Springtime in the Estuary

The first signs of spring seem to entice nearly all of our senses at once! With the sounds of the first birds of the season: spring peepers and mockingbirds, the smell of earth after a spring rain, and all the new green we see everywhere, it feels like we get a fresh start every year!

What to do:

- Start weeding. Some weedy and invasive species only make an appearance in spring (like lesser celandine), so keep an early eye out and you can help control these spring trouble makers.
- Start planning and shopping. Many plant sales take place in the spring.
- Clean-up perennials. The Xerces Society, an insect conservation organization, recommends cutting back last year's herbaceous stems in late March (for our region), but leaving 6-18 inches behind for insects that utilize them.
- Re-mulch areas as needed. Water any new plantings throughout the spring/summer.
- Monitor your trees for pests such as Dutch elm disease and the gypsy moth. These pests are active in April and May. You can monitor trees for signs of disease, such as dying leaves, wilting, and decline, or_request a service provider to inspect your trees.
- Look for signs of damage from different problems, such as tree health issues, pest problems, and more. This can help you determine if you need to take action to protect your trees.
- Participate in the growing list of tree判定 tools to help you make informed decisions about your trees.

Invasive Species Spotlight

Space Invaders: Norway Maples

With so many native species of maples to plant (red, sugar, and silver maples are all great!) the planting of Norway maples to our region has caused problems for native maples primarily due to the lack of predators and insects that can consume their foliage and seeds. However, they are prolific reproducers and their seeds can germinate in the absence of natural mortality factors. Once established, Norway maples can outcompete our native maples, so it's important to remove them from your property if you see them. The Norway Maple (Acer platanoides) is native to Europe and Western Asia. Norway maples were brought over from Europe as a shade tree for lawns and public spaces. They are a large deciduous tree with yellow fall foliage and white flowers in March; Newark, Delaware. (Photo: Sarah Bouboulis)

Perennial Estuary Native Seedling Guide

As always, check previous issues of Perennial Pages for even more tips and tricks!

The Delaware Estuary Native Seedling Guide

The Delaware Estuary Native Seedling Guide is a comprehensive guidebook that features information on how to identify the plants, large pictures of them as common native plants used in typical pollinator gardens and rain gardens in the region. The guide features 50 plus pages of seedlings or young plants, and what sort of habitats they may prefer. The mission is to help you learn how you can help. Thanks to Our Partner 3M, you can check out the guidebook on our website. If you have any pictures of seedlings you have identified and would like them featured in the guidebook, email Sarah Bouboulis at sbouboulis@delawareestuary.org.

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We hope to expand the guide in the future. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact us.

Cover of the "Native Seedlings of the Delaware Estuary" guidebook

The Delaware Estuary Native Seedling Guidebook, created by Sarah Bouboulis, is a valuable resource for anyone interested in supporting native plant species in the Delaware Estuary region. The guidebook features information on how to identify the plants, large pictures of them as common native plants used in typical pollinator gardens and rain gardens in the region. The mission is to help you learn how you can help. Thanks to Our Partner 3M, you can check out the guidebook on our website. If you have any pictures of seedlings you have identified and would like them featured in the guidebook, email Sarah Bouboulis at sbouboulis@delawareestuary.org.

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