

NATURE'S ACTION GUIDE

News & Puzzles – Fall 2024

Welcome to the first edition of *Nature's Action Guide News & Puzzles!*

As autumn marches toward winter, I hope you are getting to enjoy the glorious weather this season brings to most U.S. ecoregions. This first edition shares nature and biodiversity news, updates, events, and some “just for fun” puzzles!

Wishing you a very happy autumn and Halloween!

This spooky sculpture was “hand” crafted by bald-faced hornets. We don't use this door, and except briefly to take this photo, the porch light was kept off for the duration of their nesting period. Although, bald-faced hornets (which actually are wasps) are known to recognize faces, I'm glad to say they didn't imprint on ours and we lived harmoniously with them all summer.



Bald-faced hornet nest (top)
Bald-faced hornet, 100x
actual size



High fashion—NO! . . . High utility—YES!

No, this is not my Halloween costume, but it is one of the most useful things I have when it comes to caring for my wildlife habitat—a hand sown “onesie” that I can pull over my clothes for a quick dash out to gather seedheads, harvest tomatoes, or take photos. Notice I am NOT modeling it in this photo nor for *Nature's Action Guide* since for all its virtues, high fashion is not one of them. I used an old sheet and an all-sizes pattern for a jumpsuit (Simplicity #1731A). I added the large pockets on the front, and they really come in handy for carrying clippers, phone, and harvest bounty. If sewing is not your thing, an inexpensive hazmat suit might work equally well—I have yet to try that.



You can even make a matching onesie for your dog!

Nature's Action Guide: Updates & Additional Resources

Here are some useful resources not yet included in *Nature's Action Guide*:

- **Pollinator Partnership** (pollinator.org) offers **Ecoregional Planting Guides**. Search online for the title, enter your postal code, and enjoy a detailed guide that includes bloom periods, plants that attract pollinators, and host plants. The guides also include informative paragraphs about the variety of pollinators and the roles they play, including bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, flies, birds, and bats.
- **Sports for Nature** (sportsfornature.org) is an organization that champions nature along with athletes as it strives to reduce the environmental impacts of sporting activities and events.
- In **Crossings: How Road Ecology Is Shaping the Future of Our Planet**, Ben Goldfarb lays out the environmental impact of roads, explaining how roadkill (our vehicles kill over 1 million animals annually in the U.S.) is only part of the crisis. He goes on to describe the efforts that ecologists, conservations, and others are making to reduce the hazards that our transportation infrastructure imposes upon nature.
- A National Audubon Society article **Behind the Scenes at the Federal Bee Lab Powered by Native Plants** describes **Sam Droege's** research efforts and highlights his focus on native plants as being central to biodiversity. Search online for the title.

The WildStory: A podcast of poetry & plants

The Native Plant Society of New Jersey hosts a wonderful podcast *The WildStory*. I had the sincere honor of being interviewed by Kim Correro about *Nature's Action Guide* alongside Nadia Colburn, poet and author of *I Say the Sky*, and Doug Tallamy discussing his upcoming book *How Can I Help?* Join us as we discuss the challenges and actions urgently needed to support biodiversity! Together, let's show the world it can be done!



Nadia Colburn
Poet & Author



Sarah F. Jayne
Author of *Nature's Action Guide*



Doug Tallamy, PhD
Bestselling Author & Entomologist

The WildStory

A Podcast of Poetry & Plants

Produced by Ann E. Wallace & Kim Correro

Episode 17

by The Native Plant Society of New Jersey







Puzzles for a little biodiversity fun!

See pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter



Autumn discount on bulk orders (Courtesy of BN.com)

As a pleasant autumn surprise, Barnes & Noble is offering 10% off on author's copies through November 30, 2024. If you would like 5 or more copies of *Nature's Action Guide* shipped to one address, let me know and along with the bulk discount, I will be happy to pass this additional savings on to you or your group.

Nature Craft: Porcelain berry stem wreath

Porcelain berry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*), aka Amur peppervine, is a troublesome nonnative plant in the eastern half of the US from the Great Lakes region south to Alabama. Fortunately, it hasn't established itself in western states (yet?).



If you have porcelain berry growing in your wildlife habitat, try your hardest to remove all of it before it sets berries like the ones shown here. (I was obviously too late in this case!)

To add to your motivation for removing porcelain berry, consider using the vines to make bases for holiday wreaths like the one shown here. The trick is to weave the vines into a circle **at the time of removal**. If you attempt to weave the vines later, they'll be brittle, and you'll need to soak them in water before weaving them. Use wire or string to attach evergreen foliage, berries, and pinecones for a festive decoration.



Quality matters when it comes to choosing bypass pruners. I've been very satisfied with both the Corona (shown here) and Haus & Garten brands.

Roundup® reformulated with a more toxic cocktail of chemicals

Homeowners are grabbing Roundup® off big box shelves likely without realizing that Bayer (formerly Monsanto) has reformulated the classic Roundup® product into a line of products that may not even contain glyphosate. This is a problem because the terms “glyphosate” and “Roundup®” are often used interchangeably and some of the new products are even more toxic than glyphosate. An [article](https://uthort.tennessee.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/228/2024/05/Update-on-Roundup-Branded-Herbicides.pdf) from the University of Texas (Brosnan, Bumgarner, Bowling, Breeden, & Scott, 2024, <https://uthort.tennessee.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/228/2024/05/Update-on-Roundup-Branded-Herbicides.pdf>) explains the problem and describes the active ingredients of the new Roundup®-branded products. **Moral of the story:** Don't use pesticides (if but if you do, read the labels carefully)! Fortunately, the small scale of residential landscapes makes pesticide use unnecessary.



Step aside burning bush and make way for Aronia!

It's hard not to agree that the bright red fall color of the nonnative burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*) is a striking autumn accent in many parts of the U.S. The serious ecological problem is that burning bush grows well even in full shade where it forms dense thickets with tight root systems that prevent native plants from emerging and growing. Adding insult to injury, it seeds prolifically. Like all nonnative ecologically damaging plants, it is not inherently bad--its beauty can be appreciated without reservation in northern China, Japan, and Korea where it is native, but it doesn't have a place in the U.S. where it destroys the biodiversity of the woodlands it overtakes. A lovely alternative, which IMHO surpasses the beauty of burning bush, is red chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*). And its berries are nutritious to birds and humans alike!

Nature's Action Guide: Updates & Additional Resources, continued

- Tragically, new research estimates that the **number of birds killed by glass strikes in the U.S. has been moved upward** from 1 billion birds annually to 1.28 billion to 3.46 billion and possibly as high as 5.19 billion birds annually in the U.S.! (Klem, Saenger & Brogle, 2024). Let's screen or mark all of our home and community windows as soon as possible! (p. 2.6)
- The **American Bird Conservancy's Products & Solution Database** is described in *Nature's Action Guide*. but it can still be tricky to find so here's the URL: abcbirds.org/glass-collisions/products-database. This invaluable database rates the efficacy of different glass treatments including the DIY ones we all can do right away. (p. 2.6)
- In *Nature's Action Guide*, I didn't mention **noise pollution**, but I plan to squeeze a mention in a future revision. Human-produced noise has a negative impact on biodiversity, for example, by interfering with animal communication causing reductions in reproduction.

Nature's Action Guide is designed to be a living document. Your input is valued. Please email me (sarah@naturesactionguide.org) with your questions or ideas.

WEEDY WORDS

by Sarah F. Jayne

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T E A U N R
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S O M S E S
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R C Q S E U U
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W M N G I O
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M M Y Y U
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For answers to the puzzles, visit naturesactionguide.org/puzzles

Puzzle Complaint Department: Open 5:00 – 5:05 a.m., February 29th.

CROSSWORD: Supporting Biodiversity by Sarah F. Jayne

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ACROSS (Nature's Action Guide page numbers in parentheses are hints)

- 2 Largest monoculture in the US covering more land than the other eight top irrigated crops combined! (3.3)
- 5 ___ down shoots to layer plants. (10.18)
- 6 Give definition and are an invitation to enter a landscape (14.6)
- 10 Buy plants in a ___ to save \$\$ (10.7)
- 12 To soak flax or hemp to soften its fibers
- 13 Animal droppings
- 16 The ___ plant is a nonnative aster that gets its name from a popular Indian spice.
- 17 Most important type of native plant to plant (5.3)
- 18 FDA term for "Generally Regarded As (Safe &) Effective"
- 21 Change light bulbs to ___. (1.8)
- 22 US state with greatest biodiversity (abbr.)
- 23 First half of the name of a large city with "green bin rule" to reduce methane from food waste in landfills
- 24 Popular emitters of greenhouse gases
- 27 Gas-powered lawn mowers ___ 4 – 5% of the total greenhouse gases released in US.
- 30 Woodpecker nest construction (7.15)
- 33 Troublesome plants (adj.) (5.12)
- 35 Just say ___ to neonicotinoids (10.23)
- 37 Registered nurse (abbr.)
- 38 Bluestem grass genus (11.19)
- 43 Sweetspire genus
- 44 ___mar; ocean (French)
- 45 Happy indoor cat sound
- 46 Bear (Spanish)
- 48 Type of ALAN (1st syllable) (1.10)
- 49 Stiff bristle on barley or rye seed head
- 50 Fence part
- 52 Requires proper disposal (2.10)
- 53 The fire ___ needs your leaf litter! (1.9)
- 54 Genetic profile adapted to location (10.21)



DOWN (Nature's Action Guide page numbers in parentheses are hints)

- 1 Turn ___ the lights to protect nocturnal life. (1.4)
- 2 Keep track of plants with these. (11.2)
- 3 Initials of scientific name for a monarch favorite
- 4 Bird's home (7.15)
- 5 Helpful guide to your landscape (9.8)
- 7 T/F: Propagating plants is easy! (10.9)
- 8 Opposite of "him"
- 9 Element contributing to legibility of a landscape (14.7)
- 11 Native source of fiber but deadly to dogs, horses, etc.; a milkweed look-alike
- 14 Vegetation filled area that connects habitats (15.5)
- 15 New Jersey ___ was an important beverage substitute during the American Revolution
- 16 A lovely lawn-like alternative (11.10)
- 19 ___ -fuse, -duce, -use, -purpose, -cycle (10.10)
- 20 Asexual propagation (9.8)
- 24 Upper layer of the landscape (9.4)
- 25 Audio/visual (abbr.)
- 26 Common name of Hypericum (1st word; abbr.)
- 28 Survival strategy of the admiral butterfly
- 29 Moth of venomous stinging caterpillar
- 32 Bantu language that over 1 million people speak
- 34 Important decomposer, pollinator, composter, soil former, human food, and beauty product ingredient producer.
- 36 Number of people it takes to make a difference
- 39 Smell of improperly made compost (slang)
- 40 Reusable water (American English) (
- 41 Best type of pesticide
- 42 Peat replacement (10.13)
- 48 Important late season keystone genus (1st two letters) (7.13)
- 49 ___ yay yay
- 51 For example (abbr.)



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