



The American GARDENER[®]

The Magazine of the American Horticultural Society

July / August 2012

**Cottage Gardening
with Native Plants**

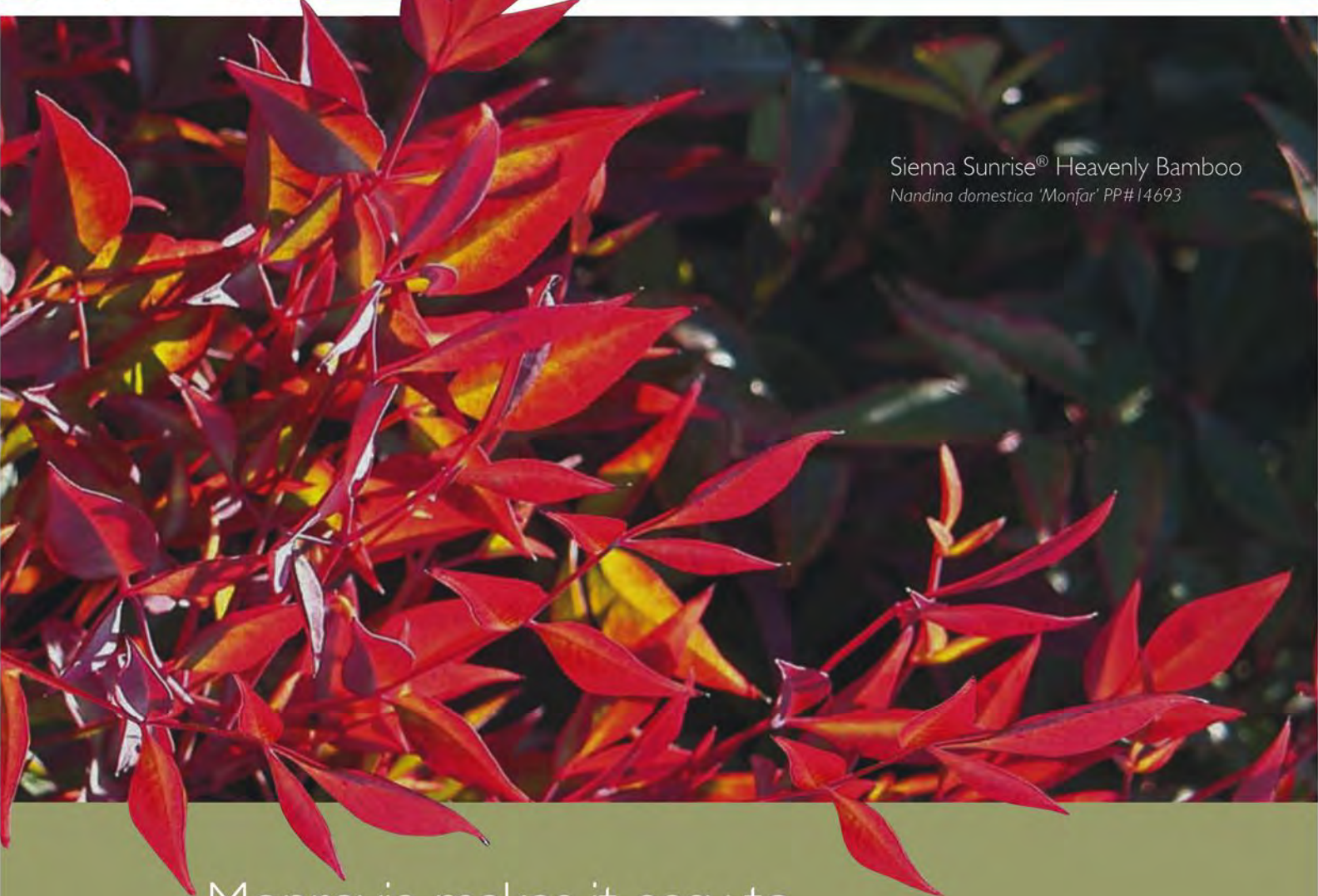
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handsome
has a
whole other
meaning.



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NOTES FROM RIVER FARM



IN MAY, we joined representatives from a dozen national plant societies at a summit hosted at the American Rose Society's headquarters in Shreveport, Louisiana. The focus of the meeting was to share ideas and best practices to ensure the continued relevance of plant societies in today's increasingly fast-paced and technology-driven world.

We spent a stimulating two days discussing membership, volunteerism, and social media. We learned about some exciting programs and innovations these groups have underway, including the American Camellia Society's work at its Masee Lane Gardens headquarters in Georgia, the American Orchid Society's partnership with Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Florida, and the Azalea Society of America's Azalea City program. And we shared news of our own major projects, including the creation of a digital archive of our publications, the ongoing redesign of our website, and the infrastructure upgrades at our River Farm headquarters.

While we are always thinking about how we can better serve American Horticultural Society members and fulfill our mission of connecting people with plants and gardens, this national summit of plant society leaders was an opportunity for us to reflect on how we as an organization need to evolve in order to remain vital and vibrant through the 21st century and beyond.

Coming up with a comprehensive strategy for this is challenging because of the many different constituencies the American Horticultural Society represents. These include members from different regions of North America, participants in our National Children & Youth Garden Symposium, horticultural partner organizations, and visitors of River Farm. Not to mention the diverse horticultural interests of our individual members, who range from professionals to casual gardeners. As a starting point for discussion with you, our members, here are a few of our initial thoughts for strategies that would help us serve all of our constituents most effectively:

- Deliver timely, practical gardening information and horticultural programs in a variety of accessible formats and media.
- Adapt our programs to expand the ranks of gardeners across the nation and cultivate the next generation of gardeners.
- Celebrate and promote the many ways gardens and gardening serve to improve the quality of life in our communities.
- Serve as a conduit between home gardeners and the gardening industry by monitoring research and trends and sharing information relevant to both groups.
- Embrace an advocacy role in addressing important national gardening issues.
- Preserve and share the remarkable history of horticulture and gardening in America.

As we begin the process of refining these strategies, we would appreciate input from all our members and other constituents. Please send comments or suggestions to us by e-mail to tunderwood@ahs.org. Or write to us at the address listed to the right of this column.

In the meantime, enjoy the summer and best wishes from all of us at the AHS,

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



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. 132 or send an e-mail to development@ahs.org.

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, e-mail youthprograms@ahs.org 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. 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 (703) 768-5700 ext. 132, send an e-mail to jsawczuk@ahs.org, 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. To access the members-only section of the website, the user name is **garden** and the password is **2012ahs**.

MEMBERS' FORUM

GOOD STINKBUGS?

I enjoyed reading Scott Aker's very informative article, "Invasion of the Stinkbugs," in the May/June issue. However, I was wondering how gardeners can distinguish the brown marmorated stinkbug from those stinkbugs that are beneficial? There is always confusion on my part—and I presume others.

*Peg Owens
Gainesville, Florida*

Scott Aker responds: Thank you for pointing out that some stinkbugs are beneficial. Even among the plant feeders in the stinkbug family, species that cause significant damage are few. Among the "good" stinkbugs are the anchor stinkbug, which is a voracious predator of Mexican bean beetle larvae and caterpillar pests, and the spined soldier bug, which is a major predator of gypsy moth caterpillars and Colorado potato beetles.

MORE TO GARDENING SUCCESS THAN ZONES

As was pointed out in the article about the new USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map (March/April 2012), "...a plant's survival depends on a lot more than minimum average temperature..." I believe most gardeners know that there are myriad factors determining plant hardiness. What I would like to see is an in-depth article discussing the methodology underlying the designation of plant hardiness. How many locations and how varied are the conditions for those who report this information? To whom do they report it? What filters are the data run through? What are the checks and balances involved, if any? In other words, how well does this information depict any given plant?

I have grown many plants over the years that theoretically should not have done well in my gardens. I have often wondered if there might be more to these successes than pH, microclimates, climate change, or other possible explanations.

*Bob Hatton
Amarillo, Texas*



The brown marmorated stinkbug, above, has beneficial counterparts, including the anchor stinkbug, top right, (shown attacking a cottonwood leaf beetle) and the spined soldier bug, bottom right.

AGGREGATES FOR VOLE CONTROL

Rita Pelczar makes reference to the use of expanded aggregates as a physical barrier to protect plants against vole damage in her article in the May/June issue, but doesn't advise further. How is it best used for this purpose? How effective is it? I have resorted to making baskets of hardware cloth to protect the primary roots of my hostas, but would love an easier, more time-efficient alternative.

*Raquel Ruiz
Westford, Massachusetts*

Rita Pelczar responds: As I mentioned in the article on expanded aggregates, expanded slate can provide an effective physical barrier to voles. As a matter of fact, it is marketed expressly for this purpose by Stalite PermaTill under the name Vole-Bloc. Espoma's Soil Perfector, another expanded slate product, works as a vole barrier as well. The coarse texture of the aggregate particles placed between roots and voles discourages their digging and physically inhibits their contact with plants.

These products are most effective when used at planting time by placing a two-inch layer on the bottom of the planting hole before setting the root ball in place. Surround the root ball with a three- to four-inch "moat" of the expanded slate as you backfill, and top with a one- to two-inch layer of expanded slate mulch on the surface. Protect bulbs similarly, covering each bulb completely with



the expanded slate; once covered, fill the remaining planting hole with a 50:50 mixture of expanded slate and topsoil.

For existing plantings, dig a three- to four-inch-wide band around the drip-line, 10 to 12 inches deep, and fill with the expanded slate. Top with another couple of inches on the soil surface.

Because the expanded slate doesn't break down readily, it provides long-term protection against voles, and your plants will enjoy the added benefit of improved drainage.

CORRECTION

In the article on native vines in the May/June issue, we incorrectly cited Confederate jasmine as an alternate common name for Carolina jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*). Confederate jasmine is the common name for *Trachelospermum jasminoides*. Thanks to alert member Cynthia Brantley of Spring Hope, North Carolina, for bringing this to our attention.

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 PRESENTS

19th Annual Gala

Garden Delights

An Evening by the River

☞ Saturday, September, 22, 2012 ☞

6:00pm - 10:00pm



At River Farm in Alexandria, Virginia

The American Horticultural Society's Board of Directors invites you to join us for an evening of fine dining and entertainment in the garden at our *19th Annual Gala, Garden Delights: An Evening by the River*. With 25 acres of lawn, meadows, woodland and formal gardens, and with scenic views of the Potomac River, River Farm is a place of natural year-round beauty and a perfect showcase for the unique history of American horticulture. This year's event will celebrate the many delightful aspects of our gardens on the river.

This year's honorary chair is Kurt Bluemel, a renowned plantsman and designer who has championed the use of ornamental grasses and herbaceous perennials in the American landscape. His 40-year-old landscape design company, Kurt Bluemel, Inc., works with Fortune 500 companies, zoos, theme parks and businesses across the US and overseas. Trained in Germany and Switzerland, Kurt is past president of the Perennial Plant Association and lectures to gardening groups and organizations around the world.

This festive evening under the stars will include an elegant formal dinner and silent auction. Attire is black-tie. Advance reservations only: tables for 10 and individual tickets are available.

All proceeds from the Gala and Online Auction benefit the stewardship of River Farm and the American Horticultural Society's outreach and educational programs.

For more information about the Gala, or to purchase tickets, please contact:

Joanne Sawczuk at 703.768.5700 ext. 132
or email jsawczuk@ahs.org

Sponsorship opportunities are also available.

ONLINE Auction

In conjunction with the annual Gala, the American Horticultural Society is proud to announce its fourth annual online auction, featuring an array of exclusive experiences and special offerings. The AHS online auction is your chance to bid on 'once in a lifetime' experiences that allow you to spend time as exclusive guests of a prominent American horticulturist, botanic garden director, or landscape designer.

Visit www.bluetreemarketing.com/AHS for more information about the online auction.



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News from the AHS

July / August 2012

PROGRAMS • EVENTS • ANNOUNCEMENTS

BURPEE FOUNDATION GRANT SUPPORTS 20TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY has received a \$25,000 grant from the **Burpee Foundation** in support of the National Children & Youth Garden Symposium (NCYGS). The Burpee Foundation, a philanthropic organization based in New York City, works to further gardening education. Prominent mail-order seed and plant supplier **W. Atlee Burpee & Co.** was a sponsor of the first symposium in 1993, so it is especially fitting that the Burpee Foundation is the official Presenting Sponsor for the 20th symposium this year.

There is also a personal tie between Burpee and the NCYGS—**George C. Ball Jr.**, chairman of the board at the Burpee Foundation and chairman and CEO of W. Atlee Burpee & Co., served as president of the AHS from 1990 to 1993 and was instrumental in developing the first symposium.

Each year, the NCYGS has been held in a different part of the country in order to bring information and resources to as many people as possible. This year's symposium will take place from July 19 through July 21 in the Washington, D.C., area. Visit www.ahs.org/ncygs for more details.

GROUNDBREAKING FOR RIVER FARM INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

ON JUNE 8, AHS Board Chair **Harry Risetto** dug the first ceremonial shovel-full of soil to kick off the construction phase of the infrastructure project that will bring about necessary upgrades to River Farm's water, sanitary, and communications systems. The project is the culmination of six years of organization, planning, and fundraising.

"This is a historic occasion for the American Horticultural Society as we break ground on this project that will enhance the operational capacity of River Farm, ensuring the vi-



Participating in the ceremonial groundbreaking for the River Farm infrastructure project were, from left to right: Susie Usrey, immediate past AHS Board chair; Bryan Dold, vice president of construction at Akridge; Harry Risetto, AHS Board chair; Ted Johnson, senior vice president at John Marshall Bank; Ed Ignacio, senior project manager at VIKA; Kurt Ferst, senior operations manager at Magnolia Plumbing; and Tom Underwood, AHS executive director.

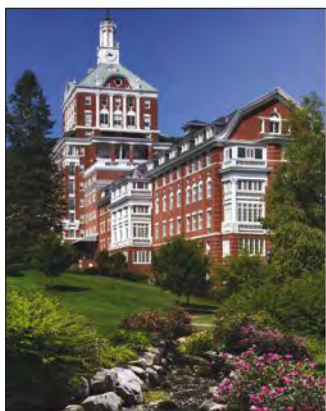
ability of our national headquarters for decades to come,” says Executive Director **Tom Underwood**. “We thank all of those who have supported the project over the years either through donations to the ‘By the Foot’ campaign or in-kind contributions.”

Many of those who have been instrumental in the process attended the ceremony, including **Susie Usrey**, immediate past chair of the AHS Board, **Brian Dold** of commercial real estate firm Akridge, **Ted Johnson** of John Marshall Bank, **Kurt Ferst** of Magnolia Plumbing, and **Ed Ignacio** from the engineering firm VIKA. Also on hand were members of the AHS Board of Directors, and members of the local community.

The construction phase of the infrastructure project is expected to be completed by spring 2013.

GARDENING-FOCUSED WEEKEND AT HOMESTEAD RESORT

LEAVE YOUR OWN planting, pruning, and weeding behind and come enjoy a weekend in someone else’s garden at the 14th



The Homestead Resort

annual “In the Garden” weekend at the Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Virginia. The weekend getaway, for which the AHS is a sponsor, will be held from August 17 to 19. Participants will be able to attend seminars by three gardening experts, tour the Homestead’s beautiful gardens, and enjoy a wine tasting hosted by **Gabriele Rausse**, known as the “father of the modern Virginia wine industry.” Participants will receive a complimentary AHS

membership as part of their registration.

The keynote speaker for the weekend is **André Viette**, noted horticulturist and host of the “In the Garden” radio show. He will be speaking about “All-Time Favorite Plants” for the garden. Other speakers will address topics such as growing grapes at home and how to bring big ideas into small gardens.

For more information about the “In the Garden” weekend and to register, visit www.thehomestead.com.

CELEBRATING “HORTICULTURAL HEROES”

EACH YEAR, the AHS’s Great American Gardeners Awards program recognizes outstanding contributions to horticulture from throughout North America. This year’s recipients and their families joined AHS Board members and staff for the awards ceremony and banquet at River Farm on June 7.

The most prestigious award, the Liberty Hyde Bailey Award, is given to an individual who has made significant lifetime contributions to horticulture through multiple disciplines, including research, leadership, communication, art, and business. This year’s winner, **Allan M. Armitage**, is a well recognized figure in all of these areas. A professor of horticulture at the University of Georgia (UGA), Armitage received the AHS Teaching Award in 1994. He was instrumental in the creation of the UGA Trial Garden in 1982 and he has written 13 books and numerous articles.

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AHS 2012 NATIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

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

JULY 19–21. **National Children & Youth Garden Symposium.** Washington, D.C.

AUG. 17–19. **The Homestead's "In the Garden" Weekend.** Hot Springs, Virginia.

SEPT. 20–22. **America in Bloom Symposium and Awards Program.** Fayetteville, Arkansas.

SEPT. 22. **AHS Annual Gala.** River Farm, Alexandria, Virginia.

OCT. 26–NOV. 5. **Heritage and Gardens of Andalusia.** AHS Travel Study Program. Spain.

DEC. 3–21. **Holiday Trees Display.** River Farm, Alexandria, Virginia.



Laura Dowling receives her award from AHS Board Chair Harry Risetto.

Ten other Great American Gardeners Awards were presented throughout the evening in such fields as plant research, garden communication, and youth gardening. **Laura Dowling**, the chief floral designer at the White House, received an award for her exceptional floral design work, and the **Smithsonian Gardens** received the Urban Beautification Award. The AHS also presented Book Awards to five outstanding gardening books published in 2011. To see a complete list of this year's winners and to nominate award recipients for 2013, visit www.ahs.org/awards.

IN MEMORIAM: SALLY BOASBERG

FORMER AHS Board of Directors member **Sally Boasberg** died on March 28. Boasberg was a crusader for environmental and horticultural causes in Washington, D.C. Her distinguished career included tireless work to create and protect green spaces in Washington, D.C., service to the U.S. National Arboretum, and acting as a founder and co-chair of the Cultural Landscape Foundation.

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 April 1, 2012, and June 30, 2012.

\$1,000+ gifts

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Mr. and Mrs. Tom Underwood
Yacht Haven Garden Club

In memory of Barbara Wall Bond and Louise Vanderburgh Wall
Ms. Judy Daniel

In honor of Ms. Arabella Dane
Hanover Garden Club

In memory of Mrs. Ida O'Connor
Ms. Jan Robbins Cox

In memory of Mr. Ben Rickard
Ms. Susan J. Shepard

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 Scott Lyons at slyons@ahs.org or call (703) 768-5700 ext. 127.

In 2007 Boasberg was honored with the American Society of Landscape Architects' LaGasse Medal for her leadership in conservancy of natural resources and public landscapes.

AHS President Emeritus **Katy Moss Warner** remembers Boasberg as someone who "really helped the AHS at a very challenging time," both financially and strategically when the Society was struggling with the stewardship of its River Farm headquarters in the 1990s. Boasberg had a "wonderful sense of design," says Warner, "and made many lovely additions to the gardens at River Farm." Boasberg served on the AHS Board from 1990 to 1996, the last three years of which she was the chair. During her tenure, she helped reinvigorate the Board by enlisting members with diverse horticultural backgrounds to ensure that the Board truly represented gardening across America.



Sally Boasberg

Save the Date for Annual Gala

The AHS's 19th annual gala, "Garden Delights: An Evening by the River," is set for September 22 at River Farm in Alexandria, Virginia. This black-tie affair will include an elegant dinner and music amid beautiful gardens overlooking the Potomac River. There will also be a silent auction of items donated by local businesses, artisans, and other supporters.

This year's honorary chair is Kurt Bluemel, a past AHS Board chair, nurseryowner, and an internationally recognized expert on perennials and ornamental grasses.

Proceeds from the gala support the AHS's outreach and educational programs and the stewardship at River Farm. For more information or to reserve tickets, call (703) 768-5700.

AMERICA IN BLOOM SYMPOSIUM AND AWARDS CEREMONY

THIS YEAR, the America in Bloom (AIB) Symposium and Awards heads to the heart of the Ozarks. "Ozark Red, White & Blooms" will take place in Fayetteville, Arkansas, from September 20 to 22 and is open to anyone interested in community beautification. The AHS has been a longtime partner of AIB in its mission to promote nationwide beautification through education and community involvement.


Fayetteville has participated in AIB, a friendly competition that helps communities improve their local and environmental involvement, for 11 years and has been recognized as one of the best places to live in America. Participants will have opportunities to

tour historic Fayetteville, see the new Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, and explore the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks.

The symposium will kick off with a barbecue where the winners of AIB's Criteria Awards will be announced in six specific categories, including environmental efforts and heritage preservation. Keynote presentations will include TV personality **P. Allen Smith** speaking about how good design and hardy plants are important to beautiful communities, and Director of the National Learning Initiative and author **Robin Moore** talking about ways to bring nature into children's lives. The program also features tours, workshops, and discussions. The event concludes with the presentation of awards for communities based on population and the John R. Holmes III Community Champion Award for an individual who has championed the values of AIB.

For more information or to register, call (614) 487-1117 or visit www.americainbloom.org.

SAVE THOSE SEEDS!

SUMMER HAS just started, but it's already time to think about collecting seeds for the annual AHS Seed Exchange. This program allows members to share seeds, many of which are unique or rare, with each other. So when you're out in your garden, be sure to think about what seeds you can gather and submit—remember, those who donate seeds get first pick of all the choices, some of which are in short supply. Look for a seed donation form in the next issue of *The American Gardener*. 

News written by Editorial Intern Holly Bowers.

THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAM



The American Horticultural Society partners with premier travel providers around the world to present these AHS Signature Travel Study Tours. Part of the Society's Garden Travel Collection, these tours are designed with the connoisseur of garden travel in mind, offering an exceptional travel program that includes many exclusive experiences and unique insights. Participation benefits the work of the American Horticultural Society and furthers our vision of "Making America a Nation of Gardeners, a Land of Gardens."

For more information about the AHS Garden Travel Collection or to be added to our mailing list, please contact Joanne Sawczuk: E-mail jsawczuk@ahs.org; Call (703) 768-5700 ext. 132.

Preview of upcoming
AHS Signature Tours:

**The Heritage and Gardens
of Andalusia**
October 2012 **SOLD OUT**

**Historic Homes & Gardens of
the Colonial South:
A Springtime Voyage aboard
the American-flagged *Yorktown***
April 2013

**Gardens of the Northern
Italian Lakes**
June 2013

Gardens of Southern Spain
October 2013

Gardens of New Zealand
January 2014



AHS MEMBERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Bill Horman

by Viveka Neveln

ASK BILL HORMAN, who recently became an American Horticultural Society member, what gardening means to him and he will say, “It’s about people and how it makes them feel, more than the plants themselves.” That’s why his lifelong dream has been to turn Sunny Fields, his 40-acre property in Emmett, Michigan, into a botanical park for the public. “My



Bill Horman

greatest joy is to see visitors enjoying the horticultural beauty and fascinating wild-life around them at Sunny Fields.”

Of course, plants are important to Horman as well; over the last 50 years he has amassed one of the largest collections of lilacs, crabapples, and conifers in the region, not to mention a diverse array of other plants. All told, the property comprises well over 1,000 different taxa that create an ever-changing tapestry of colors and textures year round.

PLEASING THE PUBLIC

Horman got his first taste of reaching people through plants during his 30-year career with the City of Detroit’s Floriculture Unit. Horman’s duties included working in the public conservatory on Belle Isle, an urban oasis larger than New York’s Central Park.

“Visitors appreciated all the plants, but they didn’t know anything about what they were looking at,” says Horman. He delighted in educating them when they asked questions, noting that “if they left with a new understanding of plants and feeling better than when they came in, I had done my job right.”

Horman felt so strongly about the value of the conservatory that he and a friend founded the Belle Isle Botanical Society in 1987, when the city threatened to close it due to insufficient funding.



A 200-year-old white oak anchors a springtime vista at Sunny Fields Botanical Park.

The nonprofit organization rallied enough volunteers and funds to not only keep it open but facilitate numerous improvements. In 2011, this group merged with three other nonprofits to form the Belle Isle Conservancy to better coordinate public and private support for the entire public park. Though he retired from the city in 1996, Horman stays involved with the conservatory by volunteering and leading tours.

ESTABLISHING SUNNY FIELDS

In 1962, a couple of years before Horman began working for the City of Detroit, his parents acquired the property that is now Sunny Fields Botanical Park. At the tender age of 18, Horman knew he wanted the land to become a botanical park.

Almost inadvertently, lilacs became the backbone of Sunny Fields because Horman noticed that the ones his family moved from their Detroit home thrived in their new location. In the mid-1970s, he joined the International Lilac Society (ILS) and attended his first annual meeting. He acquired many lilacs through the auction at the meeting, and soon afterwards more arrived in the mail,

sent by other ILS members “who wanted to help ensure my success,” he says. Today, Horman’s lilac collection includes more than 300 different varieties. These lilacs are one of the main attractions at Sunny Fields, especially during its annual two-day Lilac Festival.

Sunny Fields is also home to 147 crabapple varieties that complement the lilacs’ floral show from late spring to early summer. And because conifers are “the perfect foil for other plants,” Horman also cultivates an extensive number of pines, spruces, firs, and arborvitae.

Despite its many assets and Horman’s best efforts, Sunny Fields’ future as a botanical park is uncertain. It became a nonprofit entity in 2003, but Horman still covers about half the operating costs. He and the park’s one part-time employee also perform most of the physical labor.

Horman remains optimistic that “support will continue to grow to the point where I can gift the park to the greater community.” To learn more, visit www.visitsunnyfields.org.

Viveka Neveln is associate editor of The American Gardener.

Call for Nominations

AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY 2013 GREAT AMERICAN GARDENERS AWARDS



HERRERA-CAMPBELL PHOTOGRAPHY

2012 Professional Award
Shane Smith, Director, Cheyenne Botanic Garden

It's an Honor...

Since 1953, the American Horticultural Society's Great American Gardeners Awards Program has recognized individuals and institutions that have made significant contributions to American horticulture. Nominations are now being accepted for 2013.

Nominate your "horticultural hero"—a memorable professor, a favorite garden book author, or the driving force behind an incredible community project.

For a nomination form and additional information, visit www.ahs.org or call (703) 768-5700 ext. 121.

Nominations must be submitted by September 30, 2012.



AMERICAN
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

Liberty Hyde Bailey Award

Given to an individual who has made significant lifetime contributions to at least three of the following horticultural fields: teaching, research, communications, plant exploration, administration, art, business, and leadership.

Luther Burbank Award

Recognizes extraordinary achievement in the field of plant breeding.

Paul Ecke Jr. Commercial Award

Given to an individual or company whose commitment to the highest standards of excellence in the field of commercial horticulture contributes to the betterment of gardening practices everywhere.

G. B. Gunlogson Award

Recognizes the innovative use of technology to make home gardening more productive and successful.

Horticultural Therapy Award

Recognizes significant contributions to the field of horticultural therapy.

2013 AWARDS

Landscape Design Award

Given to an individual whose work has demonstrated and promoted the value of sound horticultural practices in the field of landscape architecture.

Meritorious Service Award

Recognizes a past Board member or friend of the American Horticultural Society for outstanding service in support of the Society's goals, mission, and activities.

B. Y. Morrison Communication Award

Recognizes effective and inspirational communication—through print, radio, television, and/or online media—that advances public interest and participation in horticulture.

Professional Award

Given to a public garden administrator whose achievements during the course of his or her career have cultivated widespread interest in horticulture.

Jane L. Taylor Award

Given to an individual, organization, or program that has inspired and nurtured future horticulturists through efforts in children's and youth gardening.

Teaching Award

Given to an individual whose ability to share his or her horticultural knowledge with others has contributed to a better public understanding of the plant world and its important influence on society.

Urban Beautification Award

Given to an individual, institution, or company for significant contributions to urban horticulture and the beautification of American cities.

Cottage Garden, *American Style*

BY THOMAS RAINER

Use native plants to translate a beloved British garden style into one that is distinctly American.



THE COTTAGE GARDEN style has always been a sentimental favorite of gardeners, and it is easy to understand its enduring appeal. The soft, billowy layers of perennials, the house partially draped in flowering vines, and the delightful spontaneity of self-seeding plants all endear us to this charismatic garden style.

While the cottage garden style has British roots, it adapts well for small

American gardens. Despite this, it has not been widely adopted in the United States. Based on my experience as a practicing landscape architect, there are a couple of major reasons for this. One is that for many American gardeners, the process of converting the typical suburban garden featuring an area of lawn and tidy foundation plantings into a more free-form cottage garden is daunting. The second is that there is much more regional variabil-

ity in climate and soils in the United States than there is in the United Kingdom, so each region requires a different palette of plants appropriate for a cottage garden.

So, what about the plants themselves? Is it possible to take a uniquely British style of planting and make it American? Can we create an American cottage garden out of a purely native palette? The answer to both questions is a resounding “yes.”



Cottage gardens typically feature densely clustered plants with different textures, colors, and habits. Opposite: Red beebalm and garden phlox are among the natives in this exuberant border. Above: Garden phlox, tickseed, and coneflowers make a colorful, lively combination.

The key to designing a successful cottage garden is to create the appearance of abundance in small spaces. Well-designed cottage gardens recall features of rural landscapes such as airy grasses, towering umbellifers, and architectural spires. The irony of creating such seemingly effortless, loose-looking landscapes is that it requires a bit of planning. To help you get started, here are some of my key design principles for creating a cottage garden, American style.

CREATE VOLUME WITH HERBACEOUS PLANTS

Good cottage gardens overflow with voluminous masses of perennials, grasses, vines, and soft shrubs. Make sure herbaceous plants and deciduous shrubs make up at least two-thirds of the total composition. The actual mix of species is less important than creating volume within planting beds.

As a rule of thumb, if you can see mulch in your beds, your plants are too far apart. Avoid low groundcovers; cottage gardens need full, heaping beds of plants that spill over the edges. Rely on plants

that are two to four feet tall on average, along with a number of accent perennials that reach for the sky, such as great coneflower (*Rudbeckia maxima*) or Joe Pye weed (*Eupatorium* spp.).

SMALL MASSES OF REPEATING PLANTS

For those of us who are hardcore plant collectors, one of the great advantages of cottage gardens is that their design lends itself to including a diverse mix of plants. Taken too far, however, this inclination can yield a muddled, overly busy design, so it's important to include masses of certain plants that will serve as focal points. Coneflowers (*Echinacea* spp.), for example, can get lost among other perennials if they are planted individually, but a grouping can have impact even from a distance.

For a cohesive design, group perennials and grasses in clusters of five to 12 plants—depending on how large your bed or garden is—and repeat them throughout the area. Large shrubs, such as hydrangeas and roses, can be dotted through the garden

singly, while medium and small shrubs, such as compact selections of summer-sweet, should be clustered in groups of three or five. This will give the overall arrangement legibility and power.

BLEND FILLERS WITH STRUCTURAL PERENNIALS

The trick to making a cottage garden look good year round is to create a balance between filler plants and structural plants. Structural plants should form the spine of your bed, with the softer fillers anchoring the edges.

Start with a strong base of filler plants, which tend to be amorphous in shape. Good choices are ornamental grasses such as prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*) and pink muhly (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*), or frothy-flowered perennials like boltonia (*Boltonia asteroides*). Then add drifts of taller structural plants like Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*). Fillers typically look good year round, creating a backdrop to showcase the real stars of the cottage garden: the structural perennials.



Native plants that make good "fillers" for cottage gardens include feathery prairie dropseed, left, and dainty-flowered boltonia, right.

Structural perennials have a diverse variety of flower shapes, and provide the visual punch that makes cottage gardens so picturesque. There's nothing quite as romantic as a richly layered composition of architectural spires like wild indigo (*Baptisia* spp.), feathery plumes like goatsbeard (*Arunacus* spp.), statuesque umbels such as cow parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*), and

brightly colored daisies like black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia* spp.).

WINTER INTEREST BEYOND EVERGREENS

Along with the lawn, evergreen shrubs are one of the most ubiquitous features of American gardens and one of the primary culprits for the stiff formality seen in many of our landscapes. The cottage garden of-

fers a powerful antidote to these static evergreen blobs often crammed together around home foundations.

That's not to say you should avoid evergreens altogether, but use them sparingly. In the winter, cottage gardens can be filled with statuesque seedheads of perennials like coneflowers, the amber glow of ornamental grasses like Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) and switch grass (*Panicum virgatum*), and the attractive seedheads of summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*) and smooth hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens*). There is perhaps nothing more poetic than watching the morning sun silhouette a frost-covered seedhead.

Sources

Bluestone Perennials, Madison, OH. (800) 854-5243.

www.bluestoneperennials.com.

High Country Gardens, Santa Fe, NM. (800) 925-9387.

www.highcountrygardens.com.

Ion Exchange, Harpers Ferry, IA. (800) 296-2143. www.ionxchange.com.

Niche Gardens, Chapel Hill, NC. (919) 967-0078. www.nichegardens.com.

Prairie Nursery, Westfield, WI. (608) 296-3679; (800) 476-9453.

www.prairienursery.com.

Sunlight Gardens, Andersonville, TN. (800) 272-7396.

www.sunlightgardens.com.

Resources

Armitage's Native Plants for North American Gardens by Allan M. Armitage. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 2006.

The Encyclopedia of Grasses for Livable Landscapes by Rick Darke. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 2007.

English Cottage Gardening: For American Gardeners by Margaret Hensel. W.W. Norton and Company, New York, New York, 2000.

Plant-Driven Design: Creating Gardens that Honor Plants, Place, and Spirit by Scott Ogden and Lauren Springer Ogden. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 2008.

FOSTER NOSTALGIA AND ROMANCE

While the contemporary garden lends itself to showcasing rare and unusual plants and the newest hybrids, cottage gardens thrive on old-fashioned favorites. Plants our grandparents would have grown—such as phlox, hydrangeas, roses, irises, and columbines (*Aquilegia* spp.)—are all excellent candidates for a cottage garden.

The familiar romance of these plants explains much of their emotional power: in them we recognize and celebrate a part of our past. In a few cases, disease-resistant selections are worth seeking out to avoid problems such as fungal diseases that can plague garden phlox and roses.

If you aren't sure what plants in your area are old-fashioned favorites, old and out-of-print wildflower books are a great resource. Well before the term "native plant" became a buzzword in horticulture, "wildflower" was the catchphrase for gardeners interested in indigenous plants. The library of the nearest botanical garden or arboretum is likely to have plenty of these handouts and books. An-

pasqueflower (*Pulsatilla patens*) make great additions around rocks and path edges. These species are often adapted for the hot conditions and poor drainage typical of these sites.

Don't neglect the vertical dimension, either. Add texture and color to walls and arbors with sun-loving native vines and climbers such as trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), Carolina jes-

comfortable, personal feel." Allowing a little self-seeding, with judicious editing where needed, will give your cottage garden an effervescent quality.

SELECTING THE PLANTS

If you follow these design principles when planning your cottage garden, there's a lot of flexibility about the type of native plants you select. To get you



Wild indigo, shown here with non-native peonies in the Maryland garden of Gail Gee, is striking in early summer with its spikes of blue flowers.

other good resource is *Restoring American Gardens* by Denise Adams (Timber Press, 2004).

FILL EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY

One of the most delightful details of cottage gardens is that plants are everywhere, giving this style its exuberance and softness. Don't miss an opportunity to add plants around path edges, in between the cracks of stones, or in the gaps of walls.

Native plant communities that grow in rock outcrops, craggy sea coasts, or mountain slopes can be an excellent source of inspiration. Plants like sundrops (*Oenothera fruticosa*), green and gold (*Chrysogonum virginianum*), or

samine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), and American wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*).

ENCOURAGE SELF-SEEDING

While cottage gardens do require planning and design, they also need a bit of spontaneity. A key characteristic of cottage gardens is the inclusion of a variety of self-seeding plants such as columbines, poppies, primroses, coneflowers, and grasses that are prone to serendipitously popping up in other parts of the garden.

If you, like many gardeners, tend to be a bit of a control freak, heed the words of the late British plantsman Christopher Lloyd, who wrote: "Gardens that give space to self-appointed volunteers have a

started, I've put together a short list (on the following pages) of herbaceous perennials, grasses, and shrubs that I have found to be ideal for creating the cottage garden effect.

To find inspiration for plants suited to your region, visit local state parks and natural areas with a good wildflower book in hand and take notes on interesting plants you see. (For examples of natives suited to specific regions, see the web special linked to this article on the AHS website.)

Thomas Rainer is a landscape architect, teacher, and writer based in Arlington, Virginia. He blogs on Grounded Design.

NATIVE PLANTS FOR THE COTTAGE GARDEN

Goatsbeard (*Aruncus dioicus*)

The great landscape designer and writer William Robinson called goatsbeard “perhaps the finest plant for the wild garden,” and once you see it in bloom in early summer, it’s hard to argue. This



edge-of-the-woods native can handle light shade or full sun if kept moist (if you live in a region with very warm summers, keep it in the shade). In early June, stately cream-colored plumes erupt from the tangle of raspberry-like foliage. When it’s happy, this plant can grow as tall as five feet, but it’s usually closer to three or four feet tall. No fence line is complete without this versatile herbaceous perennial.

Wild indigo (*Baptisia australis*)

The colorful spires of wild indigo have much of the romantic effect that foxgloves or hollyhocks lend to the English cottage garden. Used in the back of the border, wild indigo doubles as both a filler plant (when not in bloom) and a structural plant (when in bloom), and even has attractive black pods in fall and winter. Being leguminous, it fixes nitrogen in the soil and improves the fertility of your planting beds. There are a number of new selections available with a variety of flower colors. If you like yellow in the garden, the cultivar ‘Carolina Moonlight’ is spectacular.

Wavy hair grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*)

No matter how smitten you are with brightly colored flowers, be sure to make room for light catching grasses like wavy hair



grass. Low-growing grasses like this one, which reaches about two feet when in bloom, are essential for giving small gardens that expansive effect, recalling larger landscapes like meadows or pastures. Wavy hair grass is an elegant native that thrives in full sun or dry shade. And, unlike its better known cousin, tufted

hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), it can even withstand the heat and humidity of the Midwest and deep South. A cool-season grass, it is topped in early summer with feathery inflorescences that capture and hold light and sway sleepily in the breeze. It’s incredibly tough and attractive year-round.

Joe Pye weed (*Eupatorium dubium*, syn. *Eupatoriadelphus dubius*) ‘Little Joe’

Butterflies, especially swallowtails and monarchs, can’t resist



the big clusters of mauve-pink flowers in mid- to late summer. ‘Little Joe’ is a compact cultivar (four to five feet tall) better suited to small gardens than the sprawling species. ‘Little Joe’ can also handle light shade better than the species, but it grows best in sunny, moist soils at the back of a border. This cultivar has all the intense flower color that the popular ‘Gateway’ has.

Cow parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*)

Often overlooked because it is confused with its noxious sibling *H. mantegazzianum* or weedy Queen Anne’s lace (*Daucus carota*), the common cow parsnip is a great addition to the cottage garden. It produces hummocks of architectural foliage in early summer, contrasting well with finer-textured perennials and grasses. Flat umbels of lightly fragrant white flowers unfold on tall stems in late June, extending the height of the plant to eight or 10 feet. Plant cow parsnip in groups of three to five in the midst of grasses such as prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*) or wavy hair grass to create a truly expansive effect. Caution: Cow parsnip produces sap that can cause skin irritations, so wear gloves when handling plants.

Smooth hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens*)

No cottage garden is complete without a hydrangea. I like smooth hydrangea because it grows more like a loose perennial than the other native choice, oakleaf hydrangea (*H. quercifolia*). There are many selections available, but I think the large, flat disks of the lacecap selection White Dome (‘Dardom’) are better suited to the wilder look of a cottage garden than the softball-sized blooms of the popular ‘Annabelle’. The lacy white disks highlight the best aspects of the native species while at the same time giving it a bit of Victorian charm.

Garden phlox (*Phlox paniculata*)

This upright perennial reaches three to four feet tall, flowering in late summer when many other perennials are spent and attracting butterflies and hummingbirds with its sweetly scented blooms. Selections are available in a wide variety of flower colors ranging from white to pink, purple, red, and orange. In regions with humid summers, seek out some of the newer, powdery mildew-resistant cultivars such as 'David' (white flowers), 'Bright Eyes' (pink), or 'Katherine' (lavender).

Clustered mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum muticum*)

Although easy to overlook at first, mountain mint will quickly become one of your most effective garden plants. This waist-high



perennial is tolerant of wet or dry soils, sun or shade. And it is incredibly vigorous, slowly spreading and filling in gaps (some other species are more aggressive and better suited to a wild garden or meadow). Clustered mountain mint's silvery flower bracts make it a lovely foil to more brightly colored roses or perennials. It also has wonderfully fragrant foliage and is one of the best nectar sources for a wide variety of native pollinators.

Swamp rose (*Rosa palustris*)

Almost every area of the country has a species of native rose perfect for American cottage gardens. The swamp rose is native to wet areas throughout the East Coast. The first time I saw this plant in the black gum swamps of Maryland, it was loaded with single pink flowers that attracted a cloud of native bees. The graceful, arching habit of the shrub is as appealing as the blooms, and bright orange rose hips and brilliant red fall color are some of the other advantages this rose offers over its more cultivated relatives. If you've had trouble growing roses because of damp soil, this plant will solve that problem.

Great coneflower (*Rudbeckia maxima*)

This statuesque beauty grows six to seven feet in height, creating a spectacle that will surely draw comments from your neighbors.



Huge powder-blue leaves cloak the bottom third of this plant, adding a cool contrast to green grasses or warm-colored perennials. In June and July, spikes explode with large, deep yellow, drooping ray flowers around a dark brown center. Goldfinches love to snack on the seeds in late summer. It's easy to develop a relationship with this human-sized plant, which should be interplanted with grasses or filler perennials.

Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*)

Resembling a veronica on steroids, this perennial is a flat-out show-stopper, dispelling the myth that native plants are



not as showy as their exotic counterparts. Slender, branching, white flower spikes resembling a candelabra crown upright stems for up to eight weeks starting in midsummer. Culver's root is highly effective in the back of the border where it can be mixed with taller shrubs and grasses. Plant in clumps of seven or more for a truly dramatic effect. Culver's root loves moist soil but will tolerate some drought once established. Newer cultivars include the lavender-colored 'Fascination' and pinky-lilac 'Apollo'; try them and you will wonder why you ever bothered with fussy foxgloves (*Digitalis* spp.).

—T.R.



enchanting Lotuses

BY ILENE STERNBERG

If you don't have the space or time for a full-size water garden, consider growing a lotus in a container. It's a beautifully satisfying way to get your feet wet.

FOR YEARS, the undisputed star of my summer garden has been a lotus that I grow in a large, round, polyurethane container on my terrace. In mid-to late summer, intoxicated by the exotic scent of its exquisite pink blossoms as big as my face and mesmerized by the water droplets that glisten like quicksilver on its aerial leaves, I sometimes imagine I'm Queen of the Nile! And, as we all know, it's good to feel regal once in a while.

My lotus is an unnamed selection that I purchased already "tubbed" from a local farm cooperative several years ago, but as far as I'm concerned, it's just as nice as its more pedigreed cousins.

The delight it's given me is well worth the minimal effort it takes to tend, and even if I had a pond I think I'd prefer growing it as this spectacular pot-bound gargantuan bouquet that's close at hand most of the summer. Masses of lotuses are beautiful in ponds, but if not carefully controlled, they can become a bit of a liability. Dense mats can develop on ponds, lakes, reservoirs, and irrigation channels, impeding flow, overrunning native plants, and depleting oxygen levels for other aquatic life.

There are only two species in the genus *Nelumbo*—the sacred lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*), native to Asia, and the American

yellow lotus (*N. lutea*), native to the Mississippi River basin. But over the centuries growers have introduced hundreds of selections of the sacred lotus in a wide range of flower colors and fragrances (a chart listing selections recommended for containers can be found on page 23). Although our native yellow lotus is less free-flowering than most of the sacred lotus cultivars, it's a beauty with fragrant yellow flowers that is well worth trying if you can find a source.

LEGEND AND LORE

Another reason I like growing a lotus is that it is one of those plants wretched in

Growing happily in a large container on the author's terrace, this lotus produces soaring, fragrant pale pink blooms in late summer.



Sacred lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*), top, is native to Asia, where it has deep cultural associations. The American yellow lotus (*N. lutea*), above, is less storied but no less beautiful.

a fascinating blend of history, religion, and mythology. The historical record on sacred lotus is a bit muddled because early chroniclers apparently used that name to refer to what we now know as the blue water lily (*Nymphaea caerulea*). However, lotuses were known, grown, and valued for their beauty starting at least 3,000 years ago in Asia, and had made their way to southern Europe and Egypt by about 500 B.C. Frail bits of lotus petals were found in the tomb of

the ancient Egyptian ruler Ramses II. Lotus is revered throughout Asia, where it has come to symbolize purity, beauty, fertility, prosperity, perfection, and the transitory nature of human existence. When ancient peoples witnessed lotuses rising from once dried-up watercourses following the rains, they regarded them as signs of immortality and resurrection. The plant has a particularly deep association with Buddhism. As legend has it, Buddha was born in the heart of a lotus flower and

is often depicted sitting in a lotus blossom or on its leaf.

The plant also has a long history of culinary and medicinal uses. The seeds, petioles, rhizomes, and leaves of lotuses are all common ingredients in Asian cuisine. Similarly, Native Americans ate the rhizomes and seeds of yellow lotus. Various parts of the plant have been used medicinally to treat everything from sunstroke and syphilis to cardiac complaints, gastrointestinal problems, and cancer.

GROWING LOTUSES

Lotuses are quite hardy and will survive in USDA Zones 4 to 11. But in order to bloom successfully, they require two to three months of temperatures in the 80s, as well as a site that receives at least six hours of sunshine a day, which is why they

Resources

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<http://watergardenersinternational.org>.
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Sources

Lilypons Water Gardens, Buckeystown, MD. (800) 999-5459.
www.lilypons.com.
Paradise Water Gardens, Ltd., Whitman, MA. (800) 955-0161.
www.paradisewatergardens.com.
Perry's Water Gardens, Franklin, NC. (828) 524-3264.
www.perryswatergarden.net.
Texas Water Lilies, Waller, TX. (936) 931-9880.
www.texaswaterlilies.com.

are rated for AHS Heat Zones 12 to 3. They will bloom in most areas of North America, with the exception of cooler regions of the Pacific Northwest and Canada.

But in my opinion, even if you have little hope of flowers, it is still worth growing a lotus for its incredible foliage. The glaucous leaves are slightly upturned, faintly ruffled, one- to two-foot disks. Their waxy surface hosts perfect beads of rain or dew, the roll and play of which is mesmerizing to watch on a breezy day.

TIPS FOR CONTAINER CULTURE



A number of lotus cultivars are easy to grow and care for in a container. Select a round container at least three feet across by one foot deep for a standard size lotus. Containers for lotuses should always be round; otherwise, the growing tips of the rhizomes can get mangled in the corners. If you are using a wooden tub or whisky barrel, line it with black plastic to prevent leakage and avoid leaching of any wood preservatives or other chemicals into the water.

PLANTING THE RHIZOMES

Lotuses are usually planted in early spring using dormant rhizomes; mail-order suppliers will ship them to you at the right time for your growing region. If purchasing from a local supplier, make sure the rhizomes are free of decay and have a healthy growing tip.

Start by putting some aquatic or organic fertilizer in the bottom of the container—convenient tablets are available through specialty vendors. Some experts advise against using manure, but Asian growers have successfully cultivated lotuses for centuries using well composted manure or bone or fish meal mixed in with the soil.

Next, place the yamlike rhizome horizontally on the bottom of the container with the “eye” pointing toward the tub’s center.

Lotus blossoms last three to five days. The flowers of most selections open the first morning and then close by evening, then stay open permanently from the second day onward. The flowers of some cultivars, such as ‘Mrs. Perry D. Slocum’, change color gradually over the bloom period. Most, but not all, are fragrant, with

the first-day fragrance being most intense. They make magnificent cut flowers.

The seedpods, decorative “showerheads” filled with round rattling seeds, are a wonder themselves and popular in dried flower arrangements. They start out yellow or chartreuse, then turn green. Ultimately brown when fully ripe, they

bend at the neck on their stems and drop their seeds into the water.

The seeds germinate easily, although their hard, protective coating keeps them viable for centuries. Dried, gently nicked seeds sprout overnight, and within a week leaves will appear on the water surface. When growing lotuses in tubs in

Weigh the rhizome down with gravel so it’s less likely to float away, and cover with a two- to three-inch layer of soil. Don’t use standard potting mixtures because they will float and create a mess; instead use heavy-duty aquatic soil. This can be ordered from specialty mail-order suppliers (see “Resources” on page



Left: Lotuses should be planted in round containers to avoid damaging their rhizomes. **Above:** The bulbous-looking rhizomes have prominent “eyes” that give rise to aerial growth.

21) and you may find it at some nurseries and garden stores. A thin layer of pea gravel or coarse sand can be added on top, if desired, to help keep the soil in place.

Finally, add water—about three to six inches above the top of the soil is ideal. Add water regularly to maintain the level, because the edges of the leaves will dry out and turn crisp if the water gets low.

Once you’ve planted your lotus in a tub or other large container, place the tub on your deck or submerge it to a depth of six to 18 inches below the surface of a pond. The first leaves to emerge will lie flat on the water, but as the temperature warms, newer leaves will shoot above the surface.

WINTER CARE

If you live in a temperate region, move lotus containers to an unheated porch or garage where temperatures remain above freezing in winter. Or, you can store rhizomes in coir or perlite, taking care not to damage the fragile eyes. This is a little trickier, because if the rhizomes are kept too moist they may rot, and if they get too dry they may desiccate.

Divide lotuses into sections for planting in spring, with at least two sections connected by their long “umbilical cords.” Repot each rhizome to start the cycle anew. —I.S.

SUGGESTED SELECTIONS FOR CONTAINERS

Name	Flower diameter (inches)	Flower description	Height/width (feet/feet)
'Baby Doll'	4–6	white flowers with slight fragrance, chartreuse seed capsules mature to green	2–3/2
'Chastity'	5–6	inner flower petals are white and the outer two-thirds deep pink	2–3/2
'Daintiest'	3–4	pink with yellow base; outer two-thirds of the petals streaked red; attractive yellow-green seed pods	1–2/1½–2
'Momo Botan'	5–6	extra-long-blooming, fragrant flowers are deep pink with pale yellow base	2–4/2–3
'Mrs. Perry D. Slocum'	9–12	slightly anise-scented flowers open rose, maturing to peach and then yellow	4–5/2–3
'Pure Jade'	3–4	very double pale yellow to white flowers with the inner petals tipped with pale green	1–2/1½–2
'Red Children'	5	single red flowers	1½/3



Lotuses suited to containers include, left to right: 'Chastity', 'Mrs. Perry D. Slocum', and the unusual, very double-flowered 'Pure Jade'.

garden ponds, be sure to remove all seed-pods before mature seeds can be spread.

Since I don't have a recirculating pump in my container, I toss in half a Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) donut at intervals to prevent mosquito larvae from using my tub for water sports. Incidentally, the treated water does not seem to have any ill effects on animals, such as the neighborhood cats, who often drink from the container.

To help keep this mini ecosystem healthy, some growers add submerged plants (often called oxygenators), such as Canadian waterweed (*Elodea canadensis*) and hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*). The submerged plants tend to grow profusely, but are easy to thin as needed. However, be sure to check the names against your state noxious weed list before purchasing. Avoid discarding cuttings of aquatic plants where they could wash into a stream or other natural body of water.

You can also keep a small fish or two in the tub with your lotus, but be aware some species may nibble on your prize plant. Fish may also need to be provid-



Lotus seed pods turn brown when mature and are popular for dried flower arrangements. This one has dropped all its seeds.

ed oxygenation via a pump or submerged plants.

SHARING THE WEALTH

Lotus grows with such exuberance that I have plenty of divided roots to give to friends every other year. Extras can also be cooked and eaten. In Asian cooking, lotus root is often used in stir-fries and soups.

No matter where you live, it's worth finding space to grow a lotus in a pot. Even if I moved to an apartment with only a small balcony, I'd still want to grow my lotus. Once you've been Queen of the Nile, you don't want to relinquish the crown.

Garden writer Ilene Sternberg grows lotuses on her patio in West Chester, Pennsylvania. This is an updated version of an article originally published in the May/June 2004 issue of The American Gardener.

gardening in Thomas



Jefferson's Footsteps

As Monticello's head gardener, Pat Brodowski brings her own passion to interpreting Jefferson's horticultural legacy.

BY ANNE RAVER

WHEN I ASKED Pat Brodowski what her schedule is today in the vegetable garden at Monticello, the head gardener said, deadpan, "Work until I drop." Then she laughed heartily, because it's true. Brodowski's daily tasks for maintaining this two-acre expanse of vegetables and herbs, which Thomas Jefferson's slaves dug out of the side of a mountain 200 years ago, are daunting.

"We grew 220 cabbages last year," says Brodowski, a sturdy 59-year-old woman with a long brown braid, gazing out over the wide, flat 1,000-foot-long terrace, a tapestry of green cabbages, purple cauliflowers, and blue-green artichokes.

Jefferson, the son of a surveyor, had laid out the Charlottesville, Virginia, garden in nine 100-by-500-foot rectangular beds, with paths in between, to accommodate what would total, over his lifetime, 330 varieties of vegetables and herbs. On the slope below, he planted 170 varieties of fruits, including figs, nectarines, peaches, apples, gooseberries, and grapes. From the vegetable garden, visitors can share Jefferson's "sea view" across the rolling valley to the blue foothills of the Piedmont 40 miles away, topped with endless sky. It's a soaring vista that lifts the spirit.

THE CULTIVATION OF A GARDENER

Born Pat Sande, Brodowski grew up near Lake Katrine, New York, with a clan of gardeners and farmers. She and her sister, Marie, avid 4-H'ers, each had a flower, herb, and vegetable garden. Her mother tended a half-acre vegetable garden, as well as fruit trees, old-fashioned flowers, and a prize iris collection.

At 10, Pat discovered Rita J. Adrosko's book, *Natural Dyes and Home Dying* and

started making plant dyes. "They all came out yellow," laughs Brodowski, who now teaches plant dye workshops at Monticello and elsewhere. By sixth grade, she had struck up a correspondence with Nelson Coons, the author of *Using Wild and Wayside Plants*, who in-



Above: Pat Brodowski shows off a head of broccoli in Monticello's vegetable garden. **Opposite:** The current layout of the vegetable garden follows the orderly format Jefferson designed two centuries earlier.

vited her family to visit him at his home at Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The next year, she started combing through *The World Book Encyclopedia*, searching for every plant of economic importance that she could find.

Fueled by her early interest in plants, Brodowski earned a bachelor of science degree in agriculture from Cornell University in New York and then studied painting at Maryland Institute College of Art. Before coming to Monticello as head gardener in 2009, she ran the education program at the Carroll County Museum in Westminster, Maryland, where she created an heirloom garden using plants popular in that county during the 1800s.

In her spare time, Brodowski started working on a masters degree in liberal arts, which she completed this spring, at McDaniel College in Westminster. Her thesis, "Thomas Jefferson's Herbs and Sallads," explores the statesman-gardener's uses of 57 herbs and greens for good health and in the garden in the living laboratory of Monticello.

Gardening at Monticello, says Brodowski, is her dream job. "I've never worked at a place where everyone gives 100 percent of their best effort," she says, and the can-do spirit of Monticello's employees, from archeologists to groundskeepers, is energizing.

Brodowski enjoys being outdoors, the hard physical labor that keeps her in shape, as well as the challenging research. "I really love this period of history—the 18th century—when America had endless potential for the common man to excel," she says. "Jefferson was there helping, calling himself a farmer, insisting on wearing the cloth made from plants grown on the plantation." She pores over Jefferson's journals, searching for plants he grew that could be added to the garden. Earlier this year, she realized that his reference to a "white beet" was actually Swiss chard. Another vegetable Jefferson mentioned was kohlrabi. Both now flourish in Monticello's garden.

EXPERIMENTS IN STYLE

Brodowski's willingness to experiment with unconventional techniques for maintaining the vegetable garden have sometimes led to philosophical differences with more traditional colleagues. Monticello's long-time director of gardens and grounds, Peter Hatch, who started the garden's restoration in 1979 and retired this summer, compares Brodowski's "defiance of horticultural correctness," as he puts it, to the late Henry Mitchell, whose "Earthman" column for *The Washington Post* in the 1970s and 1980s was as legendary as the jungle of unfinished horticultural experiments in his backyard.

In Hatch's view, Brodowski's tendency to leave crops in the ground until long after peak harvest time in order to observe the complete life cycle of the vegetables has an aesthetic downside. "She also abhors thinning seedlings," says Hatch, "and finds empathetic joy in overcrowded crops." From Brodowski's standpoint, planting vegetables close together is part of her strategy of intensive gardening, in which more plants per square foot helps crowd out weeds.

Hatch does admire "her valiant spirit in the face of ravaging insects, browsing white-tail deer, rampant weeds, and summer drought, a noble expression of the two great lessons of gardening—persistence and patience, two qualities at the core of Thomas Jefferson's gardening experience at Monticello."

Gabriele Rausse, a well-known Charlottesville-area vintner who is succeeding Hatch as director of gardens and grounds, appreciates Brodowski's energy and "her desire to get things done. She doesn't mind working long hours."

He also notes that she is a passionate seed saver. "And this is very important to us, because we package and sell the seeds of the heirloom varieties we grow."

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

It's Brodowski's job, with only part-time help, to keep this garden picture perfect—edged, weeded, disease- and pest-free—as well as to answer visitors' questions, no matter how many times it's the same one: "What do you do with all these vegetables?" (To which the answer is: the gardeners and other employees take them home, or deliver them to vis-



Chefs often seek out Monticello's heritage vegetables. Here Brodowski shares a box of produce with Chef Dean Maupin of Keswick Hall restaurant, who holds a Green Striped Cushaw squash.

iting chefs, or clean and arrange them for gala dinners; the deer eat a lot, too.)

"When you have 20,000 people in one week, and you're still trying to get your work done, it's hard," Brodowski says, recalling the crush of tourists running through the cabbages during the Garden Club of Virginia's Historic Garden Week, held each April. Still, if some-

one is truly interested in, say, the life cycle of sea kale (*Crambe maritima*), she is apt to lean over the dried seed pods and hand over some seeds with the advice: "Plant them right away, because they don't stay viable very long."

Planted in a pot, the seeds will germinate and grow into small plants that can be set out in early fall. Sea kale, which grows



Most of the vegetables at Monticello are grown from seed, including these sea kale seedlings.



Visiting Monticello

Monticello, 931 Thomas Jefferson Parkway, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902. (434) 984-9800.
www.monticello.org.

Monticello is open to visitors every day except for Christmas; hours vary by season. Several tours take visitors through the house and grounds: the **House Tour and Grounds** (adults \$17 to \$24 depending on the season, children six to 11 \$8, children under six are free) and **Behind the Scenes Tour** (all guests \$42, includes house and grounds tour if desired) are offered daily, and **Thomas Jefferson's Revolutionary Garden Tour** (all guests \$42, includes house tour) is available on Fridays and Saturdays from April to October. Special events are held throughout the year.

Monticello is handicap accessible and parking is free.

Above: Among the many heirlooms Brodowski grows is 'Moon and Stars' watermelon. **Right:** Brodowski shows students from a University of Virginia gardening class how sea kale is grown under clay blanching pots in late winter.

wild along the coast of England, is a true perennial that goes dormant in winter.

At Monticello, the pale yellow sprouts are covered with clay blanching pots in February. The tender shoots are eaten like asparagus tips in spring. By May, the pots are lifted to allow the sea kale to soak up the sun and stretch out its great ruffled, gray-blue leaves. By June, clouds of little white flowers bloom on long stems.

LESSONS FROM THE GARDEN

Brodowski's interests are catholic, but her research into Jefferson's medicinal uses of plants is never far from her mind.

Jefferson planted scurvy grass, for instance, long before Vitamin C was discovered; he also grew thyme, which was commonly used in meat pies, and simmered in an herb sauce. "Oil of thyme will kill bacteria in 60 seconds," says Brodowski. "So if you poured that hot sauce over the meat, you sterilized it."

During a recent visit I had with her in the garden, she broke off a bit of a



woody herb with gray-green feathery leaves and held it to my nose. My sinuses suddenly cleared. "This is southernwood, which you hardly ever see, but it's a great bug repellent," she told me. "If you have gnats bugging you, you just take this and rub it on your arms and off they go." She puts chunks of it in jars of lettuce seed to repel moths.

Brodowski points out some seven-foot-tall bushy plants with tiny purple,

salvialike flowers that will make "seeds all lined up inside the pod like a little vending machine of seeds." It's sesame, which Jefferson had hoped to use to replace olive oil "because he loved the flavor, but he struggled to grind the seeds to get the oil out," she explains.

SAVING SEEDS

Part of Brodowski's job is to save the seeds of these handsome plants, as well as of many others—from beans and peas to herbs and flowers. Last year, Monticello sold 23,667 packets of seed that Brodowski and her fellow gardeners collected from the flower and vegetable beds.

"The seeds I grow are all those Jefferson grew, except the tomatoes, which are an approximation," says Brodowski, because Jefferson's notes do not name specific varieties. One called 'Large Red' "was the most popular tomato in 1820, for example," she says, so it is one of three varieties she grows.

Just what seeds of heirloom lettuces, beans, and melons are collected depends on the crop, but it's a diverse selection that includes lettuces such as Brown Dutch, Spotted Aleppo, and Tennis Ball; Arikara beans that hark back to the Lewis and Clark expedition; Green Nutmeg



Brodowski allows vegetables such as sea kale to flower and go to seed so she can collect seeds for the following season.

melon, West India gherkins, and Prickly spinach, whose succulent leaves are as big as dessert plates.

In late summer, the flower heads of Spotted Aleppo lettuce look like dried dandelions on tall stalks with their fluffy seeds. These seed heads are crushed and sieved, or tossed in the air, to separate the chaff. A 30-quart tub of seed heads may fill a quart jar with lettuce seeds.

Tomatoes are fermented the old-time way in a bucket. “We take the ones that are over-ripe,” Brodowski says, “and put them in the rotter bucket.” She adds water, massages the tomatoes to separate the peels, then lets the whole mess sit about five days.

“Everybody gets upset because it stinks,” she says, her eyes crinkling in amusement. Then she pours off the water, rinses the seeds until they are clean, and pours the last rinse through a sieve. “It might be two cups of seed that come out in a big mass,” she says.

“We dry them on newspaper in the heat of the greenhouse, then crumble them up and put them in a quart jar.” Seeds must be absolutely dry before they are stored in air-tight jars in the refrigerator or freezer.

ADOPTING HISTORIC GROWING METHODS

In addition to growing the same plants as

Jefferson grew, Brodowski is fascinated by the ancient techniques that Jefferson used here. She plants the artichokes—as well as cabbages and eggplants and many other vegetables—in a quincunx pattern, handed down by the Romans. “It means putting a plant in four corners of the square and one in the center,” she said. “It’s the most efficient way of planting.”

Using a string line and compass, with a measuring stick, she spaces the plants five to a square—“like the five-dice,” she says—repeating the pattern down the bed. When seen from above, the plants line up in parallels or diagonals, depending on your point of view. It’s a gorgeous composition for big plants like the Savoy cabbages and artichokes that Jefferson loved.



Vegetables Jefferson mentioned growing in his garden journals included Tennis Ball lettuce.



Branches pruned from fruit trees are recycled as supports for garden peas in early spring.

And in the fall, before hard frost sweeps across this terrace, Brodowski covers up the artichokes with two feet of straw, then a layer of compost, with a hole in the top for ventilation. It's a method described by Bernard McMahon, the Philadelphia plantsman whose *The American Gardener's Calendar: Adapted to the Climates and Seasons of the United States American*, was first published in 1806.

McMahon had Americanized the principles and planting schedule that Philip Miller, the chief gardener of the Chelsea Physic Garden in England, had laid out so clearly in *The Gardener's Dictionary*, first published in 1731. "And Jefferson mentions them both in his notes and letters," says Brodowski.

Most of the vegetables here are the same varieties that Jefferson grew, and the gar-

deners plant them on the same dates that Jefferson notes in his Garden Book.

"We start in January, planting onion sets, red and yellow, and seedlings of the white Spanish onion, mentioned in Jefferson's notes," says Brodowski, "We dress the asparagus and sow peas in February."

They "stick" the peas, in the English way that Jefferson used, with six-foot peach branches saved from winter pruning and other brushy stems for the peas to climb. They cut cedar trees for bean poles, and plant scarlet runner beans and purple hyacinth beans to climb up the sturdy arbor that spans the edge of the terrace.

CHALLENGES FROM PESTS

In the pursuit of maintaining the garden in a historically accurate fashion, one of Brodowski's biggest challenges is pest control. When pests begin to overwhelm


a crop, she will use biological controls such as Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) or spinosad, insecticidal soaps, pyrethrums, and the like. But at times this isn't enough to stem the tide.

"I wish we could protect the squash plants and other stuff with row covers, but we can't do that here," Brodowski notes. It would make Jefferson's garden look like a hospital ward. And besides, Jefferson didn't use plastic.

One of her most recent successes—planting cereal rye as a cover crop, then tilling it into the soil before planting potatoes—has reduced what used to be an army of potato bugs to a mere handful. Brodowski was acting on a hunch. She knew from earlier research that the Pennsylvania Germans had thatched their barns and storehouses with rye-straw thatch. "They made rye-straw baskets from it to store grains and seeds," she says. "They lasted because the rye grass is naturally allopathic—offensive to bugs." If it worked for grains, she wondered, why not potatoes?

But deer are by far the worst pests. A deer fence isn't an option for the same reason row covers aren't. So at closing time, the gardeners release a motley team of four dogs, which are kept in the area by an invisible fence (which Jefferson didn't use either, but visitors can't see it). They may keep away deer, but they also run through the peas and crush the chamomile where they bed down for the night.

When asked how she copes with the demands of her job, Brodowski just grins in that indomitable way she has. What would be overwhelming challenges to most gardeners—weeding two acres solo, for example, in a week—are to her just part of a joyful, all-consuming, exhausting job.

What makes each day memorable, she says, is the visitors. "Most of them walk through the garden and become inspired by the idea that a sprinkling of small seeds—which anyone can do—can create a lush vista of color and texture. And all of it is useful." 

The author of Deep in the Green (Knopf, 1995), Anne Raver writes about gardening and the environment for the New York Times, Landscape Architecture, and other publications. She gardens in Maryland.

diverse, decadent Dahlias

Dahlia fanciers across the country share their love for these brilliant beauties and suggest the best selections to grow for garden enjoyment.

BY JESSIE KEITH



FOR FLORAL flamboyance, dahlias are hard to beat. The diversity of flower color and forms as well as growth habits and relative ease of culture make these ever-blooming tuberous plants favorites for gardeners worldwide. For some, what starts as growing a few garden varieties evolves into an obsession where

hundreds are meticulously grown and hybridized in a quest for the perfect bloom for the competitive show arena. Hardline dahlia lovers exist across America—anywhere these flowers can be grown with reasonable success. The American Dahlia Society (ADS) is the organizational hub of the North American dahlia world, over-

seeing 75 regional dahlia societies that host over 100 shows and many gardens both for trials and public enjoyment. Each North American growing region, from New York to California, offers a unique environment for these flowers, which generally perform best where summer day temperatures are warm, nights cool, and day-lengths be-

A variety of dahlias provides loads of irresistibly colorful blooms to the late-summer to fall display at Washington's Hovander Homestead Park.

DAHLIA HISTORY AND GROWING BASICS

You can never love just one dahlia. Dahlias offer a botanical extravaganza of floral beauty with more than 50,000 named cultivars, 15 festive colors, 20 different wildly diverse forms, and blooms ranging from tiny to dinner-plate sized. (For more on dahlia flower forms, visit the American Dahlia Society (ADS) website at www.dahlia.org.) Some have small, tidy habits ideal for containers while others are seven-foot monsters. All are beautiful and unique in their own right.

HIGH-ALTITUDE ROOTS

The cultivated dahlias we grow today are hybrids of three high-altitude Mexican species—*Dahlia coccinea*, *D. pinnata*, and *D. rosea*—that were first collected in 18th-century Mexico and cultivated at the now defunct Royal Botanic Garden in Mexico City under the care of Spanish botanist, Vicente Cervantes (1755–1829). Shortly after their export to the Royal Gardens of Madrid, Spain, in 1789, European garden hybrids began to appear. Dahlias became the “it” flowers of the Victorian era in the mid-1800s, and by the early 1900s thousands of varieties existed across Europe and North America.

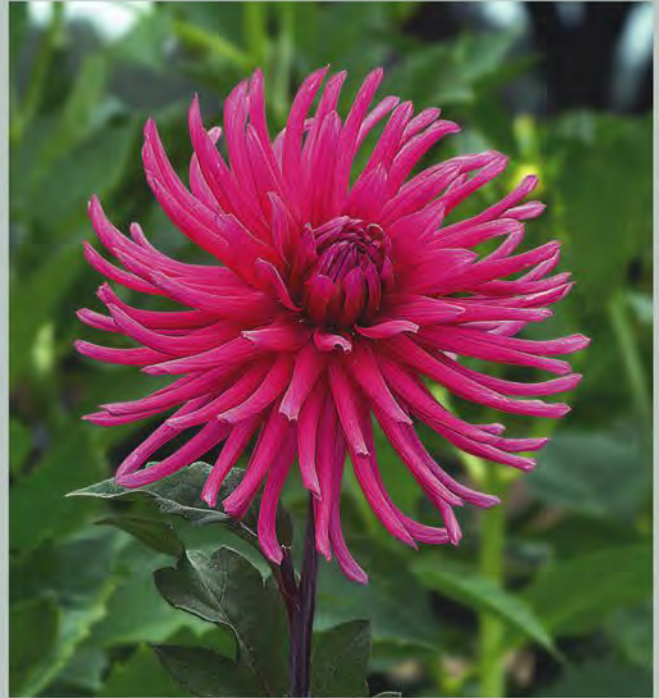
True to their high-altitude lineage, dahlias shine when weather is cool and ambient humidity moderate to low. Conditions with warm days and cool nights are ideal. Provide full to part sun and slightly acidic to neutral, friable, humus-rich soil with good drainage. Keep the tubers evenly moist—not wet—and feed with a low-nitrogen fertilizer formulated for flowers. Shorter varieties are easiest to tend as they don’t require support; tall, large-flowered varieties must be staked or caged to keep them from toppling. Deadhead regularly to keep new blooms coming until frost.

PLANTING TIPS

Dahlias are most often sold and planted as tubers, but they are also available from some sources as rooted cuttings, which



Most dahlias are sold as tubers like these that should be planted outdoors in spring after the soil has warmed.



‘Pinot Noir’ is a short dahlia suited for borders and containers.

provide a head start in the garden. Plan to place orders in the fall so the tubers or cuttings arrive at the proper time in early spring for planting. Cuttings can be planted outdoors after all danger of frost has passed; tubers should not be planted until later, after the soil has sufficiently warmed.

In USDA Hardiness Zones colder than 8, dahlia tubers must be dug and stored indoors through winter if you plan to keep them for the next season. Dig dahlias after their tops wilt following the first light frost. When digging tubers, keep them intact and be careful not to damage their necks, as this is where next year’s buds will appear. Gently clean and dry the tubers before storing them. Pack in a dry peat/vermiculite mix and store in a cool, dry basement, garage, or root cellar that gets no colder than 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Once the threat of frost is past in spring, plant outdoors at a depth of four to six inches. In cool weather, refrain from watering tubers directly after planting to avoid rot.

New dahlias are bred each year, and the best for home gardeners are the compact and floriferous border dahlias that don’t need staking. Steve Nowotarski, who heads up the ADS border dahlia trials, recommends the following five top performers for all regions of the country: ‘**Melody Pink Allegro**’ (bright pink, four-inch blooms on two-foot-tall plants); ‘**Princess Paige**’ (five-inch, purple-variegated, white-to-lavender formal decorative flowers on three-foot-tall plants); ‘**Pinot Noir**’ (four-inch, purple-red cactus flowers on two-and-a-half-foot-tall plants with attractive dark foliage); ‘**Claudette**’ (four-inch, purple blooms on two-foot-tall plants); and ‘**Melody Harmony**’ (five-inch, lavender-and-white flowers on two-foot-tall plants with dark foliage).

—J.K.

tween 12 to 14 hours. High heat, drought, and bright sun challenge perfect flower development, so those living where summers are harsh bear the brunt of the cultural difficulties. As a rule, southern growers have the toughest time and those in the North and Pacific Northwest the easiest.

If you've never grown dahlias or have not grown them in a while, ardent dahlia lovers are eager to change your mind. While they might not convince you to categorize, train, and groom your dahlia flowers like dogs headed to the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show—as they do—they are sure to open your eyes to the spectacular beauty and pleasure these plants bring to the garden. I talked with some of the country's most committed ADS regional specialists for an overview of American dahlia culture and recommended dahlia varieties they grow and love.

SOUTH

The South is a tough place to grow dahlias, but Buddy Dean is lucky to live in the cool air of the Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina. Director of the Great Smoky Mountain Dahlia Trial Garden, an ADS Senior Judge, ADS national classification committee member, and owner of retail dahlia nursery Hilltop Gardens, in Cashiers, North Carolina, Dean first became seriously interested in dahlias after his grandmother gave him 12 tubers to try. In just a few years he was growing as many as 1,600 plants of 400 named varieties, many his own hybrids. After going to his first dahlia show and seeing tables full of exemplary flowers, he took up the quest to outshine them all. "I'm still looking for the elusive perfect flower with crisp color and flawless formation," he admits.

Dean's Hilltop Gardens caters to southern growers raising dahlias for garden enjoyment or show. "The challenge is finding dahlias that perform well in heat," says Dean. "They'll grow, but their flowers won't develop right." He suggests southern growers visit the Dahlia Society of Georgia's website for a list of dahlias for the South (see "Resources," page 35), which is quite extensive and keeps growing. "I have seen southern exhibitors that trial for me," says Dean. "If a new dahlia works, we expand the list."



Top: 'Wheels' is a widely available bicolored dahlia that grows well in the hot, humid South. **Above:** Illinois dahlia enthusiast Steve Meggos is shown here in his garden with 'Vassio Meggos', a large-flowered lavender selection he hybridized and named for his daughter.

TOP: JESSIE KEITH, BOTTOM: COURTESY OF STEVE MEGGOS

Among the dahlias on the list that are both popular and easy to grow in the South are two of Dean's favorites, the giant (12-inch), red, semi-cactus 'Danum Meteor' (four feet tall), and 'Hilltop St. Charles', a flame orange-and-yellow incurved cactus (five feet tall). Other good picks for the South include 'Bishop of Llandaff' (dark red flowers and dark leaves, three feet tall); 'Bodacious' (one of my personal favorites; 10- to 12-inch, informal decorative red blooms with orange tips; four-and-a-half feet tall); 'April Dawn' (six- to eight-inch, lavender-and-

greatest loves are my wife, daughter, and my dahlias—in that order," says Meggos. Despite working 70 to 80 hours a week running the banquet hall at an entertainment resort, Meggos maintains more than 1,000 dahlia plants—398 varieties his own hybrids, including the award-winning 'Vassio Meggos' (10-inch decorative informal flowers with graceful, down-curving lavender petals; four-and-half feet tall; introduced in 2005), of which he is most proud. "Its perfect form and color never tire me," says Meggos. "It was named for my teenage daughter, who

period of time to enjoy the flowers. Summer heat and a variety of insect pests also pose potential problems. "Japanese beetles and red spider mites are the worst," says Meggos. "Both can devastate a dahlia garden in a week." (A pyrethrin-based insecticide or insecticidal soap will help control these pests.) In that region of the Midwest, flowers hit their peak from mid-August to late September, according to Meggos, and by early October he's digging up the tubers for the season.

In Midland, Michigan, artist Charles Breed shares his extraordinary love of



Dahlia Hill, a half-acre public garden, was created by Michigan artist Charles Breed to showcase both his sculptures and his love of dahlias.

white informal decorative flowers; four feet tall); 'Kidd's Climax' (nine-inch formal decorative, light pink flowers with flushes of soft yellow; four feet tall); and fantastic collarette 'Wheels' (four-inch, red-orange petals framing a set of yellow inner petals; four feet tall).

NORTH AND MIDWEST

Dahlia passion exudes from dahlia breeding legend Steve Meggos, who lives in Elgin, Illinois, just outside Chicago. "My

wants to decorate her wedding with them, when that day comes." Another notable introduction is 'Louie Meggos', a creamy white sport of 'Vassio Meggos', which is identical on all counts but color.

Because late frosts are a challenge in Elgin, patience is a garden virtue. Meggos says, "I plant one-foot-tall forced cuttings outside after Mother's Day [in early May], when all frost has passed." Dahlia cuttings tend to bloom earlier than tubers, giving short-season growers a longer

dahlias through Dahlia Hill, a half-acre terraced public garden, the grounds of which are dotted with aluminum sculptures cast by Breed himself. (Breed's art studio is also located on the property and sales contribute towards Dahlia Hill's operation.)

The Dahlia Hill Society of Midland, which Breed describes as "a non-profit dedicated to making everyone addicted to dahlias," is largely responsible for the garden's maintenance. Each year, 50 to 70



Steve Nowotarski, left, hybridized the award-winning selection 'Hannah Baker', right.

volunteers help Breed and his assistant, Peggy Kernstock, plant and care for the gardens. “We plant about 3,000 dahlias every spring, and in the end store about 10,000. Many are sold to support the next year’s garden,” says Breed.

The plantings represent 250 cultivated varieties that show all 19 dahlia petal configurations as well as the “The Fabulous 50,” a list of the 50 top-winning dahlias at ADS shows. At the top of the garden is a “Memorial Circle” around which is planted only dahlia cultivars that are new to Dahlia Hill, including those developed by Michigan hybridizers.

Mid-Michigan summers are warm during the day with cool nights, ideal for growing most dahlias. Breed’s favorites at Dahlia Hill include ‘Show ‘N’ Tell’ (10-inch lacinated [fringed or split at the ends] red-and-yellow blooms, grows

four-and-a-half feet tall), the dark red-and-white informal decorative ‘Tartan’ (three feet tall) and Dahlia Hill’s own ‘Cristi Yellow’ (semi-cactus with yellow blooms, four feet tall).

EAST AND NORTHEAST

Competitiveness and camaraderie are what drew Steve Nowotarski of Long Island, New York, to exhibit dahlias. “Dahlia exhibitors are as tough and competitive as serious golfers or fishermen,” explains Nowotarski. “You must delve into the dahlia to enhance blooms for show. It takes time, but it’s gratifying.”

Nowotarski has served as ADS senior judge and executive committee member, co-authored the ADS book *Raising Beautiful Dahlias the Easy Way* (now out of print), consults on dahlias for mail-order plant retailer White Flower Farm, and is an award-winning hybridizer.

Nowotarski is most proud of the award-winning lacinated pink-and-yellow ‘Hannah Baker’, named for his granddaughter. Introduced in 2001, this plant grows about four feet tall and bears loads of six-inch blooms. More recently he became ADS chairman of border dahlia trials, in which growers nationwide evaluate three dahlias yearly to determine the border dahlia of the year for average home growers (see sidebar on page 31 for Nowotarski’s recommended dahlias).

Long Island offers good growing conditions for dahlias, although summer heat can stunt flower growth and cause colors to wash out. “Flowers look poorest in July,” says Nowotarski, “and best from early fall to frost.” Nowotarski is convinced that soil preparation is key to growing dahlias successfully. “I had plant health problems a few years ago—growth was moderate to poor and flower production lower than normal—so I amended the soil in my garden with compost and went organic. Since then I’ve had no trouble. Good friable soil rich in compost and microbes is everything.”



Kevin Larkin and his wife, Karen, above, specialize in growing rooted dahlia cuttings at their nursery, Corralitos Gardens, right.



TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF STEVE NOWOTARSKI. TOP RIGHT: LEE-CARRAHER PHOTOGRAPHY / COURTESY OF CORRALITOS GARDENS. BOTTOM: COURTESY OF CORRALITOS GARDENS (2)



WEST AND PACIFIC NORTHWEST

In central California, where dahlia growing conditions are near perfect, Kevin Larkin makes easy work of raising hundreds of dahlia varieties at his retail nursery, Corralitos Gardens. Larkin, a hobbyist turned hybridizer, retailer, and exhibitor, and his wife, Karen, hybridize their own cultivars and are also top show exhibitors. “Our mantra is simplify dahlia gardening,” says Larkin of the nursery, which sells rooted cuttings rather than the more common tubers. “We have found that novice gardeners and newcomers to

Dahlia exhibitor Marilyn Walton, (above center with volunteers at the Pacific Northwest Dahlia Trial Garden in Tacoma, Washington) recommends ‘Mary’s Jomanda’, left, for its perfectly shaped flower heads.

dahlias can understand a live green plant better than a dormant root. There are no questions about which way is up or how deep to plant, and there is no waiting for the dormant tuber to sprout.”

Larkin says the long California growing season is a bonus: “We can plant as early as March, as late as July, and have perfect flowers up to Thanksgiving.” But he also notes some regional constraints: “Our winters are mild, so things don’t slow down and pest cycles aren’t inhibited. White flies are a constant threat.” Treating plants with an organic insecticide will be needed to combat the pests.

In the Pacific Northwest, growing conditions are ideal for most dahlias, but there are exceptions. “Heat-loving dahlias don’t grow as well here, and some forms, particularly those with fimbriated or lacinated petals, grow fewer petals, with less depth and less lacination,” says Marilyn Walton of Tacoma, Washington. Walton is an ar-

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Ferncliff Gardens, Sumas, WA. (604) 826-2447.

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Hilltop Gardens, Cashiers, NC. (828) 421-9458. www.hilltopdahlias.com.

Swan Island Dahlias, Canby, OR. (503) 266-7711. www.dahlias.com.

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dent competitive dahlia exhibitor, dahlia judging instructor, hybridizer, and director of the Washington State Dahlia Society trial garden. Her favorite flowers are chosen for perfect form and performance. “The 2012 Pacific Northwest dahlia of the year, ‘Narrows Trisha’, is the perfect yellow semi-cactus,” says Walton. “The white-and-pink informal decorative ‘April Dawn’ performs well almost everywhere; and ‘Mary’s Jomanda’ has perfect four-inch, lavender-pink, ball-shaped flowers ideal for both exhibition and garden enjoyment.” Plants grow about three feet tall.

So, everyday dahlia lovers take note: Your local dedicated ADS dahlia fanciers can teach you a lot about all things dahlia. Just be careful when you talk to them, their passion is addictive and you might get hooked!

Freelance writer Jessie Keith grows dahlias in her garden in Wilmington, Delaware.

Summersweets



These richly fragrant summer bloomers in the genus *Clethra* can really take the heat.

BY PATRICIA A. TAYLOR

LATE JULY and August can be times of tribulations for many gardeners, as heat, humidity, disease, and insects often run rampant. But these ills don't faze members of the genus *Clethra*.

These shrubs—popularly known as summersweets—not only sail through late-summer doldrums, they also feature upright or drooping spikes of intensely fragrant flowers. The blossoms are magnets for butterflies and other nectar-seeking insects. Flower color ranges from creamy white to sultry pink and in fall the foliage turns bright yellow. There is also a winter bonus in the form of sculptural seed capsules that persist into spring and are

handsome in dried arrangements. Deer are not enamored of them, and rabbits tend to leave them alone.

Need more? They come in sizes ranging from tall to short, flourish in sun to part shade, and are adaptable enough to do well in both seashore and mountain areas. They also spice up mixed borders and are beautiful as hedges.

What constitutes a member of the genus and how many members there are is a subject of botanical debate. The current thinking is that there are 30 to 70

***Clethra alnifolia* 'Hummingbird' is a tidy, compact shrub with fragrant midsummer flowers that attract a variety of pollinators.**

species, with the majority of botanists favoring the lower number. Species may be deciduous or evergreen. Their small bell- or cup-shaped flowers are arranged in panicles or racemes, and open from the bottom up. *Clethra* species are found throughout eastern Asia and North America.

A NATIVE BEAUTY

Within North America, *Clethra alnifolia* (USDA Hardiness Zones 4–9, AHS Heat Zones 9–1) is the species that has garnered the most attention. Native from Maine to Florida and across the Gulf Coast states to Texas, this summersweet is an eight- to 10-foot-tall shrub that was

obscure until 35 or so years ago, when two factors combined to bring it into prominence.

The first breakthrough for summersweet was the 1977 discovery of a dwarf form. Richard Feist, a graduate intern working for Fred Galle, director of horticulture at Callaway Gardens in Stone Mountain, Georgia, saw a three-foot-tall, compact, white-flowered summersweet growing in a drainage ditch by Hummingbird Lake. Feist named the plant 'Hummingbird' and both he and Galle spread the word about its merits, emphasizing that it was perfect for mixed borders and small gardens. Their preaching fell on fertile soil: In 1993, 'Hummingbird' was honored by the Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association and in 1994 it won a Gold Medal Award from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

The second was the native plant movement. This came into its own when former First Lady and native plant champion Lady Bird Johnson and then President Bill Clinton saw to it that federally funded landscapes included native flora. In particular, Clinton's 1994 executive memorandum stipulating the practical use of regional plants on Federal projects caused the demand for native plants to increase substantially.

With greater consumer interest in native plants and the discovery of a dwarf form, nurseryowners started taking a closer look at the variations in summersweets and they found some truly great plants—some by chance and some through careful breeding and selection.

CHANCE FINDINGS

Early efforts concentrated on finding pink flowers by working with a cultivar known as 'Rosea'. Introduced in 1906, it features dark pink buds rather than the typical white. There is some question as to whether or not this is the same plant as the cultivar sold as 'Pink Spires'. In any case, both feature flowers that fade to a pale pink after opening.

Andy Brand at Broken Arrow Nursery in Hamden, Connecticut, planted rows of 'Pink Spires' in 1992 with the hope of finding some plants bearing not only pink buds but pink flowers as well. He didn't find such a plant, but he did spot a branch covered with reddish-pink flowers. A close



Award-winning cultivar 'Ruby Spice' bears spikes of fragrant, pink flowers.

er look revealed that this lone branch, known as a "sport" in botanical terms, indeed bore different-colored flowers.

Vegetative propagation of the sport began immediately and the resulting

plants were named 'Ruby Spice'. Growing up to eight feet tall, 'Ruby Spice' was honored with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Gold Medal Award in 1998 and a Cary Award, sponsored by New England horticultural associations, in 2000.

William Flemer III, of the former Princeton Nurseries in Allentown, New Jersey, also sought a better pink. He didn't find one, but when observing rows of his seed-grown plants in the early 1990s, he discovered one plant blooming later than all the rest. Most summersweets start to flower in late July in central New Jersey, but this one began blooming in late August and continued into September. He named the plant 'September Beauty'.

Tom Dilatush's discovery was even more serendipitous than Flemer's. A retired New Jersey nurseryman, Dilatush spied a summersweet growing out of a compost heap in the mid-1970s. Under four feet tall, it had darker, glossier leaves and a denser growth habit than any other *C. alnifolia* he had come across. It was first named 'Tom's Compact', then shortened to 'Compacta'. In a major summersweet trial conducted by Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania from 1999 through 2006, 'Compacta' was named the best dwarf cul-



'Sixteen Candles' is a compact cultivar named for its upright flower clusters.

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www.arrowhead-alpines.com.

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Mason Hollow Nursery, Mason, NH.
(603) 878-4347.

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Rare Find Nursery, Jackson, NJ.
(732) 833-0613.

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tivar. In 2010, it received a Gold Medal Award from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

In Massachusetts, gardener Anne Bidwell collected and planted summersweet seeds from wild plants growing on Cape Cod. The flowers on one of the resulting plants resembled white lilacs rather than the slim spires found on all other summersweets. Named in her honor, 'Anne Bidwell' reaches a height of four to six feet.

BREEDING AND SELECTION

A rather well-kept secret in gardening circles is that 'Hummingbird' tends to sprawl with age—say after three or four years. Richard Bir, a horticulture specialist emeritus at North Carolina State University, warns that it can also be aggressive. "It is a thug in the shade, with mulch, moisture, and any fertility," says Bir.

At the University of Georgia, horticulture professor Michael A. Dirr sought to rectify this situation. He collected 'Hummingbird' seeds and trialed the resulting 260 plants. The stalwart 'Sixteen Candles' is the successful result of this work. At 30 inches tall, it is slightly smaller than 'Hummingbird', and its four- to six-inch white



Recent summersweet selections include Vanilla Spice™ ('Caleb'), top, noted for its larger flowers, and 'Crystalina', above, a miniature that grows to only two-and-half-feet tall.

flowers are upright rather than arched.

When not traveling around the world looking for superior plants, Tim Wood, product development manager at Spring Meadow Nursery, a wholesale firm in Grand Haven, Michigan, tries his hand at breeding plants. The three-

to six-foot-tall Vanilla Spice™ ('Caleb'), introduced in 2010, is one of his proud creations. Its distinguishing feature is its large flowers, which are almost double the size of normal blooms.

Thomas Ranney and his team at North Carolina State University's horti-



Two clethras deserving of more use in American gardens are cinnamon clethra, top, native to the American Southeast, and Japanese clethra, above. Both grow into large shrubs or small trees.

cultural research center in Mill's River have also been breeding better summersweets. In 2011, they introduced the dwarf 'Crystalina'. Trademarked as Sugartina, this summersweet has dark, glossy foliage and is more compact and dense in habit than many other cultivars.

And the breeding work continues. "We are working on new clethras with a focus on new flower colors," says Ranney.

OTHER CLETHRA SPECIES

Botanists are almost ready to accept that a unique native clethra with a downy

white undercoating on its leaves is a variety of *C. alnifolia* rather than a separate species. Generally referred to in botanical circles as *C. alnifolia* var. *tomentosa*, it is frequently labeled *C. tomentosa*. Fortunately there is a common name, 'Cottondale', for a superb cultivar and that's all one needs to remember.

'Cottondale' was discovered in a wild area of the Florida panhandle by Robert B. McCartney, co-owner of Woodlanders Nursery in Aiken, South Carolina. Driving along back roads, McCartney came across a truly exceptional plant bearing 16-inch-long fragrant white flowers. He stopped the car, took cuttings, and named the plant 'Cottondale', after the location of the nearest town.

Clothed in silvery white foliage throughout summer, 'Cottondale' grows four to six feet tall, flowers on racemes almost twice as long as any other clethra, and was the best performer in the clethra trials at Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania. It is also excelling in a current clethra evaluation being conducted by the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture.

Cinnamon clethra (*C. acuminata*, Zones 5–8, 8–3), native to the American Southeast, has smaller flowers but compensates by presenting a beautifully polished, cinnamon-colored bark. It can be grown as a shade-tolerant shrub or small, multi-stemmed tree.

"Though the flowers lack the penetrating fragrance of other summersweets, the long drooping inflorescences are quite pretty and yield equally attractive tan seed capsules that contrast with the golden yellow fall color of the leaves," says Bill Cullina, executive director of Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens in Boothbay. "I grow it mainly for the color of its beautifully peeling bark—a blend of cinnamon, nutmeg, and lavender," says Cullina.

At the Southern Highlands Reserve, a native plant arboretum and research center in Lake Toxaway, North Carolina, where *C. acuminata* is native, Dick Bir says, "We get more questions about it than most other plants during summer tours."

In recent years, Japanese clethra (*C. barbinervis*, Zones 5–8, 8–5) has gained popularity, due to its beautiful exfoliating bark similar to that of Stewartias. Other summersweets offered in the trade include Mexican clethra (*C. pringlei*,



Whether planted in a mixed border, left, or where their fall color shows to good effect, right, clethras are valuable additions to the garden.

Zones 8–10, 10–7) an evergreen species from the mountains of Mexico, and Chinese clethra (*C. fargesii*, Zones 5–7, 7–5), similar to but shorter than Japanese clethra. These are more like small trees than shrubs but can be trimmed to a desired size.

Unfortunately, many of these species and selections are available only through

specialty mail-order nurseries (see the sidebar below).

CLETHRAS IN THE GARDEN

Given their range in height—from a little over two to almost 20 feet—summersweets can fit into just about any garden that needs some midsummer fragrance and is not subject to extreme droughts. Once

you've decided on a suitable height, check species and varieties for hardiness and light requirements. If you have room, consider growing two or more different types.

"I sometimes combine the cultivar 'September Beauty' as a subtle formal accent in combination with straight species *Clethra alnifolia*," says Duncan Brine, principal designer at Garden Large in Pawling, New York. "Its vertical form, dark green lustrous leaf, and later bloom time stand apart from, while blending well with other clethras."

I remember seeing a lovely hedgerow of clethras in July at the Greensboro Arboretum in North Carolina. There, the more floriferous and fragrant *C. alnifolia* was combined with the darker green foliage of *C. acuminata*. I could easily envision how handsome this row looked in winter with the exfoliating, cinnamon-colored bark of the latter and the curving, twisted seed capsules of the former.

So cheer up, fellow gardeners! During the worst of the summer doldrums, you can find refreshment in the wealth of fragrance and easy-care beauty provided by clethras large and small.

Patricia A. Taylor's gardens in Princeton, New Jersey, include 'Anne Bidwell', 'Hummingbird', 'Ruby Spice', and Japanese clethra. She's now on the hunt for a 'Cottondale'.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE CLETHRAS GONE?

Five years ago, Tim Wood, product development manager at Spring Meadow Nursery, a wholesale firm in Grand Haven, Michigan, blogged about clethra and how the shrub was widely available. He listed 15 cultivars and two related species. Today, his firm offers only six cultivars and these are not big sellers.

"There are two problems," Wood explains. "The first is that retail nurseries and garden centers across the country are going out of business. Climate change, deer, and the economy have all taken their toll on our industry. If our plants don't sell, we can't afford to keep listing them." Fair enough, a business is a business.

"The second factor," Wood continues, "is that clethras are mid- to late-summer bloomers, and most retail purchases are made in the spring. It's hard to get excited about a shrub that is just leafing out in May when there are beguiling roses and hydrangeas forced into early bloom and demanding attention."

Patricia Wolfe at the mail-order nursery Forestfarm in Williams, Oregon, reports that clethra sales have decreased over the past few years. Forestfarm currently lists 12 different clethra selections.

Ron Rabideau, manager at Rare Find Nursery in Jackson, New Jersey, features 20 clethras in his retail and mail-order firm's catalog. "I just like them," he says, "and we can afford to keep a small inventory of each one. Even if they don't sell, their fragrance floats around our grounds in late July and into August and is just terrific."

—P.A.T.

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Making America a Nation of Gardeners, a Land of Gardens

Summer Tree Defoliators

by Scott Aker



Yellow-necked caterpillars usually damage a tree's appearance more than threaten its health.

NOTHING CAN send a gardener into a panic like the sudden defoliation of a prized tree. Defoliation does not always spell disaster, however; if you know what signs to look for, and monitor your trees regularly, you can usually prevent serious damage.

The culprits behind defoliation are almost always sawflies or caterpillars. The only easily noticeable difference between these insects is that sawflies have six or more pairs of knobby prolegs—leglike appendages on the back portion of the abdomen—while caterpillars have fewer than six pairs. Caterpillars, of course, are destined to become moths or butterflies, while sawfly adults look more like the bees and wasps they are related to.

To help you recognize these pests, here are descriptions of seven of the most common defoliators, along with advice on what you need to look for, when you should be looking, and how to manage or control them. Bagworms, pine sawflies, and gypsy moths can cause serious, long-term damage, while the others are bothersome more from an aesthetic standpoint.

BAGWORMS

Bagworms are caterpillars that feed mostly on evergreen conifers. If left unchecked, they can remove all the foliage from a small arborvitae or Leyland cypress in less than two weeks. Evergreen conifers die if

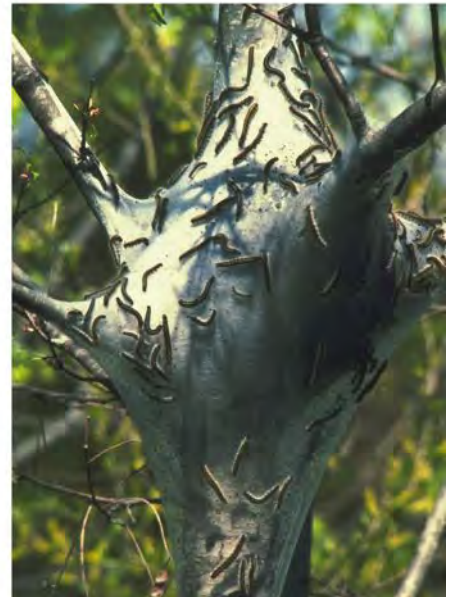


Bagworms create tell-tale cocoons, left. Eastern tent caterpillars create unsightly nests, right.

completely defoliated, so examine plants thoroughly in spring—by early June—for the presence of the conelike protective cocoons that are covered in fragments of dead foliage. Pull all the cocoons off and destroy them before the eggs inside have a chance to hatch. If there are too many of them or they are too high to reach, check weekly for the hatchlings and treat the foliage with *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Btk) or a broad-spectrum pesticide such as spinosad as soon as you see the hatched caterpillars on the foliage.

EASTERN TENT CATERPILLARS

These are early defoliators of apples and cherries. Look for the masses of eggs, which look a bit like hardened black foam, in the autumn on twigs. Prune the egg masses off when you are doing your winter pruning, or remove caterpillars and their nests when they hatch in early spring and begin to build their nests between the major branches of the trees. While the nests are unsightly, the caterpillars are done feeding in time for the trees to grow more leaves.



TOP: COURTESY OF GERALD J. LENHARD, LOUISIANA STATE UNIV. BUGWOOD.ORG. BOTTOM LEFT: COURTESY OF ERIC R. DAY, VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY. BUGWOOD.ORG. BOTTOM RIGHT: COURTESY OF WILLIAM H. HOFFARD, USDA FOREST SERVICE / BUGWOOD.ORG

FALL CANKERWORMS

Fall cankerworms are more commonly known as inchworms or loopers. The caterpillars are actually present in spring on a wide variety of deciduous trees, but the moths emerge and mate in the fall. Place a band of Tree Tanglefoot, a commercially available sticky pest barrier, around the trunk in October to prevent the flightless females from reaching the ends of the branches where they lay eggs.

FALL WEBWORMS

It's easy to spot the nests of silken threads at the ends of branches that the fall webworm caterpillars create to protect themselves as they feed and develop. Individual branches may be defoliated, but the damage is not life-threatening. Pesticides aren't very effective because it's nearly impossible to get them inside the nests where they are feeding. Simply prune off the end of the branches that are infested. Look for the nests starting in midsummer.

GYPSY MOTHS

Gypsy moth caterpillars are particularly damaging to oaks because they begin feeding as the foliage emerges and continue to feed through the time when trees have the ability to grow new leaves. Two years of defoliation often results in death. In early summer, tie burlap around the lower trunks of trees to capture adult female moths, which are white and flightless. Check under the burlap daily and scrape

Gardening Q&A with Scott Aker

MULCHING WITH EVERGREEN BOUGHS

I've heard that evergreen conifers produce compounds called polyphenolic inhibitors that keep competing plants from growing, and therefore should be used to mulch only the trees that produced them. I used branches from my Christmas tree to mulch some shrubs this past winter. Could this be why my azaleas aren't doing well?

It's unlikely that the branches from an average-sized Christmas tree would affect established azaleas. Polyphenolic inhibitors can inhibit seed germination, but it would take a thick layer of decomposing needles to produce a dose sufficient to do this. However, conifer needles should probably not be used in a vegetable garden where you plan to sow seeds directly into the ground. —S.A.
E-mail your gardening questions to Scott Aker at saker@ahs.org.

the moths into a bucket of soapy water. When the leaves have fallen, check for the tan, fuzzy egg masses and scrape them off trees and other surfaces to reduce the population for next spring. Larvae can also be captured under burlap bands and collected and destroyed.

PINE SAWFLIES

Although they are infrequent pests, pine sawflies feed in groups and can cause the death of pines that are completely defoliated. Check weekly starting in midsummer for neatly spaced yellow eggs that are partially embedded in needles. Continue to check the foliage through the end of summer. The larvae of the red-headed pine sawfly, one of the most damaging



Red-headed pine sawfly larvae

species, are active in September and October. Remove the eggs to prevent damage, or remove the larvae by hand. If an entire tree is infested, spray it thoroughly with horticultural oil or insecticidal soap.

YELLOW-NECKED CATERPILLARS

These gregarious caterpillars feed in groups at the margins of leaves. Because they defoliate trees so late in the season, they have little impact on plant health. You can remove most of them by plucking off infested leaves if you catch them shortly after they have hatched. Birches, oaks, and hornbeams are most often affected. Check foliage weekly starting in midsummer and continue monitoring through mid-August. If removal of larvae by hand is impractical, you can treat infested trees with Btk or spinosad shortly after caterpillars have hatched.

So stay in tune with your garden throughout the summer, because regularly monitoring your trees is the most effective way to identify pests early and prevent major damage from defoliators.

Scott Aker is a Washington D.C.-based horticulturist.



Tying burlap around tree trunks in early summer helps control the gypsy moth population.

Cucumbers—From Slicers to Picklers

by *Karan Davis Cutler*

THE ROMANS grew them in greenhouses called *specularia*; Queen Isabella sent their seeds to the New World with Columbus; Jefferson grew them at Monticello, Washington at Mount Vernon; Henry J. Heinz pickled them in the 1870s; Canadians experimented with growing them in a nickel mine, 4,600 feet below ground in the 1970s; and Japanese cosmonauts grew them in space in 2011. Despite its 3,000-year history, the cucumber (*Cucumis sativus*) has never been universally admired. “It has been a common saying of physicians in England, that a cucumber should be well sliced, and dressed with pepper and vinegar, and then thrown out, as good for nothing,” wrote 18th-century essayist Samuel Johnson.

Although cucumbers are 96 percent water and contain only a modest dose of vitamins and phytonutrients—most of which are in the skin and the seeds—it’s far from good for nothing. Few vegetables are better in a green salad, no burger should be served without a dill pickle, and a marinated cucumber salad is perfect for sweltering summer days. As is raita, the cucumber-yogurt condiment common to the cuisines of India and Pakistan.

CUCUMBER CHOICES

The Roman poet Virgil described the plant as snakelike, its vines writhing through the grass, but many gardeners now grow compact varieties like ‘Salad Bush’, a slicing variety that produces long fruits for fresh eating, and ‘Jackson Classic’, which has small fruits meant for pickling.

Slicers and picklers have a similar flavor, but picklers tend to ripen earlier and concentrate their crop. You don’t have to plant both: Slicers can be pickled if harvested when small, and picklers can be sliced.

All cucumber plants have large, rough, triangular-shaped leaves and small yellow flowers like those of their squash, melon, and pumpkin cousins. Yields de-



‘Marketmore 76’ is an heirloom open-pollinated slicing cucumber that is good for eating fresh.

pend on plant type and variety. For a family of four, the estimate for eating fresh is four vining or six bush plants. To prolong the harvest, plant successive crops every two or three weeks; the last sowing should be made about 12 weeks before the first-frost date.

GROWING GUIDELINES

Cucumbers thrive in high temperatures and full sun, and grow best in fertile soil that drains well, is rich with organic matter, and has a near-neutral pH. Pale leaves indicate too little nitrogen; bronze leaves signal a potassium deficiency. Spraying

with fish emulsion solves both problems.

Seeds need a minimum soil temperature of 65 degrees Fahrenheit to germinate. Wait until both the ground and air warm, a couple of weeks after the last frost, before you sow or transplant. Cucumbers resent having their roots disturbed, and small seedlings transplant best, so begin indoors no more than three weeks before the transplant date: Sow three seeds one inch deep in individual three-inch pots and thin to one plant. If you buy nursery seedlings, choose plants that are stocky without trailing vines or flowers, and harden off any transplants.

For row culture, space plants three feet apart—half that for bush varieties—with rows spaced about five feet apart. In beds, give each plant about three feet of space. Cucumber hills—mounds of soil two or three feet in diameter—should be spaced about six feet apart, three vining plants to a hill. While plants are small, mulch the soil to discourage weeds, retain moisture, and protect the fruits.

Sources

Gourmet Seed, (575) 398-6111.
www.gourmetseed.com.

Harris Seeds, (800) 544-7938.
www.harriseseeds.com.

Johnny’s Selected Seeds, (877) 564-6697.
www.johnnyseeds.com.

Trellising cucumbers saves space, reduces disease problems, and produces more and straighter fruits. Set plants about 10 inches apart along a five-foot-tall trellis. Heavy netting or wire mesh will help the vines climb. For containers, choose a compact cultivar like 'Bush Champion' and a pot at least eight inches wide and 12 inches deep for one plant.

Because they grow quickly—between 45 and 70 days to mature fruits—cukes in the garden demand uniform moisture. Apply a side dressing of balanced organic



Training cucumber vines on a trellis saves space and keeps fruits off the ground.

fertilizer about six weeks after germination but go easy: Overfeeding produces mammoth leaves and few fruits.

PESTS AND DISEASES

Cucumbers are vulnerable to a number of diseases and pests. Providing full sun and good air circulation, not working among wet plants, watering in the morning, destroying plant debris after the harvest, and changing the location of your cucumber plants each year will go a long way to discourage anthracnose, leaf spot, mildews, and other diseases—as will growing disease-resistant cultivars.

Among the most disease-resistant are the hybrid slicers 'Cobra', 'Diomedea', 'Olympian', and 'Speedway'. 'Lider' is an open-pollinated (OP) variety with good resistance. 'Wautoma', 'Eureka', 'Jackson

CUCUMBER LINGO

As if the traditional cucumber groups—slicer, pickler, bush, vining, monoecious, gynoeious, and parthenocarpic—weren't confusing enough, seed catalogs often list the following categories as well:

Beit-alpha, or Middle East, cucumbers: thin-skinned, near-seedless, high-yielding variety primarily for greenhouse culture; 'Sultan', 'Proximus', 'Aragon'

Burpless cucumbers: thin-skinned American slicers bred to have fewer cucurbitacins and thus easier to digest; 'Big Burpless Hybrid', 'Sweet Slice'

Cornichons: generic French term for pickling cucumbers; 'Parisienne Cornichon de Bourbonne', 'Harmonie'

Dutch cucumbers (aka English or European cucumbers): near-seedless varieties for greenhouse culture; 'English Telegraph', 'Carmen', 'Tyria'

Gherkins: a pickling cucumber; true gherkins are *Cucumis anguria*, a different species from cucumbers; 'West Indian Gherkin'

Lemon cucumbers: yellow oval or round fruits; 'Lemon', 'Crystal Apple'

Oriental, or Asian, cucumbers: long, thin, ribbed varieties with tiny seeds—should be trellised; 'Orient Express', 'Suyo Long'

—K.D.C.

Classic', and 'Carolina' are picklers with above average disease tolerance.

Cucumber beetles spread the always-fatal bacterial wilt and are the worst of the insects that trouble cucumbers, but aphids, leaf miners, leafhoppers, and whiteflies can also damage and even kill plants. You can apply organic pesticides, but covering the seed bed or transplants as soon as they go into the garden with floating row covers—lightweight fabrics made of polypropylene—is a safer approach. To ensure pollination, remove the covers when flowering begins.

VARIETIES

Most cucumbers are monoecious, with both female (fruiting) and male (nonfruiting) flowers on each plant; insects do the pollinating. Gynoeious cucumbers, which yield earlier and larger crops, have only female flowers and need at least one

monoecious plant nearby to bear fruits. Seed packets of 'Gemini' and other gynoeious cultivars contain a few marked pollinator seeds; be sure to carefully label these plants so you don't thin them by mistake.

Parthenocarpic cucumbers—seedless varieties like 'Corinto'—have renounced sex altogether. These are best suited for greenhouse or high-tunnel cultivation; an exception is 'Diva', an All-America Selections winner that does well outdoors.

There are more than 130 OP and scores more hybrid cucumbers available. Good OP vining cukes for slicing include the heirloom 'Long Green Improved' and 'Marketmore 76'; among hybrids 'Calypso', 'General Lee', and 'Olympian' are popular; 'Morden Early' was bred for cool, short seasons; pickle makers can't go wrong with 'Northern Pickler' or 'Jackson Classic'.

ENJOYING THE HARVEST

Pick cucumbers at any stage, but small fruits have better flavor and smaller, softer seeds; cut the stems to keep from damaging the plant. Harvest fruit regularly or plants will stop producing. Harvest in the morning, place fruits in unsealed plastic bags, and refrigerate immediately for up to four days.



'Jackson Classic' is suited for pickling.

Karan Davis Cutler grows cucumbers and other vegetables in her Bridport, Vermont, garden. She is the author of several gardening books, including The Complete Vegetable & Herb Gardener (Macmillan).

Horticultural News and Research Important to American Gardeners

NEW OWNERS FOR HERONSWOOD

Héronswood Gardens and its eponymous nursery in Kingston, Washington, now belong to the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe. The Pacific Northwest tribe, which has a reservation nearby, purchased the 15-acre property during a sealed bid auction in June. The amount



The former Heronswood nursery site has been auctioned to a Pacific Northwest tribal group.

of the winning bid has not yet been disclosed, but was reported to be significantly higher than the \$750,000 auction minimum. The renowned gardens and nursery were auctioned on behalf of W. Atlee Burpee & Company, which had purchased them from co-founders and creators Dan Hinkley and Robert Jones for \$4.5 million in 2000.

Under Hinkley's direction, starting in 1987 Heronswood nursery introduced thousands of rare and exotic plants to gardeners worldwide. Hinkley and Jones designed the elaborate display gardens that surrounded the nursery and their former home to showcase the plants, and it became a mecca for garden travelers.

A few years after Burpee purchased the property, the company transferred the nursery inventory and operations from Kingston to its Warminster, Pennsylvania, headquarters; Burpee continued to main-

tain the Heronswood gardens, periodically opening them to the public.

In addition to the property, all of Heronswood's trademarks and marketing assets—such as its website and catalogs—are included in the package that went on the auction block. Burpee retains exclusive rights to sell existing Heronswood plant varieties and collections under the umbrella of the Burpee company.

"The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe," states George Ball, chairman and CEO of Burpee, in a press release, "has agreed both to preserve the historic gardens, and to use the facilities to educate their members, as well as the public, about native plants."

FIRST ONLINE WORLD FLORA

Four institutions—the Missouri Botanical Garden; the New York Botanical Garden; the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh—have teamed up to compile the first online World Flora. The project, which should be completed by 2020, will contain information on some 400,000 known plant species worldwide. It is one of the primary goals of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, created by the United Nations' Convention on Biological Diversity in 2002 in order to combat the continuing loss of plant diversity around the world.

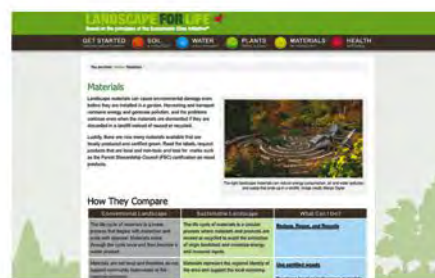
"It is imperative that we create this resource, which will help us assess the value of all plant species to humankind and be effective stewards to ensure their survival," explains Gregory Long, CEO and president of the New York Botanical Garden in New York City.

The Flora will build on current lists to create a detailed record with the accepted names, synonyms, descriptions, images, and distribution information for all known plants. As new plants are discovered, they will be added to the Flora. Scientists hope that the full inventory will help protect the 100,000 plants worldwide that are threatened by extinction, as well as harness the full potential of plants

to provide solutions for various health, social, and economic problems.

MAKING SUSTAINABILITY EASIER FOR HOME GARDENERS

May saw the official launch of Landscape for Life, a homeowner's program jointly sponsored by the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas in Austin and the U.S. Botanic Garden



The new Landscape for Life website provides sustainable garden guidance for homeowners.

(USBG) in Washington, D.C. The online resource is modeled after the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES™), an interdisciplinary effort of the Wildflower Center, the USBG, and the American Society of Landscape Architects that upholds voluntary sustainability guidelines and benchmarks for landscape professionals.

"We wanted to make sure that we were reaching homeowners, too," explains Ray Mims, the USBG's conservation and sustainability manager. "One home garden is like one drop of water on a stone. Alone it's not much, but collectively we can have a really positive impact on the environment."

Landscape for Life is designed to reach a variety of gardeners, no matter where or how large their gardens. The website is divided into categories—soil, water, plants, materials, and health—with resources and links to specific pages in each category. Gardeners can see a comparison of a conventional landscape to a sustainable landscape and read tips about ways that they can make their own landscapes more sus-

tainable. The website also includes teaching resources such as an instruction manual and five PowerPoint presentations that instructors are encouraged to add to.

For more information, and to see Landscape for Life's advice and resources, visit www.landscapeforlife.org.

EVERYTHING'S ROSY

The bragging rights for roses right belong to the Conard-Pyle Company: Not only did its Sunshine Daydream rose earn All-American Rose Selections (AARS) honors for 2012, but its Francis Meiland™ rose has been declared the 2013 winner. The Francis Meiland rose is the first hybrid tea rose to win under the AARS's new guidelines that prohibit use of spray fungicides on test roses, so the rose had no chemical assistance.

"We have received the award in multiple years before," says Kyle McKean, Conard-Pyle's marketing director. "However, this is the first time we have won two years in a row when there haven't been winners from other companies. Also exciting is that we had winners as AARS

moved to no-spray, which made surviving the test fields even more difficult."

AARS winners are chosen after two years of rigorous testing in 10 gardens across the United States. The AARS tests roses for 15 characteristics that include disease resistance, flower production, color, and fragrance in order to identify exceptional roses that gardeners can grow easily. The Francis Meiland rose excels in both disease resistance and aesthetics and has earned several awards in Europe.



Francis Meiland™ rose

Named to honor the centenary of Francis Meiland's birth, the moniker is a nod to Conard-Pyle's long relationship with rose breeders Meiland International. The rose grows between six and seven feet tall with dark green foliage. The blooms are white to pale pink with a darker pink center. Francis Meiland will be available for purchase next spring. For more information, visit www.conard-pyle.com.

Another new rose making headlines is 'Summer Waltz', a double-petaled, pink cultivar released by the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. The northern-hardy, disease-resistant selection from the University of Minnesota Woody Landscape Plant Breeding Program was released in 2011 under the name 'Rosa 66'. However, the official guidelines for naming plants (the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants) prohibit a cultivar name from containing the plant's botanical or common genus name (or from containing numerals), so the arboretum held a naming contest to rectify the problem. Mary Ann Starnes of Big Fork, Minnesota, came up with the winning name.

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PEOPLE and PLACES in the NEWS

New APGA Executive Director Appointed

In June, the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) announced that Casey Sclar has been appointed its new executive director by a unanimous vote. “Dr.



Casey Sclar

Sclar’s accomplishments over the past 25 years in the fields of public horticulture, horticultural science, and sustainability made him the number one candidate in the eyes of our search committee and the APGA Board of Directors,” says Ken Schutz, executive director of the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix, Arizona, and APGA vice president and chair of the search committee.

Sclar has served as interim executive director of the APGA since September 2011, and has been deeply involved with the organization for several years. He served as the Program Selection Committee’s chair from 2010 to 2011 and won the APGA’s Professional Citation Award for achievement in public horticulture in 2011.

Prior to his APGA appointment, Sclar spent 15 years as plant health care leader at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. He officially assumes his new role on September 1, 2012.

Duke Farms Reopens with a New Mission

Duke Farms, the estate of late heiress and philanthropist Doris Duke, recently reopened to the public with a renewed emphasis on environmental education and stewardship. In her will, Duke requested that her 2,740-acre estate in Hillsborough, New Jersey, be turned into an environmental learning center dedicated to furthering agricultural and horticultural research and protecting wildlife. To that end, the Duke Farms Foundation adopted the mission “to be a model of environmental stewardship in the



The renovated barn at Duke Farms is LEED certified.

21st century and to inspire visitors to become informed stewards of the land,” in 2006, three years after Duke’s death.

In 2008, renovations began on the farm barn, turning it into a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified orientation center outfitted with a classroom and café. From here, visitors can take a tram to the Orchid Range, the old conservatory that now houses tropical orchids and a coastal plains garden, or the Great Meadow, where they can meander along 18 miles of trails through the wildflowers and grounds.

“We hope that people will come to Duke Farms to enjoy nature and, along the way, become more aware of issues and solutions that impact the health of our ecosystem,” explains Timothy M. Taylor, executive director of the Duke Farms Foundation.

For more information on Duke Farms, visit www.dukefarms.org.

A BLOOMING DISCOVERY

How do plants “know” when to bloom? Scientists have known it has something to do with sunlight, a plant’s circadian clock, and a sequence of molecular events. Recently a team of researchers unraveled how these three factors interact to induce flowering. The research focused on FKF₁, a protein that plays a key role in determining how plants recognize seasonal change.

Using *Arabidopsis*, a simple plant in the mustard family, researchers discovered that the plant’s circadian clock—an



A sequence of molecular events controls the bloom time of *Arabidopsis* plants.

internal time-keeping mechanism that regulates 24-hour biological cycles—controls the release of FKF₁ in the late afternoon. The protein is activated by light, so when the days are short and there is no sunlight in the late afternoon, such as during the winter, the protein is not activated. During longer days, sunlight activates FKF₁, which triggers another protein, FLOWERING LOCUS T, produced in the leaves. This protein causes undifferentiated plant cells, which can become either leaf or flower tissue, to become the latter.

The researchers hope that their work with *Arabidopsis* will lead to a better understanding of more complex plants, especially food crops such as rice, wheat, and barley, as well as plants used as biofuels. “If we can regulate the timing of flowering, we might be able to increase crop yield by accelerating or delaying this,” explains Takato Imaizumi, an assistant professor of



According to a national survey, Americans are spending more on lawns and gardens.

biology at the University of Washington and one of the authors of the study, published in the journal *Science*.

LAWN AND GARDEN TRENDS SHIFT

The 2012 National Gardening Survey, released by the National Gardening Association in May, contains encouraging news for lawn and garden retailers. The results show an overall increase in lawn and garden spending in 2011 after two years of falling sales. The survey also reveals that:

- U.S. households spent \$29.1 billion on lawns and gardens in 2011, a two percent increase over the previous year.
- Average household spending amounted to \$351 for the year.
- Do-it-yourself lawn care increased three percent with an additional three million homes from the year before.
- Home improvement centers accounted for 30 percent of lawn and garden spending; mass merchants for 21 percent; local garden centers for 17 percent; and local hardware stores for 14 percent.
- While large national chains dominate the lawn and garden market overall, 23 percent of buyers in the 18 to 34 age range prefer their local stores for lawn and garden product purchases over mass merchants (19 percent) or home centers (17 percent).

For more information on the 2012 National Gardening Survey, visit www.gardenresearch.com.

CAUTIONARY NEWS FOR HOSE-DRINKERS

All of us have probably taken a drink from the garden hose at some point. A study released in May from the Ecology Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan, reveals that this may not be the best idea, however.

Researchers studied 179 garden tools and products, including hoses, for the presence of lead, cadmium, bromine, chlorine, phthalates, and BPA, all of which have been linked to birth defects, impaired learning, liver toxicity, premature births, and early puberty in laboratory animals. Their findings revealed that over two-thirds (126) of the items tested contained chemical levels of “high concern.” In particular, the water from one hose contained 18 times more lead than allowed by the Federal drinking water standard.

According to the study, polyurethane or natural rubber hoses are the safest choices. Look for hoses that say “drinking water safe” and “lead free” if you must drink from a hose. Letting a hose run for a few seconds before drinking also helps because the water that has been sitting in it will have the highest level of chemicals. Try to keep hoses in the shade because heat from the sun speeds up the leaching of chemicals into the water. For more information, and to see a complete list of results by product, visit www.healthystuff.org.

Written by Editorial Intern Holly Bowers and Associate Editor Viveka Neveln.

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GREEN GARAGE® by Rita Pelczar

Contributing editor Rita Pelczar reports on products she has found useful or innovative in her garden, with an emphasis on earth-friendly products and supplies. Here she focuses on products for gardening outdoors in summer.

Efficient, well-designed tools will maximize your sweat equity on sweltering summer days; here are a few that make gardening easier for me.

Ergonomic Shovel

Finding a good shovel that suits your strength and build goes a long way to reducing the effort involved in digging.



Green Heron Tools HERS™ Shovel-Spade Hybrid was designed for women. It has a foot-friendly extended step and comfortable blade-shaft angle to take advantage of lower body strength. It's lightweight, offers a comfortable, D-grip handle, and is available in three sizes to suit different heights.

Green Heron Tools, LLC, www.greenherontools.com.

Going Cordless

Cordless trimmers are lightweight and go wherever you need them. Unfortunately, they sometimes lack the power or duration to tackle big jobs. **Black & Decker's 36 Volt Lithium Trimmer/Edger**, however, delivers comparable performance to gasoline-powered trimmers, without the noise, fumes, or weight. It has a 14-inch cutting swath and the compact, 36-volt lithium battery holds its charge longer than any battery-powered trimmer I've used. A nifty feature allows the user to adjust the motor power for specific cutting needs: maximum power for overgrown weeds, less power for lighter trimming. Black & Decker, www.blackanddecker.com.

Sturdy Broadfork

Put your weight to work! **Valley Oak Tool Company's Broadfork** is a simple, ever-so-sturdy tool that came in very handy as I transitioned from my spring vegetables to summer crops. It's also useful for loosening up compacted soils, penetrating deeper than most tillers. It looks like a very large garden fork with 12-inch, curved steel tines connected by a flat treadbar. Step—or stand—on the bar, to sink the tines deep into the soil. Step off the bar and lean back on the stout ash handle to lift the soil. Valley Oak Tool Company, www.valleyoakttools.com.

Sun Power

I have three rain barrels that I employ to help water my gardens, but until this year, the low pressure—dependent on

gravity—has limited their practical use to garden areas below where the barrels sit. This year I installed a **RainPerfect™ Solar-Powered Rain Barrel Pump** from Rule® Innovations and



it has upped the utility of my water collection system considerably. A compact solar collector supplies the energy. A line runs from the collector to a small control

box that sits on top of the barrel, which is connected to the inline submersible pump inside the barrel, providing pressurized pumping at 13 PSI. It pumps up to 100 gallons of water on a single charge.

RainPerfect Pump, www.rainperfectpump.com.

Self-Watering Planter

Watering the garden can be a time-consuming job, and containers require particular attention, especially when temperatures rise. **Gardener's Supply's Terrazza Trough Planter** has a



generous, 130-quart capacity, and a four-gallon reservoir for water that allows plants to draw moisture as needed. Many other styles and sizes of self-watering containers are available, or you can convert your favorite planter into a self-watering container using a **Self Watering Conversion Kit**. Be sure the container has drainage holes, so you don't drown your plants.

Gardener's Supply, www.gardeners.com.

A Quick Wash

Lee Valley's Gardener's Wash Basket is great for rinsing soil off freshly harvested garden produce before bringing it indoors. It's a wire basket with sturdy, collapsible handles that can be held under an outdoor faucet or a hose that is labeled safe for drinking.

Lee Valley Tools, Ltd., www.leevalley.com.

A contributing editor for The American Gardener, Rita Pelczar lives in North Carolina.



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Madoo Conservancy

by Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp

MENTION THE Hamptons, and images of beaches, yachts, and the seaside homes of the well-heeled spring to mind. In this milieu, not far from Bridgehampton on Long Island's east end, sits the Madoo Conservancy, an eclectic garden that offers an intimate look at the life and interests of artist and gardener Robert Dash.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Soon after Dash, 78, bought the property in the mid-1960s, he began transforming the existing 19th-century structures into habitable homes and studios. For several years, he moved from building to building every few months to sleep or to paint. A painter and writer, Dash honors his Scotch ancestry not only in the garden's name—in a heavy Scottish brogue, Madoo translates to “my dove”—but with the yellow pealike flowers of Scotch laburnum (*Laburnum alpinum*) dripping from the trees.

MELDING ART AND GARDEN

A free-standing doorway welcomes visitors from the parking area to the two-acre property. Doors, arbors, and other portals lure visitors from garden room to garden room. Gardens are for repose and rapture, Dash has said, where not everything is revealed at once, a design philosophy he chronicled in *Notes from Madoo: Making a Garden in the Hamptons* (Houghton Mifflin, 2000).



The Rill is a 120-foot-long rose-bordered walkway that plays with perspective.

Given Dash's artistic bent, it's not surprising the landscape features unusual vignettes that reflect the humanities as much as horticulture. Throughout the garden are framed letters, collectibles, and other memorabilia of Dash's frequent and famous visitors. Dash relishes clipping and shearing shrubbery and trees into forms and textures that enhance the beauty of sculptures, artifacts, and other artwork.

As an artist, Dash knows how to seduce the eye. The garden is a study in greens, with much of the color and texture coming from garden features such as a rose-laden arbor, painted benches, gates and railings, and clusters of pots.

Dash also enjoys playing with perspective. His 120-foot-long rose walk called the **Rill** narrows from eight feet wide to six feet wide, giving the illusion that it goes on forever. A longtime organic gardener and believer in recycling, Dash's sliced disks of utility poles resemble water lilies in a pond. Salvaged 18th-century concrete posts form the **Faux Stumpery**.

Certainly among America's best gardens, Madoo is on the National Register of Historic Places and receives preservation assistance from the nonprofit Garden Conservancy.

Garden columnist and author Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp lives in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Additional Information

The Madoo Conservancy, 618 Sagg Main Street, Sagaponack, NY 11962. (631) 537-8200. www.madoo.org.

- Open on Fridays and Saturdays, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m., from May 15 to September 15.
- Admission is \$10; visitors can arrange personal tours with Robert Dash or casual lunches and/or drinks for an additional cost.

Other sites worth visiting while in the Long Island area:

Old Westbury Gardens, Old Westbury, NY. www.oldwestburygardens.org.

Planting Fields Arboretum, Oyster Bay, NY. www.plantingfields.org.



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AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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A season-by-season guide to a sustainable kitchen garden



MITCHELL BEAZLEY

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Recommendations for Your Gardening Library

Grow Fruit Naturally

Lee Reich. The Taunton Press, Newtown, Connecticut, 2012. 234 pages. Publisher's price, softcover: \$24.95.

GIVEN THE INTENSE interest in growing edibles, especially in smaller spaces and integrated in the landscape, *Grow Fruit Naturally* is particularly timely. It is also the latest work by Lee Reich, known for his thorough, well-researched gardening books. Here Reich draws on his decades of experience with “making fruit growing feasible within the constraints of time and space that today’s gardeners and homeowners face,” all while “following nature’s lead [to] keep things simple and successful.”

The first section of the book, “The Basics,” explores the many factors to consider when planning a fruit garden, such as which varieties to choose and where to plant. Other fundamentals, such as pruning, dealing with pests and diseases, harvesting, and storage—illustrated with plenty of informative diagrams and color photographs—complete this section.

Where Reich’s vast knowledge really shines is the fruit profiles in the second section. It covers 31 fruits (including more than 300 varieties) from apples to strawberries to citrus, as well as some unusual fruits such as jujubes, medlars, and shipovias. Each profile begins with a concise rundown on the fruit’s growth habit, pollination, light and climate requirements. Then Reich describes each fruit in mouth-watering detail and provides tips for growing and harvesting it. And if the words weren’t enough, the portraits of the ripe fruits look good enough to pluck from the page.

Most profiles include a “Grow It Naturally” box, which gives further insight into avoiding problems without resorting to drastic chemical measures. Variety lists are often extensive, with brief descriptions of each one, and in some profiles there is also a list of “Lee’s Picks” that spotlights his favorite varieties.

For budding fruit growers, this book is the answer-all-questions guide. Its only fault is that it could tempt you to grow something so unusual—a tropical ‘Sulo’ papaya, for instance—that it may struggle in your climate. Reich makes it all seem too deliciously easy!

—Doreen Howard

Doreen Howard blogs for the Old Farmer’s Almanac, often discussing her experiences growing antique apples, cranberries, Asian pears, and more in her Roscoe, Illinois, garden.

A Guide to Bearded Irises

Kelly D. Norris. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 2012. 348 pages. Publisher’s price, hardcover: \$39.95.

HAVING READ the iris “bible,” *The World of Irises*, edited by Bee Warburton, *The Iris* by Brian Mathew, *The Gardener’s Iris Book* by William Shear, plus edited chapters in *Magic of Irises* by Barbara Perry Lawton, I thought that there was nothing new to say about this genus. That is, until I read *A Guide to Bearded Irises*, which has quite a few new things to say, and certainly in new ways. This fresh contribution to iris literature is soundly conceived, researched, and written with worldly insight and youthful verve by iris nurseryman Kelly D. Norris.

A two-page montage of iris flower parts in all shades sets the stage of this book, subtitled “Cultivating the Rainbow.” Norris warns readers to “Put on your sunglasses, color is about to hit the page,” just before launching into a “romping treatise” on the evolution of each color of the rainbow in irises. Even white, “really just an absence of color,” is evocatively presented: “White irises remind many gardeners of weddings, their pristine, crystalline petals whispering the strains of Pachelbel’s *Canon* and conjuring up visions of bridal tulle.” Norris also familiarizes readers with various iris patterns and color combinations.

Subsequent chapters discuss how to grow and breed irises, and each of the six different types of bearded irises receive a chapter. Irises may be garden rock stars, but Norris points out that even they benefit from a supporting cast. A section on “Planting Combinations: Divas and Dancers” provides a multitude of choices for creating pleasing juxtapositions of irises with companion plants. History lessons abound in the fascinating chapter on “The Historical Drama of Bearded Irises,” which delves into the origins of modern irises. The use of Norris’s excellent photographs and those of prominent American Iris Society photographers throughout the book is stellar.

In short, Norris’s book is comprehensive and up-to-date, all the while brimming with an enthusiasm that is exhilarating, inspiring, and at times almost overwhelming. Whether you are new to the iris world or a seasoned veteran, I highly recommend this book to improve your iris knowledge. And it is a fun read.

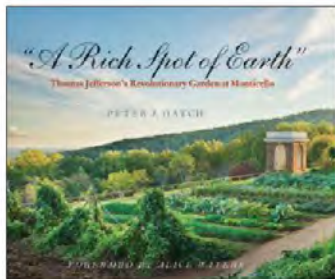
—Jim Morris

Jim Morris is first vice president of the American Iris Society, and encourages everyone to visit its extensive online Iris Encyclopedia (<http://wiki.irises.org>).

“A Rich Spot of Earth:” Thomas Jefferson’s Revolutionary Garden at Monticello

Peter J. Hatch. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 2012. 288 pages. Publisher’s price, hardcover: \$35.

THOMAS JEFFERSON was the quintessential Renaissance man: statesman, diplomat, architect, surveyor, and gardener. Yes, a *very good* gardener. And Jefferson’s gardening expertise comes alive via the words of Peter Hatch as he describes the horticultural accomplishments of this iconic American in this well-crafted book. No one is better qualified to speak to Jefferson’s garden legacy than Hatch, who has



been involved in the restoration and cultivation of Jefferson’s gardens at Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia, for more than 30 years as director of gardens and grounds.

“Few topics tell us more about Thomas Jefferson than gardening,” writes Hatch, “and the restored Monticello garden thrives as a living exhibition of his scientific and aesthetic sensibility.” Hatch’s account is insightful, erudite, and almost loving, sharing the passion and the painstaking labor of growing vegetables that were Jefferson’s bequest to America.

Historians will delight in the meticulous details of the garden’s development, most of it gleaned from Jefferson’s own

records. Not only are Jefferson’s horticultural efforts chronicled, but those of his early 19th-century slaves and neighbors as well. These accounts also informed the garden’s restoration, which took place in the early 1980s.

Cooks and epicures will relish the knowledge that Jefferson cultivated a wide variety of delectable vegetables for their inclusion on his table. Clearly he knew a good pea from a mediocre pea and his choices of table peas remain in cultivation at Monticello today, along with scores of other vegetable varieties that are familiar to us today.

Gardeners will appreciate the contemporary relevance of age-old methods of soil preparation, terrace making, pest control, seed saving, climate management, and more. Most of all, everyone will value the colorful descriptions, histories, and sumptuous photographs of the now-heirloom vegetables that Jefferson grew. Appendices provide even further details about and resources for these varieties, and an index makes it easy to look up specific plants.

In an 1811 letter, Jefferson famously observed, “No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth, and no culture comparable to that of the garden.” Indeed, Jefferson’s—and Hatch’s—enthusiasm for and contentment with nurturing edible plants, from seed to harvest, is contagious.

—Denise Wiles Adams

*Denise Wiles Adams is a horticulturist, author, and plant and garden historian. Her book *Designing American Gardens, A Guide to Historic Landscape Design, 1620–2000* will be published in spring 2013 by Timber Press.*

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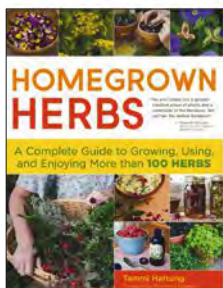
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Herb Gardening

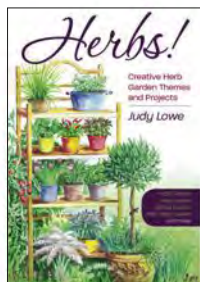
I LOVE TO jazz up recipes with fresh herbs, but I don't love the prices for them in the grocery store and some just aren't available to buy. Fortunately, herbs are easy and economical to grow yourself. In addition to their culinary value, herbs lend themselves to other uses, including brightening up the garden with their foliage and flowers. Here are recent books that explore the fascinating and flavorful world of herbs.



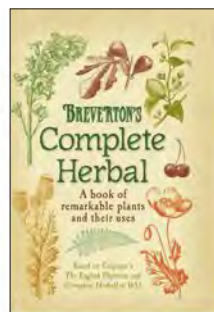
Herb Gardening from the Ground Up (Ten Speed Press, \$19.99, 2012) by Sal Gilbertie and Larry Sheehan focuses mainly on the 15 herbs most commonly used in cooking. You'll find plenty of practical guidance on seed sowing techniques, maintenance considerations, harvesting, storing, and indoor overwintering, illustrated with line drawings. The book also contains plans for 38 different types of herb gardens with specific cultural requirements for each herb.



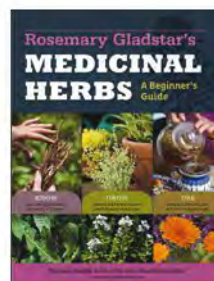
Homegrown Herbs (Storey Publishing, \$19.95, 2011) includes more than 100 plants that author and herb farmer Tammi Hartung has found to be "broadly useful and fun to grow." Chock full of helpful charts, diagrams, and colorful photographs, this book conveys the basics, from designing and planning to maintenance and harvesting, as well as how to use herbs for flavoring food and therapeutic purposes. Brief profiles of each plant round out the final chapter.



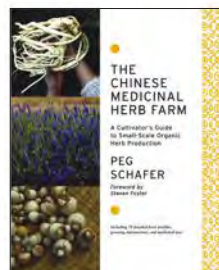
Herbs are nothing if not versatile, as Judy Lowe makes abundantly clear in ***Herbs!*** (Cool Springs Press, \$19.95, 2011), which outlines ideas for themed herb gardens and other projects that make use of homegrown herbs. Beyond medicinal and culinary themes, herb collections can be geared toward wildlife, children, fragrance, literature, history, and much more. There's also a mini-encyclopedia that lists each plant in the book with some basic information about it.



If you'd like to learn more about the uses of particular herbs, check out ***Breverton's Complete Herbal*** (Lyons Press, \$19.95, 2011) by Terry Breverton. This compendium of 250 plants from around the world is based on two works written in the 1650s by English botanist and physician Nicholas Culpeper in an effort to make herbal remedies more accessible to those who couldn't afford a doctor. Breverton's book combines this traditional plant lore with modern-day knowledge to describe the medicinal, culinary, and other uses of each entry.



Curious to try some herbal remedies? ***Rosemary Gladstar's Medicinal Herbs*** (Storey Publishing, \$14.95, 2012) is for novices who want to learn how to grow and use plants with healing properties. Many of the 33 plants in the book are already familiar to cooks and gardeners, such as ginger, dandelions, and peppermint. Gladstar provides recipes for treating various ailments with these plants and clearly explains preparation techniques, illustrated with color photos.



Numerous ornamental plants grown in North America hail from China. But what Western gardeners may not realize is that many of these feature in Chinese medicine. Peg Schafer introduces some of these familiar and some more obscure species in ***The Chinese Medicinal Herb Farm*** (Chelsea Green, \$34.95, 2011). The book explains how to grow each one organically, either commercially or at home, and describes traditional Chinese medicinal uses.

—Viveka Neveln, Associate Editor



REGIONAL HAPPENINGS

Horticultural Events from Around the Country

NORTHEAST

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

RĚ THROUGH SEPT. 23. **Urban Garden.** Exhibit. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Brooklyn, New York. (718) 623-7200. www.bbg.org.

RĚ THROUGH OCT. 21. **Monet's Garden.** Exhibit. New York Botanical Garden. Bronx, New York. (718) 817-8700. www.nybg.org.

JULY 21. **Learn to Create 'Outdoor Garden Rooms.'** Workshop. Connecticut Horticultural Society. Pine Meadow Gardens. Southbury, Connecticut. (860) 529-8713. www.cthort.org.

JULY 25-28. **Nantucket Garden Festival.** The Nantucket Lighthouse School. Nantucket, Massachusetts. (508) 228-0427. www.nantucketgardenfestival.com.

AUG. 2. **Contemporary New England Landscape Design.** Lecture and tour. Historic New England. Governor John Langdon House. Portsmouth, New Hampshire. (603) 436-3205. www.historicnewengland.org.

RĚ AUG. 14. **Meadow Gardens.** Class. The New England Wild Flower Society. Garden in the Woods. Framingham, Massachusetts. (508) 877-7630. www.newfs.org.

RĚ AUG. 14-16. **A Plant's Family Tree.** Class. Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens. Boothbay, Maine. (207) 633-4333. www.mainegardens.org.

AUG. 23. **Grassy Weed Identification Workshop.** University of Massachusetts Extension Landscape, Nursery, and Urban Forestry. Amherst, Massachusetts. (413) 545-0895. www.umassgreeninfo.org.

Looking ahead

SEPT. 8. **A Gathering of Gardeners 2012.** Symposium. Master Gardeners of Cornell Cooperative Extension, Monroe County. Rochester Museum & Science Center. Rochester, New York. (585) 461-1000. www.gatheringofgardeners.com.

MID-ATLANTIC

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

THROUGH SEPT. 23. **Summer Edibles and Some Are Not.** Exhibit. Brookside Gardens. Wheaton, Maryland. (301) 962-1400. www.brooksidegardens.org.

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

THROUGH OCT. 8. **Savage Gardens: The Real & Imaginary World of Carnivorous Plants.** Exhibit. United States Botanic Garden. Washington, D.C. (202) 225-8333. www.usbg.gov.

JULY 25. **Woody Plant Conference.** Longwood Gardens. Villanova University. Villanova, Pennsylvania. (610) 388-5238. www.woodyplantconference.org.

RĚ JULY 29. **All About Crapemyrtles.** Talk and tour. U.S. National Arboretum. Washington, D.C. (202) 245-4521. www.usna.usda.gov.

RĚ AUG. 6. **Hummingbird Gardens.** Class and tour. Norfolk Botanical Garden. Norfolk, Virginia. (757) 441-5830. www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org.

RĚ AUG. 12. **Butterfly Walk.** Guided tour. New Jersey Botanical Garden. Ringwood, New Jersey. (973) 962-9534. www.njbg.org.

AUG. 15. **Heuchera Highlights.** Tour. Mt. Cuba Center. Hockessin, Delaware. (302) 239-4244. www.mtcubacenter.org.

RĚ AUG. 25 & 26. **Annual Begonia Show and Sale.** Potomac Branch of the American Begonia Society. Green Spring Gardens. Alexandria, Virginia. (703) 642-5173. www.greenspring.org.

Looking ahead

SEPT. 15. **Fall Gardening Festival.** Virginia Beach Master Gardener Association. Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center. Virginia Beach, Virginia. (757) 385-4769. www.vbmg.org.

SOUTHEAST

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

JULY 25. **Plants and Gardens of China, Thai-**

land and Vietnam. Lecture. Bellingrath Gardens and Home. Theodore, Alabama. (800) 247-8420. www.bellingrath.org.

RĚ JULY 28 & 29. **Orchid Culture.** Class. Bonnet House Museum and Gardens. Fort Lauderdale, Florida. (954) 703-2606. www.bonnethouse.org.

RĚ AUG. 13. **Biomimicry: Great Ideas from Nature.** Lecture. Memphis Botanic Garden. Memphis, Tennessee. (901) 636-4116. www.memphisbotanicgarden.com.

RĚ AUG. 16. **Hedges: Out With the Old and in With the New.** Lecture. Mounts Botanical Garden. West Palm Beach, Florida. (561) 233-1757. www.mounts.org.

RĚ AUG. 16. **Plan Your Autumn Veggie Garden.** Class. Atlanta Botanical Garden. Atlanta, Georgia. (404) 876-5859. www.atlantabotanicalgarden.org.

RĚ AUG. 18. **Fall/Winter Vegetables Workshop.** Yew Dell Botanical Gardens. Crestwood, Kentucky. (502) 241-4778. www.yewdellgardens.org.

RĚ AUG. 24 & 25. **Speaking of Gardening Symposium.** North Carolina Arboretum. Asheville, North Carolina. (828) 665-2492. www.ncarboretum.org.

NORTH CENTRAL

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

RĚ JULY 28 & 29. **Herb Garden Weekend.** Displays and demonstrations. Chicago Botanic Garden. Chicago, Illinois. (847) 835-5440. www.chicagobotanic.org.

RĚ AUG. 4. **S-Hort Course with the Horticulture Department: The New Kitchen Garden.** Tour and class. Cleveland Botanical Garden. Cleveland, Ohio. (216) 721-1600. www.cb garden.org.

AUG. 7-9. **All-America Selections Summer Summit.** Meeting and Tour of Gardens and Plant Trials. Marriott East Lansing at University Place, East Lansing, Michigan. (630) 963-0770. www.aaswinners.com/meetings/summer_summit/index.cfm.

AUG. 10. **Journey Through Thyme: Herbs in the Garden, Kitchen and Beyond.** Minnesota Herb Society. Minnesota Landscape Arbore-

Quilts in Bloom Along Indiana's Heritage Trail

THE HERITAGE TRAIL in northern Indiana will be literally blanketed in color this summer as 19 giant Quilt Gardens come into bloom. Now in their fifth year, the Quilt Gardens span seven towns and cover over 23,000 square feet of soil. The gardens range in size from 800 to 2,500 square feet and are inspired by traditional and contemporary quilt patterns.

Mary Ann Lienhart-Cross, Extension educator at Purdue University, has worked on the design, planting, and tending of the Quilt Gardens since their inception. She explains that the plants absolutely must be able to tolerate heat well. She has found that marigolds work well, along with petunias, wax begonias, and parsley.



This star design is one of the quilt patterns on display in northern Indiana.

From its modest beginnings with just two gardens, the Quilt Gardens have been named a "Top 100 Event" by the American Bus Association. Visitors can pick up guides to the gardens at the Elkhart Visitors and Conventions Bureau, as well as an informative CD about the Heritage Trail. The Quilt Gardens will be open through October 1.

For more information visit www.quiltgardens.com.

—Holly Bowers, *Editorial Intern*

tum. Chaska, Minnesota. (952) 443-1400. www.arboretum.umn.edu.

AUG. 11 & 12. **Minnesota State Gladiolus Show.** North American Gladiolus Council. Civic Center. New Ulm, Minnesota. (507) 426-6011. www.gladworld.org.

RČ AUG. 18 & 19. **Dahlia Show.** Badger State Dahlia Society. Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Madison, Wisconsin. (608) 577-1924. www.olbrich.org.

RČ AUG. 26. **Rain Gardens: Function with Style.** Class. Fernwood Botanical Garden & Nature Preserve. Niles, Michigan. (269)

695-6491. www.fernwoodbotanical.org.

Looking ahead

RČ SEPT. 8. **Parks and Gardens of Dayton.** Tour. The Dawes Arboretum. Newark, Ohio. (740) 323-2355 ext. 1217. www.dawesarb.org.

SEPT. 10–12. **Perennial Production and Retail.** Conference. Ohio Florists Association. Amway Grand Hotel. Grand Rapids, Michigan. (614) 487-1117. www.ofaconferences.org.

RČ SEPT. 22 & 23. **Cleveland's Ripe! Fest.** Cleveland Botanical Garden. Cleveland,

Ohio. (216) 721-1600. www.cbgbarden.org.

SOUTH CENTRAL

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

RČ JULY 28 & AUG. 25. **Wildflower Identification & Ecology.** Class. Shaw Nature Reserve. Gray Summit, Missouri. (636) 451-3512. www.shawnature.org.

RČ AUG. 6. **The "Green" Garden: Recycling in the Garden.** Lecture. Burden Horticulture Society. Burden Center. Baton Rouge, Louisiana. (225) 763-3990. www.burdenhorticulturesociety.com.

RČ AUG. 13, 20, & 27. **Landscape Design Workshop.** Garvan Woodland Gardens. University of Arkansas. Hot Springs, Arkansas. (501) 262-9300. www.garvengardens.org.

AUG. 16. **Planting the Fall Vegetable Garden.** Class. Travis County Master Gardener's Association. Travis County AgriLife Extension Office. Austin, Texas. (512) 854-9600. www.tcmastergardeners.org.

RČ AUG. 18. **Open House on the Prairie.** Tour. Overland Park Arboretum & Botanical Gardens. Overland Park, Kansas. (913) 685-3604. www.opkansas.org.

RČ AUG. 25. **Summer Arboretum Field Walk.** Tour. The Crosby Arboretum. Mississippi State University. Picayune, Mississippi. (601) 799-2311. www.crosbyarboretum.msstate.edu.

Looking ahead

RČ SEPT. 6. **Herbalooza.** Exhibit and demonstrations. Missouri Botanical Garden. St. Louis, Missouri. (314) 577-5100. www.mobot.org.

RČ SEPT. 15. **Plant Sale.** Tulsa Area Iris Society, Tulsa Area Daylily Society. Tulsa Garden Center. Tulsa, Oklahoma. (918) 746-5125. www.tulsagardencenter.com.

SOUTHWEST

AZ, CO, NM, UT

RČ JULY 31 & AUG. 1. **Environmental Challenges to Desert Gardening.** Class. Desert Botanical Garden. Phoenix, Arizona. (480) 481-8164. www.dbg.org.

AUG. 4. **Petscapes.** Class. Tucson Botanical Gardens. Tucson, Arizona. (520) 326-9686. www.tucsonbotanical.org.

RČ AUG. 6. **Orangerie Tour.** Red Butte Garden. The University of Utah. Salt Lake City, Utah. (801) 581-8454. www.redbuttegarden.org.

AUG. 10. **Southwestern Horticulture Annual Day of Education (SHADE).** Arizona Nursery

Association. The Renaissance Glendale Hotel. Glendale, Arizona. (480) 966-1610. <http://azna.org/shade>.

AUG. 23. **USU Garden Open House.** Tour. Ogden Botanical Gardens. Utah State University Cooperative Extension. Ogden, Utah. (801) 399-8080. <http://extension.usu.edu/weber/html/horticulture>.

AUG. 25 & 26. **African Violets to Love.** Show and sale. BioPark Botanic Garden. Albuquerque, New Mexico. (505) 848-7112. www.cabq.gov/biopark.

Looking ahead

RČ SEPT. 22. **Harvest Festival.** The Gardens on Spring Creek. Fort Collins, Colorado. (970) 416-2486. www.fcgov.com/horticulture/events.php.

WEST COAST

CA, HI, NV

RČ JULY 28. **Form and Foliage.** Workshop. Quarryhill Botanical Garden. Glen Ellen, California. (707) 996-3166. www.quarryhillbg.org.

JULY 29. **Tropical American Trees.** Tour. Foster Botanical Garden. Honolulu Botanical Gardens. Honolulu, Hawaii. (808) 522-7066. www1.honolulu.gov/parks/hbg/calendar.htm.

AUG. 5. **Geranium Propagation Workshop.** South Coast Botanic Garden. Palos Verdes Peninsula, California. (310) 544-1948. www.southcoastbotanicgarden.org.

AUG. 8–12. **American Begonia Society Convention.** Town & Country Resort. San Diego, California. (760) 942-1919. www.begonias.org.

AUG. 11. **Ornamental Grasses for the Landscape.** Seminar. South Bay Botanic Garden. Chula Vista, California. (619) 421-6700 ext.5416. www.southbaybotanicgarden.org.

NORTHWEST

AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY

RČ JULY 31. **Pioneer Garden Plants for the Contemporary Garden.** Lecture. Idaho Botanical Garden. Boise, Idaho. (208) 343-8649. www.idahobotanicalgarden.org.

RČ AUG. 7. **Annual Trillium Celebration.** Lecture. Bellevue Botanical Garden Society. Bellevue, Washington. (425) 452-4216. www.bellevuebotanical.org.

AUG. 10 & 11. **The Emerson's Garden & Home Tour.** The Emerson. Bozeman, Montana. (406) 587-9797. www.theemerson.org.

AUG. 19. **Plants from "Far Reaches."** Lecture. Joy Creek Nursery. Scappoose, Oregon. (503) 543-7474. www.joycreek.com.

AUG. 23–25. **Farwest Show.** Tradeshow. Oregon Association of Nurseries. Oregon Convention Center. Portland, Oregon. (800) 342-6401. www.farwestshow.com.

AUG. 25 & 26. **Dahlia Show.** Puget Sound Dahlia Association. Sky Nursery. Shoreline, Washington. (425) 885-2824. www.dahliashows.com.

AUG. 30–SEPT. 2. **American Dahlia Society National Show.** Portland Dahlia Society. Columbia Red Lion Hotel. Portland, Oregon. (508) 283-4466. www.portlanddahlia.com.

CANADA

JULY 28 & 29. **BC Fuchsia & Begonia Society Annual Show & Sale.** VanDusen Botanical Garden. Vancouver, British Columbia. (604) 924-3251. www.vandusengarden.org.

AUG. 4 & 5. **Rose Show.** John Cabot Rose Society. Memorial University of Newfoundland Botanical Garden. St. John's, Newfoundland. (709) 864-8590. www.mun.ca/botgarden.

AUG. 18 & 19. **Western International and Canadian National Gladiolus Shows.** Nanaimo's Gladiolus and Dahlia Society. Country Club Centre. Nanaimo, British Columbia. (250) 755-1412. www.gladworld.org.

RČ AUG. 25–OCT. 8. **Zimsculpt.** Sculpture exhibit. Royal Botanical Gardens. Burlington, Ontario. (905) 527-1158. www.rbg.ca.

Looking ahead

SEPT. 8. **Arboretum Auxiliary Plant Sale.** The Arboretum at the University of Guelph. Guelph, Ontario. (519) 824-4120 ext. 52113. www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum.

West Meets East at Denver Botanic Gardens

DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS (DBG) is taking visitors to the other side of the Pacific Ocean this summer with its Japanese-themed exhibit "Kizuna: West Meets East." The exhibit, which runs through November 4, features the work of two installation artists, Tetsunori Kawana and Stephen Talasnik, who have created site-specific bamboo sculptures for DBG. Their massive works of art celebrate the influence that Japanese culture has had on the West, and showcase the diversity of bamboo through art and living displays in the newly reopened Japanese Garden.



One of Tetsunori Kawana's works at the DBG exhibit

Shofu-En, or the Garden of Winds and Pines, has been expanded to feature the Bill Hosokawa Bonsai Pavilion and Tea Garden, where visitors can cultivate their appreciation of Japanese culture and plants.

Programming for the exhibit includes tours, classes and workshops, lectures, and events such as a traditional tea ceremony in the Ella Mullen Weckbaugh Tea House. Through August 5 visitors can see "Fluid Dual-

ity: Bamboo Sculptures," another exhibit featuring works by Kenichi Nagakura. Nagakura incorporates traditional bamboo basket-making techniques learned from his grandfather to create abstract sculptures.

DBG is a participant in the American Horticultural Society's Reciprocal Admissions Program, granting AHS members free admission with a valid membership card. To find out more about the Kizuna exhibit, visit www.botanicgardens.org.

—Holly Bowers, Editorial Intern

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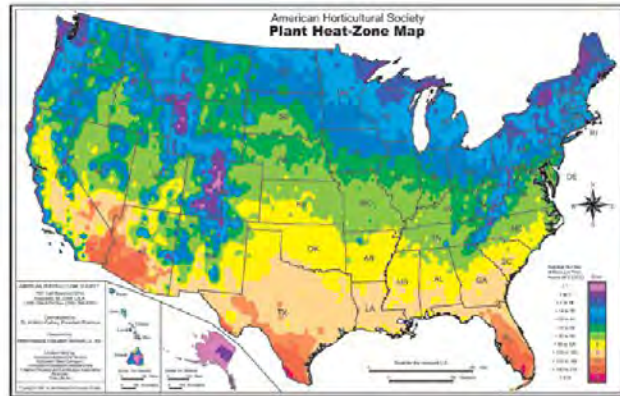
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PRONUNCIATIONS AND PLANTING ZONES

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. USDA Zones listed are still aligned with the 1990 version of the USDA's map.

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.



- Aruncus dioicus** uh-RUN-kus die-o-EE-kus (USDA Zones 3-7, AHS Heat Zones 7-1)
- Baptisia australis** bap-TIZ-yuh aw-STRAY-liss (3-9, 9-1)
- Boltonia asteroides** boh-TOH-nee-uh ass-tuh-ROY-deez (4-8, 9-2)
- Ceratophyllum demersum** seh-rah-toh-FIL-um deh-MUR-sum (6-9, 9-6)
- Chrysogonum virginianum** krih-SOG-on-um vur-jin-ee-AN-um (5-9, 9-2)
- Clethra acuminata** KLETH-ruh ak-yew-min-AY-tuh (5-8, 8-3)
- C. alnifolia** C. al-nih-FO-lee-uh (4-9, 9-1)
- C. alnifolia var. tomentosa** C. al-nih-FO-lee-uh var. toh-men-TOH-suh (5-9, 9-1)
- C. barbinervis** C. bar-bih-NUR-vis (5-8, 8-5)
- C. fargesii** C. far-JEZ-ee-eye (5-7, 7-5)
- C. pringlei** C. PRING-gee-eye (8-10, 10-7)
- Cucumis sativus** KEW-kew-mis sah-TY-vus (0-0, 10-1)
- Deschampsia flexuosa** deh-SHAMP-see-uh flex-yoo-O-suh (4-9, 9-1)
- Elodea canadensis** el-O-dee-uh kan-uh-DEN-sis (3-10, 10-1)
- Eupatorium dubium** yew-puh-TOR-ee-um DEW-be-um (5-8, 8-5)
- Gelsemium sempervirens** jel-SEE-me-um sem-pur-VY-renz (7-9, 10-4)
- Heracleum maximum** hair-uh-KLEE-um MAKS-ih-mum (3-9, 9-1)
- Hibiscus syriacus** hy-BISS-kus sih-ree-AH-kus (5-9, 9-1)
- Hydrangea arborescens** hy-DRAN-juh ar-bo-RES-enz (4-9, 9-1)
- Ilex x meserveae** EYE-leks meh-SER-vee-ee (5-9, 9-5)
- Laburnum alpinum** lah-BURR-num al-PY-num (5-8, 8-5)
- Lonicera sempervirens** lah-NISS-er-uh sem-pur-VY-renz (4-9, 9-3)
- Muhlenbergia capillaris** mew-len-BUR-jee-uh kap-ih-LAIR-iss (6-10, 10-5)
- Nelumbo lutea** neh-LUM-bo LEW-tee-uh (4-11, 12-1)
- N. nucifera** N. new-SIH-fer-uh (4-11, 12-3)
- Nymphaea caerulea** nim-FEE-uh see-ROO-lee-uh (10-11, 12-7)
- Oenothera fruticosa** ee-NOTH-ur-uh froo-tih-KO-suh (4-8, 8-1)
- Panicum virgatum** PAN-ih-kum veer-GAY-tum (5-9, 9-1)
- Phlox paniculata** FLOKS pan-ik-yew-LAY-tuh (4-8, 8-1)
- Pulsatilla patens** pull-suh-TIL-uh PAY-tenz (4-1, 7-1)
- Pycnanthemum muticum** pik-NAN-theh-mum MEW-tih-kum (3-8, 8-3)
- Rosa palustris** RO-zuh pah-LUS-triss (4-9, 10-1)
- Rudbeckia maxima** rood-BEK-ee-uh MAKS-ih-muh (4-8, 8-1)
- Sorghastrum nutans** sor-GASS-trum NOO-tanz (4-9, 9-1)
- Sporobolus heterolepis** spor-OB-o-lus het-ur-o-LEP-iss (3-8, 10-2)
- Veronicastrum virginicum** ver-on-ih-KASS-trum vir-JIN-ih-kum (4-8, 8-3)
- Wisteria frutescens** wis-TEER-ee-uh FROO-tess-ens (6-9, 9-6)

GARDEN MARKET

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Photo © Robyn Churchill

Sugar Tip Rose of Sharon

by Patricia A. Taylor



that trait alone), and can only be produced vegetatively. It first appeared as a branch on a hibiscus shrub in a Missouri garden. The garden owner (who prefers to remain anonymous) was entranced and thought others also might be. In 2004, she contacted the wholesale nursery Spring Meadow in Grand Haven, Michigan, and asked if it would like to evaluate the plant. The answer was yes, the results stunningly positive, and the plant is now patented and has been available in retail stores since 2009.

“We were thrilled not only with its variegated foliage and gorgeous double flow-

Sources

Forestfarm, Williams, OR. (541) 846-7269. www.forestfarm.com.
Rare Find Nursery, Jackson, NJ. (732) 833-0613. www.rarefindnursery.com.

UNTIL I MET Sugar Tip, a rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*, USDA Zones 5–9, AHS Zones 9–1) would not have been on my list of favorite plants. An eight- to 12-foot-tall shrub that is typically late to leaf out, it forms big blobs of boring green foliage until the flowers bloom in August, and—perhaps most damning—self-seeds like crazy.

Had my spring 2008 introduction to Sugar Tip not been as a free sample sent for trial—an occupational hazard for garden writers—frankly I never would have considered adding it to my garden. But, since the price was right, I planted it in a sunny area. And, to my surprise, I’ve been smitten ever since.

So smitten, in fact, that I often recommend this plant as a foliage shrub. The warm green leaves are edged in creamy white—hence the trademark name Sugar Tip (the official cultivar

name is ‘America Irene Scott’). I have placed this shrub in a corner flanked by the shiny, dark bluish-green foliage of a ‘Blue Girl’ holly (*Ilex xmeserveae*) and the red-tinged emerging leaves of Carefree Celebration roses.

The May emergence of Carefree Celebration’s fragrant, coral flowers is a perfect enhancement to the foliage combination. Then, just as the roses start to hibernate a bit in August’s heat, Sugar Tip starts producing its lush, double pink flowers, which continue to appear for a good six weeks. They look like roses from a distance and harmonize beautifully with the September reemergence of the rose flowers. Hummingbirds also seem to like the Sugar Tip flowers as I have spied these charming birds dashing among them.

In horticultural terms, Sugar Tip is known as a sport. It is a chance mutation, does not produce seed (three cheers for

ers but also with its growth habit,” says Stacey Hirvela, a public relations specialist with Spring Meadow. “Sugar Tip branches low while most rose of Sharon selections grow straight up and branch high, creating bare spaces below.”

Currently, Sugar Tip is a unique rose of Sharon. One selection named ‘Purpureus Variegatus’ also has variegated foliage, but its dark purple flowers never fully open—once they break through closed bud stage, they simply fall off.

Sugar Tip is now heading into its fifth year in my organically maintained garden and has survived record heat, droughts, and even a hurricane. During droughts, I water the shrub, but that is the only care I have given it. In return it provides my garden with beauty all summer long. 🌸

Garden writer Patricia A. Taylor lives in Princeton, New Jersey.



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