

## The Dr. William M. Zales Arboretum

An arboretum is a place where woody plants, trees, shrubs, and vines are grown for exhibition and study.

The 11-acre Joliet Junior College Arboretum was started in 1975 with financial assistance from the JJC Foundation. The arboretum is located on JJC's 368-acre Main Campus, between the entrance and exit roads, adjacent to Houbolt Road at the main gate.

The college arboretum concept was originated by Dr. William M. Zales in 1975 as part of a master campus use plan. Upon Dr. Zales's retirement in 1999, the arboretum was renamed in his honor to recognize his contributions. The master plan includes development of nature trails, restoration of native ecosystems such as the prairie, fen, various stages of forest successional types, soil conservation measures for the agricultural crop land, and management plans for the campus lake.

These continuing projects are managed by the JJC Natural Areas Committee, the Grounds Advisory Committee, and the college's building and grounds staff. In the spring of 2004, the JJC Foundation and Alumni Relations (The Office of Institutional Advancement) and the Natural Area Committee launched a new project called "Trees for Tomorrow" to raise funds for the continued development and maintenance of the arboretum. Funds from the Friends of the Arboretum will be used to purchase and plant trees for the arboretum. These outdoor facilities are used and enjoyed by students both in and out of the classroom, as well as by faculty, staff and community members from throughout the district.

### Design

The rationale behind the design of this arboretum is different than most public park arboreta.

The arrangement of plants is phylogenetic, according to their evolutionary ancestry and taxonomic relationships. The most primitive plants are located at the east end of the arboretum and progress through the most recently evolved west-end section.

All species in the same genus are grouped together. All genera in the same family are grouped together, and families are arranged in islands in phylogenetic order. For example, Eastern Cottonwood, White Poplar, Quaking Aspen, Balsam Poplar and Large Toothed Aspen all belong to the genus *Populus* and can be seen and compared in close proximity to each other. The genus *Salix*, the Willows, are in the same family as Poplars, *Salicaceae*, which are located in the same island planting.

The species selected for the arboretum were chosen for three reasons: they are native to this area; they are not native, but have become naturalized in the local landscape; or they are interesting botanically and represent families, genera or species not normally found in our area.

The plantings will eventually include more than 200 species that belong to more than 100 genera in approximately 50 families.

The arboretum, like the woody plants it contains, will grow and mature slowly, improve with age and become more and more useful throughout the years.

Many ornamental landscape specimens are intentionally omitted because of nutritional, genetic or disease problems associated with exotics. These specimens may be found adjacent to the Main Campus buildings in a more formal setting.

Pruning and mowing are kept to a minimum to allow the specimen groups to form natural clone populations. This allows them to assume shapes that are characteristic to each species, rather than altering shrubs into hedges or trees into uniform spheres.

This low-maintenance technique is economical, aesthetically pleasing and, in time, will allow the species, genus and family groups to grow together into more obvious islands for botanical study.

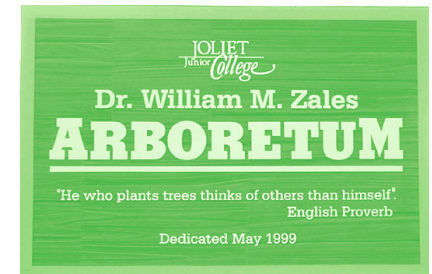
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**Arboretum**

Of Native and  
Naturalized  
Woody Plants



Botanical Laboratory

# JJC Arboretum Guide

JJC ENTRANCE

