardens will be able to see what their plants will look like.

They are looking for donations of photos for the project. Individuals and businesses who donate photos will be listed on the NetworkBees site and credit will be given where the photos are posted.

To Donate Photographs to Photos of Plants Good for Bees:

Email photos to: NetworkBees@gmail.com

Or send photos by postal mail to:

NetworkBees
c/o Alice McCombs
P O Box 573
Shawano, WI 54166

If you're donating photos please: Include the city and state, or the zip code, of the area where the photos were taken. Say what the plant is in each photo. (If you know; if you don't that's ok). Indicate if you would like to be added to the list of donors for this project. If you want to send photos of bees or beekeeping, that's wonderful! They will be added to galleries and sets about bees and beekeepers.



2011 River City Wild Ones Calendar

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

Wild Ones
NATIVE PLANTS. NATURAL LANDSCAPES

Grand Rapids Chapter
River City Wild Ones

rivercitywildones.org
www.for-wild.org
(National Headquarters)

Date	Speaker/Topic	Location
Apr 18	Mary McKinney Schmidt/An Exploration of the Eastern Shore of Lake Michigan	Bunker Interpretive Center 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Calvin College, Grand Rapids
May 16	Kristen Hintz/Field Trip to Grand River Park	Grand River Park 9473 28th Ave.. Jenison, MI 49428
Jun 20	Carol and Fritz Rottman/Native Prairie	11300 Hart St Greenville, MI 48838
Jul 18	Nathan Haan/Plaster Creek Watershed	Ken-O-Shay School 3155 Kalamazoo SE Grand Rapids, MI 49507
Aug 15	Cedar Creek Institute	701 W Cloverdale Rd
Sep 19	Dr. David Dornbos/Invasive Woody Shrubs	Bunker Interpretive Center 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Calvin College, Grand Rapids
Oct 17	To Be Announced	TBD
Nov 14	Fifth Annual Auction	Bunker Interpretive Center 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Calvin College, Grand Rapids