

ARAIYS NEWS

SPRING NEWS LETTER 2016



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Happy Spring! Welcome to our Spring Newsletter for 2016. In this newsletter we continue our conversation regarding sustainable strategies related to the SITES initiative. One critical aspect of site development is the increase of impervious surfaces and the impact on the existing watershed. Watersheds can be affected in many ways by new development and we as landscape architects employ sustainable strategies to ameliorate harm to our precious resources. Please read below about one such project where we designed a vegetated buffer to help preserve and protect Lake Agawam. Also, as the soil and air continues to warm, keep an eye out for Magnolias, Dogwoods, Redbuds beginning to bloom. Have a great Spring!

Wetland Restoration

As the world's population has expanded, wetlands have been drained and altered to accommodate for urban development. Wetland restoration is done to reinstall or reconstruct the original condition of the wetland to mimic how it was functioning before it was altered. The most ecologically sound and cost-efficient approach to wetland restoration is to restore degraded or formerly drained wetlands by systematically undoing the activities that were done to alter them. Restoration of wetlands takes place on areas that has been significantly disturbed by altering activities such as ditching, drain tile installation, stream channelization and sedimentation.

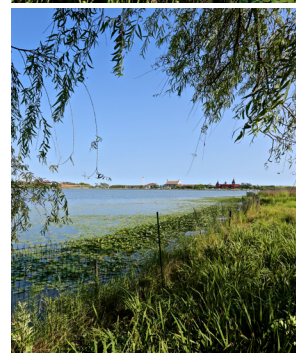
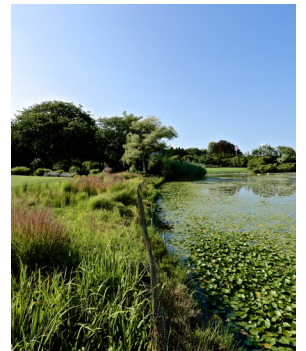
Even as we now recognize the importance of wetlands and protect them, small wetlands continue to be filled for development or drained for agricultural activities. The key to wetland restoration is to reestablish the area's original hydrology, topography as well as restoring the natural processes of the original native plants. The benefits of restoring a degraded or destroyed wetland are many, including that they make for clean water, they prevent floods, it's a scenic beauty and they encourage wildlife habitat. Changes to wetlands have brought about negative changes in the migratory patterns of birds, local climate, and the makeup of plant and animal populations. By restoring them to their original condition it can help to undo these negative changes. You can read more about one of our wetland restoration projects under the Spotlight section of this newsletter.

Spotlight: Native, Vegetated Buffer (Agawam Lake Residence)

Centrally located within the boundaries of the Village of Southampton, is the 60 acre, Agawam Lake. Running north to south from the well known Agawam Park to the outskirts of the Atlantic Ocean, Lake Agawam offers many opportunities for recreational enjoyment as well as aesthetic appreciation. With this being said, the surrounding properties of Lake Agawam are of high interest to the real estate industry and now the host for many residences. The development of these properties come with its problems, however. As houses and associated road ways have been developed, Lake Agawam has become over run with surface runoff pollutants from roadways, driveways, and lawns. Even septic systems have caused problems with the lake's water quality. All of the above have resulted in fish die-offs and decreased water quality within the Lake.

With upland improvements, comes the increase of surface run-off as a result of the increased coverage of impervious surfaces such as roofs, roads, terraces, etc. Because Lake Agawam receives most of the drainage from its surrounding land mass, it also receives all of the water and associated pollutants that are carried off of the surfaces and into the lake. As Landscape Architects, we are always looking for ways to limit surface runoff and for innovative ways to filter run off from impervious surfaces before they enter existing tributaries, or in this case, Lake Agawam.

A practice to achieve the above is also a requirement of the Village of Southampton, and are what we call Vegetated Buffers. What a Vegetated Buffer does is slow and filter storm water runoff before it enters into an existing lake, wetland, or other body of water. Because the highlighted project is located on the edge of Lake Agawam, a Vegetated Buffer was warranted in order to offset the increased run-off from the proposed, upland, impervious surfaces. We at Araiys design strive to make, what might seem like a nuisance to our clients, an opportunity in their Landscape. Through the use of native plant species that offer interest at different times of the year, the buffer seen above provides the client with countless opportunities for blooms and enjoyment within their landscape. Because the buffer is vegetated with native species, maintenance is limited and reduces the growth of invasive species.





PLANTS OF THE SEASON

In this newsletter we are highlighting Magnolia and Witch Hazel as the plants of the season. Magnolias are well-known large shrubs/trees that produce big and beautiful white, pink, red, purple or yellow flowers from early Spring until Summer. There are more than 200 species of Magnolias that are native to different parts of the world but many species are now grown worldwide because of their beautiful flowers, shape and form. Two of our favorites are Magnolia Sweetbay and Royal Star Magnolia. We also chose to highlight Diane Witch Hazel in this issue as it blooms the majority of the year and still has vibrant colors in early spring when many other plants are still dormant and colorless.



Common Name: Royal star Magnolia
Scientific Name: *Magnolia stellata* 'Royal Star'
Size: 10' - 15' tall x 10' - 12' wide

The Royal Star Magnolia is a large shrub or small tree that is an early spring bloomer with large, fragrant, double white flowers that appears before the foliage emerges in late spring. It works well to plant them in our area while they can survive late freezes. The Royal Star is a perfect choice for courtyards, entry courts, condominium gardens and should be planted up close where you can enjoy its beautiful flowers.



Common Name: Magnolia Sweetbay
Scientific Name: *Magnolia Virginiana*
Size: 12'-20' tall & wide

Magnolia Sweetbay is a semi-evergreen tree with 2"-3" creamy-white, lemon-scented flowers and glossy green leaves that blooms in late spring going in to summer. Sweetbay is perfect for smaller suburban landscapes such as a patio area as this native tree remains small and yet blooms well enough in a shaded side yard. Sweetbay can be integrated into woodlands or used to add relief against fine textured evergreen conifers.



Common Name: Diane Witch Hazel
Scientific Name: *Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Diane'
Size: 8'-10' tall x 6'-8' wide

Diane Witch Hazel is known for its copper-red flowers and is considered one of the best red flowering varieties because of its deep and rich orange-red color. Diane Witch Hazel is an exceptional large native shrub and it is the perfect planting choice for breaking up long boundaries and fence lines. It can grow beneath aged old shade trees and it naturally adapts to compositions of mixed woodlands of evergreens and deciduous forest trees. You can let it go native in wild gardens among natives or group it with other species from indigenous plant communities.