



South Central PA Chapter

Wild Ones of South-Central PA Monthly Meeting via Zoom

June 26, 2023 Minutes (Submitted by Lorrie Preston, Secretary)

Meeting Recording Link: https://wildones-org.zoom.us/rec/share/pqk5BwHKUq93NtWuHQH01rZZvEZCR9TKY5VPkDMf_8vzQ6PUU-J28VeVMslMiqcL.09KR85kATjLRElqZ

Attendance (25)

Members: Angela den Hoed, Arlene Taylor, Cindy Hogeman, Debra Latsha, Jane Allis, Jane Earle, Jane Shull, Jane Webster, Janet Bargh, Josh Donaldson, Karen Rudy, Kerri Thauby, Lorrie Preston, Margaret Naguski, Maryann Skubecz, Melanie Green, Rob Winslow, Ruth Seitz, Shawn McMurtry, Shawna Raymond, Tami Harnish, Traci Shughart, Wendy Smith

Other Attendees: Jennifer King, Kelsey Mummert

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

Minutes of May Meeting – Approved unanimously.

Reports

Membership – Kerri Thauby – Reported by Lorrie Preston – We had one new member in June. We welcome Sherri Cocklin, who found us on Facebook. We had 1 membership renewal and 1 expired member for a current total of 69 active members.

Treasurer – Margaret Naguski – We had two deposits in June - \$500 from the Penn-Cumberland Garden Club grant to be used for printing more of the HOA/Developer booklets and \$551 for second quarter dues from national Wild Ones. We have a current balance of \$2,203.91. We have not received our check from our native plant sale at Diakon Wilderness Greenhouse yet, which will more than double our checking account balance. Margaret checked with Kim Patton of Diakon and was told it sometimes takes a little while for the check to be sent.

Activities/Events:

1. June Field trip:

- a. Five Senses Garden, Harrisburg. Four Wild Ones members met up with fellow member Cindy Hogeman at the Five Senses Garden on June 11th for a very interesting and inspiring tour of the extensive gardens there. It is all planted and maintained by volunteers who have done an amazing job, with a tremendous amount of work and oversight by Cindy. It is only in the last 4 years or so that the gardens are being transformed into native plant gardens. Cindy shared the



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history of the garden and gave us a wonderful tour. The garden area is an unknown gem in Harrisburg along the Capital Area Greenbelt and everyone is encouraged to visit. Cindy welcomes donations of native plants if you are dividing so they can continue to add to and improve the gardens.

Chogeman@gmail.com

2. Ft. Halifax Pollinator Faire – Jane Allis staffed a table for our Wild Ones Chapter on June 17th. She gave out 35 meadow mix seed packets and 18 common and swamp milkweed packets as well as brochures and information pieces. Attendance was estimated at 60. Excellent talks and tables with information from various groups, including Perennial Gardens out of Perry County with a great selection of native trees, shrubs, perennials, grasses, and ferns for sale. Members Lorrie Preston and Mimi Clark attended and enjoyed it very much. It's a great location and makes a fun day trip with very good event planning and itinerary. Jane was asked to speak at next year's event on Keystone Plants.

3. July 17 Chambersburg/Fayetteville Conococheague Audubon garden tour with a talk on native plants NOW STARTING AT 9:00 am; raindate July 19. This will take place at Norlo Park, 3050 Lincoln Way E., Fayetteville, PA. The park is visible from Rt. 30. Contact Wild Ones member Josh Donaldson for more info: jd425@embarqmail.com

4. Penn DOT Pollinator Habitat Plan [Pollinator Habitat Plan \(pa.gov\)](https://legiscan.com/PA/text/HB797/2023) Jane Allis sent a letter from our chapter encouraging PennDOT to lead the effort on using native plants along our roadways without depending on volunteers to do it. She did not hear back from anyone about it. House bill # 797 passed in the House of Rep. requiring planting of native plants in highway rights-of-way; now heads to Senate. <https://legiscan.com/PA/text/HB797/2023> Member Wendy Smith suggested contacting your Senator to encourage passing of bill. Jane Allis spoke about an interesting study of the impact on queen bees where native flowering plants are planted along busy highways, with a nearly a 30% mortality rate discovered among queen bees due to busy traffic. Location of native flowering plants at interchanges and slower traffic areas may be better, while native trees and shrubs may be more appropriate along busy highways.

Cindy brought up a study about Monarch caterpillars and their negative reaction to road noise. The importance of Pollinator Pathways was discussed, allowing pollinators to get from one area to another. Small, fragmented habitats are not large enough to support healthy populations and they need healthy pathways to move from one habitat to another. Josh brought up the fact that leaf blowers are catastrophic to insects. They disrupt and destroy insects who seek protection to overwinter in leaf debris.

5. Bosler Library children's native plant program donations: Thank you to Deb Latsha and Jane Allis for donating plants. Provided each child in the program with 3 native plants and a meadow mix seed packet, along with growing information for the plants provided. Mini-gardens were to be created for each child to take home, using 2 qt. soil-filled milk-cartons laid on their side.



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6. **Penn Cumberland Garden Club grant of \$500** was awarded to our chapter to pay for the printing of more booklet guides for townships, HOAs, developers, landscapers, etc. This will allow us to print another 50. We only have about 15 left of the initial quantity. The grant is much appreciated. Thank you to WO member Susan Wilder for helping make this happen. **Digital version of this booklet is included as a separate attachment for download.**

7. **WITF video interview with Rachel McDevitt** took place at The Bower on June 20 for climate change series of videos. Jane Allis spoke about native plants, their ability to sequester carbon with their deep roots, their benefits to pollinating insects, and more. Jane will let us know when the series will air and in what format. Thank you to Kerri Thauby who made the initial contact with Rachel McDevitt. Rachel is being considered for an international award for her excellent environmental journalism.

8. Committees:

- b. **Field Trips:** Jane Allis, Jane Earle
 - i. July - Individual trips to Ft. Indiantown Gap to see Regal Fritillary butterflies. Information on signing up was sent out earlier. Tours for 2023 are now filled!
 - ii. **Sunday, July 23 at 1 p.m. - Member-garden visit to Jane Shull's garden and butterfly raising.** Perry County - 5258 Waggoners Gap Rd (RT 74 out of Carlisle), Landisburg, PA 17040. Look for balloons at her mailbox. The house sits back a long lane. Jane's husband, Larry, creates sculpture art for the garden and there may be indoor sculptures set up for us to see in the garage. Jane has invited us to bring guests and bring any plants you wish to share. Consider bringing others who may be interested in getting involved with our chapter. Please RSVP # of people coming to Jane Shull ahead of time. ibentravlin@comcast.net **Please see separate attachment for more important details.** Hope to see you there!
- c. **Programs:** (would include plant sale and seed swap): Lorrie Preston, Melanie Wertz, Janet Bargh – No report. Will work on Nov. Seed Swap presenter.
- d. **Community Outreach:** (Townships, Landscapers, Garden Centers, Developers): Heather Andrews, Lisa Emig, Wendy Smith. Wendy reported that she, Heather, Maryann Skubecz, and Jill Zdunczyk plan to meet with Hampden Township leaders soon to discuss the use of natives. Wendy also contacted a developer in Wormleysburg and received positive reactions from their landscapers about using native plants. Way to go, Wendy!
- e. **Schools Outreach:** Jill Zdunczyk, Kerri Thauby, Karen Rudy – No report.
- f. **Media:** *Members needed for this committee!* With permission from Appalachian Audubon, Lorrie Preston shared contact info for local news and publicity outlets to promote details for our events.
- g. **Nominating Committee:** To be determined in fall.



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9. Eco Beneficial Lawn presentation by Rachel Benbow, Dauphin County Master Gardener, will be after the business of the Sept 25 meeting

10. June Meeting presentation by Kelsey Mummert on DCNR Lawn Conversion Program

Kelsey presented excellent information on the PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry's efforts to restore native plants in the landscape, with a focus on converting Lawn to Forest and/or Lawn to Meadow. She reports that there are 2 million acres of lawns across PA – basically an ecological desert. Their dept. sets specific goals to reach to measure their success and enable them to get funding. Their effort started in 2020. They have 10 people employed in this effort across the whole state, with specific people being responsible for overseeing large segments of the state. For most of us in the chapter, Marlin Graham would be our contact person: c-magraham@pa.gov. He lives in the Chambersburg area and covers South-central PA. Their department assists with projects with a minimum of half an acre to be converted. They can help to provide technical assistance, state guidance and support, some funding, education and resources, partnership development, and connections. Landowner agreements are required in return, to commit to caring for the project. Feel free to contact c-kmummert@pa.gov to reach Kelsey for more information and be sure you watch the recording of her presentation if you want a lot more info. Please be advised that there was some technical difficulty in the middle of her presentation last night due to a thunderstorm, so you may experience an interruption in the middle of her presentation, but the recording will resume.

Kelsey invited us all to sign up for DCNR's "Woods and Meadows newsletter" by going to the DCNR website. For more articles and information, [subscribe](#) to DCNR's biweekly emailed newsletter, *resource*.

She encouraged all of us to speak up and remember that squeaky wheels make a difference in getting policy changes made. She reminded us that we can each make a difference:

- * Speak with our representatives.
- * Advocate for local change.
- * Educate your friends, family, and neighbors.
- * Give garden tours.
- * Engage with native plant groups, master gardeners, and others with an interest in promoting native plants.

She also acknowledged our efforts and appreciates the positive difference that our group is already making.

Meeting was adjourned about 8:40 p.m.