

Native Plant Festival Coming To The Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary

by Rivers Project Office
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WEST ALTON - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Rivers Project Office invites you to the Riverlands Native Plant Festival – a springtime celebration of native landscaping, pollinators, and the first propagation season for the new USACE Riverlands Greenhouse. Kick off Earth Day festivities with your family on April 13th at the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, in West Alton, Missouri from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for this free festival for native plants.

“Our goal with this new, exciting event is to embrace native plants and landscaping while offering fun activities for the entire family,” said Biologist and Event Coordinator Insiya Ahmed. “From a speaker series to guided plant walks to a volunteer planting opportunity, there will be plenty for you and your family to explore and learn.”

The Riverlands Native Plant Festival will host seven partnering organizations: Audubon Center at Riverlands, St. Louis Wild Ones, St. Charles Wild Ones, Grow Native, Shaw Nature Reserve, Litzsinger Road Ecology Center, and Bring Conservation Home. The festival will feature plant giveaways (while supplies last), a volunteer planting opportunity on the sand prairie, open tours of the new USACE Riverlands Greenhouse, and activity booths that teach about native plants, pollinators, and how to landscape native gardens.

A free, 45-minute speaker series with native landscaping and management experts is scheduled inside the Audubon Center at Riverlands throughout the festival. The series lineup includes:

10 -10:45 a.m. – “What's the Buzz about Natives?”, Sue Leahy, Wild Ones St. Louis

A long-time native landscaper and native plant proponent, Sue is a local expert on native landscaping in the St. Louis area. She has not only designed native landscapes but is also experienced in propagating native plants. During this presentation, she will guide folks on why native gardening is important and how to take your first steps to incorporate natives into your landscape. This talk is a must-see for those new to native gardening!

11 a.m. - noon – “Native Plants and Pollinators”, James Faupel, Litzsinger Road Ecology Center

As the supervisor for ecological restoration at the Litzsinger Road Ecology Center, James is an expert on the restoration and management of native habitats. He will be giving a presentation on native plants and pollinators, their relationship and importance, and more. He will then lead a guided hike along our trails to teach folks how to identify native plants and pollinators!

12:30-1:15 p.m. – “Maintaining Native Plant Gardens”, Betty Struckhoff, Wild Ones St. Louis

A Master Gardener since 1999, Betty is an active member of “Wild Ones Natural Landscapers”. She is also a winner of the St Louis Post Dispatch “Best Native Garden” contest. In this presentation, she’ll talk about native ground covers and other design elements to minimize maintenance time, a seasonal maintenance schedule, invasive plants, aggressive natives, and more!

Festival goers who participate in the volunteer sand prairie planting will also be eligible for take-home plants and prizes at the Welcome Tent.

The Rivers Project Office and its Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary is located at 301 Riverlands Way in West Alton, Missouri.

For more information, please contact the Rivers Project Office at 636-899-2600.