

Weekly Wild Wednesday

October 13th, 2021

What A Week of BITTER-SWEET!

We learned that REAL Bittersweet can be good—or invasive! Click photos!

A few key points to help identify Oriental (bad) bittersweet from American (good) bittersweet in crafts (for more information and pictures [click here](#)):

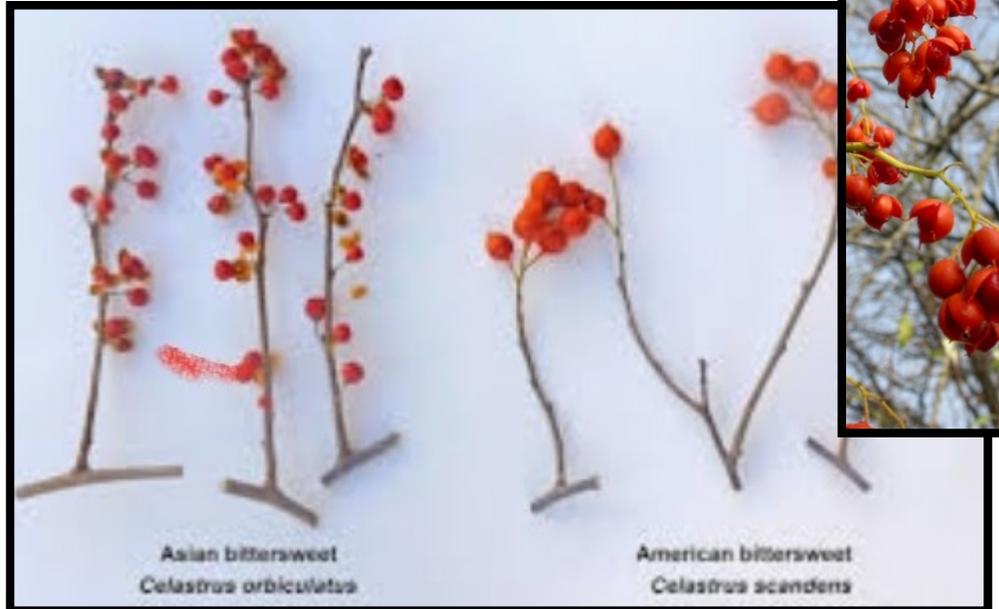


Seed capsules: Oriental bittersweet has yellow seed capsules on red berries (Give a yell when you see

ye/low.) whereas American bittersweet has orange seed capsules on red berries (Orange is OK.)

Berry placement: Oriental bittersweet has berries strung-out along the stem (Strung-out is bad) while American bittersweet

's berries are all clustered near the end (Saving the best for last).



Celastrus scandens



We made new friends!



(Above) Kody showed us this ?Praying Mantis? Cocoon!

So much happened this week! Plants, seeds, experiences. Leaves are falling, colors popping and then disappearing into a comforting blanket of brown, protective leaves.



Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation hosted a Seed Harvest, spearheaded by Melanie and hosted by Kody. Frank made the bittersweet “Find of the Day” with a giant, hissing, HARMLESS AND BENEFICIAL Bull Snake! (click photo) Andrea took that great photo--and then we carefully stayed away from his home so we wouldn't disturb him too much! We harvested a LOT of seeds!-->



Learning from all the people at the Seed Harvest made me personally think about Mentors and Mentoring. As a Beginner Wild One, Nature Enthusiast, and gardener, I am constantly astounded at the kindness and generosity of knowledge and time I am frequently receiving. The brilliant and experienced people who share their skills—freely—with smiles and patience, goes beyond anything I could have imagined when I first started my ‘fork in the road’ Nature lifestyle. I have been awed by their generosity when sharing my willingness to learn from these mentors. Plants, seeds, smiles, hours of technological coaching, hands-on help. None of this is taken for granted. We have had losses this week. Dear friends, colleagues, family members have taken a lifetime journey to it’s final fruition. Other friends, mentors, colleagues have moved on to their own forks in the road. The bittersweet recognition of life on Earth as finite, and life on Earth in a flux of constant change brings me to a place of saying Thank You.

Thank you to those who shared their entire lives with me on this Earth. You will be sorely missed.

Thank you to those who continue on this Earth with me as Dear Friends, and Mentors—As you take your Journeys “Off To Your Next Adventure”. You know who you are—and you will mentor and teach me for the rest of MY journey on this Earth.

Thank you to this glorious planet we call home.

May we all find a way to heal our own personal spaces, in whatever form that takes!



←And speaking of Mentors, Elisa showed us the difference between seeds and chaff (seed overings or debris) on a Compass Plant! Who knew! (We didn't!)

Chaff

Seeds



←We found this cool plant at [Desoto National Wildlife Refuge](#), called American Pokeberry! The berries are beautifully shaped, the colors phenomenal. Don't eat the berries, toxic to us but luckily very bitter!

Songbirds, fox can eat it, and deer don't like it! We want to try this beautiful shrub at home!

Click photo for info!



And what's up with our Golden Alexander, a Spring to early Summer bloomer? It's in FULL BLOOM!! NOW! (Click photo, above right)

Pat James
From the Hills of Boyd County

Menu

Home



My artistic explorations are focused on the 600 acres of hilly rangeland I live on along the Missouri National Recreational River in Boyd County, Nebraska. It is land that demands close focus and time to fully appreciate. When I am walking in the hills and along the river, I experience a sense of being at peace, of being separate and solitary, and of being part of natural and human history. It is a place that I have come to love, but it is also a place that transcends my brief time in it through ongoing cycles of growth, decay, and regeneration.

Wildlife Diversity News
Conservation and Recreation



Dreaming of prairie?

The *Planting Prairie 101 Series* will be a handful of articles that walk through the process of planting a prairie garden or a small patch of native prairie at your home. If you have 5 or more acres you'd like to restore to native prairie, please reach out to the [DNR's Private Lands Biologists](#).

Why Native Plants?

This is the WILDLIFE Diversity News so why are we sending out an article focused on plants? Because Iowa's native plants are the base that supports all of our native wildlife. The plants feed insects, which in turn are food for the birds which in turn are food for... you get the idea.

And why is it important that the plants be natives? Because native plants support more native wildlife! Doug Tallamy, Mr. Native Plants himself, gives an example that a native oak tree can support 542 species of butterfly or moth while the non-native Ginkgo tree supports 5 species.

One of the best things you can do to support pollinators and other wildlife, is to plant native plants. Iowa used to be covered in prairie and it can be again if enough of us plant a few of the hundreds of species that made up the tallgrass prairie ecosystem. It won't look the same as 150 years ago but it can stop the loss of native wildlife like the endangered rusty-patched bumblebee and the monarch butterfly.

←**SAVE THE DATE!!** Loess Hills Wild Ones is hosting a (We say with hope-- tech challenged!) **HYBRID** (Zoom and Live following protocol) program.

Our Own Dianne says Pat James is terrific, and this program promises to inspire all of us! We can hardly wait!!!

November 14th, 2021

2-4PM at the Downtown Sioux City Library!! Masks are required (we will have extras)

2:05 59%

The Prairie Ecologist

Essays, photos, and discussion about prairie ecology, restoration, and management



You guys, I have a museum exhibit!!

Posted by Chris Helzer

Well, last week was pretty great. Thursday evening, we had the opening reception for the *Hidden Prairie* temporary exhibit at the [University of Nebraska State Museum's Morrill Hall](#). The exhibit, which runs from now until May, 2022, features the square meter photography project I did back in 2018. First a book, now a museum exhibit – all from a silly idea I had to see what I could find within one little bit of prairie over a year! As I said during the reception, I kinda feel like I've just pulled off the greatest prank of my life...



Road Trip! Chris has his own exhibit in Lincoln, NE. Yippee!!!!!!

And honestly, this week we could have had five more pages of excellent continuing education! We will save many of these for Winter Cozy Indoor Days!

joegardener

230-Monarch Rx: The Prescription for Healthier Butterflies

OCTOBER 14, 2021 | CARE, PODCAST



(photo: Amy Prentice)

As much as we love watching monarch butterflies fluttering in our gardens and

←**Elisa shared this Planting Prairie 101 Wildlife Diversity Link!**

We loved the Joe Gardener Podcast! →

Apparently Monarchs know how to treat their own ailments with PLANTS we leave in our gardens after they are DEAD!

←**And this Superfoods in the Insect Garden really got us searching for these plants!**

2:28 45%

Superfoods in the Insect Garden
ecolandscaping.org



Superfoods in the Insect Garden

Maureen Sundberg • June 16, 2018 • Beneficials/Pollinators, Native Plants

Wishing you a week filled with "Sweet and Bittersweet"



Wild Ones[®]

NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

LOESS HILLS

