

LEXINGTON CHAPTER — March, 2016

<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 Judy Johnson, newsletter editor, at judylex@twc.com.

President's Message...

On February 16 Linda Porter and I spoke at the Monarch Summit in Frankfort. This conference, organized by the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission, brought together employees of state and federal agencies who influence the use of Kentucky lands, both public and private: the Transportation Cabinet, the Department of Agriculture, State Parks, Fish and Wildlife and others. Its goal was to gather information about efforts currently underway in Kentucky to conserve the monarch migration and to explore possibilities for vastly expanding those efforts in the future.

Linda spoke about her work as co-chair of the joint committee between *Wild Ones* and the Kentucky Council of Garden Clubs. The committee promoted the planting of monarch waystations and it was hugely successful. The number of waystations in Kentucky grew from 36 in the spring of 2013 to 324 in December of 2015. I myself spoke about our chapter—who we are and what we do. I believe that our presentations gave the audience of forward-looking government agents a sense that monarch conservation is already underway in Kentucky even if large tracts of land along highways, on utility right-of-way, tucked between agricultural fields and elsewhere still remain to be utilized.

The fact that Linda and I were invited to speak at the Monarch Summit signals an important step in the evolution of our chapter. Our mission is to promote the use of native plants in gardens and landscapes, but it appears that in the public eye we have a broader identity, namely as an environmental organization that vigorously and effectively works at creating habitat for our state's flora and fauna. We are being asked for input and advice to support other groups' efforts.

It is, therefore, entirely fitting that the creation of a new *Wild Ones* outreach committee features prominently among the new initiatives our chapter is undertaking in 2016. The committee will be ably chaired by Linda Porter who presents its future work on page 3 of this newsletter.

Members of the Monarch Waystation Joint Committee: Mary Carol Cooper, Tina Elliot, Joanna Kirby, and Linda Porter (chair). Another member, Mary Turner, is not pictured here.



While we will put considerable effort into reaching out to the general public with our environmental concerns, we are also starting at least two new programs more directly geared toward our members. Our 2016 garden tour invites participants into two gardens which will be open three times during the year so that visitors can chart the seasonal change that gives our enterprise its joy and its meaning. Tee Bergman chairs that committee. We are also offering a new program of monthly outings for chapter members and friends, ranging from wildflower hikes, to visits in gardens and parks, to an all-day pioneer history trip. Details can be found on our website under "Excursions."

Beate Popkin

A *Wild Ones*' Walk through the Garden Seasons

In place of a garden tour this year *Wild Ones* is offering three unique garden visits for members and their friends. The program for these garden visits, entitled "A *Wild Ones*' Walk through the Garden Seasons," will be presented at the March 3 meeting of the chapter. The plan is for a group of no more than 20 to tour two gardens, once in the spring, once in summer and once in the fall. In other words, both gardens will be visited on the same day, three times. The visits are planned for Saturday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

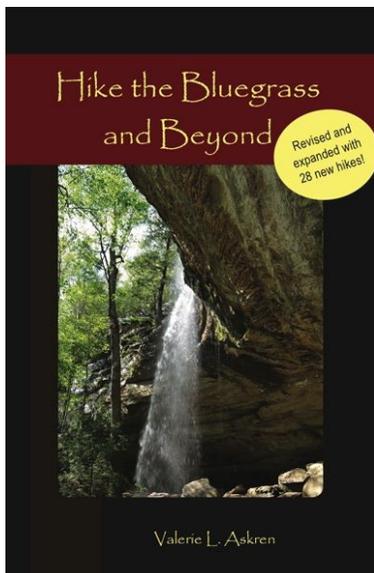
This experience is planned to meet the needs of beginner gardeners and those who have experience but want help with various aspects of a successful gardening experience. An experienced gardener will lead the discussion at each location. Plant selection, seasonal interest, layout and bed design, soil and bed maintenance, growing conditions, etc, will be discussed at each visit in each garden as well as a component appropriate to the season. The spring visit will spend some time on a soil test, how to read it and what to do with the information.

A \$30 ticket will cover participation at both locations on three different visits. If an individual has paid the fee but finds he/she cannot attend one of the sessions, the ticket can be used on that date by a friend.

More information will be available at the March meeting as well as the opportunity to sign up for the program. Remember, the number of participants will be limited to ensure the quality of the experience for everyone. If you cannot attend the meeting, please contact Tee Bergman at teebergman@twc.com.

The Hiker's Perfect Companion

By Beate Popkin



One day this winter, while idling away some time at the Morris Bookshop, I came across a small volume entitled *Hike the Bluegrass*. It caught my attention because I have hiked the Bluegrass for decades. In fact, I have been on the lookout for trails and walking opportunities near Lexington ever since I came here over 30 years ago. So, I was curious. Did this author know something about my home territory that had escaped me? And also, why had I never heard of this book during the four years it had been on the market? I never figured out the answer to the second question but the answer to the first question is a definite "Yes".

The book included all my favorite haunts and brought back to memory other places that I had visited once in the distant past. But some entries were totally unknown to me. On the weekend following my purchase of *Hike the Bluegrass* I invited a friend to go on a walk where I had never been before—the Asbury trails at Palisades Farm. What a wonderful discovery! Here was yet another opportunity, just half an hour from Lexington, to go down to the Kentucky River in a ravine that will be filled with wildflowers in the spring. (The first hike of our new *Wild Ones* outings program will take us on those trails).

The excursion to Palisades Farm (owned by Asbury College) confirmed what I already knew from studying *Hike the Bluegrass*. The directions are accurate and easy to follow. There are even descriptions for urban walking tours, many of them historic, in Lexington and neighboring cities; also for paved mixed-use trails and for gardens.

Within a few days of my discovery at the Morris Bookshop I noticed a slightly different version of the book at the J. and H. Lanmark store—this one with a color cover, color photos inside and a new title: *Hike the Bluegrass and Beyond*. This is an expanded edition of the original. The hikes included here stretch a bit outside of the Bluegrass, especially to the Gorge and the South.

I contacted the author, Valery Askren, and learned, not surprisingly, that she lives in Lexington. I also learned that she has published several other guide books, notably *Five-Star Trails: Louisville and Southern Indiana* and *Fly Fishing in Kentucky: Your Guide to Tackle Techniques and the Best Trout Waters in the State*. I am looking forward to exploring many new trails in the Bluegrass and beyond but I think I'll draw the line at fly-fishing (pun intended!).

Monarchs and Beyond: Reaching out to the Community

By Linda Porter

“Wild Ones strives to become a widely recognized voice for native plants and the sustainable landscaping movement, promoting increased use of native plantings that create living landscapes through grassroots efforts by example, education, marketing and personalized support.”

Wild Ones Vision Statement, 2015-2017

Your Lexington chapter of *Wild Ones* board voted in January 2016 to take a significant step toward helping our organization fulfill its vision for the future as stated above. A new committee has been formed – the Community Outreach Committee. The goal of this committee is to take our message of living native plant landscaping to the Central Kentucky community through a variety of educational activities. The group grew out of the two year Monarch Waystation project which was co-sponsored by our chapter and The Garden Club of Kentucky. This project educated the public about monarch butterflies and waystations.

That committee's work has been expanded to include community education on topics such as native plants, pollinators and tree conservation. The educational activities will include informative displays, presentations and lectures. It will also work with the board to partner with other like-minded organizations sponsoring events and programming.

The Community Outreach Committee needs the help of many members to make this outreach a success. How can you help? We need knowledgeable speakers to represent *Wild Ones*. We need help designing and producing educational materials. We also need assistance setting up educational displays, representing *Wild Ones* at informational tables and removing displays after events. Please consider volunteering to assist with this important work. Contact Linda Porter, committee chair, at prairiegirl7@mac.com for more information or to volunteer.

Remembering John

Wild Ones Member John Elling died on December 14, 2015, at his Lexington home. He had been a member of the Lexington chapter of *Wild Ones* since 2003.

I met John in 2007 at Betty Hall's house at the first meeting I attended after moving back to Kentucky from the Chicago area. In fact, he was one of the first members to introduce himself to me.

That was typical John. Many of you may have met him this way. Always on the lookout for visitors, he was genuinely interested in them and their love of native plants. He also worked hard on his own property to plant natives, especially trees, and was one of the first of our members to certify a Monarch Waystation. He was a true and faithful “*Wild One*.”

While John never served in an officer role, he seldom missed a chapter meeting. One of the things I appreciated most about John was his willingness to jump in and help out with the little things. From setting out chairs at meetings, to lending a hand on hikes for those of us who needed a little extra assistance, John was there. We will miss you, John. It just won't be the same without you.



Linda Porter

Visitors Who Enjoy Our Gardens Through the Seasons

By Suzanne Bhatt

Although our fair weather birds have flown to warmer climates, many of us may be enjoying the remaining birds clinging to stalks in our gardens and crowding our feeders. Cold weather provides time to watch and think about their various habits and dietary needs.

Availability of food and breeding needs drive bird behaviors and migration patterns. In spring, birds seek nesting areas where food is abundant and predators and competitors are fewer. Birds like robins, flickers, red-winged black birds and wrens count on insects and caterpillars to provide high protein meals. Planting native trees, shrubs, and flowers, such as oaks, willows, birches, maples, pines, asters, and goldenrods, that support large numbers of caterpillars and insects will attract a wide variety of such birds. Cardinals, bluejays, sparrows and doves are seed eaters and, of course, fruit and berries are considered delicacies by many of our avian friends. Fruiting shrubs or trees such as viburnum, serviceberry, dogwoods and elderberry provide food from summer into winter.



It is common to see goldfinches clinging to the stalks of cone flowers, monarda or iron weed to feed on seeds during late fall and winter. As the nights



grow colder chickadees adapt by going into a state of regulated hypothermia, or torpor, to conserve energy stores. Feeding black oil sunflower seed or suet will provide needed fats and energy for most winter birds, while thistle seed feeders will satisfy goldfinches. Other birds, such as titmice, goldfinches, and woodpeckers, are able to survive the cold winter months because they have adapted with bills that can crack hard seeds to supplement their winter diet.

Some birds even cache seeds in the peeling bark of trees or cracks in the wood for later use when seeds are no longer plentiful. Research has shown that they can remember their hiding places for an extended period of time.



However, many of our backyard friends do migrate south as insects diminish in the winter, including the colorful warblers, hummingbirds, blackbirds, and mockingbirds. Depending on species, birds may migrate to the southern US or as far as Central and South America. Some, including the 0.1 ounce hummingbird, fly nonstop across the Gulf of Mexico, often facing strong winds and harsh weather conditions. These migration routes are exhausting and perilous and many birds perish. Surviving birds face the loss of habitat in their wintering grounds once they arrive due to clear cutting of tropical forests to open up space for sun grown coffee plantations. Coffee that is grown the traditional way in shade forests continues to provide needed habitat for birds and other pollinators, such as bees and butterflies. We can support such an environmentally wise practice by buying coffee labeled shade grown or Smithsonian Bird-Friendly Certified. Wild Birds Unlimited or **bird-sandbeans.com** are good examples of sources for such products.

So let's enjoy our birds and select plants that make our yards even more attractive to them.



Appreciating the Words of Aldo Leopold

By Karen Lanier

Preaching to the choir. That's what Hannah Helm freely admitted she was about to do as she began her presentation on Aldo Leopold and *The Land Ethic* at the January meeting of *Wild Ones*. Our group certainly included those who own dog-eared copies of Leopold's best known book, *A Sand County Almanac*. Many others remember reading it at some point in their lives, yet know very little about the revolutionary ecologist's life. Hannah helped fill in the gaps.

Leopold's writing, life story and teachings have inspired the Leopold Foundation to host land ethics leadership trainings, one of which Hannah attended. She shared with us highlights of Leopold's background, his education at Yale and his time out West. Through observation of the ecosystems where he hunted and worked for the U. S. Forest Service, he increasingly became aware of the complex, interrelated community made up of wolves, deer, plants, and mountain, as expressed in his moving essay "Green Fire." (Note on page 6 that *Wild Ones* will be sponsoring the movie *Green Fire* on May 4 as part of the Bluegrass Earth Movie Series at the Lexington Public Library Farish Theatre.)

Leopold's philosophy continued to develop as he worked on his own eight acres of restored farmland in Wisconsin, where he planted 50,000 pine trees. Hannah explained that his understanding of *The Land Ethic* "enlarged the boundary of community," including humans as members rather than conquerors. His text *Game Management* was the first major work to recognize, as Hannah told it, that "in order to restore game it was critical to restore native habitat."

Hannah read excerpts from Leopold's enduring writings that conveyed his personal feelings while applying his conservation principles (choosing what not to chop down in his woods, for example). She closed with a quote that was penned 75 years ago and remains timely. "Clean farming, to be sure, aspires to rebuild the soil, but it employs to this end only imported plants, animals, and fertilizers. It sees no need for the native flora and fauna that built the soil in the first place. Can stability be synthesized out of imported plants and animals? Is fertility that comes in sacks sufficient? These are the questions at issue."

Come Exploring with *Wild Ones*

Beginning in March the Lexington chapter of *Wild Ones* will offer monthly opportunities to explore interesting areas in the Bluegrass. A full list of these excursions appears on the website lexington.wildones.org. Members are asked to register by email to beatepopkin@gmail.com no later than 7:00 p.m. on the evening before the outing. Friends are welcome!

FIRST OUTING—SUNDAY, MARCH 20

Looking for Early Wildflowers in Palisades Country

(Beate Popkin will lead this excursion.)

- WHERE:** Asbury Trails at Palisades Farm—Go through Wilmore on KY 29. Turn right on Shanty Hill Lane. After 0.7 miles turn right into the gravel parking lot.
- MEET:** 1:00 p.m. in Palomar Center parking lot for carpooling or 1:30 p.m. at trail head.
- CONDITIONS:** Easy to moderate 2-3 mi. round trip. Down to KY River and walk up again.

Urban Forestry Series Focuses on Good Stewardship



On Wednesday, March 2, the UK Urban Forest Initiative's Seminar Series will host Dr. David Nowak of the USDA Forest Service who will present "Seeing the Urban Forest for the Trees." He will share his investigations of what makes up the vegetation in cities and towns and what environmental or ecosystem services this vegetation provides to local and regional populations.

As with the February 17 presentation, the March event is planned to begin at 6:00 p.m. with food and an opportunity for participants to interact with representatives of various community organizations (including *Wild Ones*) dedicated to protecting and promoting our local trees and gardens. The event will be held at the Fayette County Extension Office, 1140 Red Mile Place. In these forums the speaker is introduced at 7:00 p.m. and after the presentation there is a time for questions from participants.

Wild Ones members who attended the February event were challenged by U of L biologist Dr. Margaret Carreiro to consider new possibilities in her presentation "Return of the Natives: Can We Create More Habitat for Native Species in Cities?" She explained the idea of *reconciliation*—creating new habitats for native plantings where people live, work, and play—based on her work in the Cherokee Park Woodlands. She shared her vision of larger patches of interconnecting urban gardens featuring vertical structures, a mix of conifers and deciduous trees, native perennials blooming across the seasons, no pesticides, and no night lights.

Dr. Nowak is sure to offer even more information useful to gardeners who cherish native plantings.

Southeastern Forests and Climate Change Project Learning Tree Secondary Module

**March 25, 2016
9-3 p.m.**

**Land Between the Lakes
\$15 Non-Members; \$10 KAAE Members**

Session designed to help educators teach about climate change using KY forests. To register, please visit: <http://www.kaee.org/machform/view/php?id=65>. For more information, contact Ashley Hoffman at director@kaee.org.



Wild Ones to Feature Gardening for Birds

On Thursday, March 3, at 6:30 p.m. the Lexington chapter of *Wild Ones* will gather at St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr. to hear about planting and tending our yards for the birds that visit us. Nic Patton, manager of Wild Birds Unlimited, will present tips on how to transform a garden into a bird paradise as well as information on year round good care for our feathered visitors.

Refreshments will be served at 6:30 p.m. and Nic will begin the discussion at 7. Visitors are welcome.

March Calendar



Bernheim Arboretum

Sat., Mar. 26, from 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.—Early Spring Wildflower Walk—Join Wren Smith, Interpretive Programs Manager, for this opportunity to scout out early spring ephemerals. \$10 for members; \$15 for non-members. Registration and payment due by 4 p.m. the day before. **Call 502-955-8512.**

Floracliff Nature Sanctuary

Sat., Mar. 26, at 1:00 p.m.—Wildflower Hike—Beverly James, Floracliff Preserve Manager, will lead the first wildflower hike of the season. Hiking level: moderate. Suggested donation: \$5. Register at info@floracliff.org with your name, phone number, and number of people you want to register.

Raven Run Nature Sanctuary

Sat., Mar. 19, at 7:30 p.m.—Earth Hour Woodcock Watch—celebrate Earth Hour while searching for the elusive woodcock. For more information call **859-272-6105.**

UK Arboretum

Tues., Mar. 15, at 5 p.m.—Sustainable Landscaping Practices—Learn about best practices for designing and growing a healthy sustainable landscape. **FREE.** **Call 859-257-6955 to pre-register.**

Tues., Mar. 29, from 2 to 5 p.m.—Begin the month-long Party for the Planet celebrating Kentucky's past. This event will feature exhibits and information geared toward children and families highlighting the early history of Kentucky. **FREE.** **Call 859-257-6955 to pre-register.**



DON'T MISS THE
bluegrass Earth
 FREE MOVIE SERIES



THE FARISH THEATER * Central Library * 140 E. Main * Films start at 6:30pm

March 9th
THE MESSENGER
 Imagine a world without birdsong.

April 6th
TRASHED
 Think waste is someone else's problem? Think again.

March 23rd
THE POWER OF ONE VOICE
 A 50-year perspective on the life of Rachel Carson

April 20th
TREES IN TROUBLE
 A city's efforts to save its urban forest.

May 4th
GREEN FIRE
 Aldo Leopold & a land ethic for our time.

Bluegrass Earth aims to improve the economic vitality and quality of life in central Kentucky by uniting individuals and organizations dedicated to environmental sustainability.



Free Movie Series sponsors include:
 Lexington Public Library, Central Kentucky Audubon Society,
 Bluegrass Greensource, Sierra Club Bluegrass Chapter, WUKY,
 UK Department of Agriculture, Urban Forest Initiative,
 Wild Ones Lexington, & the 3rd Annual Bluegrass Birding Festival

