

NATIVE NEWS

Gibson Woods Wild Ones

6201 Parish Ave. Hammond, IN * 219-844-3188

December 2019

Volume 20, Issue 10

Wild Ones promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to encourage biodiversity through the preservation, restoration, and establishment of native plant communities. Wild Ones is a not-for-profit, environmental, educational, and advocacy organization.

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Gibson Woods Chapter,

Instead of shopping on Black Friday, I opted to go outside for a free, expert-led, family-friendly hike at Indiana Dunes National Park's West Beach. Co-sponsored by Save the Dunes. I wanted to do something fun and different. I did not realize how moving it would be. I saw some familiar faces there which was comforting. I also met some new people and had some fun conversations along the way. In between the conversations I had a chance to listen to our leader about the very interesting history, topography, flora, fauna, and future thoughts about the Dunes. I also experienced a good balance of silence when I could explore my own thoughts.



It was a 2 mile tour. The terrain at times was pleasantly challenging. I remember thinking that I was glad the path was groomed, and stairs were built to climb the Dunes. The views were beautiful looking outwards on the lake and inwards across the landscapes. Of course, we could see the steel mills that flanked both sides of the beach. We could clearly see the progression as the beach turned to grassland, that turned to wooded landscapes. With this progression we could feel the silence and the calming of the microclimate. Along the footpath I saw stands Prickly Pear Cactus and Bearberry. I thought to myself how I created a sand patch in my yard for the cactus and how I could not get the Bearberry to thrive.

Getting out of my regular comfort zone and experiencing the Dunes was a rewarding experience. It allowed me to think about lots of things mentioned already and some further thoughts on my own garden. There are over 100 different species of native plants in my garden. I am certain that they would not exist in nature in the way that they were planted in my yard. I wonder if I created this unnatural habitat for the plants in my yard. And congruently, for the fauna that uses the plants for habitats. Time will tell as some plants thrive in my yard and some fade away like the bearberry as nature intended. What I do know is that it's a beautiful world out there and going out to experience it is a wonderful feeling. This feeling is a gateway for discovery.

Hope to see you at our December meeting!

Karl Ackermann

Visit us online at:

<http://gw-wildones.org/>

New Membership & Renewals:

\$40 household - or - \$25 student, ltd income

Send check to:

Wild Ones, 2285 Butte des Morts Beach Rd., Neenah, WI 54956
Mark your check 'Chapter 38'

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monthly Meetings are held the first Saturday of the month at 10:00 a.m. at Gibson Woods unless otherwise noted.

December 7, 2019

Tree Decorating Naturally
Pot Luck

January 4th, 2020

Greenhouse Orientation
Bring your own snack

February 1, 2020

To be Announced
Hosts: TBA

March 7, 2020

To be Announced
Hosts: TBA

April 4, 2020

To be Announced
Hosts: TBA

May 2, 2020

**** PLANT SALE ****

Pot Luck for workers

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

**** Shelley Fentress ****

DECEMBER MEETING

Our December meeting will be the annual Tree Decorating & Potluck party. Supplies will be provided by the fine folks at Gibson Woods, but bring something cool from nature to use or share, to be transformed into unique ornaments for the Gibson Woods Christmas tree. Also bring your favorite cold dish. We will 'Eat, Drink & be Merry – and Crafty' together!!



New books will be available for purchase at this meeting.

2020 OFFICERS

Our Officers for the coming 2020 calendar year are:

President: Karl Ackermann

Vice President: Kim Moor

Secretary: Tonia Flowers

Treasurer: Karl Ackermann

PORTER COUNTY MASTER GARDEN SHOW SIGN-UPS

After a one year hiatus, the Porter County Master Garden Show will be held once again, but new & improved, at the Porter County Fairground building. As usual, we will be participating in this event. Sign-ups will be available at our December meeting. Show hours are 8 - 4. We will need a couple of people there about an hour before to set up, and then volunteers to cover three shifts during the course of the event. Please consider volunteering. If there is a certain speaker that you want to see, check out the time before committing to the shift you sign up for. Wild Ones will cover the entry fee for all volunteers.

EDIE'S CORNER

Please let us know if you have a special request for anything that others might have to share - or if you have something you'd like to share with others. We will post the information in the next newsletter.

Requested: Edie Bukwa is in need of newspaper for her elderly dog.

Requested: Gibson Woods staff is happy to take donations of craft and other program supplies. If you have something you would like to donate, call 219-844-3188 to see if we can use it, or if it's a small amount, please put them in a box/bag with your name on it (so we can thank you!) and leave with staff on weekends. We will go through the items and anything we cannot use, we will send to the Lake County Environmental Center ReUz Room or try to find another park site that can use the items. Please refrain from leaving items in the education classroom or any of the closets or storage areas, as we have an old building and the mice like to come inside in the colder months. Thank you for your support and for partnering with us!

Join us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Wild-Ones-Native-Plants-Natural-Landscapes-Gibson-Woods-Chapter-38/528949993858676>

2019 Officers

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Plant Study by Kim Moor

Flat-Topped Aster - *Doellingeria umbellata* (formerly: *Aster umbellatus*)

Family: Aster (Asteraceae)

Genus: *Doellingeria*

This species is a perennial, early bloomer in the Aster family, flowering in July with clusters of white petals and yellow center disks. As a plant ages, the color will dull, paling to a yellowish tan. The alternately-attached leaves are simple, rounded, toothless spears with short hairs that add texture. Flat-topped Aster begins to bloom in July, much earlier than most Asters, and is rhizomatous, meaning it spreads by underground rhizomes as well as by seed.



Photo courtesy of Illinois Wildflower

Flat-Topped Aster is an attractive wildflower that favors relatively open areas that are damp and sandy. Because of its flat-topped inflorescence, it is relatively easy to distinguish from other asters. In particular, the prominent disk florets of the flowerheads are somewhat unusual in that they become dingy white or cream-colored shortly after they bloom, rather than orange-red or purple. The reason Flat-Topped Aster has been assigned to the *Doellingeria* genus is related to the different hair lengths of its tufted achenes: the outer hairs are less than 1 mm. in length, while the inner hairs are 3-6 mm. in length. Usually, asters have a uniform length for the hairs of their tufted achenes.

Faunal Associations: The nectar and pollen of the flowerheads attract long-tongued bees, short-tongued bees, wasps, flies, butterflies, beetles, and other insects. The foliage, plant juices, roots, and other parts of Flat-Topped Aster and other asters are eaten by many insects. The caterpillars of an uncommon butterfly, Harris' Checkerspot, feed on Flat-Topped Aster specifically. Other insect feeders include several caterpillars of the Aster Borer Moths. Asters in general, are also host plants of Aster Leafhopper, various aphids, lace bugs, leaf beetles, caterpillars of the butterflies Silvery Checkerspot, Pearl Crescent, larvae of Aster Leafminer Fly, and some species of larvae of small flies. Some vertebrate animals also feed on asters occasionally. The Ruffed Grouse and Wild Turkey feed on the seeds and foliage, while such songbirds as the Swamp Sparrow and Eastern Goldfinch also eat the seeds. The White-Tailed Deer and Cottontail Rabbit browse on the foliage; cattle, sheep, and other domesticated farm animals also browse on the foliage.



Photo courtesy of Illinois Wildflower

Sun Exposure: Full, Partial

Soil Moisture: Wet, Medium-Wet, Medium

Height: 5 feet

Bloom Time: July, August, September

Bloom Color: White - Cream

Sources: https://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/wetland/plants/fltp_aster.html, <https://www.prairiemoon.com/doellingeria-umbellata-flat-topped-aster>

Harris' Checkerspot - *Chlosyne harrisii*

Family: *Nymphalidae*

Identification: Upperside is orange with black markings. Underside of hindwing has a red-orange stripe at the margin and a red-orange, white, and black checkered pattern on remainder of wing.

Wing Span: 1 7/16 - 2 inches (3.6 - 5.1 cm).

Life History: Females lay eggs in clusters under host plant leaves. Caterpillars feed on leaves communally in a web. Partially-grown caterpillars hibernate at the base of the host plant.

Flight: One brood from June-July.

Caterpillar Hosts: Flat-topped white aster (*Doellingeria umbellata*).

Adult Food: Flower nectar.

Habitat: Moist areas such as marshes, bog edges, pastures, and meadows.

Range: Maritime Provinces west to Manitoba, south to West Virginia, southern Ohio, and northeastern Illinois.



Source: <https://www.butterfliesandmoths.org/species/Chlosyne-harrisii?fbclid=IwAR1CYvRjtmeBCRo7D3zzBqpq1TINW1dHOZIdNFtaTUIf8119earl4u8dzHE>

Photo: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chlosyne_harrisii

NOVEMBER PRESENTATION

The November presentation with Nathaniel Pilla about carnivorous and parasitic plants was quite interesting, as well as entertaining. His little boy was cute & entertaining too!!

- We learned about sundews having sticky spine-like enzymes, which help the plant digest live prey. And pitcher plants, that trap & consume mostly ants. These are both found in fens or bogs.
- Bladderworts are aquatic plants that have whorled leaves that are like bladders. Small water fleas become trapped & then consumed.
- Protists are neither plant, bacteria, or fungi. Some examples would be algae, slime mold, amoebas. I had to look this up to get a better understanding and found a few fun facts:



- ⇒ Algae are protists that perform photosynthesis. Algae are very similar to plants. They have chlorophyll and produce food using oxygen and the energy from the Sun. However, they are not considered plants because they do not have specialized organs or tissues like leaves, roots, and stems.
- ⇒ There are two types of slime molds: cellular and plasmodial. Plasmodial slime molds are made from one large cell. They are also called acellular. Even though these organisms are just one cell, they can be very large, even up to several feet wide. They also can have many nuclei in their single cell. Cellular slime molds are small single-celled protists that can join together to work as a single organism. Different cellular slime molds will take on different functions when they work together.
- ⇒ Amoebas are small single-celled organisms that move using pseudopods. Amoebas are shapeless and eat by engulfing their food with their bodies. Amoebas reproduce by splitting in two through the cell division process called mitosis.
- We learned that eastern poison ivy vines up trees, and western poison ivy is a shrub. We don't have poison oak in this area, and poison sumac is primarily only found in high quality wet areas.



- Bear Corn - The root system is parasitic on the roots of oak trees. Dependent on the host tree for its nourishment, the suckers of the parasitic roots cause the formation of large rounded knobs on the roots of the host tree.

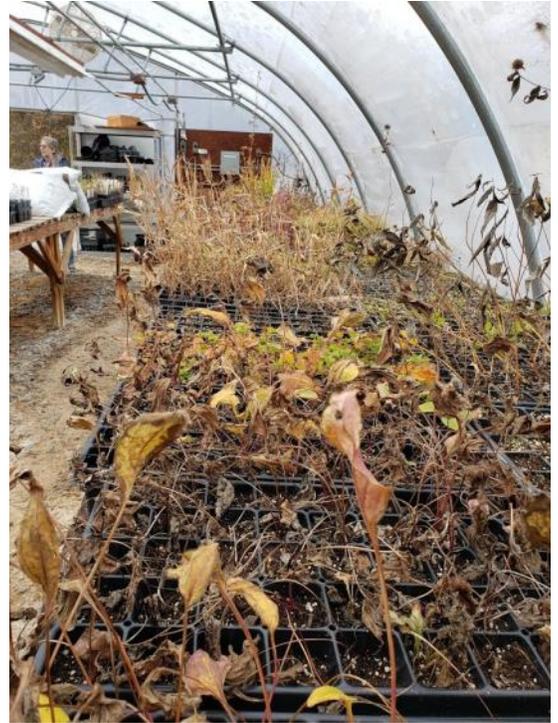


- Dodder is a plant made up of wiry twining vines of the morning-glory family that are highly deficient in chlorophyll, are parasitic on other plants, and have tiny scales instead of leaves.
- Indian pipe is in the blueberry family. It has no chlorophyll and doesn't depend on photosynthesis. It utilizes fungi to obtain carbon from the roots of autotrophic (self-nourishing) plants.

This is a subject for another day, but I came across information recently that there are certain plants that APPEAR to be parasitic, but are not exactly: Epiphytes are plants that grow upon another plant, but do not draw food or water from it. The epiphytic plant uses the host plant only for support. All its nutrients come from rainfall, the air, and materials which adhere to the exterior (such as bark crevices) of its host. Some examples of epiphytes are Spanish moss and ball moss (neither are true mosses), resurrection fern, and lichens.

As you really get into it, isn't the plant world really interesting, but strangely bizarre?!

WAITING FOR US AT THE GREENHOUSE:



THINGS TO DO

PROGRAMS & HIKES

Call for details & to register 219-844-3188

GIBSON WOODS	OAK RIDGE PRAIRIE
6201 Parrish Ave. Hammond, IN	301 South Colfax Street Griffith, IN 46323

Quilling for Beginners

Tuesdays, December 3, 10, 17 from 9:30-11 AM
Gibson Woods

Come and learn how to quill or continue a project you are working on. Cardstock, quilling paper and tools supplied. Designed for ages 15 and up. Pre-registration required for each session. \$5 per session

Name That Toon

Wednesdays, December 4-18 2019, and February 5-26 2020
from 9:30-11 AM
Gibson Woods

Increase your birding lists by enhancing your birding skills! Join us each week as we familiarize ourselves with the bird songs we hear in Northwest Indiana throughout the year. Pre-registration recommended, call 219-844-3188.

Southern Lake County Parks In Autumn/Winter

Thursday, January 9: Lemon Lake
Thursday, February 13: Grand Kankakee
From 9:30-11 AM

Enjoy our local autumn and winter wonderlands with a park naturalist at the parks in the southern part of the county. Please dress for weather! Pre-registration required, call 219-844-3188.

Bird Feeding Fun

Thursday, January 2, 2020 from 10-11:15 AM
Gibson Woods

Many species of birds stick around for our cold Northwest Indiana winters. We will learn about some of them, take a short outdoor walk to see who's around and then make some treats for them to enjoy at the feeder station (and one for you to take home too). Pre-registration required, please call 219-844-3188.

Wild About Turtles

Friday, January 3 2020 from 10-11 AM
Gibson Woods

Turtles are terrific! Discover some of their cool traits and maybe even see some up-close! Pre-registration required, please call 219-844-3188.

Full Moon Stroll

January 10, 2020, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Gibson Woods

Join us for the first full moon of 2020. Please dress for the weather. Pre-registration required, call 219-844-3188. Program is designed for adults.

Geology Of The Dunes Region Of The Calumet

Sunday, January 23, 2020 from 1-2:30 PM
Gibson Woods

Calumet region native, Dave Dolak is a professor of Instruction at Columbia College of Chicago. As a graduate researcher at Indiana Dunes National Park, he will share his expertise on the geology of the Dunes Region. Pre-registration recommended, call 219-844-3188. Ages 13 +

Valentine's Day Hot Chocolate Hike

February 14, 2020, 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM
Gibson Woods

Looking for a simple way to spend Valentine's Day? Join us as we take a hike around Gibson Woods and then warm up with some hot chocolate afterwards. Please dress for the weather. Pre-registration required, call 219-844-3188. Program is designed for adults.

Miller Garden Club

Fun'raiser "Bingo for Boulders" 2020

We're raising money for boulders to be placed in and around Marquette Park. These decorative boulders serve two purposes: They look attractive and they protect the infrastructure in our park. We place them near streetlight posts and utility boxes to prevent them from getting damaged. They are doing their job. We need more boulders to protect more locations.

Saturday, January 18, 2020
Lessard Hall, St. Mary's of the Lake
6060 Miller Ave., Gary, IN 46403

Doors open at 5:30 pm to enjoy a half-hour of refreshments before getting serious about all things BINGO at 6 pm! This is a 21+ evening of fun 'n games!" Admission will be \$20.00. Tickets can be purchased in advance through Eventbrite or at the door the night of the event. Cash and credit cards accepted. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bingo-for-boulders-tickets->

Porter County Master Gardeners

16th Annual Gardening Show

Saturday, January 25, 2020
8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. CST (Chicago Time)
Admission \$10 Cash or Check
Children under 12 Free
Free Door Prizes
Free Parking
Porter County Expo Center
215 East Division Road
Valparaiso, IN 46383

For more info: <https://www.pcgarden.info/gardening-show-2/>

Wild Ones will have a booth at this show!