



MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY

EXTENSION SERVICE

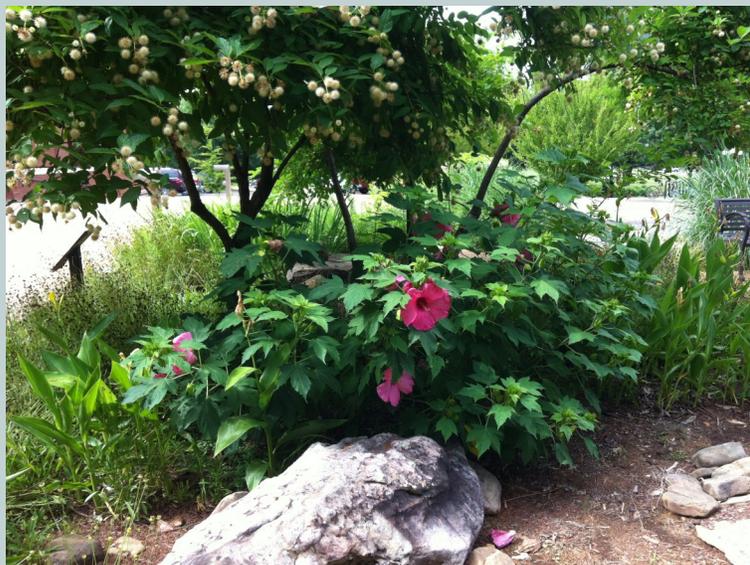
Colonel Johnson Courtyard, MSU

Mississippi State, MS

Project Highlights:

- One-quarter acre native plant entry garden
- Water feature, seating areas
- Walking pathways through wet meadow gardens

Biodiversity



Native buttonbush and hibiscus offer summer color

Project designer:

Robert Brzuszek, planting design

Context: university campus, urban

Project Overview

Located at Thompson Hall on the Mississippi State University campus, the Colonel Johnson Courtyard features plants that are native to north Mississippi. Originally planted with exotic nursery plants, faculty from Wildlife and Forestry that are located in the facility requested that the courtyard feature native plants. Using a wet meadow concept as a theme, the new planting features a variety of trees, shrubs, wildflowers and grasses.

Smart landscape features and practices

Biodiversity. While the original planting offered only 4 species of exotic trees and groundcovers with very limited wildlife use, the redesigned landscape now offers over 30 species of native plants. Tree species planted include fringe tree, ironwood, and a variety of oaks such as overcup, shumard, and black oak. Shrubs are primarily spring or summer blooming and include native azaleas, ashe viburnum, sweetshrub, oakleaf hydrangea, buttonbush, sweetspire, and summersweet. Perennials and grasses include blazing star, St. John's wort, stokes aster, muhly grass, big bluestem, verbena, Louisiana iris, river oats, rose mallow, soft rush, blue sedge, obedient plant, coreopsis, blue aster, yellow coneflower and panic grass. Groundcovers and vines include Carolina jasmine, chain fern, and crossvine.

See following page for additional images.

Yellow coneflowers greet visitors in early summer





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Plants were selected for low maintenance or because they required little care. After planting, plants are watered during the first summer to establish root systems. After the first season, watering is discontinued and maintenance is reduced to a winter cutting back of perennial foliage.



Walking paths wind through perennials and grass beds.

Native plants are organized in masses to make effective groupings, and feature grasses for strong fall and winter interest. Part of plant selection includes making a list of blooming or fruiting times of potential plants to extend seasonal diversity.

