



# Newsletter

## August 2024



### Since Last Time ...

Members gathered at Josh Banks' Johnson City home for a tour of his native plant landscape and for shopping at his budding nursery project, Paragraph Design. We owe many thanks to both Josh and to our Events Committee for setting this up!



There are also a few changes to the WOAHA chapter web page. We've added menu buttons for a newsletter archive, tee-shirt sales, and a book page. Click on the buttons, and you'll find about what you'd expect (access to the 2024 newsletters, a description of our fundraiser with a link to our vendor, and book reviews and recommendations).

<https://appalachianhighlands.wildones.org/>

Mark Merz, 2024 WOAHA President

### Calendar at-a-Glance

**September 7: Monical Hoel Tour of Emory & Henry Meadow, Meadowview, VA**

**October 26: Members' Fall Plant & Seed Share at Steele Creek Park in Bristol**

**November 14: WOAHA Annual Meeting at The Summit in Bristol**



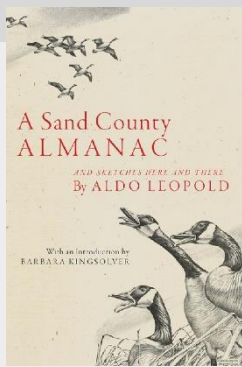
Connecting people and native plants for a healthy planet

### WOAHA T-Shirts Are Available for Order!

It's a nice shirt with a great message. There are many style and color combinations, but they all have the small chapter logo in the front left pocket area and the large "Get Wild" design on the back.

[www.bonfire.com/get-wild-6/](http://www.bonfire.com/get-wild-6/), or scan the QR code on the left with your phone's camera.





## Bookshelf: Review by Mark Merz

### *A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There*

By Aldo Leopold

From my first days in Forestry, I've encountered this book: Friends treasured it, and professors assigned readings from it. When I met the woman I would marry, I found that it always lay somewhere close at hand on a bedside stand or a living room table. Herself a retired forester, it's one of the books she most often gives as a gift. People who care about land management and conserving resources care deeply about this book!

It was first published in 1949 by Oxford University Press. There are more than 2 million copies in print, and (for the polyglot) you can read it in any of 14 different languages. It's a book that inspired many early environmentalists and profoundly shaped the course of the movement.

The first major section of the book is structured like a journal, beginning with January, working its way through the months of a year, with an essay (or 2, 3, or even 4) per month. In each one Leopold vividly and closely describes an encounter with the natural world of his family's 120-acre home on the Wisconsin River. These interactions become springboards for commentary, philosophy, and biology instruction by a writer whose career included, after graduating from Yale Forestry School, work with the U.S. Forest Service, teaching at the University of Wisconsin, and founding their Department of Wildlife Ecology. Leopold's writing is so captivating and persuasive that the reader becomes hungry for the same kinds of experiences he describes. When Leopold describes the mating ritual of the woodcock in his "Sky Dance" essay from the month of April, you are inspired to scout out your own "amphitheater in woods or brush," where "in its center there must be a mossy spot, a streak of sterile sand, a bare outcrop of rock, or a bare roadway." The author tells you exactly what time to be there on the first warm evening in April and every evening afterward until June 1<sup>st</sup>. He tells you, too, what you'll hear (peenting) and what you'll see: "[T]he bird flutters skyward in a series of wide spirals, emitting a musical twitter. Up and up he goes, the spirals steeper and smaller, the twittering louder and louder, until the performer is only a speck in the sky. Then without warning, he tumbles like a crippled plane, giving voice in a soft liquid warble that a March bluebird might envy." It's writing that insists what's happening outside is better than what's happening inside: See it; love it; treasure it!

The copy of *Sand County* we have in our home has an introduction by Robert Finch (though I also want to see what Barbara Kingsolver writes in her introduction to the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition). Finch describes the first of remaining two sections as possessing "an important change of tone, perspective and intent" with "language more elevated and less personal." It's in this section that Leopold's message becomes urgent and serious as he contemplates humankind's impact on the natural world and how actions can be reformed. Finch describes the final section of the book as a culmination of Leopold's environmental thinking in the shape of "brave public statements, directly addressing many of the political, cultural, social, and educational issues" ... "for nothing less than a fundamental reform in our relationship with the land."

This book is not just interesting and enjoyable to read; it's important! You'll be surprised by the connections you make between *Sand County Almanac* and other nature and environmental writing and speaking you read and hear. It's been *that* influential!



## Member Profile: Dick Olson

I recall my mother showing me a fringed orchid she had discovered near a pond on their property. They had moved to a 280-acre rundown farm in central Wisconsin after my dad retired from a career as a wildlife biologist. Gail and I moved north for a few years after my retirement in 2003 to help my dad, and it was there we first learned about Wild Ones. One rainy, cold spring day, Gail and I came in from a walk in the woods and complained about the miserable conditions to my dad, whose response was “There’s no such thing as a bad day in the woods.” My brothers and I transferred the property to Portage County to become the Steinhagen Recreation Area, a nature park in their honor.

We relocated to Bristol in 2007 and found our 18-acre mix of field and forest to keep us busy. I often think of my parents’ influence as we add meadows and trees to increase biodiversity on our land. My career as an environmental scientist gave me knowledge of ecoregions and biodiversity; however, it’s more satisfying and surprising when it’s your own efforts on your own land that attract more butterflies and birds. I feel fortunate to be able to actively assist our local WOA Chapter to expand, connect with new members, and promote educational activities.

## Wild Ones

Since our previous newsletter came late last month, not much has changed on the national website. This upcoming event still looks promising: [Webinar: “Combating the Biodiversity Crisis with Native Plants” with Sarah Gray & Coralie Palmer on August 22nd at 6 PM \(CT\)](#). You can click on the link for more information. You’ll also see links to a number of recorded webinars by speakers such as Benjamin Vogt, Heather McCargo, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and Lorraine Johnson.

There’s still a photo contest running through the end of August (<https://wildones.org/photo-contest-info/>), and you can always see the latest journal at <https://members.wildones.org/journals/>.



## Event Details

**September 7**

### **Emory & Henry Meadow Tour**

Join Wild Ones Appalachian Chapter at the Emory & Henry Cemetery in Emory, Virginia, as we walk the grounds of this historic cemetery and see the newly developed native plant meadow at the edge of the burial grounds. The E&H Cemetery Board and the University have partnered with the US Fish and Wildlife Partners program to create a field of native plants and flowers that stretches more than 2 acres. We'll meet some of the volunteers and hear about the process.

The tour is free and open to the public.

**Where:** Emory and Henry Cemetery  
30419 County Rd 838, Meadowview, VA

**Date:** September 7, 2024

**Time:** 6:30-8:00 pm

Directions from Exit 26 off I -81: College Dr. north (toward E & H and joins Hillman Hwy) for 0.8 miles, then left turn on Elm Street, and then right on Cambridge Ave.

Campus Map: <https://www.emoryhenry.edu/about/maps-directions/>

**October 26**

### **WOAH Plant/Seed Swap and Potluck Dinner**

Fall is a great time to share both native plants and seeds from our gardens. Our annual event is one of the benefits of being an official Wild Ones member! This is an opportunity to thin out your flower beds of native plants and bring your labeled plants or seeds to swap and share.

Please start to gather your extra plants or seeds and identify them for the swap. If you don't have any extras, just come and take some home!

The Swap will be followed by a potluck supper and social hour. Please bring your own beverage and a dish to share. This will be a great opportunity to learn about natives, get plants, and meet members.

You will be charged \$2 at the gate for parking.

**Date:** October 26, 2024,

**Time:** 3:30-6:00pm

**Location:** Steele Creek Park, 4 Little Ln, Bristol, TN, 37620 – Civitan Shelter



## Event Details

### November 14      **WOAH Annual Meeting (3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday Party)**

On November 14th we will celebrate our third anniversary as the Appalachian Highlands Chapter.

There will be a short business meeting with a social hour afterwards. We will hold the election of 2025 officers.

This is a great time as members to reflect on what we have accomplished and to discuss our future goals.

Water and coffee will be provided. Please bring your favorite light refreshment and your nametag.

The Summit building is set back from Volunteer Parkway with an access road between Eastman Credit Union and Bank of Tennessee. There is a cut-through on the Parkway divide for a left turn if you are coming from the downtown Bristol area.

**Date:** Thursday, November 14th, 2024

**Time:** 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm (Eastern Time)

**Location:** The Summit, Expedition Room, 1227 Volunteer Pkwy, Bristol, TN, 37620

## There Are Many Ways to Contribute to the WOAHS Newsletter!

- Send in your own member profile. As you've seen over the last several months, your profile can take many forms. Ken Moore's career involved native plants, so he described his significant work accomplishments. He sent in a photo, too. Yours can follow his model, or it can be as simple as telling a little about yourself and how you got involved with native plants.
- Write about your garden. What are you hoping to accomplish, what resources did you use, what strategies did you employ? Do you have before and after pictures that show what you've done?
- Have you read a good nature book that you'd like to review?

Your fellow WOAHS members would love to hear from you! Send your text and photos to [markmerz243@gmail.com](mailto:markmerz243@gmail.com).