

SEVEN BENDS AND FRIENDS



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SEVEN BENDS NURSERY



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NEXT FAIRS

- AHS Spring Market: April 14-15
- Baltimore Native Plant sale April 15



Letter from Iara

Dear Fellow Ecosystem Lovers,

It's finally here - Spring has Sprung!

After a slightly uneventful winter season here in Virginia, I, like many of you, am very ready to move on to my favorite season. At the start of spring, you can find me slowly wandering my back fencerow, coffee in hand, pensively staring at the ground. I'm looking for the first signs of plant life emerging from my gardens. Since 2016, I and my husband have been diligently planning and planting our Winchester backyard with all sorts of native plants and food crops. We've transformed a grass-filled landscape into a canvas of gardens that represent all types of water and sun conditions, from shady woodlands to sunny pollinator meadows. Just recently we finally finished up the earthworks on our very own custom wildlife pond! I simply cannot wait to fill the ground surrounding and inside the pond with a diverse assortment of native trees, shrubs, perennials, and grasses.

I take very similar strolls each morning I arrive at the nursery. I take careful mental notes on the status of each of our species, looking at the center of each black pot for the first signs of spring. As I do, I must remind myself to be patient as each species will arrive on its own terms. Still, as of the writing of this letter, we've got signs of new buds on the trees and shrubs and small green tips of emerging plant life for several of our perennials! All the plants that have shown us signs of renewed life are now on our webstore, ready for you to add to your own passion projects. As more plants take their first step into our 2023 spring season, we will add them to the lineup and bid farewell as they join their new homes.

Happy Spring Everyone,

Dr. Iara Lacher

Spring Into Gardening



STEPS TO SPRING GARDENING WITH NATIVE PLANTS

Spring is here in Virginia with her long days, cozy rainstorms, mild temperatures, and warm winds. This means there is no better time to start getting to work in the garden, especially with Seven Bend's webstore open and ready for plant orders! Thankfully one of the beauties of growing native plants is that they are low maintenance compared to non-native gardens. One reason for this is that native plants evolved in the climates and soils of the regions they belong to, many with deep roots that help them tolerate the toughest of seasons. Just a little effort can keep your native plant garden tidy for your neighbors and healthy for years to come. Here are some easy steps to caring for a native garden in a way that honors their contribution to local ecosystem health...



Webstore Open Now!

It's time!

Our webstore is open for the season and we couldn't be any more excited to provide native plants to our community. Order today to bring home the plants you have been waiting for!

If you can't find what you are looking for please check back on our webstore regularly. We will be updating the store frequently as more plants emerge from their winter slumber.

Welcome Spring!



1. Wait until temperatures are consistently above 50 degrees Fahrenheit:

Seems like a bit of a weird rule right? Not so much when we consider the role that native plants play in our gardens! Many beneficial insects such as bumble bee queens overwinter in hollow plant stumps or other protected areas in the garden, and disturbing these areas during clean-up can harm or even kill them. Waiting for temperatures to be consistently over 50 degrees for animals to safely come out of overwintering is an important part of letting your native plants do their job.

2. Leave some debris:

If you must cut back old plant stems, leave about 18 inches for the bees. Then, instead of completely removing all fallen leaves or dead stems, leave them in your garden! This dead plant material provides a habitat for beneficial insects, birds, and other wildlife. These materials also decompose and add nutrients to the soil, contributing to even healthier plants.





3. Prune shrubs and split large perennials:

For a wild area, we would never recommend disturbing the soil or pruning the natural shape of our beautiful native trees. However, if you are gardening with natives in a suburban or urban yard, pruning can be an effective way to present native plants to a wary neighbor. Approach pruning your native trees and shrubs in the same way you would most ornamental varieties - to create silhouettes that are attractive to your HOA! Furthermore, taking a shovel to some years-old perennials is a cost-effective way to generate more individual plants that you can spread across your garden.

4. Skip the fertilizer and pesticides:

When planted in the right conditions for them, native plants don't need fertilizers. They thrive in their local soils just as they are. Also, remember your native plant garden was planted to provide food and habitat for local wildlife. We WANT these plants to be eaten!

5. Look for and manage invasive plants:

Staying on top of weeding throughout the year reduces work as it prevents invasive plants from establishing themselves deep into your garden. Chemical herbicides can negatively impact human and animal health and therefore should be used sparingly for only the most difficult-to-tackle invasives. Hand weeding on the other hand is safe and easily accessible (and also gives you an excuse to spend more time in the garden).

