

The News From Native Plant School

September 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:

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

2014 Schedule

Thur, Feb. 6, 2014, 1-4 p.m.
RainScaping Fundamentals

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

Please register at shawnature.org/NPS

Email us with suggestions for 2014 classes.

Shaw Wildflower Market Friday, September 6, 2013



Don't miss it!

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

Friday, September 6, 2013
4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Local Wildflowers, Wine, Honey, Meats, Baskets, Art, Produce, Bake off, nature organizations and more...

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/visit/family-of-attractions/shaw-nature-reserve/things-to-do-at-shaw-nature-reserve/events/wildflower-sale.aspx>

Get Wild, Go Native!

Why is purple coneflower better to plant than zinnias? Or butterfly milkweed better than day lilies? Find out in the latest “Get Wild, Go Native” feature with The Nature Conservancy’s Doug Ladd, director of conservation science in Missouri, and Scott Woodbury, a native horticulturalist with Shaw Nature Reserve.

<http://nature.ly/15n2RCO>

“Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see a shadow.”
~Helen Keller

Gardening Tips:

Come to the Shaw Wildflower Market

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

Now through November is a good time to plant trees and shrubs. Be sure to mulch to a depth of 3-4 inches.

Divide and move perennials and grasses September thru October.

Mulch where needed to reduce weeding and maintain moisture and protect from winter freezing.

September through November are best months to kill invasive bush honeysuckle. Cut and spray stumps with 10% glyphosate.

Gardening with Native Vines By Scott Woodbury

I’m often asked if grape vines can kill a tree. The answer depends on a number of things. In mature woodlands they happily coexist. At the edge of the woods, in fencerows and overgrown fields, however, grapes may completely cover trees, shade them out and cause harm. In a garden or vineyard, grape vines are heavily pruned to fit on a trellis or nursery wire laid out in rows on a hillside. The take home message is that strong-growing vines like grape (others include trumpet creeper, crossvine, pipevine, bittersweet and Virginia creeper) may have a place in the landscape but should be carefully located with the understanding that they may grow to the treetops or need regular pruning to keep them from taking over.

Small-growing Native Vines

Fortunate for the home gardener, there are a number of low-maintenance native vines that are small enough to train on a lamp post, small arbor or let ramble gently through a flower border. The bell-shaped leather flowers (various *Clematis* species) top out at 6-8 feet tall. *Clematis pitcheri* blooms in June and July. Its, purplish flowers are followed by curly clusters of seeds. *Clematis versicolor* has slightly larger flowers that are pale purple and lavender with feathery whorls’ of seeds. In spring, protect the emerging leather flower stems with chicken wire as they are a favorite food of rabbits.

Next are the native honeysuckles which grow 6-7 feet tall. Yellow honeysuckle. *Lonicera flava* is similar but has darker yellow to apricot flowers and prefers dry, rocky or well-drained soils. Both are tolerant of part shade and require little to no pruning. For a natural look, leather flowers and vine honeysuckles may be grown without support, allowing them to ramble over a boulder or between perennials and grasses.

Medium-growing Native Vines

Vines in this size-range require pruning every 2-3 years to keep their size in check in a garden. At woodland edges or in full sun or where soils are rich, they tend to grow more vigorously and may take over their supporting trees or trellis. Supple-jack, *Berchemia scandans*, is desirable for its ornamental and wildlife value (nesting and fruits eaten by birds).



American bittersweet, *Celastrus scandans*, is the most mistakenly identified native vine because the invasive Oriental bittersweet looks very similar. American bittersweet grows to 20 feet. Oriental bittersweet, *Celastrus orbiculatus*, may grow to 50 ft. American bittersweet has fruits (red berry with an orange capsule) clustered at the tips of short branches and Oriental more typically has fruits (orange berry with a yellow capsule) scattered along the stems.



Carolina moonseed’s (*Cocculus caroliniana*) most attractive feature is its fire-engine red berries. Birds scarf them and humans take notice when they appear in late summer. The name moonseed comes from the crescent shape of the seed. We have found that growing a number of plants may encourage better fruit production.

This article was originally published in the summer 2103 issue of the Missouri Prairie Journal, Vol. 34 Issue 2

Fascinating Insects:

Did you enjoy our buggy newsletter last month? Here is some more info about fascinating insects. The *Synchlora aerata* glues flowers to it's back for camouflage

<http://twisteddifter.com/2012/05/wavy-lined-emerald-moth-camouflaged-looper-info-pics/>

<http://bugguide.net/node/view/8002>

Why Use Native Plants?

For Less Maintenance

Compared with lawns and mulched tree, shrub and perennial plantings, landscapes planted with appropriate native plants require less maintenance. They require minimal watering (except during establishment and drought periods) and they need no chemical fertilizers or pesticides.

Characteristics of native plants that reduce maintenance include:

- Longevity: plants that live for many decades
- Three to four-season interest: plants that are appealing most of the year
- Variable conditions: plants that tolerate a wide range of light and moisture conditions
- Small and compact: plants that are in scale with a given space
- Weed elimination: plants that grow into dense groupings and eliminate weeds
- Seediness: plants that do not spread readily from seed

September Native Plant Highlight:

Wild onion (*Allium stellatum*)

Also known as fall glade onion, this diminutive gem graces dry hillsides and glades of Missouri in late August and September. Its grass-like foliage is waxy with the taste of onion, making it both drought and deer resistant. Reaching 12-15" in height, its rich pink flowers resemble clusters of stars. Wild onion is an excellent choice for use in hot, sunny sites such as rock gardens and dry slopes.



Mark Your Calendar:

March 21 - 22, 2014 the annual Partners for Native Landscaping Workshop will be held at Missouri Botanical Garden. We are excited to announce that a special guest, Doug Tallamy, will be giving the keynote address. This event has been a huge success in previous years so we are going to make it even bigger and better in 2014. Mark your calendar now so you don't miss out on this inspirational event.

September in the Tallgrass Prairie



There are over 20 acres of reconstructed tallgrass prairie surrounding the Whitmire Wildflower Garden. It is glorious at this time of year, bursting with color and life as the end of the growing season nears. Tallgrass prairie was once a common feature in Missouri existing throughout the state. In the Wildflower Garden, trails meander through acres of blooming Indian grass, big and little bluestem, gama grass and switch grass. In addition, tall yellow sunflowers and goldenrods rise above the grasses while fall-blooming asters impart pink, blue and purple to the scene. Much more color and animation is provided by numerous bird and butterfly species searching for seeds and nectar before the winter months set in. The prairie is managed with periodical late winter burns alternated with mowing.

Plastic Pot Recycling: now - October

You can help reduce the amount of horticultural waste in landfills by recycling your plastic garden pots, polystyrene cell packs and trays at the Missouri Botanical Garden and other locations throughout St. Louis City and County.

The Missouri Botanical Garden jointly operates the most extensive public garden recycling program in the nation. The Plastic Pot Recycling program collected a record 140,000 pounds of horticultural waste in 2011.

To date, the Garden's Plastic Pot Recycling program has saved over 1 million pounds of plastic garden pots, cell packs and trays from landfills.

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/gardening-in-br-st-louis/plastic-pot-recycling.aspx>

“Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, snow is exhilarating; there is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather.”

~John Ruskin

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>

Staff Field Trip to Jefferson City



Shaw Nature Reserve horticulture staff pose with Dave and Mervin at Missouri Wildflower Nursery. Pictured from left to right: Dave Tylka author of Native landscaping for wildlife and people, Besa Schweitzer, Mervin Wallace owner of Missouri Wildflower Nursery, Jenny Lee, Matt Broderick, Terri Brandt, David Middleton, and Scott Woodbury.

There is a lot of neat native landscaping activity going on all over Missouri and every once and a while we are able to take a break from our gardening responsibilities to see it. Recently our team traveled to Jefferson City.

Our first stop was Missouri Wildflower Nursery, run by Mervin Wallace. We have been partnering with Mervin for over a decade, swapping seeds and trading horticulture info and ideas. Mervin comes to all of our plant sales and stops by to visit frequently. It was time for us to visit him. Mervin gave us a tour of his facilities and also hooked us up with a few cool new plants. If you have not yet seen Missouri Wildflower Nursery it is definitely worth a visit.

Next we drove into town to the campus of Lincoln University. The Native Plants Program at Lincoln was hosting a speaker, Dave Tylka, and luncheon. Dave Tylka spoke to a full crowd about why landscaping with native plants is so important for the environment and how it can be such an exciting experience. Dave says that bringing native plants into your landscape to get plant/insect/bird/amphibian interactions is the spice of life.

After Dave's talk we walked over to the Native Plant program offices where we were treated to a full lunch including appetizers, casseroles, salads, desserts, and drinks all featuring native plants as a special ingredient. In the photo below you can see Matt enjoying his elderberry cobbler while sitting in the native plant demonstration garden. The gardens around the site were beautiful, featuring many glade plants on the hot south side of the building and a rain garden to collect stormwater off the parking lot.



After lunch our group had a round table discussion with Nadia Navarrete-Tindall, who heads to Native Plant Program at Lincoln, and her staff. Nadia and her team plan to expand their native plant gardens throughout campus by using low maintenance landscaping methods and increasing their volunteer force. At SNR we hope to expand on our native plant recipes starting with a native plant bake-off next week.

We hope to get back to this area soon because there are many other exciting places to visit.

By Besa Schweitzer