

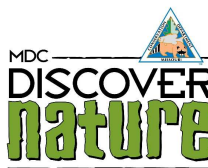
The News From Native Plant School

February 2014



Native Plant School is a partnership between Shaw Nature Reserve, Grow Native! and Wild Ones Natural Landscapers. Classes are held in the Whitmire Wildflower Garden at Shaw Nature Reserve.

Please register at shawnature.org/NPS



Upcoming classes:

2014 Schedule

Thur, Feb. 6, 2014, 1-4 p.m.
RainScaping Fundamentals
(class is full)

Thr, Mar. 13 1-4pm
Greenhouse Propagation

March 21-22, 2014
Partners in Native Landscaping
Workshop at MBG
special guest Doug Tallamy

Thur, April 10, 1-4 p.m.
Top Performing Plants

Friday May 9, 4-7:30 p.m.
Saturday May 10, 9-4 p.m.
Shaw Wildflower Market

Thur, May 15, 1-4 p.m.
Container Gardening

Thur, June 12, 1-4 p.m.
Landscaping with Sedges

Friday Sept. 5, 4-7:30 p.m.
Fall Wildflower Market

Thur, Sep. 11, 1-4 p.m.
Landscaping with Vines

Please register at
shawnature.org/NPS

Nature Connection:

The practice of putting the garden to bed may be a death sentence for overwintering insects and birds. Insect pupa exist on and inside plant stems and leaves and provide food to birds. Stems that hold seed off of the ground in winter, like many native perennials, grasses, shrubs and trees also provide critical food to winter birds, especially when snow is on the ground covering most seeds. The seed and insects remaining on plant stems is the sole food source during snow-covered periods (with the exception of feeders). Birds seem lethargic during these periods and may need more food.



A junco jumps up from the snow to peck seeds from eastern blazing star on a cold winters day.

A greater variety of native plants provides food for a greater variety of insects and birds. This winter I've noticed an abundance of seed on Eastern blazingstar (*Liatris scariosa*), orange coneflower (*Rudbeckia fulgida*), slender mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*), purple daisy (*Aster patens*), creek oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*), and beakgrass (*Diarrhena obovata*).

Bring Conservation Home:

Interested in becoming a Habitat Advisor? St. Louis Audubon's Bring Conservation Home Program will host a Volunteer Training Workshop on Saturday, April 5th from 9 am to 4 pm

Habitat Advisors perform Bring Conservation Home (BCH) landscape surveys, owner interviews and certification assessments and compile their written notes and findings. Advisors will be asked to commit to 6-12 site visits per year that take 1.5-2 hours each.

This workshop covers the BCH program, our procedures, and key native landscaping concepts. Prior experience with the program areas (highlighted above) and a long-term commitment will be essential for your success and that of the program. This is a great way to creatively use your training and knowledge to improve our community one landscape at a time. For a description of the position, the required qualifications and an application, see http://www.stlouisaudubon.org/BCH/ha_position_description.pdf

You will be contacted after your application is received and reviewed. Those meeting the qualifications will receive additional details about the workshop, including the day's schedule and location directions. Workshop participants receive lunch, a Habitat Advisor Resource Binder, and a complete survey of their own landscape at no charge, including discounts at a variety of area retailers.

www.stlouisaudubon.org/BCH

"Nature has undoubtedly mastered the art of winter gardening and even the most experienced gardener can learn from the unrestrained beauty around them."

-Vincent A. Simeone

Partners for Native Landscaping:

The 2014 Partners for Native Landscaping: A Workshop for Homeowners will be held on March 21-22 at Missouri Botanical Garden. This year Doug Tallamy, author of Bringing Nature Home will be the keynote speaker. Space is limited so register soon.

On Friday evening, March 21, Tallamy will be presenting "Your Role in Building Biological Corridors: Networks for Life" followed by a book signing and cocktail reception with a cash bar. Please note that this is a separate event from the Saturday workshop that requires a separate registration. The cost for Friday evening is \$30.

On Saturday, March 22, Tallamy will be giving two presentations: "Bringing Nature Home" and "Are Alien Plants Bad?". The goal for this event is to inspire and educate beginner and practicing native gardeners. Other speakers include Dave Tylka, Cindy Gilberg and Scott Woodbury. The cost for Saturday is \$25.

The partners include The Missouri Department of Conservation, The Metro St. Louis Sewer District, Shaw Nature Reserve, Missouri Botanical Garden, BiodiverCity St. Louis, St. Louis Audubon Society, Wild Ones Natural Landscapers and Grow Native!.

Registration is separate for the two events. Use the links below to view the brochures and link to registration.

<http://stlouisaudubon.org/PNL/2014-Friday.php>

<http://stlouisaudubon.org/PNL/2014-Saturday.php>



Daily Kos Blog Mentions Tallamy

We were very excited recently to discover this blog post about a subject near and dear to us. The post, "Thinking of Planting or Replacing a Tree at Home? Consider This" reminds us about the importance of selecting plants not only for their visual characteristics and hardiness but to also consider the role that plant will play in the local ecosystem. We hope that you will give it a look.

<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2014/01/06/1267575/-Thinking-of-Planting-or-Replacing-a-Tree-at-Home-Consider-This>

Why Use Native Plants?

For a Sense of Place

People who have lived in one place for a time develop images of their home that create a sense of belonging and familiarity. Those who have lived in rural Missouri know about flowering dogwood. For instance, its blossoms and berries have made their mark in the hearts and thoughts of so many Missouri residents that it is the state tree. Many people have recognized this heart-felt connection with nature, and it often is referred to as “sense of place”.

“What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness.”
– John Steinbeck

Edgar Denison Day

Over the next few months we will be remembering Edgar Denison for his many contributions to native landscaping in St Louis and Shaw Nature Reserve. Edgar Denison will be celebrated this April as part of Kirkwood’s Earth Day observances and his art will be on display at Powder Valley Nature Center.

<http://www.kirkwoodinbloom.org>



Partners for Native Landscaping: Event Schedule

Partners for Native Landscaping: a workshop for homeowners

Note* Register separately for Friday and Saturday events at www.stlouisaudubon.org/NPL

Special Engagement Schedule: Friday, March 21, 2014

5:30-6:00 pm Registration

6:00-6:15 pm Intro/Welcome by Dr. Peter Wyse-Jackson

6:15-7:30 pm Doug Tallamy - Your Role in Building Biological Corridors: Networks for Life

7:30-9:00 pm Reception on upper level of Ridgeway Center

Workshop Schedule: Saturday, March 22, 2014

8:00-9:00 am Registration and visit booths

9:00-10:15 am Keynote Speaker: Bringing Nature Home - Doug Tallamy

10:15-10:45 am Break/visit booths

10:45-12 pm Bird and Butterfly Landscapes for St. Louis – Dave Tylka

12 -1:00 pm Lunch/visit booths (lunch in Beaumont Side Rooms)

1:00 -2:00 pm Are Alien Plants Bad? – Doug Tallamy

2:00-3:00 pm What is Rainscaping – Cindy Gilberg

3:00-3:30 pm Break/visit booths

3:30-4:30 pm Shade Landscapes: Challenges & Solutions – Scott Woodbury

4:30-5:00 pm Closing/visit booths

Remembering Edgar Denison:

Edgar W. Denison was born in Stuttgart, Germany and immigrated to St. Louis, Missouri, in 1927, settling in Kirkwood, Missouri, in 1932, where he lived the rest of his life.

Though Denison knew very little English when he first arrived in the United States, a fact that may have contributed to his initial preference to explore the countryside over socializing, and carried his thick German accent throughout his life, he was generous in sharing his knowledge and his plants. His own Kirkwood garden was a showcase, with over 1,000 different varieties of plants, and he shared specimens and information freely with neighbors and visitors and even the Missouri Botanical Garden.

He was very active with the Missouri Botanical Garden, and wrote many articles for the Garden’s Bulletin through the years. He also trained volunteers for the Garden’s “Answer Man” horticulture answer service, and led wildflower walks at the Garden’s Shaw Arboretum in Gray Summit, Missouri.

Denison was co-founder of the Missouri Native Plant Society, and was an active member and leader throughout his life and contributed many articles to its publication Missouriensis. He was also a long-time member of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society and contributed articles to its publication, Nature Notes.

Denison served on the executive committee of the St. Louis chapter of the Sierra Club for many years. He and Ruth Denison were also members of the Missouri Prairie Foundation, and the Denison Prairie, a tract of 440 acres in southwestern Missouri’s Barton County, is named after him in recognition of his contributions to Missouri Department of Conservation.

Gardening Tips:

Prepare mowers, string trimmers, etc. for use. Clean air filters, new fuel, oil & filter change, perhaps tune-up, etc.

Finish pruning trees, shrubs, and vines before leaf-out in late March.

Most bare-rooted trees and shrubs should be planted in February or early March.

Burn grass clumps where appropriate (stay away from buildings).

Great Backyard Bird Count

The 2014 GBBC will take place Friday, February 14, through Monday, February 17. Please join us for the 17th annual count!

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are.

Everyone is welcome from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy, and it helps the birds.

Participants tally the number of individual birds of each species they see during their count period. They enter these numbers on the GBBC website.

<http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>

An archive of this newsletter is available at:
<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/visit/family-of-attractions/shaw-nature-reserve/gardens-gardening-at-shaw-nature-reserve/native-landscaping-for-the-home-gardener/native-plant-school/the-news-from-native-plant-school.aspx>

The Sharing Garden By Cindy Gilberg

For many, gardening tends to be a solitary activity. We use the land as our canvas and paint with a selected plant palette—the garden is part science, part art as we attempt to order nature to fit our vision. Yet it is more fulfilling to go beyond that and share the garden with others, especially our children, family, friends and visiting wildlife. The garden is a place where we can get away from the fast-paced, technological world, slow down, relax and be present to what is around us. Moments spent together, sitting quietly, watching nature unfold in the garden can be some of the most memorable times to share. Right in our own yards we can take time to notice a bird gather twigs and leaves to build a nest, observe a caterpillar munching leaves or how a praying mantis tilts its head to keep a large mantid eye on us. These are the kinds of experiences that reconnect all of us with the natural world.

There are some key points to include in your garden that will ensure it is a place to interact and observe nature as well as a place to share with others. First, include Missouri native plants to enhance the habitat value of the garden. Flowers of plants such as coneflowers (Echinacea and Rudbeckia), Coreopsis, and blazing star (Liatris) attract butterflies foraging for nectar and many other



insects as well as producing an abundance of seed later in the season, all of which is attractive to birds. Grasses, such as side oats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*) and prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*), also produce a large amount of seed in fall. Many native shrubs and small trees have attractive flowers followed by fruit for both resident and migrating birds. In addition, these plants offer much needed shelter and nesting sites while enhancing the overall design of the garden. Be sure to select plants that bloom at different times to make food available to insects and birds at different times throughout the season for maximum viewing pleasure. As winter approaches, don't be so quick to cut down all the perennials as they are a source of both seed and shelter.

Always include paths and sitting areas throughout the landscape. This allows for movement through the landscape, for aesthetic features with four season interest and, most importantly, provides opportunities to interact and observe what's happening in the garden. Create intimate places to be together with seating (for 2-3 people). Crowds and noise are sure to scare away wildlife.

For those coldest of winter days, design the garden with interest and habitat that can be seen from inside. Find the windows where you most likely would sit inside and observe the garden. Is there an aesthetic view? Pathways, benches, trees with berries or interesting sculptural trunks are just a few of what can be added to make the winter scene more appealing. A simple water feature, such as a bubbler stone or shallow basin of water that offers fresh water for birds in winter will draw in a number of interesting birds and small mammals. Keep a good pair of binoculars and a field guide for identifying birds near the window.

The garden is more than a place to cultivate plants—it is a place to share, discover, wonder, to reconnect with ourselves and with nature, and a place to learn. It becomes an experience.