

The News From Native Plant School

March 2015



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



Gardening is a Verb:

A long-time contributor to this newsletter and our dear friend Cindy Gilberg wrote many essays about native plants over the years, and now they are collected in a new book, "Gardening is a Verb." The book is now available for \$12 at the Shaw Nature Reserve and Missouri Botanical Garden bookstores.



Nature Connection; If you don't eat your willow you can't have any pudding!

Viceroy caterpillars eat willow leaves. So do many other showy butterfly and moth species including red-spotted purples, hairstreaks, mourning cloaks, sphinx moths, cecropia moths and the darling underwing moth to name a few. Doug Tallamy, author of Bringing Nature Home, states that there are 456 butterflies and moths that lay eggs on willows, the second



ranking native tree/shrub by ability to support butterflies and moths. Only oaks support more. Makes me wonder why we don't have more native willows in the Whitmire Wildflower Garden.

There are eleven species of willow native to Missouri. Few are available to gardeners but Shaw Nature Reserve is striving to change this! We are growing heart-leaved willow (*Salix rigida*), sandbar willow (*Salix interior*), Carolina willow (*Salix caroliniana*) and both varieties of prairie willow (*Salix humilus* var. *humilus* and var. *tristis*) in an attempt to make them available to gardeners. New plantings of prairie willow are being installed in the Whitmire wildflower garden west of the Bascom house and along the fence by the new picnic pavilions. We hope to have some for sale at the Fall Shaw Wildflower Market.

Spring Blooms to Look for in March:

clove currant
fragrant sumac
hazelnut
spring beauty
willow



Male and female flowers of hazelnut shown above.

“Biological diversity is the key to the maintenance of the world as we know it.”

~Edward O. Wilson,
The Diversity of Life

Native Backyard Edibles:

Native Backyard Edibles will be the topic of discussion at the next Wild Ones meeting. On Wednesday, Mar. 11 at 7:00 pm located at THE HEIGHTS community center in Richmond Heights. All Wild Ones meetings are open to the public. We hope you'll join us!

Volunteer Opportunity:

The next Bring Conservation Home Habitat Adviser Training will be held on March 28th. If you would like to volunteer for the BCH program and have experience in backyard conservation practices go to: <http://stlouisaudubon.org/conservation/BCH/BCH-volunteer-2015.php>

Spring is Around the Corner:



Winter becomes a fast-fading memory as spring approaches - spring in Missouri's woodlands is one of the most exhilarating times of the natural year. In the Lower Woodland spring begins subtly as plants emerge from late winter snows. Understory trees such as spice bush (*Lindera benzoin*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*) and redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) begin to bloom, creating a mid-level haze of yellow, white and pink flowers. As the warm spring sun warms the soil, white spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), dutchmen's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) and rue anemone (*Isopyrum biternatum*) burst into bloom. Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) and Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium reptans*) add color to the scene. Interconnected paths invite visitors to explore the gentle slope and rest on one of the many benches to observe, listen or for quiet meditation. One path leads to a rustic gazebo surrounded by understory trees under which woodland species such as wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), sedges (*Carex*), woodland stonecrop (*Sedum ternatum*) and ferns begin to emerge in the warmth of the spring sun.

Shaw Wildflower Market:

Sat, May 9, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.



Shaw Nature Reserve and several nurseries from throughout the area will offer hundreds of varieties of Missouri native plants to use in home landscaping and to attract wildlife. Admission is free to members, \$5 for non-members.

Members night on May 8th. from 4 to 7:30 p.m. Members get first pick of the plants for sale. Includes live music by Rosewood!

Plants will be for sale from SNR, Wild Ones, MO Wildflowers Nursery, Forest Keeling Nursery, Andy's Native Plants, Ozark Berry Farm, St. Francis Mountain Natives, and DJM Ecological Services.

More info at:
<http://shawnature.org/swm>

Gardening Tips:

- Cut down and compost dead leaves, stems and seed heads from perennials and grasses.
- Depending on the size of your landscape leave stems and leaves to protect overwintering beneficial insects. Birds will also use twigs and grass to construct nests.
- Mulch where needed to reduce weeding and maintain moisture.
- Plant trees, shrubs, vines, perennials and grasses through May.
- Recycle old plastic pots.
- Divide and move perennials and grasses March thru May. Divide ferns while leaves are short to minimize damage to leaves.
- If you use an irrigation system now is a good time for maintenance.

Awards:

Our own Scott Woodbury received the St. Louis chapter of the American Society for Landscape Architecture's 2015 Civic Stewardship Award for his work in St. Louis and with native plants.

Rainscaping Grants:

Another round of rainscaping grants has been announced for St. Louis city residents. MSD Project Clear's Rainscaping Small Grants Program encourages the public to use simple techniques on their properties to reduce the impact of stormwater on the sewer system. Approved applicants will be granted up to \$3,000 to add rainscaping features to their properties.

<http://www.projectclearstl.org/get-the-rain-out/rainscaping-small-grants-program/>

Invasive Species:

Throughout the United States, invasive plants are destroying native ecosystems and landscapes as they out-compete native plants for light, nutrients and moisture. Most of these invaders purposely were brought to the United States from other parts of the world for reasons that include ornamental value, livestock forage, erosion control, and food for wildlife. Some arrived accidentally as part of ship cargo, embedded on animals, clinging to clothing and other means. Whatever the means of entry, when these plants entered the U.S, their spread was unimpeded by natural enemies such as grazing animals, insects, and diseases, that kept them in check in their homeland.

Unregulated, they spread rapidly and wreak havoc on biodiversity as they overtake landscapes that once provided shelter and food for native wildlife. Among the worst offenders are bush honeysuckle, wintercreeper, autumn olive, sweet clover, Japanese honeysuckle, purple loosestrife, garlic mustard, *sericea lespedeza*, Japanese hops, and Johnsongrass.

The severity of infestation ranges from a few plants in a backyard to acres filled with dense populations of undesirable species. Homeowners likely will be able to use simple, mechanical methods, while professional land managers likely will resort to methods that call for herbicide application and use of large equipment. It is easier to control invasive species before they get out of control, so control early. When dealing with a large population of an invasive species, begin removal at the edges and work inward. This reduces the rate of spread. Scout annually for sprouts of invasive plants and remove immediately.

More info at: <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/Portals/o/Shaw%20Nature%20Reserve/PDFs/horticulture/NLM%20Ch3.pdf>



How to Deal with Invasive Vines:

Early spring is a great time to control the invasive woody vines that are smothering your native perennials. Attack them before desired plants emerge in the spring when the ground is moist from early spring rains. Newly emerged seedlings of woody plants are easily hand-pulled when soil is moist.

A method for small areas is to cut out the plants with a sharp garden spade. Cut and peel back the carpet of vines in small sections. Because they are shallow-rooted, they come up easily. Large sections of carpet, however, can be heavy and difficult to handle. Stem and root segments will be missed and need to be removed at a later date.

If manual removal does not seem feasible or you want to minimize soil disturbance to prevent erosion try smothering the vines. When carpets of these vines occur, smother them with black plastic, tin, rubber mats, thick cardboard, and/or a 12-inch layer of wood chips. Because these materials can be expensive or hard to come by, they are useful only on small areas and should remain in place for a year to be effective.

Classes by Tylka:

New Native Landscaping
Continuing Education Courses at St.
Louis Community College at
Meramec. Registration by telephone
314/ 984-7777 or by clicking on the
Continuing Education link at
www.stlcc.edu.

An Introduction to Native
Landscaping
HORT:711 | \$25 | David Tylka and
Mitch Leachman | April 1 -2

Identification and Ecology of
Common Missouri Wildflowers
HORT:720 | \$25 | David Tylka |
April 3

Native Landscaping with Shade-
Adapted Plants
HORT:711 | \$25 | David Tylka |
April 8

Native Landscaping with Sun-
Adapted Perennials
HORT:704 | \$25 | David Tylka |
April 10

Identification & Natural History of
Common Missouri Insects
NATR:715 | \$25 | David Tylka |
April 22

Native Landscaping for Bees,
Butterflies and Other Pollinators
HORT:765 | \$25 | David Tylka |
April 24

Ways to Attract Songbirds and
Hummingbirds through Native
Landscaping
HORT:765 | \$25 | David Tylka |
April 29

Native Landscaping with Shrubs
HORT:711 | \$25 | David Tylka | May
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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](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)

More Education Opportunities:

Native Plant School is not the only opportunity to learn about native landscaping practices. Many related classes are offered by Shaw Nature Reserve and the Missouri Botanical Garden. Listed below are some upcoming education opportunities with Shaw Nature Reserve (SNR) and Missouri Botanical Garden (MBG). To register for these classes go to:

https://www.mobot.org/iebms/coe/coe_p1_all.aspx?oc=10&cc=EDUCLASSES

March

Build a Bluebird Nest Box (SNR)
Friday, March 6 10 to 11:30 a.m. \$20 members

Weather Spotter (MBG)
Tuesday, March 10 6:30 to 9 p.m. Free

From the Ground Up: City Soils (MBG)
Sunday, March 23 6 to 8 p.m. \$28 members

Native Landscaping 101 (MBG)
Wednesday, March 25 7 to 9 p.m. \$28 members

Missouri's Wild Mushrooms: Hunting, Identifying, and Cooking (SNR)
Saturday, March 28 1 to 4 p.m. \$24 members

FrogWatch USA™ Volunteer Training (SNR)
Tuesdays, March 31; April 7, 14 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Free

April

Natural History Reading Group (SNR)
Tuesdays: April 7, 14; May 5, 12 1 to 3 p.m. Free with admission

Inviting Native Bees into Your Garden (MBG)
Monday, April 13 5 to 7 p.m. \$33 members

Climate Change for Gardeners (MBG)
Monday, April 20 7 to 9 p.m. \$28 members

May

Urban Landscaping with Native Shrubs (MBG)
Monday, May 4 6 to 8 p.m. \$28 members

Wild Edibles and Advanced Wild Edibles (SNR)
Sunday, May 17 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. \$24 members

Native Trees for Wildlife (MBG)
Monday, May 18 7 to 9 p.m. \$28 members

Soil: The Skin of the Earth (SNR)
Fridays, May 29 or June 5 10 a.m. to noon. \$5 members

June

Native Landscaping for Songbirds (MBG)
Monday, June 1 7 to 9 p.m. \$28 members

July

Rainscaping 101 (MBG)
Thursday, July 30 7 to 8:30 p.m. \$20 members