



Wildflowers

President's Column

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This is my last column as WAM president. Like our 2012 Wildflower theme, I hope I have in some small way helped “preserve the legacy” and now will “pass it on” to the very capable hands of Chad Hughson.

Before that I want to thank a whole bunch of people whose collective efforts have made your WAM the wonderful, creative, sustaining force that it is today. I have been privileged to serve with them but much more to have been educated by them. They are Cheryl Tolley (our distinguished service awardee), Esther Durnwald (conference chair), Chad Hughson (1st VP), Tom Small (co-chair), Trish Hacker-Hennig (co-chair), Darwyn Heme (board member), Maryann Whitman (grants), Jean Weirich (registrar, treasurer), Ruth Vrbensky (secretary) and many, many more. Not only have I benefitted but so has my daughter, Allison, who first attended a conference almost 10 years ago and now has presented at the 2011 and 2012 conferences. WAM is a family that has welcomed my family (and hopefully yours as well).

Our new board will convene this April, under Chad’s gavel, and immediately start evaluat-

ing this past conference and planning for the next.

Our 25th anniversary conference will be a hard act to follow. We had excellent presentations from all of our speakers. Timely coverage of pollinator issues by Jennifer Hopwood, Steven Buckman and Rufus Isaacs were in my opinion the best in the nation this spring. David Brandenburgs conifer workshop gave hands-on identification knowledge to its participants, Steve Keto, Rick Meader, and Brenda Dziejec descriptive uses of natives enriched us all and set minds to planning projects for this spring. Catherine Zimmerman’s lecture on meadow gardening taught each of us how one can make a great impact in his or her neighborhood (‘pass it on’). Ali Krueger showed how a disgusting industrial site can be restored to pristine ecological usefulness. The Buhr park duo of Clare Brush/Sophia Werthman showed us how a successful project is carried out. Finally, Dr. Lees’ wonderful hands-on presentation on native Michigan snakes ‘charmed’ us all!

What does the future hold? Well we will be working on increasing publicity for WAM and monetary support for its mission, educational grants, and annual educational workshop. It will be an exciting year. Stay with us;

have your friends join WAM; be ready to attend the next years’ 2013 conference.

Thank you all for your support of WAM.

Bob

Birds are Adjusting Slowly to Climate Change

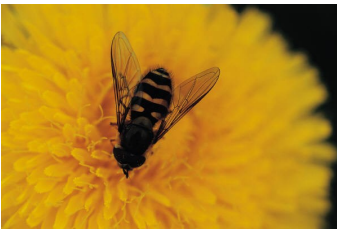
The following is taken from an article by Mary Esch which can be found on abc.news.go.com.

Data from the National Audubon Society’s most recent Christmas bird count shows that many birds take decades to adjust their ranges northward. The study, comprising 59 species, was conducted by Dr. Frank LaSorte at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The black vulture took 35 years to expand northward (1975-2009) while the red-cockaded woodpecker hasn’t moved at all. Turkey vultures and ruby-throated hummingbirds moved faster than temperature warming predicted. LaSorte concluded the take home message is that species are responding, but under their own time frames. Understanding this will be a challenge and most likely involve understanding/providing corridors for the movement to occur and this in turn could mean increasing the range of the native plants each species depends on for food or nesting areas. [RJK]

Invasives in the Arctic

Pollinators Resources

If you weren't at our 2012 Wildflower Conference, here is the website mentioned by Steven Buchman in his lectures: www.pollinator.org. In the site are links to planting guides, their shop, how-to resources and a very useful tab called "Get Involved". The 'Useful Resources' tab has 13 sections with extensive information related to nectar and host plants, projects education and much more. Stop by the site and see what you can do to help our pollinators. National Pollinator Week is June 18-24 2012, so start planning your activity now! [RJK]



Pollinator Resources from the Xerces Society

Here is the website and some resources from the Xerces Society that Jennifer Hopwood mentioned in her 2012 conference talk. The website is www.xerces.org. For information about protecting pollinating insects and their habitat go to the above site and link into its "Pollinator Conservation Resource Center". There you can click on the region encompassing MI to access plant lists, creating nest sites, etc. Once here you can download dozens of publications on these topics

Additional books from the Xerces Society can be found on the website and regional seed packets are available for purchase from their pollinator seed store. Both books and seeds can be ordered online. [RJK]

At our recent Wildflower conference I overheard several conversations on invasives. Whether it was Garlic Mustard, Dame's Rocket, Giant Hogweed or the omnipotent Autumn Olive, people are concerned. If you need an example of a non-plant invasive, just look at what the green ash borer has done in the southeast corner of the state.

The question crossed my mind, "is there a spot on the planet where invasives aren't a problem?" My answer was – the Antarctic. Well, was I ever wrong. In the LA Times in early March, Amina Khan published an article that scientists and ecotourists are bringing in alien species' seeds by the thousands to Antarctica. It is no longer the pristine wilderness it was just a few decades ago. During 2007/8, 33,000 tourists and 7,000 scientists visited the continent. A study by Chown et al published in PNAS surveyed nearly 5,700 of these folks. They vacuumed clothes, luggage, and gear of 850 individuals and found almost 2700 stowaway seeds. They could identify most of them. Projecting this sample to the 40,000 visitors the conclusion reached was more than 70,000 seeds tagged along for the visits, about half of these were from cold climates such as the arctic or alpine ecosystems. It was these that could establish themselves, potentially altering ecosystems that have remained undisturbed for hundreds of thousands of years. Now add in the problem of a warming climate in Antarctica and the problem becomes very real indeed.

Is this really possible? Khan reports "...the fates of nearby sub-Antarctic islands, where dandelions and mouse-eared chickweeds have sprouted up like, well weeds." [RJK]



Keegan Konkle, WAM Grantee



Grants Announcement

Start now, WAM members, to encourage prospective grant applicants in your area to submit a proposal for consideration of a WAM grant award. The deadline for receipt of applications is posted on the WAM website - www.wildflowersmich.org - as are the simple form and directions for its completion. Thanks to all our wonderfully generous donors and a successful conference we have sufficient funds to distribute to worthy applicants in order to enable them to purchase native seeds/plants for their projects.

Board Members Needed

Your WAM Board of Directors is looking for one volunteer to fill the last open position on the board. The term is for 4 years. We meet 4 times a year at the MSU-Hancock Turf Center: January, April, July, and October (teleconference).

A board member additionally attends the annual conference (2013 – March 3 and 4 at the Kellogg Center MSU) where he/she may introduce a speaker, help with the registration desk/assemble registration materials, etc. (as you would see fit for your interests). A passion for native plant conservation and related topics along with a volunteer’s desire to help is all that is needed. If you are interested, please contact Chad Hughson, WAM President.

2012-2013 Board Meeting Dates

July 18, 2012; 4-6 PM
 October 17, 2012; 4-6 PM
 January 16, 2013; 4-6 PM
 Note: March 3 & 4, 2013, Annual Conference

Meetings are held at the MSU Hancock Turf Center on Farm Lane in East Lansing, unless otherwise determined by the board at the previous meeting.

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I wish to provide a gift to WAM at the level of:
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