

Native Plant Sale Workshops

Workshops are rain or shine. In case of inclement weather be sure to bring a raincoat or umbrella and wear suitable shoes; each workshop includes outdoor exploration.

Drinks and snacks available between sessions for workshop attendees

<p>Before Sale: 7:15 – 8:15am</p>	<p>Early, Early, Bird Walk with Brian Rollfinke, Irvine’s Director of Education</p> <p>May is peak season for spring migrants which flock to the varied habitats of Irvine. Join experienced birder and Director of Education Brian Rollfinke for an early morning bird walk and look for wood warblers, the gems of the eastern woodlands. Notice which plants the birds like to hang out in - it might inspire some purchases at the plant sale! (If you have binoculars please bring, Irvine has some to borrow.)</p>
<p>Session 1A 9:00 – 10:00am</p>	<p>How to (Gently) Fight Plants with Plants: Using Native Plants to Crowd Out Invasives with Nancy Lawson, author of <i>The Humane Gardener: Nurturing a Backyard Habitat for Wildlife</i></p> <p>You’ve decided to start or expand your native plant garden for the good of the animals and the environment. Great move! But there’s just one problem: You’re staring down an expansive yard replete with Japanese stiltgrass, garlic mustard, English ivy, and other invasive species. How can you remove these plants that harm wildlife and their habitats while also nurturing valuable ones that are dormant in the seedbank, just waiting to escape the mower and sprout? Which native groundcovers, shrubs, wildflowers, vines, and trees can you proactively plant to help you hold the ground? In this session, you’ll learn strategies for gradual replacement and discover which native species can help you shift the balance toward a more wildlife-friendly, native-plant-filled habitat. We will also look at planting areas around Irvine to see which plants might gently fight there.</p>
<p>Session 1B 9:00 – 10:00am</p>	<p>Native Plant Restoration: Tackling Invasives with Fire, Suppression and More with Kyle Gillen, Irvine’s Natural Resource Manager</p> <p>Irvine is actively promoting native plants by restoring areas taken over by an array of invasive plants. Take a tour (10-minute walk) to our Wedding Point restoration area where we have been experimenting with suppression sowing, mechanical and chemical methods of control. We will discuss the pros and cons of different techniques, what has worked – and what hasn’t. Then return past our pollinator meadow to see the impacts of seasonal mowing and a managed burn. Get some ideas to use in your ‘restoration areas’ – whether a small yard or large meadow. Bring back the natives!</p>
<p>Session 1C 9:00 – 10:00am</p>	<p>Ferns, Fronds and Fiddleheads with Rob Mardiney, retired Director of Education, Irvine Nature Center</p>

	<p>Long before the rise of dinosaurs and seed plants, ferns dominated the landscape. These non-flowering plants grew to the size of trees, and they were a major part of our ancient forests. Their present-day descendants are small and often overlooked, but ferns provide the naturalist with many exciting discoveries, and make excellent plants for your garden. Join Rob Mardiney to learn how to identify these ‘primitive’ plants, their ecology, and ideas on adding a bit of Jurassic Park to your garden.</p>
<p>Sessions 1, 2 & 3</p>	<p>Go Native with a Planter <i>(This workshop is repeated during each of the sessions)</i></p> <p>Create a beautiful outdoor planter for that special spot on your balcony, patio, or stoop. Local Master gardeners will help you design and plant your portable perennial pot that will support our local pollinators! First, discover the roles of different plants (‘thrillers’, ‘fillers’ and ‘spillers’) and their blooming times so you can choose the perfect plants for you. Then learn how to care for your container through the seasons so it can continue to thrive for many years. Grab your container, fill it with a custom potting mix, and then choose up to 5 plants from our carefully selected plugs of shade or sun native plants. Bring on the butterflies. (This workshop has an extra materials fee of \$20 to cover the cost of plants and materials.)</p>
<p>Session 2A 10:15-11:15am</p>	<p>Layering Your Landscape: Which, Where and Why to Add Native Plants with Janet Davis, Hill House Farm & Nursery</p> <p>Join Hill House Nursery’s Janet Davis for this fun and informative workshop. Learn to see the garden in a different way and how to add more native plants into your landscape. By using native plants, employing sustainable techniques and layering our gardens, we become a ‘part of nature’ rather than ‘apart from nature’. Workshop includes the chance to gain some expert tips while looking how plants have been combined at Irvine.</p>
<p>Session 2B 10:15-11:15am</p>	<p>Why and How to Create a Homegrown National Park™ with Alison Milligan, Master Watershed Steward, Master Gardener, Master Naturalist</p> <p>Alison Milligan, a Maryland Master Gardener, Naturalist and Watershed Steward, will introduce the concept of creating a Homegrown National Park™? Come learn why creating a park at home is becoming more urgent for people and all living things. She’ll explain the simple steps you can take to create a sustainable landscape while protecting the watershed, restoring biodiversity, supporting pollinators, and adding value to your home. Showing multiple designs using readily available native plants will give you ideas and get you motivated. Then take a walk through Irvine’s great outdoor areas to see how the concepts are applied.</p>
<p>Session 2C 10:15-11:15am</p>	<p>Botany for Beginners: Woody Plant Identification with Dr. Vanessa Beauchamp, Towson University professor</p>

	<p>After a review of some basic botany vocabulary for leaf and flower characteristics, this workshop will focus on field identification while exploring outdoors. Irvine has a large diversity of native shrubs and trees (as well as several invasive species) and May is a great time to be able to examine their flowers and emerging leaves.</p>
<p>Session 3A 11:30am-12:30pm</p>	<p>Tough Plants for Tough Places with Ian Caton, owner/operator of Wood Thrush Native Plant Nursery</p> <p>Tried planting natives only to have them fail? Then this is your workshop. Using his years of experience, Ian will introduce you to some native plants that have proven to be particularly reliable and tough under the most adverse conditions: drought, flooding, extreme heat, hard-pan soils, deer, competition from invasive species, and damage from overenthusiastic pets, children and spouses. Using knowledge of how plants behave and the habitats where they are found, Ian will highlight a suite of plants that he has found to fit well into almost any difficult situation to truly create a low-maintenance landscape. Finish with a look at some locations at Irvine that need some tough plant love to get ideas for your yard.</p>
<p>Session 3B 11:30am-12:30pm</p>	<p>Results from a Local Butterfly survey and How You Can Help Butterflies with Kevin Heffernan, Howard County Bird Club, May Count and avid photographer</p> <p>Discover the world of Central Maryland butterflies. Using records of when and which butterflies have been seen during local (Howard County) butterfly surveys, Kevin, an avid nature photographer, will guide you through the most commonly seen butterflies in our area, especially in spring. Then find out how you can best help these butterflies from supplying host and nectar plants, to the all-important overwintering strategies. Finish with a short walk to look for active butterflies.</p>
<p>Session 3C 11:30am-12:30pm</p>	<p>A Home for Bees with Dr. Clare Walker, Irvine Nature Center's Manager of Public Programs</p> <p>Celebrate World Bee Day by exploring where native bees make their homes. Take a look at the many different types of bees' homes, from those designed for mason bees and bumble bees to the areas required for mining bees. We will explore the bees that will use each and the many options for providing a space for baby bees to thrive (spoiler – it requires the right native plants too!) Have a peek to see what happens inside the boxes before exploring outside to see some bee houses that have been successful (and unsuccessful) at Irvine.</p>