

LEXINGTON CHAPTER — June, 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 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.

President's Message...

In late May one of my garden tasks is cleaning up after the purple phacelias and, in the process, spreading the seeds to other gardens. I believe they can go to any urban landscape at all. It's hard to imagine a site in the city that would not be graced by this flower yet, despite its Bluegrass origins, we rarely see it in public or private gardens.

I got my first glimpse of purple phacelias on the property of one of my early landscape clients. The previous owners of their house near the university had been avid gardeners, though not specifically focused on native plants. (Who, after all, was in the 1990s?) One spring day a backyard corner was awash in lavender color which, upon approach, turned out to be a dense stand of plants a foot or so high with thousands of dainty little blossoms.

I cannot remember how I brought this plant home. Did I dig it up or did I wait for seeds? Now, ten years later, purple phacelias have wandered into every part of my garden. In late April and early May there are rivers of them meandering through the front and back yard. There are lakes and pools of phacelias and they never look out of place where they come up. They take to empty ground like a fish to water.

It's different for them in their natural habitat where they face fierce competition from other plants. I remember how astonished I was when I saw them for the first time outside the city on a palisades hike. They had no chance to form a blanket-type cover as they did in my yard. They just poked out here and there among the woodland phlox and ginger and other assorted wild-flowers.

Phacelia bipinnatifida is a biennial plant. It sets seed immediately after flowering in spring and, as the seeds drop to the ground, the parent plant dies. Early in the following spring those seeds sprout in large numbers making a kind of ground cover in landscaped sites. Not all will live but the survivors gradually form sturdy and very pretty rosettes that live through the following winter and bloom in the spring. Thus, since the seeds take two years to grow into flowering plants, one must start them in two consecutive years for a display every spring. But once two annual cycles are set up the show of phacelias is as dependable as it is delightful.



Admittedly, there is such a thing as too many phacelias in a garden. They can easily be controlled by taking up some of the plants after flowering and before seed-set. But, as a friend and fellow phacelia enthusiast recently said to me, "I like them because they form a groundcover that keeps down the weeds." And did I mention that they are a bee magnet?

Beate Popkin

PLAN AHEAD

Our July meeting takes us into the Bluegrass countryside. We will visit Oakland Farm Trees outside of Paris on Saturday, July 21, at 10:00 a.m. (Please note that this is a change from our usual meeting date on the first Thursday of each month). After the nursery tour we will have a picnic lunch at Berle and Brenda Clay's farm, just across the road. Berle and Brenda are both *Wild Ones* members.



Oakland Farm Trees, owned and managed by Laura Greenfield, is a fairly new tree nursery at 1608 Winchester Road, Paris. The operation grows Bluegrass native trees and sells them in small containers at reasonable prices. The website is at www.oaklandfarmtrees.com. Berle and Brenda's property is a working farm with a long history and, as a consequence, it has some very old trees. We will be able to admire mature versions of the trees that Laura grows in her nursery.



Here are two opportunities for anyone looking for paid gardening work:

- 1.) Ryan Koch at Seedleaf is looking for people to maintain two permaculture gardens at 330 Georgetown Place and 449 Race St (Grace Garden) in Lexington. Please call Ryan or email him, if you are interested: 859-967-8865 or seedleafinfo@gmail.com.
- 2.) Carly Reed has bought the former Shooting Star property on Soards Road, Georgetown. She is looking for someone with knowledge about native plants who will maintain the gardens that Marianne Hunt and her employees planted there. If you are interested, please email Carly at: carlyjoreed@outlook.com.



Congratulations, Lexington!

By Linda Porter

Last October, Lexington became the 339th city to sign the Mayors' Monarch Pledge. Through the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge, U.S. cities and other communities are committing to create habitat for the monarch butterfly and pollinators. They also pledge to provide citizen education about making a difference for these creatures in their yards and community; and to change government plans and regulations to protect pollinators. Several other Kentucky cities have signed the pledge including Paducah, Covington, Frankfort and Louisville.

Participation in the pledge signals a willingness to take specific action steps to help conserve monarchs and other pollinators within the communities. A full list of actions suggested by NWF can be found at www.nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/About/National-Initiatives/Mayors-Monarch-Pledge.aspx. Of course, one step is to establish monarch habitats across the city. Lexington leads all Kentucky cities in its number of monarch waystations certified with Monarch Watch. *Wild Ones* members were early participants in establishing these waystations. (A prime example is our own demonstration garden at Wellington Park.)

McConnell Springs Naturalist Steven Rogers, was instrumental in making sure that the Mayor Gray signed the pledge. Steven, who is now the project manager for implementation of the pledge, is hard at work planning ways Lexington can accomplish as many of the action steps as possible. One of his first actions is to create demonstration container gardens in front of the Police Department on East Main Street. *Wild Ones* Outreach Committee is consulting with Steven on this project. Watch for updates about this effort and other future opportunities for all of us to support the city's efforts. If you have other ideas or plans to help monarchs in our area, let Steven know at srogers@lexingtonky.gov.

Calling All Butterfly Enthusiasts and Citizen Scientists

The North American Butterfly Association reports it has run the Butterfly Count Program in the United States, Canada, and Mexico since 1993. According to their website each of the approximately 450 counts consists of a compilation of all butterflies observed at sites within a 15-mile diameter count circle in a one-day period. The annually published reports provide a tremendous amount of information about the geographical distribution and relative population sizes of the species counted. Comparisons of the results across years can be used to monitor changes in butterfly populations and study the effects of weather and habitat change on North American butterflies.

In the Lexington area Beverly James is the coordinator for the count which will be held **Saturday, June 30, beginning at 9:00 a.m.** End time has not been decided yet. Count sites include Floracliff, Raven Run, Hisle Park, the UK Arboretum, McConnell Springs and the Lexington Cemetery. If you are interested in helping out with this event as a participant or group leader, please contact Beverly at bjames@floracliff.org. There is a \$3/person participation fee. All proceeds go to the North American Butterfly Association.



June 7th Membership Meeting

On **Thursday, June 7**, our chapter will meet for a garden tour and picnic at the Kentucky Horse Park, 4089 Iron Works Parkway. We will gather at **6:30 p.m.** *Wild Ones* members have worked at the Horse Park over the last few years to install native plant flower beds. We will visit these sites in the company of their creators.

We will park in the public parking area in front of the Visitor Center. The guard gate should not be staffed at this time of day but if anyone asks questions, just say you are going to an event with Annie Martin, the volunteer coordinator. The Visitor Center will be closed so follow the walk to the left of the building through an open black gate and you will be facing the Bit and Bridle Restaurant. We will meet on the restaurant patio.

**PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE
AND A BEVERAGE**



Ann Longworth's Sixth Annual Native Plant Sale

- WHEN:** Sat., July 7 from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
WHERE: In the Berea Park shelter on Jefferson St. in Berea (Take second Berea exit from I-75)
WHAT: Over 300 seed-grown native plants, approximately 45 species—proceeds go to Monarch Watch (usually enough to fund one or two waystations)

SALE GOES ON RAIN OR SHINE

Mark your calendar now! For more information, call Ann at 859-985-0309.



Central KY Audubon Society

Sat., June 16 at 9:00 a.m.—Camp Nelson Bird Walk. Guided walk (about 2.5 mi.) at Camp Nelson Civil War Heritage Park. Carpools leaving from the parking lot of Palomar Center near Wild Eggs at 7:30 a.m. prompt. Or meet at 8:15 a.m. at Camp Nelson Interpretive Center.

Floracliff Nature Sanctuary

Wed., June 27 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.—Butterfly ID for Beginners. This indoor program will provide an introduction to butterflies of the region for those interested in participation in the Central Bluegrass Butterfly Count on June 30. Suggested donation: \$5/person. Preregistration required: info@floracliff.org.

McConnell Springs

Tues., June 12 at 6:00 p.m.—History to Chew On. "Frontier Nursing University: the Birthplace of Midwifery and Family Nursing in America," presentation by Dr. Jane Slager about the oldest continuously operating midwife training program.

Raven Run Nature Sanctuary

Sat., June 16 from 9:00 to 10:30 p.m.—Creatures of the Night. Join Raven Run naturalists to learn about the habits and folklore of animals (like owls) active at night. Preregistration required: 859-272-6105.

Salato Wildlife Education Center

Sat., June 9 at 3:00 p.m.—Summer-Themed Bobcat Enrichment. This is a great chance to get a better view of these impressive animals and learn more about them. The Center is located at #1 Sportsman Lane, Frankfort. Call 502-564-7863 for more information.

UK Arboretum

Sat., June 2 from 11:00 a.m. to noon—Walking Tour with the Curator. Preregistration required. Limit of 30. Fee of \$5/person. Friends of the Arboretum and the KCG receive one free tour per year with membership. Recommended for ages 13 and above. To register call: 859-257-6955.

And remember to check the *Wild Ones* website lexington.wildones.org for June and July Field Trips!