

EDITH J. CARRIER

ARBORETUM

AT JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®



Winter Newsletter

January 2015

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the Director
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**PARDON
OUR
MESS.**

A
stream
restoration
project is in
progress
throughout
2015

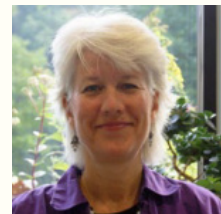
From the Director...

At first glance the Arboretum appears empty and so still, and feels crunchy underfoot. Stick around in one place long enough to discover that activity abounds here, even on the most frigid and frozen of days. Skunks have nested under our nursery building and are busy bringing forth a new family...phew-eee, no mistaking that smell! Did you know that skunks are food for eagles and owls that are not bothered by their smell?

At the pond, a resident red-tailed hawk has been eating well. It spent two or more days devouring a Mallard. As the raptor enjoyed its pond-side meals it became the highlight of visitor photography shoots. Look for pictures of its feast among the January photo contest entries. And look for remnant Mallard feathers near the red-twig dogwood at pond's edge.

Staff and volunteers are busy caring for our overwintering nursery stock in the greenhouses, completing greenhouse maintenance, and tending to the various areas of the arboretum in need of attention. This team also feeds wild birds during the cold spells. If you are interested in helping us pot up new incoming nursery stock this winter, or coming weekly to feed the birds please go to "Get Involved" at www.jmu.edu/arboretum and sign up for an orientation with our Volunteer Coordinator. Janis Traas would be happy to get new volunteers ready for February work or share information about spring and summer projects still to come.

Many thanks for all of the generous gifts of support at the end of 2014 and the beginning of this new year, to help sustain the Arboretum now and in the future!



Arboretum Flooded With “Wave” Reviews!

Favorite place for restoration recreation.

It will not come as a surprise that the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum ranks among the top three attractions in the Harrisonburg area, according to TripAdvisor.com.

Here's what some of our visitors had to say in 2014:

“A lovely, relaxing, beautiful way to spend time in Harrisonburg!” - Rock Hill, S.C.

“Plenty of trails, (and you) can get a good five-mile walk without repeating yourself. Great place to get in your jog or walk if you are visiting the city.”- Bergton, Va.

“What a surprise to discover such a beautiful arboretum right on JMU property and it's free! Beautiful garden and pond, peaceful and well kept, nice setting for photo shoot, good for a short hike as well. We took some photos, and people compare (them) to a Monet. Ran into a couple taking a photo for their engagement. So sweet and cute!” - Oakton, Va.

“Great place for a short hike. Lots of beautiful settings from the landscaped pond area to the well maintained trails through the woods.”- Williamsburg, Va.

“There was beautiful pond with lot of ducks, turtles and fish. It was so nice to walk around for a little bit. So pretty.”- Cary, N.C.

I love this arboretum. It's beautiful and a great place to take a stroll. - Annandale, Va.

This is such a tranquil place yet so close to 'the city'. It is very well maintained--flowers, beds, grass, trails, and facilities. An absolute must see/do even if only for a few minutes to walk around and stretch during a break in your trip.

A quiet and peaceful garden stroll. We spent an hour but it would be easy to spend a couple of hours in the woods. - Cape Carteret, N.C.

There were tons of flowers, ducks, fish, and turtles to feed. There are lots of trails to walk and even a meditation circle to walk. A very relaxing place to spend some time! - Harrisonburg, Va.

We very much enjoyed walking through the arboretum. The plants were marked and areas were easily navigated with the map. - Baltimore, Md.



Riparian Renewal

The EJC Arboretum will begin the construction phase of a stream restoration project, now out to bid, in either the winter or the summer of this year. A start date will be chosen after the job is awarded.

This essential project will create planted riparian areas along the Arboretum's central stream, which is the main channel of water flowing through its 125 acres. Riparian areas include not only streams, but also banks and wetlands adjacent to streams, and are vegetated areas. A riparian zone, the area moving from stream bank to flood zone alongside the creek, is a habitat that is well-defined and has higher animal and plant densities and diversity than surrounding landscapes.

A healthy riparian zone has a diverse mix of grasses, sedges, rushes, ferns, and weeds, as well as woody plants growing in high density on the stream bank or in wetland cells and beyond. Stream banks are more vertical and steep than flat and rounded. The stream flow is more consistent and flowing and the water is clearer and contains twigs, leaves, and logs that naturally become lodged to create pools and habitat for aquatic life. An increased diversity of wildlife exists in and around riparian zones including fish, insects, birds and mammals.

These zones protect water quality by capturing, storing, and treating water through the soils and root zones of plants growing there. A diversity of plant species is essential including those that are water loving and can live in wet soils nearest the stream, and those that are upland plants growing outward at the edges of the riparian zone. Plants growing in the outer areas (flood zones) have the ability to uptake and transpire thousands of gallons per acre on a daily basis.

The improvements introduced by this project will create year-round visual interest to the stream with new and attractive wetland area plantings. And the new continual flow of the restored stream, in contrast with the rapid storm water runoff now that flash floods then leaves the streambed dry, will include cascading small waterfalls that will protect the stream banks and delight the senses.

Both JMU and EMU students have been included during the design phase of this project to illustrate on-site engineering design principles of stream restoration, and computer modeling of nutrient movement throughout the waterway based on in-field sampling. This project serves to not only help clean up excess nutrient and sediment from arboretum and JMU waterways now, and enhance the beauty of the arboretum and its stream, but will provide educational opportunities to future visitors of the arboretum.



Upcoming Events 2015...

- **February 11, 2015, "Airarium" Workshop**, Wednesday, noon-1:30 pm, in the FPEC. Arboretum Director Jan Sievers Mahon demonstrates and guides participants through the process of creating a terrarium. Create a wee world with air plants this year. Registration online.
- **February 14, 2015, Valentine's Day Horse Drawn Carriage Rides**, Saturday, 5-8 pm. Romantic horse drawn carriages



leave from the FPEC by moonlight, advance reservations recommended. Walk up rides may be available day of. Call to reserve.

- **February 24, 2015, Frances Litten Invitational Dinner** Tuesday, 5:30-7:00 pm, Festival Conference Center, Ballroom B.

By invitation only, the 9th annual Frances A. Litten Invitational Dinner is a gathering of colleagues and friends of founding arboretum board member and educator, Frances A. Litten.

- **February 24, 2015, Frances Litten Botanical Lecture**, Tuesday, 7:00-8:30 pm, Festival Conference Center, Ballroom A. The 9th annual lecture offered free to the public, held in the Festival Conference Center on the campus of James Madison University. The lecture begins at 7:00 pm. Learn about transforming any garden into an outdoor gallery of pleasures with the 2015 talk, Art and Artifacts in the Chanticleer Garden with Doug Croft, a staff horticulturist at Chanticleer Garden. Book and arboretum products sales after the lecture 8:30 pm to 9:00 pm.

- **February 28 & March 7, 2015, Winter Children's Art Workshop**, Both Saturdays from 1:00 to 3:30 pm, in the Frances Plecker Education Center, (FPEC) with facilitator artist Jewel Yoder Hertzler. These two sessions offer children's education on plant identification as well as basic botanical



Upcoming Events Continued...

drawing, all materials included in a \$35 cover charge. Advance online registration needed.

- **March 17, 2015, St. Patrick's Live Highland Pipes Free Public Concert.**

Tuesday, 5:00 pm at the Journey Stage Garden, featuring Jenna Marie Dennison on Highland Pipes and Katherine Hummel on Celtic fiddle. Bring lawn chairs or a blanket and a picnic dinner. No carry on alcoholic picnic beverages.

- **March 17, 2015, St. Patrick's Day Dinner Lecture,** Tuesday, 6:00-8:30 pm in the FPEC with Dr. Amy R. Goodall, an associate professor in geographic science, speaks on how citizen science and recent technologies support collecting data for birds and butterflies, which is influencing knowledge and has even led to the discovery of new species. Enjoy fine genuine Irish cuisine and brew.

- **March 25, 2015, Birding Workshop,** Wednesday, noon-1:00 pm in the FPEC with Diane Lepkowski, in partnership with the Rockingham Bird Club. An avifauna notable and photographer of Blue Ridge

and Shenandoah Valley avian species, Diane Lepkowski lectures on songbirds to raptors, giving an annual spring lecture and forum discussion. This workshop partners with a guided birding trail walk on Wednesday April 22 with Greg Moyers.

- **March 28, 2015 Starry Nights Shenandoah** Saturday, 8:30 -10 pm, meeting in FPEC is a dark sky event in partnership with JMU's John C. Wells Planetarium, with "Night Music," telescope viewing, guided night walks, and a light pollution discussion.

