

E D I T H J . C A R R I E R

ARBORETUM

AT JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®



Spring Newsletter

April 2015

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**PARDON
OUR
MESS**

A
stream
restoration
project is in
progress
throughout
2015

From the Director...

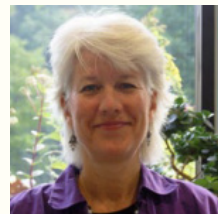
A long and snowy winter heightens the sweetness of spring that sounds its bright return by popping forth from the earth. Turtles and humans are again sunning themselves on newly-green banks and lawns. Lunchtime visitors are enjoying the many views from benches placed around the pond. Springtime, as constant as the stars, returns once again. Join with us as we enjoy its miraculous unfolding of beauty.

Plans for the stream restoration project that was mentioned in earlier issues, have moved forward and a start date in mid-summer has been set. Look for construction beginning in July that continues through fall, complete with new garden plantings. See the article on page two about some of the unique riparian and wetland plants that will soon grow in the Sycamore Flat area of the arboretum.

Families looking for activities with their children are invited to enjoy the fairy storytime every third Monday of the month at noon, with woodland fairy house building as an activity for children after the story. Families are invited to bring young children to visit our new Children's Garden next to the Pavilion. Come climb, hop, dig and crawl through different natural features offered there. A new sculpture will be added to the garden this year to delight young and old.

May you find yourself walking the arboretum woods and gardens again soon, deeply breathing the fresh cool spring air. Together, we welcome and embrace with open arms the sun's warmth arriving with reawakening life that for so long has been quietly waiting under foot.

Jan Sievers Mahon



New Natives Complete Our Restoration

The last stage of the Arboretum stream restoration project this fall will include planting hundreds of perennial wildflower “plugs” (tiny rooted starts) and small trees along the stream banks and buffer areas known as the riparian area or floodplain. Additional adjacent wetland plantings will conclude this project. Many of the riparian plants being planted, such as cardinal flower and ironweed, can be found growing in upland areas as well as riparian and wetland areas. Some new additions to the Arboretum gardens include pickerel weed, Virginia meadow-beauty, and swamp mallow.



Contributed Photo,
Meadow Beauty

Pickerel weed-*Pontederia cordata* - is a beautiful purple-flowering spiked, upright, native perennial and a wonderful nectar plant attracting insects, including bees and butterflies, and blooms summer through fall. The bees pollinate the flowers that then produce seeded fruits that are excellent food for ducks and muskrats. The leaves are eaten by deer and geese. Pickerel weed received its name from pickerel fish that are thought to cohabitate with it in freshwater lake and pond edges, or slow moving rivers. The thick, dense stands spread by underground rhizomes and provide good cover for birds, swimming mammals, fish, reptiles, turtles, and aquatic insects.

This plant is also edible for us humans. Seeds

can be eaten raw or cooked and can be ground into flour for bread or just added whole to the dough. Test for ripeness by the ease in which they fall into your hand right from the plant. Young unfurled leaves can be eaten raw or boiled. Young stalks are also edible. Just be sure that the pickerel weed is growing in an unpolluted source of water.

Virginia meadow beauty-*Rhexia virginica* - also known as Handsome Harry is a common US native found growing from Canada south to Florida but not often planted in gardens. Clusters of pink to violet flowers, with yellow showy anthers, bloom August until frost. One plant, if happy, can fill a 3' wide patch in 3 years. It loves moist, acidic soils but adapts well to higher pH soils and in non-bog garden sites. Thoreau once compared the distinctive urn-shaped fruit that this plant produces to a little cream pitcher.

Swamp rose mallow-*Hibiscus moscheutos* - is a perennial that is one of the largest and showiest of all native flowers. Growing from 3-8' tall in partial to full sun, in wet to moist conditions, it survives in many different soil types. Mallow flowers are large, white or pink, and sometimes grow 8" wide. These showy saucer-size flowers open during late summer through fall



Contributed Photo,
Mallow

and last only one day. Mallow is another great nectar plant that is pollinated by bees and hummingbirds. Its seeds are also a source of food for ducks and other birds.

Look for these important riparian plants to begin supporting the Arboretum stream bank habitats this year and beyond.

The Edith J. Carrier Arboretum, a woodland sanctuary on the James Madison University campus, is a public urban garden and forested greenspace that preserves native plants species, provides opportunities for research, and promotes knowledge of the botanical and natural world for people of all ages.

Springtime is Abuzz!

Springtime is abuzz with things to do at the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU. Visitors can enjoy a plethora of educational botanical outdoor activities. Every year a Virginia Native Plant Society guide on April 23rd, and the Arboretum Director on Virginia Arbor Day, April 24th, lead visitors on wildflower walks during Historic Garden Week, featuring over 50 varieties of native flowers on exhibit at the arboretum.

Free public guided tours also include a bird walk on April 22nd, on Earth Day, where visitors can enjoy viewing bird life with over one hundred fifteen species on record as being sighted at the arboretum. Monarch Butterfly programs begin in the spring too, teaching butterfly life cycle, companion species, predators, and native plants that support viable populations.

The EJC Arboretum offers two of its most popular plant sales in the spring. In April, wildflower lovers shop the Native Plant Sale, April 17 & 18, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Then in May, the Spring Celebration Plant Sale offers not only a great inventory of plants, shrubs, and trees to shop from, but also other entertainment like a butterfly release. Plus walk-up plant sales and private greenhouse shopping appointments begin in the spring and continue all growing season long. Over the holiday weekend, Zeta Phi Beta hosted a young children's Easter egg hunt at the EJC Arboretum. And JMU RISE hosted Easter Sunrise gatherings open to all. The EJC Arboretum is proud to host Virginia Envirothon in partnership with the Shenandoah Valley Soil and Water Conservation

District, where high school students from throughout the state gather to compete in geology, water conservation, native tree, shrub, plant identification and more.

EJC Arboretum visitors with athletic interests or those seeking "restoration recreation" may enjoy 5k events offered in the spring that are sponsored by JMU student organizations. Offered with live music,

food for purchase, free coffee beverages, Sigma Kappa launched the arboretum's springtime 5ks with its Alzheimer's benefit run on March 29, A Latte Jive. The Madison Society and Valley Scholars Program host a 5k beginning at 10:00 am at the arboretum. Then starting at 1:00 pm, JMU



Photo by Brian Ripley

Military Science Cadets offer a 5k supporting Wounded Warriors. Register with the supporting JMU organizations in advance or come early to register at the 5k event of your choice. And Mother's Day Horse Drawn Carriage Rides are offered Sunday May 10, 1:00 - 4:00 pm. Reservations in advance are recommended for carriage rides that usually sell out!

Everyone looking for educational programs offered at the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum is invited to visit the website at jmu.edu/arboretum. Be the first to learn of programs and events by becoming an arboretum friend who receives email news. Sign up for email on the arboretum website. Or check out the calendar pages of this newsletter for more information about spring programs and events.

Upcoming Events 2015

Thanks to
Lynn Whitmore
for allowing use of
her photos!

April 8 & 15, 2015, Wildflower Walks Wednesdays, 10:00 am, Arboretum Exploration Series Tours with the Arboretum Director, enjoying over dozens of varieties on exhibit at the EJC Arboretum. Walks meet at the *FPEC. No advance registration.

April 13, May 11 & June 8, 2015, Monarchs at the EJC Arboretum Monday, noon - 1:00 pm at FPEC. A three session (attend one or attend all three) workshop series with facilitator, Gail Napora, exploring the Monarch butterfly, its migration, life cycle, habitat needs and much more. This is a program for all ages. Young and Old will enjoy the thrill of releasing Monarchs at the arboretum at the second and third sessions. Online registration opens 30 days in advance of this session.

April 17 & 18, 2015, Native Plant Sale Friday and Saturday, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm *FPEC. In the prime time of spring, the Arboretum offers a wide selection of wildflowers, contrasting foliage plants like native ferns, and unusual shrubs and trees. To honor those who educate youth, all city and county public school

teachers receive 10% off tree purchases presenting a school ID!

April 19, 2015, The Madison Society 5k Sunday, 10:00 am - noon supporting The Madison Society and Valley Scholars Program. Contact the Madison Society for info and to register.

April 19, 2015, JMU Military Science Cadets 5k for Wounded Warriors Sunday, 1:00 - 5:00 pm, Starting from the large lawn

April 20 & May 18, 2015, Fairy Houses and Gnome Homes Monday, noon - 1:00 pm. All are invited to come hear a story about fairies and build a fairy house or gnome home! Join us in for a free indoor story time followed by an outdoor activity. Bring your brown bag lunch to enjoy during the story.

April 20 - October 15, 2015, Walk-Up Plant Sale Beginning in mid-April, and projected to continue until the first hard frost in the region which will be about mid-October. Shop from a selection of usually currently in bloom natives, exotics and cultivars, perennials, shrubs, and trees at the *FPEC.

April 20 - October 15, 2015, Private Greenhouse Shopping by Appointment Beginning in mid-April, and projected to continue until the first hard frost in the region which will be about mid-October. Shop from the entire greenhouse inventory of natives, exotics and perennials, shrubs, and trees, by advance appointment only, with \$50 minimum purchase required. Call (540) 568-3194, or visit the arboretum website to schedule the appointment.



Upcoming Events Continued...

April 22, 2015, Earth Day Guided Bird Walk

Wednesday, 8:00 am, Meets in the Pavilion. Led by a birding expert, Greg Moyer, in partnership with the Rockingham Bird Club.

April 23, 2015, Wildflower Walk Thursday, 10:00 - 11:00 am, Wildflower Walk, celebrating wildflowers and their ecological benefits. meets in the *FPEC. Guided by a Virginia Native Plant Society wildflower expert, Michael Seth.

April 24, 2015, Tour Celebrating Historic Garden Week

Friday, 1:00 pm, the EJC Arboretum celebrates with a tour starting at the *FPEC. Arboretum grounds are open free to public, dawn to dusk. Tour will be led by Jan Sievers Mahon, Arboretum Director and will focus on the arboretum's bulb collection, wildflowers and flowering shrubs and trees. Preregistration is not needed.

April 27, 29, & 30, 2015, Spring Children's Art Workshop

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, 4:00 - 6:00 pm, in the *FPEC. This workshop offers children's education on plant identification as well as basic botanical drawing, all materials included in a \$35 cover charge. Advance online registration needed.



Photo by Frank Doherty

May 10, 2015, Mother's Day Carriage Rides

Sunday, 1:00 - 4:00 pm in the Arboretum. Carriages leave from the *FPEC. Give a special mom a memorable celebration by a carriage ride through the natural beauty of the Arboretum. Costs vary per person for adults and children, and per private carriage, phone for cost and to reserve (540) 568-3194.

May 15 & 16, 2015, Spring Celebration Plant Sale

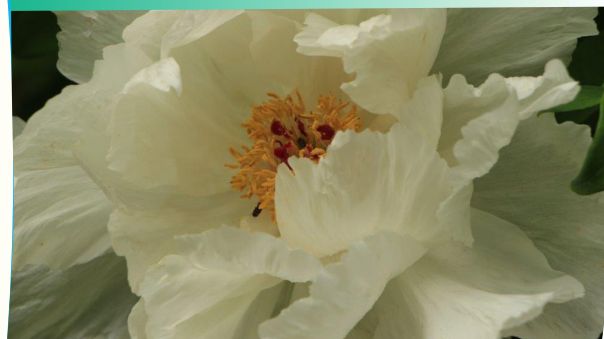
Friday & Saturday, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. Wide Selection of plants, shrubs, and trees, with Saturday educational activities that may include a lecture, demonstration, ask-an-expert, raffles, live music, and a butterfly release.

*FPEC is the Frances Plecker Education Center, found on the grounds of the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at 780 University Boulevard, Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Upcoming Events Continued...

May 22, 2015 Wine and Cheese on the Ernst Terrace

Friday, 5:00 - 7:00 pm, This event is for pre-registered guests and is held at the *FPEC. Registration is needed by 5:00 pm May 19. Guest speaker, Christine Riggelman from Silverback Distillery speaks on producing distinct and flavorful American Bourbon, Whiskey, Gin and Vodka. Come sample spirits from one of the industry leaders in environmentally sustainable distilling and enjoy paired tastings. Visit www.jmu.edu/arboretum for full details.



June 9, 2015, Storytime in the Understory

Tuesday, 11:00 am to approximately noon, monthly program begins in June second Tuesdays, and continues through September 9. Children will develop an understanding of the importance of nature from children's literature selections. Bring a picnic blanket or lawn chairs, and a brown bag picnic lunch for after Storytime.

For more information or to make reservations for events, go to the EJC Arboretum (www.jmu.edu/arboretum) or contact us at 540-568-3194. Note that within selected calendar items there is a link to more information and to the registration page for the event. Also, a complete listing of all events scheduled for the next 12 months can be found at the website's Calendar of Events.