

# Transforming our Community One Planting at a Time



## 2025 Annual Report

# Get Involved with Deep Roots KC!

## Habitat Garden Tours

Hundreds of guests enjoyed our 2025 Habitat Garden Tours. Following the tours, 70 percent of our guests visited our adjacent plant sale to add more native plants to their own yards!

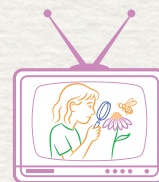


Photo: Maddie Ball

“I’ve added so many of the plants seen on the tours to my own yard.”

## Curious by Nature

Deep Roots’ Curious by Nature episodes highlight native plant landscapes in areas large and small. Join us the first and third Thursday of each month and get inspired! Missed an episode? Recordings and resources are available on our website. Year-round, you can also get involved with our in-person trainings and workshops!



Curious by Nature  
WITH DEEP ROOTS

Scan the QR to join us at these events!



Deep Roots KC is increasing native plant landscapes throughout our region.

**BY THE NUMBERS:**

**↑ 12,300**

PEOPLE ATTENDED DEEP ROOTS EVENTS

**↑ 8,549**

POLLINATOR NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

**↑ 198,000**

NATIVE PLANTS PLANTED

**ADDITIONAL DEEP ROOTS PROGRAMS:**

Callery Pear Buy Back Campaign, Naturalist Walks, Demonstration Garden at the Anita B. Gorman Conservation Discovery Center, Discover Native Gardening Learning Sessions, Land Manager Field Trips and Trainings, Plant Sales, Shawnee Mission School District Natural Areas



Photo: Cydney Ross

**Deep Roots' community is growing and expanding their gardens!**

- ↑ 19%** of program participants planted more than 41 new native plants in 2025.
- ↑ 83%** of program participants added MORE native plants to their gardens.
- ↑ 30%** added a new native plant garden from scratch!

“

This is exactly what we needed to wrap our heads around what should go where, why, and how it all fits together. You all are really onto something with this service and I'll spread the word far and wide. Looks like we have a fun winter of planning ahead...

”

**NATURE ADVISORS**



*A nature inspiration and consultation service*

Nature Advisors volunteer consultants span the metro, meet with residents, tour their properties, and then offer detailed guidance in person and in a written report.

Launched in 2022, Nature Advisors has served 275 clients. Ninety percent of Nature Advisor clients are Do-It-Yourselfers, and 20 percent of Nature Advisor participants planted native plants for the first time! More than 20 volunteer consultants are ready to serve even more residents in 2026.



Photo: Sally Urdang



**2026 HIGHLIGHTS**

More than **270** people attended our annual conference and enjoyed **21** concurrent sessions, **20** exhibitors, and **2** keynote speakers.

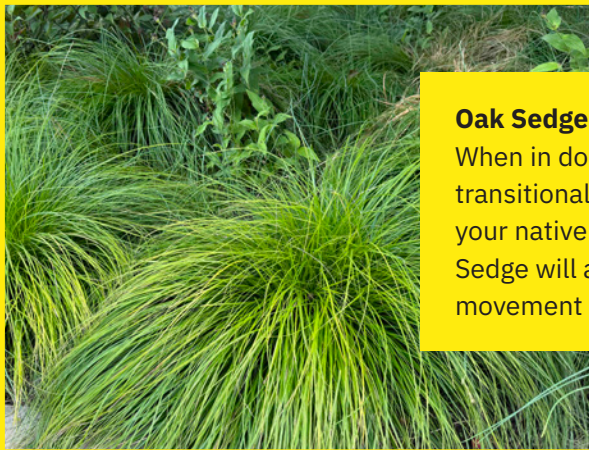
These are my favorite two days of the year!

I really enjoyed exposure to new ideas and information, in-depth information on topics that I care about.



# Woodlands

Woodlands are defined by the percentage of tree canopy: 30-80 percent canopy cover in comparison to 100 percent canopy cover in forests. Because of that bit of sunshine, a woodland ground may be covered in a variety of vibrant and diverse shade-tolerant ferns, sedges, and wildflowers.



## Oak Sedge (*Carex albicans*)

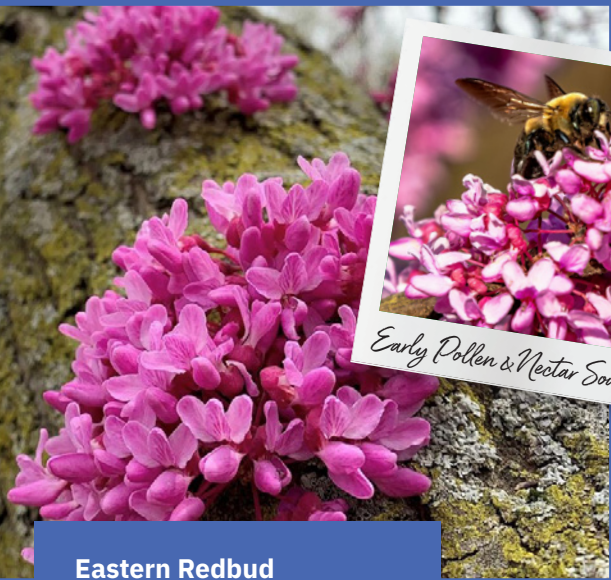
When in doubt, sedge it out! A transitional option to plant between your native garden and lawn, Oak Sedge will add stunning texture and movement to your garden.



*Ruby-throated Hummingbird*

## Woodland Pinkroot (*Spigelia marilandica*)

These flowers are more than a bright pop of color—their red hue and tubular shape are preferential to the hummingbirds that pollinate this plant in exchange for nectar.



*Early Pollen & Nectar Source!*

## Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)

This is an iconic Kansas City tree for good reason! Its early spring branches are coated in pink florets and are early pollen and nectar sources for pollinators.



## Celandine Poppy (*Sylophorum diphylum*)

Fun Fact: Celandine Poppy seeds are distributed by ants, a process called myrmecochory. The charming yellow flowers are a bonus to the dynamic foliage that will persist throughout the year.



*Ants Disperse the Seeds!*



## Defining Home Habitats for Choosing Native Plants

Habitats define the preferred environments for plants, fungi, and animals. Understanding the conditions of your landscape informs the types of plants that will thrive in your garden. Our region has three dominant urban habitat types. Think about your outdoor areas and which of these habitats describe your space. Scan the QR code for a handy site assessment checklist.

### Rattlesnake Master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*)

Standing flower stalks and dense basal rosettes provide overwintering habitat for insects. In the summer, it's a pollinator magnet attracting native bees, butterflies, and numerous beneficial wasps that nectar-feed and hunt herbivorous insects nearby.



### Foxglove Beardtongue (*Penstemon digitalis*)

Foxglove Beardtongue's flower structure favors pollination by long-tongued insects and hummingbirds. In the winter, finches feed on the tiny seeds in their seedpods.

### Blue Grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*)

Blue Grama forms tidy clumps creating a soft, fine-textured carpet. In a garden, it supports wildflowers providing structure and stability. Its fine blue-green blades and "eyelash" seed heads flutter in the breeze, providing visual interest.



### Leadplant (*Amphora canescens*)

Leadplant is a slow growing plant with deep roots that modestly spreads by seed. It blooms in early to mid-summer, feeding specialist bees and many pollinators while hosting caterpillars. Eastern tailed blue butterflies love feasting on this Leadplant's striking blooms.

# Prairies

If your yard gets a lot of sun (6-8 hours direct sunlight), prairie plants might be the choice for you. Grasses are the backbone of prairies, and they provide structure for flowering prairie plants.

A rain garden is a shallow depression in the landscape that collects rainwater and relies on plants that can handle fluctuating amounts of water. Wet species should be placed in the deepest sections while drought-tolerant species prefer the drier slopes.

# Rain Gardens



**Southern Blue Flag Iris**  
(*Iris virginica*)

Many gardeners are familiar with Irises, but have you met our native species? Adding visual structure, leaf blades stand upright while familiar light purple blooms appear in early summer. Flowers utilize nectar guides to direct pollinators to their centers.



**Buttonbush**  
(*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

Puffy cream blooms are fragrant and attractive to hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies in early summer. Its dramatic seedheads and sculptural structure provide food and shelter for songbirds in winter.



**Spotted Joe Pye Weed**  
(*Eutrochium maculatum*)

Fragrant late summer blooms will bring an abundance of pollinators to your garden. Various caterpillars feed on leaves while long-tongued bees, butterflies, skippers, and moths are attracted to its nectar.



**Marsh Milkweed**  
(*Asclepias incarnata*)

Tender leaves provide food for 12 caterpillar species, including the monarch butterfly which depends solely on Milkweed species. Pink summer blooms are fragrant, providing nectar to native bees and butterflies.



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