

bcsem

June 2015

POINTS OF INTEREST:

Our next Quarterly Meeting is being hosted by St. Clair Shores, June 18, at the St. Clair Shores Golf Club

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED! BE THE HOST COMMUNITY FOR DECEMBER 2015 OR FOR A QUARTERLY IN 2016! WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU! CONTACT JAMES KEEHN 586-894-8562 TODAY!



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Beautification Council of Southeastern Michigan

A Green Gardening Primer—Chicago Botanic Garden

Because more and more people are talking about ways to green their gardening, we will discuss some of the commonly used terms associated with the practice. We hope you find the information relevant for your own gardening purposes.

BIODEGRADABLE:

Biodegradable products or packages decompose into elements found in nature within a reasonably short period of time after normal disposal or use. Biodegradable products help to reduce the volume of materials stored in landfills and offer alternatives to products that can be recycled. In gardening, biodegradable seed-starting pots, nursery pots and containers are available.

BIOSWALE

A bioswale is a shallow channel that has been created in the landscape to temporarily store rainfall draining from hard surfaces like rooftops, parking lots, and roads. Bioswales reduce the amount of rainfall diverted to storm sewers by allowing some of the water to percolate into the soil and replenish local groundwater aquifers.

Usually lined by grass or specially selected plants, bioswales improve water quality by filtering out waterborne pollutants. More and more often, you can find bioswale channels running through paved parking lots or between expressway lanes. In some communities, commercial building codes require bioswales to reduce the need for larger sewer systems.

CARBON FOOTPRINT

Carbon dioxide is one of a handful of common greenhouse gasses associated with global climate change. A carbon footprint is a measure of greenhouse gas emission a person, business, or even municipality is adding directly or indirectly to the environment. Lifestyle changes that reduce carbon emissions help to mitigate the negative impact of global climate changes. Driving fewer miles in gas-powered vehicles and using less coal-generated elec-

tricity are common approaches for reducing one's carbon footprint. Garden-related practices and products that increase the size of a carbon footprint are using gas-powered garden equipment, using municipal water for irrigation, and the production of synthetic fertilizers. Planting trees and long-lived shrubs help to mitigate the effects of climate change because they remove and store carbon already in the atmosphere.

COMPOST

Compost is the end product of composting; a process where organic matter is collected, mixed and allowed to decompose. Compost can be used to amend soil, or as a mulch layer on garden beds and around trees. In nature, deciduous leaves create a mulch layer that eventually decomposes. Like human-made compost, this natural recycling process returns nutrients to the soil and improves soil structure, and it is one reason why native plants growing in natural ecosystems usually do not need more fertilizer than nature provides. Composting is a favorite technique for homeowners looking for easy ways to green their gardening practices. In addition to reducing the need for expensive fertilizer, and the adverse impacts fertilizer runoff can have on our lakes and streams, composting reduces the amount of garden debris that ends up in landfills.

ECOSYSTEM

An ecosystem is a complex set of natural relationships between the landscape and the organisms that live there. An ecosystem includes the plants, insects, birds, soil, waterways, fish, animals and people living together. Individual ecosystems are interconnected, and changes in one can have a serious impact others. Healthy ecosystems are in balance and able to perpetuate themselves. Concerns about climate change include the impact that changing temperatures and precipitation amounts are having on ecosystems, and the ability of native plant and animal communities to survive.

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Message from the President by James Keehn

Sometimes we find ourselves just getting by, going through the motions of completing commitments we've made just to get through them...just to get them done. Maybe it's time for a shift in our lives. Are you doing your personal best?

We each have the capacity to do great things. Take a look at your accomplishments. Don't measure yourself by what you didn't get done. Measure your time by the focus you dedicated. We each have our own level of contribution, and our results will vary. Continue to dedicate your time to the simple tasks while focusing on the larger picture. If you give it all you have, you will live your dreams. If you have given your best with what you have to give and with drive and conviction, then you have done your part.

Motivation is the mental push for your to accomplish an action. Here are some ways to help motivate us to have the drive to complete commitments by doing our personal best.

1. Start with the small stuff. Procrastination occurs when a task seems to daunting . Break it down into smaller bits suited to your attention span and timeframe.
2. Look forward to the success of task completion. Visualize the results of doing your personal best.
3. What's your motivational switch? Each of us is driven by something that motivates us to complete a task. It could be a lifelong dream. It could be the joy of helping others. Whatever moves you to accomplish a goal, tap into it every day. Use it to do something great...something you never thought possible.
4. Stop and smell the roses. So often in this busy world, we fail to stop and appreciate what we have accomplished individually or as a team. The body of a team's work or your life's work is a journey worth reflecting on. It's a map of our drive, motivation and key to where we committed to our best.
5. Where can you improve? There are always lessons if we pause to review what we've done in the past and what we really want for the future. Through this we get inspiration to ramp up our motivation.

"When we do the best we can, we never know what miracle is wrought in our life or in the life of another."
Helen Keller

"We must become the change we want to see."
Mahatma Ghandi

"We don't get a chance to do that many things, and every one should be really excellent.... Because this is our life" Steve Jobs

Our June 18th Quarterly Meeting Hosts—St. Clair Shores

The mission statement of the St. Clair Shores Beautification Commission is to be instrumental in improving their city's appearance. through landscaping, flower beds, and improvement in our park networks. And to foster beautification in their business and residential community. Each year the Beautification Commission selects business and residential property that exemplify those who live and work in the city towards enhancing the overall visual appearance of the property and its curb appeal.

The Beautification Commission has other interesting programs, as well. They include links from their page on their cities website to the National Council of State Garden Clubs, and the Edsel and Eleanor Ford House and Gardens. They also have home gardening tip links to the MSU Master Gardeners website, to pesticide -free gardening, and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. There is a link to explore children's garden projects, and a great listing of gardening books available at the St. Clair Shores Library.

There is a link to the ShorePointe Village residents partnering with elementary school students to create beautiful gardens and learn about horticulture. There is also a Giving Garden for Jefferson Middle School created by an Eagle Scout you can read about. The website to view the St. Clair Shores Beautification Commission is www.stclairshores.org, and click on City Hall at the top, and then Boards and Commissions. They meet the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. at City Hall.

Dwarf Shrubbery "Must Haves" for Your Garden



WEIGELA "MY MONET"

Weigela "My Monet" is a dwarf deciduous, compact shrub with a tight and rounded form. The variegated leaves are pinkish green with creamy white margins. It flowers in rich pink tubular blooms from April through June. It is a slow-growing shrub, landing at a size of 2-3' x 2-3' in about five years. It performs best in full sun, but can take partial shade as well. Soil requirements are average, well-drained, and slightly acidic. It can also tolerate clay soil. This is an excellent border plant or container plant. It attracts birds, and butterflies, and is deer resistant. This lovely shrub is suited for zones 4-8.

The eye-catching nature of this variegated small shrub is ideal for a perennial replacement. It requires little maintenance, and will supply consistent performance in your garden.



BUTTERFLY BUSH "LO AND BEHOLD" BLUE CHIP

Lo and Behold Blue Chip dwarf butterfly bush with a size ranging from 2' to 2'-6" x 2' x 2'-6". It is a mounded and compact plant. It requires average dry soil, and does best in full sun. This shrub can tolerate zones 5-9. It mimics a standard butterfly bush, but has even more remarkable color, and is a re-bloomer. It blooms summer to fall, and has non-stop fragrance. Great for gardens and walkways, it won't spread and overwhelm a space. It attracts butterflies and bees. Drought and heat tolerant, Lo and Behold is also self-cleaning so dead heading the blooms is not necessarily. This shrub is also good for containers as a focal point stunner.

Integrating small shrubs into a landscape can provide many benefits. They don't require dividing, staking, or deadheading. They maintain form and foliage throughout the growing season. A well-designed border relies on more than flower color. Contrasting shapes, textures, and sizes of foliage all contribute interest in a landscape. This is where shrubs can shine. They prevent a perennial border that is past its prime from looking dull and boring. Whether used individually, in odd numbers or in drifts, dwarf shrubs can provide some wonderful and dependable "bones" in a garden without the maintenance required of perennials.



Looking for an Editor—Could it Be You?

It has been my pleasure to publish the newsletter for BCSEM. At the end of 2015, I will have completed three years of compiling the quarterly newsletter, and hope you have enjoyed the educational slant, and articles. I know there is a creative person out there who is loaded with ideas and creativity to

share with fellow BCSEM members. Could that be you? The newsletter has been created on Publisher, but can also be done in Word. Once completed, it's taken to a printer. I print labels, stuff and stamp envelopes, and mail it off quarterly. Please contact me if you have any interest in volunteering your talents. 586-242-3868. Sue Keehn



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*A Green Gardening Primer—Chicago Botanical Garden
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Scientists worldwide are creating banks where seeds can be stored and used, if needed, to prevent plant extinction or restore biodiversity.

GREEN ROOF

A green or “living” roof uses specialized roofing material, a soil substitute and drought-tolerant plants to help building and homeowners save energy, better manage storm water and mitigate the urban heat island effect. Green roofs absorb and store storm water, a key component in a storm water management system which often includes the use of bioswales and native plants. A green roof slows storm water discharge from building eaves and gutters, reducing the immediate demand placed on sewer systems during large storms, which helps to decrease the likelihood of flooded basements. Green roofs also help to insulate buildings, keep buildings cooler in summer and warmer in winter. This leads to lower energy bills and reduced carbon emissions related to energy production.

NATIVE COMMUNITIES

A native community is the population of native plants, animals and soil microbes in a specific ecosystem. Each community has evolved together over hundreds of thousands of years and the members depend on each other for shelter, food, and survival. Non-native and invasive animals, plants, and insects have demonstrated their ability to have an adverse impact on native communities and disrupt entire ecosystems.

RAIN GARDENS

Rain gardens are an ornamental feature for

home landscapes that help to manage rainfall and solve problems caused by slopes and low spots. Rain gardens capture and collect rainfall so it can be absorbed into the soils slowly over time. They also remove silt, filter contaminants, and replenish groundwater aquifers. Rain gardens use plants that can tolerate periods of both extreme moisture and drought.

ORGANIC

The primary goals of organic agriculture are to optimize the health and productivity of natural communities. Adhering to organic practices promotes the health of productivity of the soil’s microbial community, plants, animals, and ultimately people. For home gardening, organic principles are best put into practice by improving soil health, choosing appropriate plants, using soil amendments and fertilizers when necessary, and only those made from naturally occurring substances. Also, employing cultural biological, or mechanical practices to address challenges posed by pests and pathogens, and composting disease-free plant material for later use as a soil amendment or mulch.

SUSTAINABLE

Sustainable practices are those that meet the needs of today without compromising the needs of the future. In gardening, it is to conserve energy and water, and reduce waste. It includes selecting the right plants for the right conditions, and growing plants that don’t need frequent irrigation or chemical control to keep them healthy.