

The Columbia Underground

Newsletter from the Columbia Garden Club
A century club, established in 1919
Member of National Garden Club
Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri
Central District



December, 2022

Editor: **Melissa Kouba**

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Calendar

Year-long native garden calendar:

<https://grownative.org/learn/native-landscape-care-calendar/>

Nov 29-Dec 30: The Polar Express train ride at Union Station, St. Louis

Nov 30-Dec 30: Every Festival of Lights at Powell Gardens

December:

1-30: Jingle Bell Hikes at Knob Noster State Park

1-3, 9-10, 16-17, 19-21; Winter Wonderland Garden of Lights at Shelter
Gardens in Columbia

2: Living Windows in the District, Columbia with Boonslick Chordbusters and
Horse Drawn Carriages

3: Holiday Homes Tours and Tea at Historic Phelps House in Carthage MO

3-4, 10-11: Weihnachtsfest - Deutschheim State Historic Site, Hermann

6: Boonslick Community Choir - Thespian Hall 7pm, Boonville

9: Tuba Christmas at Crown Center, Kansas City

9-10: Holiday Haberdashery -First MO State Capital State Historic Site in
St. Charles

10: Old Fashioned Christmas in Village - Arrow Rock

12: CGC Holiday home tour and cookie exchange

Membership form

If you are interested in joining Columbia Garden Club, complete the information below
and mail it to:

Carolyn Oates, 6302 S. Old Village Road, Columbia, MO, 65203. Include a \$25 check
payable to "Columbia Garden Club."

Name: _____

Preferred phone: (circle) cell or home _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

___I approve of the above information being printed in the annual club yearbook.

For questions about membership, feel free to contact Linda Antal at 573-819-4502 or
lga4588@yahoo.com



A note from President Betty:

★
Dear Members,

I hope everyone got a chance to enjoy a bountiful Thanksgiving with your family.

I'm going to take this chance to thank all of our members for everything you did to make 2022 a successful year for Columbia Garden Club.

You probably did more than you think! If I tried to thank individuals here, it would no longer be a note. It would be a tome! Just know that you are appreciated for what you do whether it's to enter a flower show, work at the plant sale, help at the Bluffs, attend meetings regularly, participate in projects, send things to Melissa for the newsletter, bring refreshments, etc. I could go on and on, but again, this is a note. So, I give you a heartfelt Thank You!

I hope to see all of you at our Holiday Home Tour on December 12.

Betty

November CGC meeting



The Columbia Garden Club met by Zoom on November 7, 2022 with Betty Connelly calling the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. and 17 members were present. We welcomed new member Karen Battjes. Happy Birthday greetings were mentioned belatedly for October: Connie Blackmore, Kay Kern, and Barb Schuette, and November birthday Rita Gerke. Mary Nesladek gave the inspiration: "Die when I may, I want it said by those who knew me best, that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower where I thought a flower would grow" by Abraham Lincoln. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed. Carolyn Oates gave the treasurers report showing a balance of \$12,699.53 including outstanding checks.

Old Business: We do have memorial funds of \$780 in the name of Amanda Schoenfeld. We have a committee to look into the memorial tree program with Columbia Parks and Recreation. The family has sent a thank you note for the book in Amanda's name donated to the library. The library also sent a thank you note for three gardening books purchased by CGC.

New Business: Barb Rothenberger reported that December 8 at 2 p.m. we will meet at The Bluffs to help residents make decorative arrangements in Christmas mugs. She has the supplies she needs but will purchase some fresh flowers. Melissa Kouba talked about the Russell school gardening project. There are 14 lesson plan activity kits that are partially done. Karen Blackmore reported that we can apply each year for the Teaching Missouri's Children to Plant America Grant. The maximum amount is \$300 yearly. Members discussed the 2023 budget that was presented by Carolyn Oates; it was approved by a show of hands via zoom. This budget has a deficit of \$708 which would come from savings if needed. We kept the same contributions as we had for the 2022 budget.

December 12 meeting: This will be a tour of member's homes to see Christmas decorations starting at 1 p.m. Contact Diana Cooksey to let her know you want to attend and if you want to carpool with anyone. Diana will then put people in groups to visit the homes of Diana Cooksey, Mary Nesladek, Christopher Nesladek, Karen Blackmore, and Carolyn Doyle. After you tour your last house, return to Diana's house for refreshments and a cup of cheer. Others may also help out and bring refreshments.

Program: We watched a video presentation by Dr. Douglass Tallamy, entomologist, ecologist, conservationist, professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware. The program was Bringing Nature Home, Nature's Best Hope, The Nature of Oaks with Rick Darke Living Landscape. Dr. Tallamy thinks we need to change our view of conservation and preservation from the idea of our National Parks being able to preserve resources that support wildlife as there just isn't enough space that can be devoted to wildlife alone. We must make it personal and do our part with our own property; he insists that individually we can make a difference. We should also practice conservation of private property; 40 million acres in our nation are lawns. We should reduce lawns, plant more natives, and remove invasive species. We need ecological landscapes; we need to change our culture.

After the video presentation, members also discussed gardening books that they have enjoyed. Meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Mary Nesladek



From Missouri Conservationist: December 2022

Natural Holiday Decorating

If you want to mix in some natural greenery to your holiday decorating, eastern red cedar is a great choice. It is abundant, has a beautiful natural juniper scent, and boughs of female trees are decorated with blue, berrylike fruits, providing a splash of color. To learn more about eastern red cedar, visit short.mdc.mo.gov/ZFJ.

Winter Mushroom Hunt

If you've got a taste for mushrooms, you're in luck — you don't have to wait for spring! Oyster mushrooms may appear year-round, including in wintertime. These choice edibles grow in clusters on stumps, logs, and trunks of deciduous trees. They fruit especially after a good rain and if weather is mild. A single "oyster log" can refruit several times a season. For more information on oyster mushrooms, visit short.mdc.mo.gov/4cC.

Animal Tracks Scavenger Hunt

Don't let the cold weather lead to cabin fever. The morning after a snowfall, bundle up the kids, get outside, and go for a scavenger hunt. Look for mammal tracks and see who can find the most. To help you on your search, visit short.mdc.mo.gov/Ztw.

Fluttering Reminders of Spring

Although most butterflies and moths overwinter as eggs, caterpillars, or pupae, some species overwinter as adults and may fly around on warm sunny days, even during midwinter. Just one glimpse of these fluttering beauties can give you warm thoughts of the coming spring. Some butterflies to look for include mourning cloak, eastern comma, gray comma, question mark, and goatweed leafwing. For more information on Missouri butterflies, visit short.mdc.mo.gov/4cy.

Christmas Bird Count

Do you know your birds by sight and sound? Do you own lots of warm clothes? Join the Christmas Bird Count and add to a nationwide citizen science project! There are over 20 Christmas Bird Counts in Missouri alone. If you know your birds well, consider participating. To learn more, visit tinyurl.com/ybropbvq
Dress warmly! Take snacks! Birds are awesome!

Natural Events to See This Month

Here's what's going on in the natural world.

- Trumpeter swans visit marshes, lakes, and rivers.
- Beavers swim under ice.
- Eastern gartersnakes appear on mild winter days.
- Rainbow trout are stocked in lakes and streams.
- Brown recluse spiders hide indoors.



Eastern Red Cedar *Juniperus virginiana*

Status; Common

Size Height: to 50 feet

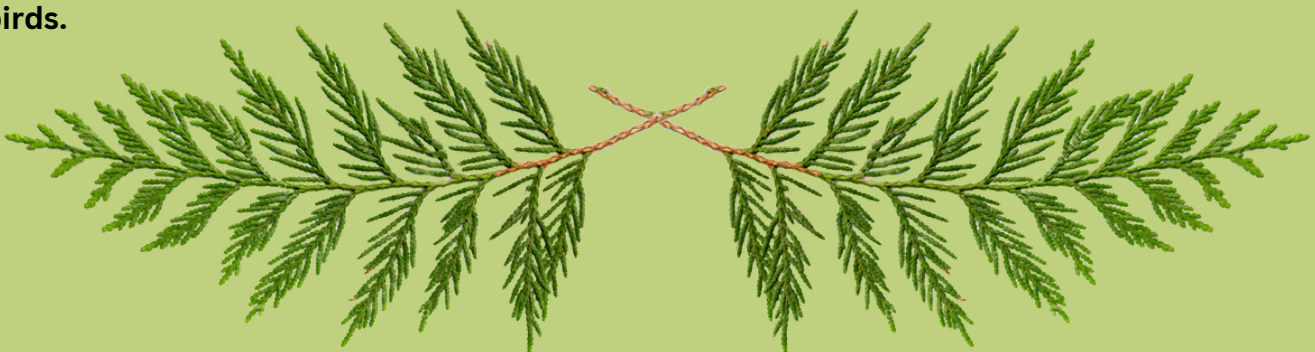
Distribution: Statewide

Eastern red cedar is a small to medium-sized tree, aromatic, evergreen, with a dense, pyramidal (sometimes cylindrical) crown that occurs on glades and bluffs; in open, rocky woods, pastures, and old fields; and along roadsides and fence rows. Some gnarled cedars on Ozark bluffs are over 1,000 years old. The fleshy, berrylike, globe-shaped fruits are dark blue with a white, waxy coating that appear from August to September.

Did You Know? This tree is not technically a cedar, which is why many specialists prefer to spell "redcedar" without a letter space or else hyphenate it. "Juniper" is a better name for this plant, as it is in the genus *Juniperus*, in the cypress family. Although many Missourians today purchase pines and spruces from Christmas tree farms, red cedar was the traditional favorite in many homes. And for many, it still is.

HUMAN CONNECTIONS The tree has been cultivated since 1664, and old specimens are prominent in many old cemeteries, farmyards, and neighborhoods. The red, aromatic wood is used for chests, closets, interior finish, posts, pencils, and other objects. An oil from the resin is used for ointments, soaps, and to flavor gin.

ECOSYSTEM CONNECTIONS The fruit is eaten by many species of birds and mammals. Cedar waxwings are named for their preference for the fruits. Seeds that have traveled through the digestive tract of waxwings and other birds have a higher germination rate than those that have not. In addition, the thick crowns of cedars provide nesting and roosting cover for many birds.



Recommended Reading:!

- "Monarch Butterflies"

Ann Hobbie, Illustrated by Olga Baumert

- "Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard"

Douglas W. Tallamy

- "The Nature of Oaks: The Rich Ecology of Our Most Essential Native Trees"

Douglas W. Tallamy

- "Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants"

Douglas W. Tallamy

- "The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home Garden"

Rick Darke and Douglas W. Tallamy





Save the Stems

Many hollow or pithy plant stems and branches provide excellent places for cavity-nesting insects to call home. Thirty percent of bees nest above ground – most of them in pre-existing cavities like plant stems and beetle holes in wood. They don't dig a hole in the sides of stems, but create their nests in the ends of stalks we leave behind when we prune. Small carpenter bees (*Ceratina* spp.) frequently carve out their nests in last year's dead raspberry (*Rubus* spp.) canes or wildflower stems, often only a few inches away from the blossoms that provide pollen to feed their young. Still tinier yellow-faced bees (*Hylaeus* spp.) use the hollow center of smaller stems, like bee balm (*Monarda* spp.) or roses (*Rosa* spp.), and larger leaf-cutter bees (*Megachile* spp.) prefer the larger stems of plants like native thistles (*Cirsium* spp.), cup plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*), or desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis*). The biggest stem-nesting bees in North America, large carpenter bees (*Xylocopa* spp.), sometimes use the pithy stems of large plants like yucca (*Yucca* spp.) and agave (*Agave* spp.) in regions where wood is uncommon or unavailable.

Bees will partition the tunnels inside the stems and use leaf pieces, leaf pulp, tree resin, pith or mud to partition brood cells inside the stem. Some leaf pieces and resin possess antimicrobial properties which can help protect the brood.

Other common occupants of dead stems and twigs include cavity-nesting wasps, stem-boring moths, and even some spiders. In addition, some beneficial insects insert their eggs into the stems of wildflowers and grasses for safe keeping over the winter.

Not all stems need to be left behind. Do a look and feel test and if the stem feels strong and fibrous and has a pithy center, it is a good one to leave! Plants such as goldenrods, coneflowers, asters and monarda make excellent habitats for bees. Hollow stems are less desirable unless the opening is less than 3/8" wide. Plants such as goldenrod, coneflower, aster and monarda provide good nesting material. Plan on leaving the stems indefinitely because the life cycle of the bee can be up to 12 months long. The stem will eventually rot to the ground. Stems don't have to be left where they grow. If the stem is not in a place where you want to leave it, cut it a little longer, cut it off at the ground and move it to a place in your garden where it can stay.

How to Create Habitat for Stem-Nesting Bees



WINTER

Leave dead flower stalks intact over the winter

SPRING

Cut back dead flower stalks leaving stem stubble of varying height, 8 to 24 inches, to provide nest cavities.



Female bees find cut or naturally occurring open stems, start a nest, then lay an egg on the pollen balls. Larvae eat the pollen.



SUMMER

New growth of the perennial hides the stem stubble.



Bee larvae develop in cut dead stems during the growing season.



FALL



WINTER

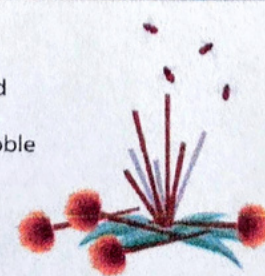


Bees hibernate in stems during the winter



SPRING

Cut back dead flower stalks. Old stem stubble will naturally decompose.



Adult bees emerge and start nests in newly cut dead stems or in naturally occurring open stems.



Learn more about how you can help provide nesting habitat for native bees at www.xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/nesting-resources

Sources:

Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation and Creating and Managing Habitat for Native Bees by Denise Ellsworth University of Minnesota; www.beelab.umn.edu