

The News From Native Plant School

August 2013



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



SHAW NATURE RESERVE
a division of the MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

Upcoming classes:

Please register at shawnature.org/NPS

2013 Schedule

Fri, Sept. 6, 4-8 p.m.
Shaw Wildflower Market

Thur, Oct. 10, 1-4 p.m.
Low-maintenance Ground Cover Gardening

Thur, Nov. 7, 1-4 p.m.
Pruning, Training and Transplanting Trees, Shrubs and Vines

Please register at shawnature.org/NPS

Email us with suggestions for 2014 classes.

Nature Connection; The Year of Food: Take a Closer Look at Your Garden

Chances are that if you have native plants in your garden, then you have some welcome visitors! Here is a list of a few native plants and features and the critters they attract.



Sunflowers

sunflower decapitator beetle chews flower stems just below the flowers causing the flower buds to die and tip over



Milkweed

monarch eggs laid underneath leaves, milkweed bug eating tips of leaves



Why Use Native Plants?

Stormwater management...

Rain gardens, bioretention and wetland detention basins filled with native plants are used by many homeowners, corporate campuses, and municipalities to control stormwater. They slow down and absorb rain water, thus reducing the quantity and velocity of storm water runoff while improving water quality. Trees are especially good at intercepting rainwater to prevent damage from erosion and flooding.

To find out more about how trees in your yard provide stormwater benefits try:
www.treebenefits.com/

Listen to horticulturist Scott Woodbury discuss native landscaping with Nature Conservancy botanist Doug Ladd.

<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/native-gardening.xml>

“The good man is the friend of all living things.”
~Mahatma Gandhi



Willow, plum
viceroy butterfly caterpillars may be seen eating leaves



Various plants

garden spiders make webs among taller native plants, jumping spiders prowl for prey on leaves

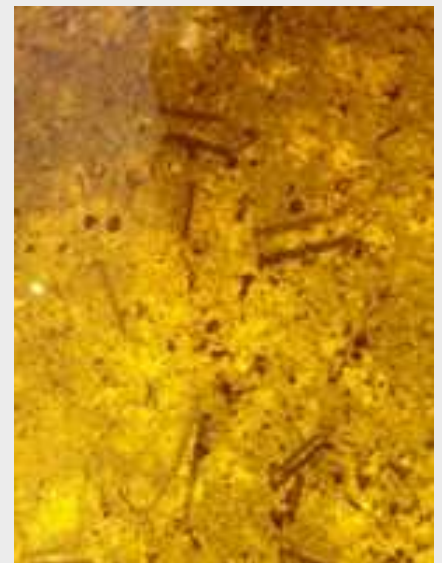


Ponds, pools of water

diving spiders walk on water and eat aquatic insects including mosquito larvae, dragonfly larvae live in bottom of ponds first year then emerge as adults in year two



Wafer ash, toothache tree
giant swallowtail caterpillars may be seen eating leaves



Gardening Tips:

Water all key planting areas thoroughly unless rainfall has been adequate.

Check plants for signs of water stress, nutrient deficiency or disease.

Divide and replant spring blooming perennials.

Hedges and shrubs can be pruned, if necessary, about mid-August.

Young trees and shrubs may be fertilized again.

Fall is a good time to plant a tree or new garden bed. Get your plants in after the heat breaks but well before the first frost.

Come to the Shaw Wildflower Market



Mud nests

mud dauber wasp paralyzes spiders, packs them in nest cells and are later eaten by wasp larvae

Next Month Shaw Wildflower Market Friday, September 6, 2013

Every fall Shaw Nature Reserve (SNR) hosts the Annual Shaw Wildflower Market where hundreds of native annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees, ready for fall planting, are available for home landscaping and wildlife habitat. The annual market also offers a variety of foods from meats, breads and veggies to beer, wine, art and craft items. Experts can answer your questions, provide plant lists and help you find native plants to fit your native landscape. Come browse the a wide selection of Missouri native plants and choose from a variety of plants for wet or dry soils, sunny or shady sites and a list that includes everything from *Allium* to *Zizia*.

Shaw Nature Reserve's
Shaw Wildflower Market

Admission is \$5.00 per person and free to MBG and SNR members.

**Friday, September 6,
2013**

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Local Wildflowers, Wine,
Bread, Meats, Cheese,
Art, Beer, Produce, Bake
off, and more...

[http://
www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/visit/family-of-attractions/shaw-nature-reserve/things-to-do-at-shaw-nature-reserve/events/wildflower-sale.aspx](http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/visit/family-of-attractions/shaw-nature-reserve/things-to-do-at-shaw-nature-reserve/events/wildflower-sale.aspx)



Q&A:

Question:

I heavily pruned back my beautyberry bush in late winter, to about 6 inches. It has since come back vigorously and was about 30 inches tall and bushy. We came back from a trip (during which St. Louis had a big rain storm) and the outer branches are now flopping down as if something fell on them or beat them down in the middle. Can I prune it back?

Answer:

If the branches are broken you should prune them off. If they are just drooping they may spring back up again after some time. In general you should not prune more than 1/3 of a woody plant off each year and try to prune when the leaves are off. Beautyberry will sometimes die back to the ground in winter. In the early spring prune out branches that don't leaf out. In our garden we cut ours to the ground about every three years.

“Forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair.”

~Khalil Gibran

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>

Native Plant Highlight:



Prickly Pear (*Opuntia humifusa*)

In June, the large and delicate yellow flowers of our native prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia humifusa*) appear at the tips of its rounded ‘pads’, or leaves. After attracting many native bees that come to collect pollen and nectar, oblong red fruit ripens—which is the “pear” part of this unusual hardy succulent. Species of the prickly pear are also known as nopale and have been a staple in the diet of Mexico and Central America for thousands of years but never became a popular food crop north of the border. This more unusual native plant makes an exotic addition for edible landscaping since the leaves (pads) and fruit are edible.

August in the Rain Garden:



The slope below the patio of the Carriage House classroom features the Rain Garden. It was constructed to demonstrate a native plant landscaping solution for storm water runoff to visitors and students. Rainwater from the roof and surrounding lawn flows into the garden and is temporarily captured in the basin long enough to be absorbed by both soil and plants. Wetland plants are showcased here, functioning to slow down and filter storm water. Featured are many showy, summer-blooming wetland plants including blue pickerel weed (*Pontaderia cordata*), red cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), blue lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*) and large, soft pink flowers of native Hibiscus. The grass-like foliage of sedges (*Carex* sp.), reeds (*Scirpus* sp.) and rushes (*Juncus* sp.) form the foundation and unify the whole garden. This diversity of plants, a viable alternative to lawn, concrete and other impermeable surfaces, provides habitat for a multitude of animals. Birds come to eat insects and retrieve seeds, dragonflies and butterflies dart about, frogs and toads serenade in the evenings.