

CGFM NATIVE PLANT CHALLENGE

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New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*) thrives in a variety of soil types

~ Photo by Betty Sanders

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BUTTONBUSH, MY FAVORITE NATIVE PLANT

Living on the edge of a 100-acre pond, my native plants need to be tough. They need to be able to stand up to water, wet feet, wind, freezing cold in the winter and blazing sun in the summer. And to beavers.

I found my favorite native plant by accident. We'd lived in our house for several years when I noticed a very unusual blossom on a medium sized,

waterfront bush, that had always just been there in an uncultivated edge of the yard. I Googled it and found that I was the proud owner of a **Common Buttonbush or Button Willow Bush**. I just call it "Buttons." Scientific name = Cephalanthus occidentalis. The blossoms are like no others. They are white and green and perfectly round. They have little spikes on them that the bees love. They look somewhat like the Corona Virus. Buttons blooms on and off all summer, its long-lasting flowers giving the area a sweet fragrance. Plants can grow to be six to twelve feet tall, but my plant is a manageable four feet tall.



Submitted by Pam Fitzgerald, Dracut Garden Club



CAN YOU SPOT THE NATIVE?

Erigeron with Matteuccia struthiopteris. The erigeron is growing through some violets (the foliage looks like it is the Eriksen but is not) and to the right you can see one small flower stem of Dicentra "Eximia?"

Submitted by Beth Jakubowski, Weston Garden Club and Native Plant Ambassador for Middlesex County

READ THIS BOOK REVIEW

Braiding Sweetgrass; Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants By Robin Wall Kimmerer

Looking for inspiration by a great storyteller, a decorated professor, member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, and a botanist? Here is a book that has been getting rave reviews, possibly because so many of us are ready and wanting to hear her message told with "abundant passion that one can never quite see the world the same way after having seen it through her eyes.

Submitted by Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks, Sharon Garden Club

RESOURCES

Looking for Answers? Inspiration? Is it Native?

[How \(and Why\) to Use Native Plants](#)

Best Native Trees for Small Gardens

From Founder of Prairie Nursery Wildflowers for NE Gardens

Replacing Invasives with Natives

Great webinar series every Wednesday at noon. Check them out!

National Wildlife Federation Native Plant Finder uses your zip code to determine the native plants indigenous to your area.

Ecological Landscape Alliance Newsletter

GARDENS TO VISIT THIS SUMMER

Garden in the Woods, Framingham
Norfolk Garden Club Rose Garden
MHS Elm Bank Native Garden
Stevens-Coolidge House & Gardens
Dracut Town Hall

Don't forget to visit the GCFM website often. You can find other NPC resources, as well as interesting events, webinars, GCFM programs, Schools, Workshops, Flower Shows and Awards.

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