

NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

NEBRASKA NURSERY AND LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

NEBRASKA GREAT PLAINS SUMMER FIELD DAY

Register now for the 2018 Great Plains Summer Field Day, taking place August 17 at the Great Plains Nursery near Weston.

The event features keynote speaker Jonathan Larson who will discuss plant pests, breakout session topics include an herbicide damage roundtable, nursery tours, plant health care, plant ID walking tour, young tree pruning and more. Demonstrations on the latest products and services will be provided by industry representatives. There will also be time to network and visit with vendors.



Not only is this a great learning opportunity, the event is also a great way to connect with other professionals while enjoying the beautiful setting of the Great Plains Nursery.

We hope you join us for education and networking at the 2018 Nebraska Great Plains Summer Field Day. The early registration deadline is August 10. View the brochure on the NNLA website.

Schedule:

7:30 – 8:25 a.m. - Registration and Breakfast
8:25 – 8:30 a.m. - Welcome
8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Keynote Session: Plant Pests, *Jonathan Larson*
9:30 – 10:00 a.m. - Break & Visit Vendors
10:00 – 10:45 a.m.
BREAKOUT A: Herbicide Damage Roundtable, *Eric Berg & Justin Evertson*
BREAKOUT B: Pre-Climb Assessment, *Rob Dein*
10:45 – 11:45 a.m.
BREAKOUT A: Nursery Tour
BREAKOUT B: Equipment Demos
BREAKOUT C: Grapple Demo, *Hughes Tree Service*
11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. - Lunch & Visit Vendors
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.
BREAKOUT A: Nursery Tour
BREAKOUT B: Plant Health Care, *John Griffiths*
2:00 – 2:15 p.m. - Break & Visit Vendors
2:15 – 3:30 p.m.
BREAKOUT A:
2:15 - 2:50: Plant ID Walking Tour, *Heather Byers & Kendra Bretschneider*
2:50 - 3:30: Young Tree Pruning
BREAKOUT B: Arborist Panel
3:30 p.m. - Event Concludes



Jonathan Larson

*See you
there!*

2018
NEBRASKA
FIELD DAY

AUGUST 17

Co-hosted by the NNLA
and NAA.

See the NNLA
website for more details
www.nnla.org



THE NNLA MISSION: TO ADVANCE THE NURSERY AND LANDSCAPE INDUSTRY BY PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NETWORKING, EDUCATION, ADVOCACY AND CERTIFICATION TO INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS FOR THE PURPOSE OF COLLECTIVELY GROWING THEIR BUSINESSES.

NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY MARTI NEELY



I think the pandemonium of spring has subsided, and the steady rhythm of summer has finally arrived. I love the fast pace of May and June, but frankly I am exhausted. I look forward to being able to take a deep breath and spending a little more time thinking instead of reacting.

Recently the opportunity to reconnect with a client I had not seen for at least 7 years came along. They contacted me as their garden had become an out of control nightmare after being invaded by native Equisetum and a few other uninvited visitors. They were hoping there would be a solution to eradicating it and returning the beds to their former self. Upon arriving and engaging in the normal social pleasantries and catching up on what was new in our lives we stepped out into the gardens.

It was rewarding to see how the young trees had grown to do exactly what they were intended to do: screen the neighboring homes. The mixed plantings around the patio provided a broad palette of color and texture as well as a buffet for pollinators. When we descended into the back I could see the magnitude of the problem. The Equisetum has not just invaded the plantings, it had literally taken them over and become the predominant inhabitant. The interesting thing was that while they saw this as terrible problem, I saw it as an unexpected opportunity. This Equisetum was only 8-10" tall, flowing as if it were waves in a lake. It had become a lovely groundcover, much like a dense planting of Carex or Liriope. The problem was the rest of the uninvited guests that had appeared in the beds overshadowed the desirable plants, creating a hot mess that looked like it needed one pruning cut, at ground level.

As we talked about the situation I explained it was apparent there was no point attempting eradication. Instead, we should embrace what is working in this continuously damp soil, remove the other undesired plants, uncover what we choose to keep and step back to see what we are left to work with. Sometimes we need to change direction and make new plans. That is not always a bad thing. We don't know where this plant came from or why it showed up. What we do know is that it is extremely happy and flourishing without any work on their part.

I am very excited to return next week with a crew of hardworking gentlemen to tackle this project. Trees will be pruned to improve their appearance and remove deadwood. The beds will have new, fresh edges, unwanted plants will be removed to reveal hidden shrubs, grasses and perennials will no doubt need some love and attention, and the rest of the gardens will receive detailing to give this property a fresh and tended-to appearance. This will be an example of what I call 'Design by Subtraction.' Designing a space by removing as much or more than adding. It's a purging of what is no longer needed or maybe never was, a bit of outdoor closet cleaning.

Many of us find that a periodic purge is healthy for the soul. Whether it is cleaning out your files, your refrigerator, the garage, your client list of those that cost you more than profit your business, or just the cobwebs in your brain, I hope you find some time this summer to enjoy a little of the beauty we are bringing to others, stumble upon something unexpected that will inspire you and that you reconnect with someone you have not seen for quite some time. Many of us will be gathering at Great Plains Nursery in Weston on August 17 for the Great Plains Summer Field Day. I will be there to check off at least one of those items on the list, hope to see you there, too.

Marti Neely, APLD, NCN
NNLA President 2017-2018

NNLA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2018

Summer in the Sandhills

July 20-21

Taylor, NE

<https://plantnebraska.org/connect/events/>**Eastern Field Day**

August 17, 2018

Great Plains Nursery

Weston, NE

Raingarden/Bioretention Garden Workshop

October 30, 2018

Douglas Co. Extension Office

Omaha, NE

Nebraska GREAT PLAINS Conference

January 23-24, 2019

Holthus Convention Center

York, NE

Additional events can be found at:

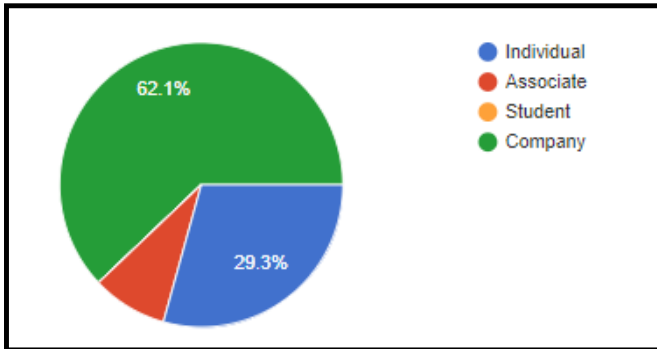
www.plantsearchonline.com/events.htm

NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

NNLA MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

In March, NNLA members were asked to take a short survey to assist the board in identifying the needs of association members. Nearly sixty members responded to the survey, and the results were reviewed by the board members during a recent meeting. Responses will be utilized to identify current needs, possible solutions, training and education topics and much more. Those who participated in the survey were entered into a drawing for a \$50 Visa gift card. The winner of the gift card was Scott Johns with Aesthetics, Inc. in Denton. The following is a brief summary of the survey results.

Membership Demographics

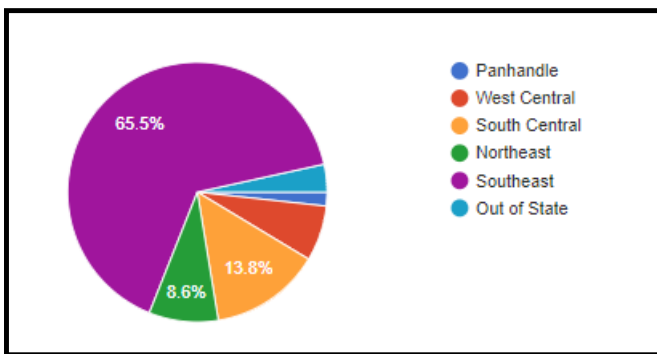


Category of businesses

Of the responses, the top categories in order were:

- Landscape maintenance, design and contractor
- Nursery
- Grower
- Hardscape
- Other (education, grounds department, retired, mulch, seeding, retail garden center, government, distributor and unemployed)

Region of business

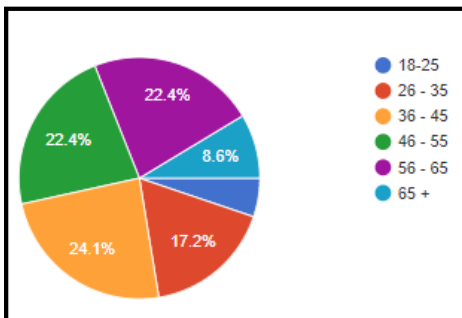


Length of Membership

62% have been members for 10 or more years; 13% have been members for 5-10 years; 15% have been members for 3-5 years; and 15% have been members for two years or less. To encourage more companies to join the association, the board will evaluate current membership benefits, how to increase membership value, and how to reach out to non-member companies. Current members are encouraged to recruit new members and are rewarded for their efforts through the Membership Referral Program. For every new member recruited, the current member receives \$25 in "membership dollars" that can be used for any NNLA-sponsored event. For more information, visit the NNLA website.

Age of Members

Nearly 50% of participants indicated they were 46 and older while less than 25% were between the ages of 18-35. This statistic is typical in many associations. The association will need to identify new ways to reach out to the younger generations and get them involved in the association.



Continued on page 4

Ingredients to a Great Impression

QUALITY. VARIETY. EXPERIENCE. EXPERTISE. SERVICE.

Our priority is to deliver the best and freshest products that meet your highest standards and help you grow your business.

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 Topsoil • Hardwood Mulch



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 Fax: 402.505.3421
 papiovalley.com

NNLA MEMBERSHIP SURVEY, CONTINUED

Satisfaction with Membership

Over 60% of participants indicated satisfaction with their membership in the association. While this statistic is encouraging, the board wants to improve association benefits and increase this percentage. The next statistic may be the primary focus for the board's short-term goals.

Top Three Association Benefits

The top association benefit by a large margin is the Nebraska GREAT PLAINS Conference. The following four were very close:

1. Field Day(s)
2. Workshops
3. Newsletter
4. NCN Program

The board is always looking for members to serve on various planning committees. If you are willing to serve, please contact a board member or the NNLA office. If you have speaker/presentation ideas, forward those as well. Members are also asked to share items for the newsletter and Facebook page. The board wants to hear about events, awards, community service, etc.

What can the association do to bring additional value to members?

There was a lot of great feedback provided by participants. Most of the comments centralized on the following:

1. Education: This included growing the winter conference, providing more workshops/small education events throughout the year (and providing them in different locations across the state), hosting networking events across the state utilizing member locations, sending more emails about relevant topics and providing/promoting webinars.
2. Promotion of members and NCNs: This would include creating ads that encourage the public to utilize an NNLA member/NCN for their next project, educating the public on the value of quality products, design, etc., advertising on Facebook, creating presentations that members can personalize and present to their local Chamber of Commerce, etc., and improve relevancy and maintain high standards for NCN program.
3. Other: Improve website functions, allow online registrations/renewals. This is something the management company is working on for all clients.

Top concerns when it comes to business operations

1. Labor: The top concern was labor. Many businesses struggle not only to find employees, but find employees who are knowledgeable/trainable. Retaining employees is also a struggle along with rising costs of insurance and other expenses. Encouraging the younger generations to consider a career in horticulture is key to addressing this issue.
2. Value: Customers do not always perceive the value of paying for quality design or products. Box stores and internet sales are huge competitors. Promoting members and educating consumers will be a top concern for the association.
3. Other: Weather, government regulation, financing, rising insurance costs and finding new clients were other concerns.



The advertisement for Great Plains Nursery is set against a light-colored wooden plank background. On the left, there is a photograph of a young tree in a white grow bag. To the right of the photo is a large, detailed illustration of a mature tree with its roots exposed. Below the tree illustration, the text "GREAT PLAINS" is written in a large, bold, serif font, with "NURSERY" underneath it in a smaller, spaced-out serif font. At the bottom of the ad, the text "NATIVE TREES & SHRUBS" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. Below that, "Rootmaker™ System & Grow Bags" is written in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font. Further down, "Local Seed Sources || Liners to Finished Material" is written in a smaller, sans-serif font. At the very bottom, the contact information "402.540.4801 || greatplainsnursery.com || Weston, NE" is displayed in a small, sans-serif font.

The board would like to thank those who participated in the survey. If you would like to discuss any of these items further, please reach out to a board member. All members are encouraged to provide additional feedback, concerns and possible solutions. Thank you for your commitment to the association. Watch for future updates from the board.

DOWNTOWN LINCOLN'S URBAN ARBORETUM CONTINUES TO BRANCH OUT

COLLIN RASMUSSEN, REPRINTED FROM DOWNTOWNLINCOLN.ORG



In 100 degree weather, a walk in downtown Lincoln can still be made in the shade. It's not an accident: downtown is one of the largest regional urban arboretums in the Midwest. The nearly 1,200 trees and 97 different species in the area are carefully identified in order to gain certification as one.

The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum is made up of more than 100 arboretum sites in 55 different communities. There are six accredited arboretums in Lincoln alone, and downtown has been one for around 10 years. It consists of 90 square blocks of urban sidewalk planting beds.

Downtown's arboretum shares data with the prestigious Morton Arboretum in Illinois as well as ArbNet, the international database of trees. It is the first arboretum in Nebraska to be recognized by the digital organization. Downtown's

trees are researched on the basis of annual growth, plant health and survivability in an urban setting.

As a well-known arboretum, downtown Lincoln can share research and advice with other Nebraska arboretums, as well as educate the public with events like the statewide Arboretum Adventure. Kids become "arboretum explorers" by following clues in a printable guidebook to the plaque located on 13th and P, where they can make a rubbing with a pencil to add to their collection. The plaques are located at arboretums across Nebraska.

Downtown's trees provide shade in the summer and break up the wind in the winter, saving tenants 10-15% percent on heating and air conditioning. However, Downtown Lincoln Association maintenance director George Pinkerton said the biggest benefit is psychological.

"It's easier to walk down a street that has a canopy on it rather than going down a street with nothing but concrete," he said. "It's the idea of people and trees interacting." When Pinkerton first began overseeing the landscape downtown, there were only seven or eight genus, or "families" of tree species. Now there are 34 genus.

"That's total biodiversity," Pinkerton said. The greater the diversity, the less likely any single event will cause a catastrophe.

Currently, emerald ash borer (EAB) poses a threat to all ash trees in the area. It is an exotic beetle whose larvae feed on the inner bark of ash trees, preventing them from taking in water and nutrients from the soil. As of May 2018, it has been found in 33 states, including Nebraska.

Although downtown Lincoln's ash trees have not been effected yet, Pinkerton said there's a high probability the bug is in Lincoln. Because of downtown's biodiversity, ash only makes up about 10% of the tree population—but that is still nearly 100 trees, many of them located down "O" street.

"It usually takes about six years for the numbers to get built up high enough where we really start seeing the damage," Pinkerton said. If the time comes, he said they will try to plant new trees close by any ash that need to be cut down. In the meantime, downtown Lincoln's arborists are continuing to try to expand the diversity of the tree population—with hickory, Turkish filbert and Buckeye trees, to name a few—so that the streets can remain lush and shaded even when one species is greatly affected.

Maintaining downtown's arboretum isn't easy, and bugs aren't the only thing causing harm to the trees.

"There's damage from construction, car accidents and there's a little bit of vandalism," downtown Lincoln maintenance manager Brian Munk said. "Being in an urban, streetscape setting opens up more possibilities of that happening than in a park-like setting." Since downtown's trees are surrounded by concrete, there is also a microclimate that the maintenance crew has to manage. "There might be trees with green leaves on them in November when we're having an Indian summer, so to speak, and all of a sudden we go from a 60 degree day to a 20 degree day," Munk said. "And that's a pretty hard shock on the tree."

The space to plant downtown is sometimes limited, as well, and the soil can be a mix of street waste, concrete blocks and clay—not an ideal growing environment for a tree. "Years ago they put in a tree and put some dirt around it and hoped it grew," Pinkerton said. "But these new developments are very, very particular about how to structure the soil and bioswales for the plants. The plants do much better now in the type of situation versus taking street waste and making a planter out of it."

Despite the obstacles, Pinkerton, Munk and their maintenance crew work daily to ensure downtown Lincoln will enjoy its trees for years to come.

RESCHEDULED RAINGARDEN WORKSHOP



The Rain Garden/Bioretention Garden Workshop that was offered on January 22, 2018, in Omaha will be offered a second time on October 30, 2018, from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. in meeting rooms A and B at the Douglas County Extension Office in Omaha. The address is 8015 W Center Road, Omaha, NE 68124.

The workshop is being offered again because many were unable to attend in January due to weather. Those who registered but were unable to attend in January can attend the event at no charge. Others can register at the member rate of \$50. Nonmembers can attend for \$75.

Landscapes today are designed to intentionally “do more” than just be beautiful. In the case of rain gardens, they help slow and soak in rainfall to protect and conserve water. Rain gardens attract pollinators and add biodiversity to landscapes. In this workshop, learn about:

- Stormwater runoff and the role of green infrastructure
- Debunking myths associated with bioretention/rain gardens
- In-depth information on rain garden design and step-by-step installation
- Effective plant selection and functions of plants in rain gardens
- Maintaining a landscape with bioretention features
- Case studies and lessons learned from bioretention/rain gardens installed in Nebraska.

Attendees will receive a copy of the manual, “Bioretention Gardens - A Manual for Contractors in the Omaha Region to Design.”

Workshop speakers include Kelly Feehan, UNL Extension Educator; Steve Rodie, Professor of Biology/Environmental Studies; Andy Szatko, Environmental Quality Control Technician; and Tom Franti, Associate Professor of Biological Systems Engineering, Surface Water Management Engineer.

The registration brochure is available on the NNLA website. Please register by October 15.

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HERBICIDE DAMAGE TO TREES

LAURIE STEPANEK, NEBRASKA FOREST SERVICE



We often rely on the use of herbicides for controlling unwanted weeds in our lawns and crop fields. However, in recent years, the Nebraska Forest Service has seen a significant increase in unintended herbicide damage to trees, shrubs and other landscape plants. Many common herbicides contain 2,4-D and dicamba, which are used to control dandelions, violets and other weeds in home lawns and for control of winter annual weeds in crop fields. Damage from these herbicides often results when the chemical drifts through the air from the site of application. On windy days, fine spray droplets may easily be carried onto nearby vegetation.

Symptoms of damage include cupped, curled or puckered leaves and stunted or deformed stems. Foliage is often yellow or pale green in color. Newly emerging leaves are quite susceptible, and damage is often seen on sensitive trees such as oaks, elms, maples, hackberry, coffeetree and redbud.

In addition to spray drift, many formulations of dicamba and 2,4-D are quite volatile. This means the herbicide can form a gaseous vapor during or following application. Warmer temperatures (typically above 85 degrees) increase volatility and may result in the vapor moving long distances from the application site on warm spring and summer days.

Other sources of tree damage occur through the uptake of herbicides via tree root systems. Many of the herbicides that cause damage in this way are long-lived in the soil and are used to keep the ground “clean” around buildings, along fence lines, and in gravel lots. Some are used to control stump sprouts. Examples include professionally-applied products such as Tordon (picloram), Hyvar (bromacil) and Primitol (prometon). Because these products control “brush and woody weeds,” affected trees may exhibit significant damage including leaf scorch, branch dieback and tree mortality. Even trees located some distance from the application site may be affected since tree roots can extend well beyond the canopy of the tree.



Leaf cupping of oak typical of dicamba or 2 4 D

The familiar product “Roundup” contains glyphosate, which can damage trees by direct contact with the spray but is not particularly volatile, nor easily picked up by roots. However, some Roundup products contain different or additional active ingredients, which may require specific precautions when used around trees. Check the label! To lessen the likelihood of damage to trees when using herbicides, read and follow all label directions. In particular, follow restrictions that help limit drift, vaporization, and runoff. Look for precautionary statements regarding trees.

When spraying, adjust nozzles to a coarser droplet size and keep the spray as close to the ground as possible to reduce drift. Monitor temperature, wind speed, and wind direction, and avoid spraying on warm, windy days. Be aware of surrounding properties with sensitive vegetation including gardens, orchards, parks, landscape nurseries, vineyards, windbreaks and native woodlands.

For weeds like dandelion and violets, fall applications are usually more effective and less damaging to trees. When possible, reduce herbicide use by spot spraying, cultivating and mulching with woodchips.

Some pre-emergence herbicides, such as “Preen” (trifluralin), prevent the growth of new weeds and cause little damage to trees. Their use helps limit the need to apply more damaging herbicides later in the season.

If you believe your trees have been damaged by herbicides, keep them as healthy as possible by watering when conditions are dry and mulching with woodchips. Herbicides in the soil will remain (and may continue to cause damage) until they break down naturally.

Herbicide injury is difficult to confirm. Tissue testing is expensive and generally must be done immediately following damage. Unfortunately, there is little information regarding what levels cause damage in trees.

It can be difficult to determine the source of the exposure as well since some herbicides (those that are highly volatile) can travel long distances from their application site. The very warm temperatures this spring and summer have likely increased damage by these herbicides.

Consider your own use of herbicides first; then talk with neighbors. Friendly conversations may help raise awareness of herbicide problems, resulting in better protection for our valuable trees.

NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

OWNER OF NEPTUNE'S WATER GARDENS NAMED "WATER ARTISAN OF THE YEAR"

Omaha, NE – Jason Heller, Land and Waterscape Designer and owner at Gretna based Neptune's Water Gardens, has been named one of POND Trade Magazine's "Water Artisans of the Year" for 2017. Jason earned first prize in the "Best Waterfall" category and runner up in the "Most Artistic" category. The award winning projects are located in Elkhorn and Valley respectively. "I am so fortunate to be able to share my passion with my clients on a daily basis," said Jason. "I couldn't have achieved this accomplishment without the support of my family and my teammates."



The independent contest is intended to honor specific water feature construction projects completed by professional contractors and eligible projects must have been completed between January 1, 2017 and November 1, 2017. In addition to promoting friendly competition, this year's contest will also raise awareness and donations for a charitable cause – the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP). The awards were presented on Thursday, February 22, 2018, at the Water Garden Expo (WGE) in Shawnee, Oklahoma.

"We are proud to serve as a level playing field for the entire spectrum of talented contractors in this growing and vibrant industry," says Lora Lee Gelles, publisher of POND Trade Magazine. POND Trade serves professionals with the latest trade news, advertising and marketing in the pond and water feature industry.



To view the award winning entries by Neptune's Water Gardens please visit their website at <http://www.omahaponds.com>. To view all of the winners and runners up from this year's POND Trade Magazine Water Artisan of the Year contest visit <https://www.pondtrademag.com>.

Jason Heller is an Award Winning Land and Waterscape Designer and Owner of Neptune's Water Gardens, specializing in the design, installation, and maintenance of water features. Jason has a B.S. in Horticulture from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln; 20 years of experience in the nursery business, and is a Nebraska Certified Nurseryman, Certified Aquascape Contractor, Certified RainXchange Professional, and NCMA Certified Segmental Retaining Wall Installer. Jason was named one of POND Trade Magazine's "Water Artisans of the Year" for 2017. Before starting Neptune's Water Gardens in 2008, Jason worked as a Landscape Designer for Mulhall's Nursery. Jason has served as a consultant for contractors from across the USA and has helped build multiple water features as teaching tools for the University of Nebraska and Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo. Jason has spoken at industry events, was part of the water feature design and installation crew for the 2007 International Flower Festival at Epcot Center in Orlando Florida, and has contributed to Backyard Farmer on NETV. Jason lives in Omaha with his wife Jessica, whom he met when they worked together at Mulhall's Nursery, their two children; Will and Anabelle, as well as many koi, goldfish, and turtles.



NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

BUR OAK, KING OF THE FOREST

BY JUSTIN EVERTSON, NEBRASKA FOREST SERVICE



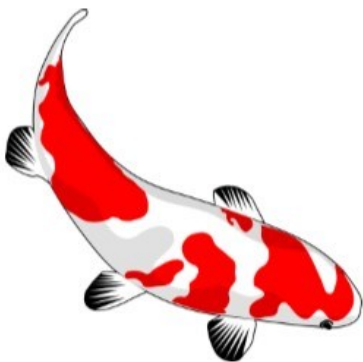
Perhaps no tree better symbolizes the spirit of the Great Plains than the bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*). This incredibly tough native can grow in places few other trees dare go. Its thick, corky bark has even enabled it to withstand prairie fires, making it one of the few trees prominent in grasslands.

Although no tree is perfect, the bur oak comes awfully close. It is relatively disease free, extremely drought tolerant, adaptable to a wide range of soil conditions and can be very long-lived. As a testament to its longevity, one tree growing in Ponca State Park in northeast Nebraska has been dated to 1644. It was reaching for the sky well before the Mayflower landed at Plymouth Rock!

Bur oak grows naturally in Nebraska from Richardson County in the southeast corner to Dawes County in the Panhandle. Despite its natural prominence, bur oak is seldom planted in Nebraska communities. What a shame. If we had planted just one bur oak to every 10 Siberian elms (*Ulmus pumila*), our community forests would be much more spectacular. Fortunately, with tree planting, it's never too late to start. Contact your local nursery today about ordering a bur oak, or if you're ambitious, gather and plant the acorns this fall.

When planting a bur oak, be sure to give it plenty of room to grow. Trees in Nebraska commonly reach 50 to 70 feet tall with a crown spread from 50 to 80 feet. The state champion in Beatrice is 75 feet tall, has a crown spread of over 100 feet and has a trunk circumference of nearly 15 feet.

*Add a splash of water to
your nursery, gift shop,
or garden center!*



Established water garden retail department setup available due to owner relocating. Fixtures, tanks, liner racking... available. Display features and inventory optional. Training, set up, and consulting can be included. Design, installation, and maintenance services available separately.

Email: pondretailforsale@yahoo.com for details

ADVERTISE IN THE NNLA NEWSLETTER

Would you like to see your company featured in an ad in the Nebraska Nursery & Landscape Association's quarterly newsletter, Nebraska Nursery News?

You will have the opportunity to present your company logo, products/services and company identity to members from across the state. Check out the new lower advertising rates on the last page of the newsletter. This is a great, affordable opportunity to reach members and anyone who views the newsletter on the website. Please contact the NNLA office at tfougeron@youraam.com or (402) 761-2216 for further

Be sure to tune in to the new season of Backyard Farmer on Thursdays at 7:00 pm.

Watch for the NNLA commercial spot!



GREENER TOWNS & TREES

Ready to change your community? We can help. The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum provides funding for public landscaping and tree planting through four green infrastructure programs:

If you're new to planting public projects, Bloom Box (for landscaping) and ReTree Nebraska (for tree planting) are both designed as a good place to start.

Greener Towns and Trees for Nebraska Towns are cost-share programs for more experienced folks ready to take on a larger project.

The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum will accept online applications starting July 1 for fall and spring projects. Funds are provided through grants from the Nebraska Environmental Trust, a beneficiary of the Nebraska lottery. Learn more about these programs at www.plantnebraska.org.



Neighbors, students, city staff and non-profit organizers worked together this spring to plant a sustainable neighborhood park in Omaha through the Greener Towns program. Image credit: Keep Omaha Beautiful.

NNLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018

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WILDFLOWERS TO LOVE: BENEFICIAL LANDSCAPES

JUSTIN EVERTSON, NEBRASKA STATEWIDE ARBORETUM

Who doesn't love wildflowers? Viewing or even imagining a natural area with an abundance of wildflowers in various shapes, colors and forms is a pleasing activity for most people. But do we ever stop to think about what a wildflower actually is? In the simplest sense, a wildflower is just that—a flower that is wild, or according to the dictionary: "living or growing in the natural environment; not domesticated or cultivated." Thus we might limit the meaning to only flowers that are growing in natural areas. But that would take a lot of the fun out of it for those of us that want to make room for a little bit of wildness right in our own yards.



Prairie ragwort

There are several benefits of using wildflowers in the home landscape, including the obvious benefit of colorful blooms coming and going across seasons. Part of the fun is the suspense and surprise of not knowing exactly which species will show up when and where, and how things can change from year to year. Other great benefits of wildflowers include an abundance of insects and other wildlife attracted to the garden; a reduced need for supplemental watering; and the chance to pick a richly diverse bouquet of flowers to brighten our indoor lives.

Wildflowers can be used in various ways from island plantings, to borders, to mixing with other landscape elements like tree and shrub islands or perennial borders. Once established, it's as easy as gathering the dried seedheads and sprinkling them around wherever a bit of next-year-surprise is desired.

Although every flower in the garden has wild origins, we generally don't think of longer-lived perennials as wildflowers. For purposes of this discussion, wildflowers are considered to be those that are easily grown from seed, have a tendency to reseed themselves, and are fairly short-lived (thus the need to reseed themselves from year to year). A wildflower doesn't have to be native to be wild, but with the plight of pollinators and other important creatures fresh in our mind, it's wise to remember that regionally native species are especially important in helping to maintain the biodiversity around us. Using more wildflowers in the landscape is a good way to give greater ecological purpose to the garden.

Here are a few of our favorite regional native wildflowers:

- Black-eyed Susan, *Rudbeckia hirta*, grows to 1-2'; has showy yellow daisy-like flowers with black center cones; and is a favorite of many small birds.
- Brown-Eyed Susan, *Rudbeckia triloba*, grows to 3-4'; has 1" yellow flowers with brown centers in late summer; is a good cut flower; and tolerates some shade.
- Wild Larkspur, *Delphinium virescens*, grows to 2-3'; has vertical spikes of delicate blue and white flowers spring to early summer; and goes dormant mid-summer so allow it to reseed.
- Plains Coreopsis, *Coreopsis tinctoria*, grows to 2-3'; has wiry stems and needle-like foliage with masses of small yellow-orange flowers in early summer; and is easy, tough and dependable.
- Wild Petunia, *Ruellia humilis*, grows to 15"; has hairy foliage and beautiful lavender flowers that close in the heat of the day.
- Prairie Ragwort, *Senecio* or *Packera plattensis*, grows to 12-18"; has bright yellow, daisy-like flowers on upright plants in mid-spring; goes dormant in summer; and is ideal for naturalizing.
- Shell-leaf Penstemon, *Penstemon grandiflorus*, grows to 2-3'; has tubular lavender flowers in late May; and is easy to harvest for reseeding.
- Bitterweed, *Helenium amarum*, grows to 12-18"; is a dense, bushy plant with thin, wiry foliage; has masses of yellow flowers late summer to frost; and is very tough and dependable.
- Prairie Coneflower, *Ratibida columnifera*, grows to 1-2'; its deep yellow petals droop around an upright cone in early summer, resembling a Mexican hat.
- Purple Prairie Clover, *Dalea purpurea*, grows to 1-2'; cones of lavender spikes top the wiry stems mid-summer.
- Rocky Mountain Bee Plant, *Cleome serrulata*, grows to 2-3'; is a western native with wispy pink flowers on bushy stems.
- Pale Purple Coneflower, *Echinacea pallida*, grows to 2-3'; drooping lavender petals surround a brown center cone and it blooms from late spring to early summer.
- Pitcher Sage, *Salvia azurea*, grows to 3-5'; is a tallgrass prairie salvia with sky blue flowers late summer.
- Curly-Cup Gumweed, *Grindelia Squarrosa*, grows to 1-2'; and is a tough-as-nails western native with yellow daisy flowers, shiny foliage and sticky flower heads.
- Blue Flax, *Linum lewisii*, grows to 1-2'; has light blue flowers on wiry stems in early spring; and is common on roadsides.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA UPDATE

ELLEN PAPAROZZI

NEW CURRICULUM AVAILABLE TO REVITALIZE UNL'S HORTICULTURE PROGRAM

After one year of work and starting this fall, current as well as entering horticulture students will have greater flexibility in course choices with the new Plant and Landscape Systems option. In addition to the college and horticulture core courses, this option allows students to select courses from topic areas including production, pest management, ecology, landscape design/management, soils and entrepreneurship.

Another new option which is not offered by other universities in the Great Plains and Midwest is the 'Design Your Own Option.' In this option students take the core courses and then during the sophomore year, choose a faculty member and committee to tailor the rest of the curriculum, internships and/or research experiences. This allows students to customize and make the most out of their UNL experience.

The third new choice is the '& Science' emphasis. This emphasis with 4-17 required credits allows a student to add science courses to any option. So rather than have a Plant Science option - any option can allow a student to have the flexibility of a path to graduate school or a research-based career.

The other three options have been streamlined and in some cases renamed. They are: Entrepreneurship, Landscape Design and Management, and Specialty Crop Production.

For more information, please visit the UNL website below and click on the Horticulture degree program. For additional questions, please contact Anne Streich (astreich2@unl.edu) or me (etp1@unl.edu). Happy summer!

<https://catalog.unl.edu/undergraduate/>

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MY YARD – MANAGEABLE LANDSCAPES

NEBRASKA STATEWIDE ARBORETUM, PLANTNEBRASKA.ORG

Mid-summer is a good check for our landscapes. How do things look? Are new plants filling in? What takes the most time and maintenance? No matter the size or condition of the yard, most gardeners want landscapes that provide a maximum of enjoyment with minimal effort. For many of us, one of the main questions is... are we just working in our gardens or are we enjoying them?

Selecting the right plants and putting them in the right place can go a long way toward enjoying them all through the year, whether we're just walking through them or up to our knees working in them.

- Group plants that need similar conditions. Woody plants are used to growing close together and protecting one another from extreme weather. Massing plants with similar needs for moisture, care, exposure and soil type will shelter them, minimize mower damage and reduce the need for watering.
- Right tree, right place, right way. For maximum growth and vigor, select good quality trees that match the site, avoid utility lines and are planted at the correct depth.
- Plant deciduous trees and shrubs west, south and east of buildings for summer shade and plant evergreens north or northwest of buildings to decrease winter winds. Conifers are most effective planted away from buildings at a distance of 1-3 times the height of the trees. Correctly placed trees can lower air conditioning bills 15-50 percent and heating bills 25-40 percent.
- Carefully prune trees while they are still young to help them develop good branch structure—they're much harder to prune when they're older and taller.
- Either space plants close together, mulch them or plant groundcovers beneath (anything lower than the "focus" plants, which may be quite tall) to conserve water, decrease temperature fluctuations, reduce weeds and increase organic matter. For trees, keep mulch away from the trunk and mulch to the dripline.
- To minimize maintenance, use shrubs that look best unpruned.
- Compost garden debris and use it on-site to improve soil and limit waste.
- Include a diversity of plants, including native plants, for hardiness, pest and disease resistance, four season interest and to provide food and shelter for wildlife and pollinators.



Photo shows multi-layered landscape w/Solomon's seal in the front & viburnum & conifers in the back.

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NEBRASKA NURSERY NEWS

WNLA UPCOMING WEBINAR:

DESIGNING A NEIGHBORHOOD-FRIENDLY LANDSCAPE

WNLA members, as well as their staff can participate in the July 25 webinar, Designing a Neighborhood-Friendly Landscape. The webinar is complimentary for WNLA members. Non-members are invited to join the webinar for \$50 – or join WNLA for \$75 and take advantage of this webinar, as well as upcoming and recorded webinars!

The July 25 webinar, Designing a Neighborhood-Friendly Landscape, will begin at noon, allowing you to create a lunch & learn session in your office. In this webinar Benjamin Vogt will discuss how you approach creating a highly-visible landscape that's full of "wild" native plants? What strategies can you use to make it visually appealing and cohesive to the neighbors, yet full of wildlife habitat and ecologically connected to the natural world around it? Learn from his experience getting a notice from county weed control.

Benjamin Vogt owns Monarch Gardens LLC, a prairie garden design firm in Nebraska. He is the author of A New Garden Ethic: Cultivating Defiant Compassion for an Uncertain Future, and for over six years has written an award-winning column for Houzz.com. He also speaks nationally on sustainable design for wildlife and landscape ethics. Benjamin has a Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska and lives in Lincoln with his family.

Thanks to Ball Seed for sponsoring WNLA's Plants with Purpose Webinar Series.

Visit wnla.org for details about each of the upcoming webinars. Registration is open. Questions? Contact Sarah at sarah@wnla.org or call 888-233-1876 ext. 701.

Since 1890, the Western continues its long-standing tradition as a regional, value oriented and interactive platform. Our purpose is to provide a social and educational networking event creating, engaging and building sustainable relationships for all members. Make plans to join us for the 2019 Western, Jan. 16, 17 & 18 in Kansas City, MO.

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- If you brought firewood in from another area, BURN IT! Don't leave it, don't take it with you.



BUY LOCAL, BURN LOCAL.

To report potential emerald ash borer, contact the Nebraska Department of Agriculture at 402-471-2351.

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PLANT NATIVE

Purple Poppy Mallow, *Callirhoe involucrata*

Height: 12-16 inches

Spread: 30 inches

Bloom time: May

Bloom description: deep to light pink flowers

Sun: Full sun to part shade

Water: Medium to dry

Purple Poppy Mallow, or Winecup, has masses of saucer shaped, wine-red flowers in late spring into early summer. Excellent in formal gardens, as a groundcover or allowed to weave in among taller plants. With its sprawling stems and deeply lobed foliage, it looks great trailing over a wall. Easily grown in dry, well-drained soils in full sun, Purple Poppy Mallow is very drought tolerant with a long tap root. This pretty wildflower is a larval host for common checkered skippers and gray hairstreak butterflies.



Rattlesnake Master, *Eryngium yuccifolium*

Height: 36-48 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Bloom time: July

Bloom description: tiny white flowers packed into round 1" globes

Sun: Full sun

Water: Medium to dry

Rattlesnake master is a unique wildflower with sword-shaped, blue-green leaves that resemble a yucca. In summer, smooth, stiff stems arise from the basal leaves, topped with 'golf ball' shaped flowers—each ball has many tiny, greenish-white flowers tightly packed into 1" diameter balls. This long-lived wildflower is easy to grow in dry, well-drained soils and full sun. Its upright habit makes an excellent focal point in the garden when planted individually or in groups. It combines well with taller native grasses as well as other taller summer natives, such as gayfeather or grey-headed coneflower. The flowers have a honey-like scent, and attract a wide variety of pollinators including bees, wasps, flies, and butterflies.



* Native plant recommendations from the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, plantnebraska.org

NNLA Membership Renewal

Membership renewal forms were sent in May for the 2018-2019 membership year. The NNLA membership year runs from July 1 - June 30.

Be sure to renew your membership to continue to receive the quarterly newsletters, email updates, discounted educational rates for the GREAT PLAINS Conference, workshops, and Summer Field Days, marketing & outreach and much more...