

LEXINGTON CHAPTER — July, 2014

<http://lexington.wildones.org>

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The Lexington chapter of *Wild Ones* meets the first Thursday of every month and at other times for special programs. Visitors welcome! Check our website www.lexington.wildones.org for details.

This newsletter is a publication of the Lexington chapter of *Wild Ones*. It is published nine times a year—March through November—as an electronic newsletter.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or information for future editions, contact Ann Bowe, chair of the Marketing and Communications Committee, at annbowe@annbowedesigns.com or Judy Johnson, newsletter editor, at judylex@twc.com.

President's Message...



Last year, the Idle Hour Neighbors Alliance planted a native plant garden and monarch waystation in the St. Ann traffic median just off Richmond Road. This year, the Alliance was recognized by the Lexington Council Garden Clubs as a winner in their “Lexington in Bloom” competition. And there is no doubt: the newly planted median is a vast improvement over the trash-strewn weed patch that Idle Hour residents had lived with for so long.

When the neighborhood association was reincorporated three years ago, there was a strong sense that beautifying the three one-block medians that mark the entrances into Idle Hour should be one of its goals. Many entrance signs in Lexington are encased in a stone structure, flanked by a group of arborvitae on each side and fronted by a planting of annuals in summer. The Idle Hour Neighbors Alliance chose an option that was not only much more affordable but that also had the potential of building community through gardening: a simple wooden sign and a long bed of native perennials, shrubs and grasses stretching behind it. Groups of ornamental boulders add to the natural look.

The project was supported by a sustainability grant from LFUCG. Independently of the successful grant application, permission had to be obtained to plant on city property, which meant that a traffic engineer had to weigh in. His main concern was that visibility across the median should not be blocked by high plants. This, of course proved to be a challenge, since so many native plants grow tall and had to be excluded. Councilman Bill Farmer’s support was very valuable. His office helped the Idle Hour Neighbors Alliance cope with bureaucratic hurdles, made suggestions for funding, and publicized the garden.

The Idle Hour Neighbors Alliance takes great pride in the St. Ann entrance median. More importantly, however, placing a monarch waystation sign in the median has opened up ecological awareness among board members and some residents. This year, at its annual summer picnic, there will be an instructional table to highlight the pollinator dilemma that we *Wild Ones* deplore, and to promote the establishment of mason bee condos in the neighborhood.

It is our mission as *Wild Ones* to promote native plants and to educate people about ecological relationships. Creating and maintaining a garden in a public space appears to be a good approach toward fulfilling our educational role.

Beate Popkin

Hidden Gems of Maywoods

By Karen Lanier

On a quiet country road near Crab Orchard, where the Bluegrass blends with Appalachian knobs, edges of ecosystems mingle and biodiversity thrives at the Maywoods Environmental and Educational Laboratory. Short hiking trails and excellent signage create an accessible and multi-sensory learning experience. Eastern Kentucky University operates the 1,700 acre natural area and wildlife refuge for students of all ages and it is open to the public seven days a week.

As part of the Family Nature Day that Maywoods hosted in May, I led a photography workshop focusing on the natural wonders throughout the woods. Surrounded by the rural farmland setting of Garrard and Rockcastle counties, the trails of Maywoods are organized by natural ecosystems that include oak-hickory forest, lakeside, streamside, winding up to ridges and knobs that offer broad vistas.



Participants photographed by Karen Lanier



Lichen moth photographed by Anthony Ndirangu

I met half a dozen families throughout the day. We shared thoughts on what we find inspiring about nature photography and how we know good composition when we see it. I oriented folks to basic digital camera functions and provided tips for changing settings to avoid common mistakes. Then I passed out their assignments: scavenger hunts to work on together as participants explored the forest down to the stream. One young girl asked me what the prize would be, and I told her it was obvious. She would take home great photos!

The scavenger hunts directed the participants' attention to little details they might have otherwise passed over and challenged them to frame their discoveries deliberately. They were asked to make photographs, not snapshots. For beginners, they could find subjects such as a heart-shaped leaf, their favorite color, or a flower with the same number of petals as people in their group. One little boy loved orange, and captured his favorite color when he discovered an Eastern box turtle with an orange neck (and a bright red eye)! Intermediate photographers could look for parts of the plant community and get at least one shot of each forest layer, or find signs of animals, such as a feather, tracks, or scat. Advanced shooters were challenged to capture all the layers of a plant community in one shot, or try to show examples of connections in the food web, or frame the flow of water in a smooth blur with a slower shutter speed. Again, the wildlife stole the show at the stream when a dad turned over a rock and gently handled a red salamander.

Family groups took their time climbing down the hillsides, ending the trek at a refreshing cold stream. Youngsters from age 4 to 15 noticed the mottled patterns of water and minerals in the shale creek bed and discovered frogs, water striders, crawdads, and quartz crystals. Their parents found tranquil resting spots in the shade.

The photo workshop was planned to help participants slow down and notice small details as well as significant relationships in nature. Interpretive signs educated hikers beyond plant identification and explained the roles of each member of the ecosystem. Dominant species, stratified layers of the forest, food webs, evolution, nutrient cycling, the aging of lakes – these and more environmental science topics come to life when you hear the call of red-wing blackbirds and wood thrushes while you rest against a dead snag of Virginia pine and feel the hammering of a northern flicker vibrating down through the wood at your back.

The next Family Nature Day will be held in the fall. Maywoods offers fine facilities for lodging, cooking, teaching and even fishing. Teachers' manuals and activity kits are available on the EKU Natural Areas website, www.naturalareas.eku.edu, along with contact information and prices. Maywoods is surely a special place, full of native plants, wildlife and fun ways to learn!



Box turtle photographed by Karen Lanier

Wild Ones Get the Buzz on Bees

By Judy Johnson



Dr. Tammy Horn, on the left, our newly appointed State Apiarist, with Mary Sheldon, on the right, EKU Steele-Reese researcher.

On June 5 the *Wild Ones* gathered in a golden summer evening setting at Floracliff where two very knowledgeable guests shared their pollinator expertise.

Dr. Tammy Horn spoke briefly about her work with Coal Country Beeworks, a collaboration with coal companies to plant pollinator-friendly trees and flowers on reclaimed mine sites and to promote a commercial

honey industry in Appalachia. She also outlined the responsibilities she has taken on with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. She answered several questions including one about the potential impact of honey bees (which are European) on native bee populations by saying “the early results of a small preliminary study seem to indicate that if enough different species of flowers are planted, they all seem to get along.”

Mary Sheldon explained her grant-funded work to trap and identify native bees in the state and analyze data collected on them, determining the status of pollinator health, following various bee families and observing their activities, recording how long it takes to re-establish them on the reclaimed mine sites. We learned a bit about leaf-cutting bees (*Megachile spp.*), sweat bees (*Halictidae spp.*) more accurately labeled “the living jewels of the forest” according to Tammy, squash bees (*Xenoglossa spp.*), whose queen “cruises petals where males hang out much like bars,” mining bees (*Andrena spp.*) that appear to carry pollen “in their armpits,” our old friend the bumble bee (*Bombus impatiens*) and many, many more.

After Mary’s presentation, many of the group strolled and chatted with our guests while some more adventuresome members went in search of pollinators as you can see in the photos below.

We left concerned about pesticides but hopeful about the benefits of our work with pollinator-friendly plants.

Nathan Skinner (below) helps first Josie Miller (left) and then Victoria Ligenza (right) look for late flying bees—much enthusiasm, little luck.



Local Teacher Studying Pollination

Thanks to a program called Polar Trec which focuses on teachers and researchers collaborating in hands-on research, Crawford Middle School teacher Emily Dodson, spent June 8-30 in Kangerlussuaq, Greenland, with research partner Christine Urbanowicz, a PhD student in ecology and environmental biology at Dartmouth College. Emily is a second year integrated science teacher, a graduate of Georgetown College.

This team’s mission was to study the effects of climate change on plant pollination with Christine focusing on leading a polar research expedition and Emily engaging the public and translating the research to a student friendly format to use in the classroom.

This study can have important pan-Arctic and global implications. It will help determine which mechanisms may most strongly drive changes in plant-pollinator interactions and plant reproduction.

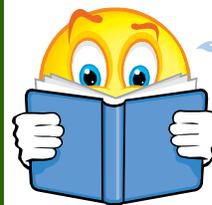
Check out the website PolarTrec.com for more on this exciting venture.



Protect Pollinators

Information from Mary Sheldon

There are many sources of information about pesticides, their uses and effects. Two important resources are panna.org (the Pesticide Action Network) and beyondpesticides.org, a nonprofit that works with allies to protect public health and the environment to lead the transition to a world free of toxic pesticides. The latter features a “BEE Protective” campaign focusing on protecting honey bees and wild pollinators from pesticides.



Looking for an interesting book on our pollinator friends? Check out *The Forgotten Pollinators* by Stephen Buckmann and Gary Paul Nabhan, published in 1997 and available online from sources that deal in older/used books like abe-books.com. (Our local bookstores may be able to find it.) Focused on the often ignored relationship between plants and the animals that pollinate them, its chapters contain solid science told through entertaining personal anecdotes and chatty commentary.



Artist's Corner

By Judy Johnson



Joe Carwile is a 1993 prize winning graduate of WKU photo-journalism program. He can be contacted through his website joecarwilephotography.com where more of his work is displayed.



Continuing our summer focus on local nature-inspired artwork, this month we present Kentucky native and Lexington resident Joe Carwile. As you can see from samples on this page, Joe turns his camera on the smallest, most insignificant features of plant and insect life to find enchanting patterns, shapes and colors.

Joe's promising career as a newspaper photographer was cut short in 1994 when he suffered a traumatic brain injury in an automobile accident. Despite serious challenges, he worked hard over the following years to overcome obstacles and now finds great satisfaction in his work at a rehab center for people who have suffered similar injuries.



About his work Joe says, "Every day at the newspaper was different. Photographing nature is much the same. The sun may pop out from behind a cloud, giving a plant an unexpected edge. A raindrop can make something ordinary into something breathtaking. A dragonfly may wait and smile for the camera. The world around us is amazing!"

New Alternative to Harmful Pesticides

On Monday, July 28 from 7 to 9 p.m. Cr. S. R. Palli, UK Entomologist, and Gerald Hayes, Monsanto, Inc. will discuss "Latest Developments in RNA Interference Technology." The location of the presentation is Room 108 of Crabbe Library on the EKU campus. RNAi technology, in very specific ways that do not harm honey bees, can target mites that attack bee colonies. **This event is free and open to the public.**

Wild Ones members might also like to follow the link <http://nyti.ms/1jZ3P1q> to a very interesting article on the subject.

Want a really cool app to help select native plants for your garden? Check this out....



You can find link at <http://www.pollinator.org/beesmartapp.htm>

- Database of nearly 1,000 pollinator friendly native plants
- Colorful images, clear information
- Can be filtered by pollinators you wish to attract
- Can customize shopping list of plants to purchase
- IT IS FREE!

Who Is on My Milkweed?

By Deborah Holloway

Most of us plant our milkweeds (*Asclepias* species) hoping to attract butterflies, especially the wonderful monarchs. However, if you have ever walked through a meadow in midsummer, you know there are hundreds-of-thousands, of insects enjoying the milkweeds. Look closely and you may see them in your garden.

The two most common are the large and small milkweed bugs, which are native to North America. Narrow, orange and black and usually seen in clusters, they puncture, inject enzymes and then suck up their food. The adults are safe from most predators because the milkweed sap contains an ingredient that makes the predator vomit.

The oleander aphid, a non-native insect, can take over your milkweed. An infestation can cause serious damage. Suggestion: As soon as you see any aphids, start squishing them.

If you are concerned about misshapen buds, flowers, or seeds, simply pick off a few bugs here and there. They won't hurt you. Enjoy your milkweeds. They are a living science display and home to many other insects even though we may not love them as we do the monarchs!

Wild Ones July Event

PLEASE NOTE: The date and location for the July meeting of *Wild Ones* will be **Sunday, July 6 at 9 a.m. at Dave Svetich's garden.** The address is 3809 Brier East Rd., Lexington 40509. His property is a haven for butterflies and caterpillars and Dave has invited members to join in his annual July butterfly count. Also, Mary Carol Cooper will demonstrate how to tag monarch butterflies.

It is recommended that you bring a net, hat, field guide and binoculars if you have them. All skill levels are welcome.

DIRECTIONS: The property is located east of New Circle Rd. You can pick up Winchester Rd. from either New Circle or Man O War. Proceed 14 miles east of Man O War on Winchester Rd. (US 60) to Walnut Grove Lane. Turn right on Walnut Grove Lane and drive about 1 1/2 miles. Turn left on Brier East Rd. and the property will be on your left.

June Calendar

Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest

Sat., July 12 from 9:00 to 11:00 p.m.—Full "Thunder" Moon Hike. Program weaves together stories about night ecology, moon lore, history, and nature. Members \$10; non-members \$12. Registration and payment due by 4 p.m. day prior to the start of program. Call **502-955-8512** for information.

UK Arboretum

Thurs., 12:15 to 2:30 p.m., July 17—Third Thursday Walk. Todd Rounsaville, Curator of Native Plants, leads a walk through a different part of the Walk across Kentucky to help expand understanding of Arboretum plants and physical features. **FREE**

Continuing until July 18—"Returned to the Arboretum" Exhibit and Silent Auction Featuring Bluegrass Area Woodturners. This exhibit features wood-turned items created from naturally downed trees in the Arboretum. Silent bids may be placed on these beautifully crafted pieces any time until 4:00 p.m. on Friday, July 18. Winners will be announced at that time.

Thurs., July 24 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.—Restoring Riparian Areas along Streams. Amanda Gumbert, UK Water Quality Extension Specialist, will discuss riparian buffers, selection of native plants, techniques for clearing invasive plants, and proper planting and maintenance practices. **FREE**

Thurs., July 31 from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.—Building a Rain Garden. Jesse Dahl, Arboretum Horticulturist, will provide information helpful to homeowners interested in building rain gardens. **FREE**

For more information about any of the Arboretum programs, call **859-257-6955**.

Springhouse Gardens POLLINATOR DAY

Sat, July 5, 2014
10 am to 1 pm



10 - 11:15 am BOUQUETS FOR BEES
Dr. Tammy Horn, Kentucky State Apiarist

11:15 am Break

11:30 - 12:15 pm POLLINATOR CONSERVATION
Dr Dan Potter, Professor of Entomology

**BLUEGRASS BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
INFORMATION & DISPLAY**
Phil Clark, Vice President

POLLINATOR & WAYSTATION INFORMATION
Linda Porter—Garden Club of KY,
Garden Club of Danville & Wild Ones



TO REGISTER -

**Call 859-224-0033 or Email
greatplants@springhousegardens.com**