



# April/May 2021 Chapter Newsletter

**Wild Ones Mission Statement:** promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration, and establishment of native plant communities.

**Member Login:** If you are a member, you are entitled to the resources on the national website. To create your website login, go to [www.wildones.org](http://www.wildones.org) and click on the “Member Login” button near the top right corner of the home page. Then click on “Already a member but not registered? Register password for member here”. Complete the short form for the Wild Password Registration. **Note:** use the same email you used when completing your registration form to join Wild Ones.

**Membership:** Our Wild Ones chapter is dedicated to educating and advocating for biodiversity in the Great Smoky Mountains. We offer a variety of programs and events throughout the year that teach and encourage sustainable landscaping and gardening practices using plants that are native to Our Smoky Mountain Region. Membership is vital to the ongoing success of our chapter. We invite you to attend our programs and to become a member! To obtain a membership packet, please contact Marti Agler at [martiava@att.net](mailto:martiava@att.net)

**Kroger Community Rewards Program:** Wild Ones members can help raise money for their chapter. One of the ways in which you can do this is through the Kroger Community Rewards program. This program makes fundraising easy by donating to local organizations based on the shopping you do every day. Once you link your Card to an organization, all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Shopper’s Card. Our Chapter’s exclusive organization number is XN695. Visit the following link to sign up today: <https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>

## Trees We Love!

X	T	G	I	A	N	T	S	E	Q	U	O	I	A
N	T	U	N	L	A	W	U	K	A	O	F	I	H
W	I	L	L	O	W	H	D	O	O	W	D	E	R
F	S	S	D	H	D	O	P	O	P	L	A	R	V
I	Q	S	O	S	O	N	R	I	F	W	S	M	F
K	D	E	O	A	O	E	F	P	E	I	P	M	O
X	J	R	W	J	W	Y	A	S	L	D	E	Y	H
K	F	P	N	U	S	L	P	Y	M	D	N	A	C
F	E	Y	O	N	S	O	E	C	U	R	P	S	R
F	R	C	T	I	A	C	R	A	Y	D	E	L	I
O	B	S	T	P	B	U	B	M	W	O	J	D	B
V	R	Y	O	E	T	S	D	O	O	W	G	O	D
E	V	X	C	R	T	T	B	R	Q	E	N	I	P
T	U	N	T	S	E	H	C	E	E	L	P	A	M

Ash Aspen Basswood Birch Chestnut Cottonwood Cypress Dogwood  
 Elm Fir Giant Sequoia Honey Locust Juniper Maple Oak Pine Poplar  
 Redwood Spruce Sycamore Walnut Willow

# Status of Restoration of the American Chestnut

By Richard (Dick) Olsen

The American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) was a dominant native tree in the Eastern hardwood forests, especially the Smoky Mountains, until the chestnut blight decimated the species in the early 1900s. The chestnut was well known for providing a reliable source of nuts for wildlife. We may not fully appreciate its essential role in the forest ecosystem. The US Geological Survey Native Bee Lab reported that the Lost Chestnut Bee (a pollinator dependent on the American chestnut) diminished along with blooming chestnuts (<http://usgsbiml.tumblr.com/post/615607397487149056/the-lost-chestnut-bee-have-you-seen-this-bee>). They state that chestnuts were critical to pollinators by “providing tons of pollen in a forested environment in late spring/early summer when nothing else was blooming in the woods.” Plus, for human beings the lumber was a vital resource while the nuts were fed to livestock. People also enjoyed the taste of the roasted nuts.

Most of us do not even recognize that this species has vanished. Grandparents may remember stories about them. Currently, hikers may see chestnut seedlings growing as stump sprouts that are eventually killed by the blight before producing nuts. It was never a city tree due to the prickly burrs containing the nuts. Restoration would benefit wildlife plus be an important part of fulfilling our responsibility to preserve nature that is being impacted by so many human introduced pests.

The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) has devoted over 30 years to developing a blight resistant chestnut that could survive and provide ecosystem functions similar to the decimated species. TACF has a core professional staff and research farm with active Chapters of volunteers in the 16 states covered by the original range of the species. Currently, TACF is pursuing three approaches to achieving restoration: traditional breeding, transgenics, and hypo virulence. The breeding program has required years for each generation to grow and select resistant trees for cross breeding in the next generation. This process is being shortened and becoming more effective by using genomic tools. The transgenic approach has succeeded in introducing a gene that allows the tree to resist the blight. Finally, viruses are being selected that will attack the blight as part of the hypo virulence method, which has proven to be successful in Europe.

Progress has been made with all approaches such that state TACF Chapters are now establishing seed orchards. These orchards will produce nuts adapted to local conditions (such as climate) and maintain a high level of genetic diversity. In addition, restoration planting methods are being compared, such as planting seedlings with predator protection versus nuts with no protection. It is anticipated that widespread restoration plantings will begin in the next 7-10 years. Most planting sites may be on state and federal public lands although private lands will be included. There will be ample possibilities for volunteers to assist in the final stage of returning this important native tree to its former range. For more information and opportunities, please visit the TACF web site: [www.acf.org](http://www.acf.org).



American chestnut being used in the TACF breeding program



chestnut burr with nuts

# How to Raise Butterflies – DIY

By Glenna Julian

The first step in selecting a location is to pick an area with at least four hours of sunlight each day because butterflies are cold blooded and need to warm up even in summer to fly well. On many mornings they will bask on a flower in order for their wings to dry. You need to make sure you provide the necessary plant life to accommodate your butterflies.

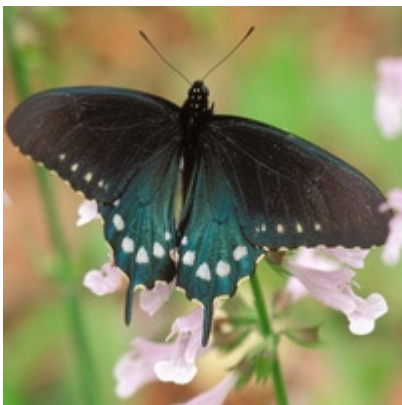
Native plants are best. Some trees would be Willow and Pawpaw trees.

A good choice for woody perennials would be native plants like Spicebush. Other native perennials like asters, sunflowers, coneflowers, and milkweeds are good choices. Flowering vines also would be a good choice.

Grow pipevine to attract beautiful swallowtails, native passionflower for fritillaries, and pawpaw to attract our beautiful zebra swallowtail. Because Monarchs lay eggs on milkweed, they need these plants for eggs and caterpillars' food. There are several species of milkweed native to our area.

Of course, you will not need all the plants suggested, but you must provide some as food for the butterflies you hope to attract. When you provide host food, butterflies will choose your plants for laying their eggs. Caterpillars will hatch, and then you may find them eating the leaves of the host plant, and the cycle continues ... butterfly, egg, caterpillar, chrysalis.

If you are interested in raising butterflies, make sure you have a sunny garden and host plants. The butterflies will find you, and then you can enjoy their visits. If you plant right, they will come!



Pipevine Swallowtail Butterfly



Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia tomentosa*)



Gulf Fritillary Butterfly



Passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*)



Monarch Butterfly



Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*)

## Some Interesting Facts About Hummingbirds

- \* The average nest is about the size of a half-dollar coin. The eggs look like tiny white jelly beans.
- \* Hummingbirds are very territorial and spend a lot of time chasing other birds away.
- \* Banding research indicates that hummingbirds are likely to return to the area where they hatched.
- \* They are the only birds that can fly backwards.
- \* Hummingbirds can beat their wings fifty times per second and faster.
- \* When flowers are hard to find, hummingbirds also eat tree sap and small insects.
- \* Only the females build hummingbird nests. The tiny nests are made of lichen, moss and spiderwebs.

### Native Wildflowers Especially Loved By Hummingbirds



Columbine ( *Aquilegia canadensis* )



Foxglove beardtongue ( *Penstemon digitalis* )



Blue Sage ( *Salvia azurea* )



Indian pink ( *Spigelia marilandica* )



Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)



Wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*)



Shining blue star (*Amsonia illustris*)



Royal Catchfly (*Silene Regis*)



Summer phlox (*Phlox paniculata*)



Trumpet Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)