

The News From Native Plant School

August 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



Upcoming classes:

2014 Schedule

Friday Sept. 5, 4-7:30 p.m.
Shaw 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

Science 30:

Have you heard of the Members only Tuesday Nights at Missouri Botanical Garden? Coming Soon, Scott Woodbury will be speaking about the Ozark Plateau Seed Bank and Trail Garden on August 12 at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

http://www.mobot.org/eblasts/2014/IA/IA_Science30.html

Prairie Day:

September 20, 2014
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
at Shaw Nature Reserve

Shaw Wildflower Market September 5th, 2014

Friday, September 5, 2014 from 4 p.m. till 7:30 p.m.
in the Whitmire Wildflower Garden, Shaw Nature Reserve in Gray Summit MO

Shop for locally produced native plants, food and crafts. Also, experts will answer your native gardening questions.

Adults \$5
Seniors \$3
MBG/SNR Members Free

The Shaw Wildflower Market is geared for new and experienced gardeners and people looking for locally made products for a greener community, including Wildflowers from Missouri Wildflower Nursery, Wine, Bread, Meats, Cheese, Art, Beer, Produce and more.

The event is located in the pavilions behind the Bascom House, near the Whitmire Wildflower Garden at Shaw Nature Reserve. The garden is devoted to showcasing native plants in many habitats and design styles. Participants will be able to stroll through the gardens, gaining inspiration from the mature plantings within each area.

Bring checks and cash to pay vendors and vote in the bake off. One vendor, Missouri Wildflower Nursery, will accept credit cards. Cash or check accepted by all vendors.



Native Plant Bake Off:

Looking for Bakers for the Native Plant Bake Off

Friday September 5, 2014
From 4 p.m. till 7:30 p.m.
At Shaw Nature Reserve
in Gray Summit MO

Native plant bake off items must contain at least one Missouri native species. The winning cook will receive a fabulous prize and be interviewed for the October issue of the News from Native Plant School. Contest open to everyone.

Contact
besa.schweitzer@mobot.org
to enter and details.

August in the Rain Garden

The slope below the patio of the Carriage House classroom features a 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.

Footsteps: A Tribute to Cindy Gilberg

By Scott Woodbury

Cindy Gilberg grew up in Missouri with a sense of wonder about the natural world. Before the age of electronic devices her family snorkeled in Ozark streams in search of cool waters and underwater critters. They hiked natural areas exploring for plants and ferns and things wild. As an adult Cindy picked wild mushrooms and edible weeds and grew vegetables which she and husband Doug fed to their children Becca and Nathan, who are now grown up and following in their footsteps.



The fruit doesn't fall far from the tree. Cindy's story reminds me of Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* who wrote: "We have such a brief opportunity to pass on to our children our love for this Earth, and to tell our stories. These are the moments when the world is made whole. In my children's memories, the adventures we've had together in nature will always exist". I think of Cindy as the parent passing on a love for this earth; her audience, her readers, her colleagues and her clients being the children in her extended family.

She pursued a passion for horticulture and received a degree in ornamental horticulture from University of Missouri-Columbia. Cindy fine-tuned the art of gardening as co-owner of Gilberg Perennial Farms, a garden center that offered a wide array of unusual, hard-to-find perennials. Here, she developed extensive display gardens and devoted herself to educating the gardening public. Starting in 1993, Cindy collaborated with Shaw Nature Reserve as an event speaker and tour leader for the Native Plant Conference and later Native Plant School, both held in the Shaw Nature Reserve. In 2006 she began working in the Whitmire Wildflower Garden (Shaw Nature Reserve) designing, installing and maintaining native plantings. During this time, she got her feet wet in the native woodland and rain gardens and has since become an authority on the subjects. Her expertise with rain gardening earned her key positions working with the Missouri Botanical Garden's Rainscape Rebates program and rainscaping webpage. In recent years Cindy was also a native landscaping consultant assisting people with landscape design, storm water management, native plant landscaping and creating habitat gardens. Cindy was also a past-president of the Greater St Louis Horticulture Co-op, Midwest Director for the Perennial Plant Association and Manager of the Wildwood Farms Community Garden.

Her ideas on native plants and landscaping are chronicled over the past decade through regular contributions to the News from Native Plant School Newsletter, Gateway Gardener, Healthy Planet, the Kansas City Gardener and Missouri Ruralist. Cindy has taught many horticulture classes for the region's garden community, both residential and commercial for the last 30 years. She was a regular instructor at Missouri Botanical Garden. Also, with garden writer and mother Barbara Perry Lawton, Cindy co-wrote *Shaw Nature Reserve: 85 years of Natural Wonders*. Cindy was creative, was ever curious and possessed an intuitive design sense all of which rang clearly in her day-to-day conversations and work. She engaged people in conversation yet led by example and so often gently inspired others to follow in her footsteps. Most notably perhaps was her sense of humor and strong work ethic which she managed to hold on to throughout her life and battle with cancer since 2007. Everyone in the world of horticulture knew her. Cindy was connected to so many people and in so many circles. Cindy often shared a lending hand, a view, an explanation, an edit, an argument, a recipe, an hour of her time, a favorite plant description, a gardening tip or a compliment all of which followed with a smile and warm hugs. She shared often and freely without question or complaint. Cindy's wisdom, her warmth, her ideas, her jokes, her balanced opinion, openness and caring will live on in our memory and no doubt will guide our footsteps in the days to come. You will be missed dearly Cindy by all of us for many decades. Warm wishes and hugs right back at ya'!

“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.”

- Cindy Gilberg

Gardening Tips:

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

Divide and replant spring blooming perennials.

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

Youth Photography Contest :

June 1–October 15

Take a picture at Shaw Nature Reserve and enter it into our contest. You could win a prize!

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/Portals/o/Shaw%20Nature%20Reserve/PDFs/Education/Contest%20Rules.pdf>

<http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/Portals/o/Shaw%20Nature%20Reserve/PDFs/Education/Entry%20forms.pdf>

"Perhaps one of the most important ecological functions of our gardens will be to sustain the diversity of life that sustains us. By planting our landscapes with productive plants, we can create diverse, stable, and balanced food webs that meet our own ecological and cultural needs while enabling life around us."

~Doug Tallamy

Cindy Gilberg Tributes

Cindy Gilberg, a horticulture team member at Shaw Nature Reserve and frequent contributor to this newsletter, passed away, Monday, June 30, 2014.

Jean Ponzi wrote a tribute to Cindy Gilberg in the July edition of the Healthy Planet. You can read it online at: www.thehealthyplanet.com

Tribute in Gateway Gardener magazine:

<http://www.gatewaygardener.com/uncategorized/a-tribute-to-cindy-gilberg-our-own-missouri-native>

The Emerald Ash Borer is Here

By Besa Schweitzer



The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has now been confirmed in the St Louis region. It is expected that 100% of our ash trees will be dead in 10 years except for trees that have been treated with EAB specific insecticides.

The EAB is a small green beetle that probably came to the United States from Asia in wood packing material. The EAB will only eat ash trees. It burrows under the bark leaving serpentine tunnels that eventually kill the tree. Adult EABs spread by flying to nearby ash trees or catching a ride when firewood or other ash tree products are moved.

Before our ash trees start dying en mass we have a few years to prepare. The death of ash in an area is exponential with a low number of trees dying in the first few years and then the majority of trees dying in years 7-10 of the infestation. It is strongly recommend that ash trees be removed when they start showing symptoms and not wait until they are totally dead. Symptoms of infection include dying of branches from the top down, sprouting from the base of trees and bark falling off. A dead tree is more hazardous to remove because dead trees become brittle very rapidly making it dangerous to climb during removal. Branches also come down quickly after death and may fall on people, cars, or buildings. Homeowners and communities currently have 3-5 years to be proactive about tree removal. Remember that when your trees start dying all arborists may be busy.

Calculating the impact of EAB is complicated. Ash tree removal and replacement will be a burden for many homeowners. This cost does not include the other benefits of trees like shade, stormwater mitigation, wildlife habitat, and increased property values. In Missouri, industries that depend on ash to produce products, such as baseball bats, will also suffer.

It is recommended that homeowners identify any ash trees on their property. If any of these trees must be saved then start insecticide treatments now with a professional arborist. Plant replacement trees for your ash trees now. Remove any diseased or dyeing ash trees on your property immediately and continue to monitor for new signs of disease. Removing ash trees before they are dead can prevent costly emergency removals.

Losing our ash trees is a horrible thought and will leave many gaps in the beautiful Missouri landscape. Take this opportunity to plant a diversity of native trees. Remember right tree, right place. Keep your backyard wildlife in mind when you select your trees. Shaw Nature Reserve is here to help you select a new tree for your yard. Don't hesitate to contact us.



Bookshelf:

The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home Garden

By Rick Darke and Douglas W. Tallamy

“A home garden is often seen as separate from the natural world surrounding it. In truth, it is actually just one part of a larger landscape made up of many living layers. And the replacement of the rich layers of native flora with turf grass greatly diminishes a garden’s biological diversity and ecological function.

The Living Landscape seeks to reverse this trend by showing gardeners how to create a landscape that is full of life. Written by Rick Darke and Douglas W. Tallamy, two of the most important voices in sustainability and horticulture, it is the definitive guide to designing a beautiful, biodiverse home garden. The authors first explain each layer of the landscape and what role the plants within them play in the larger environment, from providing berries for birds, food for bugs, or a place for bees to pollinate. The authors then put this information into context and offer design strategies to implement into a home garden.”

http://www.timberpress.com/books/living_landscape/darke/9781604694086

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.asp>

Plant of the Month a Bug-lovers Dream:

American spikenard or Sarsaparilla, *Aralia Racemosa*

What do jumping spiders, cucumber beetles, hover flies, leaf-footed bugs, black and yellow mud dobbers, paper wasps, rust-colored spider wasps, metallic green sweat bees, various ants, flies, leaf hoppers, long-legged flies and syrphid flies all have in common in July and August? They may be seen visiting the unpretentious flowers of American spikenard (sometimes referred to as sarsaparilla), *Aralia racemosa*. For a second year running this is my favorite tall perennial. I am continually amazed at the diversity of insects that come to it. If you want a lesson in entomology, park yourself next to it during bloom season (late July to early August) for 5 minutes or 5 hours and you will be in for an action packed lesson in pollination and predation. Better yet, have your laptop or entomology reference books in hand and see how many critters you can identify. One of these days I need to watch it at twilight as there were a couple moths hanging out nearby and some remnant spider webs. Humans also love to visit this plant to see its bold stalks pop out of the ground in spring, its immense bold leaves (largest of any Missouri native perennial) and later in summer see its glossy ruby berries in fat clusters. In good years fruiting stalks may arch out and need staking.

Garden Maintenance, Long Term Responsibility

By Besa Schweitzer

Many of us are getting requests from the organizations we associate with to create a wildflower or butterfly garden or to fix a neglected one. It would be wonderful if every church, school yard, and corner park had a native plant garden. However, gardens take work, not only for the installation but even more so for upkeep. Who is going to maintain that garden for the rest of time? When I am asked to build someone a garden, my first question is, “who is going to take care of it?”. I don’t have time to commit to maintain every garden I put my hands on, and if I’m weeding, I won’t have time left to build more gardens.

Many people have no idea how much care a wildflower garden needs. You can’t install it and walk away. Weeds have to be managed, and managed intensively the first few years during establishment. There is no point in spending your time and their money on a garden that is going to look like a weed patch and be ripped out next year. We are not doing the native gardening community any favors by planting future weed patches in public spaces.

If an organization wants a garden it should be willing to commit a volunteer or staff to the gardens upkeep for the rest of the life of that garden. We should offer to train the person who will be managing the garden by having them assist in planting the garden and then work side by side with them until you are confident they clearly understand their maintenance duties. When designing a garden to be managed by native plant novices it is best to limit the number of species used in the garden and plant like species in groups. It is easier to weed when you can pull everything except for the one plant you know. Also avoid using native plants that look similar to the local weeds. Mulch is another positive addition to the garden as it preserves soil moisture which reduces watering, and smothers weed seeds which reduces weeding. Creating a map of the garden with photos of the plants in it also makes a great tool for volunteers.

The volunteer you train will gain knowledge of native plants and can add more diversity every year as their confidence grows. They may even start designing their own native gardens to be carefully tended by other volunteers just beginning their own life long education in native plants. I dream of the day when every vacant space is filled with native flowers and hordes of butterflies, tended by loving and experienced gardeners.