

Nature Niche

Nature By The Yard – Fostering a Natural Sense of Wonder

Autumn, 2005

Volume 2, Issue 3

Calendar of Events

Please call the hosting organization for reservation information.

Nature Inside Out
"Spiders" Tues. Sept. 27. 11-12 noon or Thurs. Sept. 29 3:30-4:30pm Kids 3-6 years. Cotsen Children's Library, Princeton. 258-2697 Free

Nature Inside Out
"Fall Season" Mon. Oct. 17, 3:30-4:30pm or Tues. Oct. 18 11-12 noon. Kids 3-6 years old. Cotsen Children's Library. Princeton, 258-2697. Free

Tiny Tot Walk Wed. Oct. 19. 10-11am Kids 18-36 months. Buttinger Nature Center, Pennington 737-7592 Fee

Children's Nature Story Hour Fri. Oct. 21. 10-11am. Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, New Hope, Pa. (215) 862-2924. Fee

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Spiders

They have a reputation of befriending witches. They are creepy. They suck the insides of their prey. Their webs hit us in the face while on a leisurely autumn walk. They bite. Yuck, after all that, it is no wonder most folks hate spiders. But honestly, without spiders, we would be overrun by insects. Besides, a closer look at their interesting lives might just change your mind.

Spiders are not insects. They belong to the Arachnid group. Spiders have 8 legs, 6-8 eyes and two body parts. Insects have 6 legs, three body parts and two eyes.

All spiders can spin a web, and most, but not all use it to catch food.

Spinning a web is no small task and the material from which the web is made is valuable. That's

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Landscaping for Fall Color

Do you have your fall foliage travel plans in place? No? You may be out of luck to get a hotel in the Adirondacks or Shenandoah, but it isn't too late to plan for next year. I'm not talking about a road trip to a National Forest. I'm talking about planting your own fall foliage display. There are so many great trees to choose from, and you're almost guaranteed of a show stopper year after year.

Fall is a great time of year to plant. Not only will you be giving the plants the whole winter to set healthy roots, but

many nurseries have 1/2 price sales going on now.

Your first step is to look at your yard to see what kind of light, soil space and water you can offer your trees. Then head out to your local nursery and start picking out your favorites. Try selecting trees that will offer different colors and textures. This will add depth and interest to your landscape. Keep in mind when you buy a tree it is small, but just like that cute puppy, it will grow and need lots of space. Different trees have different requirements and will turn

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Nature By The Yard

Nature Inside Out
"Turkeys" Kids 3-6 years.
Mon. Nov. 14, 3:30-4:30pm
or Tues. Nov. 15 11-12 noon
Cotsen Children's Library.
Princeton. 258-2697. Free

Tiny Tot Walk Fri. Nov.
18. 10-11am. Kids 18-36
months. Buttinger Nature
Center, Pennington 737-
7592. Fee.

Want to read about spiders with your child? There are some great non-fiction books out there, but try these fun fiction books too.

"Diary of a Spider" by Doreen Cronin

"Anansi The Spider" Series has various authors.

"Sophie's Masterpiece" by Eileen Spinelli

We're on the Web

See us at:

www.naturebytheyard.com

Spiders (*continued*)

why most spiders recycle their web by eating it after an evening of catching food.

The silk that makes up a web comes out of the abdomen of the spider from specialized organs called spinnerets. There are many spinnerets from which the silk is drawn and as it comes out, it is liquid. When it touches air, the strands dry and become a strong band.

Did you know each web has a

different jobs. The webs for catching food are an intricate masterpiece. A dragline web prevents a spider from falling to the ground. There are also nursery webs, ballooning webs, securing webs and wrapping webs. The next time you come across an orb weaver web (circular ones), take notice of its construction. If you're lucky, the builder will be close by waiting for her next meal.

Landscaping for Fall (*continued*)

various shades depending on what type of soil you have. Even the same species of tree can have different fall foliage color depending on whether you have alkaline or acidic soil.

Choose trees that are healthy with a strong leader branch, unblemished bark and no signs of disease. If you are going for a particular look, use the following as a guideline. But remember, the color the foliage turns is as almost as dependent on the soil type as it is on the

tree species.

Dogwoods	Purple
Sweetgum	Purple
Hickory	Yellow or Orange
Tulip	Yellow
Maple	Orange or Red
Redbud	Yellow
Oaks	Burgundy

Don't forget the evergreens. You'll need something green to keep you going until spring.

A rainbow of color awaits you.

About Our Organization...

Nature By The Yard was started in January, 2001. We offer fun, hands-on, nature education programs to schools, scouts, camps, libraries, birthday parties, garden clubs, nature centers, wildflower preserves or any organized group. We also provided

workshops for teachers on using the outdoors as a classroom as well as offer advice and expertise on designing school yard habitats. For details on our services visit

www.naturebytheyard.com