

The American GARDENER[®]

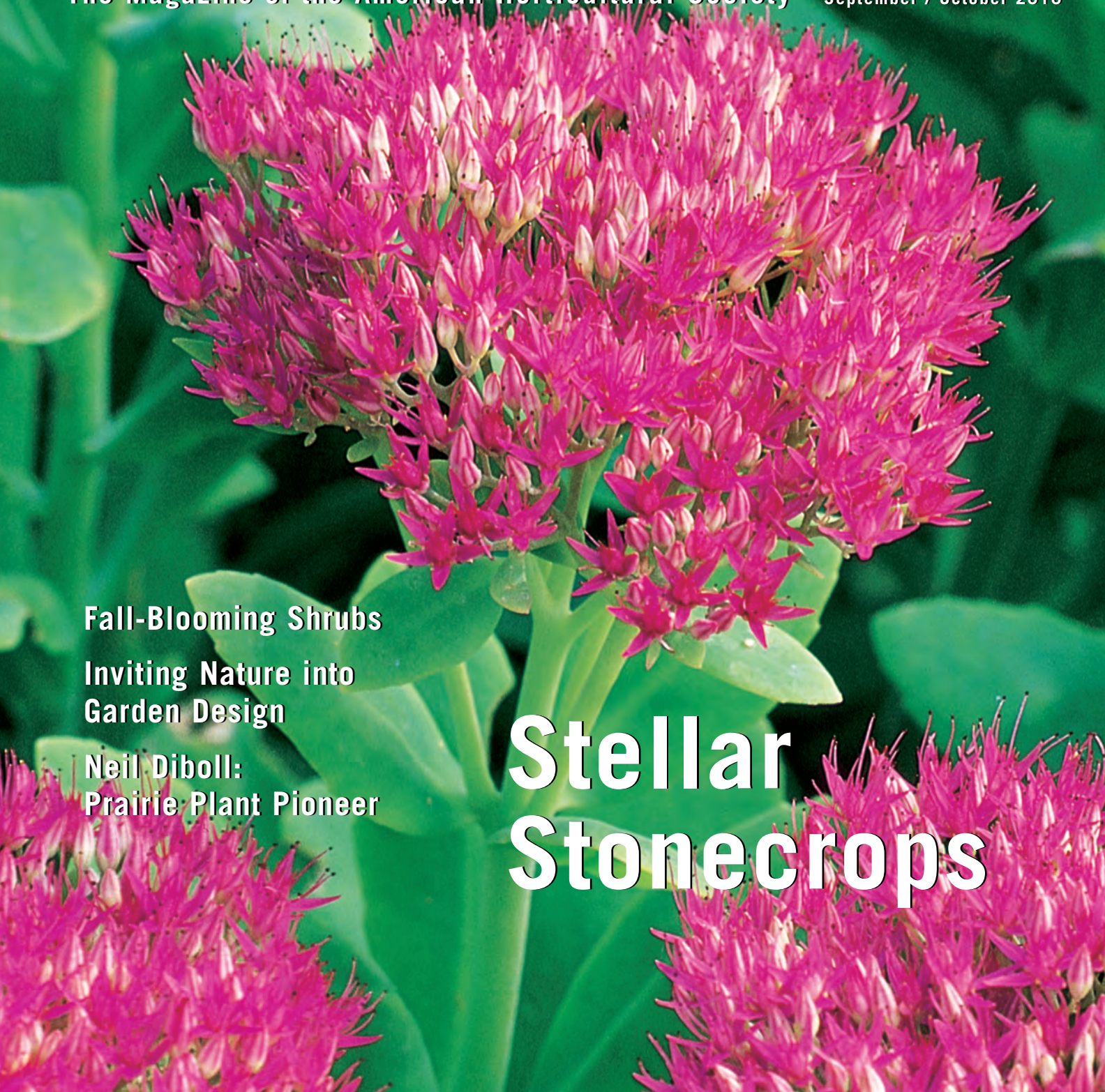
The Magazine of the American Horticultural Society September / October 2010

Fall-Blooming Shrubs

**Inviting Nature into
Garden Design**

**Neil Diboll:
Prairie Plant Pioneer**

**Stellar
Stonecrops**





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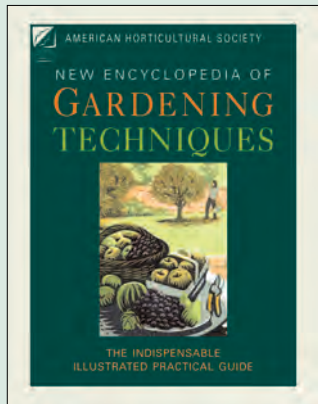
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Three-flower maple (*Acer triflorum*).



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“This is a book to turn to over a lifetime of garden misadventures.”
—Dominique Browning
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AHS New Encyclopedia of Gardening Techniques

“You’ll find step-by-step instructions for pruning, watering, propagating; information about all categories of plants...sections on organic techniques and recycling; and how to treat pests and disease.... Consider it a plant-lover’s mutual fund—a little of this and little of that, in a dandy investment.”

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NOTES FROM RIVER FARM

SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY happened this past July during our annual AHS National Children & Youth Garden Symposium in Pasadena, California. For three days, more than 260 teachers, youth program leaders, and children's gardening advocates gathered to exchange ideas, share encouragement, and network. They came from all parts of the country—from Hawaii to Maine. The energy was high and the excitement palpable. (To read more about the symposium, see page 14.)

A lasting influence. For 18 years, the Society has been the catalyst and coordinator for this remarkable event. Over that period, thousands of attendees have participated in the symposium and returned to their schools, public gardens, and homes with renewed energy, new skills, and knowledge. They also gained access to a national network of colleagues who share their commitment to gardening with children and youth.

Our proudest achievement has been the important influence these participants have had on the lives of millions of young people across the country—fostering a better appreciation of our natural world and encouraging positive environmental values that last a lifetime.

Planting the seed. How does a life-changing event like the youth garden symposium get started? Most often it comes down to an individual or a small group of people who are passionate about a cause and simply decide to do something about it. This past summer, both of us had the pleasure of spending time with Jane Taylor, one of America's most energetic advocates of connecting kids with plants (and the namesake of the AHS Jane L. Taylor award for youth gardening). Jane remembers when the seed was first planted, nearly 20 years ago, for an annual, national forum focusing on youth-oriented gardening programs. Over the years, she has served as an indispensable advisor, helping the AHS turn that seed into the one-of-a-kind symposium it is today.

Taking the next step. Looking at how far we have come, we are heartened by this vivid example of how each of us can make a positive difference in the world around us. And this gives us confidence that we are ready to take the next step. Because the symposium is just too influential to be a once-a-year event, we are exploring ways to turn our dedication to children's gardening into a year-round initiative. To all of those who have been a part of the symposium over the years we say, "Stay tuned."

Anticipating autumn. With this issue of *The American Gardener*, we start turning our attention to fall, with anticipation of a respite from the heat that has challenged many of us around the country this summer. We invite you to turn the page and dig into another issue packed with information and inspiration. Among other things, you will discover the rewards of incorporating autumn-blooming shrubs into your garden, meet an American horticulturist who for decades has been championing the beauty and practicality of prairie plants, and get an expert's guide to the best new stonecrops (*Sedum* spp.) for your garden.

Happy gardening!

Harry Risetto, Chair, AHS Board of Directors
Tom Underwood, Executive Director



Tom Underwood and Harry Risetto



CONTACTS FOR AHS PROGRAMS, MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS & DEPARTMENTS

For general information about your membership, call (800) 777-7931. Send change of address notifications to our membership department at 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308. If your magazine is lost or damaged in the mail, call the number above for a replacement. Requests for membership information and change of address notification can also be e-mailed to membership@ahs.org.

THE AMERICAN GARDENER To submit a letter to the editor of *The American Gardener*, write to The American Gardener, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308, or send an e-mail to editor@ahs.org.

DEVELOPMENT To make a gift to the American Horticultural Society, or for information about a donation you have already made, call (800) 777-7931 ext. 127.

E-NEWSLETTER To sign up for our monthly e-newsletter, visit www.ahs.org.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM The AHS offers internships in communications, horticulture, and youth programs. For information, send an e-mail to education@ahs.org. Information and application forms can also be found in the River Farm area of www.ahs.org.

NATIONAL CHILDREN & YOUTH GARDEN SYMPOSIUM For information about the Society's annual National Children & Youth Garden Symposium, call (800) 777-7931 ext. 137 or visit the Youth Gardening section of www.ahs.org.

RECIPROCAL ADMISSIONS PROGRAM The AHS Reciprocal Admissions Program offers members free admission and other discounts to more than 250 botanical gardens and other horticultural destinations throughout North America. A list of participating gardens can be found in the Membership area of www.ahs.org. For more information, call (800) 777-7931 ext. 119.

RIVER FARM The AHS headquarters at River Farm is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays year-round (except Federal holidays), and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays from April through September. Admission is free. For information about events, rentals, and directions, visit the River Farm section of www.ahs.org.

TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAM Visit spectacular private and public gardens around the world through the Society's acclaimed Travel Study Program. For information about upcoming trips, call (800) 627-6621, send an e-mail to ahs@macnairtravel.com, or visit the Travel Study section of www.ahs.org.

WEBSITE: www.ahs.org The AHS website is a valuable source of information about the Society's programs and activities, finding out about gardening events in your area, and linking to other useful websites. To access the members-only section of the website, this year's password is **oak**. The user name is always **ahs**.

MEMBERS' FORUM

DIGITAL EDITION GETS MIXED REVIEWS

Editor's note: We received lots of feedback about the first digital edition of the magazine (July/August 2010). Most members were pleased to have the option of reading the magazine online and linking directly to resources. Some experienced technical problems or found the magazine difficult to read. Here is a sampling of the messages we received.

If you would like to receive reminders when the new digital editions are available, you can sign up by visiting the homepage of our website (www.ahs.org).

The new digital edition of *The American Gardener* is another impressive outreach tool. Your organization continually impresses me with your efforts to make digital communication with members high quality, effective, and easy to use. There are many ways people and organizations attempt to share information, and the results are often either too tricky or untried, or too static to merit the fanfare about their debut. Having attended some of your seminars and trips, and read about the children's programs, I am happy to be a member. With this digital edition, your efforts to communicate with members demonstrate again that my donations are used appropriately and effectively.

*Julie Ernest
Colbert, Washington*

I have been an AHS member for some time and I love the magazine. I do appreciate the option of the electronic version, but in my opinion this is not an improvement over the printed edition. I realize that electronic is the way to go, but I find the text too small. Although there is a zoom-in feature, not enough text fits onto the screen, making it too cumbersome to read. Otherwise, great content, good topics, and, all in all, a very nice publication.

*Constance Roellig
Washington, D.C.*

I am thrilled about this latest innovation. I am a hoarder, so I'm pleased that I may



now be able to recycle my years of back issues and still retain my reference capability. It is easy to navigate and make the print the size you need to read it. But I would like to know if it will be easy to find the magazines I may want to locate later? How far back will you go with online issues? Will I be able to search through all issues by keywords?

*Maggie Murray
Shelby Township, Michigan*

I took a quick look at the new digital edition and found it to be a clunky reading experience. The default setting for the table of contents display takes up nearly half the screen; I think it should be narrower so that it doesn't compete with the actual contents. That said, it is good to have a digital edition available because I no longer store paper; I store all relevant information electronically.

*David C. Long
Mill Valley, California*

This is so wonderful! Words cannot describe how much I appreciate the digital edition. Thank you.

*Liz Crawmer
Union Bridge, Maryland*

HAPPY NEW MEMBER

I was so pleased that my first issue of the magazine (July/August 2010) included encouraging news regarding the New York Federal Court decision to act on insecticides. I have been in the horticulture industry for 30 years and have harbored

a dread of the unintended consequences of systemic pesticides since they were introduced. The precautionary principle may better serve to maintain our freedom of choice and the pursuit of health, safety, and welfare. Issues of food safety and freshness were tactfully touched upon by "Organic Food Gardens Make A Splash At Corporate Headquarters." And the article on "Summer Squash Secrets" was a perfect presentation: clear photos of plant parts, sources, gender equality, and companion plant tips!

*Jill Toby
Great Neck, New Jersey*

GARDEN INVENTORY PROGRAMS

Can you tell me if there are any online sites where one can keep a garden inventory? I have been using an Excel spreadsheet, but it would be so much nicer if there were a site where photos of the plants appear as well as general information about bloom time, height, sun requirements, etc. Ideally, I would enter in the number of plants I have, where and when I bought them, how much I paid, and where they are in my gardens.

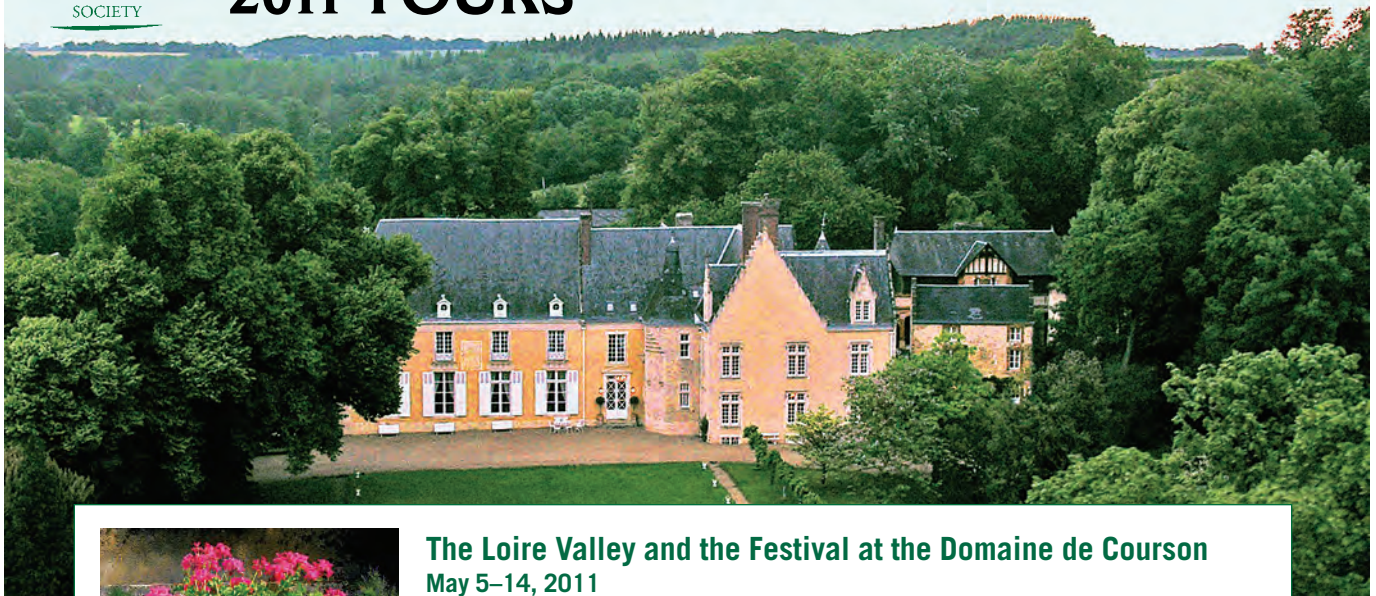
*Jennifer Julier
Hamden, Connecticut*

Editor's response: Our editorial volunteer, Caroline Bentley, did some research and found a number of promising sites and programs that are worth investigating. With some you pay a one-time fee; others have annual subscriptions. Green Thumb Journal (www.greenthumbjournal.com; free), Garden Tracker (www.gardentracker.com; standard version \$60), PlantJotter (Plantjotter.com; \$21, annually), the Garden Management System from HMK Consultants (www.hmk.on.ca; \$30 Canadian), and Premier Gardens from Pleasant Lake Software (www.pleasantlakesoftware.com; \$39.95).

PLEASE WRITE US! Address letters to Editor, *The American Gardener*, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308. Send e-mails to editor@ahs.org (note Letter to Editor in subject line). Letters we print may be edited for length and clarity.



THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAM 2011 TOURS



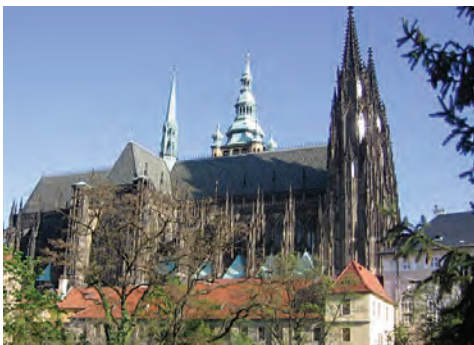
The Loire Valley and the Festival at the Domaine de Courson May 5–14, 2011

■ Explore the beautiful and storied Loire Valley in northwestern France in springtime. This exclusive tour will provide entrée to some of the finest privately-owned historic châteaux and gardens, including Château de Cheverny, Château de Chenonceau, and the inspirational ornamental potager at Villandry. For the grand finale, we will enjoy the international “Journées des Plantes” festival at the Domaine de Courson, south of Paris.



Gardens and Innovation: Chicagoland and Rockford Summer 2011

■ Discover the horticultural abundance that the Chicago area offers during this tour of the innovative gardens that have contributed to the greening of Chicago. Among these are the Lurie Gardens in Chicago’s Millennium Park, the world-renowned Chicago Botanic Garden, and Garfield Park Conservatory. We will also visit several stunning private gardens, award-winning gardens in Rockford, Illinois, and trial gardens at Ball Horticultural Company’s headquarters.



Castles and Gardens of Bohemia and Moravia September 26–October 6, 2011

■ We begin this trip to the Czech Republic in the capital city of Prague, renowned for its castles and cathedrals. From there we will venture to the historic and picturesque regions of Bohemia and Moravia. Experience a wealth of gardens in styles ranging from formal Italianate, Renaissance, and Baroque to Neo-classical and modern—including several 20th-century gardens created by visionary designers.

For more information about upcoming tours in the AHS Travel Study Program, please contact our travel planner, MacNair Travel:
• E-mail: ahs@macnairtravel.com • Call: (866) 627-6621 • Visit: www.ahs.org

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The American Gardener (ISSN 1087-9978) is published bimonthly (January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, November/December) by the American Horticultural Society, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308-1300, (703) 768-5700. Membership in the Society includes a subscription to *The American Gardener*. Annual dues are \$35; two years, \$60. International dues are \$50. \$10 of annual dues goes toward magazine subscription. Periodicals postage paid at Alexandria, Virginia, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Please send Form 3579 to *The American Gardener*, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308-1300.

Botanical nomenclature is based on *The American Horticultural Society A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants*, on *A Synonymized Checklist of the Vascular Flora of the United States, Canada and Greenland* and on the *Royal Horticultural Society Index of Garden Plants*. Opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Society. Manuscripts, artwork, and photographs sent for possible publication will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We cannot guarantee the safe return of unsolicited material. Back issues are available at \$8 per copy.

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Printed in the U.S.A.

News from the AHS

September / October 2010

PROGRAMS • EVENTS • ANNOUNCEMENTS

GARDEN CENTERS OF AMERICA AND THE AHS FORGE PARTNERSHIP

THE GARDEN CENTERS OF AMERICA (GCA) and the American Horticultural Society have established a partnership that will allow the two non-profit organizations to share resources and better serve American gardeners. The GCA is a major horticultural trade organization that represents more than 320 independent retail garden centers throughout North America.

“This unprecedented partnership will help our organizations reach a wider national audience,” says AHS Executive Director **Tom Underwood**. “Making the extensive gardening resources of the AHS more accessible to the hundreds of thousands of gardeners who patronize independent garden centers will fulfill the mission of both organizations to get more Americans actively involved in gardening in their homes, schools, and communities.”

The AHS will provide authoritative gardening information that GCA members can disseminate through their newsletters, handouts, and online media to educate and inform their customers and staff. GCA member firms will also make AHS membership information available to encourage their customers to take advantage of the Society’s gardening resources for all ages.

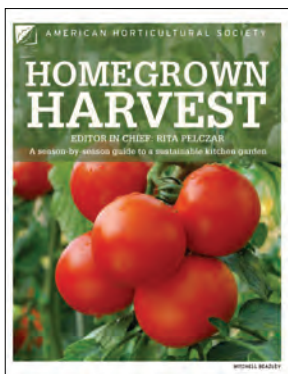
“It’s a win-win situation for the garden centers and their customers,” says **David Williams**, president of the GCA Board of Directors. “The AHS is nationally respected for the content of its magazine and gardening reference books, which emphasize earth-friendly practices and showcase the tools, products, and techniques that can help gardeners not only beautify their yards and communities, but become good stewards of the earth.”

AHS PUBLISHES NEW SEASONAL GUIDE TO GROWING EDIBLES

ONE OF THE best ways to ensure what you eat is fresh, safe, and delicious is to grow it in your own backyard. For anyone planning to start a kitchen garden, or improve the productivity of an existing one, the American Horticultural Society’s new book *Homegrown Harvest: A Season-by-Season Guide to a Sustainable Kitchen Garden* (Mitchell Beazley/Octopus Books USA; \$32.50) is the perfect resource. Compiled by noted gardening expert **Rita Pelczar**, a contributing editor for *The American Gardener*, this book has something for everyone—whether your garden consists of hundreds of square feet or just a few containers on the patio.

“More and more people are looking for basic, practical information on how to grow their own food, so this reference could not have come at a better time,” says **David J. Ellis**, AHS director of communications. “It offers easy to understand, season-by-season advice on cultivating a wide variety of vegetables, fruits, and herbs along with hundreds of inspirational images.”

The 300-page hardcover book begins with the basics, such as how to prepare the soil, deal with weeds and pests using non-toxic methods, and devise a planting scheme tailored to each gardener’s individual tastes and goals. From there, it provides details on which vegetables, fruits, and herbs are best suited for specific climates and regions of the country. Concise, step-by-step information is provided in a seasonal format, so for each crop a gardener can see what they should be doing at any given time of year. All of this



is supplemented by helpful sidebars and charts, not to mention more than 300 how-to photographs and illustrations.

To view an excerpt from the book or place an online order, visit the AHS website (www.ahs.org). Copies will be available in book stores beginning in November.

2010 GROWING GOOD KIDS BOOK AWARD WINNERS

THE FOUR WINNERS of the 2010 Growing Good Kids—Excellence in Children’s Literature award were unveiled at the National Children & Youth Garden Symposium this past July. This award, jointly administered by the Junior Master Gardener Program (JMG) and the AHS, is designed to recognize children’s books that effectively promote an



appreciation for gardening, plants, and the environment. This year’s winners are: *Bring me Some Apples and I’ll Make You a Pie* by **Robin Gourley**; *The Busy Tree* by **Jennifer Ward**; *The Curious Garden* by **Peter Brown**; and *Our Shadow Garden* by **Cherie Foster Colburn**.

Nominations for the 2011 awards will be accepted until April 22, 2011. For more information about the Growing Good Kids Awards Program, visit www.jmgkids.us/bookawards.

LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO AHS STAFF MEMBER

AHS STAFF MEMBER **Stephanie Jutila**, director of member programs and outreach, has been named one of four recipients of the Chanticleer Scholarship in Professional Development for 2010. This scholarship, sponsored by the Chanticleer Foundation, provides professional development opportunities for staff members at public gardens, including academic coursework and travel opportunities to meet with other public garden leaders.



Stephanie Jutila

Jutila, who has been on staff at the AHS since 2004, intends to use her scholarship to take a course being offered by the Center for Creative Leadership.

She plans to apply what she learns from the course, “Leading for Organizational Impact: The Looking Glass Experience,” toward developing even more effective programming for AHS members. “Not only will this course give me additional tools and resources to be more successful in my

Gifts of Note

In addition to vital support through membership dues, the American Horticultural Society relies on grants, bequests, and other gifts to support its programs. We would like to thank the following donors for gifts received between June 1 and July 31, 2010.

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In Memory of Barbara Wall Bond
Red Hill Garden Club

In Memory of Dr. H. Marc Cathey
National Capital Area Garden Clubs, District II

In Honor of Mary Courvisier
Mount Prospect Public Library

In Honor of Arabella Dane
Woodstock Garden Club

In Memory of Sally Foote’s Mother
Ms. Joan F. Beer

In Memory of Peggy Shannon
Avalon Garden Club, Inc.

If you would like to support the American Horticultural Society as part of your estate planning, as a tribute to a loved one, or as part of your annual charitable giving plan, please contact: Tom Underwood, Executive Director at (703) 768-5700 ext. 123 or tunderwood@ahs.org.

career,” says Jutila, “it will help strengthen the impact of my work at the American Horticultural Society.”

“Stephanie consistently demonstrates she is an eager learner who is strongly motivated and has high standards,” says AHS Executive Director **Tom Underwood**. “The scope of her role and responsibilities at the AHS has expanded greatly over the last several years, and this scholarship recognizes not only her accomplishments, but her potential as a dynamic and creative leader in American horticulture.”

ARMITAGE WEBINAR ON NATIVE PERENNIALS SET FOR OCTOBER

IN EARLY OCTOBER, University of Georgia Horticulture Professor **Allan M. Armitage** will give an online presentation on native perennials. Armitage is the author of numerous gardening books, including *Armitage's Native Plants for North American Gardens* (Timber Press, 2006). The date and time of this members-

only webinar, along with registration information, will be announced soon through the AHS e-newsletter and on the website.

ONLINE AUCTION OPENS SEPTEMBER 25

COINCIDING WITH this year's annual gala set for September 25, the AHS's month-long online auction will open. Participants can bid on 10 exclusive tours at public gardens and other horticultural destinations throughout the United States. These private tours of great gardens feature some of America's foremost horticulturists and landscape architects as your personal guide.

One of this year's featured tours will be at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. Arboretum Curator **Michael Dosmann** will lead this behind-the-scenes look at the historic 265-acre arboretum. Participants will get the inside story on one of the finest collections in the world, including plants discovered or acquired by leg-



AHS NATIONAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

2010-2011 CALENDAR

Mark your calendar for these national events that are sponsored or co-sponsored by the AHS. Visit www.ahs.org or call (703) 768-5700 for more information.

SEPT. 25. **AHS Annual Gala.** River Farm, Alexandria, Virginia.

SEPT. 30–OCT. 2. **America In Bloom Symposium and Awards Ceremony.** St. Louis, Missouri.

OCT. Date to be determined. **AHS Webinar.**

OCT. 28–NOV. 7. **Sicily: Gardens and Antiquities.** AHS Travel Study Program. Sicily, Italy.

DEC. 1–23. **Holiday Trees Display.** River Farm, Alexandria, Virginia.

DEC. 9. **Annual Holiday Reception.** River Farm, Alexandria, Virginia.

2011

MAR. 23–27. **President's Council Trip.** Houston, Texas. Hosted by AHS Board Member Gay Estes.

APR. 15 & 16. **Spring Plant Sale.** River Farm, Alexandria, Virginia. (Note: AHS Members-only preview sale is Thursday, April 14)

MAY 5–14. **The Loire Valley and the Festival of the Domaine de Courson.** AHS Travel Study Program. Loire Valley, France.



Among the auction items is an exclusive tour of the Biltmore Estate.

endary horticulturists and plant explorers.

Other tours include the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina, with Director of Horticulture **Parker Andes**; the Springs Preserve in Las Vegas, Nevada, with Curator **Russell Harrison**; gardens in Dallas, Texas, with landscape architect **Tres Fromme** of the MESA Design group; the National Tropical Botanical Garden in Kalaheo, Hawaii, with Director **Chipper Wichman**; and the Monrovia Nursery Company in Dayton, Oregon, with former AHS Board Chair **Susie Usrey**.

Bids must be received by October 25. For more information about the auction, including descriptions of this year's tours and comments from a winner of one of last year's auction packages, visit www.ahs.org/auction.

SEED EXCHANGE REMINDER

FALL IS ON THE way and the November 1 deadline to submit seeds for the members-only annual Seed Exchange is approaching fast. If you would like to donate seeds from your garden, you'll find instructions and a handy seed submission form attached to page 9. And remember, those who donate seeds to the exchange are given first choice of the 2011 offerings—particularly advantageous if there are limited quantities of a few uncommon or desirable seed varieties (to qualify, members must submit enough seeds of one variety to supply 125 or-

ders). For more information about the seed exchange, visit www.ahs.org/membership/seed_exchange.htm.

NEW LIBRARY AT RIVER FARM

IN 2009, the AHS received a grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust to create a horticultural reference library at its River Farm headquarters. Along with renovating an existing space for this facility in a building that also serves as River Farm's visitor center, the AHS used the funds to purchase needed shelving, furniture, and a cataloging program.

The bulk of the collection consists of more than 1,000 books donated by **Jane L. Taylor**, founder and former curator of the Michigan 4-H Children's Garden at Michigan State University. These include garden-related children's books and resources for teaching children about plants and nature. The library will also feature general plant references and the AHS's own publications.

"We're very pleased to be able to make these books available to AHS members and visitors to River Farm," says **Jane Underwood**, AHS volunteer coordinator. "The books Jane Taylor donated may well comprise the most comprehensive collection of garden-related books for children in the country."

For the time being, the new library will be open by appointment; books may be used on-site only. To make an appointment, please contact Jane Underwood at (703) 768-5700 ext. 133 or junderwood@ahs.org.

News written by Editorial Intern Meredith Soeder and Associate Editor Viveka Neveln.

Autumn Tapestry



From late summer into fall, the yellow plumes of goldenrod (*Solidago* sp.), white sprays of false aster (*Boltonia asteroides*), and purple blooms of New England aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*) brighten up the André Bluemel Meadow at River Farm.

VIVEKA NEVELN

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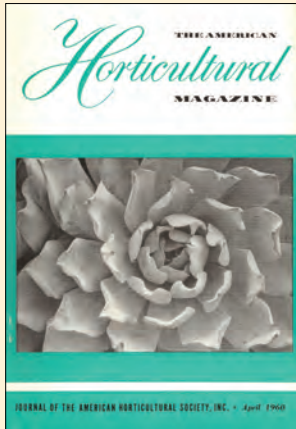
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50 Years Ago at the American Horticultural Society—Looking Back to 1960

■ The president of the AHS was **Richard P. White**; other officers were **Donald Wyman**, **Stuart M. Armstrong**, and **Olive E. Weatherell**.

■ The Society's headquarters was located in Washington, D.C., near the U.S. National Arboretum.



■ The AHS merged with the American Horticultural Council, an umbrella organization that was originally formed to serve as a collective voice for horticultural institutions.

■ Publication of the first U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) plant hardiness zone map (titled the New Plant Hardiness Map) was announced by **Henry T. Skinner**, who at the time was director of the U.S. National Arboretum (and also a member of

the AHS Board of Directors). The color map, sponsored by the American Horticultural Society and developed through the work of an AHS committee, was published by the USDA.

■ The AHS's 15th Annual Congress—held November 10 to 12 in Pasadena, California—focused on Pacific Coast horticulture.


■ The AHS changed the name of its publication from *The National Horticultural Magazine* to *The American Horticultural Magazine*, issued quarterly. The editor of the magazine was **B.Y. Morrison**; the editor of the newsletter, *Gardeners Forum*, was **Wilbur H. Youngman**. Examples of articles and news items covered in the 1960 issues of the magazine included:

- A report on the experimental use of a fungicide targeting petal blight in azaleas.
- An account of the history and current trends in blueberry breeding.
- A 14-page spread featuring the Fairchild Tropical Garden (now the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden) in Miami, Florida.
- Suggestions for rhododendrons suitable for small gardens.
- **William T. Gotelli's** account of the collection of dwarf and slow-growing conifers he had assembled at his home arboretum in South Orange, New Jersey—the collection was donated to the U.S. National Arboretum in 1962.
- A profile of the genus *Echeveria*.

—Meredith Soeder, Editorial Intern

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Making America a Nation of Gardeners, a Land of Gardens

Energizing *the* Learning Environment

BY MEREDITH SOEDER

Inspiring examples of how plants and gardens can teach important lessons abounded during the American Horticultural Society's 2010 National Children & Youth Garden Symposium in California.



FOR HIGH SCHOOL senior **Sam Levin**, getting kids into gardening is an important step towards reconnecting our culture with food and where it comes from. As one of the founders of Project Sprout, an organic, student-run school garden in Barrington, Massachusetts, this teenager would know. Project Sprout has also taught him a thing or two about life, such as the rewards of dreaming big dreams, working

hard to make them happen, and seeing your labor come to fruition.

Levin's efforts attracted the attention of **Alice Waters**, chef, author, and proprietor of Chez Panisse restaurant in Berkeley, California. Waters is also the founder of the Edible Schoolyard, a one-acre organic garden and kitchen classroom at Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School in Berkeley. Together, Levin and Waters shared the secrets of

their successes during a keynote address that kicked off the American Horticultural Society's 18th annual National Children & Youth Garden Symposium this past July in Pasadena, California. Many of those in the audience of teachers, administrators, garden designers, volunteers, and parents are also working to use gardens to energize and enhance learning environments, a key theme of this year's symposium.

Garden designer Nancy Goslee Power welcomes symposium attendees to 24th Street Elementary, a pilot site for the Garden School Foundation.



Some symposium participants toured the new Hamilton Children's Garden, above, at the San Diego Botanic Garden. The children's garden opened in 2009.

GARDENING IN THE RAIN

While Levin and Waters acknowledged that every garden project will be different, they offered a set of “absolutes” (see box, above right) that have guided them in their work with school gardens. For Levin, one of the most meaningful lessons Project Sprout taught him was to trust the power of youth to accomplish great things. Watching his younger peers take the reins of the garden he helped create, Levin finally understood just how vital trust is when working with young learners who are often bursting with eagerness to show their natural leadership skills—just as school administrators trusted him and his classmates when they wanted to start the garden three years ago.

Waters wholeheartedly agreed with Levin about the importance of trust. One of her inspirations for starting the Edible Schoolyard program was observing the journey of several inmates from the San Francisco County Jail, who started out tending seven acres of fruits and vegetables at the jail, moved from there to gardening at a halfway house, and then on to work with the Tree Corps of San Francisco. After witnessing this success story,

Waters realized that amazing things could happen when you trust those you might not expect to trust.

After several more anecdotes to illustrate the lessons learned along the way, the keynote address closed with this poignant thought from Levin: “Anyone can garden when the sun is shining. It is up to us to garden in the rain—to do what it takes.” He encouraged the audience to never give up on inspiring youth to pursue their dreams, both in the garden and in life, no matter what challenges arise.

TAPPING INTO THE VITALITY OF GARDENS

In addition to the pearls of gardening wisdom Levin and Waters imparted in their opening keynote address, the three-day symposium provided participants with plenty of other ideas and success stories. More than 50 educational sessions focused on topics ranging from composting and wildlife to art and technology in the garden to victory gardens and public gardens.

Several sessions pertained to various aspects of school gardens, including “Wealth in Diversity: LA County School Gardens” led by **Yvonne Savio** and master gardeners **Herb Machleder** and **Nora**

SYMPOSIUM KEYNOTE GARDENING ABSOLUTES

During the opening keynote of the symposium, Sam Levin and Alice Waters shared these four absolutes—guidelines that have helped them succeed in their gardening efforts:

1. Trust in people you wouldn't expect to trust. From young high-schoolers to inmates at a prison, they will pleasantly surprise you.
2. Value the people you work with. They lift you up, challenge you, push you, and give you energy.
3. Find what someone can do that is extraordinary. Together you can create something that is greater than the sum of its parts.
4. Garden in the rain. Do whatever it takes and never give up.

Dvosin. Coordinator for the Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program for the University of California Cooperative Extension in Los Angeles County, Savio says, “More than 400 school gardens that we've helped establish over the years have kids actively involved in where their food comes from, caring for the environment, and learning academic subjects via hands-on activities at least weekly in the on-site school garden.” She adds, “We hope that others at the symposium gained confidence to make their own projects successful by trying anything. And to have fun ‘playing’ in the garden with the kids!”

Jason Pittman of Hollin Meadows Science and Math Focus School in Alexandria, Virginia, led a session titled “The Silicon Garden: Technology Projects in School Gardens.” In it, Pittman discussed

Lansing 2011

Next year's National Children & Youth Garden Symposium will take place July 21 to 23 in Lansing, Michigan, hosted by the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park and Michigan State University's 4-H Children's Garden. For more details, please visit www.ahs.org.



Above: An educational session at the Huntington Botanical Gardens delves into biodynamic composting. Left: Symposium participants at Kidspace Children's Museum try their hands at making apple cider.

a variety of ways to integrate technology, including SKYPE (an internet-based communication program), robotics, alternative energy, microscopes, and wireless cameras to provide authentic experiences kids will remember. "This was such a great session," says **Frederique Lavoipierre** of Sonoma

State University near San Francisco. "It put into perspective the possibility and ease of integrating technology in the garden. Because that's how kids learn these days."

YOUTH GARDENING IN ACTION

In addition to the educational sessions,

participants toured several gardens and sites that provided more examples of successful projects. Garden designer **Nancy Goslee Power** at Kidspace Children's Museum and 24th Street Elementary School in Los Angeles explained ways to create a garden that a child will play in and learn from. Her advice to educators and garden designers was simple: "Let the children play in the water features and climb up walls and touch plants on their own. That way they'll learn by discovering the world around them." Just over two acres and six years old, the Kidspace children's garden that Power designed gives young visitors the opportunity to interactively explore nature and plants that are native to California. At 24th Street Elementary School, kids get hands-on experience planting, harvesting, and cooking vegetables.

Visits to the sites of other symposium hosts offered participants the opportuni-

PROJECT SPROUT AFFIRMS HOPE FOR FUTURE

Sam Levin's passion for growing things started during his childhood visits to his grandfather's farm, where he enjoyed "playing with the animals, discovering bugs, and connecting with the natural world." This passion is what eventually led him and a group of classmates to turn an old soccer field at their high school into Project Sprout, a one-acre edible garden entirely run by students. Now in its third year, Project Sprout supplies three school cafeterias with fresh fruits and vegetables, helps feed the hungry in the community, and serves as an outdoor classroom for the Monument School System in Barrington, Massachusetts.



Sam Levin

As Levin enters his senior year this fall, he is preparing to hand off Project Sprout to his successors, a group of enthusiastic younger students. Levin plans to help them learn the ins and outs of caring for the garden, as well as tasks such as applying for grants, meeting with community leaders, and, most importantly, teaching others about growing plants. He has great confidence in the next leaders of Project Sprout because, as he told symposium participants during his keynote presentation, his experiences have taught him to "trust the power of youth always."

"Many of the teachers, designers, and others involved with kids and gardening are doing what they do because they know there's an opportunity to have more Sam Levins in the world," says AHS Director of Member Programs and Outreach **Stephanie Jutila**. "Sam and his peers are our hope and our future." —M.S.

To hear more about Sam Levin's thoughts on trusting the power of youth, click on the link with this article at www.ahs.org.

ty to see a wide array of southern California public, school, and environmentally-focused gardens. One of the tours took place at the Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens, where guests experienced a round of educational sessions, tours, and a progressive dinner in the garden. All of these allowed participants to observe how the Huntington engages children of various age groups through play, sensory experiences, experimentation, and discovery.


At the Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden, participants learned about the garden's permaculture program, which takes a holistic approach to land use, and its thriving, three-month-old permaculture garden. Ideal for schools or community gardens, permaculture encourages making use of whatever resources are on hand while mimicking nature.

"Touring the different gardens inspired so many ideas," says **Julie Bar-**

nette-Foster of Taconi Elementary School in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. "From getting extraordinary ideas to meeting new peers in youth gardening, everything I experienced will impact what I do in the future. I can't wait to implement what I have learned."

WRAPPING UP WITH WATERMELONS

Roger Swain, author, former science editor of *Horticulture* magazine, and a former host of PBS's *The Victory Garden* series, closed the symposium with his entertaining and evocative presentation, "The Watermelons of Memory." Swain used watermelons as a vivid example of how memories are created and preserved, discussing how experiences such as growing, harvesting, and eating watermelons are shared across generations. Recalling his own childhood experiences with watermelons, Swain talked about the ways in which traditions are created, and emphasized how valuable it is for parents and teachers to pass them on to children.

"No other fruit is a better fruit to serve as a centerpiece for this gathering," he remarked. "No other fruit has the potential to please so many. No other fruit has such a magical form of social glue like the watermelon. And these are the things we've been talking about for the past two and a half days." 

Meredith Soeder is an editorial intern with The American Gardener.



Permaculturist Caitlin Bergman explains the principles of permaculture to a group of symposium participants at the Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden.

Among perennials that are showy in autumn, stonecrops (*Sedum* spp.) are one of the most popular. Plant evaluator Richard Hawke offers this guide to help gardeners choose among the many cultivars of the upright border stonecrops now being offered.

sizing up Stonecrops

BY RICHARD HAWKE

LIKE MANY gardeners, the very first stonecrop (*Sedum* spp.) I became familiar with was the ubiquitous Autumn Joy. For decades after its introduction in 1955, it was the only stonecrop on the list of must-have garden plants. Autumn Joy, or ‘Herbstfreude’ as it is properly named, reigned supreme in those days.

Many years later, new color selections with rich purple, burnished bronze, and yellow- or cream-splashed foliage have supplanted ‘Herbstfreude’ and fueled a renewed interest in upright border stonecrops. Perhaps gardeners have simply become more sophisticated in their plant choices or maybe the sustainable gardening message is pushing this trend. Whatever the reason, gardeners win big with all the stonecrops available to them today. However, it is important to remember that quantity—or good marketing—does not always equal quality and there is a wide gap in performance among these plants.

For almost 20 years I’ve grown hundreds of stonecrops as plant evaluation manager at the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe, Illinois. From diminutive ground-hugging species to robust border plants, we collected and evaluated stonecrops with the guidance of David Heller, a retired college professor who volunteered for many years in the plant evaluation gardens. The late “Doc” Heller’s passion for sedums was infectious, his knowledge encyclopedic. Although I never attained his appreciation for all of the nuances between species, I developed a deep respect for this valuable group of garden plants.



Reddish purple stems and large clusters of pink flowers adorn *Sedum* ‘Matrona’.

SEDUM OVERVIEW

Sedum is a large, varied genus of succulent plants. Roughly 500 hardy and tender species are native to northern temperate regions; some species come from tropical mountains and coastal areas. Stonecrop is the common name of choice, although “sedum” is acceptable too. The genus is a part of the stonecrop family (Crassulaceae), which includes other popular succulent plants for house and garden such as *Echeveria*, *Kalanchoe*, and *Sempervivum*.

As is the case with several popular perennial plant groups, taxonomists have muddied the water where *Sedum* nomen-

clature is concerned. The generic names of the upright border types discussed in this article have been seesawing between *Sedum* and *Hylotelephium* for a number of years. Although they will likely land firmly in *Hylotelephium*, for the purposes of this article I am lumping everything under *Sedum*. Just be aware you may need to look under both names when perusing catalogs or searching online.

UPRIGHT BORDER STONECROPS

The wealth of upright border stonecrops includes *Sedum spectabile*, *S. telephium*, *S. erythrostictum*, and *S. aizoon*, as well as

a bounty of hybrid cultivars. The most noticeable trait of all stonecrops is their succulent or fleshy foliage. Foliar traits vary greatly among the species but within the upright group the leaves are generally egg-shaped with toothed margins; green, gray-green, or blue-green; and either alternately or oppositely arranged on stout fleshy stems. They are clump-forming with erect, unbranched stems forming a mounded, almost shrubby habit, from 12 to 30 inches tall and slightly less in diameter.

Generally speaking, the classic form of a stonecrop flower consists of five petals, five sepals, and 10 stamens. Flowers may be pink, white, or yellow and are commonly described by their petal and carpel colors. The prominent carpels (the female reproductive parts) sit at the center of each star-shaped flower and their color may complement or contrast with the petals. The carpels remain colorful as they ripen in the fall, often becoming reddish or russet in color. The small, starlike flowers, borne in broadly domed clusters above the foliage, draw bees and butterflies from midsummer to autumn.

Enticed by fanciful names and alluring descriptions, gardeners have been keen to try some of the upright stonecrops introduced in recent years. The ongoing trial at the Chicago Botanic Garden was initiated to sort through the garden-worthiness of all these new selections, many being hybrids between *S. spectabile* and *S. telephium*. Unfortunately, a number of the new cultivars have not lived up to the marketing hype. Our greatest disappointments were among the purple-leaved hybrids, which seemed particularly prone to foliar problems, and stem and crown rots.

A number of success stories also emerged from our test gardens. The following upright border stonecrops fared well in our trial and are thus good choices

for Midwest gardens; some recommendations from experts in other regions are on page 21.

FOUR-STAR STONECROPS

A number of cultivars of *S. spectabile* are popular, reliable garden plants. In general, these plants have gray-green, egg-shaped leaves with shallow teeth along the margins. Flat-topped flower clusters, six to eight inches across, crown the erect stems in midsummer to early fall. Their flowers age to a reddish brown in the fall and often remain ornamental during winter. (For those who would like to be able to distin-



Low-growing *Sedum* 'Hot Stuff' forms a striking mass of bright pink flowers.

guish their upright stonecrops, *Sedum spectabile* differs from *S. telephium* in having opposite leaves and stamens that are longer than the petals; however, the hybridization of these species has resulted in cultivars with intermediate characteristics.)

Dark pink-flowered 'Brilliant', growing to 20 inches tall, has long been a favorite of ours. Unfortunately, there may be plants masquerading as 'Brilliant' in the market, as we found in our 2006 trial—

one way to tell is that all flower parts of 'Brilliant' are the same pink color. 'Hot Stuff', a recent introduction from Terra Nova Nurseries, is a compact version of 'Brilliant' with comparable dark pink flowers on stems eight to 12 inches tall. Another strong performer from an early trial was 'Carmen' with carmine pink flowers on stems 18 to 24 inches tall. 'Neon' is aptly named for its bright violet-magenta flowers. At 20 inches tall, 'Neon' has an exceptionally uniform bushy habit compared with its peers.

Among white-flowered forms, 'Iceberg' and 'Stardust' are top-notch, growing 14 inches tall and 18 inches tall, respectively. Keep an eye out for pink flowers, as both cultivars are prone to reversion.

'Variegatum' is a robust plant with creamy yellow leaves and green margins. I'm drawn to its uniquely colored flowers, which have pale chartreuse petals and pink-flushed carpels. As with other variegated stonecrops, reversions to green stems and leaves are not uncommon. 'Variegatum' strongly resembles 'Clown', a cultivar of *S. telephium* I grew many years ago. These cultivars could be the same thing but 'Variegatum' is easier to find at garden centers.

Orpine (*S. telephium*) is well represented in the garden, especially by the many purple-leaved introductions. It is distinguished

by mostly alternate leaves, and stamens that are shorter than the petals. However, the species is quite variable and has been widely hybridized with *S. spectabile*, which accounts for the inconsistency in assigning cultivars. Over the years 'Matrona' has become a garden favorite for its purple-flushed leaves on red-purple stems to 30 inches tall. The pale pink flowers, which age to reddish brown, are clustered in large flat-topped flowerheads in late summer to fall.

I've become quite enamored of 'Red Cauli' for its exceptional combination of

blue-green leaves and striking red-purple stems. The flowers appear smaller because the light pink petals remain flat against the deep pink carpels, which turn red-purple in fall. An arching habit, to 18 inches tall, gives 'Red Cauli' an informal look that is quite different from other orpine cultivars.

I'm guessing 'Hab Gray' honors an actual person or place and its smoky gray leaves are just coincidental. The leaf margins and midribs and the 24-inch stems are all red. Soft yellow flowers are borne in six-inch-wide clusters beginning in early August in the Midwest.

Sedum erythrostictum 'Frosty Morn' is another robust border stonecrop. Its pale green leaves with creamy white margins evoke its namesake, while variegated leafy bracts within the flowers enhance the frosty look. White petals and pink carpels held in domed clusters top sturdy stems to 27 inches tall. We occasionally noted green reversions within the plants.

Sedum aizoon is the odd man out in this group—producing yellow flowers in early summer. Its oval- to lance-shaped green leaves are sharply toothed and often take on an orange cast in fall. The bright yellow flowers, in flat-topped clusters to three inches across, sit atop stems 12 to 16 inches tall. 'Euphorbioides', slightly shorter at 10 inches tall, features dark green leaves, dark red stems, and orange-yellow flowers.

HYBRID STONECROPS

The Herbstfreude Group was coined to designate the hybrid cultivars of *Sedum spectabile* and *S. telephium* ssp. *maximum*. Although plants in this group may appear similar to one parent or the other, they are typically characterized by the lack of stamens and smaller or inconspicuous petals. Despite their sterile nature, the carpels change color as they age. From an ecological standpoint, their sterility means that most cultivars in this group are not as attractive to pollinating insects.

'Herbstfreude', introduced by German breeder Georg Arends, is certainly the best known of upright border stonecrops and a precursor to all that has come after. It is usually listed under the Anglicized name Autumn Joy, but in deference to naming rules the original 'Herbstfreude' should be used. Gray-green leaves, deep-pink flowers, dark reddish carpels in the fall, and a robust habit are its hallmarks.

Many newer hybrids have captured the attention of gardeners, but only time will tell if they will supersede this old timer. Several are worth trying.

I'm not sure who the Carl in 'Carl' is but I fancy he might have been a fan of Bazooka™ bubble gum. The bright pink flowers of this selection are packed into domed clusters above perfectly mounded plants. At 19 inches tall, green-leaved 'Carl' is similar in size to 'Herbstfreude'.

'Joyce Henderson', 26 inches tall, may look much like other stonecrops, but on

closer inspection the blue-green leaves are rimmed in burgundy. The flowers, white petals with a pink blush and pink carpels that age reddish brown, are held in flat-topped clusters to six inches across.

The light pink petals and creamy yellow carpels of 'Strawberries and Cream' are especially pretty. The color of the delicate flowers nicely complements the purple-tinged blue-green leaves. 'Strawberries and Cream', to 34 inches tall, is one of the largest stonecrops but its slightly arched, red-purple stems give it an informal look.



The author admires 'Red Cauli', top, for its pairing of reddish flowers and blue-gray foliage. *Sedum erythrostictum* 'Frosty Morn', above, has variegated foliage and pure white flowers.

REGIONAL FAVORITES

I checked with some gardening experts around the country to see which stonecrops they recommend for gardens in their regions.

Mid-Atlantic

Stephanie Cohen, Pennsylvania-based author, professor, and all-around garden diva, was a long time fan of Autumn Joy. “It was easy to grow, had good fall color, and performed well in all sorts of difficult environments,” she says. Her gripe with Autumn Joy was that unless she remembered to cut it back in early summer, it developed a stunning case of urban sprawl just when it reached full bloom. She’s now a convert to ‘Autumn Fire’—it is slightly shorter but stands up straight without staking, and the flowers are a brighter, showier pink.

Cohen describes ‘Hab Gray’ as a great sedum with the “Rodney Dangerfield syndrome”—it gets no respect. The leaves are blue-gray with a slight infusion of purple and the stems are strong. It flowers slightly earlier than the above cultivars with a classic pink inflorescence and the stems are strong. “I wish more gardeners knew this one!” she adds. Cohen’s advice for those who are terribly smitten with purple leaves is to try ‘Xenox’, a shorter selection, only 15 to 18 inches tall. Its purple foliage is lightly scalloped and the flower color is more rose than pink. She says it looks great paired with white fall-flowering anemones.

Southern California

Debra Lee Baldwin, author of *Designing with Succulents* and *Succulent Container Gardens*, says she’s over the moon about *Sedum* ‘Garnet Brocade’, a heat-tolerant hybrid from Inno-



‘Garnet Brocade’

Plant sold under the Proven Winners label. “It has 18- to 24-inch purple stems and long gray leaves with a purple vein down the middle. These contrast beautifully with pink buds on purple petioles that open purple-pink in late summer and fall.” Shrub sedums do well in her area, Baldwin advises. “They are unfussy plants providing they receive regular water. They perform best in amended soil that

drains well. Along the coast, plant shrub sedums in full sun. In hotter inland areas, give them morning sun and dappled afternoon shade, especially in summer.” Baldwin also likes Autumn Joy and recommends *Sedum spectabile* cultivars ‘Brilliant’ (deep rose-red), ‘Meteor’ (carmine), and ‘Ruby Jewel’ (maroon).

Mountain

Gwen Kelaidis, author of *Hardy Succulents*, is currently growing ‘Lajos’ (Autumn Charm™) in her Lakewood, Colorado, garden.



‘Carl’

den. She likes it for the combination of its stocky, sturdy habit and the delightful white-edged foliage. “Its flowers are an odd color, trending towards a mustardy green as they age, and I think that is just fun where I grow it among the greens of daylily and phlox foliage, she adds. “The flowers of ‘Frosty Morn’ have an airy arrangement that

is wispier than ‘Lajos’. ‘Matrona’ is quite wonderful, with its sturdy stems of dark red and the smaller flowerheads of pale pink. And it is lovely near or in front of gray foliage plants, such as artemisia, and it doesn’t ever seem to flop.” Kelaidis also includes ‘Carl’, ‘Neon’, and ‘Brilliant’ on her list of garden-worthy sedums.

“Among the dark-foliaged crowd, I don’t care much for ‘Purple Emperor’, which does not reliably stay dark,” says Kelaidis. Instead she likes the very dark ‘Postman’s Pride’. ‘Xenox’ is a broad-leaved dark horse, with interesting reddish and yellow highlights in the foliage, giving it what Kelaidis would call a moody color—fascinating and a great contrast in the perennial border.

Pacific Northwest

Richard Hartlage, a Seattle-based landscape architect and author of *Bold Visions for the Garden*, uses many sedums in his garden projects on both coasts. In his experience, ‘Autumn Fire’ is an improvement over Autumn Joy, with a longer bloom period and erect stems. He admires ‘Carl’ for its neon pink flowers, especially in combination with whites and creams to compete with the intense color. ‘Neon’ works well in combination with red-purples and violets but Hartlage thinks it looks clownlike with lavender or blues. “For subtlety, I love *Sedum telephium* ssp. *ruprechtii* for its glaucous, rose-tinted foliage,” says Hartlage. Because it tends to get tall and leggy, he recommends shearing it once when the foliage is about four inches high. He says the plant grows in the direction of the strongest light, providing a wonderful sense of movement to a planting.

—R.H.

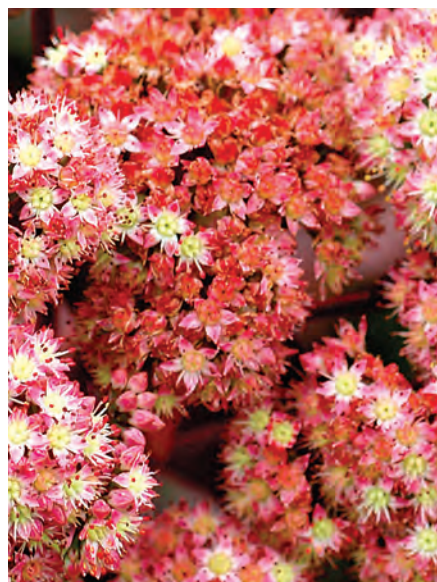
TOP STONECROPS AT A GLANCE

Botanical name	Height (inches)	Foliage and flowers	Origin	USDA Hardiness/AHS Heat Zones
<i>Sedum aizoon</i>	12–16	sharply toothed green leaves, yellow flower clusters 3 to 4 inches wide	Siberia, China, Japan	3–8/8–1
S. ‘Autumn Fire’	24	light green leaves, rosy pink flowers age to dark red, similar to but more robust than Autumn Joy	hybrid origin	3–9/10–1
S. ‘Carl’	18	pale gray-green foliage, dense bright pink flowerheads	hybrid origin	4–8/8–1
S. <i>erythrostictum</i> ‘Frosty Morn’	12–24	gray-green leaves with upturned white margins, bicolored flowers with white petals and pale pink carpels	China, Japan	5–9/9–6
S. ‘Garnet Brocade’	24	gray-green leaves with purple midribs	hybrid origin	3–10/10–1
S. ‘Hab Gray’	24	gray-blue leaves, creamy yellow 6-inch flower clusters with red margins, midribs, and stems	hybrid origin	3–9/9–1
S. ‘Lajos’ (Autumn Charm)	12	green leaves with creamy yellow margins, pink flower clusters	hybrid origin	4–8/8–1
S. ‘Matrona’	24–30	olive-green leaves, maroon midrib and stems, white buds open to pink 6-inch flowerheads	hybrid origin	3–8/9–1
S. ‘Red Cauli’	18	blue-green leaves with red-purple stems, flowerheads of light pink petals with deep pink carpels turn red-purple in fall	hybrid origin	3–9/9–1
S. <i>spectabile</i> ‘Brilliant’	18	pale gray-green leaves up to 4 inches long, dark pink flower clusters	China, Korea	4–9/9–1
S. <i>spectabile</i> ‘Neon’	18–20	a sport from ‘Brilliant’, it has pale gray-green leaves, bright rose flowers	China, Korea	4–9/9–1
S. ‘Strawberries and Cream’	34	dark green leaves, domed flowerheads start off as pink buds and open white	hybrid origin	4–8/8–1
S. <i>telephium</i> ssp. <i>ruprechtii</i>	16	gray-green leaves with pink flushing, pale yellow flowerheads	Europe, Russia, China, Japan	4–9/9–1
S. ‘Xenox’	15	scalloped burgundy leaves, rose flowers	hybrid origin	3–9/9–1

‘Lajos’ (Autumn Charm™) is a very pretty plant with green leaves edged in creamy yellow; occasionally fully yellow leaves appear. The pink flowers, actually creamy white petals and pink carpels, turn russet brown as they age. Although ‘Lajos’ is a variegated form of ‘Herbstfreude’, it topped out in our trial at only 12 inches tall. ‘Beka’ (Autumn Delight™) is a reverse sport of ‘Lajos’ with chartreuse-yellow leaves bordered in green. ‘Beka’ is a full-bodied plant up to 27 inches tall. Alas, green reversions are not uncommon.

CARE AND COMPANIONS

Stonecrops and sunlight go together naturally, but a bit of shade is not a bother for most. While they adapt to tough, dry conditions, stonecrops thrive in average well-drained garden soils. Most are hardy in USDA Zones 3 to 9 but may succumb if



‘Strawberries and Cream’ bears bicolored flowers that live up to its evocative name.

grown in sites that stay wet in winter. Fertilizing is generally not necessary; overly rich soil may cause problems such as crown rot and stem floppiness.

Stonecrops are heat- and drought-tolerant and typically long-lived when grown in the right cultural conditions. Although generally regarded as trouble-free, a number of leaf and stem diseases can be problems including anthracnose, powdery mildew, rust, leaf spots, and stem rot. Watering early in the day and at the soil line can help avoid or alleviate these problems. In certain regions, deer munch on the tender flower buds in mid-summer—regular applications of repellents will keep them at bay.

Stonecrops make great accent plants in beds, borders, and containers, and are pleasing in large masses. Their fleshy leaves juxtapose nicely with feathery or



Combined with a dwarf spruce and black-eyed Susans in a Connie Cross-designed border, 'Herbstfreude' (Autumn Joy) is still a garden favorite.

fine-textured plants such as threadleaf coreopsis (*Coreopsis verticillata*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), and ornamental grasses. Black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia* spp.), purple coneflowers (*Echinacea* spp.), catmints (*Nepeta* spp.), and daylilies (*Hemerocallis* spp.) are just a few of the many perennials that are good garden companions. Stonecrops are long-lasting

cut flowers in fresh and dried floral arrangements. Their flowerheads remain colorful and ornamental well into winter, so many gardeners do not cut them back until early spring.

A BRIGHT FUTURE

After 19 years of evaluating stonecrops, you'd think I'd be sick of them, but grow-

ers continue to introduce cultivars with novel attributes. Three recent introductions keep me optimistic about the future of upright border stonecrops. 'Thundercloud' has gray-green leaves with jagged red margins and white flowers opening from pink buds. It has a low arching habit, to 12 inches tall, reminiscent of the lovely *Sedum sieboldii*. 'Plum Perfection' is also a compact plant, only eight inches tall and a foot wide. The purple leaves are distinctively gray-tipped and pink flowers bloom in late summer and fall. 'Sublime' is a unique color form for an upright border stonecrop. Its bright green leaves edged with red are sublime, and light pink flowers top the 18-inch stems in late summer.

The good news for gardeners is that Autumn Joy is no longer the only game in town—there are now plenty of reliable and attractive cultivars offering a range of foliage and flower colors, with the promise of many more to come.

Richard Hawke is plant evaluation manager at the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe, Illinois.

Sources

Ambergate Gardens, Chaska, MN. (877) 211-9769. www.ambergategardens.com.

Bluestone Perennials, Madison, OH. (800) 852-5243.

www.bluestoneperennials.com.

Digging Dog Nursery, Albion, CA. (707) 937-1130. www.diggingdog.com.

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www.songsparrow.com.

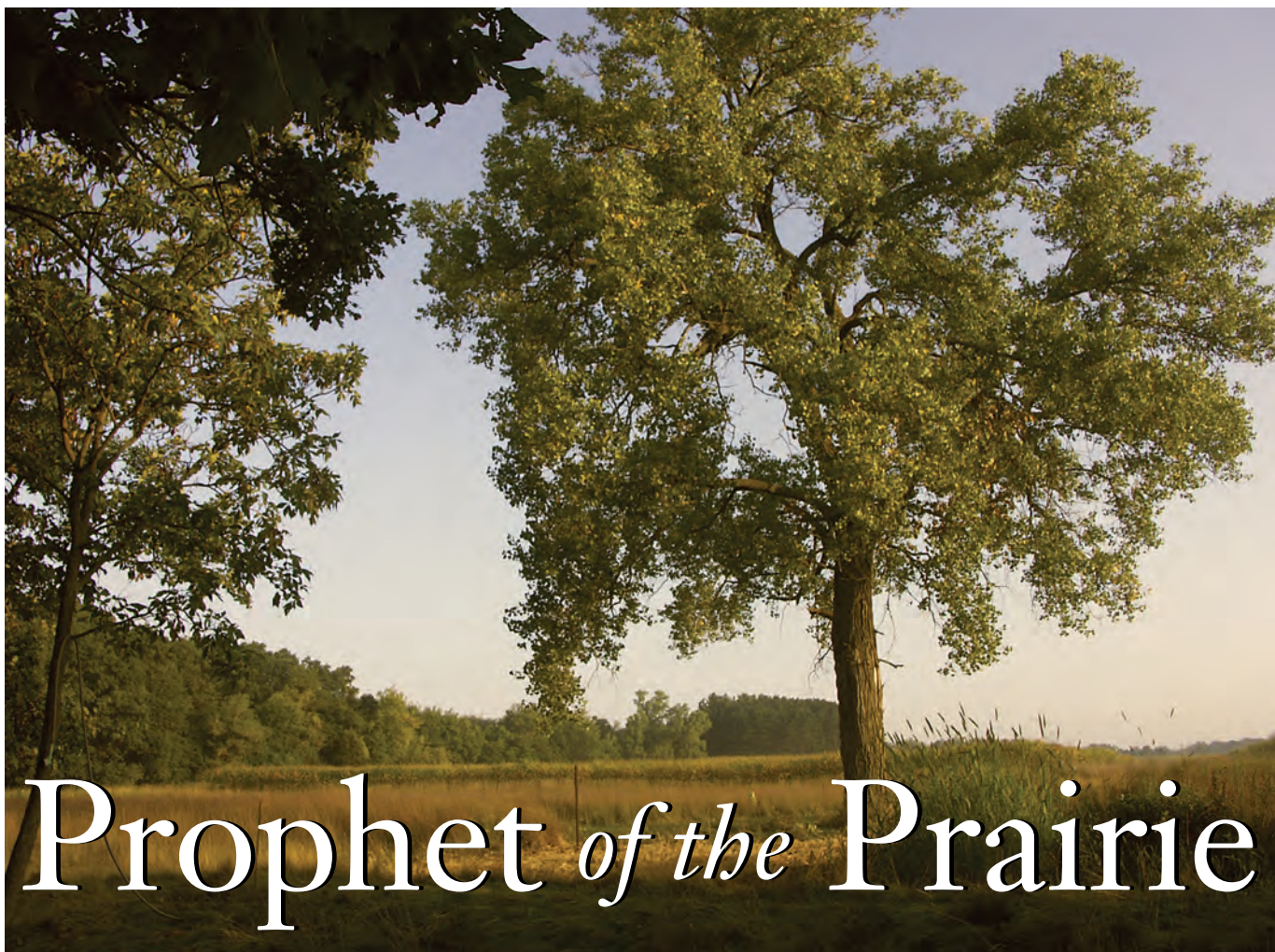
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Nurseryman Neil Diboll has spent a lifetime teaching gardeners and horticulturists to appreciate the beauty and sustainability of prairie plants.

BY CAROLE OTTESEN

SAY THE word “prairie” and most people will think of Willa Cather or Garrison Keillor. Say it to a plantsperson, and the first name that comes to mind will be Neil Diboll. Diboll (pronounced dih-BOLL) is president of Prairie Nursery in Westfield, Wisconsin. His business ships seeds and plants of prairie and woodland species to gardeners around the country, maintains a retail store, designs and installs prairies throughout Wisconsin, and advises clients on construction and restoration of prairie meadows and gardens.

What inspired a city boy from St. Louis to find his calling on the prairie? Diboll credits Keith White, a professor of ecology



Sitting along the edge of a prairie planting, Neil Diboll, above, is surrounded by the open landscape, top, of his Wisconsin home.

at the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay, where Diboll studied. He also says his parents have something to do with it.

“It’s all my parents’ fault—as is everything in life,” he says. Hiking is a family tradition on his mother’s side. Diboll remembers his parents often dragging him on wildflowers walks in Colorado and in the Ozarks in Missouri.

A PERFECT FIT

The love of nature and the outdoors may have been instilled by his parents—his father was a professor and mother a kindergarten teacher—but ultimately Diboll’s choice of where and how to pursue it was his



An old barn and fruit trees are relics of the former farm on which Diboll and his partner, Reen Durning, now live. They cleared the property of invasive species and replanted prairie natives.

own, with a little help from Professor White. After graduating with a degree in environmental science in 1978 and stints working with the U.S. Park Service in Virginia and the U.S. Forest Service in Colorado, Diboll returned to Wisconsin. Reserved, progressive, tolerant, plain, no-nonsense Wisconsin was, culturally, the perfect fit for the young, idealistic ecologist.

“When I came to Wisconsin, it was interesting to see a culture that balanced the natural environment. It was different from what I had seen in other parts of the country,” says Diboll. He acknowledges that much of the state’s environmental awareness is connected with the hunting and fishing ethos, but overall he credits it to plentiful common sense. “People here know that without stewardship the natural environment will be lost,” he says. “It has value in our culture.”

Wisconsin also won Diboll over with its beguiling prairies. “I’ve always liked plants, but I fell in love with the prairie.”

Love of the prairie inspired him to begin his life’s work. In 1982, “with all of the usual delusions about starting a business,” he says, he took over a “little backyard garden nursery” from its founder, J. Robert Smith. At a time when few people wanted to buy prairie plants—native grasses and wildflowers—or even knew what they were, Diboll began selling them. Or, at least, trying to.

Today “native plants” is a household phrase, and ecology has morphed from a science into a religion for some, jokes Diboll. But in the ’80s, he was far ahead of his time. His was a lonely voice crying in a turfgrass wilderness.

HAVING FAITH

As a result, Prairie Nursery wasn’t an im-

For More Information

Prairie Nursery, W5875 Dyke Avenue, Westfield, WI. (800) 476-9453. www.prairienursery.com.

- Guided tours and a photography workshop are given several times a summer; self-guided tours can be taken anytime. Groups of 20 or more should contact Prairie Nursery in advance. The retail store is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday from April through October.

- Neil Diboll also gives talks about prairie plants. A list of his speaking events is on the nursery’s website.

- To view an interview with Diboll posted on YouTube, click on the link from this article on the AHS website (www.ahs.org).

mediate success. “In the beginning, we were considered wackos,” admits Diboll. “We were planting what everybody considered weeds. At first, I couldn’t give the stuff away.” If that was discouraging, it didn’t slow him down. “You’ll go through hell and high water to do what you want to do,” he shrugs. “I was a plant nerd. I didn’t care about money. I had faith.”

He believed then, as he does now, that prairies are one of the best alternatives to a traditional lawn. He ticks off the advantages of a prairie planting with an ease that comes from 30 years of practice. “There are few, if any, needs for pesticides and herbicides—bugs are part of the food chain. If you’re serious about living in harmony with the planet, then landscape with natural ecosystems. It makes ecological sense, it makes economic sense, and it makes emotional sense.”

Despite his early struggles, Diboll soldiered on. Eventually, through faith, focus, and energy, the zeitgeist caught up with him. And his nursery grew. And grew. The original one-half acre and a tiny greenhouse have expanded to 200 acres devoted to seed production, a large propagation house, 10 large greenhouses, and extensive display gardens. The number of employees jumped from two to a dozen full-time employees today. What people once called “the weed farm” is now an internationally known, unqualified success. As owner and pres-

ident, Diboll is in constant demand as a consultant and speaker.

“Neil doesn’t focus on ‘charismatic megafloora’—trilliums and sweet things like that,” says friend and colleague John Greenlee, a California-based grass expert and author of *The American Meadow Garden* (Timber Press, 2009). “Neil really taught people about systems and communities; his interest helped changed the prevailing attitudes in influential organizations like the PPA [Perennial Plant Association]. He really did bring environmentalism to mainstream gardening.”

When he isn’t traveling around the country bringing the message of prairie, he says, “The best part of my job is hearing from customers who have planted a native prairie or a woodland or rain garden. What great excitement they experience when they see birds and butterflies and bugs that come and the joy that it brings them.”

SPREADING THE WORD

And that is enough for Diboll. He has no plans for expanding the nursery. Instead, he is cutting back from some of the demands of his business and refocusing his boundless energy on a new project—a plant-identification book he is writing with Hilary Cox of Indianapolis, Indiana. Scheduled for release in 2011 by University of Chicago Press, it is titled *The Gardener’s Guide to Prairie Plants*.

The book will feature several photos of each plant species—from seedlings to seedheads—to allow for accurate identification at all stages of the plant’s lifecycle. The book will be a fitting tribute to the plants and the ecosystem Diboll has promoted for most of his adult life. It is, as well, a labor of love from a true believer.

When he speaks about prairie, the usually irreverent Diboll becomes serious—at least for a few minutes. At these times, he can display a passion and eloquence that is enormously persuasive. You get the feeling that if he could somehow reach every household in America, the country might sprout prairie from coast to coast.

“Neil’s gift is to be able to communicate in simple language the interconnectedness of complex systems,” says Alabama nurserywoman Jan Midgley, proprietor of Wildflower, a nursery spe-



Diboll, top, sits at the edge of a mixed prairie planting at his home. Prairie blazing star (*Liatris pycnostachya*) and Joe Pye weed mingle, above, in another area of the garden.

cializing in southeastern native plants, and author of several wildflower books. She describes Diboll as an “earth steward,” a person who thinks globally and plants his local ecosystem, prairie.

THE POWER OF PRAIRIE

Prairie is absolutely crucial to Diboll’s life and thinking. Like the mythological giant Antaeus, who drew his life force from the earth, Diboll is sustained, energized, and inspired by prairie.

“There’s something about the flowers and the grasses and the movement. It’s so dynamic,” Diboll says of this complex ecosystem in which “two-thirds of living plants are under the ground.” He sees an analogy between those deep, out-of-sight roots and the people of the Midwest; both are “stable, reliable, well-rooted, and well-grounded” with a “you’ve-got-to-get-to-know-me-before-you-get-to-see-all-there-is-to-see” attitude.

What gives the prairie its stability, Diboll emphasizes, is that it is not reliant on any individual “keystone” species. Instead, the prairie is a community of many different plants that have woven themselves into an extremely durable fabric.

Within the community, relationships are at once competitive and cooperative. “The plants partition the seasons,” he says. “Short plants bloom in spring. Height increases as the season goes on—so there’s no deadheading!” Early species are dormant by July and thus don’t compete with those that mature later. And fall species just hang around, waiting for their time in the sun.

Plants also partition the soil environment. Turfgrasses have shallow roots only a few inches deep, notes Diboll, while herbaceous perennials, or forbs, and deep-rooted grasses may go down as much as eight feet or more.

While sharing space below the ground, the roots perform another crucial function by capturing and storing rainwater. Diboll says the root systems of prairie plants stave off all kinds of environmental problems, including flooding and erosion, by “serving as a giant soil sponge.”

In Diboll’s view, using prairie plant communities as a model for gardens would be one way for millions of midwestern gardeners to reduce their carbon footprint and overall resource consumption. Not everyone is willing to evaluate how their gardening practices reflect environmental responsibility, but Diboll does. He thinks about his carbon footprint daily and takes pains to decrease it.

SWEET HOME WISCONSIN

Nowhere are Diboll’s efforts more apparent than at his home. Located in the heart of Amish country, his 20-acre property is planted almost entirely with natives.

It wasn’t always this way. When Diboll bought the property, it was 20 acres of buckthorn (*Rhamnus* sp.), an invasive tree common in the Midwest. It has taken nearly 20 years to clear away the buckthorn and other exotic invasives, and he’s still working on “liberating” a few remaining holdouts.

For a visitor, a first glance reveals a house, dwarfed by an ancient barn and giant trees with borrowed scenery beyond—broad, flat fields stretching seemingly endlessly into the distance. In the

PRAIRIE PLANT SAMPLER

Neil Diboll has helped generations of gardeners discover the joys of gardening with prairie plants, but he says a few are still deserving of greater attention and garden use both in the Midwest and into much of the eastern United States. In the prairie, most plants thrive in full sun, but a few, says Diboll, will tolerate just a half day’s worth. Here are some of his recommendations for sites in sun and part shade.

FOR SUN

Diboll’s recommendations include long-lived white false indigo (*Baptisia alba*, Zones 3–9, 9–3), which he calls a phenomenal plant that is “structurally more interesting than *Baptisia australis*.” After the upright white flowers fade on three-



Eryngium yuccifolium



Sporobolus heterolepis

five-foot stems, the green seedheads extend the season, eventually turning a striking black. He suggests a lower-growing partner such as prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*, Zones 3–8, 10–2), to fill in around it.

Another favorite is rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*, Zones 4–9, 12–1), which Diboll describes as a “user-friendly yuccalike plant” that tolerates alkaline soils. Its three-foot-tall spikes of ball-like flowers are a silvery white that serves as an excellent foil to the light pink flowers of prairie blazing star (*Liatrix pycnostachya*, Zones 3–8, 8–1).

He also suggests wild quinine (*Parthenium integrifolium*, Zones 4–8, 8–1), which produces cottony, white flowers on two- to four-foot stems over a two-month period in late summer.

FOR PART SHADE

Among plants that will tolerate some shade, Diboll suggests Ohio goldenrod (*Solidago ohioensis*, Zones 4–9, 9–1), which grows up to three feet tall and bears huge golden flower clusters, and bottle gentian (*Gentiana andrewsii*, Zones 3–7, 7–1), which grows a foot tall and bears closed, sky-blue “bottle” flowers; both bloom in late summer to fall.



Gentiana andrewsii

Diboll also likes Culver’s root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*, Zones 4–8, 8–3), which can reach six feet tall, bearing white flower spires that attract bees and butterflies. Another statuesque native, suitable for full sun or part shade, is tall ironweed (*Vernonia gigantea*, Zones 5–9, 9–1), which grows up to eight feet tall and bears deep purple flowers in late summer.

—C.O.

Resources

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The New England Wild Flower Society Guide to Growing and Propagating Wildflowers by William Cullina. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, Massachusetts, 2000.

mornings and late afternoons, the sun aims golden shafts across the fields to ignite fringes of prairie grasses.

This is a scene that, for a visitor, evokes something familiar and soothing, but it takes a few moments to conjure up the right mental image. Then it comes: It is a landscape from the past—Grandpa's farm, the way the big field at the end of the road used to look before they built all of those houses.

Here, all of the traditional landscaping conventions are absent, but not at all missed. In this loose and easy landscape, there is no heavily-fertilized, bright green lawn, knife-edged, and neatly mown. There are no brick-encircled planting beds or swathes of uniform groundcover. Nor do precisely planted exotic trees stand self-consciously in plump circles of mulch.

Instead, there's a path of a blend of fine fescue grasses—the mature result of Prairie Nursery's 'No-Mow' lawn mix, one of the nursery's 22 custom-blended seed mixes. Soft underfoot, it circles the house all the way to a vast vegetable garden and the south-facing ruins of a stone chicken house.

Along the way, around a small shed is a clump of tall Joe Pye (*Eupatorium fistulosum*), queen of the prairie (*Filipendula rubra*), a fringe of dense spike blazing star (*Liatris spicata*), and rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*). Elsewhere, relaxing on the ground is a hybrid silphium. Diboll says it appears to be a hybrid of prairie rosin weed (*Silphium integrifolium*) and compass plant (*S. laciniatum*), but he doesn't sell it at the nursery because it tends to flop at the end of the season.

As the path moves toward woodland, it meanders under big oak and hickory trees and between islands of prairie. Blooming




sweet black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia subtomentosa*) and the chocolate-colored seed-heads of coneflowers (*Echinacea purpurea* and *E. pallida*) mark the passing season and add texture to a diverse matrix of glowing, amber-colored prairie grasses.

Benches and a swing offer places to stop, sit, and contemplate these visions of

Neil Diboll's Prairie Nursery is a source for seeds and plants of many prairie natives, including tall Joe Pye weed, left—here visited by a viceroy butterfly—and sweet black-eyed Susan, above.

quintessential Wisconsin. Sitting there, it is easy to make the connection to the landscape that Diboll has come to treasure. "People have a need to be connected to the earth, but our culture encourages exploitation and destruction of the natural world," says Diboll who has worked to make a connection happen ever since he began selling the plants that nobody wanted. Since then, much has changed, leaving him optimistic.

"In the last 30 years we have realized the value of our environment," he says. "We're dependent upon it for our very survival. If we destroy it, we'll go with it. That's the bottom line for me. It's not just the plants; it's the whole warp and weave of the fabric of life on this wonderful planet." 

A contributing writer for The American Gardener, Carole Ottesen gardens in Maryland and Nova Scotia.

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fall-blooming Shrubs

Late-blooming shrubs add a burst of color and often delightful fragrance to the fall garden.

BY ANDREW BUNTING

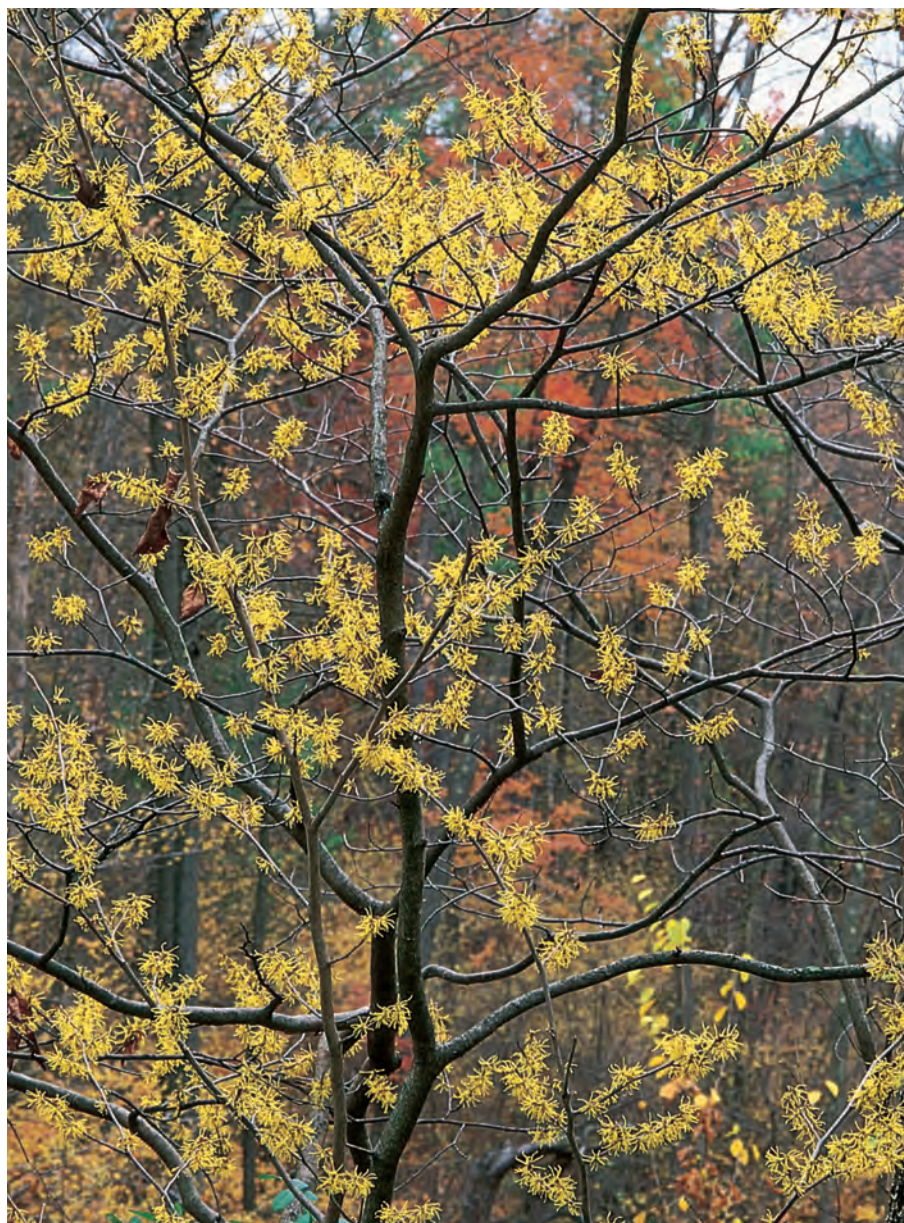
AS FALL approaches, many of the summer-flowering shrubs such as hydrangeas, crape myrtles, and roses begin to fade. Taking their place from September into early December are many interesting shrubs that will extend the flowering season for gardeners. Here

are a few that I have experienced through my work as curator of woody plants at the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College, just southwest of Philadelphia, and from visiting other public and private gardens around the country. (For more fall-blooming shrubs, see chart, page 34.)

CAMELLIAS

Camellias are sometimes typecast as spring-flowering shrubs. For instance, the Japanese camellia (*Camellia japonica*, USDA Hardiness Zones 7–8, AHS Heat Zones 8–7) can flower from late winter to early spring in the southeastern and western parts of the United States. But a number of camellias bloom in fall.

Many of the fall-blooming cultivars are hybrids between tea-oil camellia (*C. oleifera*, Zones 6–9, 9–5) and Sasanqua camellia (*C. sasanqua*, Zones 7–8, 8–7). Both species bloom from fall into early winter. Garden designer and author Charles Cresson in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, recommends the following camel-



The fragrant flowers of common witch hazel, left, and colorful flowers of hardy camellias such as ‘Winter’s Star’, above, add interest to gardens from fall into winter.

lias, which bloom from October to November, for USDA Zone 6b and above:

‘Autumn Spirit’ has intense, double, deep carmine-red flowers. Like most camellias, it is evergreen, but this selection is upright, making it a good choice for a tight spot outside of a door or in a court-

LEFT: KAREN BUSSOLINI. RIGHT: BILL JOHNSON

yard. 'Lu Shan Snow' is a large camellia, reaching 15 feet tall with an equal spread, that produces an abundance of single white flowers. At maturity the individual trunks will become smooth with cinnamon-orange bark. It has survived minus 10 degrees Fahrenheit at the United States National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. 'Winter's Star' is upright like 'Autumn Spirit', but has single pink flowers. 'Snow Flurry' has a rounded and mounding habit with anemone-like, double, white blooms. 'Survivor' is upright with single white flowers that are pink in bud. Similar to 'Survivor' is 'Mason Farm', which has larger and slightly pinker flowers.

GLOSSY ABELIA

An old-fashioned shrub with fantastic fall flowers throughout the United States, including the West Coast, is glossy abelia (*Abelia x grandiflora*, Zones 6–9, 9–6). A hybrid between *Abelia chinensis* and *Abelia uniflora*, this shrub has shiny small leaves and reaches eight feet tall with an equal spread. In May and June, it begins flowering with one-inch-long tubular flowers that are white with a pink blush and slight fragrance. The sepals, which subtend the flowers, emerge green and fade to a soft pink and persist for several months.

Because glossy abelia forms flowers on new wood, it can be pruned hard in the winter without sacrificing flowers the subsequent growing season. It grows best in full sun and is very tolerant of poor soils and urban conditions. It's also great for attracting butterflies, including western tiger swallowtail, eastern tiger swallowtail, and the silver-spotted skipper. For smaller gardens, there are some diminutive forms such as Confetti™ ('Conti'), which reaches two feet tall and has variegated leaf margins. 'Sherwoodii' is slightly larger with dark green leaves that can turn slightly purple in the winter.

WITCH HAZEL FAMILY

Two of my favorite fall-flowering shrubs are members of the witch hazel family (Hamamelidaceae): *Disanthus cercidifolius* (Zones 5–8, 8–5) and the common witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*, Zones 3–8, 8–1).

A shrub deserving of wider use, *Disanthus cercidifolius* is prized for its fall foliage

and flowers. It grows six to 12 feet tall and has heart-shaped leaves resembling those of redbuds (hence the specific epithet). The leaves turn a brilliant red in fall, and in October curious star-shaped maroon flowers composed of straplike petals emerge in pairs along the stems.

Common witch hazel is native from Canada south to Georgia and west to Nebraska. Flowering begins in the fall and sometimes extends into the winter months, especially in the warmer parts of

tended period in the fall. 'Harvest Moon' is an improved flowering form with lemon-yellow flowers.

HOLLY TEA OLIVES

I am often asked what broad-leaved evergreen will grow in dry shade. From Zone 6 and warmer, I recommend the holly tea olives (*Osmanthus* spp.).

The holly osmanthus (*Osmanthus heterophyllus*, Zones 7–9, 9–7) is one of the hardiest of the species. The leaves are



Holly tea olives such as *Osmanthus heterophyllus* 'Rotundifolius' feature evergreen leaves.

the country. Like *disanthus*, the petals are straplike and nearly one inch long. Four-petaled flowers emerge from red sepals or a calyx. These fragrant flowers are often hidden among the foliage until the leaves fall from the branches.

In recent years, several cultivars of common witch hazel have been selected, including 'Mohonk Red', which has an abundance of brick-red flowers for an ex-

dark green, evergreen, and have spines—hence the reference to holly in the common name. An abundance of tiny white flowers are borne in clusters along the eight- to 10-foot stems from September through November. Although the flowers for the most part are hidden by the foliage, they are intensely fragrant. There are several outstanding selections of the holly osmanthus, including 'Gulf tide',

which is an upright clone with dense foliage. In my home garden, I use it as a hedge, lightly pruning it with hand shears every summer.

In recent years, the Scott Arboretum has trialed many varieties of osmanthus, including 'Sasaba', which has extremely spiny, decorative foliage and reaches three to five feet tall. 'Goshiki' is relatively slow-growing, reaching only five feet tall after six years with a slightly pyramidal habit and gold-flecked leaves, making it a good choice to brighten a dark woodland garden. 'Rotundifolius' is a good choice if you'd rather do without sharp spines; it has oblong and somewhat rounded leaves. 'Purpureus' has leaves similar to 'Gulf tide', but the newly emerging foliage is a striking purple.

Osmanthus armatus (Zones 7–9, 9–7) is relatively unknown in American gardens. Like holly osmanthus it produces tiny, white, fragrant flowers in the fall. The leaves are three to six inches long and only have slight spines along the margin. At maturity this can become a very large shrub, growing 15 feet tall and wide.

The fragrant tea holly (*O. fragrans*, Zones 8–11, 12–8) is the least hardy of the aforementioned species. In Swarthmore, which is USDA Zone 7a, we grow *O. fragrans* var. *thunbergii* 'Clemson Yellow' in a site protected by two buildings, but plants are still regularly damaged by winter cold. However, in the southeastern United States, fragrant tea holly can be a stunning shrub. The leaves are dark green with only a slightly serrated edge; they lack the prickly touch of *O. heterophyllus* and *O. armatus*.

The flowers on fragrant tea holly are much showier than *O. heterophyllus*, not so shrouded by the foliage, and are fragrant. While flowering generally occurs in the fall, it can continue in sporadic spurts during warm winter periods and throughout the summer. 'Clemson Yellow' is a yellow-

flowered selection found at the South Carolina Botanical Garden at Clemson. 'Butter Yellow' has soft, sulfur-yellow flowers. 'Orange Supreme' produces bright orange flowers.

DAPHNES

People tend to associate daphnes with early spring. However, *Daphne xtransatlantica* (Zones 6–9, 9–6), a hybrid between *D. collina* and *D. caucasica*, blooms from April through spring and summer until frost. One of the most

plantswoman Sally Reath. As this large shrub has matured, we have gradually removed the lower and side branches. Today, it is approximately 20 feet tall and the pruning has revealed a beautiful, slightly exfoliating bark streaked with tan, gray, and white.

This relative to the viburnums and honeysuckles is inclined to grow as an upright, gangly, large shrub or small tree, but providing some judicious pruning as it matures will ultimately result in a picturesque plant.



Maturing as a large shrub or small tree, seven-son flower has striking autumn flowers.

popular cultivars is 'Jim's Pride', which produces an abundance of tiny white, starlike flowers that are intensely fragrant. This deciduous daphne is perfect for the small garden since it only reaches four feet tall and wide at maturity. The selection 'Summer Ice' has creamy white-edged leaves that complement the pinkish white flowers perfectly.

SEVEN-SON FLOWER

Almost 20 years ago, the Scott Arboretum received a sizeable plant of the seven-son flower (*Heptacodium miconioides*, Zones 5–9, 9–4) from local

At the Scott Arboretum we have several specimens growing in a variety of planting situations in full sun. It is one of the toughest shrubs we grow, very tolerant of poor soils and drought. In August and into September, it produces large panicles of tiny, white, fragrant flowers that attract butterflies. As the flowers fade, the green sepals turn pink, adding three more weeks of interest.

HIBISCUSES

Many hibiscus species have a long flowering period and continue well into the fall. The old-fashioned rose of Sharon

REGIONAL FALL-BLOOMING FAVORITES

Shrubs that perform well at the Scott Arboretum are suitable for most areas of the Northeast. Some are adaptable to other areas of the country as well. And there are many fall bloomers that will not survive in Pennsylvania but thrive in other regions. We asked experts from regions across the country to suggest their favorite fall-blooming shrubs.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Fiona Gilsenan, a garden writer and contributor to *Sunset* magazine, suggests the strawberry tree (*Arbutus unedo*, Zones 8–9, 9–6) as an outstanding fall bloomer. “The little creamy urn-shaped flowers pop out at the same time as the knobby crimson balls of fruit are ripening,” says Gilsenan. Another favorite is common bluebeard (*Caryopteris incana*, Zones 6–9, 9–1), especially the cultivar ‘Jason’, with its gold foliage and deep blue flowers. “I like it in Mediterranean-style plantings with grasses to keep some blue in the garden once the lavenders have faded,” says Gilsenan, who lives in British Columbia.



Arbutus unedo

DESERT SOUTHWEST

Many shrubs bloom in the fall in the desert Southwest in response to cooler days and late summer rains. Among those that landscape designer Judith Phillips of Vegeta, New Mexico, recommends are: Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*, Zones 7–11, 12–7), which blooms in spring and again in fall. “Its white flowers and beautiful feathery pink seed plumes glow in the low, angled light.” *Salvia greggii* (Zones 7–9, 9–4) begins flowering in summer and continues into fall. The flower color—red, purple, pink, or yellow—intensifies as temperatures drop; long blooming red hesperaloe (*Hesperaloe parviflora*, Zones 6–11, 12–6) and the scarlet flowered desert honeysuckle (*Anisacanthus wrightii*, Zones 7–10, 10–7), says Phillips, are favorites of migrating hummingbirds. Phillips also recommends black dalea (*Dalea frutescens*, Zones 8–10, 11–8), which produces an “intense show of wine-colored flowers,” and turpentine bush (*Ericameria laricifolia*, Zones 8–11, 12–8) which bears “masses of small yellow daisies against fine dark green foliage.”



Salvia greggii

MIDWEST

The top choice for fall flowers from Edward Hasselkus, University of Wisconsin horticulture professor emeritus and curator at Longenecker Horticultural Gardens in Madison, Wisconsin, is one that grows well in many regions of the country, common witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*). “It’s also one of the most shade-tolerant shrubs that we can grow,” he says. Another widely adaptable favorite is *Heptacodium miconoides* (Zones 5–7, 9–4), with its white flowers that “are always buzzing with insects.”

In addition to the above two shrubs, John Fech, horticulture professor at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, recommends Chinese sumac, (*Rhus chinensis*, Zones 5–8, 8–5), which produces large white flowers in late summer and fall.

SOUTHEAST

Common witch hazel, in particular, the cultivar ‘Harvest Moon’, is also recommended for southeastern gardens by Jamie Blackburn, curator of the woodland gardens at Atlanta Botanical Garden. He also suggests groundsel bush (*Baccharis halimifolia*, Zones 5–9, 9–4), which Blackburn describes as an “overlooked native, especially good for massing in difficult, sunny spots.” Other Blackburn favorites include Encore™ azaleas, rose of Sharon, Knock Out™ roses, and Burmese plumbago (*Ceratostigma griffithii*, Zones 7–10, 10–7), which is “more of a sub-shrub,” says Blackburn, “with fantastic blue fall flowers in combination with its bright red fall foliage color at the same time.”

—Rita Pelczar



Knock Out™ rose

Rita Pelczar is a contributing editor for The American Gardener.

MORE FALL-BLOOMING SHRUBS

Botanical name (common name)	Height/Spread (feet)	Flower color	Comments	Origin	USDA Hardiness/ AHS Heat Zones
<i>Caryopteris ×clandonensis</i> (bluebeard)	3/5	blue	gray-green leaves, deciduous	east Asia	6–9/9–1
<i>Clerodendrum trichotomum</i>	15–20/15–20	white with red tepals	fragrant, deciduous	China, Japan	7–9/9–7
<i>Elsholtzia stauntonii</i> (mint shrub)	5/5	purple-pink	mint-scented	China	5–8/8–5
<i>Escallonia bifida</i>	10/8	white, purple-pink	evergreen	Brazil, Uruguay	8–9/9–8
<i>Lespedeza thunbergii</i> (bush clover)	6/10		deciduous	China, Japan	6–8/8–6
<i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i> (Texas sage)	3–4/4–8	lavender, purple	blue-gray leaves, evergreen	Texas, New Mexico, Mexico	7–10/10–7
<i>Plumbago auriculata</i> (cape leadwort)	10–20/3–10	sky blue	climbing or sprawling evergreen	South Africa	11–11/12–10
<i>Rhododendron prunifolium</i> (plumleaf azalea)	8–10/6–8	orange-red	evergreen	southeast U.S.	6–9/9–5
<i>Rhododendron</i> Encore™ series	2 1/2–5/3–4	white, pink, purple, red	evergreen	hybrid origin	7–9/9–7



Elsholtzia stauntonii



Rhododendron Encore™ Autumn Carnation™

(*Hibiscus syriacus*, Zones 5–9, 9–1) performs admirably as a tough plant for difficult landscapes. The straight species and many of the clones, however, set copious amounts of seed and have become pernicious, self-sowing weeds in some regions. The five-petaled flowers of *H. syriacus* are five inches across; flowering begins in midsummer and continues into fall.

In the '60s and '70s, the U. S. National Arboretum released several cultivars that were sterile, eliminating the problem of unwanted seedlings. My favorite is 'Diana', which is pure white. Other excellent selections include 'Helene' (white with a deep burgundy throat), 'Minerva' (lavender), and 'Aphrodite' (pink).

These tough shrubs thrive in full sun and require very little care. Because *H. syr-*



'Helene', above, and other rose of Sharon cultivars bloom from summer into fall.

iacus blooms on new wood, it can be pruned severely in the winter. In late March, we often prune them down to 12 to 18 inches. During the growing season, they will grow back to about four feet, blooming profusely every year.

Another great hibiscus for autumn flowers is the confederate rose (*H. mutabilis*, Zones 10–11, 12–8). This large shrub often reaches 15 feet tall. Despite the common name, it is actually a native of China and not the southern states. The deeply-lobed leaves are five to seven inches long and hairy on the undersides. Over a three-day period, the flowers, which are similar in shape to those of other hibiscus species, go through an interesting transformation of colors. Emerging white, they turn a deep pink and eventually bluish pink before they wither. Both

single- and double-flowering forms are available. 'Flora Plena' is described by North Carolina nurseryman Tony Avent as having flowers "resembling giant, double, rosy pink camellias."

FALL BLOOMERS FOR WARM CLIMATES

A popular fall-blooming shrub for West Coast gardens is *Luculia gratissima* (Zones 10–11, 12–10). This native of the Himalayas grows from northern India into western

Tibouchinas offer more good fall bloomers for warm regions. They are evergreen, subtropical shrubs, native to South America, grown for their beautiful, velvety leaves and sprays of purple and lavender flowers. In cooler climates, they make great container specimens or seasonal tropicals grown as annuals, where the flowers emerge in midsummer and continue to frost. Famous Brazilian artist and landscape designer, Roberto



Tropical *Tibouchina urvilleana* is best suited to warm climate gardens or greenhouses.

China. At maturity it will reach eight to 10 feet tall with an equal spread. This semi-evergreen to evergreen shrub blooms from fall into the winter, bearing eight-inch clusters of fragrant, pink, five-petaled flowers. For best flowering, this shrub should be given light shade. Pruning to remove spent flowers helps maintain a tightly mounded shape; otherwise it can become lanky.

Burle Marx popularized the use of tibouchina as a landscape ornamental plant.

Tibouchina urvilleana (Zones 10–11, 12–7) is native to Brazil. Thriving in full sun, this species can be grown as a perennial as far north as Zone 8, where it will die to the ground, but will often resprout the following spring. This large shrub or small tree can reach 15 feet tall. The narrow, ta-

Sources

Crownsville Nursery, Strasburg, VA. (540) 631-9411.

www.crownsvillenursery.com.

Fairweather Gardens, Greenwich, NJ. (856) 451-6261.

www.fairweathergardens.com.

Forestfarm Nursery, Williams, OR. (541) 846-7269.

www.forestfarm.com.

Klehm's Song Sparrow Nursery, Avalon, WI. (800) 553-3715.

www.songsparrow.com.

Woodlanders, Aiken, SC. (803) 648-7522. www.woodlanders.net.

Resources

Dirr's Hardy Trees and Shrubs by Michael Dirr. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 1997.

Fallscaping: Extending Your Garden Season Into Autumn by Nancy J. Ondra and Stephanie Cohen. Storey Publishing, North Adams, Massachusetts, 2007.

pering leaves have a beautiful textural quality as a result of their velvety surface. Open-faced, striking purple flowers to three inches across are produced in abundance. Where it is hardy, this plant will bloom reliably from May to January.

A close relative is *T. grandifolia* (Zones 11–11, 12–7), also native to Brazil. Its soft-textured leaves are more rounded, and the smaller flowers, which are lavender-purple with a white eye, are borne in upright, cone-shaped panicles.

Even when the leaves and fruits of many woody plants have begun to turn from green to yellow, orange, and red, the growing season is far from finished. For many shrubs, the flowering has just begun; others continue a flowering season that may have started as early as spring. Fall-flowering shrubs bring additional interest to the landscape, attract late-season pollinators to the garden, and create many possibilities for combinations with the colorful fruits and foliage of autumn. ♪

Andrew Bunting is curator of woody plants at the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

inviting Nature *into* Your Garden

BY DUNCAN BRINE



If you're starting a new garden or contemplating a redesign, consider a naturalistic approach, which has renewed relevance in today's environment.

TWENTY YEARS AGO, I left New York City with my future wife to make a garden and a new life in the country, north of the city. There I found inspiration in moving away from the status quo of traditional gardens and toward a career creating naturalistic gardens.

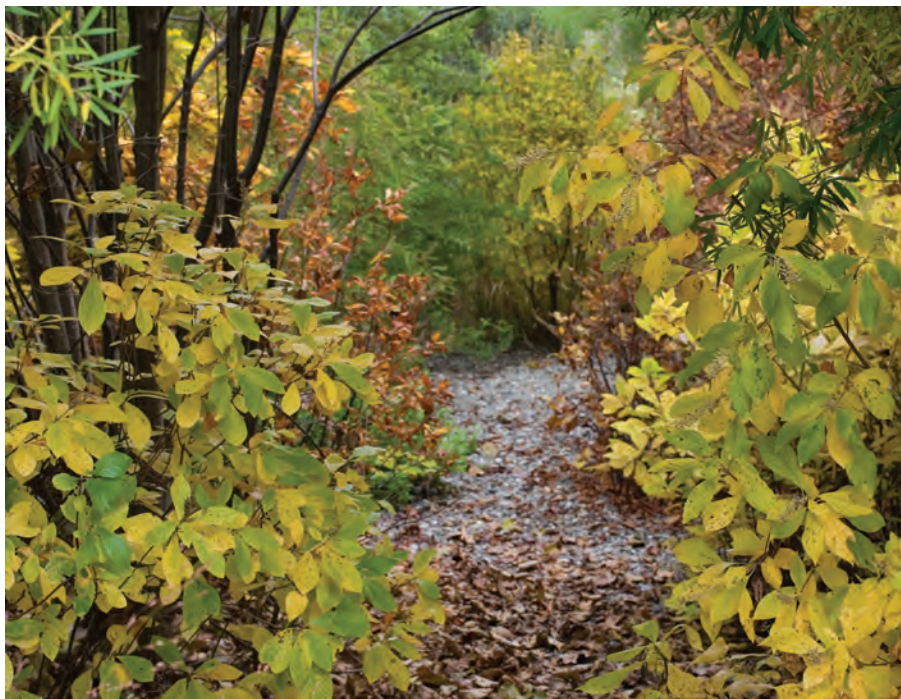
The term “naturalistic” is often used loosely; it can mean different things to different people. A naturalistic garden combines a gardener's needs and desires with nature's dictates; its design cannot be premeditated because its inherent beauty is inextricably linked to the landscape on which it is created.

Naturalistic gardens should look different in different parts of the country. They are not generic or paint by numbers—each one is unique. The diverse native flora, land forms, soil, climate, and other regional characteristics inform their individuality. The goal of a naturalistic garden is to idealize and partner with nature's potential in a given place.

EMBRACING NATURALISTIC DESIGN

Designing naturalistic gardens is an art shaped by science. From my perspective, traditional gardens flaunt their style without consideration of sustainability, while naturalistic gardens have a subtle appeal and simple beauty that reflect today's concern for the environment.

In Duncan Brine's garden, Joe Pye weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*) is a favored native perennial used as a recurring element to tie different areas of the garden together. “In my designs I like to cluster similar plant shapes in a mass,” says Brine. “Repeating these massed plants helps connect and structure an entire landscape.” He describes Joe Pye as “a great wildlife plant, late to emerge, emblematic, and long lasting.”



In autumn, the foliage of summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*) creates a colorful corridor through the Brine garden. According to Brine, this is “somewhat of a secret path, designed to draw visitors through the garden.” The plantings reflect one of Brine’s design tips, which is to repeat signature plants along both sides of a path. In addition to the species summersweet in the foreground, Brine has planted the cultivar ‘September Beauty’ further down the path. He likes this selection because of its vertical habit, later bloom time, and darker green summer foliage.

Unlike the clipped, tidy stasis of traditional gardens, a naturalistic garden foresees, provides for, and celebrates organic change, including redundancy and decay. Those who favor naturalistic gardens tend to embrace their serendipity. They anticipate and facilitate change, delighting in growth and evolution of all kinds.

Naturalistic garden designs can be adapted to spaces of all sizes. A small gar-

den is a fragment, which borrows or quotes from nature, while a large country garden may provide enough space to include areas that replicate different regional ecosystems. A small garden can be used to showcase vignettes representing aspects of a meadow, while a large garden might include an actual meadow.

People habituated to the regimented appearance of a traditional garden can

initially be taken aback by a naturalistic garden’s seemingly structureless, scruffy look. Naturalistic gardens are sometimes a taste that takes some time to acquire, but they are worth the effort for many reasons.

One of the inherent goals of a naturalistic garden is to conserve resources and reduce our environmental footprint. Acute problems vary from region to region, but ecosystems fragmented by development and urban sprawl prevail now throughout our country. Properly conceived, naturalistic gardens can reduce water usage, enhance water quality, compensate for habitat loss, and encourage biodiversity.

A naturalistic garden is a personal initiative and pleasure, but in today’s world it is also an expression of a widening awareness that nature is vital and precious; it needs our help.

Observing often simple design techniques provides a structural underpinning and guides creation of a naturalistic garden. In this article, images from my rural New York garden illustrate some of the techniques I use in my designs, but the concepts discussed are broadly adaptable in most regions of the country.

GUIDING LIGHTS

Perhaps surprisingly, one of the most important influences on my personal design philosophy is an entomologist and ecologist named Doug Tallamy. In my opinion, not since Rachel Carson and her groundbreaking book *Silent Spring* (1962)—which warned about the dangers of the pesticide DDT—has there been such a persuasive observer of and advocate for the environment as Tallamy.



Duncan and Julia Brine’s home, above, is one of two buildings on the property dating to 1920. The other building serves as the office for their design firm. Planted in front are several different viburnums, including Wright viburnum (*V. wrightii*) and linden viburnum (*V. dilatatum*), that bear attractive berries in fall and winter. Natives such as black flowering sedge (*Carex nigra*) and switch grass (*Panicum virgatum*) add texture in front of the shrubs.

A professor in the entomology and wildlife ecology department at the University of Delaware, Tallamy is one of several national proponents of a growing movement that advocates naturalistic gardens. As a university professor, he is accustomed to teaching, but with the publication of his book *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens* (see “Resources,” page 41) and his popularity as a speaker, his classroom has enlarged to a nationwide audience.

In his presentations, Tallamy uses a combination of statistics about habitat loss and decline in wildlife—particularly pollinators—with engaging images of native plants and animals to encourage homeowners to reorient their priorities, habits, and perceptions of home land-

scapes. Specifically he advocates the use of more native plants, particularly woody species that create structure in gardens and provide shelter and food for wildlife. He also urges people to devote more space to plants and less to that ubiquitous suburban monoculture, the lawn.

THE NATURALISTIC GARDEN EXPERIENCE

Tallamy’s goal is to conserve and increase biodiversity, so from his perspective it doesn’t really matter whether or not people take a personal interest in the transformative processes that happen in their gardens. As Tallamy writes, “homeowners can observe and enjoy the restoration of complex food webs in their yards, or they can ignore the process.”

As a landscape designer, however, I enjoy engaging and involving my clients

with their gardens. Based on my own experience, many are intrigued by and value the interaction of wildlife and plants in their gardens, so they embrace the concept of naturalistic design not only for its positive effects on the environment but because it enhances their own enjoyment.

A naturalistic garden spotlights the unexpected while appreciating the routine; it includes the discovery of a never-before-seen insect, a migrating bird’s return to its customary nesting spot, and the anticipated sighting of hummingbirds at the opening of the first native honeysuckle flower. Becoming attuned to recurring natural events deepens our understanding of the intricate workings of ecosystems and gives our gardens meaning that transcends the superficial.

Living with nature and observing its



This grove of ‘Heritage’ river birches (*Betula nigra*) is one of several groupings of native trees Brine planted in an area of his garden that was formerly a meadow. The goal is, over time, to convert the meadow into a woodland. “To create a more natural look, we’ve planted the trees gradually over a number of years, mimicking a multi-generational community,” says Brine. “This gives the grove a more natural look because the trees are not all the same height.”



rituals is its own reward—perhaps even more so now when many of us are looking for ways to escape the relentless demands of the technologically driven world we now live in. When you're in a naturalistic garden, you're part of nature and its interconnected yet seemingly spontaneous activities. You're alert and sensitized; if the tall grass moves in the distance, you wonder, what animal is moving unseen? When the usual bird song becomes louder and more urgent, you look to see if a bird of prey or a snake is threatening a nest.

Enabling and discovering these interdependencies is at the heart of a naturalistic garden design.

PLANNING A NATURALISTIC GARDEN

A naturalistic garden has a dual focus; like horticulture itself, it's balanced between art and science. As an artist, you work with feelings and beauty, while as a scientist, you're concerned with conservation of your garden's environment and its wildlife. When you create a naturalis-



When it comes to good native plants for wildlife, two that Brine recommends are summersweet, top, and wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*), above, which attract a wide variety of insects, including bees, butterflies, and moths. Brine values summersweet because of its fragrant flowers, wildlife value, and late-summer bloom, "when nothing much else is in flower." Wild bergamot was well established on the property when the Brines acquired it, growing in a meadow alongside companions such as goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.)



Another of Brine's design maxims for naturalistic gardens is, "When you have a large area to work with, keep it simple, otherwise you may lose the majesty of the space." Here Brine has planted Joe Pye weed, foreground, at the point where visitors stand on a wooden bridge that crosses a stream. On the other side of a mass of naturally occurring cattails that define the streambed, he planted two silvery-leaved willows (*Salix alba* var. *sericea*) and a Shawnee Brave bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*). Brine says the upright trees are designed to tie in the planting with the distant trees growing on a ridge in the background.



Every garden needs places for rest and contemplation. This bench, made from oak planks used by local horse farms and locust wood harvested on the property, sits along a path of “no-mow” grass (a blend of fescues that Brine does mow occasionally, mainly to suppress weed growth). Here, visitors can look back through the trees toward the house and office, or simply enjoy the wildlife drawn to the natives growing in a natural meadow.

tic garden, you have to mediate between these sometimes conflicting perspectives.

From my experience, in some cases it is possible to find a happy medium between traditional garden design and naturalistic garden design. Say, for instance, you are strongly attracted to some particular quality of Japanese, French, or English garden design. My advice would be to draw inspiration from that design and incorporate it into an indigenous style.

Although designing a garden to match the fundamental conditions of your site—sun or shade, moist or dry ground, and

acidic or alkaline soil—is important in all gardens, it’s particularly critical for naturalistic gardens. Within the overall design, always place plants where they will thrive, not where you’d prefer they grow for aesthetic reasons. This may sound fundamental, but how often have you fooled yourself about a plant’s preferences because you wanted it in a prominent location or next to another plant? I will be the first to admit that I’ve done this many times. The first rule of designing a naturalistic garden, however, is to use realistic, not just wishful, thinking.

Resources

Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens by Douglas W. Tallamy. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 2007 (updated edition 2009).

Silent Spring by Rachel Carson. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, Massachusetts, 1962.


Confining yourself to plants that are well suited to existing conditions may seem limiting to gardeners who are used to radically amending soil or removing trees to create sunny borders. But with a naturalistic garden, these limitations actually help you find, or preserve, your landscape’s identity by excluding the inappropriate.

NATURALISTIC DESIGN TECHNIQUES

There is a generally unacknowledged sleight of hand, a purposeful confusion, involved with designing a naturalistic garden. Much like magicians, naturalistic landscape designers create illusion and don’t always want to share the smoke and mirrors.

Those of us who specialize in naturalistic gardens may not readily admit it, but we tend to choose and place everything in a naturalistic garden just as carefully as designers do in a traditional garden. In my designs, I try to blend the existing and introduced plants so they co-mingle and the distinctions are blurred.

GIVING BACK TO NATURE

Too often, even gardeners take nature for granted. A naturalistic garden offers us all a unique personal opportunity to nurture nature. I like to view naturalistic gardens as part of a two-way remediation; they are a means for each of us to give back to nature while, at the same time, we are benefiting from nature. For those who choose to create a naturalistic garden, the dividends are richly rewarding. 

Duncan Brine and his wife, Julia, are principals in Horticultural Design, Inc. (www.gardenlarge.com), a landscape design firm. The couple’s six-acre garden in Pawling, New York, is a regular stop on garden tours.

Buddy Lee: Encore™ Azalea Breeder

by Mary Yee

UNTIL THE introduction of the Encore™ azalea in the 1990s, azaleas were mainly considered spring-time bloomers in most gardens. For azalea lovers like nurseryman Robert E. “Buddy” Lee, this was a shortcoming both in terms of sales opportunities and gardening enjoyment—but one for which he knew he had a solution. It took him about 15 years—some while working nightshifts as a registered nurse in a hospital to support his family—to breed and bring the first Encore azalea to the market. His hunch that there would be a demand for azaleas that would bloom spring, summer, and fall proved right. According to Lee, two million Encore azaleas were sold this year, making it the best-selling brand of azaleas in the United States.



The success of Encore hasn’t diminished Lee’s lifelong interest in plants and belief that better varieties are still to come. At his home and small research nursery, Transcend Nursery, located in Independence, Louisiana, Lee says, “I have untold selections of many plants being grown and evaluated for future releases.”

Since 2007, Lee has been director of plant innovations for Plant Development Services, Inc., (PDSI) of Loxley, Alabama, a job that keeps him traveling a good part of each year looking for new introductions for the Southern Living™ Plant Collection.

Managing Editor and Art Director Mary Yee caught up with Lee recently to talk about how he bred the Encore azaleas (www.encoreazalea.com) and what is being grown in today’s southern gardens.

Mary Yee: How did you get started in azalea breeding?

Buddy Lee: I was interested in developing new plant varieties from an early age. The area around the family farm where I grew up in southeastern Louisiana had an active nursery industry. At 15, I started working part-time at a wholesale nursery specializing in traditional spring-blooming evergreen azaleas. From high school through college, I worked on all phases of azalea production, from propagation to sales.

What is the history behind developing the Encore azalea?

In the late 1970s and early ’80s, I started doing controlled cross-pollination at my own nursery. I grew many cultivars of traditional azaleas, and I was looking for ways to extend my sales into the fall, so I also

collected traditional spring-blooming azaleas that had a tendency to rebloom later. The performance of these azaleas was not predictable, however; some years, some of the cultivars would not repeat bloom at all.



Autumn Lilac, released this past spring, is the newest member of the Encore™ azalea series.

Then one day I came across seedlings of *Rhododendron oldhamii* [a late-flowering evergreen species from Taiwan] blooming in July at a friend’s nursery. I began crossing it with azaleas in my nursery and soon ran out of room to grow the seedlings. That was when I partnered with Flowerwood Nursery in Loxley, Alabama, to have more space for my breeding program. The first Encore azalea debuted in Atlanta in the mid-1990s.

Can Encore azaleas be grown successfully outside the South?

The breeding program that gave rise to the Encore azaleas had a broad genetic base. Over 40 traditional azalea cultivars were used in the program, from very cold-hardy to very heat-tolerant varieties. There has always been the misconception that the En-

cores were derived from the Southern Indica Hybrid azaleas, which tend to be sensitive to extreme cold. I did use some Southern Indicas in my initial breeding program, but the Encore azaleas currently available are not directly descended from them. Several cold-hardiness trials that have been conducted on the Encore azaleas confirm that many of them—such as Autumn Lilac—are fairly cold hardy (to USDA Zone 6).

As director of plant innovations at PDSI, what are you looking for?

My main objective is to find new plants for the Southern Living Plant Collection. I visit with nursery owners, plant breeders and collectors, and home gardeners across the South to find new and exciting plants suited to our challenging growing conditions. I look for plants with improved disease resistance, more color, compact habits, and that are easy to care for.

We just added a crape myrtle developed at Mississippi State University called Delta Jazz™ to the collection. What attracted me to it was its unique burgundy leaf color. It

has pink flowers and is also easy to grow.

Has all the traveling affected your breeding work?

It's hard to separate the time that I spend on PDSI "stuff" from my plant breeding "stuff" because the two are so intertwined. Spring is usually the most difficult time for me to be away from my nursery because I think of all the blooming plants that I



The Southern Living Collection includes Jubilation™ gardenia, above, and Emerald Snow™ Ioropetalum, both bred by Buddy Lee.

could be cross-pollinating or selecting for evaluation. I make up that lost time by working late into the evenings and weekends when I am at home. Any time in the garden or nursery feels great.

Have you noticed any trends in today's southern gardens?

Iconic southern plants such as camellias, gardenias, and azaleas are making a strong comeback after years of decline due to so many different types of new plants coming into the market. I also notice that the days of landscaping your home once and living the rest of your life with rows of boxwood are quickly disappearing.

What are your plans for the future?

My passion for developing the next great azalea is as strong as ever. I recently purchased a 100-acre location that will give me room to expand my in-ground evaluating of plants. Eventually there might also be a small drive-through arboretum.

Mary Yee is Managing Editor and Art Director for The American Gardener.



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The Pleasure of Persimmons

by Lee Reich

PERSIMMON FRUITS live up to their generic name, *Diospyros*—which translates to “Jove’s grain” or “food of the gods.” This holds true, however, only if they are eaten when fully ripe. Unripe, a persimmon fruit is insipid, or worse. Captain John Smith, of Jamestown Colony and Pocahontas fame, wrote, “If a persimmon is not ripe it will draw a man’s mouth awrie with much torment.” In 21st century parlance, the astringency of an unripe persimmon might be likened to having a vacuum cleaner in your mouth, an unpleasant sensation that lingers even after you spit out the offending bite.

The Captain did go on to say that when a persimmon *is* ripe—he was writing of American persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*)—it “is as delicious as an apricot.” I agree, except to me the ripe fruit is more like a dried apricot that has been soaked in water, dipped in honey, then given a dash of spice. Ripe Asian persimmons (*D. kaki*) are delicately sweet with the smooth texture of jelly.

An added benefit to persimmon trees is they are very ornamental. Their drooping leaves and branches—the branches made more so by their weight of fruit—give the trees a languid appearance. That languid look is livened up as fall approaches and the bright-colored fruits turn orange-yellow. As fall progresses, leaves turn from clear yellow to crimson, and then fruits hanging on leafless branches carry the scene into winter. And the bark of native persimmon is attractively fissured, like alligator skin.

GROWING GUIDELINES

Given sun and reasonably well-drained soil during the growing season, persimmon trees are easy to grow and generally pest-free. The blossoms appear late, so they are rarely bothered by spring frosts.

Asian persimmon, sometimes called kaki, is generally adapted to USDA



‘Szukis’ is a cold-hardy selection of American persimmon especially suited for gardens in regions that have short growing seasons. It bears fruit prolifically without needing pollination.

Zones 7 to 10 and AHS Zones 10 to 7. Most cultivated varieties originated in the relatively mild winter climate of Japan, but wild kakis are found growing at the edge of the Gobi Desert, where temperatures plummet well below zero degrees Fahrenheit, so hardier varieties may someday be developed.

American persimmons (Zones 4–10, 9–4) are native throughout the eastern United States from Connecticut to Florida, and west to Kansas.

Gender is a somewhat complicated affair for persimmons. Wild trees are generally male or female—the females, of course, being the ones that bear fruits. Female trees may bear fruit parthenocarpically (without pollination); male trees may bear some female flowers; female trees may bear some male flowers; and occasionally a tree will change its mind about whatever flowering habit it had.

Once a gardener has resolved the gender issue, persimmon trees require little



American persimmons have ornamental attributes, including attractive, fissured bark.

care. They bear pale green, inconspicuous flowers in the leaf axils of new shoots. Light, dormant-season pruning helps stimulate growth during the current season for fruit the following season, and shortens some branches to lighten their load and reduce limb breakage.

PESTS AND DISEASES

Pests and diseases rarely threaten persimmons. That said, persimmon girdler, persimmon borer, and scale insects might call for attention. Control the girdler by picking up and burning fallen twigs in autumn, the borer by keeping a tree growing vigorously, and scale with sprays of summer horticultural oil. Control anthracnose, a fungal disease that causes black spots on leaves and weakens trees, by raking up infected leaves in autumn. Persimmon wilt, which occurs in the Southeast and can be triggered by atypically cold winters or late spring freezes, results in tree death. Unfortunately, no controls are known.

RECOMMENDED VARIETIES

Kaki varieties can be grouped into those that can be eaten while still firm (non-astringent, “NA”), and those that must be thoroughly soft before being eaten (astringent, “A”). Astringent varieties need

Planting Tips

Plant persimmons in spring, being careful not to damage the sparse root system. Don't be put off by the trees' black roots. That is their natural color; they are not dead. Persimmons adapt to any soil, but site them in full sun with room to spread.

Kaki trees mature at 20 to 35 feet high and wide. American persimmon is a medium- to large-size tree, growing as tall as 75 feet high in warmer regions and less than half that height in colder parts of its growing range. Prune to keep trees to a manageable size. —L.R.

hot summers to ripen. Within those two categories, pollination constant (“PC”) varieties are unaffected by pollination while pollination variable (“PV”) varieties exhibit dark flesh around the seeds when pollinated. NA varieties are edible firm only if they have been pollinated.

Kakis with excellent flavor include ‘Fuyu’ (PC/NA), with large, orange-red fruits, ‘Eureka’ (PC/A) with round, red fruits, and ‘Saijo’ (PC/A) with very sweet, small, yellowish orange fruits. The latter two are hardy only to USDA Zone 5.

Many of the better varieties of American persimmon do not need male pollinator trees. Plant a named variety to be assured of good-tasting fruit and, important in colder zones, fruit that will ripen within your growing season. Among the



Persimmon fruits, such as these kakis, resemble small tomatoes.

Sources

Edible Landscaping Nursery, Afton, VA. (800) 524-4156.

www.eat-it.com.

Nolin River Nut Tree Nursery, Upton, KY. (270) 369-8551; www.nolinnursery.com.

One Green World, Molalla, OR. (877) 353-4028.

www.onegreenworld.com.

Resources

Landscaping with Fruit by Lee Reich. Storey Publishing, North Adams, Massachusetts, 2009.

best varieties are ‘Garretson’, early ripening with a clear orange pulp; ‘John Rick’, with large fruit having red pulp, and ‘Szukis’, which is very cold hardy, very delicious, very prolific, and does not need pollination. ‘Szukis’ is my favorite for short growing seasons.

ENJOYING THE HARVEST

Persimmons ripen in late summer and autumn, but that is only the start of the harvest story. Pick non-astringent kakis when they are fully colored and firm, astringent kakis and American persimmons when they are fully colored and the pulp is so soft as to be barely contained within the skin. Kakis usually need to be clipped from the branches. Pick American persimmons without clipping or after they drop to the ground.

Contrary to popular belief, frost is not necessary to ripen persimmons. Kakis will ripen off the tree if picked nearly ripe. Ripening can be coaxing along in various ways, such as by putting fruits in a paper bag with an apple, in a container with a bit of sake (or whiskey), or by immersing them in water.

Frozen persimmons, whole or pulped, are a winter treat. The fruits also make delicious pies, cookies, and cakes. Persimmons ferment readily, the transformation yielding, in China, vinegar or brandy, and, in our South, mashed with cornmeal, ‘simmon beer.

Lee Reich is the author of several books, including Uncommon Fruits for Every Garden (Timber Press, 2004).

Horticultural News and Research Important to American Gardeners



The Henry A. Wallace Beltsville Agricultural Research Center occupies nearly 7,000 acres.

WORLD'S LARGEST AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTER TURNS 100

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service comprises numerous laboratories and research centers around the country. For one of these—reportedly the largest research complex of its kind in the world—2010 has special significance. This year, the Henry A. Wallace Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) in Beltsville, Maryland, celebrates a century of important discoveries.

From its modest beginnings in 1910, focusing on dairy and animal husbandry research on several hundred acres, BARC now conducts research in all areas of agriculture on nearly 7,000 acres. Much of the facility's expansion took place in the 1930s under the direction of Henry A. Wallace, who was the Secretary of Agriculture at the time; his name was officially added to BARC's title in 2000.

Over the years, BARC's research has had a significant impact on everything from controlling plant and animal diseases to improving human nutrition. Among its first horticultural breakthroughs was the discovery of photoperiodism, which enabled growers to manipulate plant re-

sponses, such as flowering, by exposing plants to timed cycles of light. The horticulture industry has benefited from numerous other BARC discoveries, as well as the hundreds of new varieties of fruits, vegetables, and ornamental plants developed by BARC scientists over the decades.

GENETIC TESTING RESOLVES GERANIUM NAME ISSUE

With so many new plant cultivars flooding the market every year, sometimes it's a challenge to tell the difference between them. In the case of two blue-flowered hardy geraniums, *Geranium* 'Jolly Bee' and *G. Rozanne*® ('Gerwat'), growers and gar-



Geranium Rozanne®

deners alike often couldn't tell them apart. Their similarity prompted Blooms of Bressingham North America, which introduced Rozanne, to order genetic testing to determine if the two selections were too similar to be marketed as separate cultivars.

According to a statement released by Blooms of Bressingham, "independent DNA research revealed that there are no or virtually no differences in the DNA of both varieties. In addition, new investigations revealed that both varieties are not, at least not clearly, distinct from one another from a morphological point of view."

Because Rozanne was introduced first, in 2001, its name will be preserved. 'Jolly Bee', released three years after Rozanne and marketed through Proven Winners, will gradually disappear from nurseries, catalogs, reference books, and plant labels.

SAVE PLANTS WITH YOUR MOUSE

Helping to save threatened plant species is as easy as visiting a website thanks to Plants for the Planet, a new campaign launched by Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI). The goal of this campaign, according to BGCI's secretary general Sara Oldfield, is to "gather signatures from people around the world in order to persuade governments to adopt the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation" during the Convention on Biological Diversity taking place in Japan this October.

The Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) consists of 16 targets, designed to significantly influence plant conservation efforts worldwide in the next decade. These tasks range from creating a "widely accessible working list of known plant species, as a first step towards a complete world flora" to "no species of wild flora endangered by international trade," all of which will require a collaborative effort on the part of governments around the world.

To add your name to the list of GSPC supporters, go to www.plants-

PEOPLE and PLACES in the NEWS

Missouri Botanical Garden President Peter Raven Retires

After nearly four decades of leading the Missouri Botanical Garden (MOBOT) as its president, Peter Raven retired on September 1. Under Raven's direction, MOBOT has become a "world-class center for botanical research, education, and hor-



Peter Raven, left, and successor Peter Wyse Jackson, right.

tical display." He has also been a prominent advocate for plant conservation and getting children interested in nature.

MOBOT's incoming president is Peter Wyse Jackson, who previously was the director of the National Botanic Gardens of Ireland. Raven, who assisted with the selection process, feels Wyse Jackson is well equipped to take the helm at MOBOT because "he brings not only a wealth of horticultural and botanical experience, but also a deep understanding of the importance of sustainability and conservation."

Like his predecessor, Wyse Jackson is very involved with global plant conservation efforts. Among his many achievements, he has been instrumental in creating policy designed to preserve biodiversity through Botanic Gardens Conservation International, an organization he helped to found. He currently is chairman of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation and has served on the boards of several conservation organizations, including the U.S. Center for Plant Conservation.

Urban Tree Champion George Ware Dies

America is a little greener thanks to George Ware, who died in July at the age of 86. Over the course of a 40-year career as a dendrologist, then research director at the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois, Ware helped develop and select "tough trees for tough places." These include several disease- and pest-resistant elm cultivars introduced to replace the American elms nearly wiped out by Dutch elm disease in the first half of the 20th century. He was es-



George Ware with a branch of Anhui elm (*Ulmus gaussonii*)

pecially interested in finding trees that would thrive in less-than-ideal urban environments, focusing on those that could tolerate poor soil conditions.

"He has been a trusted source of expert knowledge and inspiration," says Gerard T. Donnelly, president and CEO of Morton, "to countless other scientists, arborists, and tree-loving citizens alike who have come to share his dedication to the planting and conservation of trees."

In addition to earning the American Horticultural Society's highest honor—the Liberty Hyde Bailey Award—in 2002, Ware received the Award of Merit from the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta (now the American Public Gardens Association), the Special Achievement Award from the National Arbor Day Foundation, the Urban Forestry Medal for Research from American Forests, and the Gold Seal Award from the National Council of State Garden Clubs.

Landscape Designer of the Year

As part of its Annual International Landscape Design Awards program, the Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD) selects one entry for its top honor, the Landscape Designer of the Year.



This year, the winner of this prestigious title is James Doyle Design Associates in Greenwich, Connecticut, for its Harmony Farm design. This project also won a Gold Award for residential design, selected based on project impact, creativity, technical merit, and planting design.

"The designers drew from the time-honored tradition of formal, geometric gardens and created a modern, richly textured, functional garden that complements the great architecture of the home," says APLD President Patricia St. John. "They've brought the past and future together, and we are pleased to recognize this outstanding team effort."

APLD's mission is to "advance the profession of landscape design and to promote the recognition of landscape designers as qualified and dedicated professionals."

For more information about the APLD and its 2010 award winners, visit www.apld.org.



fortheplanet.com. After October, BGCI intends to use the Plants for the Planet campaign as a way to spread the word about GSPC progress and what botanic gardens are doing to assist global plant conservation efforts.

NEW GARDEN SPEAKER'S BUREAU

Say you're looking for some expert insight into a particular aspect of gardening. Or maybe you'd like to find out which gardening gurus have an upcoming event in your town. Wouldn't it be great if there were a resource to make it easier? Now there is, thanks to a website called GreatGardenSpeakers.com, developed by a group of enterprising garden communicators.

"Our idea," says award-winning garden book author and blogger Amy Stewart, one of the site's creators, "was to create a true one-stop-shop site that lists garden book authors, floral designers, botanists, conservation experts, and television and

radio hosts, in an effort to help connect inspiring speakers with audiences."

Topic categories range from botany to water-wise gardening. Visitors to the site can rate speakers they have heard and post reviews. There's also a "Coming to a City Near You" feature, searchable by zip code or city and state, that shows upcoming speaking events in that area.

CLOVER'S LUCKY GENE DISCOVERED

A member of the legume family with nitrogen-fixing capabilities, clover (*Trifolium*



White clover (*Trifolium repens*)

spp.) is also prized for the luck its four-leaf variants purportedly impart. Clover plants are known to have a lot of variation when it comes to leaf traits, making it tricky to track down the responsible genes. But lady luck finally smiled on a team of researchers from the University of Georgia and the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

According to a study published in the July/August 2010 issue of *Crop Science*, the team identified a gene responsible for turning ordinary three-leaf clovers into the four-leaf kind. The scientists also found two other clover genes that affect leaf color and shape. These discoveries will help plant breeders create new ornamental varieties of the plant as well as improve varieties used for forage crops. Additionally, the study's results will help researchers identify other important traits, such as drought tolerance, in clover and other legumes as part of an effort to develop improved varieties.

News written by Associate Editor Viveka Neveln.

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Vegetable Gardens Sprout on College Campuses

BY MEREDITH SOEDER

WITH THE edible gardening revolution in full swing, it is probably not surprising that vegetable gardens are springing up at college campuses across the nation. More unexpected is that these gardens are being created and maintained by students from many different academic disciplines. As English major Andrew Bostick at Haverford College, in Haverford, Pennsylvania, puts it, “Up to this point, the bulk of the gardening here has been done by students with widely varying backgrounds. Everyone—from the most literature-minded English majors to the most pragmatic of science majors—has enjoyed spending time in the garden.”

Besides providing a source of locally grown food, these campus gardens are helping to teach students important lessons about sustainability, foster community involvement, and encourage healthier eating habits.

HEAD START FOR COLLEGES WITH HORTICULTURAL PROGRAMS

Vegetable gardens are fairly common at colleges and universities that have well-established horticulture, agriculture, or environmental science programs, since these schools usually can piggyback on existing resources such as plenty of open space, experienced faculty members, and existing facilities such as greenhouses.

At the University of Georgia in Athens, students established a vegetable garden—called the UGarden—in 2009 with the assistance of the horticulture department and local Master Gardeners. Midway through this past summer, the garden had already yielded more than 700 pounds of produce—ranging from cucumbers and squash to corn and green beans. The harvested produce is being donated to the Northeast Georgia Food Bank. “Planting, nurturing, harvesting, and eating together gives students a chance to learn beyond the classroom and gain practical life skills,” says Mary Ora Carlson, an art history major who helps in the garden. “The garden enables students to learn how to grow their own food and cultivate relationships with a variety of people in Athens.”

At Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania, students working towards developing an “edible campus” have created a vegetable garden and an herb garden, planted apple trees, and put together a fundraising bake sale that incorporated

produce they grew. “I was excited that students wanted to put into practice what they had been learning about sustainable agriculture,” says Rich Bowden, professor of environmental science and garden adviser. “Students met with local plant specialists, college administrators, and physical plant personnel. In this process, they gained first-hand experience with what it takes to plan and initiate a project.”

LIBERAL ARTS STUDENTS GARDEN, TOO

Campus food gardens are not restricted to universities that have existing horticulture programs. A number of smaller, more liberal arts-oriented colleges such as Longwood University in Farmville, Virginia, and Haverford College have also started vegetable gardens in the last few years.

“We established our garden, above all, as a vehicle for demonstrating aspects of nutrition, healthy lifestyles, sustainability, and local history,” says Geoff Orth, director of the Cormier Honors College at Longwood University. “All of these relate to the mission of our institution, which focuses on the development of citizen leaders.” The university’s garden was the subject of an article in the journal, *Honors in Practice*, and has caught the attention of Longwood students and faculty, agriculture students from a nearby vocational-technical school, and community members.

At Haverford College, Bostick launched the Haverford Garden Initiative, a program that grew out of his summer internship for the college’s Center for Peace and Global Citizenship. The group’s initial goal was to convince the college administration to convert the school’s summer garden into a year-round one. “The garden is the space where all members of the community can come to think about food, our most basic human need,” says Bostick. “In the garden, we step away from the formal relationships that exist between professor and student, boss and employee. Instead, we all work together as equals. In this way, the biggest contribution of the garden is the building of a sense of community.”

Meredith Soeder is an editorial intern with The American Gardener.



A student tends the campus vegetable garden at Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania.

Jim Wilson (1925–2010)

by Guy Sternberg

JAMES W. WILSON, who was 85 years old when he died August 1, was a Master Gardener in every sense. Along the way, Jim became one of the most admired personalities on American television. He was a prolific author, a member of the Garden Writers Association (GWA) Hall of Fame, a popular keynote speaker, and a friend and mentor to countless people. A certified South Carolina Master Gardener, he also was an honorary Master Gardener in 10 other states. He won countless awards, including the Horticultural Communication Award from the American Horticultural Society in 2002. He even had a tree named after him—the ‘Jim Wilson’ sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*).

I knew Jim for 20 years—nearly half my adult life. During that time, we became co-authors, co-presenters, and close personal friends. The gentle character and charmingly humble personality you might have seen on television was his genuine persona. In 2004, I asked him to write a short description of himself for a book we had collaborated on. He wrote simply this: “Jim Wilson is a veteran horticulturist, familiar to most gardeners as the [personable] co-host of *The Victory Garden* television series. He is a widely published [and respected] garden writer and a lifelong student of native plants.” I had to insert the words “personable” and “respected” because of his humility in describing himself.

Jim’s early days were spent on a farm in Mississippi, helping his parents maintain a food garden that provided for their family and friends during the Great Depression. During World War II, he saw active service in the U.S. Army Air Corps (now the Air Force), primarily as a fighter pilot instructor. Victory gardens were common in those days, and his memories of the times no doubt served him well decades later, when he became a host of the southern location of *The Victory Garden* series on public television. In the interim, he earned a degree from the University of Missouri at Columbia in



Jim Wilson examines the foliage of *Acer spicatum* at the author’s Starhill Forest Arboretum.

1948 and started his gardening career with a job at Ferry-Morse Seed Company. Eventually, after living and working in six different states, he would return to Columbia and claim it as home.

Jim’s commitment to social justice and interest in food gardening prompted him

to serve as the spokesman for Plant a Row for the Hungry 15 years ago. Coordinated by the GWA, this program that asks gardeners to plant an extra row of vegetables to help feed the needy has generated millions of pounds of fresh food and is still going strong. It was one of Jim’s most cherished achievements. But he was equally involved with native plants, ornamental gardening, trees, and everything else that could be called green.

I never saw Jim happier than he was in the final chapter of his long series of life adventures, at home with his gracious sweetheart Janie Mandel in their beautifully restored and updated 1840s log home in Columbia. Their joint garden, Friendship Farm, is a place of inspiration and contentment, not to mention a frequent stop on garden tours. It reveals the dedication and good taste of the couple, who collaborated on everything.

I had helped Jim in a minor way with one of his early books on native plants. Years later, while commiserating over a sad streetscape of Asian pears, Siberian elms, and European lindens during a GWA symposium in St. Louis, we decided to embark on a project to bring native trees to the gardens of North Americans. Our first book, *Landscaping with Native Trees*, came out in 1995 and sold out. With Jim’s blessing and help, in



Wilson with companion Janie Mandel

2004 I expanded it into *Native Trees for North American Landscapes*, the 550-page highlight of our joint work.

Working with Jim brought out the best in both of us, and I will miss him very much. But the true measure of Jim's influence is that there are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other people who feel the same way I do about him. On behalf of all of us, I'd like to say, "Thanks, Jim." 🌱

An arborist, landscape architect, and author, Guy Sternberg lives in Petersburg, Illinois.

COLLEAGUES REMEMBER JIM WILSON

"I think all of us in the gardening field have many Jim Wilson experiences that made us so dearly love him. One of my favorite memories was something he told an audience regarding Plant A Row For the Hungry. He said, 'And if you grow flowers but no vegetables, think of contributing [the flowers] to your local soup kitchen. For how often do those who frequent a soup kitchen have the opportunity to dine with flowers on the table?'"

—Rose Marie Nichols McGee, president of Nichols Garden Nursery in Albany, Oregon

"Jim was a joy to work with. His easy-going nature and love of plants made him a wonderful companion. Because of his warmth as a person, he touched the lives of so many people through his work on *The Victory Garden*."

—Holly H. Shimizu, executive director of the U.S. Botanic Garden and former co-host of *The Victory Garden*

"Jim had a behind-the-scenes effect on many in both the horticultural world and the horticultural media. And this was totally aside from his personal qualities that we all got to enjoy in smaller, more private moments. He was one of the finest people I ever met; that states it about as clearly as I can."

—Shepherd Ogden, founder and former co-owner of the Cook's Garden mail-order seed company

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Safe Storage and Disposal of Garden Pesticides

by Rita Pelczar

WE ALL want to avoid pest and disease problems in our gardens. But, despite our best cultural efforts—keeping plants vigorous, removing diseased or damaged plant parts, rotating crops, providing adequate air circulation, planting resistant varieties, encouraging beneficial insects—there are times when these techniques are insufficient against a particular pest or disease. And some pests and diseases are so widespread—or have the potential to cause such significant damage—that applying a pesticide makes sense. But the decision to use a pesticide, regardless of its perceived position on the spectrum from toxic to “safe,” comes with significant responsibility.

LOOK TO THE LABEL

Since 1972, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been tasked with the regulation of pesticides—insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and other materials designed to kill or repel organisms that are considered pests. By their nature, these materials are toxic to certain organisms—often including those not intended for control. Many pesticides can also be harmful to humans, pets, and the environment. Safe practices are imperative—from the selection of the appropriate material for the specific pest to properly disposing of the pesticide container after its use.

To be marketed, pesticides must be registered by the EPA and have a label that contains specific, detailed information, including ingredients, formulation, necessary directions for safe use and handling, and precautionary statements. Also required on the label are instructions for safe storage and disposal of both the pesticide and its container. Pesticide users are required by law to comply with the instructions on the label.

PESTICIDE STORAGE GUIDELINES

Because the label contains vital information about the pesticide, these products should always be stored in their original container with the label intact. “If pesti-



cides become separated from their container, consider storing the label in a plastic bag that you attach to the product,” suggests Ann Ketter, a pesticide specialist with the National Pesticide In-



Potentially dangerous home and garden products should be stored in a locked cabinet.

formation Center (NPIC) at Oregon State University. If the label is gone and you cannot identify the contents of a pesticide container, contact your local solid waste agency or call 1-800-CLEANUP, a recycling locator offered by Earth911.com.

Pesticides should be stored in a designated, preferably locked, area that is well out of the reach of children and pets. The storage area should be well-ventilated and dry to prevent any material from leaking

into drains, wells, or ground or surface water. Flammable liquid pesticides should be kept well away from potential sources of heat or ignition such as cars, grills, mowers, and furnaces.

“Temperature matters,” says Kaci Buhl, NPIC project coordinator. “Both hot and cold weather can cause pesticides to change inside their containers.” Most pesticides are best stored between 40 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. If you plan to store a pesticide in an unheated area, check with the manufacturer or distributor to be sure it will not be affected by freezing.

Never store a pesticide near food, animal feed, medical supplies, or cleaning products; fumes can cause contamination. And never repackage a pesticide in a container that might be mistaken for food or drink. “Some of them have at-

OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP

The long-term storage of unwanted pesticides can be dangerous—labels and containers deteriorate over time, raising the potential for leaks that introduce unwanted chemicals into the environment. To tackle this problem, a number of state and local governments, starting with North Carolina in 1980, created “Clean Sweep” programs in which unwanted, restricted, or banned pesticides are collected for proper disposal.

Forty-eight states have participated, although the programs vary widely. Some programs are permanently funded, others intermittent, a few were one-time only. Some are available only to farmers and ranchers, others allow agricultural businesses to participate; but quite a few include households.



Long-banned pesticides such as Chlordane still show up with some frequency at collection sites.

As of 2008, these programs had collected a total of nearly 52.5 million pounds of unwanted pesticides. Among the particularly toxic pesticides occasionally found in old homes, garages, or barns are Chlordane, Lindane, and DDT. A complete list of banned and restricted pesticides can be seen on the Pesticide Fact Sheet (see “Resources,” page 54).

According to the EPA, the cost of Clean Sweep programs is small compared to the cost of environmental cleanup operations necessary after improper disposal of unwanted or banned pesticides, and that the need for these programs will continue for the foreseeable future.

For information about Clean Sweep programs in your state, the EPA provides a state-by-state listing of coordinators at www.epa.gov/pesticides/regulating/disposal_contacts.htm. —R.P.

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⑤ BULBS	TO START THEM VIGOROUSLY, Beating Soil-rot, Hastening Better BLOOMING	
⑥ SEEDS	To Help GERMINATION Percentage and SPEED EARLIER, BETTER YIELDS, including Vegetables	
⑦ LAWN	To Make QUICKER, deeper, TOUGHER TURF from SEED, SOD, Stolons, Sprigs, HYDRO-seeding	
⑧ FRUITING	For EARLIER, HEAVIER, BEARING?	
⑨ 11 XMAS TREES	17 HYDROSEEDING	22 FLOWERING PLANT
⑩ 12 REFORESTATION	18 LANDSCAPING	COMPETITIONS
13 HYDROPONICS	19 PROPAGATION	23 INTERIORSKAPING
14 FIELD CROPS	20 ANTI-EROSION	24 CUT FLOWERS
15 BONSAI	21 ENVIRONMENTAL	25 WEATHER DAMAGE
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tractive odors, so kids and pets may seek them out,” says Buhl.

A common mistake made by many home gardeners is buying too much of a particular pesticide that they plan to use; avoid stockpiling. “Home gardeners only need a small quantity of a given pesticide for a pest problem, so they should be looking for the smallest container and they should use it during the current sea-



When shopping for a pesticide, select the smallest practical size to avoid leftovers.

son,” says Mark Shour, Extension program specialist for the Pest Management & the Environment Program at Iowa State University in Ames.

DISPOSING OF PESTICIDES AND THEIR CONTAINERS

With the exception of banned or restricted materials, experts advise the best way to dispose of any pesticide is to use it for its intended purpose, following all instructions on the label. (For information on the disposal of banned or outdated materials, see “Operation Clean Sweep,” above).

If you have leftover pesticide that you do not plan to use or do not wish to store, experts recommend offering it to a neighbor who can use it—keep it in its original container with the label intact—as long as it is not banned or restricted, and does not require a license for use. Alternatively, contact your local waste management authority or Department of Natural Resources for hazardous waste collection programs or locations. Earth911.com (see



Many communities across the country regularly hold household hazardous waste collection events under the sponsorship of the state's Department of Environmental Protection. At this collection site in Pennsylvania, local residents drop off unwanted home and garden products so trained workers wearing appropriate safety attire can collect them for proper disposal.

“Resources,” far right) provides information on local and regional collection facilities; by inserting your zip code and designating the material you want to dispose of, a list of local sites is provided. This same resource provides help for recycling electronic wastes.

Never pour a pesticide down a drain. Municipal water treatment facilities are not equipped to handle, and may be badly disrupted by, such chemicals; septic systems may be damaged; storm drains often lead directly to streams or rivers where pesticides can kill plants, poison fish and other wildlife, and otherwise cause environmental damage.

After you use the entire contents of a pesticide container, remember that the container still contains traces of the

active ingredients and must be handled properly. This includes organic or biological pesticides, which, says Shour, “must be disposed of in the same way that conventional pesticides are disposed: triple rinsing plastic or paper-board containers and putting the rinsing water in the spray tank, puncturing the container, and then disposing of it in trash or recycling at an approved facility.” For safety, always make sure the container is made unsuitable for reuse.

Aerosol containers should be relieved of pressure by spraying until they are empty. Never puncture an aerosol container.

Containers of dry formulations of pesticides should be carefully emptied into the mixing tank to remove as much

Resources

Beyond Pesticides,
www.beyondpesticides.org.

Earth911.com. (800) CLEANUP.
http://earth911.com.

The National Pesticide Information Center, (800) 858-PEST.
http://npic.orst.edu.

The Pesticide Stewardship Alliance,
www.tpsalliance.org/index.html.

Pesticide Fact Sheet #141,
Colorado Environmental Pesticide Education Program, E.J. Buffington and S.K. McDonald. 2006 update.
www.cepep.colostate.edu.

Proper Disposal of Pesticides,
National Agricultural Safety Database, 2002.
http://nasdonline.org/document/1259/d001057/dispose-of-pesticides-properly.html.

Safe Use, Storage and Disposal of Pesticides, University of Missouri Extension, 2007. *http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=WM6000#regulations.*

residue as possible, then the container should be opened at the top and bottom to prevent its reuse. Be careful to avoid inhaling the dust.

Once these procedures have been completed, the containers should be disposed of in a licensed sanitary landfill. If you have pesticide storage or disposal questions, NPIC offers multi-lingual phone assistance seven days a week (see “Resources,” above).

USE PESTICIDES RESPONSIBLY

When used properly, pesticides offer gardeners an important tool for combating plant diseases and pests, but they must be treated with caution and respect. Careful use and handling of pesticides, including their storage and disposal, will help minimize any detrimental effects they may have on non-target organisms—including humans—and the environment.

A contributing editor for The American Gardener, Rita Pelczar is editor-in-chief of Homegrown Harvest: A Season-by-Season Guide to A Sustainable Kitchen Garden (Mitchell Beazley, 2010).

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Recommendations for Your Gardening Library

Japanese Maples

J. D. Vertrees and Peter Gregory. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 2010. 404 pages. Publisher's price, hardcover: \$49.95.

I WOULD BE hard pressed to think of a tree species with a greater range of variation in form, size, leaf shape, and foliage color than Japanese maples. This enormous diversity ensures that there is a variety for any purpose, from bonsai to urban gardens to the largest landscapes. One of the most comprehensive guides to these plants is *Japanese Maples*, first published in 1978. Written by the late nurseryman J. D. Vertrees, this classic reference has been thoroughly updated for its fourth edition by Peter Gregory, chairman of the Maple Society.



This beautifully illustrated edition focuses primarily on the myriad cultivars of *Acer palmatum*. It also contains excellent descriptions of other maples from Japan, some of which are fairly common commercially and others of which are mostly known to true acerophiles. For this latest edition, Gregory has added more than 100 new cultivar descriptions to an already exhaustive list of plants.

While the plant descriptions make up the bulk of this book, there are also chapters on taxonomy and nomenclature, general growing guidelines, and propagation, which have been updated to reflect modern practices. Gregory has also updated the appendices as needed. One particularly useful appendix is the "Guide to Uses and Characteristics," which lists cultivars alphabetically in chart form "to assist in the selection of plants for individual situations."

Japanese maples are widely adaptable to a range of growing conditions across North America, and are well worth adding to your garden. One caveat I would add: Be aware that, at least in the mid-Atlantic states, *A. palmatum* is becoming naturalized in native forests. Because maple seed is wind dispersed, gardeners near sensitive areas should make sure to choose varieties that are less likely to produce viable seed.

Whether you are already a Japanese maple aficionado or looking to dip your toe into this colorful, diverse world, *Japanese Maples* is far and away the best written and most comprehensive guide. The only problem is that every cultivar will sound so good, you'll want to grow them all!

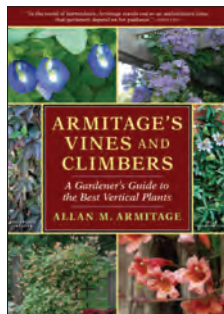
—Anthony S. Aiello

Anthony S. Aiello is director of horticulture and curator at the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania.

Armitage's Vines and Climbers

Allan M. Armitage, Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 2010. 212 pages. Publisher's price, hardcover: \$29.95.

VINING AND CLIMBING plants are easy to love—they're generally low maintenance, colorful, and versatile. Allan Armitage's own infectious enthusiasm for this group of plants shines through in his new book, *Armitage's Vines and Climbers: A Gardener's Guide to the Best Vertical Plants*. With a conversational, over-the-back-fence writing style, he shares his experiences with them in the garden and through his trials at the University of Georgia in an engaging, and at times, entertaining way.



The real core of the book is the A-to-Z list of more than 100 plants from 70 genera, accompanied by plentiful photographs. Entries are either for a single species or a group of related plants. One of the most interesting aspects is that about half of the book is dedicated to coverage of annual and tropical vines. Many of these are fantastic additions to the garden and are rarely well covered in publications.

Each entry has a brief description of the plant, and for most, Armitage adds a dash of his own opinions, tips, and anecdotes. Many entries include information on other closely related species or cultivars and basic propagation information. Armitage also describes the method by which the plant climbs, such as tendrils, rambling, or twining, as well as the origin of the botanical name and common name and what they mean. However, basic cultural information such as light requirements or hardiness ranges is haphazardly covered. Fortunately, much of this information can be easily found elsewhere.

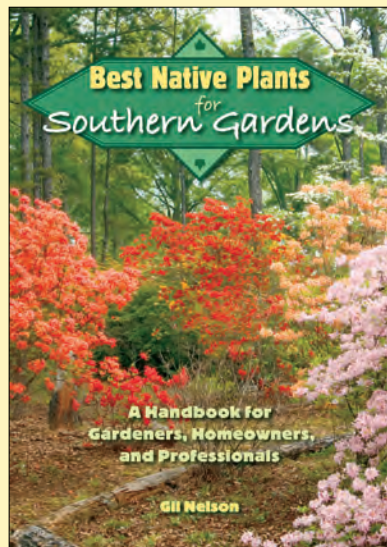
In almost all books of this nature, large, complex groups of plants are under-covered. To avoid this problem, Armitage instead tries to provide an understanding of how to approach large groups such as clematis or roses. He also suggests consulting books specifically about these groups or organizations devoted to their culture.

This would be a good reference for someone just starting to use vines or those who are looking for interesting and unusual climbers to add to the landscape. Armitage does an excellent job at encouraging gardeners to go beyond the common climbers and try something new.

—Richie Steffen

Richie Steffen maintains and builds the rare and unusual plant collections for the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden in Seattle, Washington.

The New, Must-Have Guide from Gil Nelson



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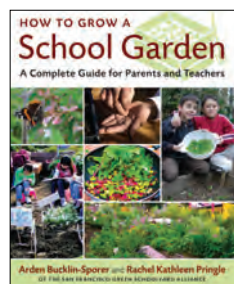
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How to Grow A School Garden

Arden Bucklin-Sporer and Rachel Kathleen Pringle, Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 2010. 224 pages. Publisher's price, softcover: \$24.95.

FOR ME, a school garden is a labor of love; clearly Arden Bucklin-Sporer and



Rachel Kathleen Pringle feel the same way. In *How to Grow a School Garden*, they synthesize 10 years of experience working with students

and schools in the San Francisco area into a thoughtful and informative guide to creating a sustainable outdoor education program.

The book begins with the important question of why students and communities benefit from school gardens. Backed by research and personal narratives, the authors make a sound argument for the necessity of garden-based learning and experiential education. Subsequent chapters describe everything from how to lay the groundwork to design considerations, budgeting, and breaking ground.

Once the garden is created, or for already existing gardens, Bucklin-Sporer and Pringle explain how to develop and manage a successful school garden program. They discuss the importance of connecting content standards with garden curriculum. While they use the Cal-

ifornia standards as an example, their advice is applicable anywhere. Another consideration is hiring a garden coordinator/educator—the authors succinctly demystify the requirements and responsibilities of this position.

Along with structured educational activities such as seasonal garden lessons and student journaling, the book encourages recognizing unanticipated opportunities for wonder in an outdoor learning environment. Gardens can be a gateway for getting kids excited about and interested in the natural world around them, so allowing self-guided exploration can be just as valuable as planned programs.

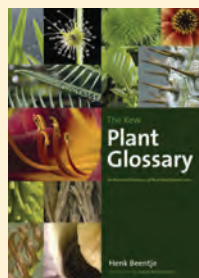
Bucklin-Sporer and Pringle close the book by sharing their reflections on the sometimes challenging but always rewarding process involved in establishing and cultivating a school garden. As someone who has had this experience, I could particularly relate to their observations of the excitement their first garden created: "It was impossible to deny how much the kids loved to be outside, how happy they were in the garden, and how much more willing they were to settle down when they returned to the classroom."

Easy to read, informative, and visually pleasing, any parent or teacher considering a school garden will find a wealth of information in this book.

—*Shawn Akard*

Shawn Akard is outdoor education coordinator for Hollin Meadows Science and Math Focus School in Alexandria, Virginia.

COMPILED BY botanist Henk Beentje, *The Kew Plant Glossary: An Illustrated Dictionary of Plant Terms* (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, 2010, \$30) contains more



than 4,100 botanical terms used to describe plants. Its inviting format avoids the monotony of similar glossaries by incorporating light green highlighted entries—each containing a line drawing or diagram by the author's wife, Juliet Williamson—throughout the text. The subject plates, nearly 30 in all, at the end of the book allow for quick identification of plant features such as leaf shapes, flower forms, and color.

If you've ever found yourself struggling to decipher the terms in a plant description (tripinnatifid, anyone?), or would just like a simple explanation of the difference between spines and thorns, this little book will surely come in handy. Students and professionals in the plant sciences will find it equally useful.

—*Caroline Bentley, special to The American Gardener*

REGIONAL HAPPENINGS

Horticultural Events from Around the Country

NORTHEAST

CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT

RAP SEPT. 17. **A Maine Harvest.** Art show and reception. Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens. Boothbay, Maine. (207) 633-4333. www.maine gardens.org.

SEPT. 24. **The First Annual North Hill Autumn Symposium: The Kitchen Garden and the Table.** Historic Scott Farm. Dummerston, Vermont. (802) 423-5444. www.northhillgarden.com.

RAP SEPT. 25 & 26. **Combined Plant Societies' Show & Sale.** American Begonia Society, Buxton Branch/Gesneriad Society, New England Chapter. Tower Hill Botanic Garden. Boylston, Massachusetts. (508) 869-6111. www.towerhillbg.org.

OCT. 2. **Mushroom Walk & Talk.** Friends of the Horticultural Farm. Burlington, Vermont. (802) 864-3073. www.friendsofthehortfarm.org.

RAP OCT. 9 & 10. **Dahlia Show.** Mid Island Dahlia Society. Planting Fields Arboretum.

Oyster Bay, New York. (516) 541-6452. www.dahliashows.com.

RAP OCT. 9-11. **Fall Festival Weekend: Family Harvest Weekend.** New York Botanical Garden. Bronx, New York. (718) 817-8616. www.nybg.org.

RAP OCT. 20. **Bulb Forcing Workshop.** Blithewold Mansion, Gardens & Arboretum. Blithewold Carriage House. Bristol, Rhode Island. (401) 253-2707. www.blithewold.org.

MID-ATLANTIC

PA, NJ, VA, MD, DE, WV, DC

SEPT. 23-26. **Preservation Weekend.** Conference. The Garden Conservancy. Mt. Cuba Center. Hockessin, Delaware. (845) 265-2029. www.gardenconservancy.org.

AHS SEPT. 25. **American Horticultural Society Annual Gala.** River Farm, Alexandria, Virginia. (703) 768-5700. www.ahs.org.

SEPT. 25. **Seed Saving Workshop.** Monticello,

Events sponsored by or including official participation by AHS or AHS staff members are identified with the **AHS** symbol.

Events hosted by botanical gardens and arboreta that participate in AHS's Reciprocal Admissions Program are identified with the **RAP** symbol. Current AHS members showing a valid membership card are eligible for free or discounted admission to the garden or other benefits. Special events may not be included; contact the host site for details or visit www.ahs.org/events/reciprocal_events.htm.

the Thomas Jefferson Foundation. Charlottesville, Virginia. (434) 984-9880. www.monticello.org.

OCT. 1 & 2. **Giving through Growing.** Workshops. American Community Gardening Association. Washington, D.C. (877) 275-2242. E-mail: info@communitygarden.org.

OCT. 7. **Herbal Wreath Crafting.** Workshop.

Planting Fields Arboretum Reopens Historic Italian Garden

ON JUNE 18, Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park and Coe Hall of Oyster Bay, New York, held a grand opening ceremony for its newly renovated Italian Garden. This historic garden had been inaccessible to the public for the last decade because its state of disrepair had rendered it too hazardous for visitors.

The Italian Garden was originally constructed in 1916 for Mai Rogers Coe, heiress of Standard Oil, on the 409-acre estate she and her husband William Robertson Coe had purchased in 1913. In seeking to restore the former glory of the garden, 10 years ago Planting Fields Foundation Executive Director Henry B. Joyce launched a fundraising campaign with the assistance of the Gerry Foundation and Planting Fields Foundation trustees.



The reflecting pool in the renovated Italian Garden

After eight years of fundraising and construction, the renovated garden was completely replanted based on a plan created by landscape architect Richard Gibney. The new plan, which maintains the historic character of the formal Italian garden, features a reflecting pool, ornamental urns and statues, French wood planters known as *caisses de Versailles*, and an Italy-inspired plant collection. The renovation project was the impetus for a summer-long exhibit, "Italian Gardens in America," which will be open at Coe Hall until September 30.

An AHS Reciprocal Admissions Program participant, Planting Fields offers free admission, a discount on the audio tour, and library privileges to AHS members with a current membership card. Visit www.plantingfields.org or call (516) 922-9200 for additional information.

—Meredith Soeder, Editorial Intern

Rosemary House and Gardens. Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. (717) 697-5111. www.therosemaryhouse.com.

RAP OCT. 9. **Fall Flowers and Fruits.** Garden walk. Winterthur Museum & Country Estate. Winterthur, Delaware. (800) 448-3883. www.winterthur.org.

RAP OCT. 9 & 10. **Mum Madness & Pumpkin Parade Family Festival.** Camden Children's Garden. Camden, New Jersey. (856) 365-8733. www.camdenchildrensgarden.org.

RAP OCT. 23. **Design Symposium.** Green Spring Gardens. Alexandria, Virginia. (703) 642-5173. www.greenspring.org.

RAP OCT. 24. **Goblins and Gourds.** Harvest celebration. Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Richmond, Virginia. (804) 262-9887. www.lewisginter.org.

Looking ahead

NOV. 3-5. **Independent Plant Breeders Conference.** Longwood Gardens. Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. (610) 388-5442. www.longwoodgardens.org.

SOUTHEAST

AL, FL, GA, KY, NC, SC, TN

RAP SEPT. 25. **Mounting & Repotting Orchids.** Workshop. Mounts Botanical Garden. West Palm Beach, Florida. (561) 233-1757. www.mounts.org.

OCT. 3-5. **Autumn Wildflower Workshop.** North Carolina Botanical Garden. High Hampton Inn & Country Club. Cashiers, North Carolina. (800) 334-2551. www.highhamptoninn.com.

RAP OCT. 8-10. **2010 Mid-South Native Plant Conference.** Dixon Gallery & Gardens. Memphis, Tennessee. (901) 761-5250. www.dixon.org.

RAP OCT. 9 & 10. **Carolina Bonsai Expo.** North Carolina Arboretum. Asheville, North Carolina. (828) 665-2492. www.ncarboretum.org.

RAP OCT. 16 & 17. **Fall Plant Sale.** Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Birmingham, Alabama. (205) 414-3960. www.bbgardens.org.

RAP OCT. 21-24. **Fall Plant Sale and Party.** Mobile Botanical Gardens. Mobile, Alabama. (251) 342-0555. www.mobilebotanicalgardens.org.

RAP OCT. 23 & 24. **Edible Garden Festival.** Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. Coral Gables, Florida. (305) 667-1651. www.fairchildgarden.org.

RAP OCT. 28. **Garden Gems.** Lecture.

Fayette County Master Gardeners & Friends of the Arboretum. Fayette County Extension Office. Lexington, Kentucky. (859) 257-6955. www.ca.uky.edu/arboretum.

Looking ahead

NOV. 3-7. **American Bamboo Society Annual Conference 2010.** Hilton Desoto. Savannah, Georgia. (229) 782-7455. www.sec-bamboo.org.

NORTH CENTRAL

IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI

SEPT. 16-18. **2010 Upper Midwest Master Gardeners Conference.** Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau and the University of Illinois Extension office. Clock Tower Resort. Rockford, Illinois. (815) 544-3710. <http://my.ilstu.edu/~cmseffr/MG/>.

SEPT. 24-26. **Chicagoland Orchid Fest.** Chicagoland Orchid Growers Association. Chicago, Illinois. (847) 428-8500. www.chicagolandorchidfestival.com.

SEPT. 25 & 26. **Barberton Mum Fest.** City of Barberton Beautification. Lake Anna Park. Barberton, Ohio. (330) 848-6653. E-mail: Lmclean@cityofbarberton.com.

RAP OCT. 3. **Fall Festival.** Toledo Botanical Garden. Toledo, Ohio. (419) 536-5566. www.toledogarden.org.

RAP OCT. 16 & 17. **Midwest Fruit Explorers Show & Sale.** Chicago Botanic Garden. Glencoe, Illinois. (847) 835-5440. www.chicagobotanic.org/plantshows.

RAP OCT. 23. **Leaf Collection Show and Petiole Tour.** Brenton Arboretum. Dallas Center, Iowa. (515) 992-4211. www.thebrentonarboretum.org.

OCT. 23. **Natural Landscaping Conference.** Milwaukee Area Wild Ones. Cardinal Stritch University. Milwaukee, Wisconsin. (877) 394-9453. www.for-wild.org.

RAP OCT. 30. **The Artistry of Tree Forms.** Art class and tour. Morton Arboretum. Lisle, Illinois. (630) 725-2103. www.mortonarb.org.

Looking ahead

NOV. 6. **INPAWS Annual Conference.** Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society. University of Indianapolis. Indianapolis, Indiana. (317) 831-1715. www.inpaws.org.

SOUTH CENTRAL

AR, KS, LA, MO, MS, OK, TX

RAP SEPT. 18. **Metropolitan St. Louis African Violet Council Sale.** Missouri Botanical Garden. Beaumont Room at Ridgway Visitor Center. St. Louis, Missouri. (314) 577-5100. www.avsa.org.

RAP SEPT. 25 & 26. **Fort Worth Orchid Society Sale.** Fort Worth Botanic Garden. Fort Worth, Texas. (817) 871-7686. www.fwbgo.org.

OCT. 2. **PlantFest! 2010.** Hilltop Arboretum. Louisiana State University. Baton Rouge, Louisiana. (225) 767-6916. www.lsu.edu/hilltop.

OCT. 7-10. **Native Plant Society of Texas Symposium.** Texas Women's University. Denton, Texas. (830) 997-9272. www.npsot.org/symposium2010.

OCT. 26. **Oklahoma Certified Wildscape: Create Your Own.** Class. OSU-OKC Agriculture Research Center. Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. (405) 943-0827. www.okhort.org.

SOUTHWEST

AZ, NM, CO, UT

RAP SEPT. 25. **Fall Plant and Bulb Sale.** Denver Botanic Gardens. Denver, Colorado. (720) 865-3500. www.botanicgardens.org.

SEPT. 25. **Rocky Mountain African Violet Society Fall Sale.** Plant Sale. Rocky Mountain African Violet Society. Tagawa Gardens. Centennial, Colorado. (303) 690-4722. www.tagawagardens.com.

OCT. 9 & 10. **Harvest Festival.** Rio Grande Botanic Garden. Heritage Farm. Albuquerque, New Mexico. (505) 768-2000. www.cabq.gov/biopark/garden.

RAP OCT. 16. **Pumpkin Walk.** The Arboretum at Flagstaff. Flagstaff, Arizona. (928) 774-1442 ext. 110. www.thearb.org.

OCT. 16 & 17. **Orchid Show & Sale.** Orchid Society of Arizona. Arizona State Veteran's Home. Phoenix, Arizona. (602) 803-6889. www.orchidsocietyaz.org.

WEST COAST

CA, NV, HI

SEPT. 23-26. **Style & Whimsy in the Sustainable Garden.** Pacific Horticulture Symposium. Pasadena, California. (510) 849-1627. www.pacifichorticulture.org/programs/php.

RAP SEPT. 25 & 26. **Orchid Show & Sale.** South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation. Palos Verdes Peninsula, California. (310) 544-1948. www.southcoastbotanicgarden.org.

RAP OCT. 2-6. **The 6th International Symposium of Japanese Gardens.** International Association of Japanese Gardens. Japanese Friendship Garden. San Diego, California. (619) 232-2721. www.niwa.org.

New Visitor Center Opens at Bayou Bend Gardens

ON SEPTEMBER 25, Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens in Houston, Texas, will host the grand opening of its Lora Jean Kilroy Visitor and Education Center. The center will offer an enhanced visitor experience with spaces for public programming, a research library, and a central location for special exhibits relating to American history, art, and culture.



The east facade of the visitor center

The grand opening will include educational opportunities, musical performances, tours, and family-oriented activities. Curator Bart Brechter will use hands-on demonstrations to show how Bayou Bend is maintained, and guided tours will highlight the innovative construction methods and eco-friendly design elements that earned the Kilroy Center a prestigious Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification. Admission is free for this one-day event.

Bayou Bend is the former estate of philanthropist and art collector Ima Hogg, the daughter of a former Texas governor. In addition to enjoying the grand opening festivities, guests will have the opportunity to walk around the 14-acre historic estate, which includes eight acres of organically maintained gardens. Highlights include the native bayou woodlands on the edge of the property and the garden's rare Duchesse de Caze pink camellias, which are no longer available for commercial sale.

For more information on the garden or the grand opening ceremonies, visit www.mfah.org/bayoubend or call (713) 639-7554.

—Meredith Soeder, Editorial Intern

RAP OCT. 9. **Succulent Troubleshooting.** Workshop. Ruth Bancroft Garden. Walnut Creek, California. (925) 944-9352. www.ruthbancroftgarden.org.

OCT. 16 & 17. **Long Beach Indoor Gardening Expo.** Long Beach Convention Center. Long Beach, California. (250) 729-2677. www.indoorgardenexpo.com/lb2010_show.php.

RAP OCT. 22–24. **Harvest Festival and Plant Fair.** Descanso Gardens. La Cañada Flintridge, California. (818) 949-7980. www.descansogardens.org.

OCT. 23. **Sowing the Seeds of Wonder: Discovering the Garden in Early Childhood Education.** Educator Workshop. Life Lab Science Program. Santa Cruz, California. (831) 459-3833. www.lifelab.org.

OCT. 23. **Winterizing Sprinkler Systems.** Workshop. Wilbur D. May Arboretum & Botanical Garden. Reno, Nevada. (775) 785-4153. www.washoecounty.us/parks/arboretum.

OCT. 29. **Fourth Quarter Gardens: An August to December Romance.** Seminar and garden

tours. The Garden Conservancy, Ruth Bancroft Garden, and *Pacific Horticulture* magazine. Lafayette Public Library. Lafayette, California. (415) 441-4300. www.gardenconservancy.org.

OCT. 30. **8th Annual Gardening Festival.** Alameda County Master Gardeners. Merritt College. Oakland, California. (510) 639-1275. <http://groups.ucanr.org/ACMG/>.

Looking ahead

RAP NOV. 6 & 7. **Annual Fall Plant Sale.** Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. Claremont, California. (909) 625-8767. www.rsabg.com.

NORTHWEST

AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY

SEPT. 18 & 19. **Dahlia Show.** Lane County Dahlia Society. Lane Events Center. Eugene, Oregon. (541) 461-8004. www.dahliashows.com.

SEPT. 23 & 25. **2010 Convention.** Oregon Association of Nurseries. Riverhouse Resort. Bend, Oregon. (503) 682-5089. www.oan.org.

OCT. 2 & 3. **Sunset Empire Orchid Society Show.** Bob Chisholm Community Center. Seaside, Oregon. (503) 861-1344. E-mail: sunsetorchid@gmail.com.

RAP OCT. 2–4. **Fall Bulb and Plant Sale.** The Arboretum Foundation. Washington Park Arboretum. Seattle, Washington. (206) 325-4510. www.arboretumfoundation.org.

OCT. 13. **Designing with Elegant Silvers.** Lecture. Northwest Horticultural Society. Center for Urban Horticulture. Seattle, Washington. (206) 527-1794. www.northwesthort.org.

OCT. 13–15. **Top Japanese Garden Designers Reunion.** Public forum and discussion. Portland Japanese Garden. Portland, Oregon. (503) 328-0050. www.japanesegarden.com.

OCT. 24. **Discovering the Jewels in the Crown.** Talk. Montana Native Plant Society. Gallagher Business Building of the University of Montana. Missoula, Montana. (406) 466-3661. www.mtnativeplants.org.

Looking ahead

NOV. 10. **Living Green: High Concept Design Meets Sustainability.** Lecture. Northwest Horticultural Society. Center for Urban Horticulture. Seattle, Washington. (206) 527-1794. www.northwesthort.org.

CANADA

SEPT. 18 & 19. **Dahlia Show.** Fraser Valley Dahlia Society. George Preston Recreation Centre. Langley, British Columbia. (604) 792-0242. www.dahliashows.com.

RAP SEPT. 26. **The Toronto African Violet Society Fall Open House and Sale.** Toronto African Violet Society. Toronto Botanical Gardens. Toronto, Ontario. (416) 964-9305. <http://tavs.ca/>.

SEPT. 29 & 30. **CanWest Horticulture Show.** Horticulture trade show. Vancouver Convention Centre. Vancouver, British Columbia. (604) 574-7772. www.canwesthortshow.com.

OCT. 19 & 20. **Window to the World: Landscape Ontario's Expo.** Garden and floral expo. Toronto Congress Centre. Toronto, Ontario. (800) 265-5656 ext. 2366. <http://loexpo.ca>.

OCT. 27–30. **Communities in Bloom: Awards Ceremonies and Symposium on Parks and Grounds.** Halifax Regional Municipality. Halifax, Nova Scotia. (514) 694-8871. www.communitiesinbloom.ca.

OCT. 30 & 31. **Fall Colour Days at Milner.** Milner Gardens & Woodland. Qualicum Beach, British Columbia. (250) 752-6153. www.milnergardens.org.

PRONUNCIATIONS AND PLANTING ZONES



Most of the cultivated plants described in this issue are listed here with their pronunciations, USDA Plant Hardiness Zones, and AHS Plant Heat Zones. These zones suggest a range of locations where temperatures are appropriate—both in winter and summer—for growing each plant.

While the zones are a good place to start in determining plant adaptability in your region, factors such as exposure, moisture, snow cover, and humidity also play an important role in plant survival. The zones tend to be conservative; plants may grow outside the ranges indicated. A USDA zone rating of 0–0 means that the plant is a true annual and completes its life cycle in a year or less.

A–C

- Abelia** × *grandiflora* uh-BEEL-yuh gran-dih-FLOR-uh (USDA Zones 6–9, AHS Zones 9–6)
Acer *triflorum* AY-sur try-FLOR-um (5–7, 7–4)
Anisacanthus *wrightii* uh-nis-uh-KAN-thus RITE-ee-eye (7–10, 10–7)
Arbutus *unedo* AR-byew-tus YEW-nee-doh (8–9, 9–6)
Baccharis *halimifolia* BAK-uh-riss hal-ih-mih-FO-lee-uh (5–9, 9–4)
Baptisia *alba* bap-TEEZ-yuh AL-buh (3–9, 9–3)
Camellia *japonica* kuh-MEEL-yuh jah-PON-ih-kuh (7–8, 8–7)
C. oleifera C. o-lee-IF-ur-uh (6–9, 9–5)
C. sasanqua C. sah-SAHNG-kwuh (7–8, 8–7)
Caryopteris × *clandonensis* kair-ee-OP-tur-iss klan-doh-NEN-siss (6–9, 9–1)
C. incana C. in-KAN-uh (6–9, 9–1)
Ceratostigma *griffithii* sur-at-o-STIG-muh GRIF-ith-ee-eye (7–10, 10–7)
Clerodendrum *trichotomum* kleer-o-DEN-drum try-KO-toh-mum (7–9, 9–7)

D–G

- Dalea** *frutescens* DAY-lee-uh froo-TES-enz (8–10, 11–8)
Daphne *caucasica* DAF-nee kaw-KAZ-ih-kuh (6–8, 8–6)
D. collina D. ko-LEE-nuh (7–8, 8–7)
D. ×transatlantica D. tranz-at-LAN-tih-kuh (6–9, 9–6)
Diospyros *kaki* dy-OS-pih-ros KAH-kee (7–10, 10–7)
D. virginiana D. vir-jin-ee-AN-uh (4–9, 9–1)
Disanthus *cercidifolius* dis-AN-thus sur-sid-ih-FO-lee-us (5–8, 8–5)
Echinacea *pallida* ek-ih-NAY-see-uh PAL-ih-dah (4–8, 8–1)
E. purpurea E. pur-PUR-ee-uh (3–9, 9–1)

- Elsholtzia** *stauntonii* el-SHOLT-see-uh stawn-TOWN-ee-eye (5–8, 8–5)
Ericameria *laricifolia* air-ih-kuh-MAIR-ee-uh luh-rih-sih-FO-lee-uh (8–11, 12–8)
Eryngium *yuccifolium* ee-RIN-jee-um yuk-ih-FO-lee-um (4–9, 12–1)
Escallonia *bifida* es-kuh-LO-nee-uh BIF-ih-duh (8–9, 9–8)
Eupatorium *fistulosum* yew-puh-TOR-ee-um fis-tyew-LO-sum (3–8, 8–2)
Fallugia *paradoxa* fah-LEW-gee-uh pair-uh-DOK-suh (7–11, 12–7)
Filipendula *rubra* fih-lih-PEN-dyew-luh ROO-bruh (3–9, 9–1)
Gentiana *andrewsii* jen-she-AN-uh an-DREW-zee-eye (3–7, 7–1)

H–O

- Hamamelis** *virginiana* ham-uh-ME-liss vir-jin-ee-AN-uh (3–8, 8–1)
Heptacodium *miconioides* hep-tuh-KO-dee-um my-kon-ee-OY-deez (5–9, 9–4)
Hesperaloe *parviflora* hes-pur-AL-o par-vih-FLOR-uh (6–11, 12–6)
Hibiscus *mutabilis* hy-BISS-kus mew-TAH-bih-liss (10–11, 12–8)
H. syriacus H. sih-ree-AH-kus (5–9, 9–1)
Lespedeza *thunbergii* les-peh-DEE-zuh thun-BER-jee-eye (6–8, 8–6)
Leucophyllum *frutescens* loo-ko-FIL-um froo-TES-enz (8–9, 9–8)
Liatris *pycnostachya* ly-AY-triss pik-no-STAKE-ee-uh (3–8, 8–1)
L. spicata L. spy-KAY-tuh (4–9, 9–1)
Luculia *gratissima* lew-KEW-lee-uh gra-TIS-sim-uh (10–11, 12–10)
Monarda *fistulosa* moh-NAR-duh fis-tyew-LO-suh (3–9, 9–1)
Osmanthus *armatus* oz-MAN-thuss arm-AH-tus (7–9, 9–7)
O. fragrans O. FRAY-granz (8–11, 12–8)
O. heterophyllum O. het-ur-ah-FIL-lus (7–9, 9–7)

P–Z

- Parthenium** *integrifolium* par-THEE-nee-um in-teg-rih-FO-lee-um (4–8, 8–1)
Plumbago *auriculata* plum-BAY-go aw-rik-yew-LAY-tuh (11–11, 12–10)
Rhododendron *prunifolium* ro-doh-DEN-dron proo-nih-FO-lee-um (6–9, 9–5)
Rhus *chinensis* RUS chy-NEN-siss (5–8, 8–5)
Rudbeckia *subtomentosa* rood-BEK-ee-uh sub-toh-men-TOH-suh (4–7, 7–1)
Salvia *greggii* SAL-vee-uh GREG-ee-eye (7–9, 9–4)
Sedum *aizoon* SEE-dum AY-zoon (3–8, 8–1)
S. erythrostictum S. er-ith-ro-STIK-tum (6–9, 9–6)
S. sieboldii S. see-BOL-dee-eye (6–9, 9–6)
S. spectabile S. spek-TAB-ih-lee (4–9, 9–1)
S. telephium S. tuh-LEF-ee-um (4–9, 9–1)
Silphium *integrifolium* SIL-fee-um in-teg-rih-FO-lee-um (4–7, 7–1)
S. laciniatum S. lah-syn-ee-AY-tum (5–9, 9–5)
Solidago *ohioensis* sol-ih-DAY-go o-hy-o-EN-siss (4–9, 9–1)
Sporobolus *heterolepis* spor-OB-o-lus het-ur-o-LEP-iss (3–8, 10–2)
Taxodium *distichum* taks-O-dee-um DIS-tih-kum (5–11, 12–5)
Tibouchina *grandifolia* tih-boo-KY-nuh gran-dih-FO-lee-uh (11–11, 12–7)
T. urvilleana T. ur-vil-lee-AN-uh (10–11, 12–7)
Vernonia *gigantea* vur-NO-nee-uh jy-GAN-tee-uh (5–9, 9–1)
Veronicastrum *virginicum* ver-on-ih-KASS-trum vir-JIN-ih-kum (4–8, 8–3)
Viburnum *dilatatum* vy-BUR-num dih-luh-TAY-tum (5–8, 8–5)
Vitex *agnus-castus* VY-teks AG-nus KAS-tus (6–9, 9–6)

GARDEN MARKET

CLASSIFIED AD RATES: All classified advertising must be prepaid. \$2.75 per word; minimum \$66 per insertion. Copy and prepayment must be received by the 20th of the month three months prior to publication date. Display ad space is also available. To place an ad, call (703) 768-5700 ext. 120 or e-mail advertising@ahs.org.

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Season–Spanning Beauty: *Acer triflorum*

by Bob Hill

IF I WERE in charge of naming trees, my goal would be to reflect their overall beauty and landscape appeal rather than glorify insignificant botanical details, such as the number of flowers. The first common name on my chopping block would be the three-flower maple (*Acer triflorum*, USDA Hardiness Zones 5–7, AHS Heat Zones 7–4). The name may be botanically accurate, but it just doesn’t do this fine tree justice.

YEAR-ROUND APPEAL

Despite its uninspiring common name, the three-flower maple has lots of other things going for it. In his *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants*, former University of Georgia horticulturist Michael Dirr calls it “one of my favorites; the bark and fall color cannot be adequately described in words; not easy to propagate and obtain, but a real treasure for the discriminating gardener.”

Native to North Korea, Manchuria, and northern China, the three-flower maple grows 20 to 30 feet tall. There is a lot of variability in the species, but the good selections just get better every year, growing upright and handsome, with limbs reaching up and out in perfect proportion to the furrowed trunk.

While attractive year round, it is especially so in the fall when the foliage turns brilliant orange, red, yellow, and purple. Its exfoliating bark peels in vertical strips to reveal tan to amber coloring. The inconspicuous greenish flowers bloom in late spring in clusters of three.



Three-flower maple has colorful fall foliage, above left, and attractive peeling bark, above right.

Three-flower maple holds up well as it ages, becoming the focal point of a mature garden or a perfect specimen tree. It does require rich, acidic soil and lots of sun to fulfill that promise, but its adaptability is evident in its uses across the United States.

REGIONAL KUDOS

In addition to Dirr’s accolades, the three-flower maple has received recognition from several regional plant award programs. It was the 2008 winner of the Cary Award for the Distinctive Plants for New England. The Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest in Kentucky has it on its “Bernheim Select” list, and the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden in Seattle has included it on its “Great Plant Picks” list.

I have a pair of very happy three-flower maples growing in the mini-arboretum my wife and I have created at our home in southern Indiana. One is just behind our

screened-in back porch, where its deeply-furrowed bark and finely-etched green leaves can be enjoyed from a reclined position. The second is paired up with a hybrid maple known as Girard’s form—probably a cross between *Acer griseum* and *A. maximowiczianum*—which has reddish, less-fluted bark that offers a nice contrast to the more rugged, amber-colored features of the three-flower maple.

If I were given license to tinker with the common name, I would go with something along the lines of “ridgebark maple” or “amber maple.” With a name that better reflects its best traits, I bet this tree would be growing in many more gardens.

Bob Hill is a garden radio show host and former columnist for the Courier-Journal, Louisville, Kentucky. He lives in Utica, Indiana.

Resources

Manual of Woody Landscapes Plants
by Michael Dirr. Stipes Publishing,
Champaign, Illinois, 2009.

Sources

Camellia Forest Farm, Chapel Hill,
NC. (919) 968-0504.
www.camforest.com.

Wildwood Farm, Kenwood, CA.
(888) 833-4181.
www.wildwoodmaples.com.

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