

The News From Native Plant School

March 2012



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 and pay [online](#)



Upcoming classes:

Please register and pay [online](#).

2012 Schedule

Thur, March 8, 1-4 p.m.
Deer-resistant Native Plants
(Donovan)

Fri, March 9, 5-7 p.m.
Book Review 2 Bringing Nature Home/Tallamy (Chs. 8-13) (Gilberg/Woodbury)

Thur, April 12, 9-12 noon
Sedges for Native Landscaping
(Woodbury)

Thur or Fri, April 12/13, 1-4 p.m.
Small Flowering Trees, Shrubs and Vines Part 1 (Woodbury)

Thur April 26, 9-12 noon
Container Gardening & Native Annuals (Woodbury)

Thur or Sat, April 26/28, 1-4 p.m.
Top Performing Native Plants for Home Gardening (Gilberg)

Sat, May 12, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Partners for Native Landscaping ..a workshop for homeowners

Saturday, March 31, 2012
8:00am - 4:00pm

at Powder Valley
Conservation Nature Center
Kirkwood, MO

Workshop Cost: \$15.00

This in-depth workshop is designed for beginner and advanced gardeners. It offers information and resources on how to landscape with native plants.

[More info and registration](#)



Nature Connection:



Spring peepers are in full roar right now. Don't miss the action in the Whitmire Wildflower Garden (and elsewhere at the Reserve). When walking up to one of the gardens three ponds,

Sat, May 12, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

[Spring Wildflower Sale](#)

Thurs or Sat, May 17/19, 1-4 p.m.
Gardening for Wildlife and People
(Tylka)

Thur or Sat, June 14/16, 1-4 p.m.
Rain Gardening for Home Owners
(Gilberg)

Thur or Fri, July 12/13, 1-4 p.m.
Small Flowering Trees, Shrubs and
Vines Part 2 (Woodbury)

Fri, Aug. 17, 5-7 p.m.
Book Review 1 Noah's Garden/Stein
(Chapters 1-6) (Gilberg/Woodbury)

Friday, Sept. 7, 4-8 p.m.
[Fall Wildflower Sale and Open
Garden](#)

Thur, Sept 13, 1-4 p.m.
Reconstructing Tallgrass Prairies
(Woodbury)

Thur-Fri, Oct. 11/12, 1-4 p.m.
Small Flowering Trees, Shrubs and
Vines Part 3 (Woodbury)

Fri, Oct. 12, 5-7 p.m.
Book Review 2 Noah's Garden/Stein
(Chapters 7-13) (Gilberg/Woodbury)

**Please register and
pay [online](#).**



Reserve). When waking up to one of the gardens three ponds, peepers will quiet down. Be still for a few minutes and they will start right up again...peeeep-peeeep-peeeep! You may also hear leopard and wood frogs.

Photo by Scott Woodbury

March Native Plant Highlight

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*) is a delightful, slow-growing, 15-20 foot small tree that is commonly found in the deciduous forests of the eastern half of the U.S. It favors growing in sites that are light sun to part shade with average soils and is one of the first understory trees to bloom in Missouri woodlands. Fragrant clusters of pure white, 5-petaled flowers appear in early spring, followed by small, round berries. These berries ripen in early summer—first bright red, then a purplish-plum—and are not only edible but quite delicious, often used to make jams, jellies or pies. A wide range of birds also relish the sweet treats in June, hence alternate name for *Amelanchier* is juneberry.



Gardening Tips:

Apply shredded bark mulch to tree/shrub beds and ground leaf compost to flower beds to control weeds and reduce need for watering.

Divide and replant summer and fall blooming perennials.

There is still time to plant stratified seed. You can plant indoors with grow lights or outside in a cold frame.

Scout for and pull *Euonymus* and Bush Honeysuckle seedlings when they are small. Grub out or pull larger plants with weed wrench type of device. For larger areas cut and spray 10% solution of roundup on stumps of larger plants.

"To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves."
~Gandhi

Signs of Spring

Signs of Spring



by Cindy Gilberg

Showy, spring-blooming native plants that are available in the nursery trade:

Spring-blooming wildflowers:

- Bellwort—*Uvularia grandiflora*
- Bloodroot—*Sanguinaria canadensis*
- Celandine poppy—*Stylophorum diphyllum*
- Columbine—*Aquilegia canadensis*
- Crested iris—*Iris cristata*
- Groundsel *Senecio* spp.
- Rose verbena—*Glandularia canadensis*
- Sand phlox—*Phlox bifida*
- Spiderwort—*Tradescantia* spp.
- Violet—*Viola*
- Wild sweet William—*Phlox divaricata*
- Woodland/wild stonecrop—*Sedum ternatum*
- Yellow honeysuckle—*Lonicera flava*

Spring-blooming shrubs and

After what always seems to be an endless Midwest winter, spring is a long awaited time of year for gardeners. Late winter and early spring—February and March—is a time of sloppy snows alternating with refreshing warm days. Beneath sheer cabin fever lies the need to feel warmth of the sun and see fresh green growth—and, yes, flowers! As the days get longer, subtle signs of spring begin to appear. Buds on tree and shrubs swell, soon to burst with new leaves. Mosses turn rich emerald green. Spring peepers herald in early spring on warm days and birds announce the new season.

Among the first signs that spring is around the corner are the fragrant blossoms of vernal witch hazel, appearing on balmy winter days in late January and February. The soft sweet scent greets you long before you see the small tree with its fringy yellow-orange flowers. Hazelnut, a wonderful nut-bearing shrub that grows throughout Missouri, is seen in bloom at this time as well. Despite its dependence on wind for pollination, it has showy, long yellow catkins (male flowers) and smaller purplish flowers (the female) on the same plant, adding interest to the spring scene.

As the calendar page turns to March, fragrant sumac makes an appearance. Before its leaves emerge, yellow flowers open and are clustered at the tips of the branches. This sumac grows in rocky open woods, and, in late summer, its red berries are favored by many birds and mammals. An intriguing flower to look for in early to mid-March is that of the pawpaw tree. Its maroon flowers are followed by unique yellow fruit that ripens in late summer.

Though the familiar white flowers of dogwood are still four to six weeks away, the orchestra of spring flowers is commencing a magnificent and colorful symphony. By the spring equinox (March 20th), the woodlands are filling with color as spring blooming plants race to bloom and set seed while the sunlight can still penetrate the tree canopy. Chartreuse flowers appear on spicebush, a small tree that grows in damp

Spring-blooming shrubs and small trees:

Aromatic sumac—*Rhus aromatica*

Clove currant—*Ribes odoratum*

Dogwoods—*Cornus spp.*

Gooseberry—*Ribes missouriense*

Pawpaw—*Asimina triloba*

Redbud—*Cercis canadensis*

Serviceberry—*Amelanchier arborea*

Spicebush—*Lindera benzoin*

Vernal witchhazel—*Hamamelis vernalis*

tree canopy. Chartreuse flowers appear on spicebush, a small tree that grows in damp woodlands. A medicinal tea was once made of the spicy bark and the red fruit is a choice food for wildlife. Among the shrubs that flower at this time is gooseberry. This small, 3-foot shrub inhabits woodlands and has delicate yellow blooms that dangle from thorny stems. The fruit that ripens later provides a delicious treat for birds. Its cousin, clove currant, is a larger shrub (5-6 foot) that is thornless and grows in more open, partial sun locations. It bursts into bloom with a blanket of brilliant yellow flowers. The flowers of this shrub have a spicy-sweet fragrance that floats on the air, attracting the attention of pollinators as well as gardeners.

Branches of redbuds become covered in the pink blooms, putting on a show that often coincides with the white flowers of wild plum and cherry. Now is also when the serviceberry begins to bloom with its white clusters of flowers. There are many native plants that are wind pollinated and therefore don't have showy flowers. Nonetheless, they join in the spring tradition with a heavy crop of yellow pollen. Included in this group are many of the large trees, such as the mighty oaks and hickories. The appearance of oak flowers is the harbinger of morel mushroom season.

Every week presents a new crop of flowers, making it a most exciting time of year. Add a diversity of native spring color to your garden so you don't miss a beat.

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