



**Date:** October 20, 2009

## **MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN PLANS PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS**

(ST. LOUIS): The Missouri Botanical Garden at 4344 Shaw Blvd. will temporarily close the east side of its main parking lot beginning Monday, October 26, 2009 through March 2010 for needed repairs and improvements. During construction, free visitor parking will continue to be available on the west side of the main parking lot and at two additional lots located two blocks west at the corner of Shaw and Vandeventer. The improvements, to be completed by BSI Constructors, Inc., are the second of a three-phase improvement project funded through previously-awarded grants.

The east side parking lot improvement incorporates a number of sustainable features focused on improving stormwater management. A bio-remediation area will be added to collect rain water drainage, allowing water to gradually seep into the ground rather than going directly into the storm sewer system. The bio-remediation area will be planted with Missouri natives adapted for retaining moisture. The plants were selected by horticulturists from the Garden's Shaw Nature Reserve, as recommended in the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) Landscape Guide for Stormwater Best Management Practice Design (<http://www.shawnature.org/nativeland/MSD.aspx>). Two foot bridges will cross over the bio-remediation channel for easy visitor access to the Ridgway Visitor Center.

A portion of the lot will be paved with pervious (or porous) concrete and asphalt, which allow water from precipitation and other sources to pass directly through the material, reducing runoff and initiating groundwater recharge (the process where water moves from the surface to

**(over)**

### **ADD ONE: Parking lot improvements**

groundwater, below plant roots, helping to dispose of excess salt and wastes.) Existing grasscrete, a type of paving with cutout vents or openings, will continue to be utilized in areas surrounding trees.

Functional improvements include an increase in designated handicapped parking spaces. A new sidewalk will run parallel to the western side of the lot, adjacent to the row of handicapped spaces, for safer access to the Ridgway Visitor Center. A new sliding gate, accessible only through card access for enhanced security, will replace an older gate located at the southeast perimeter of the lot. Lighting and irrigation systems will also be improved.

During the construction phase, the east side of the Garden's parking lot will be closed to all vehicular and pedestrian access. Visitors entering the gate at 4344 Shaw Blvd. will be directed to the open west (or right) side of the lot.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd., easily accessible from Interstate 44 at the Vandeventer exit. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily (closed Dec. 25). Admission is \$8 for adults and free for children (ages 12 and under); St. Louis City and County residents enjoy discounted admission of \$4 adults and free admission on most Wednesday and Saturday mornings before noon.

For general Garden information, visit [www.mobot.org](http://www.mobot.org) or call the 24-hour recorded event hotline at (314) 577-9400.

The Missouri Botanical Garden is the oldest continually operating botanical garden in the nation, celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2009. *Missouri Botanical Garden: Green for 150 Years*.

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**NOTE: A color rendering is available by request. Download media materials at [www.mobot.org/press](http://www.mobot.org/press).**

The Missouri Botanical Garden's mission is "to discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment, in order to preserve and enrich life." Today, 150 years after opening, the Missouri Botanical Garden is a National Historic Landmark and a center for science, conservation, education and horticultural display. *Missouri Botanical Garden: Green for 150 Years*.

**The Missouri Botanical Garden is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd. in St. Louis, just south of I-44 at Vandeventer-Kingshighway (exit #287B). Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Dec. 25. Grounds open at 7 a.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays. Admission is \$8; free children ages 12 and under and Garden members. St. Louis City and County residents are \$4 and free Wednesdays and Saturdays until noon (exception: special admission rate events). Park for free on site and two blocks west at the Shaw-Vandeventer intersection. The Garden is easily accessible by taking the MetroLink commuter rail line to the Central West End station and picking up a Metro bus ([www.metrostlouis.org](http://www.metrostlouis.org)). For general information, log on to [www.mobot.org](http://www.mobot.org) or call the 24-hour recording at (314) 577-9400 or 1 (800) 642-8842. For membership information, call (314) 577-5118 during weekday business hours. For volunteer opportunities, call (314)-577-5187 or visit [www.mobot.org/volunteer](http://www.mobot.org/volunteer). The Missouri Botanical Garden is a tobacco-free environment.**