WAM Grant Monies Put to Good Use

by Esther Durnwald

Thanks to YOUR support of our annual conference and to the generosity provided by the Hal and Jean Glassen Foundation WAM offers grants for educators to establish native plantings. Maryann Whitman (WAM Grant Coordinator) and Robert Krueger (WAM Grant Chairman) have received some follow up reports this summer from grant recipients. Hearing back from our recipients is an important part of the grant process as each project differs in its scope and vision. It is not only informative, but inspiring and encouraging to receive feedback from those initiating these wonderful projects. Here is an excerpt from one of those reports that we’d like to share with you. Frank Stukenborg, York Township Park & Recreation Committee Chairman and John Farmer, Project Coordinator report on 7/26/08 that at the Mary McCann Park “…the butterfly wildflower beds are now planted….five species of butterfly were seen to visit the beds WHILE WE WERE PLANTING! And yesterday, while mulching and watering the plants, ten species were recorded including: black swallowtail, summer azure, pearl crescent, eastern tailed blue, cabbage white, clouded sulphur, silver-spotted skipper, eastern comma, tawny edge skipper, and Peck’s skipper on or near the beds. Although, in the absence of blossoms on the plants, the butterflies/ were mainly fortuitous visitors or drawn by the fermenting wood after mulching, their presence in such variety attests to the placement of the beds as very favor- able to their intended purpose. As you will recall, when designed to frame our teaching station atop a man-made mound, we felt that the combination of wildflowers and landform would accent the teaching site with both wildflowers and the insects they support. It looks as if that effect will be realized as the plants grow and bloom. By labeling them visitors will be able to associate plant names with their characteristics and with the butterflies and other insects that they attract. Our sincere thanks to the Hal and Jean Glassen Foundation for providing the funds and to WAM for directing grant money our way for completion of this project.”

More WAM Grant info on page 3

Our mission is to promote, coordinate, and participate in education, enjoyment, science, and stewardship of native wildflowers and their habitats – including promoting public education of proper principles, ethics, and methods of landscaping with native wildflowers and associated habitats.
In the past week we have received generous amounts of much needed rain. At our farm here in Portland we have experienced an exceptionally beautiful summer season. Temperatures were quite moderate and other than that dry spell in August we had adequate moisture. Obviously, every growing season is unique and different than the last. Our Lupine field was not as in vivid bloom as in years past and many of the stalks were void of seed pods. Were the blooms not pollinated? What might have prevented pollination? Rain? Cold temperatures? It’s not due to lack of bees because thanks to our local beekeeper we have a healthy population of honey bees this year. This situation reminds me of another benefit of diversity, or “not putting all your eggs in one basket”. Although our yield of Lupine seed will be lower this year, surely another species, perhaps Coreopsis or Blackeyed Susan, will provide an exceptional harvest. The more species you can include in your native planting the more you can be assured of its health and sustainability. The variety of flora will not only offer you interest visually, but provide a selection of food and cover for wildlife. Understanding our need for pollinators, not only for our wildflower seed production, but our fruits and vegetables reminds me of our interconnection with our natural world. We have chosen “Building a Web of Life” as our theme for the 2009 conference and are thrilled to report that Doug Tallamy, author of Bringing Nature Home, has agreed to be our keynote speaker. Be sure to mark March 8 and 9, 2009 on your calendars for what already looks to be a terrific event. Our winter issue will provide complete conference information.

Thanks to board member, Suzie Knoll, an updated membership brochure is now available. Cheryl Tolley continues to put in endless hours of work as she is putting a precious collection of Michigan native plant slides onto disc. We’ll have more to report on this project in the future.

Did you know that your WAM Board Members are volunteers? While working the WAM exhibit at the Lansing Home and Garden Show I encountered someone, who made the assumption that WAM Board Members are paid. Not so. Your WAM board members contribute their time and talents to further the interest, knowledge and awareness about Michigan’s natural heritage. Consider sharing a bit of your time and talent for this cause. We could use help with newsletter editing, contribution of articles for our newsletters, promotion of our conference, fundraising and helping at WAM exhibit opportunities. Don’t hesitate to contact me at wildflowers@voyager.net if you would like to play a more active role. Have a great fall!

~ PRESIDENT’S NOTE ~

American Roots

American Roots is a small native plant nursery located about halfway between Clarkston and Ortonville, in the center of Northern Oakland County. It is owned and run by Trish Hacker Hennig, a Michigan farm girl from Pinconning. American Roots is somewhat an extension of the gardens that have been created here over 15 years, with labeled native plants combining with non-natives in some areas, and areas of all-natives in others. Garden clubs visit annually to tour the gardens and learn about the wildflowers and native grasses.

The Nursery is also very much born of this place. For many years, I have been learning about native plants, through primarily the extraordinary conferences sponsored by WAM and my involvement as an officer and member of our local Wild Ones chapter. Every seminar or class I attended, and every book read, was reinforced by coming back to my own piece of nature and seeing the plants and plant communities right here. Volunteering with plant sales and learning how to identify plants in the wild led me to the amazing realization that many of the plants were right here, in my face all along. I just needed the eyes to see them. So now I have “my eyes on” wherever I go. The 10 acres we call home has vernal pools, wooded wetlands, open field edges, upland Oak-Hickory woodlands and wooded lake frontage on Perry Lake. Consequently, many plants are represented. Woodland wildflowers grow here, as do sedges, wetland plants, shrubs, trees, and some of the prairie plants. Most of the seeds I collect are from here or very near this extraordinary place. A major goal is to offer as many Oakland County Genotype plants as possible.

Over the past 2.5 years a great deal of time has been spent building structures (most recently a new greenhouse) to facilitate all the aspects of growing plants, and I keep working on increasing the diversity of species to offer. American Roots is open mainly by appointment, but also is open a few Saturdays through the summer. We contract grow for landscapers and designers, and do consulting work as well. Contact us at:…

Trish A. Hacker Hennig

American Roots

1958 Hidden Lake Trail • Ortonville, MI 48462
248.627-8525 • 248.882-7768 (Cell)
248.627-3865 (Fax)

Esther Durnwald
President

BIZINESS MEMBER PROFILE
WAM Grant Packets Available for 2009 Grant Cycle

With the generous monetary support of the Harold and Jean Glassen Memorial Foundation, WAM is pleased to announce that it has a minimum of $5000 available in allocations for this year’s grant cycle. These grants are for educational projects involving the planting of native wildflowers, shrubs and trees for the enjoyment and education of school children and the public. Each applicant may request up to $1000 in support. The application deadline is December 15, 2008. All applicants will be notified if they are or are not recipients of an award no later than January 30, 2009. Awardees will receive their funds at the WAM annual conference during ANR week in March, of 2009. This meeting will be held at the Kellogg Center on the Michigan State University campus. If you have any further questions pertaining to the grant application process or would like to receive a complete application packet please contact Maryann Whitman, WAM Grant Coordinator, at the address below. Good luck and thank you for your interest in WAM's Glassen Educational Grant Program.

Maryann Whitman
WAM Grant Coordinator
2271 Rochester Road
Oakland, MI 48363
Email: maryannwhitman@comcast.net

Wildflower Association of Michigan
A nonprofit organization founded in 1986, Lansing, MI

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Please make check or money order payable to WAM
And mail with this form to:

Wildflower Association of Michigan
c/o Jean Weirich, Treasurer
3947 E. St. Joseph
Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Seed Collecting Opportunity

The State Park Stewardship Unit is once again gearing up for our annual native prairie seed collection activities. More than a dozen seed collection workdays will be held throughout the month of October and in early November in eight southern Michigan State Parks and Recreation Areas. Seed collected by volunteers will be used to re-establish and restore tallgrass prairie, lakeplain prairie, and oak savanna ecosystems.

For a complete schedule of seed collection workdays and to register visit the DNR’s website: www.michigan.gov/dnvolunteers, and click on the “Calendar of Volunteer Stewardship Workdays” link.
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Your WAM membership expires on the date Above your name. This is the only notice you Will receive. IF IT IS TIME, PLEASE RENEW.

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