



# Pine Tree State Arboretum

....to promote the knowledge and appreciation of Maine's trees and other flora for people of all ages by offering educational, recreational, and inspirational opportunities.

June 2008 —Volume 19 Number 2

Printed on recycled Paper

## Thanks to Volunteers for Answering the Call by: Stephen Oliveri



In the March Issue I asked for gardening volunteers to take on the responsibility for individual collections. The response was terrific! The following areas all have individual gardeners who have agreed to take care of them:

- Native Plants** - Glenda Goodwin
- Visitors Center Area** - Sylvia Michaud
- Daylilies** - Debbie Clarke
- Rock Garden** - Diane Jerome
- Rhododendron Grove** - John James
- Heirloom Apple Orchard** - Kristin Sweeney
- Hostas** - Bernie Slofer

Of course, there is a lot of teamwork involved and most of these folks also help out on other areas. In addition, several of the volunteers listed above serve as team leaders and organize group workdays involving other gardeners, many from the Cooperative Extension Service's Master Gardener program. The Master Gardener program, with its requirement for community service, has provided a real boost to the Arboretum's volunteer corps. You need not be a master gardener to help out though and anyone who doesn't mind getting their hands a little dirty is more than welcome to join in!

For more information contact:  
Steve Oliveri 621-0031

## Inside this issue:

Thanks to Volunteers for Answering the Call	1
Ornamental Grasses in a Pathway Garden	2
Lesser celandine	3
From the Director	4
Calendar of Events	5
IMBD Festival Re-cap	5
What Bird is That?	6
Chainsaw Safety Program Proves Popular	7

## Special points of interest:

- *The Hosta Garden is better than ever! Come enjoy this truly amazing collection.*
- *Volunteer Recognition Picnic & PTSA Annual Meeting scheduled for June 26th @ 4:30pm. Please call for details.*

**This issue of the newsletter is supported by:**



# Ornamental Grasses in a Pathway Garden by: Joe Scott



Gardens with paths and gradual curves can give a garden a whole new feel. If you are fortunate enough to have areas where there is banking on either side of the walkway, again this creates a whole new view of the garden. Another important item to have in different locations along the path are benches for sitting, relaxing, and meditating. Ornamental perennial grasses have become very popular, they are not only practical but also aesthetic. Ornamental grasses will reward you with added texture, shape, movement, beauty, and sound. Often with the movement from the wind, the sound will be very much the same as if it were a water fountain. Clump forming grasses are very attractive in perennial borders spaced in groups between varieties of flowering perennials. Always plant in odd numbers to give a natural effect and place the tallest to the back and shorter near the front. Grasses are not only beautiful in summer but also in winter with their fox-like dried flowers swaying in the breeze. Cut the old growth off in early spring before new growth begins. They are truly a four season plant. Following are several varieties of ornamental grasses that each have their own special beauty, form, and height.

1. Indian grass—a wide spread native, 5 to 6 feet tall, narrow form with bluish-green foliage and stiff upright stems, holding long, feathery seed stalks that attract birds. The foliage turns bronze in the fall.
2. Dwarf zebra grass—2 feet tall with beautiful striped leaves and silver plumes rise above the foliage in late summer.

3. ‘Glauca’ - blue-green silvery foliage forming 6 to 12 inch high mounds. It does well in sun or partial shade, and is a good ground cover near the edge of a border.
4. Switchgrass—3 to 6 feet tall, grows in an upright narrow growth pattern in full sun or partial shade. The red switch grass has great crimson fall color.
5. Fountain grass—4 to 4.5 feet tall. Foxtail-like flowers are very showy on a mound forming plant. It is beautiful blowing in the wind and the sound is very pleasant. Does well in sun or partial shade.
6. Reed—Variety Karl Foerster is a long blooming, 2 to 3 feet tall plant with vertical foliage and flower stems 4 to 5 feet high.
7. Northern Sea Oats—has a narrow arching growth habit with a bronze to light brown color in the fall. Height is 3 feet.
8. Moor grass—small tufts of green strap-like foliage, 2 feet tall, with wide, creamy yellow margins, tall airy flowers 2 feet tall.



The list of varieties included here is only about one third of those available, but should give an interesting start in any garden plan. Grasses should not be planted too close together,

give them plenty of room to grow into their natural shapes and show off their beauty. Suggested planting would be 3 to 5 feet apart depending on the variety. Some suggested flowering perennials to plant along with perennial grasses include Rudbeckia, Echinacea, Liatrus, Coreopsis, Daylily, Hosta, Phlox, Dianthus, etc. Plant like varieties in odd numbers, and place the tallest varieties in back. Be sure and arrange the flowering colors so they don't clash with each other, and be sure to visit the pathways and gardens at the Pine Tree State Arboretum.

*\*Pictures by: [www.northerngardening.com/fourthseason](http://www.northerngardening.com/fourthseason) & [www.quansettnurseries.com](http://www.quansettnurseries.com)*



## Lesser celandine by: Mary Oatway

Several years ago, in early spring, a delightful little yellow flower, framed by a rosette of glossy, heart-shaped leaves, took up residence in the Pine Tree State Arboretum's hosta garden. Most everyone who saw it wanted one. Wouldn't it be perfect for a rock garden, or make a charming border

along a pathway or around a perennial bed? But, on identification, all those aspirations quickly faded and the little newcomer suddenly lost its charm. It was a villain, an intruder, and a threatening invader, preparing to take over the entire garden and march beyond! Its name was lesser celandine. Lesser celandine, *ranunculus ficaria*, had already found its way to nineteen states in the Northeast and Pacific Northwest and had been reported to be invasive in nine of those states and parts of Canada. Before its surprising discovery growing as weed in the hosta garden in 2002, "it had not been reported from any natural areas in Maine." In its native countries of Europe and Western Asia, it was respected and admired. Early settlers brought it to North America for ornamental and medicinal purposes. Very early in the spring, glossy green heart-shaped leaves with ruffled edges form a rosette from which a separate stalk flaunts a buttercup-yellow, eight-petaled flower which closes for the night opens in the morning. It also closes before every rain-storm. While open, the flowers appear to have been designed to attract insects for fertilization. The bright colored, burnished petals have nectar sacs at their base, but because the flower can tolerate colder days than the insects, for whom the nectar sacs were provided, not many insects have emerged. The result is that comparatively few flowers in this country become fertilized and not many seeds are produced. But this clever little plant has recourse to alternative methods of reproduction! In the area where the upper leaves join the stem "little objects like minute round tumors grow, about the size of a grain of wheat." By early summer, this aggressive plant is ready for a rest and the leaves and stems start dying down, allowing the grains to loosen and drop to the ground. Each one is capable of producing a plant. "A heavy rain will sometimes wash them in every direction." Lesser celandine is a low growing, three to six inch, perennial plant that

spends much time of the year underground as thickened fingerlike tubers or underground stems. It spreads by vegetative means through abundant tubers and bulblets, each of which is ready to become a new plant as soon as it is separated from the parent plant. Primarily, lesser celandine is a "threat to native plants through its extremely early growth and the development of a dense network of roots and tuber in the soil." Over time, it forms extensive carpets in natural areas, crowding out wildflowers that grow and flower before the leaf growth matures on the forest canopy. A few examples of those early spring wildflowers are, trout lily, bloodroot, rue anemone, Dutchman's breeches, and violets, all of which are taking advantage of the needed sunlight and nutrients of decaying vegetation from the months of winter. Other common names for lesser celandine are, smallwort, fig buttercup, pilewort, figwort, and small celandine. Control of lesser celandine is difficult because of the short-lived nature of the above ground portion of the plant. Careful hand digging with a trowel is appropriate for small areas, while watching for tubers, bulblets, and broken roots which can carry on the infestation. Management efforts must be persistent and it may take several years to eradicate it from the site. For larger infestations, systemic herbicides have proven to be effective. In life, lesser celandine is new to Maine gardeners and the Maine countryside, but in print, it has been immortalized by famous poets and popular story tellers. In England, during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was the noted poet, William Wordsworth, who brought into English literature a deep, poetic appreciation of nature. Three of his poems were about lesser celandine. The first verse of his eight stanza poem, *To the Small Celandine*, reads,

"Pansies, lilies, kingcups,\*daisies;  
Let them live upon their praises;  
Long as there's a sun that sets,  
Primroses will have their glory;  
Long as there are violets,  
They will have a place in story;  
There's a flower that shall be mine,  
'Tis the little celandine."

Times change. That was 200 years ago!

\*marsh marigolds

\*\*Pictures provided by USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database



## From the Director by: Stephen Oliveri



Two pairs of bluebirds have already fledged their first brood. The gorgeous display of flowering trees and lilacs has flown by and the heat of summer is starting to settle in. Spring,

that most glorious and anticipated of seasons was spectacular this year, but alas, all too fleeting. Welcome to summer.

### New computer woes

Did we forget to mail out your membership renewal “thank you” note this spring? Some of you may be wondering why your notice came late, or maybe never came at all. The problem is a common one in our modern age; a new computer. There were the inevitable glitches in converting membership records to a new database. Fortunately, the problems seem to be resolved and things should be back to normal. In the meantime, if you are unsure of your membership status, just give us a call or send an e-mail. Your membership support is very important and we want to make sure we’ve got it right. Thanks for your patience.

### Strategic Planning continues

In 2007, the Arboretum began work on a new strategic plan. Board members, staff and a handful of volunteers refined the Arboretum’s mission statement, drafted up our new vision, and identified five major goals for the next five years:



- achieving financial stability
- strengthening relationships with members and

the community

- improving educational offerings and programs
- taking better care of collections and trails
- providing adequate staffing and governance

Work continues on the plan with five teams focusing on each of the major goals. Each team is working on tasks that will move the Arboretum toward our mission and vision. This will take a serious commitment from staff, board, and volunteers, but knowing that we are working to create a world class arboretum is a great reward. To any doubters we say, come back in one hundred years and you will truly be amazed!



### The hundred-year plan

Planting a tree is an act of faith – we know we will never live so long as to enjoy the fullness of its maturity. It is for future generations that we plant; only they will be able to appreciate the work we do today. Would you like to help make that hundred-year dream a reality? The Arboretum needs people who are willing to work; on the board of directors, as planning team members, as fundraisers, and as volunteers. To learn more about how you can get involved, contact Steve or Toni at 621-0031 or by e-mail.

With summer now upon us, we here at the Arboretum send along our best wishes to all our members, friends, supporters, and volunteers. Enjoy this all too brief and all too busy season. Go to the festivals, swim in the ocean and lakes, climb the mountains – but when you are looking for something a little quieter and close to home, don’t forget to visit us too!

With summer now upon us, we here at the Arboretum send along our best wishes to all our members, friends, supporters, and volunteers. Enjoy this all too brief and all too busy season. Go to the festivals, swim in the ocean and lakes, climb the mountains – but when you are looking for something a little quieter and close to home, don’t forget to visit us too!

*\*There are currently no programs or events planned for July & August. You are welcome to get out on the trails, have a picnic, or just come to relax and enjoy the scenery.*



*Please go to [www.pinetreestatearboretum.org](http://www.pinetreestatearboretum.org) for more information and the most up-to-date schedule.*



## Schedule of Events

- Sept. 6—Identifying Mushrooms Class with Instructor Greg Marley from “Mushrooms for Health”, 9am-3pm, \$40 for members of PTSA, \$50 for non-members, pre-registration is required.

\*Please Call Toni Pied, Education Director, to Pre-Register for events at 621-0031, or e-mail at [ptsaedu@roadrunner.com](mailto:ptsaedu@roadrunner.com)

# September 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

## Re-cap: 1st Annual International Migratory Bird Day Festival by: Toni B. Pied

We would like to thank all who participated in our 1st annual International Migratory Bird Day Festival on May 10th. There were bird walks, a raffle, information about caring for birds, children’s activities & lots of free stuff! You can view the list of birds that were spotted that day by visiting the “latest news” on our website:

<http://pinetreestatearboretum.org/pages/news.php>

*A special “thanks” to all who made donations and volunteered to help.*

- ~ Hannaford Supermarket ~ Shaw’s Supermarket
- ~ Knight’s Farm Supply ~ Liberty Graphics t-shirts ~ Maine State Museum ~ Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife ~ University of Maine Cooperative Extension ~ Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed ~ Members of the Augusta Bird Club ~ Bernie Slofer ~

# Thank You!!!

Education Director, Toni Pied shows kids how to make bird feeders out of recycled materials ↓



Raffle: T-shirts donated by Liberty Graphics ↓



Bird mounts on loan from the ↑ Maine State Museum.



↑ Bluebird Boxes built by volunteer, Bernie Slofer, and available to buy @ the Arbo-retum.

## What bird is that? by: Stephen Oliveri

*"... Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,  
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.  
'Surely,' said I, 'surely that is something at my window lattice;  
Let me see then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore -  
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore; -  
'Tis the wind and nothing more!' ... "*

*from "The Raven" by Edgar Allen Poe*

For Edgar Allen Poe, the mysterious tapping at his windowpane turned out to be a "stately raven" but for me it was a great crested flycatcher. The flycatchers are fairly common around the Arboretum this year and there is surely a pair nesting somewhere near the visitors center. One or both of them can be seen hanging around on any given day and their raucous calls can be heard at any time, even when the birds aren't readily visible. A favorite haunt for our local pair seems to be the viburnums in the Native Plant collection right outside my office window. They flit constantly from the wild raisins to the nannyberries and around back to the big green ash. It's a real treat to see this lovely, large flycatcher up close. The soft yellow belly and ashy gray throat contrast vividly with the striking rufous of their big tails. They are seldom quiet for long so that even if one of them doesn't catch your eye, they will surely catch your ear with their loud and rolling *queEEEEP* call! In most respects, this busy pair of birds seemed fairly normal. They would perch on an exposed twig for a minute or two, then dart out suddenly to snatch a passing insect on the wing and move on a little ways to another favorite perch. But there was one odd behavior that really caught my eye, or rather, my ear, and it wasn't their usual assortment of vocal sounds. Instead, as I would be working away at my desk or computer, I would suddenly become aware of one of the great cresteds tapping against my window. For the longest time, I never actually caught one of them in the act. I would suddenly become aware of the tapping and turn quickly, only to see a bright fox-colored tail retreating swiftly away. At first I assumed the bird was just catching insects

that happened to be hanging around that particular window - and none of the other windows, curiously enough. This went on for several weeks and I was never quite quick enough to see what exactly it was that the bird was going after. Finally, one morning I happened to be looking out the window at just the right time and caught sight of the bird just as it started tapping.. At the lower edge of my window I had placed a decal of some tropical butterflies that someone had sent me several years ago. The decal had become faded from long exposure to the sun, and like so many other things that sit right before our eyes, had become all but invisible to me - so accustomed was I to seeing it there that I no longer really saw it. But it was very visible to my "raven - ous" flycatcher. The bird had been trying for weeks to snatch one of those delectable looking morsels. It was probably as confused about why it couldn't catch one of those butterflies as I was about why it kept tapping at my window in the first place. Mystery solved! The solution was simple enough, I peeled off the decal.



*"... and the flycatcher never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting*

*in the flowering viburnums just outside my office window.*

*But that tapping on my window - it shall happen 'Nevermore' ... "*

*with apologies to Edgar Allen Poe.*

\*\*\*\*\*

I want to: \_\_\_\_\_ renew my membership for 2008 \_\_\_\_\_ become a member \_\_\_\_\_ give a gift membership  
Please make any necessary changes to your mailing label on the other side, or write the full name and address for a new or gift membership in the space below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

- Balsam fir (Individual)     \$25                       Small Business     \$100
- Juneberry (Family)         \$50                       Corporate             \$500
- Sugar maple (Supporting) \$100                       Sponsor                 \$1,000

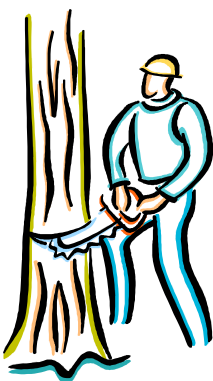
\*Please make your check payable to: PINE TREE STATE ARBORETUM  
153 Hospital Street, Augusta, ME 04330

**or**

You can donate online @ [www.pinetreestatearboretum.org](http://www.pinetreestatearboretum.org)

*The Arboretum is a 501(c)(3) corporation. Membership fees are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.*

\*\*\*\*\*



## Chainsaw Safety program proves popular by: Stephen Oliveri

Chainsaw and logging expert Mike Maines put on an excellent program at the Arboretum on May 17. Fifteen participants attended the workshop, learning how to safely and efficiently handle a chainsaw and most of them got a chance to fell a tree in the Arboretum's Demonstration Tree Farm.



*\*This large hemlock tree was felled during the chainsaw safety class. It will be sawn into lumber and used to repair bridges and boardwalks.*

The downed trees will be sawn into lumber to repair the wetlands boardwalk. All of the participants agreed that Mike was a terrific instructor and that they gained a lot of confidence in safely using a chainsaw. The program was jointly sponsored by the Arboretum and our partners from the Small Woodland Owner's Association of Maine (SWOAM). Due to the popularity of this workshop, we will probably try to get Mike to come back in the near future.

If you missed this one and can't wait to take one on your own, here is the phone number for Mike Maines: 667-4425. He can tell you where and when future workshops will be.

This large hemlock tree was felled during the chainsaw





153 Hospital Street  
Augusta, ME 04330

Phone: 207-621-0031  
Email: ptsaso@roadrunner.com

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
AUGUSTA, ME  
PERMIT NO. 83

We're on the Web

[www.pinetreestatearboretum.org](http://www.pinetreestatearboretum.org)

The Pine Tree State Arboretum Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Pine Tree State Arboretum, a nonprofit corporation. Subscriptions are available through membership. The Arboretum is dedicated to promoting the knowledge and appreciation of trees. The Pine Tree State Arboretum is located at 153 Hospital Street and is open during daylight hours to the public, free of charge.

Inquiries to: Stephen Oliveri, Executive Director

Phone: (207) 621-0031

E-mail: [ptsaso@roadrunner.com](mailto:ptsaso@roadrunner.com)

Website: [www.pinetreestatearboretum.org](http://www.pinetreestatearboretum.org)

#### Board of Directors

President: Robert Marvinney

Vice President: Susan Cottle

Treasurer: Isaac McLaughlin

Secretary: Bernie Slofer

David Auclair

Dean Corner

Marilyn Mollicone

Jerry Nault

Mary Oatway

Kathleen Quintal

Lila Segal

Hillary Schultz

Dave Simard

Elsie Viles

George Viles

Cliff West

#### Advisory Board

Alice Darlington

Richard Fecteau

Al Johnson

Joe Scott

#### Staff

Executive Director: Stephen Oliveri

Education Director: Toni B. Pied

Project Canopy: Jan Santerre

Maintenance: Michael Beaulieu

#### Newsletter Compiled By

Toni B. Pied

Steve Oliveri