

March, 2018  
Volume 7 Issue 3

# Wild Ones®

NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

## OAK OPENINGS REGION

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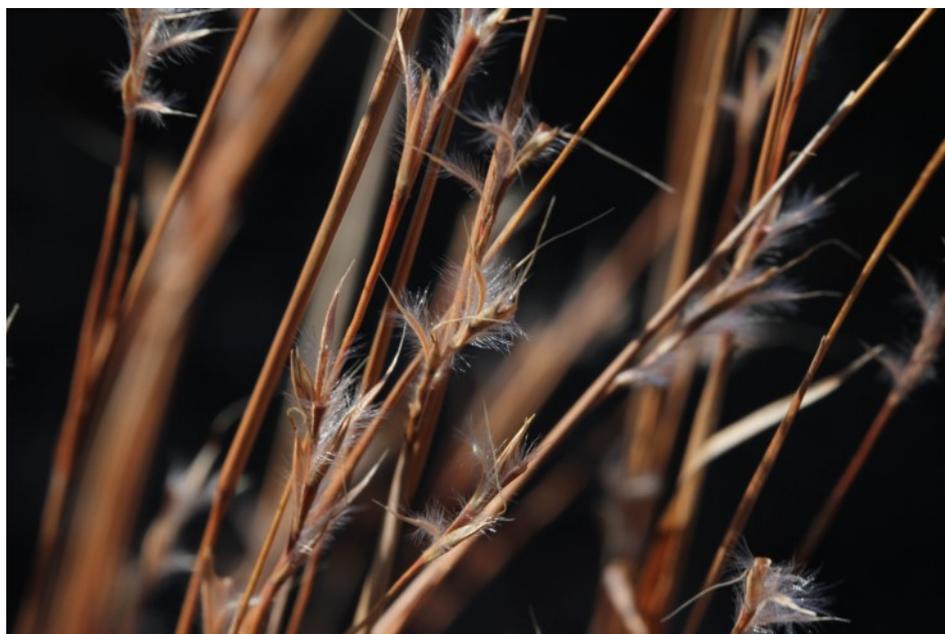
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Wild Ones Oak Openings Region  
Chapter

WildOnesOakOpeningsRegion@  
gmail.com



## Invasive Plant Treatment and Removal

*Tuesday, March 13th*

**Location:** Olander Park,  
Nederhouser Community Hall,  
Sylvania, Ohio

**Time:** 7:00 pm

LaRae Sprow, Land Management Technician of Metroparks Toledo, will explain the impact and control of invasive plants. Invasive plants threaten the integrity of our native habitat by displacing native species and altering ecosystem functions. Learn about some of the most common invasive plants that may

be thriving in your own landscape. Explore the different ways you can combat these invaders and some of the great native plants you can use to replace them. Wildlife will thank you!

This program is free and open to the public. Bring your friends and neighbors. Refreshments will be available. We'll see you there.

## President's Column: It's Working

*by Hal Mann*

Wow! It seemed like the line of people waiting to get in went on forever. When the doors opened for the 14th Annual Toledo GROWs

Seed Swap, it was non-stop action at our booth for the next three hours. We gave away native seed our members collected, cleaned and packaged during the year. Gateway Middle School gave us a large box of Common Milkweed packets they collected and packaged. That was nearly gone by the time the closing bell rang. Thank you to The Black Swamp Conservancy who generously provided a big box of tote bags which were quickly given away to our booth visitors. Another big thank you goes out to all those who volunteered during the year to get us ready for this event. Of course, our gratitude goes to Diane DeYonker, Angie Cole, Jon Zabowski, and Jan Dixon for staffing this booth. They answered questions, helped people decide which plants were best suited for their particular situation, and passed out the seed packages to an endless stream of people interested in native plants. Given the throngs of people you have to admire their stamina, fortitude, and dedication. When Diane got home that night she tallied the number of native seed packets we handed out. Drum roll – a new record – wait for it –



848 packages of seed distributed.  
THANK YOU!

While folks were lined up at our booth waiting to talk with our team, I had a great opportunity to talk with so many people and discovered something wonderful. Without a doubt, more and more people are becoming aware of the

benefits of native plants. There was one man who was looking to improve the productivity of his organic orchard by supporting pollinators and beneficial insects. Many were asking about plants to use in a rain garden to improve water quality. Others were excited to hear how their faith communities could participate in the Sacred Grounds program. Some were new landowners in the Oak Openings Region and wanted to know more about protecting their own slice of this globally rare ecosystem. At the end of this day, yes, I was tired, but more than that, I was enthused. Our mission is to teach the benefit of using native plants, and coupled with the work of many other like-minded local organizations, I believe our efforts are working.

As I chatted with people waiting to talk with our team of seed dispersers, someone asked me about invasive plants and how to get rid of them. The lady described a terrible problem she was having with Bamboo. Naturally I invited her to our next meeting where LaRae Sprow, a member of the Ohio Invasive Plants Council, will be talking about this very subject. I'll see you there.

## Milestones

by Cinda Stutzman  
*Natural Resources Specialist,  
Bowling Green City Parks*

I have been thinking a lot about milestones lately. At the Wintergarden/St. John's Nature Preserve the milestones are piling up. The preserve has been actively undergoing restoration efforts for 20 years to enhance biodiversity and replicate historic plant communities. Much has been achieved thanks to the helping

### Saturday, March 10 **Stewardship: Brush Removal**

10:00 am - 2:00 pm Kitty Todd Nature Preserve, 10420 Old State Line Rd., Swanton, OH

Help remove woody brush from the Moseley Barrens, a prime Oak Openings habitat. This is a family friendly event. No herbicides will be used. All tools are provided. Meet Please RSVP to Jon Zabowski at [jonzabowski@gmail.com](mailto:jonzabowski@gmail.com)

### Tuesday, March 13 **Invasive Plant Treatment and Removal**

7:00 pm, Olander Park, 6930 W. Sylvania, Sylvania, OH 43560 Nederhouser Community Hall

LaRae Sprow, Land Management Technician of Metroparks Toledo, will explain the impact and control of invasive plants. Invasive plants are the second largest threat to our native species. Controlling them takes strategy and integrity. Learn about different techniques for controlling invasive species and about some of the best natives to plant in their place.

### Tuesday, April 10 **Introduction to Plant Identification**

7:00 pm, Olander Park, 6930 W. Sylvania, Sylvania, OH 43560 Nederhouser Community Hall

Penny Niday, Seed Nursery Coordinator for Metroparks Toledo, will talk to us about native plant identification. Getting started can be both fun and frustrating!! Follow along as Penny walks us through parts of an identification key and teaches us some of the basic terminology used to identify various native plant species.

*(Continued on page 3)*



hands of Bowling Green residents and BGSU students. We have so much to be proud of! Populations of invasive species are dwindling while introduced native plant species are increasing. Fire is being used as a management tool. And people of all ages are utilizing the preserve regularly to reconnect with nature.

Wintergarden is often referred to as a “real gem.” It is 100 acres in size and quite accessible for a town populated by approximately 15,000 full-time residents and 17,000 university students. The preserve has been a work-in-progress since 1946 through 5 land purchases and donations, each ranging in size from 4 to 40 acres. It is unique in that the first purchase of land was not in an effort to create a park, but to drill for water for the city.



**Hoar Frost at Wintergarden  
“Pointing the Way to Spring”**  
*photo by Sherri Werdebaugh*

I vividly remember a moment during my introductory tour of the preserve after being hired by the City of Bowling Green Parks and Recreation Department. My supervisor, Chris Gajewicz, stopped the park utility cart beside a Butterfly Milkweed, pointed to it and directed me to “make more of *that* grow.” Three lonely plants now have many companions. The meadow area, formerly a farm field, had much already going for

it. Many native prairie and savanna plants could be found hiding throughout in small numbers, including Dotted Horsemint and Flowering Spurge in sandy areas and Common Boneset and Blue Vervain in the wet areas. Since then, 50 native plant species have been successfully introduced, the majority of which have self sustaining populations.



**“The Lupine Fairy”**  
*photo by Janet Stutzman*

One plant that was able to easily establish itself was Wild Blue Lupine. A patch of 400 transplants, courtesy of Dr. Helen Michaels of BGSU, has now managed to cover the sandy portions of the meadow with a little seed spreading help from volunteers. For a potentially threatened plant, it sure does thrive if given plenty of sand and sun!

Regarding invasive species, the biggest threats to Wintergarden have been Garlic Mustard and honeysuckle in the oak woodland portion of the preserve. We have managed to eradicate the honeysuckle, and we have a good handle on the garlic mustard. Yay! Three out of the last four years we have prevented the Garlic Mustard from going to seed using both herbicide and hand removal. I am now beginning to look forward to the day we can manage Garlic Mustard without using chemicals!

*(Continued from page 2)*

**Tuesday, May 15**  
**Urban Prairies**

*7 pm Secor Meeting Room, The National Center for Nature Photography at Secor Metropark, 10001 W. Central Ave, Sylvania, OH 43560*

As part of Blue Week programs, Dr. Ryan Walsh from the Toledo Zoo conservation department will discuss their urban prairie program as well as their new initiative aimed at bringing native plants to gardeners and home owners in the Toledo area. Topics will include updates on the progress of the urban prairies, an inside look at the zoos native plant production and a discussion on the future of the programs. **Location is at Secor Metropark.**

**Wednesday, July 11**  
**Pollinators of Native Plants with Heather Holm**

Get this on your calendar. Join nationally acclaimed, award winning author, Heather Holm for a book signing and program on pollinators of native plants. Field trips on Thursday for Wild Ones members. Stay tuned for details.

The Wild Geranium and Mayapples carpet the forest floor without these unsightly weeds. And although I have no scientific proof, I do believe there may be more white baneberry and starry Solomon’s seal than there used to be.

I recall another park evaluation meeting with my supervisor during my first few years at the preserve. I was expressing my frustration that I did not feel like we were getting



anywhere, and that we were just spinning our wheels and banging our heads against the wall, at which point he told me, “You have 30 years to restore this place!” So, now, as I look back on the first half of that journey, I can’t believe just how much the preserve has changed. In the grand scheme of things, Wintergarden is small, but it is a mighty island in a county that is dominated by a sea of agriculture. We provide a home base for many species but also serve an important role as a stepping stone for migratory birds and insects. And, for the residents and students of Bowling Green, we provide a place close to home for respite from fast paced, technologically dominated lives.

## Native Plant of the Month: Pussy Willow

(*Salix discolor*)

by Jan Dixon

(all photos by author)



Female flowers of Pussy Willow

*Salix discolor*, the American pussy willow or glaucous willow, is a species of willow native to North America, and one of two species commonly called pussy willow. The other species also called pussy willow is *Salix caprea*, the European pussy willow. *Salix discolor* is native to much of Alaska, as well as the northern forest and wetlands of Canada (British Columbia east to Newfoundland), and is also found in the northeastern portions of the United States (Idaho east to Maine, and south to Maryland). It is easy to find in the wet prairies of Kitty Todd and other areas of Oak Openings.

Pussy Willow is a tall deciduous shrub or small tree growing from 10 to 20 feet. The leaves are oval, 3-14 centimeters long and 1 – 3.5 centimeters wide, blue-green above and downy grey-white beneath. The brown shoots are typically clustered in a strong, upright form that provides good cover and nesting sites for birds. This is a clonal plant that can spread by rhizomes and form dense thickets in the right location. Pussy Willow thrives in moist to wet areas that are also in full sun and can grow in sand, loam or clay.

*Salix discolor* is a dioecious species, with the male and female flowers produced on separate plants. It is an early sign of spring as the beautiful flowers are silky catkins that bloom in March or early April before the leaves appear on bare stems. The catkins on the male and female plant are different, with the male catkins maturing from white to yellow as pollen is released. Both the male and female flowers produce nectar, but the native bees and other pollinators are



Pussy Willow male catkins

more likely to collect pollen on the male plants. The female plant produces the soft nubby catkins which are often used in flower cuttings and mature differently.

The fruit is a small capsule, only 7-12 mm long, containing numerous minute seeds embedded in cottony down. At least three to five shrubs are needed for successful fruiting. However, in most landscape settings fruiting is not important.

One of the many strengths of this plant is that the leaves serve as a host for several butterflies including the Viceroy, the Mourning Cloak, and a special species of the Oak Openings, the Acadian Hairstreak. Another strength is the early nectar it provides for pollinators.

Other interesting information related to Pussy Willow:





Viceroy Butterfly laying egg on Pussy Willow leaf

Salicin is a bitter compound found in willow bark. It is a glucoside related to aspirin, and accounts for the Native American use of willow bark as a pain killer.

The many buds of the Pussy Willow make it a special flower of the Chinese Lunar New Year as the fluffy white blossoms resemble silk and eventually bring forth green shoots the color of jade which represents the coming of prosperity.

The name Pussy Willow comes from the male catkins that are silky soft, similar to kitten's fur.

## Clear Choices, Clean Water

by Sara Guiher

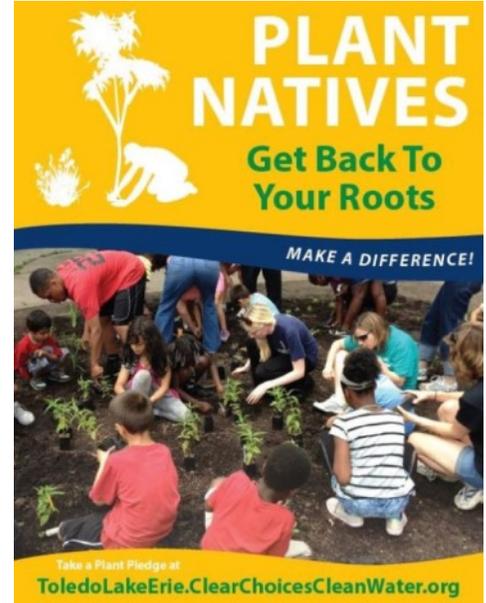
We are all aware that the Oak Openings region is a unique and special place, but did you know that it is also part of the crucial Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB) watershed? All the water that moves through the watershed (which is nearly 7 million acres) eventually makes its way to the shallow western basin of Lake Erie. This means that what happens on all that land can ultimately impact the lake. Federal, state, and local governments, conservation organizations, watershed groups, and many others are striving to

improve the water quality of Lake Erie. I am fortunate to be able to contribute to this endeavor as a Water Quality Planner with Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG). There is a lot of work to do, and we can't do it alone, so public outreach and education are very important parts of our efforts.

One major outreach effort that encourages individuals and households to get involved is the Greater Toledo Lake Erie Clear Choices Clean Water (C3W) campaign. Members of the TMACOG Stormwater Coalition (SWC) launched the interactive C3W website in 2017 to show residents how they can positively impact water quality in their backyards and communities. Visit the website to learn how everyday choices can affect our waterways through five main program areas: Volunteer Service, Super Kids, Lawn Fertilizer, Native Plants and Pollinators, and Pets & Other Poo. Each area offers background information, tips and advice on how to implement water quality practices, and links to local resources.

After identifying the areas you want to focus on, the next step is to take a pledge showing what you will do to improve water quality. Pledges are added to an interactive map, allowing users to see that they are part of a collective effort. Each month the campaign focuses on a different program area to encourage pledges; March is the first Native Plants month of the year. Many of us are already committed to using native plants, and adding our pledges is a great way to encourage participation by

others. The website also uses a model from the U.S. EPA to calculate the reduction of nutrients in runoff expected based on the size of your garden. While this is an estimate, it is fun to see how all



Native plants postcard for the CCCW campaign

the work that comes with gardening can pay off. You can also use the information to impress friends and family or encourage them to have a greater impact!

Wild Ones Oak Openings joined the C3W campaign as an outreach partner in January 2018, and I am very happy to work with all of you to take care of the Oak Openings

**Membership**  
as of February 28<sup>th</sup>

**128**

1/31/2017 Bank Balance: \$4,402



and our waterways! Wild Ones is listed on the website as a partner and referenced throughout the Native Plants and Pollinators program area; I also share Wild Ones events and volunteer opportunities on the C3W calendar. It is exciting to see this partnership develop, and I look forward to letting our members and partners know about all the amazing work that Wild Ones does. If you are part of an organization that may want to become a partner or if you want more information about the C3W campaign, please visit the website at [toledolakeerie.clearchoicescleanwater.com](http://toledolakeerie.clearchoicescleanwater.com) or contact me: [guiher@tmacog.org](mailto:guiher@tmacog.org).  
Image:

## Meet a Member: Jon Zabowski

*(reprinted from March 2014 issue)*



*photo by  
Eleanor Dombrowski*

Jon loves birding and hiking. He was born in Toledo and grew up in Whitehouse, Ohio. While going to Anthony Wayne High school he didn't have time for extra-curricular activities. Instead he worked on his uncle's farm. He found himself doing a lot of things like baling hay and driving a tractor. It was there he discovered he had a real skill for dealing with the mechanical intricacies of farm equipment.

As a teenager this knack with machines developed into an

interest in automobiles. So on graduating from high school, he enrolled in the Auto Mechanics program at Penta County Vocational School. Continuing to work part time on the farm, he decided he wanted to learn something different; something he felt had more advancement opportunity for him. He switched to the electrical program at Owens Community College and landed a job at The Anderson's. They realized Jon's ability to handle large equipment coupled with his mechanical skills would be suited to something that many a youngster dream of doing. At the ripe old age of nineteen, Jon was put to work driving a railroad engine. When railroad cars came into the grain elevators loaded with corn, he'd get 10 or so of them hooked up to his switching engine. Pushing and pulling, he'd get them to the proper place for unloading. He says when you put the brakes on an engine pulling 300,000 lbs., it doesn't stop very fast. It takes a lot of planning to make these cars loaded with grain stop in the right location.

Finishing up his studies at Owens with an electrical certificate, he moved into the Anderson's Engineering department as an electrician. During his 22 years at the company he's developed a wide range of skills that include maintaining mechanical equipment like conveyors and elevators. From the older electricians he's learned the intricacies of the older electrical equipment. At the same time he's managed to stay up to date on the newest computer controlled electronics. He says that dealing with the rapid rate of change is a challenge. Infrared

scanning has become a specialty for him. He now travels all over the country to the numerous company plants using this technology to discover problems before they become critical. He describes how loose wire connections create heat which he can see on the infrared equipment.

Fortunately his company travels are for preventative maintenance purposes. This gives him time to plan his trips to include one of his favorite activities. No matter what part of the country he finds himself in, he takes advantage of hiking, cross country skiing, and birding in nearby natural areas.

As a young child, he spent a lot of time walking the trails at Oak Openings with his grandmother. She taught him to be observant, stopping to be quiet and listen to the sounds, and see the movement of animals going about their daily business. At her passing, their family was able to memorialize her fondness for nature with a bench located on her favorite trail: the Red trail by the sand dunes. Jon is most happy that the nature loving spirit of his grandmother stays alive in him.

In 2010 Jon took the naturalist training courses offered by the Metroparks. This training exposed him to those marvelous birds at the apex of the food chain, the raptors. He was hooked and became a Raptor monitor, spending many hours looking for and reporting on hawk and owl nests. His first assigned "Raptor Trail" took him along an area of Wildwood Preserve where he would often sit and watch over a prairie. He decided he should have some of that environment at his home.





# TIDBITS

## Other Events of Interest

### Olander Park System Workdays (TOPS)

Olander supports us with use of the room and presentation equipment for our monthly meetings. Help us give back by helping them in their conservation efforts. Register in advance for each workday at 419-882-8313, extension 1003.

**Sunday** - last Sunday of every month

1 pm to 4 pm. Meet at the Olander Park Maintenance Building. Join the Natural Resources Team to restore wildlife habitat in Sylvania. All necessary tools provided.

### Sunday, March 4th

#### **Making Rain Gardens Work with Native Plants**

2 pm – 3 pm. Fallen Timbers Battlefield Visitor Center, 4949 N. Jerome Road, Maumee, Ohio 43537 - Hal Mann of the Wild Ones Oak Openings Region Chapter will introduce the concept of rain gardens. Learn why they are important, how they work and how to make them most effective using native plants. Free and open to the public. Register at <http://bit.ly/2BZMFjf>

### Saturday, March 24th

#### **Bowling Green Seed Swap**

9 am - 12 pm. Simpson Garden Park, 1291 Conneaut Ave. Bowling Green, Ohio - see attached for details

### Thursday, April 26th

**The Power of Parkitecture** - see attached flier

### Friday, May 4th

#### **Backyard Conservation Open House**

8 am - 6 pm. Lucas County Soil & Water Conservation District, 130 West Dudley St., Maumee, OH - see <http://bit.ly/2F1efhq> for details

### Sunday, May 13th - Sunday, May 20th

#### **Oak Openings Blue Week**

Numerous events and programs through the week. Find all the details at <https://www.oakopenings.org/>.

### Saturday and Sunday, May 19th and 20th

#### **Oak Openings Blue Week Native Plant Sale**

10 am - 4 pm. Kitty Todd Nature Preserve; 10420 Old State Line Rd., Swanton, OH - see attached for details

- **New Members** - Make sure you register on the national website ([www.WildOnes.org](http://www.WildOnes.org)) for exclusive member content. Once registered you can join the national Facebook group, and will have access to the New Member Handbook, and other information exclusive for members.
- **Facebook** – While our Chapter Facebook page is open to the public, our Facebook group is only open to members. To access the group, you just have to be a Wild Ones member.
- **Snow Emergencies** - It's still possible when weather can make it dangerous to attend a meeting. Any event will be cancelled if there is a Level 2 snow emergency in the county where the event is scheduled. Check Facebook or our website for up-to-date status.
- **Blue Week Native Plant Sale Volunteers Needed** - contact Denise Gehring at [dhgehring@gmail.com](mailto:dhgehring@gmail.com)
- **Reminder to Current Members:** If you have moved or changed your email address since you joined Wild Ones, please email to let us know your new address and we will forward to the national office.
- **Board meetings – Members are always welcome to attend** the Chapter board meetings. See the Chapter events page at our website for times and locations.

### *Contact Information:*

**President:** Hal Mann  
[hfmann@buckeye-express.com](mailto:hfmann@buckeye-express.com) (419)-874 6965

**Vice President:** Angie Cole  
[aecole@rocketmail.com](mailto:aecole@rocketmail.com)

**Secretary:** Penny Niday  
[copperpaws1222@aol.com](mailto:copperpaws1222@aol.com)

**Treasurer:** Elsa Nadler  
[elsa.nadler@gmail.com](mailto:elsa.nadler@gmail.com)

**Newsletter Editor** Hal Mann  
[hfmann@buckeye-express.com](mailto:hfmann@buckeye-express.com) (419)-874-6965

**National Director** Denise Gehring  
[dhgehring@gmail.com](mailto:dhgehring@gmail.com) 419-705-1017

#### **Wild Ones Oak Openings Chapter:**

Web: <http://OakOpenings.WildOnes.org>

Email: [WildOnesOakOpeningsRegion@gmail.com](mailto:WildOnesOakOpeningsRegion@gmail.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wildonesoakopenings/>

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/WildOnes\\_Oaks](https://twitter.com/WildOnes_Oaks)

**Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes** promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities. Wild Ones is a national not-for-profit environmental education and advocacy organization

**Healing the Earth – One Yard at a Time**

