



South Central PA Chapter

Wild Ones of South-Central PA Monthly Meeting via Zoom

May 23, 2022 – Minutes (Submitted by Lorrie Preston)

Attendance- (17 Total)

Members: Cindy Hogeman (Dauphin), Debra Shepler (Dauphin), Heather Andrews (Cumberland), Jane Allis (Perry), Jane Webster (Dauphin), Kara Lubold (Lebanon), Karen Rudy (Cumberland), Katherine Gehris (Lebanon), Kerri Thauby (Cumberland), Kristen Acri (Cumberland), Lorrie Preston (York), Margaret Naguski (Cumberland), Maryann Skubecz (Cumberland), Melanie Wertz (Perry), Shawna Raymond (York), Susan Zalesky (Cumberland), Zach Richard (Dauphin)

Non Members: None

Welcome and Introductions: Those attending introduce themselves and noted the county where they reside

Minutes of April Meeting approved unanimously.

Reports

Membership – Kerri Thauby – We’ve added 5 more members since the April meeting – 1 in April and 4 in May; 1 from newspaper, 1 from Patriot News article, 1 from Appalachian Audubon Society, 1 from Facebook, and one from local Wild Ones Chapter

Treasurer – Margaret Naguski – One expense this month – Jane purchased 100 brochures from national Wild Ones for \$23.95, leaving us a balance of \$216.99. Member dues reimbursement comes from national on a quarterly basis, which will add to our balance.

Activities/Events:

1. Calendar updates:
 - a. Revised calendar for the year sent out
 - b. June 5, 1pm Craighead House Native Plant Garden and tour by Heather Andrews – members will meet there, no RSVP needed.
 - c. July 17th, 2pm Penn State Arboretum Pollinator Garden *Check parking info on their website; parking fee but arboretum is free. Details later.*
 - d. August 20, 10:30 am Hungry Hook Farm workshop (in Bainbridge) on collecting and processing seeds – *Limit ten vehicles, so carpooling is encouraged and necessary. Jane can help connect you with members that live near your area for carpooling*



South Central PA Chapter

- e. September 18, 2:00 pm tour Horn Farm, York – \$8 fee per person or \$85 flat for less than 12, so hopefully we get a good turnout.
 - f. October 16, 1:00pm Tour of Letort Spring Preserve (Carlisle) with option to continue to Kings Gap Environmental Center afterwards
2. We purchased 100 Wild Ones membership brochures for \$15 + shipping = \$23.95. Jane is getting 200 free “Landscaping with Native Plants” brochures and 100 free “Invasive Plant” brochures from DCNR to give away at our public events.
3. Ft. Halifax Park event: Annual “Butterflies, Bees, Bats, and Blooms – 5B’s Pollinator and Garden Faire” June 18 from 9 am to 3 pm. Includes a native plant sale. Jane will be there with our Wild Ones table set up, looking for additional member or two to cover the event so volunteers can also take turns checking out the festivities. Jane welcomes ideas for offering some sort of hands-on activity to add interest to our table and display. We will give out free native plant seeds, offered by at least three members. Jane has purchased seed envelopes and a stamp with our chapter name and logo to use in giving out seeds. (See “After the Meeting” at the end of this report for another handout idea.)
4. Listserv idea from Kathy Carter not yet up and running – This would give our members a way to communicate within the group on a regular basis rather than wait until our monthly meeting. Kerri is going to investigate this further.
5. A new PA chapter of Wild Ones has just started, which overlaps our Huntingdon County area. It’s called the “Ridge and Valley” chapter and is in the Altoona area. Our Huntingdon County members may be interested in checking it out to decide which chapter they wish to be affiliated with.
6. We received a request from someone who needs help creating a meadow in their front yard. LadyBug Earth Care was suggested, as well as the Penn State Master Gardeners in applicable county.
7. Topics for future meetings for discussion: what ideas do you have?
 - a. Possible slideshow from National Wild Ones for new or inexperienced members. Jane is going to check into this further for our June meeting.
 - b. Something we did wrong and what we learned from it/get feedback from others.
 - c. Something we did right – What is working in your garden?
 - d. Connie Schmotzer as a speaker. She’s an extremely knowledgeable Master Gardener who led MAESCAPES in York County for many years. Shawna will contact her about presenting at one of our future meetings – perhaps July.

Discussion – Many topics were brought up for interesting discussion at the end of the meeting.

1. Where to find a dependable PH meter? Gardeners.com suggested.
2. Pollenless sunflowers are more common than those that offer pollen. Do your research when choosing seeds to be sure you are getting sunflowers that offer pollen.
3. Heather reported that she is fielding many questions about Spotted Lanternfly nymphs in the garden now and she's seeing them, as well. She finds them on the underside of leaves, such as milkweed, (they seem to die after ingesting milkweed!), peonies, and more. They are particularly attracted to grape vines. She has found that sticky tape wrapped around her hand (the kind you remove lint with) does a nice job of catching a bunch all at the same time. They seem to hang out in a group at this stage. They remain black with white spots for their first 3 instars – now into July. In 4th instar, July through August, they are red with white dots and black stripes. First adults emerge in late July. You can band trees that they are populating – maples, birches, etc., but be sure to use hardware cloth around the band to protect birds and other beneficial insects from being trapped. For the safest spray method to control the SLF, eBay sells a soil bacterium specifically for SLF. It's called BotaniGard22WP *Beveria Bassiana*, however it is very expensive. For more info on Spotted Lanternflies:
<https://extension.psu.edu/programs/master-gardener/outreach/spotted-lanternfly-outreach>
4. Plant identification using apps. Shawna explained that on an iPhone, you can select a plant photo, tap the info button or swipe up, tap the green leaf icon that appears in or below the photo, and it takes you to "Visual Look Up" and gives you the plant name immediately. On an Android, open a photo using Google Photos, hit "Lens" under the photo and it will give you the ID in seconds.
Jane reported that she read an article rating identification apps. Although many people use iNaturalist, it is 3 or 4 from the top in accuracy. "Picture This" is reported to be the most accurate, but it is not a free app.
Cornell Labs "Merlin" app is a wonderful app for identifying bird songs.
5. Cindy asked about Milorganite to discourage deer. It is composted human waste from Michigan and is sold at many garden centers. Place a couple of TBSP of the granular product in small bags and tie it to the plant and it works for a fairly long period. Blacks Nursery in Mechanicsburg sells the small bags for you to fill and they also sell the product itself.



South Central PA Chapter

6. How do you use mulch? New York Brooklyn Bridge native plant garden suggests using mulch only when you need it. It can bring weed seeds and other headaches into your garden. Place an inch or so of mulch at planting time. Leave your leaves in place, as well as plant debris, when possible. Use your own leaf mold as mulch, or it can be available for purchase. Highland Gardens in Camp Hill sells it. Plants, densely spaced, create a living mulch. Layer your plants, allowing taller plants to shade shorter plants. Examples of native plants to use to spread over an area to create a living mulch include Golden Ragwort, Violets, Blue Mistflower and others.

Two books to help: "Planting in a Post-Wild World" by Claudia West and Thomas Rainer and "Garden Revolution" by Larry Weaner and Tom Christopher.

Article link provided by Jane:

[A Living Mulch - Allowing Plants to spread as Nature intended \(goodnaturedlandscapes.com\)](http://goodnaturedlandscapes.com)

7. Member question – Is Wild Ones only for die-hard native plant enthusiasts? What if we have natives, cultivars, or even non-native species in our gardens? Is there a place for us in Wild Ones? YES! We are all learning and growing. The more we learn, the more we can make good choices. Wild Ones of South-Central PA is a place for education and discussion – no judgement. We are all on a journey to explore the use of native plants and all levels of experience are welcome and encouraged to be part of our group.

OTHER – After the Meeting

Lorrie has dozens of swamp milkweed seedlings that would make a nice give-away at our upcoming tabling event. Small native seedlings potted up in peat pots or other small pots would make a nice-give aways. Contact Jane if you have something similar to offer.

Heather wants to pass along this helpful website: www.choosenativeplants.com

Separate attachments:

- 1) Revised calendar (*previously sent on May 20*)
- 2) Brooklyn Bridge Park on Mulch (*previously sent on May 20*)
- 3) Wild Ones SCPA Gardening Resources (*previously sent*)
- 4) May Newsletter of the Southeast PA Wild Ones chapter – lots of great info!