

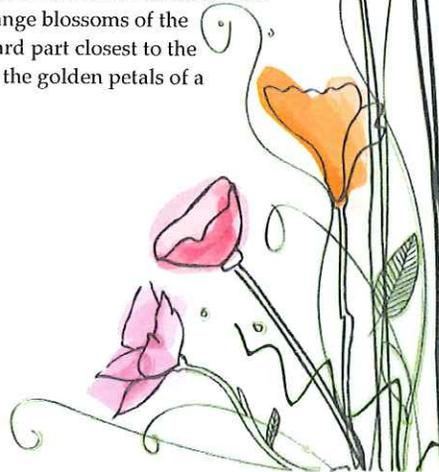
Comments from the Artist: Susan Doster

I was honored to be asked to create the watercolor painting for the Go Greener Garden Award. This project gave me the opportunity to use artistic expression for the purpose of supporting a cause dear to my heart--- efforts towards nurturing sustainable living with respect for nature.

Initially I made a study painting in order to see how I might intertwine the various plants while using them to move the seasons around the rectangular format. This study also helped me to determine whether certain plants would suit as I'd envisioned they might be located.

In the final painting, I moved the tulip poplar to be representing early Spring in the upper left just after the white pine and redbud blossoms. The palette here is softer with pale pinks, softer greens and yellows. This movement set up my circle to go round as each successive plant was then made to gradually lay one over the other as the seasons progressed through late Spring into Summer. Late Spring has the columbine blooming in front of the tiny blue-ish purple blossoms of the wild blue indigo.

I placed the peak of midsummer at the bottom center so I could feature a monarch butterfly alighting upon the orange blossoms of the butterfly weed. This then is the most forward part closest to the viewer. The wings of the monarch overlap the golden petals of a summer Black-eyed Susan.



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Midsummer moves along towards the right side with black walnut leaves and dark purple Elderberries in the lower right. These bring more vivid late summer colors which lay one on top of the other rising up along the right side in to Fall in the top right. Fall gives rich golden oak and red maple colors in leaves and red winterberries.

At the top center, the tiny blue berries of the Eastern red cedar represent winter moving into the initial redbud blossoms of early Spring.

I added a Say's firefly and honeybee to promote sustainable environments for these along with the monarch butterfly.

As I was working my way through the flowers and leaves, around the edges of the rectangular format, I observed there were the primary colors (red, yellow, blue) as dominant colors in each of the three main sections supported by the secondary colors (orange, purple, green). I chose to emphasize these having noticed them beginning to dominate the painting. In addition, I noticed and then intentionally emphasized strong linear angles being drawn by all the stems and branches. These, too, I wanted to use to help move the viewers eye around the painting and the seasons.

It was a pleasure creating this piece and I hope it will help to inspire others to plant native species and appreciate the insects, the birds, and the beauty of our Indiana native trees, shrubs, flowers, grasses, and plants.

