

Jonesborough's Ardinna Woods Arboretum at the Pliny Fisk Environmental Services site

A Tree City USA, the Town of Jonesborough worked for a number of years toward establishment of a public arboretum. An area fronting its Pliny Fisk Environmental Services facility, at Britt Drive and Highway 81 South, was treeless for several decades. Beginning in the year 2000, facility staff and town volunteers began "greening" the site through planting donated young trees that are native to the Southern Appalachian region. Since 2006, direct funding from several sources enabled the project to acquire and complete the planting of some 170 trees representing more than 60 native species. The Division of Forestry of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, through a community tree planting grant, the Johnson City Power Board through its small-tree demonstration program, and budgetary allocations from the Town's Tree and Townscape Board were the funding sources.

Named by the Town "Ardinna Woods," after the Celtic deity venerated as guardian of forests in ancient times, the arboretum contains two principal tree collections. A group of large and medium size trees includes such rare species as Yellowwood, Black Tupelo and Kentucky Coffeetree, as well as hickories, oaks and other, more common species. These are found in a relatively level, south facing area along Britt Drive. A steep-sloped bank section along the east side contains a group of small urban trees appropriate for siting near homes or under or near power lines. Representative trees of such species as Sourwood, Striped Maple, Carolina Buckthorn, American Smoketree, dogwoods, viburnums and many others native to our region can be seen there.

On the right hand side as one enters the area, a certified butterfly garden hosts shrubs, flowers and native vines that nourish butterflies and their caterpillar young. With food-support for butterflies and other insect-life in mind, many of the arboretum's choices in trees and shrubs are hosts for eastern-region butterflies.

Enjoy blazes of flowers of rare white blooming and common redbud trees, the hum of bees on linden and sourwood and tulip trees, the sight of hummingbirds sipping nectar off flowers and of birds feasting on berry-loaded branches as the plantings in our arboretum go through their annual growing cycle. Public, guided arboretum and butterfly-watch tours are held at the site during the summer months, for which announcements are posted here and through local newspapers.

Jonesborough received certification for "Ardinna Woods," as Level II arboretum, on April 20, 2011. Principal certifying agents are the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Urban Forestry Program. The arboretum had its official, public dedication day on September 1, 2011.

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See photos below



Small trees in east bank fronted by annual and perennial flowers



Creamy white flower clusters of Alternate-Leaf Dogwood



The airy, lilies-of-the-valley like flowers of the Sourwood tree



Giant leaf of the Kentucky Coffee tree



Mulch and leaf litter under larger trees sprouting mushrooms



The Arrowwood Viburnum shrub: sustenance for butterflies and many birds