



South Central PA Chapter

Wild Ones of South-Central PA Monthly Meeting Via Zoom

May 22, 2023, Minutes (Submitted by Lorrie Preston, Secretary)

Meeting Recording Link:

https://wildones-org.zoom.us/rec/share/A9-f3dtONfiHGE9-AAr4rltm_hBcOQfmev1VEf2ffvenLHpE4L1qNDTLwUmhTf4.uMjOAFctiuD9efwC

Attendance (18)

Members: Arlene Taylor, Cindy Hogeman, Florence Pyle, Jane Allis, Jane Earle, Josh Donaldson, Karen Rudy, Kristen Acri, Kyle Kephart, Lisa Emig, Lorrie Preston, Margaret Naguski, Maryann Skubecz, Mimi Clark, Shawna Raymond, Susan Wagner, Tami Harnish, Wendy Smith

Other Attendees: None

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

Minutes of April Meeting: Approved

Reports:

Membership – Lorrie reported for Kerri Thauby, who was unable to attend. We added 3 new members since our last meeting. Welcome to Josh Donaldson, Edward Franco and Mimi Clark! 1 new member was referred by another native plant organization, 1 read the Sentinel announcement of our Native Species walk, and one was word of mouth. We also had 3 membership renewals and 2 expired memberships. We currently have 69 active members (including 2 group members). We have 39 people on our listserv, which allows us to communicate with each other between meetings. If you are interested in joining the listserv group, please contact Kerri at kerritb@gmail.com.

Treasurer – Margaret Naguski - We had one expense this month of \$46 for 100 brochures. We had used up our brochures at spring events. This leaves us with a balance of \$1,152.91. Margaret shared the good news of our very successful native plant sale partnering with Diakon Wilderness Greenhouse on May 6th, after receiving an update from Kim Patton, who manages the greenhouse. The near record-breaking sales that day amounted to \$9,822. Our chapter will receive 25% of that amount, which equates to \$2,456! Kim is very appreciative of the 60 hours or more of volunteer work provided by our members to help her prepare the greenhouse for the spring season. Members seemed to enjoy volunteering at the greenhouse and helping customers on the day of our sale, calling it a “great experience.” We thank all of you who volunteered, spread the word, and bought plants. We are excited about how successful it was and it will be a great help to our budget! We did great, despite other native plant sales happening the same day.

Shawna asked if we must give any part of our sale proceeds back to National Wild Ones. Jane responded “no”. They make a request for a chapter donation annually, but we did not donate this year due to not having excess funds. Some members donated to national W.O. on their own.



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Activities/Events:

1. **Plant Sale Update** – Please see above Treasurer’s report. The sale was a great success!

2. **FOX43 News and WITF (Media)** – Jane Allis was interviewed by reporter Alexandra Debicki of Fox43 about the Second Annual Native Species Day and it aired 2 days before our walk for the event. Here’s the link to watch the 2 ½ minute video/read the text:

[FOX43 News Clip for 2nd Annual Native Species Day](#)

Member Wendy Smith connected Jane Allis with the host of the WITF radio program “The Spark” who interviewed Jane and aired it live on May 18th – the actual afternoon of PA Native Species Day. Jane talked about the importance of native plants to native birds, pollinators and wildlife and talked about our W.O. chapter and The Bower. This interview is about 20 minutes: <https://www.witf.org/2023/05/19/native-species-day-in-pennsylvania-promotes-importance-of-native-plants-and-animals/>

Jane did a great job in both interviews and represented our chapter beautifully. We are still in need of volunteers for our Media Committee, who will help to get the word out about our events and activities, initiate similar interviews, etc. Please talk with Jane Allis, if interested.

3. **2nd Annual PA Native Species Day Walk at Vincent DiFilippo Nature Preserve** – May 18, 9:30 a.m. start time. This was a very enjoyable and well-attended event, co-hosted with the Appalachian Audubon Society. We counted 31 participants at one point. A big thank you to Rick and Peggy Price of AAS for IDing many beautiful birds for us. We offered 3 different walks of varying lengths. Jane Earle led a walk with members of the Penn Cumberland Garden Club and anyone else who wanted to go along with her to i.d. trees along Conodoguinet Creek. Lorrie led the 2-mile loop along the level path and some took a shorter loop back. There were lots of things to see and talk about. Some of the native species we enjoyed that day were Kingbirds, Bluebirds, lots of Orioles (including a nest dangling from a branch over the creek), red-tailed hawk, many turtles, a deer, groundhog, a garter snake 5’ above the ground looking out a small hole in a tree and more. Native trees included Pawpaw, Burr Oak, Chinquapin Oak, Hackberry and more. We gave away native seed packets to all participants. The preserve is a beautiful place and Jane Allis recommends we all check it out when we can. This will possibly be an annual event for us. (110 Sample Bridge Rd., Mechanicsburg)

4. **Upcoming June 11 Field Trip** – Meet at 2 p.m. at the Five Senses Garden, 1350 N. Harrisburg St, Harrisburg. Member Cindy Hogeman, who oversees this garden, will lead us on a tour. Please note that this address will get you NEAR the garden, but there is actually no # address for the garden itself. Look for the garden sign and the parking lot ACROSS THE STREET from the garden in that general area of Harrisburg St. From the parking lot, use the safety crossing to cross the street to the garden and meet at the kiosk in the center of the garden. **Hope you can join us!**



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5. **June 26th Zoom Meeting Presentation** will be given after our business meeting by Kelsey Mummert on the DCNR Lawn to Meadow Conversion Program. Funding is available. Join us that evening to learn more.

6. **June 17 – 9-3, Ft. Halifax “Butterflies, Birds, Bees, Bats & Blooms – A Pollinator and Garden Faire”** Our chapter will be tabling there. Contact Jane Allis if you want to help out at our table. We were there last year, and Jane Allis says it is a great event and highly recommends us to attend. They have presentations all day, native plant sales, and tables of related organizations to visit. [Ft. Halifax Pollinator and Garden Faire](#)

7. **July 17 – Chambersburg/Fayetteville Conococheague Audubon Garden Tour** with talk on native plants – 8 a.m., Raindate July 19. Along Rte. 30. New member Josh Donaldson chairs the committee that takes care of this garden and invites us to join them for this community event for a chance to learn from each other. Josh - jd425@embarqmail.com for more information.

8. **Penn State Pollinator Garden of Merit** – Lorrie Preston’s garden was featured in the spring 2023 issue of Penn State’s online publication “What’s the Buzz”. All gardens that are certified as a “Pollinator Friendly Habitat” through this Penn State program may be considered and featured as a Pollinator Garden of Merit. To find out more about the program: <https://pollinators.psu.edu/landscaping-for-pollinators/pollinator-habitat-certification>

To read about Lorrie’s garden – See separate attachment for PDF of “What’s the Buzz.”

9. **PennDOT Pollinator Habitat Plan** [PennDOT Pollinator Habitat Plan](#) (pa.gov) Member Zach Richard expressed concerns about the plan with Jane Allis and wondered if our chapter would be willing to write a letter to PennDOT outlining some of the concerns. Volunteers are asked to sign a two-year contract committing to caring for their native garden along our highways. Signage would be provided, giving credit to the group or persons installing and maintaining the garden. It is felt that the state government should be planting native plants in the interchanges themselves, and not asking the public to do it. There are safety issues for volunteers and drivers, knowledge issues, and more. Our meeting attendees supported the writing of the letter and Jane is going to draft a letter and send it to the board members for their input before mailing it. There is no interest by our group currently to create and maintain a PennDOT native plant garden. Along with the stated concerns, with membership in 11 counties, just choosing a site would be difficult and members stay busy with other projects and our own gardens. Other state’s Transportation Departments prioritize planting native plants along their highways – a good example is Delaware, who has been doing this for many years.

10. **Committees: Please contact Jane Allis if you would like to participate on any committee.**

a. **Field Trips** - Jane Allis, Jane Earle

i. Five Senses Garden, June 11, 2 p.m. (see item # 4)

b. **Programs** - Lorrie Preston, Melanie Wertz, Janet Bargh – No report at this time



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- c. **Community Outreach** – Heather Andrews, Lisa Emig, Wendy Smith. Wendy and Maryann Skubecz will be talking with Hampden Township. Jill also lives in the township. Someone on the Native Species walk asked Jane Allis to consider talking with Silver Spring Township but she doesn't live within the township or even live in Cumberland County. Suggested a member from that community would be better. Our booklet for Townships, Landscapers, Garden Centers, and Developers is available on our website, but Jane Allis can also provide you with a printed copy, if wanted. All members are encouraged to talk with their community contacts to promote native plants, whether or not you are part of the actual Community Outreach Committee.
- d. **School Outreach** – Jill Zdunczyk, Kerri Thauby, Karen Rudy – No report at this time
- e. **Media** – Members are needed for this committee. Please direct questions to Jane A.
- f. **Nominating Committee** - To be determined in the fall
- g. **Committee chairs are encouraged to give reports** at next meeting

11. Jane asked us if there is interest in having Rachel Benbow, Dauphin County Master Gardener, do a presentation for us after one of our monthly meetings about **Eco-beneficial Lawn Care – Best practices for lawns** that don't harm the environment. The group expressed interest, so Jane will line that up for the future.

12. **Remember to start saving your seeds for our Nov. 12 Seed Swap!** Some plants have already produced their seeds, so start collecting!