

Blazing Star

Holistic Learning Centre
Courses and workshops that come to you!

Working with native plants over the past decade has led to a deeper appreciation of the interconnectedness of all living things and how our mind set can act to dislocate us from this relationship or bring peace and concord to how we relate to the life world. To foster the process of connecting with the inherent richness of both ourselves and the phenomenal world, it seems like a natural extension of Acorus Restoration, our native plant nursery, to create and provide mobile workshops related to Native plants, self-inquiry, discovery, and mindful action.

Paul Morris, an expert in the fields of **ecology, botany, eco-system restoration** and **gardening with native plants**, is an engaging speaker who has presented at a wide variety of venues, including the Royal Botanical Gardens, Society for Ecological Restoration and the Natural Habitat Conference. His depth of knowledge of native plants is inspiring and practical. Through the use of multimedia and interactive strategies, Paul enables participants to leave the workshop with the knowledge and know-how to create their own native plant masterpieces.

In Paul spent time with his father and grandfather landscape painting in his youth, these times fostered a passion for the outdoors and natural history. Later he completed his undergraduate degree at **Waterloo University** in biology and then went on to complete his **Masters at Acadia University** in Nova Scotia. His extensive experience in wetland and prairie restoration ecology and conservation biology makes him a leader in the design and planting of restoration areas. In 1997, Environment Canada asked him to co-author a manual on prairie and meadow restoration. He continues to restore sections of his 95-acre farm and has completed numerous projects across Ontario, including Eco-parks, wastewater and storm water ponds, and naturalization for private homeowners.

Workshop Menu - Below is a sampling of some of the workshops that we offer.
If you would like to enquire about these offerings
please phone (519) 586-2603 or email: info@ecologyart.com.

Propagating Wild Plants

Learn how to release the life contained within tiny seeds. The workshop will look at how you can grow many species of wild plants from seed, germination and stratification techniques, soils, transplanting. Each species has specific conditions or cues that need to be met for them to know when to burst free and start growing. Learn about these conditions and how to be a detective to figure out new species!

Attracting Birds and Butterflies to Your Sanctuary

Urbanized properties for the most part are deserts to birds and butterflies. What are the conditions needed to attract those denizens of the sky? We will explore the elements of food, cover, and water to make sanctuaries for our flying friends.

Beginners Yoga & Meditation Workshop

Join us for a yoga and meditation experience! Discover how far reaching the benefits of yoga are. The practice of yoga helps to alleviate both physical and mental stress. Practicing yoga is like giving yourself a deep tissue and emotional massage. The morning portion of the program includes wholesome helpings of asanas (breath with movement) and instruction on the therapeutic benefits of a variety of yoga postures. Lunch is a light potluck. The afternoon involves deep relaxation through calm abiding meditation and yoga nidra. The program includes talks, meditation practice and discussion. Maintaining a regular yoga and meditation practice enables you to connect with a deeper level of contentment and a heart realization that everything is as it should be.

Beginners Plant Identification

Weed or Wildflower? Ever wanted to figure out what that interesting plant is? Learn how to identify plants for yourselves. We will look at the plant characteristics that help us identify a variety of plants and work with plant keys to figure out just what that plant is.

Natural Foods and Wild Edibles

Come and explore the bounty of nature as we explore the culinary treasures of the wild lands around us. We will look at the edible plants of Ontario and sample some treats!

Ecological Restoration of Prairie and Meadow

Since 1995 Paul Morris has been a leader in the ecological restoration of Prairie and Meadow ecosystems. Learn how to establish and manage a Prairie and the diversity of species available!

Ecological Restoration of Wetlands

Since 1995 Paul Morris has been a leader in the ecological restoration of wetland ecosystems. Learn how to establish and manage a wetland and the diversity of species available!

Backyard Habitats Wetlands and Watergardens

Why spend money on tropical plants when native plants are hardy and attractive! Paul Morris will teach us how to create beautiful ponds that are functional ecosystems and attract wildlife.

Backyard Habitats Prairies and Meadows

Ever wanted to enhance your property by making it wildlife friendly and more green? Need plants that can survive a watering ban? Paul Morris will discuss techniques to add that country feel to your yard.

Habitat Restoration at Acorus Restoration Farm

Hear the first hand experience of Paul Morris talking about the acres of Tallgrass Prairie, Wetland, Wet meadow, Woodland and Stream restored on the 95 acre farm since 1995. Challenges, techniques and rewards will be shared.

Presentation Considerations:

We will need access to electricity to give our PowerPoint presentation. We have a projector and computer that we will bring.

We have a small portable screen but access to a larger screen would be beneficial.

We can bring our seed packets to sell or people may order plants that we can bring and distribute. For fundraising purposes your group can sell our plants at retail prices and you can pay for the plants at wholesale prices.