

# Grow Native massachusetts

*Every garden matters ~ Every landscape counts®*



April 2024 Newsletter

What better way to welcome spring, as well as National Native Plant Month, than to celebrate the wondrous willow? Willows are among the very first shrubs to bloom in the spring, starting at the beginning of April, when few other plants are in flower. Because of this, they are a vital source of pollen and nectar to bees and other pollinators at this time of year, when these insects are beginning to emerge from their winter-time hibernation.

The appearance of velvety pussy willow catkins in our wetlands hails the beginning of the end of winter in New England. While largely known for their decorative value, the pussy willow (*Salix discolor*) and its fellow members of the genus *Salix*, are also ecological dynamos. They are important colonizers of disturbed areas, especially riverbanks and wet areas after floods or fires. And they are a vital source of food for all kinds of wildlife, in particular as a host plant for many, many types of caterpillars.

[Read More About Native Willows](#)

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## Are you "rooting" for sustainable gardens and landscapes?

We are, too! We invite you to join Grow Native Massachusetts in our work to educate, advocate, and inspire people to action for native plants with a special membership offer.

In celebration of spring and the promise of getting back outside to our treasured gardens and landscapes, **first time contributions to Grow Native made in April or May will be matched by some of our generous board members\***.

That's double the resources that Grow Native will use to provide free

programs, increase access to native plants, and educate the commonwealth and beyond about the importance of native landscapes.

Give at one of our [membership levels](#) and dig in to membership benefits like:

- Advance access to our annual [Native Plant Sale](#)
- Discounted [Workshop](#) registration *and*
- A variety of members-only programs, including our popular [Gatherings in the Field](#), open to members at all levels.

Spring is an exciting and busy season at Grow Native and a great time to tap into our native plant community. Wherever you are in your native plant journey, we have the resources, learning opportunities, and access points to help you take your next step!

[Donate / Become a Member](#)

\*Gifts will be matched up to a total of \$12,000.

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## Don't Miss Our Final Evenings with Experts Lecture of 2024: Gardening Among Hungry Mammals



Nancy Lawson, [Author, The Humane Gardener](#)

**May 8 | 7:00 - 8:30pm**

**Where:** Online (By Zoom Webinar)

**Fee:** Free and open to all.

PLEASE NOTE: A recording of this lecture will be available to registered participants for *2 weeks only*. It will not be posted to our website for future viewing.

It's hard to imagine, but white-tailed deer were once nearly extinct in dozens of states. Their abundance now puts them at odds with most gardeners, who become frustrated by the ineffectiveness of conventional methods such as use of repellent sprays and so-called "deer-resistant" species that end up getting browsed. Add to the mix all the resident rabbits, squirrels, and groundhogs, and many gardeners are ready to throw in the trowel. But by understanding plant resistance and tolerance strategies as well as animal behaviors and natural histories, we can create resilient gardens that will support a diversity of vertebrate and invertebrate life in our home habitats. Join author Nancy Lawson to discover how a combination of strategies—including mixtures of preferred and unpalatable species, strategic plantings along well-used pathways, and gentle exclusion techniques—can help you trade resistance for peaceful coexistence.



Nancy Lawson's latest book is [Wildscape: Trilling Chipmunks, Beckoning Blooms, Salty Butterflies, and other Sensory Wonders of Nature](#). A master naturalist and habitat consultant, she pioneers creative wildlife-friendly landscaping methods, and helped launch a community science project, [Monarch Rx](#), based on scientific discoveries made in her own garden.

[Register to Watch Online](#)

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## WORKSHOP: *Welcoming Spring in Virginia Wood*



**A guided nature walk in Middlesex Fells: April 18 , 11:00 am - 1:00 pm**

Every spring we are greeted by a beautiful bouquet of flowers blooming throughout our woodlands. Many of these plants emerge early to soak up the sun before the forest canopy has fully leafed out. Though delicate in appearance, they are quite tough and adaptable. Join Grow Native's plant expert Meredith Gallogly to get to know some of these wildflowers.

Members: \$28

Non-members: \$38

[Register for this and other Workshops](#)

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## Hip Hip Hooray, Come Get Plants on Earth Day!

**Great news!** Our first ever Native Plant Pop-Up Market in late September 2023 was such a popular community event, we have planned several more for 2024! A couple are coming up soon, so get these on your calendars and come out to meet (and support) some great local native plant growers!

- April 21 - Fitchburg Celebrates: Earth Day, 12:00 - 3:00 pm
- May 4 - Framingham Spring Fest, 12:00 - 4:00 pm



[More info about upcoming Pop-Up Markets](#)

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## Upcoming Events of Note

Check out our [NEW Upcoming Partner Events](#) listings on our website! You can go here anytime to catch up on what's going on around the state (and beyond!). You can also **SUBMIT** any native plant, ecological landscaping, or habitat creation/restoration events that are not already listed.

### [How to Design, Plant and Care for a Low-Maintenance, High-Impact, Pollinator-Friendly Flower Garden](#)

**April 6 | 8:45am - 3:30pm** | In Person

**Host:** Berkshire Botanical Garden

**Presenter:** Kerry Ann Mendez

**Cost:** \$110 for BBG members, \$130 for non-members

Led by garden author and lecturer Kerry Ann Mendez, this in-depth course covers key steps for designing and planting ever-blooming, sustainable flower gardens, including light and soil assessment, bed preparation, and plant placement on Saturday, April 6, from 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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### [Invasive Plants Workshop at Hall's Pond](#)

**April 7 | 10:00am - 12:00pm** | In Person

**Host:** Friends of Hall's Pond

**Presenter:** Alexander Cassie, Brookline's Parks and Open Space Division

**Cost:** FREE

On Sunday, April 7, from 10 am to noon, Alexander Cassie from Brookline's Parks and Open Space Division is leading an in-person workshop at Hall's Pond Sanctuary, 3 Amory

Street, Brookline, to identify and learn to remove invasive plants. Participation is free and open to the public.

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### **[Documenting Beneficial Insects and Their Native Hosts Q&A](#)**

**April 9 | 6:00 - 7:30pm** | Online

**Host:** Earthwise Aware

**Presenter:** EwA Buggy Team

**Cost:** FREE

Delve into the world of beneficial insects, learn how to document insect-host associations using EwA Buggy, and take action to protect “the little things that run the world” in this Virtual Skillshare.

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### **[Specialist Bees](#)**

**April 9 | 6:30 - 8:00pm** | Online

**Host:** Cheshire Public Library, Cheshire Pollinator Pathway, and the Hamden Land Conservation Trust

**Presenter:** Heather Holm

**Cost:** FREE

The monarch butterfly is probably the most famous insect specialist (the caterpillars feed only on milkweed), but did you know that many native bees are also specialists?

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### **[Protecting Our Night Skies](#)**

**April 10 | 5:00 - 6:00pm** | Online

**Host:** Massachusetts Sierra Club

**Presenter:** DarkSky Mass

**Cost:** FREE

Increasingly, the deep dark of night is muddied by artificial illumination. Light pollution represents a threat to nocturnal habitats, disrupts our circadian balance, wastes energy, and robs us of enjoying the night sky’s glorious canopy of stars. Learn about solutions for combating light pollution throughout the Commonwealth.

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### **[Discussing Resilient Landscapes for a Changing Climate](#)**

**April 10 | 7:00 - 8:30pm** | Online

**Host:** Massachusetts Pollinator Network

**Presenter:** Trevor Smith, Design and Education Manager, Weston Nurseries

**Cost:** FREE

Trevor will take you past the scary numbers and the heartbreaking photographs and break out what sorts of things you can actually do about climate change in your landscape practice and design.

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### **[Building Resilient Landscapes](#)**

**April 11 | 12:00 - 1:00pm** | Online

**Host:** Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions

**Presenter:** Dan Jaffe Wilder, Director of Applied Ecology, Norcross Wildlife Foundation

**Cost:** FREE

In the changing world in which we find ourselves, it behooves us to build resiliency into every landscape. The days of landscapes dedicated to beauty alone are passing. People are demanding ecologically sensitive landscapes; they want reduced lawn, reduced maintenance, and greater wildlife value.

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### **[Nibbling on Native Plants in Your Back Yard and Beyond](#)**

**April 11 | 7:00 - 8:30pm** | In Person

**Host:** Weston Garden Club

**Presenter:** Russ Cohen, Naturalist, edible native plant seed collector, propagator & planter

**Cost:** FREE

The fact that many of our native species are edible by people too provides an additional incentive for people to plant them in their yards that might be insufficiently induced to do so for the ecological rationale alone.

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### **[Pollinator Party!](#)**

**April 15 | 1:30 - 3:00pm** | In Person

**Host:** New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill

**Cost:** Garden Member: \$24 Child, \$0 Adult; Non-Members: \$34 Child, \$20 Adult

For children ages 6-10. Protect our pollinators! Learn what plants need to survive, paint a 4-inch terracotta pot, plant pollinator friendly seeds, and add a butterfly friend to watch over your garden. Start your own growing journal to track your garden's growth back at home.

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### **[Worcester's Miyawaki Forests](#)**

**April 17 | 1:00 - 2:30pm** | In Person

**Host:** Worcester Garden Club

**Presenter:** Evelyn Herwitz, Chair, Worcester Green Streets, Green Worcester Advisory Committee

**Cost:** Free



Learn about Worcester's new initiative to design and build two Miyawaki forests, one at the Worcester Public Library and one at Plumley Village. Presenter Evelyn Herwitz will explain what these mini forests are, why they matter, and how they are created. Miyawaki Forests are small, dense, layered urban native plantings that grow vigorously.

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### **[Native Edibles for Cities](#)**

**April 18 | 6:00 - 7:00pm** | Online

**Host:** Native Plant Trust

**Presenter:** Dan Jaffe Wilder

**Cost:** \$17 for NPT members, \$20 for non-members

Native edibles can feed you (and the rest of the ecosystem) regardless of your available space, and can be planted in shady corners, container gardens, and other small spaces. Learn about species of native edibles that can be grown wherever you can find (or put) soil.

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### **[Ecological Approaches to Garden Design and Management](#)**

**April 18 | 7:00 - 8:30pm** | Online, In Person

**Host:** Connecticut Horticultural Society

**Presenter:** Harland Patch, Director of Pollinator Programming, Penn State's Bird and Pollinator Garden

**Cost:** FREE for CHS members, \$10 suggested donation for non-members

Much of the interest in ecological gardens comes from concerns about declining biodiversity and degradation of natural spaces. Recent advances in pollination science from the landscape level to genetics can greatly inform the creation and management of ecological gardens.

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### **[Insect Lab](#)**

**April 19 | 1:30 - 3:00pm** | In Person

**Host:** New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill

**Cost:** Garden Members: \$18 Child, \$0 Adult; Non-Members: \$28 Child, \$20 Adult

For children ages 4-8. Join us for springtime insect studies. Learn what makes an insect an insect and explore the relationship between flowers and bugs. Join us for an insect safari and study pollinators in action at the garden. Build your own bug hotel using recycled materials to create a sanctuary for pollinators in your backyard.

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### **[Transforming The Landscape: Audubon Native Plants and Pollinators Symposium](#)**

**April 20 | 9:00am - 4:00pm** | In Person

**Host:** Audubon Society of Rhode Island

**Cost:** \$30 - \$60

Join Audubon and learn how to protect pollinators and other wildlife with healthy gardens and landscaping. Featuring keynote speaker Doug Tallamy.

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### **Gardening for Hummingbirds**

**April 20 | 10:00am - 12:00pm** | In Person

**Host:** Berkshire Botanical Garden

**Presenter:** Duncan Himmelman

**Cost:** \$25 for BBG members, \$40 for non-members

Ruby-throated hummingbirds are amazing creatures and always a wonder to see. Make your yard a haven for these tiny flying jewels with a great selection of native plants that provide food sources and nesting sites all season long.

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### **Native Groundcovers**

**April 20 | 1:00 - 3:00pm** | In Person

**Host:** Berkshire Botanical Garden

**Presenter:** Duncan Himmelman

**Cost:** \$25 for BBG members, \$40 for non-members

Kick mulch to the curb! Replace it with a beautiful tapestry of foliage and flowers that are more visually appealing and ecologically valuable. Discover a selection of tough, versatile native plants to use as groundcovers in a variety of growing conditions.

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### **Edible Native Plants**

**April 22 | 2:00 - 3:30pm** | Online

**Host:** Chatham Conservation Foundation

**Presenter:** Russ Cohen, Naturalist, edible native plant seed collector, propagator & planter

**Cost:** Free

The fact that many of our native species are edible by people too provides an additional incentive for people to plant them in their yards that might otherwise be insufficiently induced to do so for the ecological rationale alone.

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### **Gathering April Showers**

**April 23 | 7:00 - 8:00pm** | Online

**Host:** Mass Audubon

**Presenter:** Martha Gach, Education Manager and Conservation Coordinator, Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary

**Cost:** \$15/Mass Audubon member; \$20/non-member



This online program will celebrate the beauty of spring and help you find ways to capture rainfall to nurture plants and pollinators while improving water quality in local streams. Look at the impact of current and future spring precipitation patterns on local habitats and learn how to harness this valuable resource for the benefit of all.

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### **[Rethinking Gardening](#)**

**April 24 | 7:00 - 8:00pm** | Online

**Host:** York Public Library

**Presenter:** Wild Seed Project

**Cost:** FREE

Our garden plant choices can determine which species can seek refuge in our gardens, how much species diversity we see in residential areas and help minimize impacts of climate change such as flooding and drought.

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### **[Tree Planting Party](#)**

**April 25 | 4:00 - 6:00pm** | In Person

**Host:** Green Cambridge and Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

**Cost:** FREE

Join us in planting 8-10 native trees at Grand Junction Park! In addition to tree planting there will be lots of music, food, and fun!

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### **[Native Plants and Birds in New England](#)**

**April 25 | 6:30 - 8:00pm** | Online

**Host:** Native Plant Trust

**Presenter:** Evan Dalton, Director, Manomet Observatory

**Cost:** \$26 for NPT members, \$30 for non-members

Have you ever wondered how local birds are affected by the plants in your yard? Would you like to learn how to make your yard more attractive to birds?

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### **[Pollinator Paradise](#)**

**April 27 | 1:00 - 2:30pm** | In Person

**Host:** Berkshire Botanical Garden

**Presenter:** Chris Ferrero, Master Gardener

**Cost:** \$25 for BBG members, \$40 for non-members

“Bee-friendly” backyards support lots of pollinators and beneficial insects, which make gardens more beautiful. Chris will discuss important pollinators and their needs and habits in a garden.

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## [Native Plants for Ecological Landscaping](#)

April 27 | 2:00 - 3:00pm | In Person

**Host:** Arnold Arboretum

**Presenter:** Brendan Keegan, Horticulturalist

**Cost:** FREE

April is National Native Plant Month, and the Arnold Arboretum is teeming with native plants: redbuds, azaleas, oaks, maples, even herbaceous plants like cattails.

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### Photo of the Month



#### Unequal Cellophane Bee

© Nick Dorian

Unequal cellophane bees (*Colletes inaequalis*) are common in early spring across eastern North America where they build nests underground in sandy soils. [True harbingers of spring](#), they visit many early-blooming tree species such as red maple (*Acer rubrum*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier spp.*), redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), and pussy willow (*Salix discolor*).

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**Header Photo:** *Salix discolor* (Pussy willow) buds

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We inspire people to action across Massachusetts on behalf of native plants and the diversity of life they support.

*We are passionate about our*



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***mission. Please join with us to  
make it a reality.***



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