

The Crosby Arboretum

Mississippi State University Extension Service

Quarterly News Journal

Fall 2008

MISSISSIPPI'S FALL SPLENDOR

Here in the Deep South, cicadas still drone loudly through the piney woods. The clear yellow of tulip poplar leaves flare out against the ever-present background of green trees and shrubs. Black cherry and red maple trees are already painted wildly with vivid hues, yet are hidden by tenacious and overpowering kudzu vines. We do have fall color here in the South – *you just have to look for it.*



Mississippi is actually located in the southwestern tail of the eastern deciduous forest, and many of the same tree species that give their colors in New England also grow here. Including, believe it or not, the sugar maple so famous to northeastern towns. Here is a Southern fall color primer of tree types arranged by their hues, one that you can use as you barrel up Highway 61 wondering what all those blazing trees are on the side of the road.

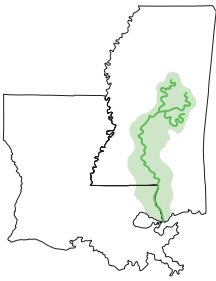
Hickory (*Carya* spp.) – When it comes to a clear yellow fall color, hickory is indeed a mighty king. This magnificent canopy tree towers above the forest, and is highly noticeable in the fall due to its sheer large leaf size. The pinnately-compound leaves can reach two feet in length, and the leaflets shimmer a rich gold in the late autumn sun. With about ten species native to our state, hickories can be found ranging in habitat all the way from the edges of bottomland swamps to the very driest ridgetops. These broad-spreading trees are unusually long-lived, with Mississippi's Champion mockernut hickory tree (living in Panola) reaching 13'4" in circumference.

American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) – This forest giant is celebrated for its golden fall hues. Reaching over one hundred feet in height and sixty feet wide, American beech is typically found on the upper stream banks of rivers and creeks. Its leaves are chameleon-like and shifts color through the seasons. Starting out as bright chartreuse green in spring, it changes to a deep velvety green in summer, to rich clear yellows in fall, and finally persisting through the winter as a tan brown. Against massive horizontal stems and a smooth light grey bark, the fall colors stand out to define the very essence of autumn.

Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) – Similar to having relatives, there may be a few things that we don't like about some trees but we have to love them anyway. Such is the fate of sweet gum. Brilliant with fall color and superior as a shade tree, yet it is sometimes despised by gardeners for its falling spiny fruits. Found in nearly every nook and cranny of the eastern United States, sweet gums grow everywhere. This stately tree has an

(Continued on page two)

Robert Brzuszek is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Landscape Architecture at Mississippi State University. He was curator of The Crosby Arboretum from 1990 to 2003. Bob will be presenting a talk entitled "Ecology, Place and Delight" at the Central South Native Plant Conference, to be held October 17-18 at Birmingham Botanical Gardens. For more information, visit www.bbgardens.org or call the gardens at 205-414-3965.



The **Crosby Arboretum**
Mississippi State University

A regional arboretum representing the native flora of the Pearl River Drainage Basin in Mississippi and Louisiana.

Picayune, Mississippi, USA

MISSISSIPPI'S FALL SPLENDOR (*continued*)

upright pyramidal form and can be easily identified by its star-shaped leaves. The striking fall color can vary on this tree from clear yellow, to bright red, to deep maroon. Since sweet gums seed readily, they are often found in multiple groupings which are very effective when showing fall color.

Bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) – Not often thought of for fall color, cypress trees turn a rich rusty-brown in fall. Perhaps the charm comes from the setting – the gigantic boles of cypress trunks rising from lapping lake water; with rich brown leaves shining among the Spanish moss-festooned branches. While tolerant of living in shallow water, bald cypress will grow well in average garden soils. If this massive tree is too large for your suburban space, try its shorter growing cousin – pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*).

Black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) – Exhibiting the color symbol for danger, black gum wears its red fall leaves proudly. This large canopy tree is found across the eastern United States in just about every range of habitat. The long horizontal branches are striking in winter, and even more so at the height of fall color. Black gum colors early, usually late summer along the coast. This tree is often used as a street tree in urban areas due to its durability and fall coloration.

Red maple (*Acer rubrum*) – It's hard to imagine fall without thinking of the stunning crimson leaves of red maple. This tree is so widespread across North America, that it actually contributes the lion's share of fall color as we know it. Reaching sixty feet in height, this shade tree is found in a wide range of conditions. When cool autumn winds blow, red maples glow in deep red, yellow and orange, sometimes on the same tree.

Sumac (*Rhus* spp.) – Unless one has actually seen lava flow from a volcano, how can one hope to understand the fiery red of fall sumac? This small understory tree pops up along every roadside and old field that there is – then steals the show with a breathtaking vision of autumn glory. Greatly underutilized in the home garden, with seeds cherished by birds and wildlife, I would select sumac over a crape myrtle any day. Unfortunately, it is difficult to find in the nursery trade.

If you really have a hankering for fall color, save yourself some gas by traveling to faraway lands, just try planting a little fall color into your home landscape.

– **Bob Brzuszek**

Reservations: Call the Arboretum office at (601) 799-2311, ext. 101 to confirm all events and to make a reservation, seating is limited. Programs subject to change.
Physical Address: 370 Ridge Road, Picayune, MS 39466
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1639, Picayune, MS 39466
E-mail Contact: drackett@ext.msstate.edu
Hours of Operation: Wednesday-Sunday, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Admission Fees: Adults, \$4; Seniors (over 55), \$3; Children under 12, \$2; Members free admission to grounds and programs.
Webpage: www.crosbyarboretum.msstate.edu. Lists programs and events, volunteer opportunities, arboretum and natural area information, and news updates.

The News Journal is a quarterly publication of The Crosby Arboretum, Mississippi State University Extension Service. Journal subscriptions may be obtained with membership at the Arboretum. Printed on recycled paper.

Please address correspondence to:
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Crosby Arboretum Program Schedule

September 2008 - October 2008



What did we catch? MSU Summer Bug Camp spent a field day in July at the Crosby Arboretum, hunting for insects.



BUGFEST (Kids!)

Friday, Sept. 19 • 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 20 • 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Get ready for the return of BugFest! Friday evening, after an introduction to insects, we'll go searching for night insects on the arboretum grounds. Saturday morning, kids will learn to mount bugs and how to start an insect collection. At 9:30, the New Orleans Audubon Insectarium BUGMOBILE will be open from 9:30 to 10:30 for children participating in BugFest, and for general public from 10:30 to 11:30. Admission is \$3 per child; adults free, and free for members' children. A parent or guardian must be present with each child or group of children. Please register by September 18.

HOME LANDSCAPE DESIGN (Adults)

Saturday, Sept. 20 • 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Prepare for shopping at our Fall Plant Sale! Curator Pat Drackett will discuss the basic design process, how to use these principles as a framework for analyzing your property and guiding your planting decisions, and ultimately learn to make wise decisions when planning your home landscape. Free to arboretum members; \$4 for non-members. Please register by September 19.

FALL PLANT SALE

Saturday, Sept. 27 & Sunday, Sept. 28

Sat./Sun. • 9 - 10 a.m. Members Only Sale

General Public Sale: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Grab a cart and choose from a variety of wonderful trees, shrubs and perennials for your home landscape, and come early for the best selection of many hard-to-find plants. We'll help you select the right plant for the right place on your property. **Free admission.** Arboretum greenhouse.

GREENHOUSE/PROPAGATION (Saturdays)

Sept. 13, Oct. 11, Nov. 22 • 8:00 - 10:00 a.m.

Take advantage of an excellent volunteer opportunity to learn from **Gary Bachman**, Extension Horticulturist with the MSU Coastal Research and Extension Center, will be working with volunteers in the greenhouse and growing areas.

INVASIVE PLANTS (Fridays)

Sept. 12 & 26; Oct. 10 • 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

Learn about the MOST WANTED list of troublesome plants, and best methods for their eradication, while participating in these "hands-on" volunteer work sessions on the arboretum grounds, led by **Terry Johnson** and **Jarrett Hurlston**. Participants must wear old clothes, boots and gloves, and be prepared for strenuous work, lifting and walking.

BASIC SOAPMAKING TECHNIQUES (Adults)

Friday, Oct. 3 • 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Join **Phyllis Davenport** of Country Clean Soaps to learn how to homecraft your own soaps! Learn the process, ingredients and equipment needed for basic soapmaking, and the many additives used to customize soaps such as spices, natural exfoliants, and essential oils. Arboretum members, free; \$4 for non-members. Register by October 1.

WILDFLOWER WALK (Adults)

Saturday, Oct. 4 • 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Join arboretum staff members **Terry and Kim Johnson** as they take you on a tour of the arboretum's savannah areas. Wildflowers and other plants will be discussed and observed along the way. Bring your camera, and dress for walking. Members free; non-members \$4. Please register by October 3.

GARDENING WITH NATIVE PLANTS (Adults)

Saturday, Oct. 4 • 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Learn how to identify and use native shrubs, trees, and wildflowers in the home landscape. **Darla Pastorek** will share her knowledge and experience growing and designing with her favorite natives for every season, tips on choosing the proper location, installation, maintenance, and plant propagation. Free to members; \$4 non-members. Please register by October 2.

Crosby Arboretum Program Schedule

October 2008 - November 2008

CHILDREN'S THEATER IN THE PINEY WOODS

Saturdays, October 4, 11, 18 & 25

10:30 a.m. - Noon (Ages 6 - 12)

Hear ye! Hear ye! "**Gypsy Grannie**" **Marilyn Meilleur** announces a fun fall theater workshop in the Piney Woods. No experience is necessary! Children will learn about theater background, prop and costume design, and techniques in improvisation. For the final class session, students will perform an original play by **Gypsy Grannie**, "The Dragon Who Loved Flowers." Bring pen and pad to the first session. \$20 for members' children; \$25 for children of non-members. Limited to 20 participants; register by October 2.

GOURDS 101 (Adults)

Friday, October 10 • 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Gourdcrafter **Janet Schlauderaff** will give you an understanding of how gourds are crafted and get you started in crafting your own gourds. This class provides an introduction to gourd growing, cleaning methods, and basic gourdcrafting techniques. Each participant will receive their own gourd to take home and work with! Free to members; non-members \$4. Register by October 8.

GROWING GULF COAST FRUIT (Adults)

Friday, October 10 • 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

How about an orchard in your own backyard? Join **Dr. John Braswell**, MSU Extension Professor, for an informative overview of fruit crops that grow well in our area, including blueberries, muscadines, strawberries, apples, pears, peaches, plums, persimmons, and figs. Planting methods, maintenance, and cultural practices to establish and grow good quality fruit will be covered. Free to arboretum members; non-members \$4. Register by October 8.

PROFESSOR MARVEL'S MIRACULOUS "MIRACLE GROW" ELIXIR (Adults)

Saturday, October 11 • 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Sometimes fertilization recommendations can seem confusing. **Gary Bachman**, MSU Extension Horticulturist, will cut through the confusion and present a basic plant nutrition seminar, making it easy for the home gardener to have beautiful and healthy plants. Members free, \$4 non-members. Please register by October 9.

YOGA AT PINECOTE PAVILION (Adults)

Saturday, October 11 • 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Join certified yoga instructor, **James Sones**, in the beautiful natural setting of Pinecote Pavilion for a gentle yoga class followed by a short meditation sitting. Class size is limited to 16. Yoga mats will be provided, but you are welcome to bring your own. Please arrive at least 10 minutes early. Admission free for members, \$5 non-members. Register by October 10.

PAINT-A-PUMPKIN (Kids!)

Saturday, October 25 • 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Children of all ages will enjoy decorating their own pumpkins. Materials will be provided (paints, glue and other items), but **BRING YOUR OWN PUMPKIN**. Member's children, \$3, Non-members children, \$4.



PINEY WOODS HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Friday, Nov. 14 • 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (Schools)

Saturday, Nov. 15 • 10 a.m.-4 p.m (Family)

Celebrate the early days of the Piney Woods in the return of this sixth annual festival. Along the trails, exhibits and demonstrations of traditional skills such as blacksmithing, wood-carving, spinning, basket-making, and more will be featured. Members free; \$5 non-member adults, \$3 children under 12.

GARDENING'S SEVEN DEADLY SINS (Adults)

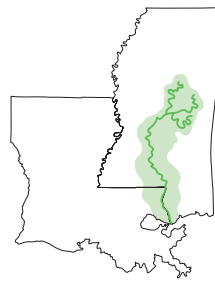
Saturday, Nov. 22 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Gardening, be it vegetables or flowers, is a very popular pursuit for the homeowner. The enjoyment received from a garden can be summed up with the following: "*The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul.*" – *Alfred Austin* But as enjoyable as gardens can be, there are times when gardeners have problems. **Gary Bachman**, MSU Extension Horticulturist, will describe some of the traps all gardeners fall into from time to time, and their solutions. Members free, \$4 for non-members. Register by November 20.

NATURAL AREA FIELD TRIP – HILLSIDE BOG

Saturday, Nov. 22 • 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Join us for a fall trip to one of the arboretum's natural areas, a highly diverse 70 acre habitat in northern Hancock County, containing longleaf pine, sweetbay-tupelo-swampbay, and longleaf pine-scrub oak communities. Meet at the Visitor Parking Area to carpool. Bring snacks and refreshments. Members \$6, non-members \$8. Register by November 21.



The Crosby Arboretum
Mississippi State University

A regional arboretum representing the native flora of the Pearl River Drainage Basin in Mississippi and Louisiana.

Picayune, Mississippi, USA



*Volunteer Gordon Ousset (holding clump) and Grounds Manager Terry Johnson plant *S. psittacina* into the savannah areas.*

GIVE AN ARBORETUM MEMBERSHIP FOR CHRISTMAS!

A membership to the Crosby Arboretum is a gift that will be enjoyed by the recipient all year long! The new member will receive an elegant information packet. To order, call Kim Johnson, Membership Coordinator, (601) 799-2311.

MEMBER E-MAIL LIST

If you would like to add your name to our e-mail list for periodic notices of upcoming events and programs, please e-mail Kim Johnson at kimj@ext.msstate.edu. Also, please tell us if you are interested in receiving our quarterly *News Journal* by e-mail rather than snail mail.

PARROT PITCHER PLANTS FIND NEW HOME AT THE ARBORETUM

Thanks to member Dr. Grafton Teets and family, the Arboretum was notified that a pitcher plant bog would soon be cleared for construction in the Biloxi area. CBL & Associates Properties, Inc. granted the arboretum permission to gather plants at The Promenade in D'Iberville, the site of a new Target store. A profusion of parrot pitcher plants (*Sarracenia psittacina*) quickly became the focus of our collecting efforts. This carnivorous plant is quite different in appearance from the taller yellow pitcher plant (*S. alata*) prominent in the arboretum's savanna areas. Parrot pitcher plants stand only around six inches tall, and have tube-like leaves with a prominent "wing" and a balloon-like hood that increases in size as it matures. Older leaves become dark red, and an opening gradually develops through which insects are attracted to the sweet nectar inside. White spots on the plant's hood are perceived as "windows" by unsuspecting insects, which are attracted to fly upwards, only to fall and be trapped below, assisted by downward-pointed hairs. Keep your eyes open for these new "babies" in the savanna!

THE GUM POND: CROSBY ARBORETUM'S NEXT MAJOR EXHIBIT

Planning has begun on the Gum Pond, a key exhibit in the arboretum's Water Journey, to be located in the northern section of the property. As described in Pinecote's Master Plan, *"The Gum Pond's shallow periphery will mature as a wooded swamp encircling a deeper, small, sunny, atrium-like pool. Among the woodland's swollen trunks will be island-like hummocks bearing small shrubs, ferns and tufts of grass in narrow shafts of light."* Ed Blake, landscape architect for the arboretum's master plan, recently walked the site of the future exhibit with curator Pat Drackett. Ed talked about the gradual process for developing the gum pond, and "letting the land reveal its form" by a careful and continuous study of the existing plants in this area. In the coming year, we will be judiciously removing immature pine trees from the project area, and leaving other plants such as the grasses, ferns, black gum and sweetbay magnolia. An initial pathway will be created around the perceived edge of the gum pond, to facilitate frequent travels of the perimeter, and allowing the land to "speak" of the path's final location. The process used to develop the Gum Pond exhibit will mirror that used in creating the Beaver Pond (Pinecote Pavilion's aquatic setting), and will include thorough observation of the landscape through the seasons, eventually uncovering the final footprint for this new wetland exhibit.



Dr. Lelia Kelly's informative summer herb presentation, "A Fun Thyme in the Garden," was very well attended.

TOUR GUIDE TRAINING

Docent training will be held this fall for persons interested in learning to conduct group tours of the arboretum. Volunteers will receive a wealth of information to prepare them for their role! If interested, please call Robin Veerkamp or attend the next volunteer meeting.

DO YOU HAVE SPARE POTS?

Should you have any extra nursery containers, please consider donating them to the arboretum. We're always in need of one- and three-gallon containers, as well as the larger sizes, for the greenhouse and nursery.

PLANT COLLECTING IN THE PEARL RIVER DRAINAGE BASIN

An October Memory by Jean Hartfield

How well I remember Fran Burge, Chris Wells, Judy Kittlestad, and I wading into one of the swampy borrow holes along Highway 90 between Bay St. Louis and Pearlinton to collect water plants for the pond (Ed Blake insisted on calling it a lake). It was late October and kind of chilly. Our safety measure was stuffing the legs of our jeans down into our socks and tying them with string just in case of leeches or snakes! We loaded up Chris' truck and came back to the arboretum, all of us wet and grungy. He loaded the plants into a canoe and we followed behind it, swimming where the water was deep enough and wading in the shallower areas of the aquatic exhibit, to place the plants. Chris kept warning us about getting sick because we were wet, and to this day he will not admit who really got a bad cold from exposure!

NEW BOOKS IN GIFT SHOP

The arboretum gift shop has received a new order of books, so come pick out one to keep you company this fall. Keep our selection of gifts for the nature lover in mind when you are planning your Christmas shopping.

Membership Application

All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed. For more information call: (601) 799-2311

_____	Student (send student i.d.)	\$ 10.00
_____	Individual	25.00
_____	Family	35.00
_____	Donor	100.00
_____	Business	100.00
_____	Patron	250.00
_____	Benefactor	1,000.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Renewing?

Memberships are for one year.

The Crosby Arboretum
Mississippi State University
P.O. Box 1639
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(601) 799-2311