



*the* **HPSO**  
*quarterly*  
WINTER 2014

A PUBLICATION  
OF THE HARDY  
PLANT SOCIETY  
OF OREGON





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# HPSO WINTER LECTURE

an illustrated  
talk by

*rick darke*

## Time and the Garden: Lessons from a Quarter Century

by Bob Hyland, Co-Chair Large Programs

**Sunday, January 19, 2014**

**Portland State University, Hoffmann Hall**

doors open at 12:30pm, program begins at 1:30pm

Members \$20; Non-members \$25; Students \$10

Book sale, door prizes, and refreshments included

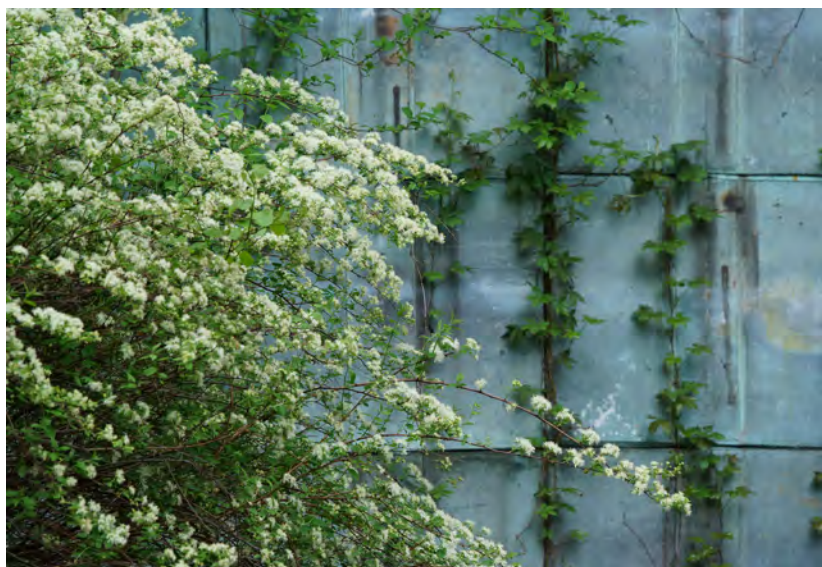
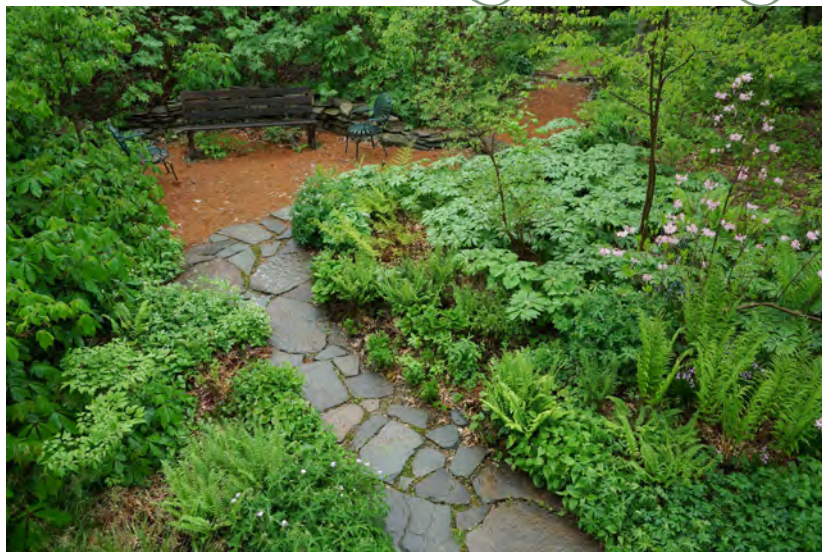
Whether new or old, big or small, a garden changes with every day, week, season, and year. Here in the Pacific Northwest, I am continually amazed at how fast a garden can evolve ... to my delight!

At HPSO's winter lecture, my friend and colleague Rick Darke presents insights and lessons learned from tending the same acre-and-a-half home garden in Landenberg, Pennsylvania, for more than 25 years. Rick and I both worked at Longwood Gardens during the 1980s, so I have seen first-hand the early stages of his garden, with infrequent visits over the years.

Rick Darke is a Pennsylvania-based design consultant, celebrated photographer and award-winning author. Rick's work is grounded in an observational ethic that blends art, ecology, and cultural geography in the design and stewardship of livable landscapes. A distinguished alumnus of the University of Delaware and former Curator of Plants at world-famous Longwood Gardens in southeastern Pennsylvania, Darke has traveled extensively around the world. His current projects include parks, post-industrial sites, transportation corridors, corporate and collegiate campuses, conservation developments and botanic gardens.

Rick's many books include *The American Woodland Garden: Capturing the Spirit of the Deciduous Forest* (Timber Press), *In Harmony With Nature: Lessons from the Arts & Crafts Garden* (Michael Friedman Publishing), *The Encyclopedia of Grasses for Livable Landscapes* (Timber Press), and *The Wild Garden: Expanded Edition* (Timber Press). His writing and images have been featured in collaborative works including *Fallingwater* (Rizzoli) and *On The High Line: Exploring America's Most Original Urban Park* (Thames & Hudson). The American Horticultural Society honored Darke with its Scientific Award, which recognizes individuals "who have enriched horticulture through outstanding and notable research." Rick's Pennsylvania garden, which he and his wife Melinda Zoehrer have made and maintain together, has been featured in multiple books and magazines. For more information see: [www.rickdarke.com](http://www.rickdarke.com)

PS: Rick Darke's presentations are visually stunning and chock full of plant talk. Don't miss this opportunity to hear Rick when most of our gardens are in winter rest. He will surely jumpstart spring in the Pacific Northwest.





# 2014 HPSO calendar

## JANUARY

SAT 11  
Garden School:  
A Guide to Opening Your Garden

SUN 19  
Winter Program: "Time and the  
Garden: Lessons from A Quarter  
Century," with Rick Darke

## FEBRUARY

SAT 15  
Open Garden Book Deadline

SUN 23  
Gen(i)us Series: "Expanding the  
Conifer Palette," with Norm Jacobs

FRI 28  
HPSO Grants Application Deadline

## FEBRUARY/MARCH

THU FEB 27 – SUN MAR 2  
Yard, Garden & Patio Show

## MARCH

SUN 16  
Gen(i)us Series: "Which Hazel?  
Hamamelis and Its Relatives,"  
with Robert Herald

FRI 21  
Garden School: "Smartphone  
Photography for Gardeners,"  
with Mark Turner

## APRIL

SAT 12 – SUN 13  
Hortlandia 2014  
Plant Sale and Art Fair

SAT 26 – WED MAY 7  
HPSO Overseas Garden Tour:  
"An Andalusian Odyssey: Palaces,  
Patos, & Gardens of Southern Spain"

## MAY

WED 7 - MON 19  
HPSO Overseas Garden Tour:  
"The Fairytale Palaces & Gardens  
of Portugal in the Springtime"

SUN 18  
Spring Program: "Planting: A New  
Perspective," with Noël Kingsbury

MON 19 - SUN 25  
HPSO Overseas Garden Tour:  
"Madiera: The Flower Island  
Paradise of the Atlantic"

## JUNE

MON 9 - SUN 15  
HPSO North American Garden Tour:  
"Gardens of New York City and Long  
Island"

FRI 20 – SUN 22  
Study Weekend 2014:  
"Married to Your Garden"  
Bellevue, Washington

SAT 28  
HPSO/Garden Conservancy  
Open Garden Day Tour

## SEPTEMBER

MON 8 - TUES 16  
HPSO Overseas Garden Tour:  
"English Gardens from London  
to the Welsh Marches"

SAT 20  
PlantFest : Speaker Program with  
Gary Lewis and Plant Sale

TUES 16 - TUES 23  
HPSO Overseas Garden Tour:  
"Princely, Public & Private Gardens  
of Berlin"

## OCTOBER

SUN 19  
Annual Meeting & Marvin Black  
Memorial Lecture: "The Peripatetic  
Gardener: Now Rooted in the Pacific"  
Northwest," with Bob Hyland

## PLUS MORE!

Watch for more information about  
additional **Gen(i)us & Garden School**  
programs, and the **Open Gardens Book**  
listing approximately 100 member  
open gardens.

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## Hortlandia

THE HARDY PLANT SOCIETY OF OREGON'S  
PLANT & GARDEN ART SALE

**April 12 and 13, 2014**

**10am-3pm at the Portland EXPO Center**

### **Hortlandia: Biggest Shopping Day of the Year!**

*by Bruce Wakefield*

The experts will tell you that the biggest shopping day of the year is the day after Thanksgiving. Obviously, the experts aren't gardeners. Those of us in HPSO know that the biggest shopping day(s) of the year are actually the two days of HPSO's Hortlandia—the spring plant sale and garden art sale. This year those days will be April 12th and 13th, 2014. There is nothing quite like the adrenaline rush of finding those horticultural treasures you've been longing for. To be able to find these treasures all in one place, all under one roof, and with plenty of parking – that's a real bonus!

Plant vendors (nurseries) from all over the Pacific Northwest will be bringing to you their very latest, best, and rarest plants. We expect to have over 75 different specialty nurseries represented at the sale—all under one roof. It would take you a long time, and many miles, to visit them all individually at their regular place of business. In fact, some of them aren't even open to the general public, so this is an opportunity not to be missed.

Another incentive to visit Hortlandia is the chance to purchase unique art objects for your garden. Dozens of local artists are very busy creating those one-of-a-kind, very special works that will be offered at this event. The vendors personally make all the art so you won't find cheaply made imports here.

While the experts blather on about "Black Friday", the name they've given to the big shopping day after Thanksgiving, we gardeners really think "Green" instead. We know when our biggest shopping days of the year are – the two days of the HPSO's Hortlandia. So, if you haven't already marked those days in your new 2014 calendars, do it now so you don't miss out on the best shopping days of the year!

### **The Yard, Garden & Patio Show**

The centerpiece for this year's Yard, Garden & Patio Show, presented by Dennis' 7 Dees Landscaping and Garden Centers, will present eight Showcase Gardens that offer solutions to every gardener's biggest challenge, whether it's maximizing a small space or screening an unsightly view. The Urban Edible Garden makes its fourth appearance in the form of "Abundant Nature." A food forest—don't you love the sound of that!—and permaculture bent melds with native plantings and surprising enchanting elements. Nancy Goldman and Lucy Hardiman once again will bring well-known regional speakers for three full days of insightful educational programming. Specialty and retail nurseries and garden centers will have their most intriguing plants for sale and Cracked Pots artists will be back to add color and interest, among many other garden-oriented vendors. And because enjoying gardening is a lifestyle, the show also offers wine tastings and sales, outdoor cooking classes and kids entertainment. Plants, exceptional garden design, seminars and everything a garden needs in one location! Check [www.ygshow.com](http://www.ygshow.com) for times and seminar schedule.

### **Volunteer to help out at the HPSO Winter Interest in the Garden Display at the 2014 Yard, Garden & Patio Show.**

The Oregon Association of Nurseries has a great show planned and you can be part of it by volunteering at the eleventh annual HPSO Winter Interest display. You will not want to miss the line-up of excellent speakers, the Remarkable Green Market, the beautiful display gardens, the numerous horticulture related vendors, and of course, the HPSO Winter Interest display.

We will prepare and staff our display in cooperation with the Great Plant Picks Program; Linda Beutler and her Clackamas Community College Horticulture students will again wow us with one of their fabulous floral arrangements. Our display will feature both cut and potted botanicals that provide fragrance, bark, seeds, broad leaf evergreens and conifers for winter beauty in the landscape. Volunteers will answer questions, assist folks using our reference guides and promote the Hardy Plant Society. We need help with set-up on Thursday, Feb. 27 from 9-1 and with staffing the booth in 3 hour shifts on Friday through Sunday. As an added bonus, you will receive a free pass for the Show on the day you volunteer. Watch the weekly email for sign-up information, or email me if you know you would like to help or have questions about volunteering: [lindacarsonor@frontier.com](mailto:lindacarsonor@frontier.com). I look forward to seeing you for an inspiring time celebrating Northwest horticulture.

*Linda Carson, YGP  
Volunteer Coordinator*



**February 28 - March 2, 2014**  
**at the Oregon Convention Center**



# Nursery Tours

Three HPSO members have been exploring local nurseries. Here are their reports.



## Neighborhood Nurseries

by *Gardennia nutii*

Geography, landscape, and local nurseries define neighborhoods—at least any neighborhood where HPSO members congregate. One clear and sunny October afternoon, a group of HPSOers decided to visit some Portland neighborhood nurseries to buy some plants and have some fun. At the end of the afternoon the communal station wagon overflowed with leaves and plumage and happy plant nerds.

Our day-trip only covered a few of the hundreds of wonderful, local nurseries in our state, and yet it provided many new and unique finds. We hope that our tour will spark ideas and motivate you to visit your local nurseries when spring once again returns to peek its head around the corner and beckon the faithful devotees of all things green and blooming.

We started at **Xera Plants** located at 1114 SE Clay right at the west edge of Ladd's Addition off of Hawthorne. Xera just opened this retail location, and though small, it is packed with ideas and inspiration. We were there in October and the crape myrtles were glowing with fire reds and oranges. Container ideas for simple, but high-impact designs by **Bob Hyland Garden Design** were there, too, along with an endless supply of beautiful drought tolerant plants to enhance any garden.

Next stop, **Thicket**, located at 4933 NE 23rd, right off of Alberta street. The owners describe the nursery as “a charming tangle of botanical curiosities, vintage finds and modern craft to inspire life lived in the garden.” That description is perfect. Around every corner were great ideas for using recycled materials, plant combinations, and ideas of how to make your garden an extension of your home.

The final stop on our short tour was **Viscaya Garden and Nursery** located on 13936 SE Division Street. What a unique nursery. Now, sadly, a closed nursery. It turns out that we visited on one of the last weekends it was open for business. What made this last stop so rewarding was the chance to see plants in a garden setting, full size, with other plants. I'm glad we had the opportunity to visit.

Knowing that we saw Viscaya so close to its last day makes this short article all that



at left, Xera Plants; above, Thicket





Viscaya Garden and Nursery

## New Treasures Found on a Nursery Tour

by Kym Pokorny

Making a list is one thing. Following it is another. But on the nursery-hopping trip I took with Whitney Rideout and Ann Murphy, I veered off only once, and that was for *Osmunda regalis* 'Purpurascens' at **Thicket** in Southeast Portland. In spring, the new fronds of this royal fern unfurl in purple. That was enough to turn my head. Then I discovered this studly plant can get 4 to 5 feet tall, will grow in sun or shade and is hardy to Zone 4. Sold. I planted the *Osmunda* in the middle of a mostly sunny border that I can see from my dining room table. When the *Stewartia* nearby gets bigger, I'll move in *Podophyllum pleianthum* (Chinese mayapple),

*Trillium kurabayashii* (perhaps my favorite plant of all time) and hellebores to make the beginnings of a woodland garden.

Also from Thicket, I hauled away *Helleborus x sternii* 'Silver Dollar', *Yucca filamentosa* 'Color Guard' and *Corokia cotoneaster*. All three had grown in my former garden and were on my list. 'Silver Dollar' because the white overlay on the deeply serrated foliage and dark pink stems is a combination that goes with everything. In my case, next to *Arctostaphylos* 'White Lanterns' because the hellebore plays up the manzanita's auburn bark and they bloom at the same time. On the other side, I planted *Phygelius* 'Pheeges Passionate Pink' (cape fuchsia) and the new *Agastache* 'Licorice Candy,' both with pink flowers spiked with just enough blue to tie it all together.

I was happy to find *Yucca* 'Color Guard'. Think of the yellowest lemon you've ever seen. That's the central color of this variegated yucca that's edged in a dark grass

*Podophyllum pleianthum*, *Yucca* 'Color Guard', and *Trillium kurabayashi*

more important. Support your local nurseries. Visit them. Go and shop, learn, and grow. Use these wonderful resources, which are so close at hand. Unique places to visit and "get your plant nerd on" are as wonderful as they are rare. Support them. As an added benefit, you'll find yourself walking around your neighborhood, meeting neighbors and making new friends. As you do, you'll notice how influential those nurseries (and plants) are in the community. Ponder that word for a moment ... 'Community'.

Think back a few years to a voice that embodied the spirit of community as few others have:

"It's a beautiful day in this neighborhood, a beautiful day for a neighbor, would you be mine?"

Enjoy your neighborhood. Enjoy your community and the nurseries that help make it the singular and vibrant place you've chosen to call home. Visit your local nurseries, witness the passion they bring to their endeavors, and support them as if your community depended on it, because, in fact, it does.





## Nursery Tours *continued*

green. I wouldn't say 'Color Guard' has a spot at the top of my list, but as soon as I planted it, I realized, oh yeah, the garden needed some brightness. This plant certainly adds light next to a boxwood hedge and in front of *Musa sikkimensis*, an exciting hardy banana that I wish was more available. It's not as impressively big as *Musa basjoo*, but the leaves are tinged with red, which in my book makes it a great alternative to the tender, red-leaved bananas so many of us use as annuals or, for those lucky enough to have a greenhouse, overwinter.

The first time I bought *Corokia* was at the HPSO spring sale years ago. My brother was visiting and came along with me to the event. He disappeared for a while and came back carrying a twisty stemmed, barely leafed treasure. He handed it to me,

*Musa sikkimensis* in situ



saying, "You like weird plants, right?" I've loved it ever since. The latest *Corokia* went into a pot until I can figure out where to plant it.

From **Xera Plants**, the place with plants chosen especially for the Northwest climate and distinctively humorous and instructive labels, I bought an *Arbutus unedo* 'Elfin King'. In my former garden, I tried the straight species *Arbutus unedo* (strawberry tree), a Zone 8 plant, three times. I lost all of them, probably because I planted in fall and the trees didn't have enough time to get established. Sometimes



*Arbutus unedo* 'Elfin King'

determination and dumb come awfully close in my life. But now I have the best of both worlds. 'Elfin King' has everything *A. unedo* has, but is hardy to 5 degrees and is 8 feet tall instead of 20 or more. A better choice for a 45-by-35-foot back garden that already contains two *Stewartia pseudocamellia*, two 'Natchez' crape myrtles, and an *Albizia* 'Summer Chocolate'.

Why could I not live without an *Arbutus*? First of all, anything related to our ravishing native madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) tops my list. And except for fall color, the large shrub has everything going for it: drooping clusters of urn-shaped white flowers in winter; evergreen foliage; a form that is, as the surfers used to say, "gnarly, man"; bark that sheds to the most spectacular, smooth mahogany; and, best of all, eye-candy fruits that start yellow and gradually turn a bright, orange-red. Both colors, and all the shades in between, are on the plant at the same time.

At our last stop, **Viscaya**, I couldn't leave without *Tetrapanax papyrifer* (rice-paper plant). A long time ago, a designer told me small gardens shouldn't be just about small plants. In fact, used judiciously, big and bold can make the garden look larger, she said. Such was the case, in my old courtyard, where 8-foot red bananas, flapping elephant ears and King Kong-size *Tetrapanax*, gave the space just the right perspective. Rice-paper plant is a bit—well, maybe a lot—assertive. I kept mine in a pot, where it did ridiculously well as long as I gave it regular water.

So I did pretty well on our shopping trip. I've added five old favorites to the garden and introduced a new one. Now, it's time branch out again. I plan to leave the list at home the next time I head for a garden center.

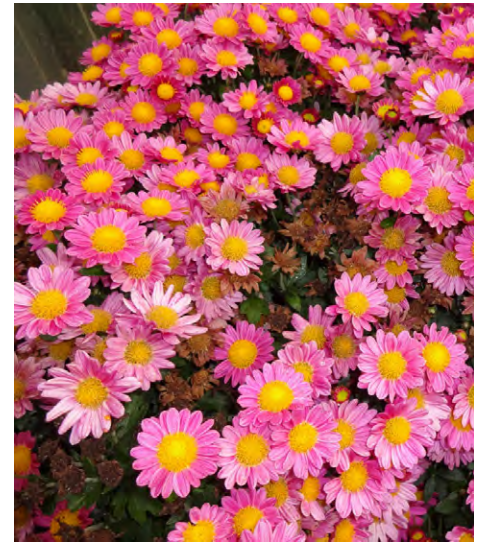






'Symphony', a flamboyant spider mum which has been disbudded for maximum size

'Naha' chrysanthemum, a short, strong grower



## Mum's the Word

by Barbara Blossom

It took an article in the *Wall Street Journal* to lead me to **King's Mums** in Oregon City. A member of our HPSO Gardening in Our Golden Years interest group read that feature and organized a tour of the nursery for us with Kim Gray, who co-owns the nursery with her husband Ray.

On a heavenly October morning, driving along the winding backroads of Oregon City with maples flaming red and gold, we arrived at the greenhouses where Kim gave us some background information, then turned us loose to revel in the flowers.

One step inside the first of a half dozen greenhouses and the spicy aroma of chrysanthemums brought back a flood of memories of bouquets from the corner florist when I lived in Manhattan in the 1960s.

But the colors in these greenhouses went far beyond the bronze football mums of early days. Pink, yellow, lavender, orange, burgundy, white and red chrysanthemums bloomed in an array of shapes, from clusters of simple daisies and pompoms to tall stands of flamboyant spiders that took my breath away. I could practically hear lavender-pink spider mum 'Vienna Waltz' whispering, "Behold me and bow down on your knees, for I am the queen of the flowers."

For a sumptuous flower like bronze spider 'Symphony' or 'Golden Splendor' to bloom above a four-foot-tall stem, it takes strategy. Kim removes the lateral stems and pinches off buds lower down on the plant so that all the juice goes into one glorious flower at the top of a thick, sturdy stem.

In addition, a long sheet of plastic grid netting is stretched between fence posts placed along the entire length of each greenhouse to support the tall mums. They grow through that grid, instead of being individually staked. These techniques work well for growing the best cut flowers in greenhouses set up for that purpose.

Since most mums are tall, in the garden, Kim recommends planting them in April and May and then cutting them back to six or eight inches no later than the first week in July.

In front of the greenhouses, beds of shorter mums in vivid colors won me over for their easier maintenance. 'Naha', with small purple daisies and yellow centers,

and brilliant orange 'Pumpkin' went on my wish list.

You may order mums online at [www.kingsmums.com](http://www.kingsmums.com) any time from March through June. More details about ordering, shipping, and growing mums are at their website, along with a catalog to download.

The time to visit is in October, when the mums in the greenhouses are in full glorious bloom. Next year's fall open house will likely be October 18th through November 8th, but for up-to-date information about the bloom cycle, best to call ahead at 503-656-2078, or email [mums@kingsmums.com](mailto:mums@kingsmums.com). You can buy cut flowers and also make your wish list for the following spring.

One warning: Most of us coming from Portland got terribly lost using Google Maps or Mapquest. Unless you have a GPS, email King's Mums for directions at [mums@kingsmums.com](mailto:mums@kingsmums.com), or study a map of the area before you set out.



'Whirlaway' with strong stems, is a spoon chrysanthemum





# A Garden in Portland, Oregon

by Susan Franklin

A slogan has appeared in Portland over the last decade: "Keep Portland Weird". This is a little baffling to many of us who make our homes here since the word 'weird' is not a particularly complimentary term. The slogan actually stems in part from former Mayor Bud Clark's "Expose Yourself to Art" campaign, with the famous poster showing him opening his raincoat to one of Portland's major statues.

The real spirit underlying Portland's 'weird' reputation, and the (equally weird) *Portlandia* television series is that Portlanders pride themselves on a degree of free thinking and tolerance of eccentricity that is not always present in other parts of the U.S.; Portland is known for its liberal political views, its prolific theatre and music scene, and a gastronomic culture that is hard to rival. It is also known for its unparalleled natural beauty which leads to the enjoyment of nearly every outdoor sport that one can imagine. Including gardening.

Oregon was settled in the mid 1800s. The pioneers from Eastern America who



*herb garden outside front entrance*

settled here, rather than continuing on to find gold in California were frequently artists and intellectuals who were attracted by the temperate climate, the natural beauty and the perception that this was a place where they could express themselves in ways that were prohibited in their native states. For farmers and gardeners it was a paradise. Mild winters, long summers and fertile soil made it possible to import plants from many different regions. Lewis and Clark brought seeds and plants collected as they traveled through America, as did the early settlers and so began the gardening culture that thrives today.

My husband and I are fortunate to live in a home that, while not very old by European standards, is an older home here. Built in

1906, it is a three story 'craftsman' house standing on 2/3 of an acre. When we first saw the house we immediately fell in love with it, while friends regarded us as if we had lost our minds. True, the house looked dilapidated, to put it kindly, and you could not see the garden for the wild blackberries that romped freely everywhere. But, we are English! And if you looked closely you could see the potential—a good house with strong bones, clearly lovingly built and laid out.

Twenty years later the garden is an oasis surrounded by tall hedges, filled with plants that spread themselves happily through the borders, providing color and texture in every season. Wandering through the garden is almost like wandering through the rooms of a house. With each corner or bend in a path you enter a different landscape, from the English profusion of the front borders to the gravel garden along the side of the house, to the waterfall and pond under



*Antirrhinum grown from seed bloomed from early May through late August.*



*Just Joey rose*



the ancient Douglas fir. Then there is the Crescent Bed with David Austin roses and the long lawn leading down to the Orchard and the vegetable garden. Back up on the other side to the "Italian" patio surrounded by sage and lavender and on to Andrew's penstemon bed. In each area there is somewhere to sit and contemplate. A friend once remarked that people forget that an important part of gardening is just sitting somewhere so that you can see what you and your garden have created—and allowing yourself to be immersed in its beauty.

This year we were persuaded by our Hardy Plant Society (2,300 members strong) to have an Open Garden. In Portland, open gardens are not a rare occurrence. In fact, almost every day of the year you can visit a garden owned and lovingly tended by a Hardy Plant Society member. For us, however, it was a new experience and one which we looked forward to with a certain degree of apprehension. It is one thing to enjoy your own garden, another thing entirely to have it subject to the scrutiny of relative strangers, many of whom would probably be far more expert than we are.

We had to pick a date by March 1st so we picked June 23rd—our wedding anniversary and also a time of year when there are still some days of rain to keep the garden moist. It is generally a time when the roses are in full bloom and all the early summer plants are at their happiest. Needless to say, we worked non-stop in the months prior to the date. A week before, I was organizing friends to bake cakes and cookies, staring anxiously at



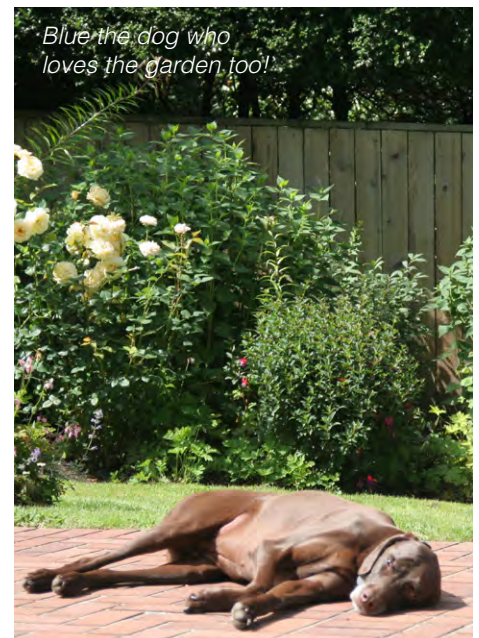
*looking down from the house to the vegetable garden.*



*clematis over front pergola at front gate*



*part of the long border with potting shed in background*



*Blue the dog who loves the garden too!*





front border

the cloudless sky and chasing our marauding band of chickens out of the flower beds.

The day dawned—with cloudy skies and rain! The first rain in over thirty days. However, gardeners are intrepid folk and our first visitors arrived promptly at 9am. From then on there was a steady stream of people wandering through the garden or sitting on a bench somewhere contemplating a deep pink penstemon, or the lilac fringe of the *Galega* 'Lady Wilson', or the glorious orange of the 'Just Joey' roses. Many people perched on our porch and whiled away an hour or two chatting to us or to other gardeners, collecting tidbits of information or just talking about their lives and gardens here in Portland.

For us, it helped us to stand back and see our garden through the eyes of others. We were able to appreciate how welcoming our garden has become and how all the work we have put into it has created something that we can love and appreciate.

Now I just have to find time to sit on one of those benches and contemplate the beauty of our garden. Uh Oh! I can see a weed!



*Susan Franklin wrote this "Letter from America" to the Burley Village Magazine in Hampshire, England.*



Tosca and Musetta, our operatic chickens



pond and water garden

## HPSO Grant Funds Available for Schools and Nonprofit Organizations

The HPSO Grants and Scholarship Committee is soliciting applications for our 2014 grant program. Previous grantees have included school and community groups undertaking horticultural, environmental, education, beautification, preservation and food-production projects.

The HPSO Grants Program is named in honor of the late Elaine Joines, who was designer and curator of the Martha Springer Botanic Garden at Willamette University and a dedicated member of the HPSO Grants Committee. Grant funding comes primarily from the HPSO Garden Conservancy Open Day Tour.

Projects must further the mission of HPSO to promote education and understanding of herbaceous perennial plants. Grant awards this cycle will be capped at \$1,500. Applications are accepted only from school groups and IRS-qualified 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations located in Oregon and Clark County, Washington.

### Application Details and Deadline

Detailed information and submission requirements related to the grants program can be accessed from HPSO's website. On our home page in the lower left hand corner click on the red 'Grants' title. Electronic and hard copies are due at the HPSO office by the end of the business day Friday, February 28, 2014. Successful grantees will be notified in May 2014.

If you have questions about the program, application, or qualifications contact the interim chair of the HPSO Grants and Scholarship Committee, Shari MacDonald, at [grants@hardyplantsociety.org](mailto:grants@hardyplantsociety.org).



*Bienstart Community Garden*





# HPSO GRANT FOCUS: Willowcreek School Garden Project

By Zachary Knapp, third and fourth grade teacher at and Coordinator for the Willowcreek Elementary School Garden Project

The Willowcreek School Garden has continued to grow and flourish with the help of the Hardy Plant Society of Oregon as well as numerous other donors and volunteers. Our project has expanded in a variety of ways and continues to find new ways to support student understanding of sustainable food practices as well as the many benefits of locally grown foods.

When we applied for the HPSO Elaine Joines Memorial Grant, our school garden was little more than six small beds each about four feet square growing salad greens and radishes for our school salad bar. Since that time our garden has expanded in a variety of ways. With our grant funding we purchased much needed garden tools and seed starting equipment. The seed starting supplies allowed us the opportunity to start a wide variety of seeds indoors during the spring of last year. We started a variety of melons, squash, cucumbers, peppers and tomatoes all under grow lights on a very nice custom built seed starting system that was donated by KC and Theresa Meiwald. These starts proved to be very educational for our students and were a welcome addition to our school garden when it was time to plant things out in the late spring before school got out.

Since we had ready access to good garden tools, and a funding source for high powered growing amendments, we added numerous raised beds around campus. On the south wall of our building, near our existing garden, we added three new raised beds filled with high quality compost from the local landfill, which we purchased with grant funds. These beds proved to be amazing resources and are still producing at the end of October even though other tomatoes and peppers in the local area have all been killed off by frost. The southern exposure and close proximity to a brick wall, with an overhanging roof have provided a nice thermal buffer, leading to wonderful discussions with the students about solar energy. We are so happy with the look and feel of this growing space that we have plans to expand this planting area this fall by adding even more raised beds.

We also tackled a weedy area of our campus next to some tennis courts and transformed this area into a raised bed garden, again filled with the wonderful

compost product purchased from the local landfill with grant funding. These 10 beds grew an amazing amount of watermelons, cucumbers, summer and winter squash, popcorn and flowers all summer long, along with a very healthy crop of weeds. In fact, this project turned out so well that we have plans for expanding this planting area so we have even more growing space next spring and summer. And, we have been heavily mulching this planting area to try and keep the weeds in check more efficiently next summer. Our students ate watermelon from our garden well into October, and we have plans for some fun cooking demonstrations using the winter squash that we grew in that garden space. Summer volunteers had more than enough zucchini to keep them happy all summer long.

Additionally, we have finished the basic construction on our new 20x48 foot greenhouse. The shell is in place and we have six 8x4 foot raised beds in this facility. Currently, we are planting some of these beds in winter-hardy veggies, such as salad greens, carrots, snap peas, and spinach. Construction of this facility was completed with the help of some students and a small group of volunteers who gave up an entire Saturday to get everything in place. We are currently working through the final phases of this project, getting a heater installed, along with some electricity to supply the fans and grow lights. As it sits currently, this facility is a functional hoop house, but will very soon be a fully functional greenhouse that will provide us with ample growing space to keep things working all year long.

We also have begun a small fruit orchard, something that we plan to expand. Fruit is an important part of our garden, and was very popular with students this fall, we will be looking at adding additional plantings of things like raspberries, strawberries, and other, perhaps lesser known fruits that are compatible with our growing area, such as gooseberries.

The Willowcreek School Garden project started as little more than some simple salad greens growing in some small beds. With the help of the Hardy Plant Society of Oregon, our project has blossomed and like many of the plants our students are now tending, it continues to grow and change. New opportunities present new

challenges, and it is with an eager student body, hungry to learn about their food and where it comes from that we continue to work and learn as we seek to create an example of food sustainability for both our students and our local communities as well.







## Clematis Pruning Myths

by Linda Beutler, President,  
International Clematis Society

"Tis the season to be jolly?" No, I prefer "Tis the season to be ruthless!" After growing many kinds of clematis in my own garden, and overseeing the antics of 1,700 clematis plants at the Rogerson Clematis Collection, I can tell you for certain these plants are tough. You cannot kill a clematis by pruning it. You might think you have, but more likely causes of death abound.

The genus *Clematis* has 300 species, from tiny shrublets in New Zealand to *Clematis vitalba*, which gallops throughout England and Europe, is now in China, and may be the culprit choking trees with an ivy-like grip in a neighborhood near you. From the coldest regions of the world come herbaceous perennial clematis, and vines that wrap their dead leaves around their nodes for winter insulation. And all of them, including the flashy large-flowered hybrids—the glamour girls—need to be pruned sometime in our gardens.

The prevailing wisdom has divided the 300 species and their 4,000 or so hybrids into three pruning groups. These groups are about to be reshuffled, and about time, too! Here's why. Take pruning group 1, the group of clematis that allegedly do not need pruning. Ha! I cannot recommend to you a clematis that doesn't need pruning. It would be better to suggest group 1 clematis be pruned annually, or at least every other year. You may prune them as hard or as little as you'd like. Timing is key for this group in our climate. The clematis in group 1 tend to be early spring blooming, and sometimes a little tender. If they are pruned immediately

after blooming these clematis have the rest of our generous growing season to recover, and will bloom on time the next year. Examples from pruning Group 1 are: the Montana group (var. *rubens*, var. *wilsonii*, 'Tetrarose', 'Freda', and the like), the evergreen group (hybrids of *Clematis armandii*, and such New Zealanders as 'Early Sensation'), and hybrids from the species *alpina*, *koreana*, and *macropetala*.

Now we come to the most confounding pruning group for most gardeners, group 2. It is said this group should be pruned partially, so not all old wood is removed, because it is this old wood that produces the largest flowers. Bah! Humbug! If you choose to hard prune this group instead, you are merely slowing down the bloom production, resetting the plant's timing. Clematis like 'Betty Risdon', 'W. E. Gladstone', 'Henryi', 'Nelly Moser' (and her many progeny)—all capable of producing HUGE flowers—will flower later if hard pruned in winter, but the flowers (in July), will be just as large as if the plant was only pruned by one third (flowering in May).

This allows the gardener a lot of latitude in creating plant combinations. Hard pruning a typically spring-blooming large-flowered hybrid in the winter means it will partner with your hydrangeas rather than your roses. Think about it...that might be a very grand display!

The other thing about the group 2 clematis is, if you choose to prune them only moderately in the late winter, you may also prune them again right after the spring flowering (hard prune or by a third to a half, in late June) to produce another spectacular array of flowers in August or later. Now you're in the realm of creating autumn color combinations of clematis bloom with leaf color in shrubs such as Japanese maples, *Cotinus*, sumac, and roses in the *Rugosa* group with their gold October leaf color.

Lastly we come to what should be the easiest clematis to prune, those in pruning group 3. Here we are told to prune the entire plant to a foot tall in mid-to-late winter. This group includes a lot of disparate, sometimes desperate, characters, such as the North American species in the Viorna group (including that Holy Grail for collectors, *Clematis texensis*), the Viticella group (with cast iron vines such as 'Etoile Violette', 'Madame Julia Correvon', and 'Venosa Violacea'), the late-flowering, large-flowered hybrids ('Jackmanii' and its numerous descendants), and the herbaceous perennials in the Integrifolia group.

We can dispense with the Viorna and Integrifolia groups easily. They are both herbaceous in habit, meaning last year's growth, laying around in the garden looking sodden and bereft through the winter, will not rejuvenate. All new growth will come from the ground (remember, this includes *Clematis texensis* and its hybrids), so everything should be removed from the previous season as soon as the plants go dormant in the autumn or early winter. This is just good hygiene.

The Jackmanii and Viticella groups actually offer us surprising options. If you do not hard prune the Jackmanii group in the winter, they will behave like their Group 2 cousins, producing surprisingly big flowers in May and June. 'Gypsy Queen', 'Viola', 'Hagley Hybrid', and many others are capable of shockingly large flowers in May if left unpruned, or only lightly pruned (in winter). But wait...there's more! If you prune them after they've finished the spring show (prune back to whatever degree you desire), in early July, these will re-bloom in about 30-45 days. You control the bloom time!

The Viticella group is justifiably popular, bright, healthy, and easy. We are admonished to hard prune them brutally every winter, once they are dormant. All well and good, but what if you want a colorful, reliable vine to take up a large space and stay there? This is still the group for you. Unpruned clematis in this group reach 20-25 feet tall. If you want a pretty plant for a fir or hemlock, or a big broadleaf evergreen shrub, select a cultivar in a color you like from this group. Once the clematis is as big as you'd like, leave it! You don't have to prune it, and you will have one long period of bloom through late spring to late summer.

In closing, if you wish to kill a clematis by pruning it, you must prune it repeatedly, at each sign of recovery. But other than murdering a weedy *Clematis vitalba* by organic measures, why would you do such a thing? The fine-tuning of clematis pruning advice is an on-going debate. The published "rules" are about to change, and this will be reflected on plant care tags in the near future. But the basic rule is, there are no rules. Gardeners, especially those new to clematis, are comforted by knowing there is only one right way to prune something, but clematis are free spirits, and will reward your creativity (or forgetfulness) by behaving in ways you would not have thought possible if you limit yourself to only growing clematis from a certain pruning group. Branch out!



# Winter is Conifer Propagation Time

by Cori Bacher

Wintertime is upon us, so the gardening season is over for the year, right? Well, not necessarily. The time-honored traditions of planning projects for the coming spring, as well as mooning over plant and seed catalogs are still firm favorites. However, I would strongly encourage you to add another activity to your winter repertoire: conifer propagation from cuttings. I know that it seems completely counter-intuitive to remove delicate, fragile little cuttings from their mother plant during the absolutely worst weather of the year, but a very handy little booklet from the Washington Park Arboretum in Seattle entitled *Cuttings Through the Year*, recommends just that. This booklet contains a calendar of the optimal times of year here in the Pacific Northwest to stick cuttings of a wide number of species, and winter is great for a number of plants. Their recommendations for most are to use hardwood cuttings, but of especial interest to me are the recommendations for a variety of conifers that can be propagated by softwood cuttings. My favorites are the species of *Chamaecyparis*, and particularly the elegant and varied cultivars of *obtusata*, the Hinoki cypress. These are optimally propagated between October and March. I do mine in January and February, when there are few other garden chores. Other conifers that are also recommended for softwood cuttings at this time of year include *Picea*, *Thuja*, *Tsuga*, *Taxus*, *Pinus*, *Juniperus* and *Sciadopitys*, so I can have a conifer festival in the gloom of early winter.

Generally, I process my cuttings in very conventional ways. I always try to take the cuttings in the mornings when they are damp and cool. I plunge them directly into water, and keep them in cool shade until I can get to processing them. However, working with cuttings in the winter means that there is far greater latitude in how they are handled than those taken in drier and warmer months. Whereas a hydrangea cutting taken on a hot August morning can be worthless for propagation purposes by evening, conifer cuttings can stay viable for days if they are cool and moist. I have even been able to snag cuttings from bouquets or holiday greens that have been off the plant for significant periods of time, and been successful with these as well. But I am a bit of an experimenter, and am willing to lose cuttings for the fun of

pushing the envelope. If you want nearly guaranteed results, rely on the tried-and-true techniques.

When sticking the plants, always re-cut the stems, on the diagonal, and pare a thin slice off the stem to expose more cambium. I use Wood's Rooting Compound, diluted to the correct concentration for softwood cuttings, and hold the cutting in the solution for about five seconds. Since I am not a commercial propagator, trying to get large numbers of finished plants, I have been increasingly leaning to larger cuttings, between four and six inches, so that I can get bigger plants, faster. I have found that a 50/50 mix of a good, chunky potting soil (no weird additives, please) and perlite gives me a rooting medium that drains well without drying out every time my back is turned (I lack an automated misting system). I use this medium to fill either 50-cell propagation trays or two-inch plastic pots in flats. Then I cover these with the taller propagation domes since they accommodate both my taller

cuttings and regular stake-type plant tags (label everything, I have lost more plants to carelessness with this than anything else). Conifers do not like to be misted as regularly as other plants, so their care can be a little more casual, but I still mist several times a week. For housing my babies, since I lack any form of shed, garage, greenhouse, or basement, I have set up a small propagation area in a corner of my living room. This room has abundant light from the east, south and west, so I don't need grow lights. We heat it to 65 degrees during the day, and drop it to 55 degrees at night, so the plants are warm, but not baked. The results have been great. I get good root systems in about two months, and plants that can be moved into a four-inch pot by late spring (many of these, depending on the plant, are ready for a gallon by the late fall). In fact, I have had such good results with my conifers that I now bring all my cuttings, year-round, into the house to get started. My family is quite patient with me, and visitors are either intrigued with the baby plants, or stiffly ignore the entire area. A similar set-up could be managed with heat mats and grow-lights almost anywhere, but if you have a well-lit corner of your house, and you heat it enough to live in, I can heartily recommend bringing your cuttings in and making them part of the family. You will better remember to mist them, check them for pests, and tend them generally. It isn't quite as intimate as the British woman I remember from the Sixties who used to incubate her chicken eggs in her ample cleavage, but, for gardeners, it is about as close as we are going to get.

I find that growing plants from cuttings is endlessly fascinating, and so I do it as much for the process as for the product. However, the plants in my garden which I have started in this way hold a special place in my heart. I remember where I got the cutting, from which friend, and the pleasure of collecting and processing them with other friends. I watch with pleasure and awe as the plant takes shape, knowing that without my steady, reliable care it would not exist at all, but also knowing that I, a mere human, could never devise the intricacies of the genes and cells at work. So, I hope you will try propagating a few conifers this winter, and that, as the years pass, they will brighten your garden, gladden your heart, and connect you even more deeply with the miracle of life on our lovely planet.





# BOOK REVIEW: *Back in the Garden with Dulcy*

by Carol Gaynor

I recently had the privilege of reading that remarkable book Portland gardeners have long been waiting for, *Back in the Garden with Dulcy*, edited by her husband, Ted Mahar. Happily we now have a collection of Dulcy's favorite garden columns and no longer have to resort to rifling through stashed-away clippings from the *Oregonian*! Along with the weekly columns we are also so fortunate to have a most lovely, caring, and insightful memoir written by Ted, long-time film critic for the same newspaper. He lets us in on some of their life together, their professional and house and garden history, and their beloved cats and dogs that provided Dulcy with much comfort in her final years. The photos throughout the book were selected by one of our own HPSO members, Beth Hansen-Winters. Beth is a professional book designer and was responsible for the general look of the book, including the Japanese grass photos inside the covers and the selections of quotes pulled from the

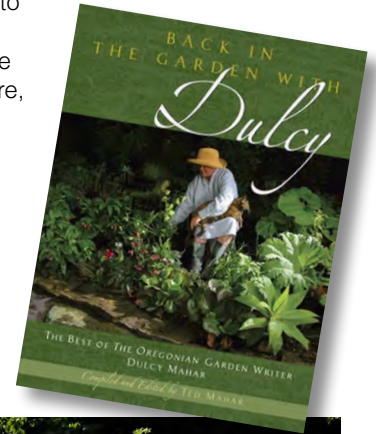


Beth Hansen-Winters

columns. And most appropriately, the book opens with a preface from none other than Doug the Wonder Boy/Guy, whose hard work and advice were invaluable to Dulcy's garden creations.

Dulcy had little formal training in horticulture. She taught herself through trial and error in her own garden and by reading a wealth of horticulture books, and that knowledge was truly helpful to her readers in developing their own gardens. Those weekly writings were so appealing to gardeners because they included wit, charm, and above all, honesty. Who among us has not bought too many plants and placed them too close together, forgotten the botanical names we thought we'd never forget, finally pulled out a sickly looking plant in our own garden only to see the same thriving in a neighbor's garden? I know I have and probably that's why one of my favorite sections in this new book is "Mistakes, Mishaps, and Do-Overs!"

Dulcy's garden in Garthwick was beautiful and a joy for visitors. Not all of us have such gardens, but we can share her love of gardening and laugh at the same mistakes and savor small triumphs. Her writing gives us permission and inspiration to enjoy our gardens the way they are, unique to each one of us.







## An Unintentional New Penstemon Hybrid

by Dave Nelson

An apparent hybrid has developed in a yard containing several penstemon species. Its pink flower clusters surround the stem in a ring fashion unlike the parents, *P. strictus* (purple) and *P. eatonii* (red). The leaves and structure are similar to *P. strictus*, while *P. eatonii* is the only red species in the immediate area. Reproduction of the hybrid required root cuttings since stem cuttings did not work. However, seeds from the hybrid yielded 37 percent pink flowers with the remainder shades of purple. Obviously, this hybrid penstemon shall require considerable effort to establish better reproduction, as well as other differences from the parents. Read the full article online at [hardyplantsociety.org—hpso.memberclicks.net/landing-page-v2](http://hardyplantsociety.org-hpso.memberclicks.net/landing-page-v2)

## Share Your Gardening Passion in the Quarterly

HPSO is a society devoted to its members' passion for plants. Sharing information, some laughs, and experience is what makes participating in this group such a joy. Help us all grow as gardeners by sharing what you know and love about gardening with your fellow members in an article for the *Quarterly*.

Article submissions have two simple guidelines: they should be no longer than 1,000 words and any photos should be high-resolution (5MB+). A member of the committee will let you know when your article will be published and offer recommended edits. Space availability may create publication constraints; if this occurs we will work with you to publish an abbreviated version, or post your full submission on the HPSO website. If you have questions or an article to submit, contact Whitney Rideout at [whitney@skygardensdesign.com](mailto:whitney@skygardensdesign.com).

# volunteer "bud"

by Cori Bacher

## Rhonda Taylor

A love of animals was the first step in Rhonda Taylor's path to the world of horticulture. Soon after moving to Portland, she discovered Recycled Gardens, a non-profit nursery whose proceeds supported pet spay and neuter clinics. She started volunteering at the nursery because she believed in the cause, and then, with plant credits earned through hours worked, started taking plants home to her newly-acquired yard. Researching plants in order to write tags further piqued Rhonda's interest. Fellow volunteer Yasuko Oiye told her about this great organization, HPSO, and urged her to join and meet other plant enthusiasts. Taking her to visit some of the open gardens was the clincher, and Rhonda has been an active member of HPSO ever since.

Enjoying its behind-the-scenes nature, the quiet and self-effacing Rhonda has been coordinating the tag-sorting function at Hortlandia for the last three years. A member since 2006, and a volunteer starting with the 2007 plant sale, she tried a variety of plant sale activities before settling on tag-sorting, and the plant sale committee, as her niche activity. Sidelines are stints at the HPSO booth at the Yard, Garden and Patio show in February, and help with the Garden Conservancy tours in June.

Rhonda was not particularly exposed to gardening in her childhood. Frequent moves precluded a focus on a family garden, and her own early career was spent in the Bahamas living in provided housing. So moving to Portland and buying her first home was her first real opportunity to work with plants. She is now both passionate and knowledgeable, particularly focusing on some of the larger ornamental groups such as Japanese maples, hostas, and dwarf conifers. Propagation from cuttings is also a strong interest, and she always has several small standing greenhouses filled with flats of cuttings and maturing plants.

For Rhonda, gardening has brought her a sense of peace in difficult times. Her garden is a "sanctuary just a few steps away," where she can have the transcendental experience of watching one iris bloom or the labor of working with boulder-size rocks. Currently she is working on editing her plant collection, refining it to include only those plants she really loves instead of the "anything and everything" approach of her early gardening years.

Benefits of HPSO membership for Rhonda include visiting open gardens, going to lectures, and working and socializing with other members. Some of her best friends have been met through her volunteer activities, since, as she says, "gardeners are always such nice people." Her next HPSO activity will probably be joining an interest group, when she is sure she has the time available. HPSO makes Rhonda a better gardener, and Rhonda makes HPSO a better organization. Thank you Rhonda, for all you do. We'll see you at Hortlandia in the spring.



*Rhonda Taylor in her garden with Sophie, a rescue shepherd-mix who also enjoys being outside.*





# WHY I GARDEN...

by Barbara Blossom

The other day I came in from the garden and caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror. Who was that woman in the muddy jacket, hair sticking up like a punk rocker, hands streaked with dirt, with a deliriously happy grin on her face?

What made me so euphoric on that particular September day? It was probably the scent of *Agastache* 'Summer Breeze', a blend of lemon, sugar and mint, wafting through the garden, so enticing that I run my hands through the stems to release more and more aroma. Morning and evening, hummingbirds flock to it, darting into the coral and pink tubular flowers for nectar.

It might have been the radiant pink flowers of *Colchicum autumnale*, blooming at the feet of hostas and epimeediums, that lifted my spirits. Or the white flowers of *Cyclamen hederifolium* gleaming in front of dark green hellebore leaves, or the raindrops sparkling on the burgundy leaves of the purple smoke tree.

I garden to travel to the wonderland of sensory delights. Out there I'm a little kid digging in the dirt, abandoning all cares. I'm back in my wild childhood, before self-consciousness set in. Gardening sets me free.

Dressed in raggedy t-shirts and well-worn, stretched out pants, that are soon splattered with mud, coated with compost, soil crumbs, seed pods, and grass clippings, I'm as much a part of the earth as a worm. A final layer of fuzzy fur comes courtesy of Blackjackie, the cat who strayed into my garden two years ago and decided to

stay. She meows like a siren until I pet her, so to turn off her plaintive yowls, I weed with my right hand and pet her with my left. The instant I stop, she rubs up against my pants, shedding fine black hairs.

Blackjackie helps me slow down and notice what's happening in the garden. She jumps up on a garden bench and howls until I sit down beside her and stroke her coat, letting me know by head butts that she needs to have her head massaged endlessly. As we sit there together, I look up to see that *Heptacodium's*



*I love the dramatic look of castor beans bold leaves and bright seed pods.*

white flowers are dropping their petals to expose the red calyces. The tree is a study in white and red. Just minutes earlier I'd walked right by without paying any attention. I would have missed it entirely if it weren't for the cat.

One warm autumn afternoon Blackjackie hurled herself onto the lawn, tummy side up to catch the sun. I thought she had a good idea, so I lay down beside her and stretched out, enjoying an upside down view of the silver willow against a blue sky.

Every day the garden surprises me. After two days of drenching rain and winds so strong I was sure the young Chinese elm would snap off at the trunk, the tree still stands strong, green leaves shining in today's welcome sunlight. The six-foot-tall

castor bean plants went from vertical to horizontal, and as I trimmed the gorgeous red leaves to free the plants beneath them, I saved plenty of seed pods for next year.

It was close to dusk when I was watering the pots and a flicker of yellow caught my eye. There on the rim of the purple birdbath stood a tiny yellow bird. Hopping along, it circled the rim. Did it want a drink? A bath? Finally it bobbed its small head down to the water and took a dainty sip. Scurried some more and bobbed again, dipping delicately into the water for another small sip. This went on repeatedly as I stood there spellbound, overwatering the pots.

My garden is a blend of yesterday and tomorrow, of this season, past and future ones. Stout grape vines planted fifty years ago continue to bear, along with apple trees whose trunks are reminders of the stalwart beauty of old age. The 'Desert King' fig tree began as a cutting, rooting in sawdust beneath a greenhouse bench in my earliest horticulture class, and the thirty-foot tall silver willow once grew in a gallon pot at Heronswood.

But beyond the pleasures of color and scent, of flowers and fruit, there's the great joy of tending, of caring for, of working with the soil, water,

and sun to grow life. Like the plants, I need to feel the sun and rain on my face, the wind in my hair, the soil running through my fingers. I need to breathe in the fresh air, no matter how cold or hot, to be out there as the seasons turn.

When I give myself to the garden—digging, raking, planting, mulching, pruning—all sense of linear time falls away. Worry and fear blow away with the clouds, and I'm left with a sense of ease and wonder. More and more lately, I stand before the vivid 'Magic Fire' dahlias, before the purple 'Enor' penstemons, and whisper, "You are so beautiful!"

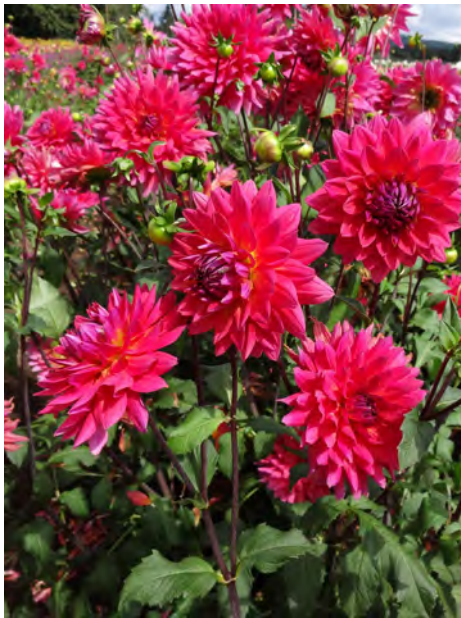
In the garden the line between work and play vanishes. When I'm moving the big pile of wood chips from the shoulder of



the road to the paths, and passersby urge me not to work so hard, I just smile—only similarly smitten gardeners understand how much fun I'm having. If I were to give my garden a name, it would be Barbara's Playground.

Many years ago, long before I became a gardener, I drove along a meandering country road in Maine, right around that magical time when the sun is low in the late afternoon sky and the fields are bathed in golden light. I saw a scene that sank deeply into my consciousness. An old woman in faded clothing knelt in her garden, weeding. She looked so serene, so engrossed in her work that she never even once looked up at my car.

That would be the life, I thought to myself. And that small thought remained lodged somewhere inside me for a very long time, dormant as a nasturtium seed in winter. I am that woman now, and the garden is my true home, much more so than the rooms inside my house.



*When these dahlias light up my garden, I feel like bowing down before them reverently.*

"Why I Garden" essays will appear intermittently in upcoming issues of the *Quarterly*. We invite you to submit your own essay on the subject. See page 15 for submission details.



## Recipe to Preserve Your Cut Hellebore Treasures

*by Linda Beutler and the students of Hort 232, Commercial Floral Design, Clackamas Community College*

Hellebores are a winter treasure, especially on those cold, wet, grey days. Many HPSO members love to bring their hellebore blooms indoors for display, but get dismayed when they quickly fade.

Linda Beutler and her commercial floral design students impart their wisdom below for the best way to preserve your *Helleborus x hybridus* blooms.

### Cut Hellebore Water Recipe:

In a quart of water, add one packet (which equals one level, not heaping, tablespoon) of commercial floral preservative, and 2 tablespoons of ethyl alcohol. NOTE: the CCC students used ethyl alcohol containing acetone. For the next best results you could swap isopropyl alcohol for ethyl alcohol.

### Tips:

- Leave the hellebore stems as long as possible, and harvest the stems when the nectaries have fallen off the primary (first to open) flower, with secondary buds open or opening.
- Always cut the ends of any cut plant stems at an angle.
- Don't be skimpy with the water: you want at least half of the stem length submerged. In our experiments we used vases that held a quart of solution. *Helleborus x hybridus* stems don't have bark or a tough outer sheath so some water/solution will be absorbed through the sides of the stems as well as being drawn up the cut end.
- Don't overdose the formula by adding more commercial preservative or alcohol. This isn't like cooking with garlic—more is not better.
- If the hellebore stems develop a "cooked" looking cut end after a week or so, simply pull them from the water and cut that portion of the stem off.
- If you don't have commercial preservative, you will still notice better vase life for hellebores by just using the alcohol, still only 2T per quart of water.





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