



PLANT SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH





Bottlebrush Buckeye (Aesculus parviflora)

Although this majestic shrub is now reaching the end of its bloom season, we wanted to make sure to give it time in the spotlight. For anyone keen on planting native pollinator plants, Buckeye would be an excellent choice for a moist (but well-draining) shady site. The flowers attract a variety of butterflies and hummingbirds (pictured is one of many Swallowtails seen on the shrub that day). This species is also great for those seeking a low-maintenance garden: very little is needed in the way of pruning, and it is extremely resilient and long-lived. There is some debate on the edibility of the seed, which would need to be thoroughly leached of toxins before considering that use. A safer idea for using the seed might be to experiment with using the boiled seed water for soap or detergent (since it contains saponins).





Summer Eco-Landscaping Services

- Chemical-free weed & pest management (including Spotted Lanternfly treatments)
- Tree services with a certified arborist
- Garden & woodland cleanup
- Design and installation of gardens, patios, fences, raised beds, container gardens, and irrigation systems
- Routine maintenance
- Home ecosystem consultations

We can help make your home and garden beautiful and beneficial—for you, the ecosystem, and the planet. [Learn more and book your spring services via our website.](#)



Do Mushrooms Have a Place in the Garden?

I got so excited when I found these cute Russula mushrooms under the Wild Ginger leaves. There were several other types of Russula mushrooms abounding in this restored woodland as well – they have obviously been loving the recent rainfall! Many gardeners and arborists dislike mushrooms, and there seems to be a general mycophobia in society (whether from disgust, fear of poisoning, fear of disease, or just distaste for the oddness and aesthetic difference they offer). The truth is that a great number of mushrooms we find in our garden are not hurting anything, and in many cases, they are helping! You can check out [EFTE-ARE's article on soil](#) to learn how fungi drastically improve soil and plant health. Russula mushrooms are mycorrhizal, meaning they develop healthy, symbiotic relationships with certain trees and herbaceous plants. Even the dreaded stinkhorn mushrooms, which do certainly emit unpleasant smells, can be welcomed into your garden, since they are helping to decompose organic matter.

It's also that time of year when many folks are foraging for Chicken of the

Woods mushrooms. [Learn more about this mushroom on the EFTE-ARE site.](#)

Spotted Lanternfly Update

If you missed our free video lecture and discussion on safe and effective Lanternfly treatment (and why there's no reason to panic!), you can [check out the zoom recording at our youtube page.](#)

Lots of Lovely Lobelias



All three of these Lobelia species (from left to right *Lobelia spicata*, *Lobelia Dortmunda*, and *Lobelia siphilitica*) are native to our region and love moist, partly-shady conditions. All three are currently in bloom and will continue through late summer and often into fall. *Lobelia Dortmunda* isn't often planted intentionally; it's usually weeded out of gardens because folks may not recognize it when not in flower. It's not very showy, unlike the red and blue counterparts. It is, however, the most medicinal of the Lobelias, being used primarily to support the respiratory tract. My favorite Lobelia though, would have to be *Lobelia siphilitica* since it attracts and feeds hummingbirds!



THE CROP CORNER

It's blueberry season, yay! Did you know that wild highbush blueberries abound in acidic soils like those found in pine forests? If you've tried to grow blueberries, you already know – they need different soil than most other types of crops grown at home. If traipsing out to the myriad Jersey blueberry farms or foraging for wild blueberries just isn't filling your blueberry craving, you might consider prepping a bed now to start growing blueberries next spring. Some acidifying amendments you may want to consider adding to a potential blueberry bed include garden sulfur, coffee grounds, compost tea, small amounts of diluted vinegar, human urine (yes, really!), and pine needle mulch.



Eating for the Ecosystem is a woman-owned business with predominately-female work crews. In addition to our meticulous and eco-friendly practices such as limiting our carbon footprint and composting landscape debris, we are also committed to helping clients learn more about—and develop stronger relationships with—the plants in our ecosystem.

Help us Grow

If you believe a friend or family member would like to learn about Eating for the Ecosystem, please [forward this newsletter](#).



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