

a voice
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movement



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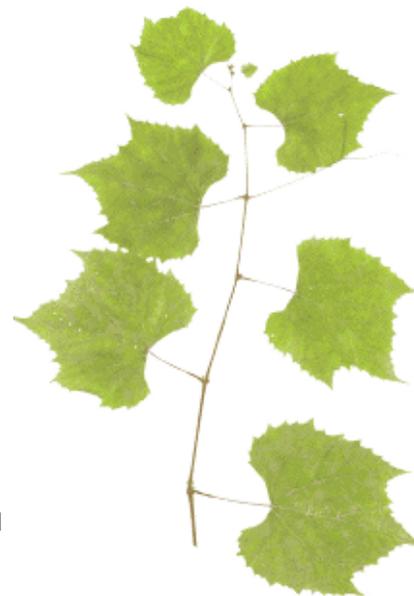
The Grapevine

By Maryann Whitman

Project Budburst

You may have read about Project Budburst in a recent *Wild Ones Journal*. It's a nationwide volunteer effort to observe buds, leaves and blossoms on trees as part of tracking climatic variation over time. Herbaceous and non-native plants are also targets. You can learn more, and sign up at www.windows.ucar.edu/citizen-science/budburst/.

"As a point of observation," writes somebody on one of my lists, "all the black locust around here (Ann Arbor area) would have come from the Southeast, *Amelanchier canadensis* will have come from points farther east, (our native trees would be *A. arborea*, *A. laevis*, or *A. interior*), and nursery-grown red maples may have originated anywhere from Florida to Maine. Planted tulip poplars could have come from anywhere within their range as well, although we do have native ones in moist woods. There's likely to be variation in those plants based on where the parent is from.



"Where they are planted is also something to make note of. The plants along streets and sidewalks are likely to have a warmer micro-environment than those in surrounding woods or depressions where cold air settles. This might create local variations in leafing out/flowering by two weeks or more."

What an interesting point. I suppose that as these data are collected across the continent and over the long-term, the geographic provenance and growing conditions of individuals may not matter as much as the overall trends, and variations from some baseline. And perhaps the designers of this study have already accounted for that in the data that they receive.

Perhaps the greatest value will be in getting people to pay attention to the phenology of local species and how climate change may be affecting these plants.

The same correspondent went on to suggest that it might be interesting to create a display planting of red maples, selecting plants at a variety of points along its range, from north to south and east to west, to showcase the genetic memory related to the geographic location of the parent plants. If you'll check Peterson's *Field Guide of Eastern Trees*, you'll note that the range of the red maple extends along the 48th parallel from the southern tip of Newfoundland, west to Minnesota, and south to the tip of Florida.

Maryann is Editor of the *Wild Ones Journal*, and comes to the position with an extensive background in environmental matters of all kinds.