

LEXINGTON CHAPTER — November, 2017

<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...

This is our last chapter newsletter of 2017 and it invites reflection about the past year as well as about the future of our group. Our monthly meetings continue to be well attended suggesting that both the informative programs we offer and the opportunity to socialize with fellow environmentalists are appreciated. I like the fact that our meetings are open to non-members, and we always have first time visitors as well as people who return occasionally. I hope that we will continue to be a welcoming organization.



Wild Ones members assessing a stream restoration planting in 2016

As in years past, we held a garden tour this year. We scheduled it for mid-spring, stepping away from the usual summer date with its easy and orderly displays of showy flowers. Our tour included shade gardens as well as sunny gardens. We showcased wild gardens and carefully managed gardens and both seemed to appeal to tour participants. As always, the garden tour was a fund raiser and this year it generated a net return of \$1268.00.

At this moment in late 2017 our chapter has 123 members, consistent with a slow but steady annual increase. It seems to me that we have acquired a reputation around Lexington, and possibly in the counties beyond, as an environmental group focused on plants and nature. It helps, of course, that there is a strong national movement toward more naturalistic landscape design and more use of native plants. The Lexington city government has embraced this trend, as is evident from recent plantings in parks and public green spaces.

Thus, our organization is part of a broader movement. We may ask ourselves whether we are as effective as we can be helping our urban communities move toward more natural landscapes in our midst. Should we co-operate more with programs already underway? Should we develop new initiatives of our own? How can we build on our strengths?

The Lexington city government is eager for citizens to participate in the effort to make our urban space more natural. It offers grants to plant trees, to landscape urban green spaces and to restore the natural environment along creeks. Some of our members have undertaken such projects and gained considerable expertise, not only with planting and landscape maintenance, but also with the management of grants. Perhaps we can share that expertise among ourselves more explicitly or even beyond our group. And perhaps some of the Lexington practices can be exported to the communities around us where many of our members live.

But there is also this question: can our chapter imagine projects relating to plants and landscapes for which we would take the initiative? Surely, there are possibilities that go beyond the scope of what government can jumpstart or sponsor. What is happening in other communities that can be a model for us? I am offering these questions for consideration as garden work winds down to its slow season and we await a new year offering time to be filled with energy and commitment.

Beate Popkin

A New Face at The Arboretum

By Suzanne Bhatt



Meet Emily Ellingson, the new Curator of the Native Plants Collection at the Arboretum who took up her duties on September 1. Emily earned a combined MS degree in Applied Plant Science and Museum Studies from the University of Minnesota and she brings a great deal of experience to Lexington from her work at public gardens across the country. Emily views public gardens as outdoor museums that preserve native and rare species and genetic diversity while educating the public about the importance of plants and ecosystems.

The new curator credits her interest in native plants to her post-bachelor's degree work with the U.S. Forest Service in Washington. There she participated in botanical surveys of a fire-scarred area of the Eastern Cascade Range to better understand patterns of invasive species incursion in disturbed areas. Over the next few years she worked at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens where she helped to plan

and manage the Children's Garden and Youth and Family programs. She also gained experience at Harvard's Arnold Arboretum in Boston and a private garden in California.

Emily worked with database programs used to track the history of species and individuals within plant collections and conducted research on the use of beneficial insects to manage plant pests. During a nine month internship at Polly Hill Arboretum in Martha's Vineyard (where her predecessor at the Arboretum, Todd Rounsaville, is currently employed), Emily was in charge of curating a portion of the gardens. She also was involved in a partnership with the Nature Conservancy to collect and cultivate native plants for use at local Conservancy sites as well as for public sale to promote native plants for all kinds of gardens.

Emily is excited to be a part of our Arboretum. She is particularly impressed with its extensive wild-collected plant repository organized to represent the eco-regions of Kentucky. She hopes to more fully develop the ecosystem zones, such as the Cedar Glade in the Pennyrile area, and install more detailed interpretive signage to educate visitors about the plants and ecological characteristics as they walk through each zone. Her vision is to provide more public education about research and conservation efforts at the Arboretum as they co-exist with its recreational components.

Wild Ones welcomes Emily to Lexington. We look forward to seeing her ideas take shape in the Arboretum's native landscapes.

Wild Ones Meeting—The next meeting of the Lexington chapter of *Wild Ones* will be Thursday, Nov. 2 at St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr. Roberta Burnes, a policy analyst in the director's office of the Kentucky Division for Air Quality, will present "Taking a 'Lichen' to Air Quality." Lichens are very sensitive to sulfur dioxide pollution in the air, which means their presence – or absence – can be a good indicator for that pollutant, and, therefore, the health of the entire biological community. Roberta will show us how to categorize lichens and how they are being used in citizen science projects to track the health of our forests.

We will meet at 6:30 p.m. for social time. The program begins at 7:00 p.m.

Words for Winter Reflection

By Vicki Reed

For winter reading—or a gift to give or request—I recommend a book first published in 1943, Hal Borland's *Twelve Moons of the Year.* This volume was out of print for years but is now available from Amazon, abebooks.com, Barnes and Noble, and other online sources. I hope this availability means other readers are again discovering Mr. Borland, a naturalist born in Nebraska in 1900 and raised in Colorado where his family homesteaded.

Although Borland began engineering studies, he graduated with a degree in journalism from Columbia University in New York. He worked for a variety of newspapers across the country before settling in for six years writing a nature column for the New York Times. He established a reputation as an author of short stories as well as an essayist and naturalist.

First printed in 1943 this collection, a mini-essay for every day of the year, remains interesting and pertinent today. It is perfect for bedside reading. For the last *Wild Ones* newsletter of 2017 this sample from his book seems appropriate:

November comes rustling down the valley, last summer's shade reduced to a brittle crispness underfoot. On the twigs where skittering leaves were green in July buds are already set and visible, promise of next April and green again. In the grass, awaiting the warmth and urgency of spring, are the maple's samara, oak's acorns, and hickory's nuts, tomorrow's woodland and another generation's shade.

The leafless milkweed, with its goosehead pods, strew fluff and floss to every breeze seeding field and pasture. The pregnant queen bumblebee, next summer's colony patterned in her unborn eggs, sleeps dormant in an abandoned field mouse den. The wooly caterpillar curled in hibernation is next June's pink and yellow Isia moth.

Summaries and promises, but no finalities. November, chill, short-dayed November, but implicit with a future, with tomorrow.

In Memory of Ann Blevins

By Linda Porter

Long time member of the *Wild Ones* Lexington Chapter Ann Blevins passed away the morning of Thursday, October 5. Although her illness kept her away from meetings for the past two years, Ann, a dedicated member of our group since 2003, was always willing to do anything she could to help out on projects and at meetings. She served on the *Wild Ones* board and as Hospitality Chair for a number of years. She will best be remembered for her friendly smile, great sense of humor and the wonderful treats that she created. They made every meeting seem like a party!

Ann was a dedicated native plant gardener and loved to spend her days outdoors, especially with her friend Mary Carol Cooper. Her daughter Laurie said of her, "Mother loved the *Wild Ones* and often spoke fondly of the people who worked hard to support the organization." She will be missed by all of us who knew her.

Ann did not want a memorial service but a spring gathering will be planned in 2018 at her home in Carlisle, Kentucky. *Wild Ones* members will also be invited to a work party before the gathering to help prepare her garden. More about this gathering in the March 2018 newsletter.



Ann Blevins (rear) loved to hike with her close friend Mary Carol Cooper.

Winter Garden Suggestions

By Vicki Reed

You planted some new trees. You put down some cardboard then piled all the leaves you could find on top so that come spring you'll have a new bed ready for planting. You cleaned and put away your tools. But now the non-gardening months loom large.

So how does a gardener survive till those first wildflowers begin popping up in late winter or early spring? For starters, instead of planting and nurturing things, you can eradicate them. Winter is a good time to get rid of invasives like honeysuckle and wintercreeper. At this time the sap is being pulled down to the roots so herbicides are at their most effective. Cut honeysuckle to the ground and immediately apply Roundup to cover the stumps. Use a small paintbrush or order daubers specifically designed for this purpose. Landscape restoration at <https://landscape-restoration.com/buckthorn/> carries the dauber, additional replacement applicator caps, handy landscape dye so that you can see where you have applied the herbicide, and a handy field identification guide.

On a snowless winter day when the weather is sunny and above 45, rough up that patch of wintercreeper with a weed eater and daub it with the herbicide. Thicker stumps may require additional treatments. For large vines growing up a tree use the same cut stump method you would use with honeysuckle.

If your own garden is not enough of a challenge to assuage any homicidal tendencies, consider volunteering at one of our natural areas. Throughout the year Floracliff has an ongoing volunteer work session on Wednesday mornings. The Arboretum trains and uses specific native plant volunteers who work there on Thursday mornings. Raven Run has a volunteer day the first Saturday morning of each month. Check in with a local neighborhood association to see what is going on in their local parks like Garden Springs and Stonewall. Not only will you be eliminating stifling competition so that native trees and flowers get enough sunlight to germinate or grow but you will be getting some exercise to justify that extra piece of pumpkin pie. You'll enjoy the companionship of like-minded individuals. And, finally, winter is just a great time to be out in the woods. Vistas open up, you can practice your winter tree identification skills (and workshops are offered to do so) and, best of all, the ticks are not really an issue.



Of course, there is a limit to everything. My recommendations are fine and good until six inches of snow cover the ground and the thermometer takes a dive to nine degrees. Then it's time to hunker down with hot cider and watch the birds. Wild Birds Unlimited is my go-to for quality feeders. It may be time to invest in one of the newer designs like the No/No model—no plastic, no wood. Check out a decent pair of binoculars to watch the visitors to your garden up close and personal.

Download one of the bird apps from Audubon or get Merlin from Cornell to hone your identification skills. Become a citizen scientist by joining Feeder Watch at <https://feederwatch.org/> to report sightings. And, finally, comfort yourself with the old adage...

*"when winter comes
can spring be far behind??"*



Audubon app free from iTunes

Where Are Our Monarchs?



Various studies, such as the Michigan State Extension report, indicate that the summer of 2017 was good for monarchs in North America. Now the fall migration is well underway and the butterflies are winging their way to winter over in the mountains of central Mexico.

The yellow circle on the map above shows their destination, the monarch sanctuaries of 12 mountaintops covered with the only remaining oyamel fir forest. Temperatures at lower altitudes are now too warm to sustain these endangered trees. The total sanctuary area measures about 40 by 62 miles, about 2% of the original forest.

To follow the migration south, check in with <https://www.learner.org/jnorth/monarch/>. We hope the winter weather is not harsh and that the number flying north in the early spring will again increase.



Along with our native plants, the newsletter goes dormant for the winter. Thanks to all who have shared their ideas, skills and time in order to make this publication informative and interesting this year. We look forward to hearing from more of our members in 2018.

November

Bernheim Forest

Sun., Tues, Thurs. Nov. 5, 7, 9 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.—**Fire Tower Open.** Experience the beauty of fall from atop Bernheim's historical fire tower. Volunteer naturalist Ken Johnson will be there to guide you to one of the best views of fall foliage in the state. Call 502-955-8512 for more information.

Floracliff

Wed., Nov. 22 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.—**Thanksgiving Eve Long Hike.** Moderate to difficult hike over about 4 miles featuring Trail's End, the Kentucky River, Elk Lick Falls, Elk Lick Creek, and the oldest documented tree in Fayette County. Suggested donation \$5-\$10 donation. Pre-registration required. To register, email info@floracliff.org with name, phone number, and number of people in party.

2017 Financial Summary

After reviewing our 2017 activities and financial status, we can report that Wild Ones Lexington has once again met our goal of increasing the knowledge of native plants in the region and promoting the use of native plants in private and public landscapes. Our Community Outreach Committee under the leadership of Linda Porter is reaching more schools and garden clubs, attending conferences and festivals, and participated in the development of the state Monarch Conservation Plan. Our spring garden tour provided ideas for including natives in residential and non-residential gardens. Monthly programs included speakers and four on site tours of private and public restoration projects.

Expenses as of 11/1/2017:

- \$300 for honorariums for speakers
- \$350 for sponsorships & donations
- \$182 for maintenance at Wellington Garden
- \$670 for a new projector for our meetings
- \$250 for community outreach programs
- \$90 for miscellaneous items
- \$1843 total**

Revenue as of 11/1/2017:

- \$349 from our plant exchange
- \$1268 from the spring garden tour
- \$93 from dues
- \$408 from donations
- \$2118 total**

We will have a bank balance of approximately **\$5500** to start the new fiscal year. The 2018 budget will be adopted in January. Funds not allocated for 2018 will remain in savings.

Tee Bergman

Free Workshop
Sat. Nov 11th
11:00 AM
Wild Birds
Unlimited

What are your
trees
telling you?

Lawn to Limb

Learn about:

- Tree health & care
- Necessary nutrients
- Tips for landscape care

Soil is
the
building
block
of your
landscape

Wild Birds Unlimited 152 N Locust Hill Drive Lexington, KY 40509
For more information: Phone 859-268-0114 or email hummerllc@windstream.net

Program presented by UK's Environmental and Natural Resources Initiative and Urban Forest Initiative.
Funding: LFOG Stormwater Quality Projects Incentive Grant Program.



West Sixth
Brewing

November 11

2 – 6 pm

Ask an Arborist

Silent Auction

Vote for
Lexington's
Official Tree

NOVEMBER 11 FUNDRAISER

Learn more about Trees Lexington! Healthy trees are a significant part of the environmental quality, economics, and beauty of a community. Find out why we're all about trees, how we plan to increase Lexington's tree canopy and how you can be a part of this exciting legacy that will benefit Lexington for generations to come.

A portion of entire day's sales benefit Trees Lexington!



FUNDS RAISED USED FOR:

Plant fruit trees at Hope
Center

Provide trees for Habitat for
Humanity

Create tree canopy at new
Frederick Douglass High
School

www.treeslexington.org