



Kaitlyn and Kyle Fritzsche at the Pumpkin Giveaway in 2017

Pumpkin Festival

Celebrate fall with us during our annual Pumpkin Festival on Friday and Saturday, October 19 and 20! We will kick off the festivities on Sunday, October 14, when we give away 1,000 pumpkins to anyone who wishes to carve a pumpkin for our jack-o'-lantern contest. These often amazing and bizarre creations will decorate the perimeter of

the Event Lawn on Friday and Saturday night. While waiting for dark, visitors will be able to grab a cup of apple cider, a bag of kettle corn, a sweet treat, or hot sandwich from local food vendors and enjoy music by the Nittany Valley Wranglers. Or be entertained with performances by Picker and Papa and magician Ben Salinas as they stroll through the gardens. Child-oriented activities inspired by the season will be fun for everyone. Come experience the beauty of the gardens in the fall!

To learn more about Pumpkin Festival and the Jack-o'-Lantern Contest, check out our [flyer](#).

Summer Reflections from Childhood's Gate Children's Garden: Weaving Plastic and Nature

Many children's garden activities were themed around plastic this year, following the interest generated by the Palmer's *Plastic Entanglements* exhibit and the Arboretum's *Gravity Schmavity* display of three plastic sculptures by Aurora Robson. We began integrating plastic with natural and recycled materials early in the season, creating garden murals with colorful bottle caps, cutting spiral sun catchers, and making music shakers out of water bottles. Amy Schirf, Centre County Refuse and Recycling Authority's Education Coordinator, joined us on several occasions to share tips on home recycling with an emphasis on single-use plastic items that are familiar to children, such as straws, water and juice bottles, and bags.



Birch bark loom weavings

In mid-summer, graduate student Brooke Stouffer (Art Education) began working weekly with children to make creations from plastic bags and natural plant materials on our special loom made of birch bark. These activities—and the incongruity of Robson's beautiful garden sculptures created from discarded plastic—led to many conversations about repurposing plastic materials and reducing unnecessary waste.



A monarch caterpillar feasts on the leaves of a balloon plant growing in the H.O. Smith Botanic Gardens

Plant Spotlight: Balloon Plant

One of the plants we've been asked about most this summer is the balloon plant (*Gomphocarpus physocarpus*), an unusual milkweed relative featured in this year's Display Garden plantings by the Esplanade. The plant is relatively inconspicuous early in the growing season—its narrow lance-shaped leaves and small, nodding umbels of white flowers, while attractive, are easily overlooked. When the blossoms give way to seed pods in late summer to fall, however, the balloon plant becomes a true oddity. These seed pods are what give the plant its common name—they are spherical, balloon-like, chartreuse in color, and covered with coarse hairs. As the pods mature, they

grow to over 2" in diameter. When produced in abundance, they give the plant an undeniably alien appearance.

The balloon plant is attractive to creatures other than human garden visitors as well. It's also proven to be a popular food source for monarch butterfly caterpillars. Monarch larvae rely on milkweeds and closely-related plants for nourishment, and our balloon plants have been populated with happily-munching caterpillars all season. Luckily, we have enough plants in the garden to satisfy their needs and still leave plenty of the fascinating seed pods for everyone else to enjoy!

Focus on Research

Many flowering plants depend upon frugivory (consumption of fruits) for their dispersal by animals, chiefly birds and mammals. Large, fragrant fruits that fall to the ground tend to be dispersed by mammals such as bears, deer, raccoons, and foxes, which locate the fruit mostly by smell. Most birds have little sense of smell and are attracted to colorful fruits, especially reds and blues, that are appropriately sized for bird consumption and retained on the plant for display and access.



Photinia pyrifolia 'Brilliantissima' fruit

Dr. Tomás Carlo Joglar, associate professor of biology, and his students have been studying frugivory in the Arboretum for several years. At the most general level, their question of interest is how the behavior and movements of fruit-eating birds affect the diversity and spatial patterning of plants on the landscape. This fall they are using camera "traps" to monitor bird behavior at several locations where pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) and other fruit choices are present.



Arboretum sunset
Photo by Rusty Glessner
Summer 2018 1st Place

Visitors Capture the Arboretum in Photos

In summer 2017, the Arboretum began hosting photo contests to solicit images of seasonal beauty and memorable moments in the Arboretum.

Submissions have yielded many impressive and sometimes striking images. The three top-rated images in this past summer's contest (featured to the left and in the side bar) illustrate some of this variety in

subject matter and perspective. We hope you enjoy seeing these winning entries, as well as those of the previous four seasons (featured in the side bar).

We thank everyone who has submitted photos so far, and hope many of you are inspired to enter a photo in our autumn photo contest. Read our [contest rules](#) and submit your photo (one per person) before October 31!

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

Penn State is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer, and is committed to providing employment opportunities to all qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability or protected veteran status. U.Ed. AGR 19-16

The Arboretum at Penn State | The Pennsylvania State University
336 Forest Resources Building | University Park PA 16802-3604
Images in this e-newsletter have been contributed by Arboretum staff unless otherwise noted.

If you no longer wish to receive this publication, please un-subscribe by using the link below.

Contact us at kkri1@psu.edu
Make a gift
[Sign up](#) | [Manage your preferences](#)
[Opt out using TrueRemove®](#)
[Forward this email](#)



[Follow us on Instagram](#)



Play dates at the Arboretum are the best!
Photo by Suzy Unger
Summer 2017 Winner (tie)



Early summer blooms
Photo by Heather Weikel
Summer 2017 Winner (tie)



Milkweed seed pod
Photo by Ruth Merritt
Autumn 2017 Winner



Mark your calendar!
Winter Celebration
December 7
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.



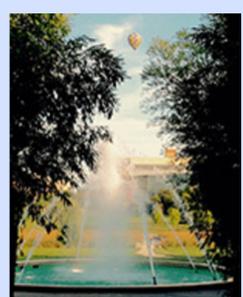
Snow on the Event Lawn
Photo by Krystian Kwiechinski
Winter 2018 1st Place



Spring on the Esplanade
Photo by Anita Graham
Spring 2018 1st Place



Kaleidoscope
Photo by Gabriella DiDomizio
Summer 2018 2nd Place



Bamboo and Fountain
Photo by Jen Nourse
Summer 2018 3rd Place (tie)



Aquatic plants at Childhood's Gate
Photo by Peter Rzasa
Summer 2018 3rd Place (tie)

Share this email:



336 Forest Resources Building
University Park, PA | 16802 US

This email was sent to .
To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.

