

## LEXINGTON CHAPTER — March, 2018

<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](http://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 [judydex@twc.com](mailto:judydex@twc.com).

### *President's Message...*

The Lexington chapter of *Wild Ones* meets the 2018 season with a full load of plans, projects and partnerships. The program for our regular membership meetings is posted on our website. We will gather indoors at St. Michael's during the early spring, have our plant exchange in May, move outdoors for summer meetings and return to St. Michael's in the fall. We will flesh out the program descriptions a bit, providing more detail, as the year unfolds.



I am very excited about our new outings program. From spring to fall we will participate in a series of field trips led by expert guides and developed by *Wild Ones* member Janet James in conjunction with the Kentucky Native Plant Society and the Cincinnati Wild Flower Preservation Society. These trips provide opportunities to see wildflowers blooming in their natural environment, some quite unfamiliar to us. The outings are open to the public, but some require preregistration to limit the number of participants walking in ecologically fragile sites. This newsletter provides a condensed list of the field trips; a full description of each is on our website.

And who would ever have thought that we would bring theater to Lexington? On Sunday, April 29 at 2 p.m., our chapter, in partnership with the Sierra Club, will sponsor the acclaimed play "Sisters of the Mother Forest," written and performed by Alice Jones of EKU. Dr. Jones represents the life of Lucy Braun, the famous Cincinnati-based pioneer ecologist whose scientific work is fundamental to our understand of the Appalachian forests. The performance takes place at the Farish Theatre in the Lexington Central Library building on Main St. This event is free and open to the public and we hope to attract a large audience.

On October 6 our chapter will host the first sustainable urban landscape symposium in Lexington intended to appeal to home owners and landscapers interested in learning about more earth-friendly landscape design and planting. Our symposium will be part of the Urban Forest Initiative's "Tree Week," a series of events highlighting city trees and the need for nature in urban spaces.

These are ambitious plans and I invite you to participate in carrying them out. Please contact me if you want to contribute to any of these projects. Above all, please plan to attend the events and outings that interest you.

*Beate Popkin*

# Adding a Little More “Wild” to *Wild Ones*

*Article and Photography by Janet James*

Beginning in March of this year, *Wild Ones* will increase its already significant educational opportunities by offering a series of field trips to discover Kentucky native wildflowers and plants in their diverse habitats throughout the state. We will explore some of the wetlands, prairies, woodlands, barrens and stream banks in our state which has such a rich botanical heritage.

Each scheduled field trip leader is a knowledgeable expert who will take us at a slow pace through a carefully selected preserve location to allow time for discussion of floral highlights and photography. Our goal is to enjoy the treasure hunt feeling of spotting seldom seen rare wildflower species as well as delightful common ones, the chance sightings of wildlife and beautiful natural landscapes.

The concept of “forest bathing” has been in the media lately. It means immersing oneself in the atmosphere of a natural setting to relax and reduce stress. Fully clothed and no soap involved! It seems research shows that time spent in green spaces measurably reduces the stress hormone cortisol and boosts one’s immune system. Many gardeners and hikers know this well. Each of our field trips will put participants right in the middle of an optimal place to soak up the green.



*Soapwort gentian*



*Birdfoot violets*

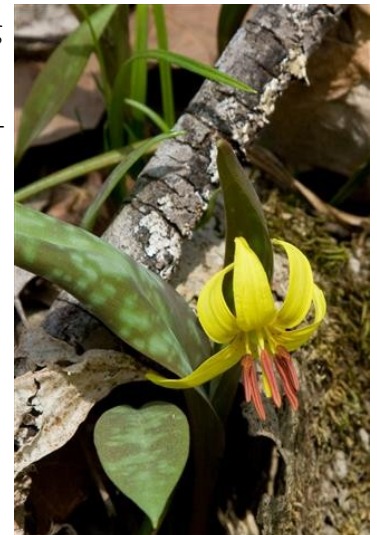
day trip will take us out of Kentucky to the E. Lucy Braun Lynx Prairie in southeast Ohio when its wildflowers will be at the peak of their glory. This prairie site 20 miles north after crossing the Ohio River at Maysville is where the famous pioneer ecologist did much of her research. It is one of two preserves on our list named for her.

Most of our trips are a joint venture with the Kentucky Native Plant Society and the Cincinnati Wild Flower Preservation Society. All trips are open to the public and free. Check the next page for the first two months’ offerings. Hope to see you in the wild!

**Janet James**  
Field Trip Coordinator

During the past three years, I have joined field trips of several organizations in Kentucky and Ohio looking for unusual, showy wildflowers to photograph, particularly wild native orchids. My botanical knowledge and photo collection has increased dramatically due to the expertise of the planners and hike leaders who knew where to go and when. The friendly, like-minded, nature-loving people on the walks represented all ages and levels of experience. Invariably some individuals were well-versed in areas other than botany, like mushrooms or butterflies, which added other dimensions to the adventure. I hope this year the *Wild Ones* field trip offerings will likewise provide a wealth of knowledge and much pleasure for those who choose to participate.

One particularly exciting



*Yellow trout lily*



## First of the 2018 Field Trips

Full descriptions and directions for the trips can be found on the *Wild Ones* website [lexington.wildones.org](http://lexington.wildones.org).

Field trips with an asterisk\* require registration. Registration form can be found on Kentucky Native Plant Society website at [knps.org](http://knps.org) under Field Trips.

### March

- \*12 *Floracliff Nature Sanctuary*, Fayette County, **Monday at 1:00 p.m.**—leader - **Beverly James** (snow trillium, early spring ephemerals). Two mile walk rated moderate to difficult hike.
- 31 *Highland Cemetery*, Kenton County, **Saturday at 10:00 a.m.**—leader - **Rob Repasky** with Cincinnati Wildflower Preservation Society (three lakes, waterfalls, streams, hundreds of large trees, one of the best locations for spring ephemerals). Moderately easy walk. Directions on the *Wild Ones* website.

### April

- \* 7 *Thompson Creek Glades State Nature Preserve*, Saturday at 10:00 a.m.—Larue County, leader - **Brian Yahn** (hairy puccoon, birdfoot violet, Indian paintbrush, spring ephemerals). Two miles moderate to difficult due to off trail conditions.
- \* 21 *Beech Fork Wild River Conservation Area*, Saturday at 10:00 a.m.—Pulaski County, leader – **Martina Hines** (spring wildflowers and mature hemlock mixed forest). Driving directions and meeting information provided upon registration.
- 22 *Red River Gorge*, Sunday at 10:00 a.m.—Powell County, leader - **Dave Kuehner** (spotted mandarin, whorled pogonia, showy orchids, pink lady's slipper). Two of the trails are flat and the other has a couple of short uphill sections. Be sure to pack water and a lunch. Restrooms at trail heads. Directions on the *Wild Ones* website.

### May

## The Rest of the Year at a Glance

- \* 5 *Lower Howard's Creek Nature and Heritage Preserve*, Clark County
- 19 *Mantle Rock Preserve*, Livingston County

### June

- 9 *Cumberland Falls State Nature Preserve*, Whitley/McCreary Counties
- \* 23 *E. Lucy Braun State Nature Preserve*, Harlan County

### July

- 7 *Land Between the Lakes at Hematite Lake*, Livingston County
- 14 *Yahoo Falls*, McCreary County
- 28 *E. Lucy Braun Lynx Prairie Preserve*, Adams County, Ohio

### August

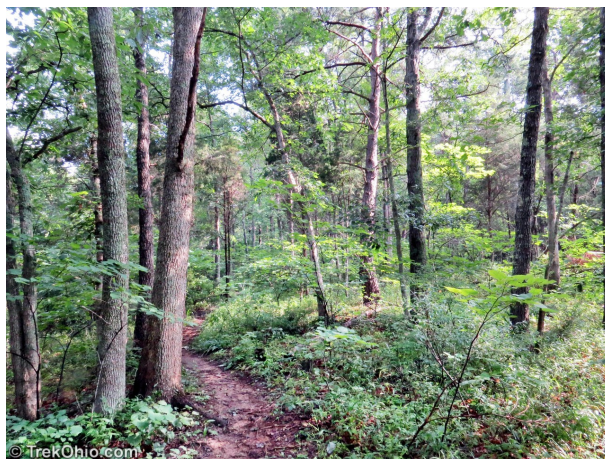
- \* 4 *Hazeldell Meadow Nature Preserve*, Pulaski County
- \* 25 *Crooked Creek Barrens State Nature Preserve*, Lewis County

### September

- \* 8 *Jean's Glade*, Madison County
- 22 *Blue Licks State Park Nature Preserve*, Robertson County
- \*29 *Eastview Barrens State Nature Preserve*, Hardin County

### October

- \*13 *Little South Fork Water Conservation Area*, Wayne County



Trail in E. Lucy Braun Lynx Prairie area

### *A Note of Appreciation....*

*At the end of 2017, two of our board members ended their service on our chapter board. **Caroline Johnson** had served for seven years, almost all of them as secretary. She faithfully recorded the proceedings of our board meetings, helped with numerous tasks that arise in the ordinary life of our chapter, kept up our loudspeaker system and helped at many of our outreach events. Lee Meyer will follow her as secretary in 2018.*

*Susan Cohn has served on our board for two years. She helped us make decisions on behalf of our chapter, chaired the 2017 garden tour, and during a year when we had no other fund-raisers, Susan raised money for us at her church in honor of Linda Porter's environmental work.*

*On behalf of our chapter board, I would like to thank both Caroline and Susan for their service and their dedication to Wild Ones and I would like to express our gratitude to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington for the donation in Linda's name.*

*Beate*

## **At War with Invasives**

*By Vicki Reed*

Last summer *Wild Ones* members met at Wellington Park to investigate various features including the gardens, the wetlands and prairie. One area we visited was the site of a 1999 Reforest the Bluegrass project. This area has changed significantly over the almost 20 year span since its beginning as it has gradually been taken over by invasive plants.

The good news is that the surviving tree saplings planted by volunteers have gained height and now form a woodland section. The bad news is that over the years aggressive Calery pears and honeysuckle have moved in too. In certain areas they grew so thick it brought to mind the dark foreboding forest of fairy tales. A rabbit might not make it through the underbrush and so little sunlight penetrated the stand of trees that no understory natives could survive.

But now there is again good news. Recently the woodsmen of LFUCG's Division of Environmental Services spent a week clearing out invasive overgrowth. Before they began, native trees were flagged to be spared. Removal of invasive trees was no easy task but, fortunately, the department brought a forest cutter attached to a bobcat and it made short work of branch and trunk removal. When the area was cleared a hundred new native trees were planted and seeds of coffee trees, black walnuts and other desirable species were sown.

Staff continue working to keep invasives in check, not just at Wellington, but at other Reforest the Bluegrass sites, as well as city parks. Honeysuckle has been removed along one side of the Brighton Rail Trail and new dogwoods planted in the now open spaces. Liberty Trail (near the elementary school of the same name) is receiving similar attention. If you go to Raven Run the trails through the upland meadow have all been widened to form a better firebreak. To widen them large swaths of honeysuckle were removed. And all future Reforest the Bluegrass sites will be maintained, not just planted and left to fend on their own.

To some less informed people these removal areas may appear to be devastated, although this spring their appearance should improve. It is important that we *Wild Ones* keep our concerned neighbors informed that what may appear to be careless destruction is really an effort to a healthy native habitat. As Lee Meyer says, "We, who understand the needs of native growth, should look for opportunities to gently educate others who may not understand."

And we can continue to watch in the now open areas for indicators of regeneration. For example, on the southeast side of Wellington Park there is a small group of cedars that looks like it has been released from a strangle hold. Let's keep an eye on it to see what happens in that small area.



## Information about Invasive Plants

The Energy and Environment Cabinet in the KY Department of Natural Resources has handy information for those who would like to know more about the invasives threatening our native plants. On the website <http://forestry.ky.gov/foresthealth/Pages/InvasivePlantThreats.aspx/> is a list of their Top Ten Worst Threats. The identified plants are:

- **Bush honeysuckle** (no surprise)
- **Chinese silvergrass** (an escapee from older ornamental plantings)
- **Garlic mustard**
- **Japanese knotweed**
- **Japanese stiltgrass**
- **Kudzu** (famous for blanketing everything)
- **Multi-flora rose**
- **Oriental bittersweet**
- **Purple loosestrife**
- **Winged burningbush**

A resource mentioned on the forestry webpage is a yearly “least wanted plant” poster put out by Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest, the southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council and the Environmental Resource Management at NKU. Each year’s poster describes not only the pest of the year plant but native alternatives to that plant. Posters for the years 2000 through 2017 can be found at <http://www.se-eppc.org/ky/leastwant.htm>.

## Wild Ones to Talk About Trees



On Thursday, March 1 members of *Wild Ones* will gather at St. Michael’s Episcopal Church to hear Heather Wilson, LFUCG Arborist, talk about Lexington’s Urban Forestry Programs.

Social time starting at 6:30 p.m. will precede the presentation. At 7:00 p.m. Heather will explain Lexington’s efforts to garner support for our trees and our natural areas and how these resources are managed. She will address some of the obstacles to increasing and improving our tree canopy and describe opportunities for citizens to support and influence city decisions regarding our urban forest. Members may expect a lively discussion.

St. Michael’s is located at 2025 Bellefonte Drive.

# MARCH

## Bernheim Arboretum

**Sat., Mar. 10, Mar. 17 and Mar. 31 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.—Wildflower Walk.** Tour of spring ephemerals led by Interpretive Programs Manager Wren Smith. Her stories combine plant science and woodland lore. **Members \$10; Nonmembers \$12.** Meet at the Visitors’ Center.

## Central KY Audubon Society

**Sun., Mar. 18 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.—Hisle Park Bird Walk.** Moderate pace over easy terrain. Total distance is approximately a mile. Anybody seeking guidance about viewing and identifying birds should check their website [http://centralkentuckyaudubon.org/Events\\_Calendar.html](http://centralkentuckyaudubon.org/Events_Calendar.html).

Other outings, field trips and events are listed there.

## Floracliff Nature Sanctuary

**Sat., Mar. 31 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.—Spring Long Hike.** For those who want a challenge—moderate hike over steep, uneven terrain. This wildflower hike will cover natural history, folklore, pollinator relationships and other information. **Suggested donation \$5-\$10. Preregistration required.** Email [info@floracliff.org](mailto:info@floracliff.org) and provide your name, phone number and number of persons you are registering.

## Raven Run Nature Sanctuary

**Fri., Mar. 2 at 6:00 p.m. and Mar. 16 at 7:00 p.m.—Woodcock Watch.** Join the search for the elusive woodcock.

**Sat., Mar. 17 at 8:00 p.m.—Stargazing.** View the night sky with the Bluegrass Amateur Astronomy Club.

For more information on these events call 859-272-6109 or email [info@ravenrun.org](mailto:info@ravenrun.org).

## UK Arboretum

**Sun., Mar. 4 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.—Glories of the Garden Artists’ Reception at the Visitor Center.** View the works on display; light refreshments will be served. **FREE** and open to the public.

**Thurs., Mar. 15 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.—Children’s Garden Season Opening.**

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And remember to check the *Wild Ones* website [lexington.wildones.org](http://lexington.wildones.org) for March Field Trips!