

By Dick Harlow

JOE-PYE WEED



Joe-pye Weed, *Eutrochium purpureum*,
© Dick Harlow

Joe-pye Weed, *Eutrochium purpureum*, to many gardeners is not a weed at all, but an integral part of their garden plantings.

One source says, "Joe-pye weed flowers were named after a New England man that used the plant medicinally for helping people with typhus fever. In addition to its medicinal properties, both the flowers and seeds have been used in producing pink or red dye for textiles."

There are five species of the genus *Eutrochium*, called Joe-pye Weed. Because of its current popularity there are some smaller varieties as well.

However, all Joe-pye weed plants have the same type of flower and the nominate species *purpureum* regularly integrate with other species of this genus. Therefore, I will focus on *purpureum*, the tallest of the species.

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Joe-pye Weed, *Eutrochium purpureum*,

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This species can grow from 5 feet to more than 8 feet tall, and because it is a clump forming plant can outstretch from 3.6 to 4 feet in width. It is not a plant that you want to put in the front of your garden! However, Joe-pye Weed likes a moist spot rather than a dry one and if that is difficult to find it will do well in shade.

It flowers from the end of July to the end of August and into September. Monarch and other butterflies will feed off the nectar produced by the flowers as will honey bees and other pollinating insects.



Joe-pye Weed, *Eutrochium purpureum*,

and a variety of *Apis*, Honey Bee © Dick Harlow

This is the middle of September or the middle of the first month of the Fall Season. Late blooming perennials are flowering, even with the dearth of rainwater. These plants need to flower so that they can produce seed for next year before the cold weather sets in. Also, at this time of year although bird migration began for some species at the end of July, bird migration is now moving right along. Migratory birds need to fly to their winter homes in Central and South America before weather events such as hurricanes and fall storms take their toll.

All plants and animals have as part of their cells a DNA molecule whose function is to direct the evolution of each species. Whether the weather is wet or dry, hot or cold, whether there is enough food or a lack thereof, that DNA code is responsible for the organism's survival, to seasonally function and procreate. Reproduction of the next generation is what every species is directed to do. DNA directions and small changes therein, allow for the slow evolution of the species as has been done over eons. The reasons that humans have caused the rapid increase of this evolution including the extinction of organisms both here in North America and the world will be discussed in another Nature Notes.

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GRAY SQUIRREL



Gray Squirrel, *Sciurus carolinensis*,
© Dick Harlow

When we humans are trying to dissuade Gray Squirrels from using our bird feeders as their own food locker, we tend to forget that food, especially nuts and various types of seed are basic to a Gray Squirrel's survival. We go to the super market for our food; they, on the other hand, have to find it where they live. If humans invade their territory, they will take every opportunity to remove every handout humans put in bird feeders. So goes the battle we all face every Fall, Winter and Spring as we try and fool these wily rodents.

Here at EastView, Gray Squirrels didn't move in until 2015. They ventured into this unknown region of human habitation from time to time in 2014; but because we are wide open with very little cover, it took them a year or so to gain the courage and where-with-all to find areas around the Inn and cottages where they could hide. Once they got accustomed to human clutter and the lack of danger from dogs and kids, they associated our area with the freedom to come and go as they pleased with only an occasional disturbance from a resident or a Red-tailed Hawk.



Gray Squirrel, *Sciurus carolinensis*,
© Dick Harlow

These fellows can eat you out of birdseed if you don't take precautions. It doesn't matter whether you feed ground seed or sunflower, they will devour whatever you put out except for thistle seed. They are not fond of thistle seed.

Make sure your feeder is a stand-alone feeder away from shrubs or trees and that it has a baffle on the pole. They can jump, but would prefer a short leap from a roof, a tree or shrub on to your feeder.

On the other hand if you want to attract squirrels, then pay no attention to what I just wrote!

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EASTERN TAILED BLUE



Eastern Tailed-Blue, *Everes comyntas*,
© Dick Harlow

These thumbnail sized butterflies would be invisible, but for their flitting about from flower to flower. If you are fortunate to have one feed long enough for you to take a look you will see how delicate they are.

EastView is the perfect place for this beauty as its host plants are various legumes such as Vetch, clovers of various kinds including bush clovers. However, they will visit gardens and compost to glean nectar and minerals. As you can see in the view above it is nectaring on Purple Coneflower.

This butterfly is considered a generalist and is found in a wide variety of habitats. So, if you are out in your garden be on the lookout for this very small, but beautiful butterfly.

OBSERVATIONS

BUTTERFLIES

Cabbage White
Clouded Sulphur
Monarch
Viceroy

DRAGONFLIES

Black Meadowhawk
Eastern Pond Hawk
Common Green Darner
Canada Darner

DAMSELFLIES

Eastern Forktail
Marsh Bluet

AMPHIBIANS

American Bullfrog
Leopard Frog

MAMMALS

Gray Squirrel
Eastern Cottontail
Eastern Chipmunk
Meadow Vole
Muskrat

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Weather Tidbits

Month of SEPTEMBER 1-14, 2016

All Measurements taken at solar noon (1230 EST).

PRECIPITATION

Total Precipitation: 15.8 mm or .62 inches

Overcast Days: 2

WIND

Highest wind gust: SEPTEMBER 11, 26 MPH, Direction: North

Average Wind speed SEPTEMBER 1-14: 1.2 mph,

Dominate Wind Direction: South

Days w/wind gusts 20-30 MPH: 4

Days w/wind gusts 30 MPH: 0

TEMPERATURE

Mean Temp: 20.0 C⁰/68.0⁰F

High Temp: 29.5 C⁰/85.1⁰F

Low Temp: 9.2 C⁰/48.6⁰F