

# The News From Native Plant School

April 2014



Native Plant School is a partnership between Shaw Nature Reserve, The Missouri Department of Conservation, and Wild Ones Natural Landscapers. Classes are held in the Whitmire Wildflower Garden at Shaw Nature Reserve.

Please register at [shawnature.org/NPS](http://shawnature.org/NPS)



## Upcoming classes:

### 2014 Schedule

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

Friday May 9, 4-7:30 p.m.  
Shaw Wildflower Market  
Members only pre-sale

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

Thur, Oct. 9, 1-4 p.m.  
Small Flowering Trees and Shrubs

Please register at  
[shawnature.org/NPS](http://shawnature.org/NPS)

*"In the Spring, I have counted 136 different kinds of weather inside of 24 hours."*  
Mark Twain

## Edgar Denison (1904 - 1993)

An extraordinary man with a wide range of interests, Edgar Denison was an amateur naturalist, botanist, pianist, artist, photographer, woodworker, geologist, paleontologist, teacher, a pioneering recycler and enthusiastic promoter of native plants gardening.

His garden in Kirkwood was a showplace where visitors were welcome. He grew more than a 1000 species of plants, often potting extras to set on the curb for passers-by. Largely self-taught, dynamic, creative, with a delightful sense of humor, Denison was inspiring, influential and beloved by those who attended his nature hikes, lectures and classes. A founding member of Missouri Native Plant Society and a member of Webster Groves Nature Study Society, he was accomplished enough to teach a botany class at Washington University without a formal degree himself.

Edgar Denison is probably best known for Missouri Wildflowers, the first full-color field guide of the wildflowers of Missouri, the materials for which he researched, wrote, photographed and donated to Missouri Department of Conservation in the early 1970's.

At a memorial for Edgar Denison at Shaw Nature Reserve, Dr. Peter Raven, said ..

"In the glades and prairies and woods of Missouri, Edgar Denison will always be alive with us, teaching, urging, and challenging us to continue to do everything possible to enjoy, to cherish, and to preserve the wild things that make this such a wonderful place to live."



## Shaw Wildflower Market: May 10th

The Largest Selection of Native Wildflowers Available in the St. Louis Area. May 10th 2014 from 9am-4pm. Plants will be for sale from Shaw Nature Reserve, Wild Ones, Missouri Wildflowers Nursery, Forest Keeling Nursery, Pan's Garden, Andy's Native Plants, Ozark Berry Farm, St. Francis Mountain Natives, and DJM Ecological Services.

Event info at:

[shawnature.org/NPS](http://shawnature.org/NPS)

Watch for the May issue of The News from Native Plant School for more info.

## Sustainable Backyard Tour

The Sustainable Backyard Tour returns for the fourth year on Sunday, June 22, 2014!

Maybe you would like to be a backyard host this year? Hosts can sign up through the online registry located on the website: [www.SustainableBackyardTour](http://www.SustainableBackyardTour)

The 2014 Sustainable Backyard Tour is sponsored by media partners Gateway Gardener, The Healthy Planet and R3 St. Louis. Community partners are St. Louis Audubon, Saint Louis Beekeepers, Grow Native! and Slow Food St. Louis.

The goal is to be collaborative and connected; to focus attention on sustainable living and ecological gardening; to make St. Louis a greener region; and to have a great time meeting, sharing and learning from each other.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please email [Terry@SustainableBackyardTour.com](mailto:Terry@SustainableBackyardTour.com) or call 314-680-3445.

## Friday Greener Garden Series

The 2014 Friday greener garden series in the Whitmire Wildflower Garden is a new opportunity to learn about native plants and native landscaping. Shaw Nature Reserve Staff will be leading round-table discussions and tours along with Missouri Department of Conservation staff and Wild Ones members. Nurseries will be on hand to speak with gardeners and sell plants and seeds. Come enjoy the company of gardeners and assorted plant nuts in this informal outdoor setting.

April 25, 2014 **Woodland Connection!** Are you gardening in the shade? Have you been struggling to find the right plants that grow under trees? Join Shaw Nature Reserve, Missouri Department of Conservation and Missouri Wildflowers Nursery staff for a discussion and woodland garden tour on gardening in shade. Many woodland plants will be in full bloom and for sale at this peak season wildflower event. 5 - 7:30 p.m.



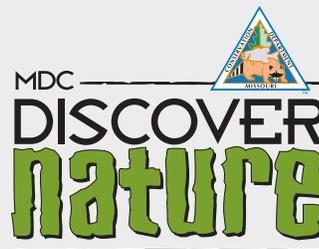
June 27, 2014 **For the Birds: why insects matter.** Don't stomp that caterpillar, celebrate it. Native insects in the garden aren't a disease; they belong there and provide needed food for nesting birds. Join Shaw Nature Reserve, Missouri Department of Conservation, St. Louis Audubon Society and Wild Ones staff as we discuss the many benefits of native plants and garden insects for bird welfare, and tour the garden in search of creeping, crawling and flying wildlife. 5 - 7:30 p.m.



September 12, 2014 **Seeding a Tallgrass Prairie or Savanna!** Larger land owners/managers who are wondering what to do with that huge expanses of mowed lawn or field can benefit from this discussion led by DJM Ecological Services, Missouri Department of Conservation and Shaw Nature Reserve Staff. Come learn how to plan, prepare the site, install and maintain a seeded prairie or savanna landscape. 5 - 7:30 p.m.



October 24, 2014 **Celebrate Autumn Color!** What better time than autumn to discover the beauty of Missouri native trees and shrubs. On hand to talk about Missouri's showiest woody plants are Missouri Department of Conservation, Shaw Nature Reserve and Forrest Keeling Nursery. Many trees and shrubs will be in full autumn color and will be for sale. 4:30 - 7 p.m.



Friday events are free but you must register in advance. Participants are encouraged to bring food to share. Drinks will be provided. Registration is limited to the first 40 people.

Register by emailing [besa.schweitzer@mobot.org](mailto:besa.schweitzer@mobot.org)



## Edgar Denison Celebration

The life of Edgar W. Denison (1904 - 1993), late resident of Kirkwood, Mo, amateur naturalist, botanist, artist and early leader in promotion of environmental sustainability, will be celebrated in Kirkwood this spring with events promoting education and appreciation of Missouri's natural assets. All events are free and open to the public:

**Edgar Denison: A Modern Johnny Appleseed.** A panel discussion on the life and contributions of Edgar Denison. Moderated by Scott Woodbury, Curator of the Whitmire Wildflower Garden, Shaw Nature Reserve. Panelists include Peter Raven, George Yatskievych, Tom Ott, Lesley Schoedinger and Bill Ruppert. First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood, East Adams and South Kirkwood Road, Monday, April 14th, 7:00 pm.

**An exhibit of Edgar Denison's original botanical artwork** at Missouri Department of Conservation's Powder Valley Nature Center, 11715 Cragwold, Kirkwood, opening April 5th and running through the month of April, including:  
April 5th: Gallery Opening, 6 - 8 pm  
April 12th: Nature Drawing class, 10 am - noon  
April 22nd: Gallery Talk, 6 - 6:45 pm, 7 - 7:45 pm

**Edgar Denison Day:** Saturday, April 19th, 10 am - 3 pm, Kirkwood Farmers' Market, in conjunction with Kirkwood Living Green's Earth Day celebration, including exhibitors and native plant sellers, kids' activities, and at 10 am, dedication of an Edgar Denison Memorial Garden, designed by Kirkwood resident June Hutson, Supervisor of the Kemper Home Demonstration Gardens at the Missouri Botanical Gardens.

**Edgar Denison Interviews** with Scott Woodbury and Bill Ruppert Jean Ponzi's show "Growing Green St. Louis" on the Big 550 KTRS-AM Airing Sunday 4/6/14 and Sunday 4/13/14 from 3-4 pm  
Podcast available Monday 4/7/14 at [www.ktrs.com/shows/sundays/growing-green-st-louis](http://www.ktrs.com/shows/sundays/growing-green-st-louis)

Kirkwood's 2014 Edgar Denison tribute series:  
[www.websterkirkwoodtimes.com/](http://www.websterkirkwoodtimes.com/)

Edgar Denison's new Wikipedia page is now live at:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar\\_W.\\_Denison](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar_W._Denison)

Edgar Denison Commentary: On St. Louis Public Radio website  
<http://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/commentary-edgar-denison-left-legacy-patch-blue-eyed-mary>

For more Denison events, visit [www.KirkwoodinBloom.org/calendar](http://www.KirkwoodinBloom.org/calendar)

## Gardening Tips:

Begin planting native perennials and grasses later than normal. Wait until the end of April or early May to be safe.

Replace mulch which has been washed out with spring rains. Smooth mulch layer if it has been disturbed.

Prune winter-damaged branches on shrubs or trees that have not begun to grow by late April/early May (especially beautyberry).

In late April and early May cut back tall grasses, goldenrods, wild bergamot, sweet coneflower, garden phlox, and asters by 50% to promote fuller and more compact growth.

## Garden Connection:

With the current warming trend, sedges are beginning to send up green shoots. If you haven't done so already, cut back sedges (palm sedge, globe sedge, oak sedge, cedar sedge, yellow fox sedge, etc.) with a lawn mower set on high for larger areas or with a string trimmer for smaller patches. Sedges green up faster than most grasses so don't wait until spring to cut them back or you will have green leaves growing through tan ones. Leaving last years leaves through winter provides food and cover for birds.



## Support Missouri Prairie Foundation

Saturday, May 3, 2014--MPF Plant Sale at Whole Foods Market® in Town & Country, St. Louis Area

A smashing and bountiful selection of choice native perennials, grasses, sedges, vines, shrubs, and trees supplied by Missouri Wildflowers Nursery will be available outside the entrance to the Town & Country Whole Foods Market from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Don't miss this great sale!

A portion of the proceeds will benefit the prairie conservation work of the Missouri Prairie Foundation.

Address: Town and Country Whole Foods Market, 1160 Town and Country Crossing Drive, Town and Country, MO 63017

## Know MO worms

So you think earthworms are an unmitigated good, and indicators of rich soil? As usual, it's rather more complicated than these simple dictums. It starts with the fact that most of the ones you're familiar with are INVASIVE SPECIES! (Cue scary music.)

Read the article at:  
<http://www.onearth.org/articles/2014/03/beware-the-worm>

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>

## Natural History Reading Group

This spring as the daffodils bloom, join our Natural History Reading Group at the Bascom House that will meet after Tuesday Spring Wildflower Walks on Tuesdays - April 8th, 22nd, May 6th, and 20th From 1:00 to 2:30 pm or an hour after the Wildflower Walks end.

Bring a lunch to relax between the walk and reading group. We will discuss books by EDWIN WAY TEALE. Teale's books will be available to borrow from the SNR Natural History Library for the duration of the Reading Group and can be checked out from the Visitors' Center after March 21st.

To sign up please email Larry Melton at [lcmelton67@gmail.com](mailto:lcmelton67@gmail.com)  
A schedule of the discussions will be returned to you by email and there is no fee for participation.



EDWIN WAY TEALE  
1899-1980

Edwin Way Teale was one of America's most admired natural history writers in the 1960's and early 1970's. As a trained entomologist he wrote prolifically about insects but his most popular writings dealt with expansive natural history travelogues recounting observations Teale and his wife Nellie made following the four seasons across North America and Great Britain. His elegant black and white photographs illustrate most of his books and are as artistically descriptive as his writing. He also wrote on Henry David Thoreau and John Muir. Teale died at the age of 81.

## Native Landscaping Event was Success

350 people attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Partners for Native Landscaping workshop for homeowners on Saturday March 22, 2014. This year, Doug Tallamy, professor of entomology and author of *Bringing Nature Home* was the keynote speaker. He wowed the audience with a cacophony of insect names...the American dagger moth, the dogbane tiger, the virgin tiger, the trumpet vine sphinx, the waved sphinx, the four-horned sphinx, the pawpaw sphinx, the royal walnut moth, the falcate orangetip, the clouded sulphur, the swarthy skipper, the hickory hairstreak, and so on, and so on, for an hour or longer. The audience learned about the critical importance of landscaping with native plants on private land. Other speakers included Dave Tylka (pictured), author of *Native Landscaping for Wildlife and People*, Simon Barker, owner of Native Landscape Solutions and Scott Woodbury, Curator of the Whitmire Wildflower Garden.

