# The American GARDENER®

The Magazine of the American Horticultural Society

March / April 2017

10 great
Small Trees for
spring bloom

Meet Daffodil Fanatic
Jason Delaney

Quick-Growing Vines for Fast Color

DIY Small Patios



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Volume 96, Number 2 · March / April 2017

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### 20 SPRING-BLOOMING TREES FOR SMALL GARDENS

BY ANDREW BUNTING

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You can easily create a beautiful garden for relaxing and entertaining without breaking your budget by using reclaimed material and a bit of creativity.

ON THE COVER: 'Lois', a yellow-flowered hybrid magnolia selection, grows only 15 to 20 feet tall at maturity, making it a suitable tree for many space-challenged gardens.

Photograph by Rob Cardillo

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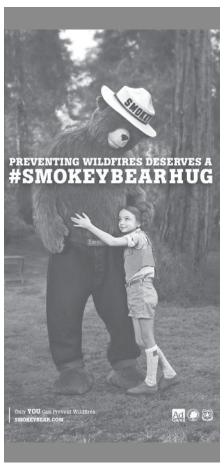
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Gardenia (Gardenia jasminoides).







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Y NOW, most of you should be aware of the American Horticultural Society's new website address: www.ahsgardening.org. Be sure to visit us there to take advantage of your AHS member benefits. This includes the directory of more than 300 gardens, arboreta, and other public venues that participate in our Reciprocal Admissions Program. Don't forget that with your current member card, you can visit these places for free or receive discounts and other special benefits at them. You'll also find back issues of this magazine, which are searchable by keyword, and plenty of other gardening resources.

Some of you may also know that our new domain name isn't the only recent change for the organization. In February, our Executive Director Tom Underwood stepped down to take on a similar role with the Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens in Alabama. We are enormously grateful to Tom and his wife, Jane, who was also on our staff, for their hard work and dedication to the Society and our members.

Over the course of 14 years, Tom accomplished a great deal. Working with a small but talented staff and supported by the Board of Directors, he kept the AHS



in a strong and stable position through the economic recession in the late 2000s and other daunting challenges. Among his many achievements, Tom successfully tackled significant infrastructure upgrades at our River Farm headquarters, bolstered membership, and fostered unprecedented financial stability.

At the request of the Board of Directors, I have agreed to serve as the Interim Executive Director while we conduct a national search for a new leader. For those who are not familiar with me, I retired from leading the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C., a couple of years ago and subsequently joined the AHS's Board. My goal is to support the staff in making this transitional period as smooth as possible.

Speaking of transitions, here at River Farm winter has certainly given way to spring, judging from all the plants that are bursting into bloom and leafing out! One of the earliest, most cheery flowers out there is the daffodil. In this issue of The American Gardener, we profile Jason Delaney, a dedicated daffodil expert in Missouri who reveals some of his favorite cultivars. How does your own list of favorites compare? Send us a note at editor@ahsgardening.org to tell us about the daffodil cultivars you covet and why. Photos are welcome, too, of course! We'll publish the best of these in an upcoming issue of the magazine.

There are many other people like Delaney who are doing tremendously inspiring things in horticulture. We've selected 11 of them to receive our 2017 Great American Gardeners Awards—turn to page 14 to meet them. Also, please start thinking about people you know who would be deserving of national recognition for horticultural accomplishments of their own. Look for more information about next year's nomination process in the July/August issue of this magazine.

We hope you will enjoy all this issue has to offer, and we thank you for continuing to be a member of the American Horticultural Society. Your support helps us to foster important connections between plants, people, and the environment.

Holly H. Shimizu Interim Executive Director

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## **MEMBERS' FORUM**

### **PICKING POKE**

I was interested to see your inclusion of poke in Carole Ottesen's article on wild greens in the November/December 2016 issue. I grew up on a large farm in Maryland, north of Baltimore. Every spring when the poke was beginning to grow, my mother would send me out to the woods with a knife and a small basket. She had me pick all the sprouts that were no taller than the knife, which was six to seven inches long, because above that size they became poisonous. She cooked them like spinach, boiling them until tender and wilted, but she didn't use two changes of water as your author suggested. Dressed with butter and a bit of vinegar, they had a slightly tart flavor I found delicious.

> Pepperrell Crofoot Hellertown, PA

### PLASTIC MULCH FOR SWEET POTATOES

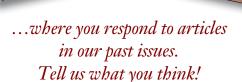
Ira Wallace's article about sweet potatoes (November/December 2016) has inspired me to try this crop again. Perhaps it is because my clay loam stays cold in spring that past attempts have not been fruitful.

I do disagree, however, with Wallace's advice to use black plastic to warm the soil prior to planting. In my experience in California, black plastic blocks sunlight and keeps the soil cooler. Instead I use 3-to 4-mil clear plastic or a translucent row cover (Agribon or Tufbell). If the edges of the clear plastic are sealed with soil, it also kills weeds via solarization. Using this method in the weeks near the summer solstice, when the sun is most effective, I have eradicated both bindweed and crabgrass in my garden.

Carolyn Singer Grass Valley, CA

### MORE INFORMATION NEEDED

A short news article in "Gardener's Notebook" (January/February 2017) titled "Tomatoes Two Weeks Early" de-



scribed development of a new strain of earlier-flowering tomatoes but did not provide adequate detail about the gene editing technology, known as CRISPR, used in their development. This is a technology that is a step up from genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and as with GMOs, my concern is that no long-term testing is being undertaken to prove safety or viability. Because this is a complex issue, I would like to see you publish a more detailed article about the CRISPR technology and its implications for horticulture and agriculture.

Barry Avery North Granby, CT

### **COMMON AND SCIENTIFIC NAMES**

I rarely write to any publication, but I felt like I had to contribute to the discussion about using common or scientific names for plants. As a landscape contractor and former nursery owner, I can tell you that it is terribly difficult to work with clients who use common names such as "monkey grass," which in the South could refer to plants in one of two genera: *Ophiopogon* spp. or *Liriope* spp. In coastal North Carolina, the term "grandfathers gray beard" could refer to a low-growing juniper (*Juniperus* spp.) or fringe tree (*Chionanthus* 

virginicus). As several readers suggested, I think that where possible you should include both the scientific and common names for the plants being referenced. But whatever you do, please don't dumb down this periodical.

Joel Carpenter Annandale, VA

Editor's note Our readers have made it clear that they feel quite passionate about both common and botanical names for plants. We will continue to list both as space allows.

### **CORRECTIONS: GEOGRAPHY LESSON**

I'm sure you did it just to test whether readers are paying attention, but just in case I wanted to point out that on page 27 in the January/February 2017 issue, you stated that the author of the feature article, *The Secret Language of Plants*, lives in Sequim, Oregon. Oops...the only Sequim around here is in Washington. And for anyone not in the know, it is pronounced "Skwim."

We lived just down the road from the AHS headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, for several years and spent some great times at River Farm. My wife volunteered and participated in the Seed Exchange among other things. We now live about as far away as one can get, so we always enjoy receiving the magazine. And reading something that is local to our new home is particularly rewarding. Norman Marten

Norman Marten Bainbridge Island, WA

**Editor's note** Several other readers wrote to chastise us for misidentifying the home state of contributor Pam Larsen. She lives in Sequim, Washington.

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





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NATIONAL CHILDREN & YOUTH GARDEN SYMPOSIUM For information about the Society's annual National Children & Youth Garden Symposium, e-mail education@ahsgardening.org, or visit www.ahsgardening.org/ncygs.

**RECIPROCAL ADMISSIONS PROGRAM** The AHS Reciprocal Admissions Program offers members free admission and other discounts to 300 botanical gardens and other horticultural destinations throughout North America. A list of participating gardens can be found on *www. ahsgardening.org/rap*. For more information, call (703) 768-5700 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 About River Farm section of *www. ahsgardening.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. 127, e-mail development@ahsgardening.org, or visit the Gardening Programs section of www.ahs gardening.org.

**WEBSITE:** www.ahsgardening.org The AHS website is a valuable source of information about the Society's programs and activities. Users must set up a username and password to access the member's-only sections.

# News from the AHS

March / April 2017

PROGRAMS • EVENTS • ANNOUNCEMENTS

### AHS LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

AFTER 14 years with the American Horticultural Society (AHS), **Tom Underwood** stepped down from his role as Executive Director in February to lead the Friends of Bir-



Holly H. Shimizu

mingham Botanical Gardens in Álabama. The AHS Board of Directors is conducting a national search to fill the position, but in the meantime, **Holly H. Shimizu** is serving as the organization's interim executive director. Shimizu, who retired a couple of years ago after serving as executive director of the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C., is a proven administrator and internationally respected horticulturist.

"Holly's extensive horticultural background and knowledge already were an invaluable asset in her role as an AHS Board member over the last few years," says **Amy Bolton**, chair of the AHS Board of Directors. "Between her steady direction and the experience of our hard-working staff, we know the organization is in good hands during this transition period."

### AHS WEBSITE MOVES TO NEW ADDRESS

THE AHS'S website completed its move to a new address, **www.ahsgardening.org**, at the end of February. The organization selected its current web address in an effort to realize several short- and long-term goals relating to branding and search engine optimization. "Although longer than our previous web address," says Director of Communications **David Ellis**, "the new one more clearly identifies our purpose while at the same time differentiating us from other organizations that use similar initials." All AHS e-mail addresses followed suit; for example, to reach our membership department, you would use membership@ahsgardening.org.

### PACIFIC NORTHWEST TO HOST YOUTH GARDEN SYMPOSIUM

EACH YEAR, the AHS's annual National Children & Youth Garden Symposium takes place in a different location in order to showcase a broad range of exemplary gardens and programs across the country. This summer, it will be based in Vancou-



Symposium participants will tour numerous school gardens like this one in the Portland area.

ver, Washington, with numerous excursions around the greater Portland area in neighboring Oregon. In addition to educational tours, the event offers learning and networking opportunities for teachers, garden designers, community leaders, program coordinators, and anyone involved in connecting young people to the natural world.

Beginning Wednesday July 12, optional pre-symposium tours set the scene with visits to the Oregon Garden and school gardens in Portland. The symposium officially kicks off the following day with a welcome address from **Sarah Drinkwater**, assistant superintendent of the Oregon Department of Education. From there, a smorgasbord of educational sessions, keynote presentations, workshops, and field trips will fill out the agenda through July 15.

To view a complete schedule and registration information, visit the AHS website at www.ahsgardening.org/ncygs or send an e-mail to education@ahsgardening.org.

### HISTORIC GARDEN WEEK INCLUDES RIVER FARM

RIVER FARM, the headquarters of AHS in Alexandria, Virginia, will once again participate in Virginia's Historic Garden Week. Perched on the banks of the Potomac River a few miles south of Washington, D.C., the 25-acre estate welcomes visitors throughout the year, but this event provides the perfect excuse to visit at the height of spring beauty.

River Farm will be among over 250 historic gardens, land-marks, and homes across the state that are participating this year from April 22 through 29. Coordinated by the Garden Club of Virginia since 1929, Historic Garden Week helps the organization raise funds for the preservation and restoration of Virginia's historic public gardens and landscapes, a research fellowship program, and the club's Centennial Project with Virginia State Parks. For more information and tickets, visit www.vagardenweek.org.

### SPRING GARDEN MARKET ON EARTH DAY WEEKEND

THE AHS'S annual Spring Garden Market at River Farm will take place this year on Friday, April 21, and Saturday, April 22, which, not altogether coincidentally, is Earth Day. Vendors

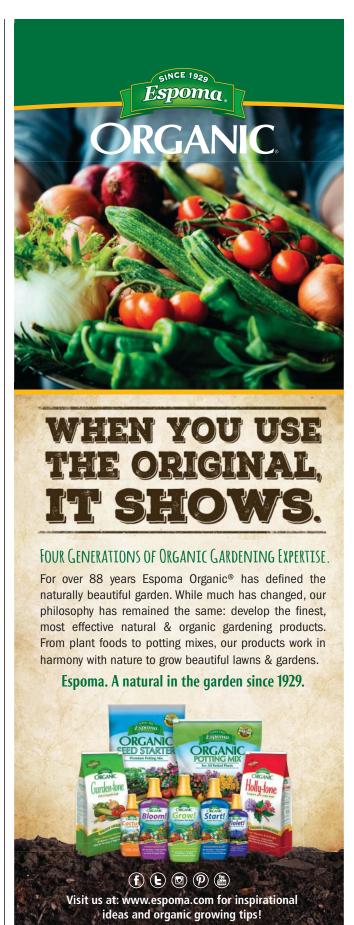


from across the mid-Atlantic region will offer a large selection of plants such as vegetable seedlings, natives, unusual trees, and pollinator favorites. Garden art, tools, books, and other accessories also will be available. Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer gardening questions.

"What better way for gardeners to celebrate Earth Day," says AHS In-

terim Executive Director **Holly Shimizu**, "than making the planet a more beautiful and sustainable place through plants."

April 21 from 10 am to noon is the preview sale for AHS members showing a valid membership card or other proof of membership (such as an online receipt). The event then opens to all from noon to 4 p.m. and continues on Saturday, April 22, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Parking is \$5 (cash only) per car for non-members; free for AHS members. Non-members who join during the event can apply the fee to their membership. Visit www.ahsgardening.org/gardenmarket for more information.





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 December 24, 2016 and February 28, 2017.

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### AHS NATIONAL EVENTS CALENDAR

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

APR. 21 & 22. Spring Garden Market. River Farm, Alexandria, VA. APR. 22. Great Gardens and Landscaping Symposium.

Woodstock, VT. (AHS partner event.)

APR. 22-29. Historic Garden Week in Virginia. (AHS partner event.)

APR. 28-30. Colonial Williamsburg Garden Symposium.

Williamsburg, VA. (AHS partner event.)

MAY 12. National Public Gardens Day.

MAY 16-25. Gardens of Southern Scotland.

AHS Travel Study Program.

MAY 18. Coalition of American Plant Societies meeting. Chicago, IL. (AHS partner event.)

JUNE 8. Great American Gardeners and AHS Book Awards

Ceremony. River Farm, Alexandria, VA.

JUNE 26-30. AHS President's Council Trip to Connecticut

Gardens: Litchfield Hills and Points East.

JULY 12-15. National Children & Youth Garden Symposium. Portland, OR.

SEPT. 5-15. Gardens of Genoa, the Italian Riviera & Florence. AHS Travel Study Program.

SEPT. 23. AHS Annual Gala. River Farm, Alexandria, VA.

OCT. 5-7. America in Bloom Symposium and Awards Program.

Holliston, MA. (AHS partner event.)

OCT. 30-NOV. 8. Gardens of Argentina: Buenos Aires, Mendoza & Salta (with optional post-tour to Iguaza Falls, Nov. 8–10). AHS Travel Study Program.

### 2018

JAN. 6-28. Gardens. Wine & Wilderness: A Tour of New Zealand. AHS Travel Study Program.

### PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL TRIP TO CONNECTICUT

FOR PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL level donors, the AHS arranges an exclusive trip each year to sample the best of American gardening in different areas of the country. This year's destination, from June 26 to 30, is the scenic Litchfield Hills region of northwest Connecticut.

"We are especially thrilled to include a special visit to the historic Hollister House Garden in Washington, Connecticut, thanks to a special arrangement with the Garden Conservancy," notes Susan Klejst, AHS Director of Development and Engagement. "The Conservancy is also connecting us to several stunning private gardens that participate in its annual Open Days program."

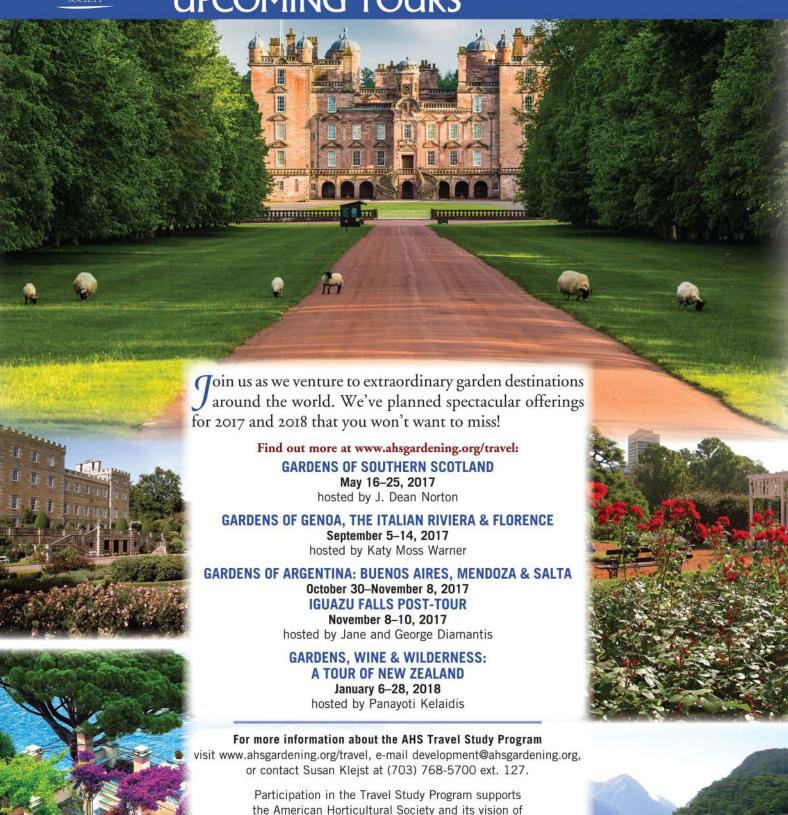
Other trip highlights will include tours of White Flower Farms, Broken Arrow Nursery, and the O'Brien Nursery. Travelers will stay at the luxurious Interlaken Inn in Lakeville.

To be added to a list to receive a complete itinerary, and to learn how to join the President's Council, e-mail development@ahsgardening.org, or visit www.ahsgardening.org.

News written by AHS staff.



# AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAM UPCOMING TOURS



"Making America a Nation of Gardeners, A Land of Gardens."

### AHS MEMBERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Scott Kunst

by Julia Polentes

HEN PONDERING his garden, Scott Kunst thinks of his family's Christmas tree. "Every year we add more and more ornaments. There's the one our neighbors gave us our first Christmas here, one from my wife's mother when she visited us, one from my great-grandmother," he explains. "The tree is pretty to other people, but there's a deeper beauty for us, because there's so much more personal meaning." Similarly, gardens are beautiful to look at and can also be filled with history.

This aspect of gardening has been Kunst's passion for more than three decades, particularly through his business, Old House Gardens, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He founded it in 1983 as a research and consulting service for historic landscaping after earning his master's degree in

historic landscape preservation from the University of Michigan. Tracking down heirloom plants for clients led him to cross paths with a botanist who later sent him a box of specimens collected from remnants of older landscapes. This gift led Kunst to an epiphany: Historic plants were everywhere, not just in catalogs, which often didn't identify them as such. This happened to be particularly true in the case of antique bulbs.

### HEIRLOOM BULB BUSINESS

Kunst, who became an American Horticultural Society member in 1989, started to seriously research and collect rare bulbs.

Although authoritative records weren't available in America, he discovered that the bulb industry in the Netherlands published listings of tens of thousands of bulbs by name and year introduced. These listings became instrumental to his efforts. One tulip cultivar from 1860 called 'Prince of Austria' became a favorite early on. Despite its sunset orange petals, its exceptionally strong, intoxicating scent, and its ability to return year after

year—even after enduring Michigan's wet summers—it disappeared completely from American catalogs. Kunst felt he had a responsibility to make it available again. So, in 1993, he mailed out 500 copies of a three-

page catalog, featuring this tulip along with



Top: 'Prince of Austria', the tulip that helped launch a successful bulb business. Top right: Old House Gardens' first catalog. Above: Scott Kunst with his wife, Jane, and rescue dog, Toby.

other rare bulbs he hoped gardeners would want to grow.

To his surprise, he was overwhelmed with orders and encouragement. Old House Gardens-Heirloom Bulbs took off from there, tripling sales the following year.

With the goal of preserving the best bulbs of the past in order to enrich gardens today, Kunst and his team have continued to track down bulb species and varieties in danger of disappearing, and then recruit American farmers to grow them, or propagate the

> bulbs themselves on micro-farms around their community.

### A GROUP EFFORT

Over the years, Old House Gardens has saved numerous bulbs from extinction. 'Clara Butt', introduced in 1889, which, at one time, was the world's most popular tulip, is one example. Its

catalog also features centuries-old varieties like 'Zomerschoon', which was released in 1620, and graced the Dutch aristocracy's gardens during the infamous Tulipomania. It supplies bulbs like these to historic landscapes and public gardens all over the Unit-

ed States, including George Washington's Mount Vernon in Virginia.

This spring, Kunst is sending out bulbs for the last time before retiring in May, leaving the business in the hands of a skilled team of bulb enthusiasts who will continue his work to preserve invaluable components of our garden heritage. "It's really gratifying to have a pipe dream and make it real, but, now that I'm retiring, I keep coming back to people I've worked with and met," he muses, referring to the "far-flung, worldwide village of people who have helped turn this dream into a reality." Likening Old House Gardens to the story of stone soup, where each character adds an important ingredient to the final product, he feels that the nursery's achievements are "way bigger and better than what any of us could have done alone."

Julia Polentes is an editorial intern for The American Gardener.

### THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY'S 25TH ANNUAL



THE GREATER PORTLAND, OR AND VANCOUVER, WA AREA

AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY • JULY 12-15, 2017

Join us at the only national event of its kind for educators, garden designers, community leaders, program coordinators, and others dedicated to connecting kids to the natural world.

The National Children and Youth
Garden Symposium reignited my drive
and creativity for my job. I do not feel
alone in this push to integrate a garden
curriculum into a child's everyday life.
Our work is incredibly important and
this symposium reminded me of that.

JANN KNAPPAGE,
 First-time NCYGS attendee

- Explore topics ranging from curriculum to program management to garden design and maintenance during four dynamic days of educational sessions, field trips, and expert keynote presentations.
- Experience the vibrant gardening and environmental culture of the green Pacific Northwest.
- Share ideas, success stories, and inspiration with like-minded colleagues from across the nation.



# AHS NEWS SPECIAL

## AHS 2017 Great American Gardeners National Award Winners

HE American Horticultural Society (AHS) is proud to announce the recipients of the Society's 2017 Great American Gardeners Awards. These individuals, organizations, and businesses have contributed significantly to fields such as plant research, garden communication, landscape design, youth gardening, teaching, and commercial horticulture. This year we introduce a new award to recognize an emerging horticultural professional. The awards will be presented June 8 during a ceremony and banquet at River Farm, the AHS's headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. For more information, or to register to attend the ceremony, visit www. ahsgardening.org/awards or call (703) 768-5700.

THE 2017 Liberty Hyde Bailey Award is presented to William A. McNamara, who has devoted his career to discovering, researching, protecting, and promoting plants in North America and abroad. His lifelong interest was first piqued as a teenager, after learning about the adventures and discoveries of 19th-century plant hunters. After graduating from the University of California at Berkeley in 1975 with an English degree, McNamara got a chance to have his own international adventures.

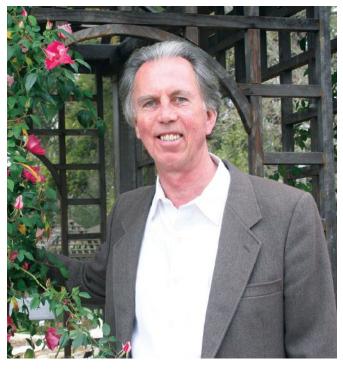
### **LIBERTY HYDE BAILEY AWARD**

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. Named after Liberty Hyde Bailey (1858–1954), horticulturist, educator, author. First awarded in 1958.

He spent nearly a year visiting gardens and botanizing in remote natural areas around the globe. But it was the flora of Asia that most captivated him, and he has returned to that continent almost annually ever since for plant-hunting expeditions.

After that first trip, McNamara settled in Sonoma, California, where he established Con Mara Gardens, a residential landscape contracting business that he successfully ran for 16 years. In 1987, he became an assistant director at Quarryhill Botanical Garden, a private research garden in Glen Ellen, California, that specializes in displaying plants from temperate East Asia. McNamara rose through the ranks, becoming director in 1994, and today he is its executive director and president. McNamara also returned to school to earn a Masters degree in conservation biology at Sonoma State University in 2005.

McNamara's wide-ranging professional affiliations include serving as vice president of the Western United States region of the International Dendrology Society and as an international ad-



visor for *Curtis's Botanical Magazine*, published by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. He is also a field associate of the Department of Botany at the California Academy of Sciences. In addition to sharing his horticultural knowledge through frequent presentations throughout the country, he regularly contributes to scientific journals, plant society publications, and other periodicals.

In recognition of his many achievements in horticulture and plant conservation, McNamara has received the Garden Club of America's Eloise Payne Luquer Medal, the Scott Medal and Award from the Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, the National Garden Clubs Award of Excellence, and the Veitch Memorial Medal from the Royal Horticultural Society.



### **EMERGING HORTICULTURAL PROFESSIONAL AWARD**

Given in the early stages of an individual's career, this award recognizes significant achievements and/or leadership that have advanced the field of horticulture in America. First given in 2017.

Brienne Gluvna Arthur is a horticulturist, landscape design consultant, and garden communicator based in Raleigh, North Carolina. She serves as the foodscaping and landscape design correspondent for the PBS show "Growing a Greener World" and her first book, The Foodscape Revolution, was released this spring. In an effort to get younger horticulturists better connected with their peers in the field, she helped found the Facebook forum, "Emergent: A Group for Growing Professionals," and serves as a member of the AmericanHort NextGen committee. She currently serves as a national director of the Association for Garden Communicators for the Southeastern United States and sits on the Executive Committee for the International Plant Propagators Society, Southern Region.

### LANDSCAPE DESIGN AWARD

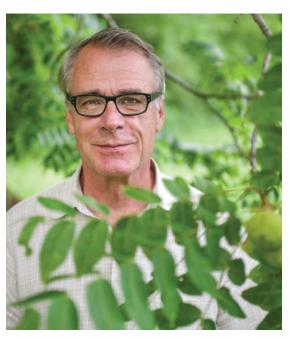
Given to an individual whose work has demonstrated and promoted the value of sound horticultural practices in the field of landscape architecture. First given in 1974.

Melissa "Missy" Marshall has dedicated more than 30 years to public landscape design, working on projects at more than 50 botanical institutions in 28 states. After spending two decades



with the firm Environmental Planning and Design, she co-founded her own firm, which was recently renamed Pashek+MTR. Her projects have been recognized with awards from the American Society of Landscape Architects and the American Public Gardens Association (APGA). She received the Award of Merit from the APGA for distinction in her work. In 2013,

she was inducted into the Council of Fellows of the American Society of Landscape Architects. She has also served on the Board of Directors of the American Horticultural Society and assisted the organization with the creation of a master plan for its 25-acre River Farm headquarters.



### 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. Named for Paul Ecke Jr. (1925-2002), innovator, facilitator, businessman. Formerly known as the Commercial Award, it was first awarded in 1971.

Allen Bush has played an influential role in introducing and helping to popularize perennial plants in the United States since 1980, when he opened Holbrook Farm and Nursery in Fletcher, North Carolina. That pioneering mail-order nursery served as a source of rare and unusual perennials and other plants for 15 years. In 1995, Bush helped establish the North American office of Jelitto Perennial Seeds in Louisville, Kentucky. He has served as this innovative German company's director of special projects since then, working with domestic seed producers and searching for new varieties around the world. In 2002, the Royal Horticultural Society recognized his Heuchera introduction, 'Molly Bush', with an Award of Garden Merit. Bush received the Perennial Plant Association's Award of Merit in 2011.

### **LUTHER BURBANK AWARD**

Recognizes extraordinary achievement in the field of plant breeding. Named for Luther Burbank (1849–1926), legendary American plant breeder. First awarded in 1993.

**Thomas G. Ranney** is the JC Raulston Distinguished Professor of Horticultural Science at North Carolina State University. He heads the research program at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research and Extension Center in Mills River, North Carolina. His work there has encompassed a broad array of



landscape plants, such as dogwoods, flowering cherries, magnolias, and viburnums, resulting in the develop of numerous improved cultivars. His breeding efforts also have focused on creating seedless cultivars of barberry, Japanese silver grass, and other popular but aggressive ornamental plants. Ranney speaks internationally and serves in leadership roles for several academic and profession-

al organizations including the American Society for Horticultural Science. He has received dozens of awards, including the H. Marc Cathey Award for excellence in horticultural research from the American Horticultural Society in 2008.

### 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. First awarded in 1980.

**Vivian Boley** has been a dedicated volunteer at the American Horticultural Society's River Farm headquarters for 20 years.

During this time, she has enthusiastically lent a hand wherever it was needed and inspired many other volunteers with her passion for gardening. At River Farm, she has spent untold hours weeding, planting, pruning, and doing myriad other gardening tasks, as well as helping to package seeds and fill orders for the annual AHS members-only Seed Exchange. A gardener at



home as well, she particularly loves hostas, which she often divides and shares with fellow volunteers.

### **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. Named for Benjamin Yoe Morrison (1891–1966), landscape architect, plant breeder, artist. Formerly known as the Horticultural Communication Award, it was first awarded in 1987. In 2005, this award merged with the Horticultural Writing Award, which debuted in 1953.

Tom Fischer got his start in publishing as a manuscript editor for the University of Chicago Press. Next he became a managing editor at Beacon Press in Boston, Massachusetts; it was there that



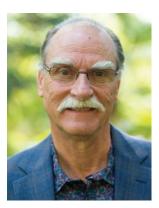
he got into gardening after renovating the courtyard garden at the Beacon offices. Beginning in 1990, he spent 14 years on the editorial staff of Horticulture magazine, first as senior editor and then as general editor. He then moved on to Timber Press in Portland, Oregon, where he is the senior acquisitions editor. In this role, he has focused on bringing the most inspiring and environmentally responsible gardening books to the reading public. His first book, Perennial

Companions: 100 Dazzling Plant Combinations for Every Season, was published by Timber Press in 2009. He followed up with a second book, The Gardener's Color Palette, in 2010.

### PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Given to a public garden administrator whose achievements during the course of his or her career have cultivated widespread interest in horticulture. First awarded in 1953.

Julian Duval is president and CEO of the San Diego Botanic Garden in Encinitas, California. Over his 20-year tenure there,



he has led its transformation from a struggling county-run garden with depleted financial reserves into the successful nonprofit organization it is today. This has included enhancing its educational programs and creating the largest children's garden on the West Coast. Prior to this position, he helped establish the Indianapolis Zoo at a new location, where he championed efforts to make the zoo's three-acre garden an accred-

ited botanical garden. In the process, he became a pioneer in advocating for the growing role of zoos in conservation and horticulture. Duval received the Horticulturist of the Year Award from the San Diego Horticultural Society in 2014.

### 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. Named for Jane L. Taylor, youth advocate, horticulturist, educator. First awarded in 2000.

Lee Coykendall is the children's education specialist at the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C., where she has been introducing kids to the importance and wonder of the plant world for 20 years. Her infectious passion for plants infuses the innovative lessons she designs and teaches to children of all ages. She also conducts professional development programs for teachers to help them engage their students in plant-based learning. One of Coykendall's creations is HOPS (Hands On Plant Science), an immersive environmental science program she launched 10 years ago as a resource for underserved youth in the Washington, D.C., community and their teachers.



### **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. First awarded in 1953.

Johanna Roman has worked on international agricultural issues for Texas A&M University and AgriLife Research for most of



her 25-year professional career. Her many achievements include creation of agricultural development projects in Latin America that have benefited thousands of small-scale farmers, women, and children. She has led numerous horticulture and nutrition training programs for kids in Central America. She also has served as a mentor and advisor to student and development organizations in Latin America and Africa

working to improve horticultural techniques and food production programs. In her current role as program manager for the nonprofit Conflict and Development Foundation, based in College Station, Texas, she works with student teams to create innovative solutions to problems farmers face. She also coordinates research on agricultural issues affecting rural women and youth.

### Nominations for 2018

Help us give recognition to deserving "horticultural heroes" by nominating someone you know for one of the 2018 Great American Gardeners Awards. For more information, visit www.ahsgardening.org/awards.

### **URBAN BEAUTIFICATION AWARD**

Given to an individual, institution, or company for significant contributions to urban horticulture and the beautification of American cities. First awarded in 1985.

Founded in 2007, the Philadelphia Orchard Project (POP) in Pennsylvania promotes sustainable, equitable, and ethical food systems. The nonprofit organization works with community groups



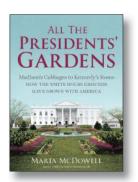
to design, build, and maintain orchards in neighborhoods where residents lack access to fresh fruit. Community organizations own, sustain, and harvest the orchards, which utilize and beautify neglected space. POP has helped plan and plant community orchards at 41 locations to date and currently supports 56 orchard sites throughout Philadelphia. A recently developed harvest program provides a way for the community orchardists to donate excess produce to local food banks.

## 2017 AHS Book Award Winners

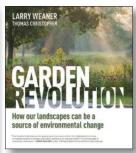
Each year, the American Horticultural Society recognizes outstanding gardening books published in North America with its annual Book Award. Nominated books are judged by the AHS Book Award Committee on qualities such as writing style, authority, accuracy, and physical quality. This year's recipients, selected from books published in 2016, are listed below.

The 2017 Book Award Committee members were: chair **Susan Hines**, a garden communicator in Hyattsville, Maryland; **Augustus "Jenks" Farmer**, garden book author and plantsman based in the Columbia, South Carolina, area; **Mary Ann Newcomer**, a garden communicator in Boise, Idaho; **Doug Oster**, Home & Garden editor for the

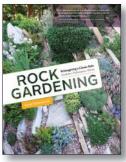
*Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, television host, and radio personality based in Pennsylvania; **Brian Thompson**, manager and curator of the Elisabeth C. Miller Library at the University of Washington Botanic Gardens in Seattle; **Deb Wiley**, garden writer, editor, and book project manager in Des Moines, Iowa, and **Anne Marie Van Nest**, a garden communicator and horticulturist in the Niagara Falls area of New York.











### All the Presidents' Gardens

by Marta McDowell. Timber Press.

■ "Thoroughly researched prose and fascinating, historic images tell a refreshingly non-partisan story of how the White House grounds have grown with America," says Anne Marie Van Nest. "This sort of storytelling and history of one place, one relatively small garden, helps us understand how much gardens do—and should—change with every generation, every family, every new desire of what we need and want from our outside spaces," says Jenks Farmer.

### The Bee-Friendly Garden

by Kate Frey and Gretchen LeBuhn. Ten Speed Press.

■ Filled with "practical information that any gardener can use, this book does an excellent job of focusing on a specific, sufficiently narrow subject," notes Brian Thompson, especially one that has increasing significance to pollinator health. Mary Ann Newcomer appreciates the "wide range of plant recommendations by region, making it a useful resource anywhere in North America." From its in-depth, insightful discussions to its "layout and photography, it's a well done book all the way through," says Doug Oster.

### **Garden Revolution**

by Larry Weaner and Thomas Christopher. Timber Press.

■ Deb Wiley declares this book "has it all: inspirational personal anecdotes and photographs, a deep understanding of horticulture, a fresh take on how to garden ecologically and beauti-

fully." Thompson praises it for "explaining complex ecological concepts in an easy-to-understand, encouraging way that is applicable to home gardens." Farmer notes that "it's more than pie-in-the-sky dreams of naturalistic landscapes," it's one he would put to use when making decisions about his own garden.

### **PLANT**

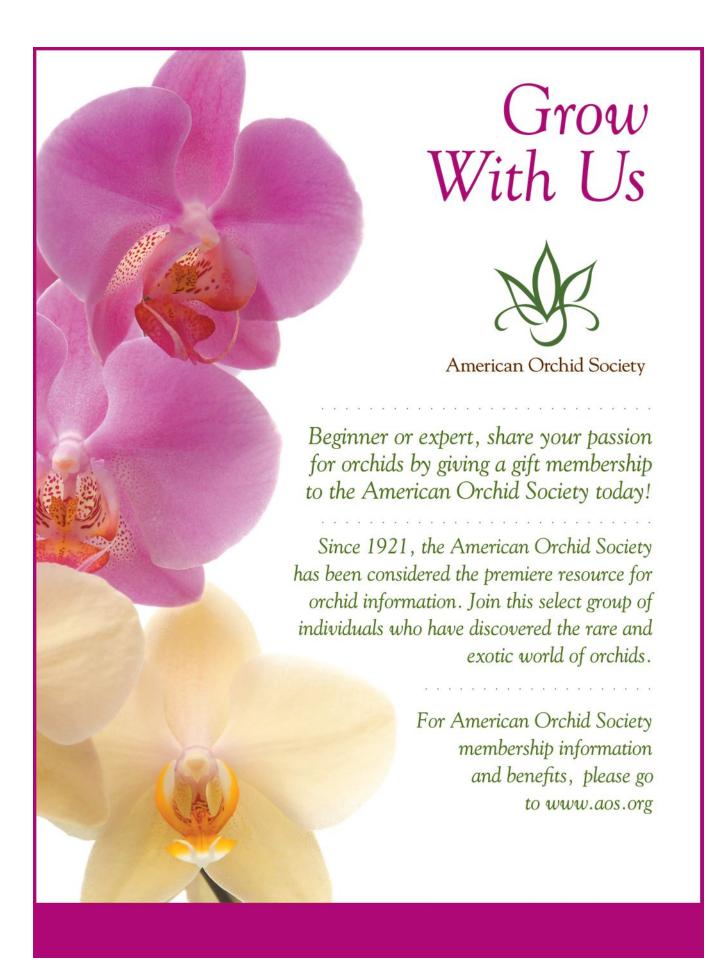
by the editors at Phaidon Press.

■ "Not only is this book a stunning visual feast," says Oster, "but it also brims with fascinating details about the botanical art which graces its pages." Susan Hines describes it as "an art exhibit in book form that provides tidbits of knowledge without being the least bit pedantic." Newcomer notes that by showcasing different ways of approaching botanical art through various eras, the book also fosters an "appreciation for plants through this art."

### **Rock Gardening**

by Joseph Tychonievich. Timber Press.

■ Spectacular photography, colorful writing, and detailed plant information combine to bring rock gardening to life for modern audiences that are increasingly interested in diminutive gardens. "The author takes readers through some of the most amazing gardens around the world and shares his own epiphanies from each," says Oster. "Tychonievich's enthusiasm shines throughout the book," says Van Nest, "and readers just can't help but fall in love—or in love again—with this style of gardening."



# Spring-Blooming Trees for Small Gardens

When selecting the perfect spring-flowering tree for a small to medium-size garden, narrowing the list of choices may be the hardest decision. Here are 10 to get you started. BY ANDREW BUNTING

VER THE YEARS, I have been continually challenged with selecting trees that offer a terrific flowering display in spring yet don't take up too much space in my modest garden. The issue is not so much in finding good options, but rather in selecting from what is almost an embarrassment of riches available through specialty nurseries and even more sources online. When you find yourself in a similar predicament, I have assembled the following list of 10 particularly rewarding species based on my own experience and the input from colleagues across the country. For additional options for different regions of the country, see the web special for this article.

### MAGNOLIAS

To me, the quintessential spring-flowering tree is the magnolia. The best-of-the-best is the saucer magnolia (Magnolia ×soulangeana, USDA Hardiness Zones 5-9, AHS Heat Zones 9-5), which is phenomenal most springs—except in those years when frost hits just as the gorgeous flowers begin to open. Ultimately, however, saucer magnolias can outgrow a small garden, reaching to 40 feet tall with an equal or even greater spread. One exception is a diminutive form called 'Lilliputian' that bears pinkish-white flowers in May. It only reaches 10 to 12 feet with a spread of six feet at maturity.

If I had to distill all the magnolias down to just one choice for a medium-size garden, I would pick 'Lois', one of the yellow-flowered magnolia introductions from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden in New York. In 2012, it received the Award of Garden Merit from the U.K.'s Royal Horticultural Society. The habit is stout and rounded, reaching about 15 to 20 feet tall



with a similar spread at maturity in full sun. The goblet-shaped flowers are held upright on the branches; these typically open in mid- to late April in USDA Zone 7.

### FLOWERING DOGWOOD

Another classic spring-flowering tree, especially on the East Coast and in parts of the South, is the native flowering dogwood (Cornus florida, Zones 5-8, 8-3). While the straight species has proven vulnerable to dogwood anthracnose, gardeners can rely on a number of resistant cultivars that have been introduced. Among these is a series out of the University of Tennessee breeding program, including 'Appalachian



Snow', 'Appalachian Mist', 'Appalachian Joy', and my favorite 'Appalachian Spring'. This selection has all the great attributes of the species: upward-facing, four-bracted flowers in late April, reddish-purple fall color, and an abundance of shiny red fruits that attract birds. This pyramidally-shaped tree also develops a somewhat layered branching pattern over time. Best

flowering and fall color will occur in full sun but be sure to provide ample moisture in times of drought.

### **SILVERBELLS**

I have long been an admirer of the Carolina silverbell (Halesia tetraptera, Zones 4-8, 8-4), but this native of the southeastern United States soon outgrows small gardens. During my time working at the Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, I became familiar with its relative, the two-winged silverbell (H. diptera, Zones 5-8, 8-5), which is surprisingly hardy for a plant native to the Gulf Coastal plain and Florida Panhandle. Often multistemmed, this silverbell reaches 25 feet tall with an equal spread, thriving in the dappled shade beneath taller trees. In May the branches are adorned with one-and-a-halfinch-long, drooping, bell-shaped, white flowers. The golden-yellow fall leaf color and two-winged fruits offer additional appeal, but it is the stunning display of spring flowers that makes this tree worthy of a spot in your garden and earned it a Gold Medal from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's plant award program.

### JAPANESE SPICEBUSH

Japanese spicebush (Lindera obtusiloba, Zones 4-9, 8-1) is one of plant explorer and writer Dan Hinkley's favorites for the Seattle, Washington, area. A larger relative of the lovely North American native spicebush (L. benzoin), Japanese spicebush reaches 20 feet tall and 10 feet



wide at maturity and can be treated as either a broad spreading shrub or a small flowering tree. In late winter to early spring, clusters of tiny, bright yellow flowers bloom on the naked stems. The flowers remind me of those of the very early spring flowering Cornelian cherry (Cornus mas), while the foliage resembles that of sassafras (Sassafras albidum) in that it includes both broad entire leaves and mitten-shaped leaves. In autumn, these leaves turn an incredible vibrant gold. Japanese spicebush thrives equally well in full sun and in considerable shade, where it will still develop excellent

which is also known as mescal bean to differentiate it from the unrelated mountain laurels (Kalmia spp.).

Mescal bean is native from central Texas west into New Mexico and south into Mexico. This slow-growing evergreen is usually shrubby in habit, but with selective pruning, it can reach 25 to 30 feet tall at maturity with a 10-foot spread. The dark green, pinnately-compound foliage provides a nice backdrop for the highly fragrant, pealike purple to lavender flowers that bloom in dense, drooping racemes in late winter to mid-spring. The flower clusters resemble those of wisteria and their fragrance is often described as similar to grape soda. In late summer, leathery, gray to brown seedpods develop; it's best to remove these before they split open to reveal the pretty but poisonous red seeds. This plant thrives in full or part sun, tolerates heat, moderate drought, and alkaline soil, but prefers well-drained sites.

### **RED BUCKEYE**

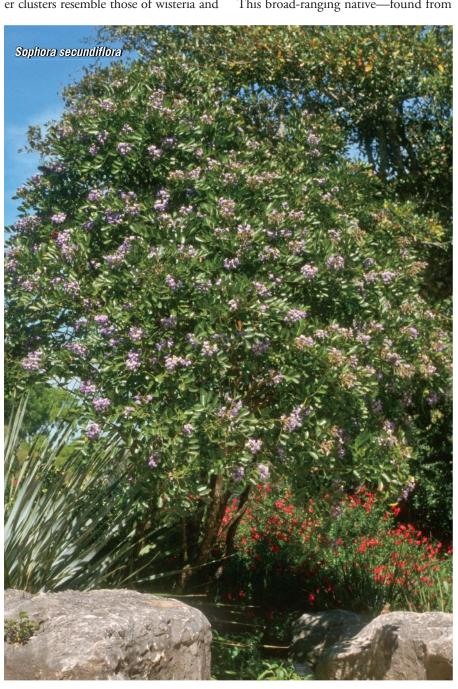
When I was a student at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, spring's arrival was signaled by the flowering of the red buckeye (Aesculus pavia, Zones 4-8, 8-1). This broad-ranging native—found from

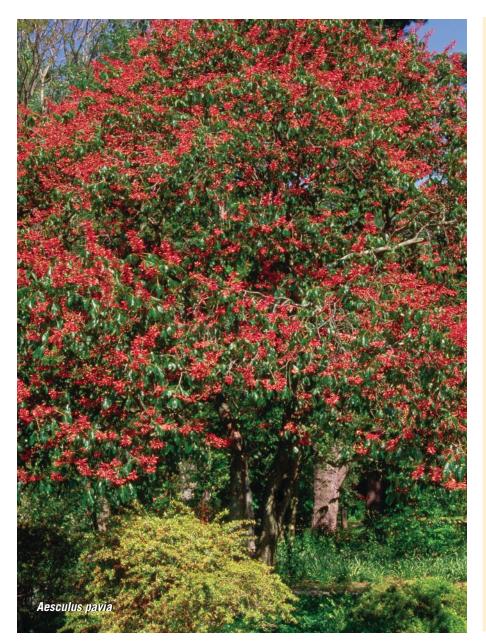


fall color. Like other *Lindera* species, it is very resistant to deer browsing. It was selected for Great Plant Picks, a program that highlights top plants for gardens in the maritime Pacific Northwest.

### TEXAS MOUNTAIN LAUREL

For gardeners in the drier South and Southwest, Darrin Duling, director of the Mercer Country Arboretum and Botanical Garden in Houston, Texas, recommends Texas mountain laurel (Sophora secundiflora, Zones 8-10, 12-7),





North Carolina south into Florida and west to Texas and as far north as Illinois—typically begins blooming from late April to mid-May, depending on region. Six- to 10-inch panicles of tubular red flowers emerge above the glossy, palmately compound, leaves, attracting hummingbirds. There is a yellow-flowered form of the red buckeye (A. pavia var. flavescens) from Texas. Red buckeye is mostly pest- and disease-free and thrives in a variety of soils. It grows well as an understory tree in woodlands, but will flower best in full sun. At maturity, it will grow to 20 feet tall with an equal spread.

### CRABAPPLES

Many selections of crabapples (Malus spp.) make excellent options for gardeners in colder regions such as the Upper Midwest. In addition to their hardiness to USDA Zones 3, crabapples enhance their landscape—and wildlife—value with ornamental fall fruits that follow outstanding spring flowers that draw pollinators.

Recommended selections from the experts I spoke with for this article include 'Adams', which reaches 20 feet tall with an equal spread and has a broadly rounded habitat at maturity. The deep pink buds open to a single pink flower in April, followed by persistent red fruits in the fall. It also exhibits excellent resistance to fire blight and cedar apple rust. Sugar Tyme® has a more upright habit to 18 feet tall and 15 feet wide; its pale pink buds open into single white flowers, and it has excellent

### Sources

Broken Arrow Nursery, Hamden, CT. www.brokenarrownursery.com. Forestfarm at Pacifica, Williams, OR. www.forestfarm.com. Klehm's Song Sparrow Farm & Nursery, Avalon, WI. www.songsparrow.com. McKay Nursery Co., Waterloo, WI. www.mckaynursery.com. Monrovia. Azusa. CA. www.monrovia.com. (Wholesale but delivers to local nurseries.) Rare Find Nursery, Jackson, NJ. www.rarefindnursery.com. Sunlight Gardens, Andersonville, TN. www.sunlightgardens.com.

### Resources

**Manual of Woody Landscape Plants** (6th ed.) by Michael A. Dirr. Stipes Publishing, Champaign, IL, 2009. Native Trees, Shrubs, & Vines by William Cullina. Houghton Mifflin, Boston, MA, 2002.

The New Sunset Western Garden Book edited by Kathleen Norris Brenzel. Sunset Publishing, New York, NY,

The Plant Lover's Guide to Magnolias by Andrew Bunting. Timber Press, Portland, OR, 2016.

Plant Collections Network, American Public Gardens Association (www.publicgardens.org/programs/ about-plant-collections-network).

resistance to cedar apple rust and mildew.

One of the most disease-resistant crabapples, 'Prairifire', has a broad spreading habit, reaching 20 feet tall and wide at maturity. The foliage emerges maroon, providing a great contrast with the pinkish-red flowers, before fading to green. In the fall, it is covered with plump, bright red fruits. Royal Raindrops® is broadly upright, reaching 20 feet tall with a spread of 15 feet. In the spring it produces a profusion of pinkish-red flowers. In fall, it provides color both from its cutleaf foliage, which turns orangey yellow, and red fruits.

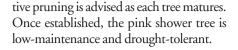
### PINK SHOWER TREE

Gardeners who live in subtropical regions should consider the pink shower tree (Cas-

sia bakeriana, Zones 9-11, 12-9), which is sometimes touted as a cherry tree equivalent for tropical climates. Ian Simpkins, deputy director of horticulture at Vizcaya Museum and Gardens in Miami, Florida, recommends it as a great spring-blooming tree for south Florida and southern California alike. This native of Thailand and Myanmar reaches only 20 to 30 feet tall at maturity with an upright habit and broad spreading canopy. In spring, the naked branches are covered with star-shaped pink flowers that fade to lighter pink and eventually white. As with many other trees in the legume family, the foliage is compound and semi-evergreen. A portion of the foliage remains over the winter, but by the time flowering occurs in the spring, most of the leaves have dropped. The stout branches can look a little awkward, so some selec-







### REDBUDS

Another classic spring-flowering tree is the eastern redbud (Cercis canadensis, Zones 5-8, 8–1). Its pinkish-red flowers bloom in early spring on bare stems and branches, which makes for an outstanding floral display. The heart-shaped foliage that follows is attractive in its own right. This broad-ranging American native is common throughout the mid-Atlantic, the South, and the Midwest. More than 50 selections and hybrids



exist, featuring an array of flower and foliage color variations. 'Appalachian Red' reaches 15 to 25 feet tall with an equal spread; its bright pinkish-red, pealike flowers densely cloak the stems. The Rising Sun™ has two strong attributes: the newly emerging foliage is a striking yellowish-orange and the flowers are lavender rose. 'Pauline Lily', one of my favorites, has unusual soft lavender-pink flowers. Among selections with purple foliage, 'Merlot' is an improvement on 'Forest Pansy', exhibiting a tighter habit and greater heat tolerance. Redbuds tolerate part shade,

is native to moist woodlands and stream banks from New Jersey to West Virginia and south to Florida and Texas. Fringetrees tend to be upright and oval shaped in habit at first, broadening considerably over time. At maturity they can reach up to 25 feet tall with an equal spread. The delicate white flowers are borne in long panicles from mid- to late spring. Fringetrees are dioecious, so only female specimens produce clusters of small black-purple fruits in late summer; these are relatively inconspicuous, but are enjoyed by wildlife.

choice. I have highlighted a few selections of 10 popular spring-flowering trees, but there's no doubt that an entire book could be dedicated to this topic. To get a better sense of what these trees look like in the landscape, I recommend visiting local botanical gardens and arboreta this spring and summer. Certain public gardens have collections of specific genera, so if you want to compare redbuds, for instance, you can visit the JC Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh, North Carolina, or if you wish to see magnolias, visit the



but will have the best flowering display in full sun. (For more on redbuds, view the article "Rise of the Redbuds" published in the September/October 2016 issue.)

### FRINGETREES

Perhaps the most graceful of all the springflowering trees are the fringetrees (Chionanthus spp.). Both the American native (C. virginicus, Zones 4-9, 9-1) and the Chinese fringetree (C. retusus, Zones 5-9, 9-3) make excellent additions to a garden.

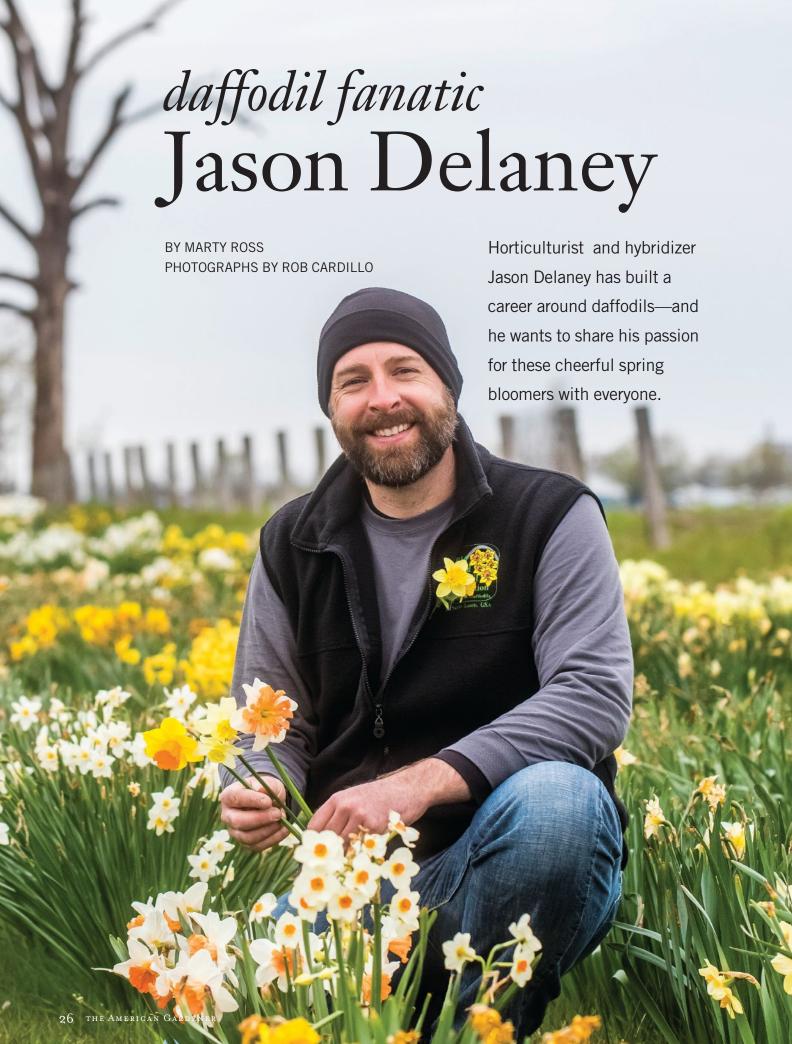
The American species—commonly known as old man's beard because of its dangling clusters of pure white flowers—

Chinese fringetree is more upright and treelike from a young age, reaching 25 feet tall at maturity. Its glossy green, rounded leaves are much smaller than the leaves of our native species, but the flowering display is equally impressive. 'Tokyo Tower' is a relatively new selection that is very upright, reaching 12 feet tall with a spread of only four feet. 'China Snow' was selected for its heavy flowering.

### CHOOSING WISELY

A small flowering tree is often the signature element in a garden design, so it's worth taking the time to make a suitable Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania or Quarryhill Botanical Garden in California. You can find a list of public gardens that have nationally accredited plant collections on the American Public Gardens Association's website (see "Resources." page 23). Being able to observe these trees in different seasons will help you make the best choice for such an important role in your garden.

Andrew Bunting is Assistant Director of the Garden and Director of Collections at the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe, Illinois.





NE OF THE images on Jason Delaney's Facebook page shows Jason as a child, grinning in front of a daffodil backdrop. Come to think of it, many of the pictures of Delaney on Facebook show a kid with a grin and lots of daffodils. Delaney is now a very youthful 40, but before he was knee-high to a daffodil, he was already crazy about these gorgeous spring flowers, and he still is.

Delaney's life and work are both braided up with daffodils. For 20 years, until last June, he worked at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis, where he was bulb collection specialist and the champion of the Samuels and Heckman Bulb Gardens, located close to the garden's entrance. The splendid spring show in these gardens, beginning with little crocuses and snowdrops and then progressing to a breathtaking crescendo of hundreds of different daffodil cultivars, is a tribute to his favorite flower.

Even in the wide world of daffodils, Delaney is a hard man to miss. He not only knows daffodils inside and out, but is friends with hybridizers, growers, judges, and daffodil fanatics around the globe. He has been a regional director of the American Daffodil



Above: Posing in front of a daffodil backdrop during a studio photo shoot when he was six years old, Jason Delaney displays the same grin as he does today, opposite page, in a daffodil field at his parents' farm in Illinois. Top: A young photographer takes a shot of the daffodils in the Samuels and Heckman Bulb Gardens at the Missouri Botanical Garden, where Delaney spent the first 20 years of his career.

Society (ADS), served on the organization's national board of directors for two terms, and was chairman of the ADS's 51st annual national convention in 2005. When the World Daffodil Convention held its quadrennial meeting in St. Louis a year ago, it was as though Delaney had invited several hundred of his best friends to town.

Delaney knows plant society rules and conventions backwards and forwards and has won his share of blue ribbons exhibiting at flower shows. But he's most at home out in the garden, anticipating that thrill he still feels every year at the sight of the first ebullient spring daffodil.

### **EXPANDING HORIZONS**

When you fall head over heels in love with a plant, it's nice to have institutional support. Delaney's supervisors at the Missouri Botanical Garden recognized his abilities right away and, over the course of his career, pretty much gave him free rein-along with a budget for purchasing prodigious numbers of spring-flowering bulbs of all kinds. When Delaney arrived in the summer of 1995 as a horticulture intern straight out of college at Michigan State University, the garden's daffodil collection consisted of fewer than 30 cultivars. By the time he left, the garden's outstanding collection of Narcissus had been recognized as the ADS's first-ever Daffodil Display Garden.

At its peak, the daffodil collection exploded to nearly 700 different cultivars. Delaney acknowledges it was "a personal goal to grow as many daffodils as I could possibly squeeze in." Visitors who came to the garden expecting to see lots of big yellow daffodils were never disappointed, but Delaney also introduced them to unusual cultivars, confounding generally held assumptions and expectations about daffodils. He always made room for new hybrids, some of them lovely if frail curiosities. The daffodils he fa-



vored are, above all, excellent garden plants: showy, but adaptable, reliable, and hardy. In a presentation to the ADS at its annual meeting in 2013, Delaney referred to these old-time favorites, the classic garden daffodils, as "dear friends from our past" that have earned their places in our gardens.

It may be hard to imagine that an experienced horticulturist and daffodil expert favors tried-and-true older cultivars over budget-busting, blue-ribbon hybrids, but Delaney is not a daffodil elitist.

Fortunately for all of us, there are many fine choices. More than 25,000 daffodil



Delaney found many ways to showcase daffodils at the Missouri Botanical Garden. Above: The daffodil cultivar 'Suzy' is paired with Fritillaria imperialis in a border. Left: Daffodils and a variety of cool-season annuals combine in a large urn to make a sprightly spring display.

cultivars have been registered. And new cultivars with fancy pedigrees—and prices to match—are introduced every year.

### A NEW VENUE

A year ago, Delaney left Missouri Botanical Garden to become the horticulture director at Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum in St. Louis. Bellefontaine, which occupies 314 acres, was established in 1849 during an era when many great landscaped, parklike cemeteries were created. Delaney's interest in plants has always extended far beyond the golden spring horizon of daffodils, and so now do his horticultural responsibilities, but one of his first projects at Bellefontaine naturally involved his favorite bulb.

Bellefontaine is the final resting place of notable soldiers, beer barons, fur traders, engineers, poets, suffragettes, rascals, politicians, and athletes, among many others. It is also a living museum of plants and landscape design, a distinguished horticultural setting, with many possibilities to explore. The cemetery's age and history have inspired Delaney to concentrate on period plants. In the fall of 2016, he planted thousands of bulbs at the cemetery, including







Over the years, Delaney added dozens of new daffodil cultivars to the bulb borders at the Missouri Botanical Gardens. From left to right, these include 'Gay Kybo', introduced in 1980; 'Edna Earl', introduced in 1950; and 'Classic Garden', introduced in 2001.

drifts of 25 different daffodil cultivars along a popular tour route through the 14 miles of roads. "We're concentrating on older varieties, nothing too new," Delaney says. The cultivars he chose for his first planting—'Mount Hood', 'Flower Record', 'Fortune', 'Stratosphere', and otherswere introduced from the 1920s through the 1940s. They're great daffodils today, and they "would have been valuable to people at the time," Delaney says. Within a few years, as more daffodils are planted, he hopes the cemetery will be added to the list of ADS display gardens.

### HIS OWN COLLECTION

After hours, Delaney is the owner of PHS (Professional Horticultural Services), a one-man residential garden design and maintenance company that, not surprisingly, also specializes in growing, hybridizing, evaluating, and selling daffodils.



Delaney with his father, Don, in the tractor shed at his parents' farm in Flora, Illinois. Delaney comes by his collecting instincts naturally —his father collects tractors, farm signs, and vintage seed bags, while his mother favors Fostoria glassware.



Visitors attending the World Daffodil Convention in St. Louis last spring had a chance to compare hundreds of daffodil selections in bloom in Delaney's personal collection growing on three acres at his parents' farm in Flora, Illinois.

His formidable personal daffodil collection has its home on his parents' property in Flora, Illinois, a farming town with a tight-knit population of about 5,000, a couple of hours' drive east of St. Louis.

Jane and Don Delaney are their son's steadfast supporters. From them, he inherited the collecting gene: his mother fancies Fostoria glassware, and his father collects and shows vintage Ford tractors. Jane Delaney has also helped Jason add to his collection of bulb catalogs. This is not an idle practice for either of them: They once discovered they were bidding hotly against each other on Ebay for the same catalog.

Don Delaney, a farmer, long ago gave up a field behind the house for his son's daffodils. The daffodil planting—mapped out and meticulously marked in the field, with rows and sections of seven to 10 bulbs of each cultivar, is cataloged on 41 single-spaced pages. Last fall, the plantings expanded to fill three acres. "My lifelong dream is growing there," Delaney says. "Every variety that I can get hold of, I have."

Delaney especially favors Dutch hybrid daffodils from the 1940s to '60s, prizing their "bold, dramatic flowers." He loves split-corona daffodils, big, colorful trumpet daffs, and those with intense colors. He also grows and evaluates daffodils hybridized by Missouri breeders Dave Niswonger and Gary Knehans, as well as a significant number of crosses from John Reed, a hybridizer in Michigan. One of Reed's intro-

### Resources

American Daffodil Society, www.daffodilusa.org. **Bellefontaine Cemetery and** Arboretum, St. Louis, MO. www.bellefontainecemetery.org. Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, MO. www.mobot.org.

### Sources

Brent and Becky's Bulbs, Gloucester, VA. www.brentandbeckysbulbs.com. Colorblends, Bridgeport, CT. www.colorblends.com. John Scheepers, Bantam, CT. www.johnscheepers.com. PHS Daffodils, Flora, IL. www.phsdaffodils.com. White Flower Farm, Litchfield, CT. www.whiteflowerfarm.com.

ductions, 'Jaw Breaker,' is, in a way, named after Delaney. In his formal description of the large-trumpet daffodil on Daffseek, the ADS daffodil identification website, Reed wrote, "When first seen by Jason Delaney, his mouth opened so wide, I thought his jaw would drop off, hence the name."

### A GARDEN PARTY

Delaney's own seedling crosses number around 2,000. They're mostly "split coronas, daffodils with ruffled coronas and trumpets with fins," he says. "I don't breed to win blue ribbons, I breed for people to go, 'Wow." So far, he has registered three hybrids, including 'Orpha', a flashy orange-trumpet daffodil named after his cat; 'Nico', a fragrant white jonquilla named for another cat; and 'Copacabana', a yellow daffodil with a big orange cup, ruffled around the edges and tipped with yellow highlights.

Last spring, Delaney showed them all off, along with the thousands of other daffodils growing in fields at his parents' farm, for distinguished guests. On the final day of the World Daffodil Convention, busloads of daffodil fanatics—people who had been studying, exhibiting, talking

### A FEW OF JASON DELANEY'S FAVORITE DAFFODILS

Conditions across the country and even within a single state make it challenging to recommend top daffodils for every gardener, so Jason Delaney advises checking with your local American Daffodil Society (ADS) club to learn the best cultivars for your region. Start at the ADS website (www.daffodilusa.org) and go to "Daffodil societies near you," then to information for local clubs.

With that said, Delaney has a few favorite daffodils that he says are adaptable, reliable, and widely available. Several on his list are Wister Award winners, recognized by the ADS for great garden performance and long-lasting blooms on tall, sturdy stems. Some are ADS Classic daffodils, cultivars registered between 1940 and 1969; a few are ADS Historic cultivars, registered or known to have been in gardens before 1940.

'Actea' has white petals with a flat yellow cup edged with red. Registered before 1919; ADS Historic and Wister Award.

'Barrett Browning' has white petals and a short, ruffled orange cup. Registered before 1945; ADS Classic and Wister Award. 'Cassata' is a split-cupped daffodil with white petals and a showy cup that opens yellow and fades to white. Registered in 1963; ADS Classic.

'Congress' is a split-cup daffodil with yellow petals and an orange cup. Registered in 1976.

'Fortune' has large yellow flowers and an orange cup. It blooms in early to mid-spring. Registered before 1917; ADS Historic. 'Geranium' produces up to six white flowers with orange cups on each stem. Registered before 1930; ADS Historic and Wister Award. 'Golden Dawn' has several yellow flowers with orange cups on each stem. Registered in 1958; ADS Classic.

'Ice Follies' is a big-trumpet daffodil with white petals and a yellow trumpet that stands tall on 26-inch stems. Registered before 1953; an ADS Classic and Wister Award winner.

'Marieke' produces large, rich-yellow trumpet flowers in mid-spring. Introduced in 1986. This is the best of the yellow trumpets in the Midwest, Delaney says.

'Pink Charm' has snow-white overlapping petals and a white cup rimmed with pink ruffles. Registered in 1977. Wister Award. 'Stratosphere' is a golden yellow daffodil with an orange cup, producing up to three flowers on each stem. Registered in 1968; ADS Classic and Wister Award.

'Tahiti' is a double daffodil; the trumpet consists of slightly shorter orange trumpet segments, whirled amid the yellow petals. Registered in 1956; ADS Classic and Wister Award.

'Yellow Cheerfulness' produces double yellow flowers with a bright twist of darker yellow segments in the center. Introduced before 1937; ADS Historic. —M.R.





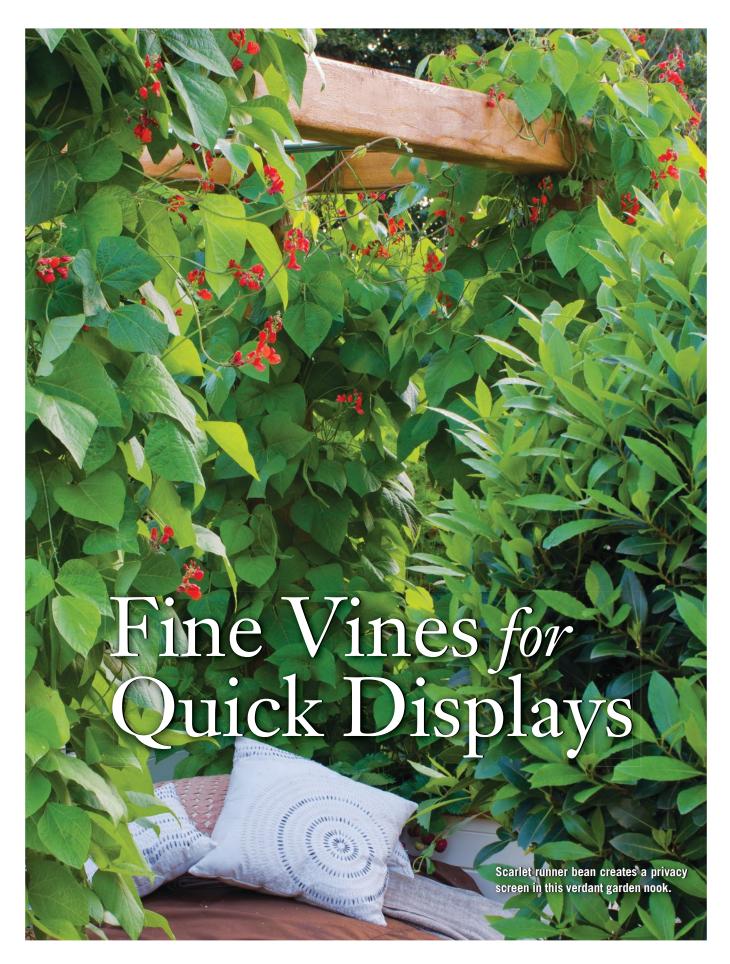
Delaney admires all forms of daffodils, including 'Curly Lace', left, a split-corona hybrid introduced in 2009, and Narcissus jonguilla 'Simplex', right, a species daffodil classified in the 18th century.

about, and photographing daffodils for five straight days, pulled up at the Delaney farm at about 11 a.m., ready for still more. Volunteers from the community, including Delaney's proud first-grade teacher, greeted visitors at tables set up with hot coffee and snacks. Mimosas were poured generously, for this was a real celebration. Delaney, all smiles as usual, wore a little yellow daffodil pinned to his fleece vest to remind him of his friend and daffodil mentor, Jo-Anne Ohms, the owner of the mail-order bulb company John Scheepers, who wasn't able to attend the meeting.

The weather was chilly and overcast, precisely the sort of conditions in which daffodils are happiest. Out in the field, the daffodils stood straight and tall on sturdy stems, and their colors glowed. Delaney and his partner, Rob Donnelly, a social worker who has learned to appreciate daffodils, were up by the barn, talking with friends about daffodils and life in general, while a bluegrass band set up for dancing after lunch. Vases on every table, stuffed with daffodils from the exhibit hall, turned blue-ribbon winners into centerpieces.

Lunch was served and the conversation was of daffodils and of the people who grow them, know them, and love them best. These daffodil connoisseurs from around the world were ready to relax, and the setting, in the big tractor barn filled with flowers, was perfect. It was Delaney's — and every gardener's—dream of the perfect spring garden party.

Marty Ross is a garden journalist and daffodil enthusiast. She grows many daffodil cultivars in her garden in Tidewater, Virginia.





Use fast-growing but well-behaved climbers to add almost instant color to the garden all season. BY RITA PELCZAR

NNUAL AND tender perennial vines are the aerial acrobats of the summer garden. As if shot from a cannon, they quickly scale fences, cover trellises, and tumble over walls. In a single season, many grow 15 to 20 feet tall and produce an extended flower show while they're at it!

Sure, this speedy growth may make certain vines pests, but there are plenty of choices that won't take over the world. The following are some of the showiest, carefree, and well-behaved climbers for gardens across the country.

### CLIMBING CANARIES AND BUTTERFLIES

Yellow-flowered canary creeper (Tropaeolum peregrinum, USDA Hardiness Zones 9-10, AHS Heat Zones 10-5) grows 10 feet tall, using its threadlike petioles to grasp onto supports. Native to the Andes mountains, this tender South American perennial bears an abundance of one-inch blooms from summer to fall. Each flower has five petals, the upper two are wide spread and fringed, resembling wings of a small bird. The deeply lobed gray-green leaves are an inch or two across.

It's a favorite of garden writer Marty Wingate of Mountlake Terrace, Washington, who loves its "whiskery yellow flowers." Start it from seed a month or so before transplanting it to the garden after the last hard frost. Adaptable to full sun or light shade, it needs moist, well-drained soil. If allowed to climb through a shrub, it will appear as if a flock of canaries has landed there. "This is a great little scrambler, never growing too far," Wingate adds.

The yellow butterfly vine (Callaeum macropterum, syn. Mascagnia macroptera, Zones 8-11, 11-6) produces bright yellow blooms from spring to summer, followed by winged seedpods. Horticultural consultant and garden writer Mary Irish of Castroville, Texas, suggests planting it "where you can see the odd, whirly-gig flowers up



Left: The canary creeper is a great choice for hanging baskets or for weaving through shrubs. Above: The butterfly vine's clusters of dainty summer flowers are followed by chartreuse seedpods that resemble butterflies.

close." The papery winged seedpods that follow are the source of the common name.

Grown as an annual in most regions, it is an evergreen perennial in its native Mexico and the southwestern United States. Its twining stems can climb 10 to 20 feet. Although the vine thrives in full sun, Irish says it does well for her in part shade, too. It is also quite drought tolerant.

### A SCENTED ASCENT

Some vines enhance their charms with fragrance. Among the most fragrant is sweet pea (Lathyrus odoratus, Zones 0-0, 8-1), a cool-season annual from the Mediterranean region that thrives where summers are mild. The flowers appear in clusters from spring to early summer, or longer if regularly dead-



Annual sweet peas fill a garden—or a vase—with their heady fragrance and vibrant colors from spring to early summer.

headed. Numerous cultivars are available in a rainbow of colors. One of the most fragrant is 'Cupani', a heat-tolerant heirloom with bicolored maroon and violet flowers.

In regions where the ground doesn't freeze, sow seeds in fall. Elsewhere, sow in spring as soon as the soil can be worked, or get a head start by sowing seeds indoors six or seven weeks before the last expected frost. Grow sweet peas in rich, well-drained soil and full sun. The vine's winged stems produce terminal tendrils that help them climb six to eight feet.

It's easy to guess how the corkscrew vine (Cochliasanthus caracalla, syn. Vigna caracalla, Zones 9-11, 11-5) got its common name—just take a look at the flowers. "Corkscrew vine is a visual delight, blooming all season with bunches of spiraling flowers resembling a corkscrew or snail shell," explains Dennis Schrader, co-owner of Landcraft Environments, a wholesale nursery in Long Island, New York. "Each flower starts off as a white bud, maturing to pinkish lavender, then ultimately fading to a pale fawn color," he adds.

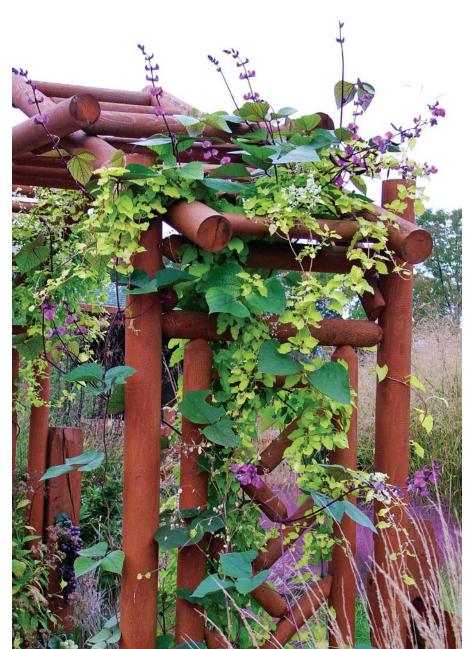
The flower's delightful scent has been likened to lilac, hyacinth, and jasmine. "We plant this amazing vine on an arbor, close to a pathway so we can enjoy the heady fragrance," says Schrader. Growing 10 to 20 feet tall, this South American native flowers

from summer into fall. A tender perennial grown mainly as an annual, it needs full sun and enriched, well drained soil to perform best. In the warmest regions of the United States, it is perennial.

### DELICIOUSLY PRETTY

Red Malabar spinach (Basella alba 'Rubra', syn. Basella rubra, Zones 10–11, 11-5) is a poster child for edible ornamentals. Native to eastern Asia, it grows easily from seed sown directly in the garden after the soil has warmed in spring. It thrives in hot weather and full sun. The twining, deep red stems ascend 10 to 15 feet, producing shiny dark leaves and





late-summer clusters of white to purple flowers. The leaves, which have a mild flavor, make a good hot-weather substitute for spinach.

"What a fun and tasty plant to grow for its architectural, visual, and culinary aspects," says Schrader. He places it "on a rustic locust wood arbor in full sun where the interesting flowers, vivid burgundy stems, and lustrous succulent leaves can be enjoyed."

Two more heat-loving edible vines to consider are scarlet runner bean (Phaseolus coccineus, Zones 9-11, 12-4) and hyacinth bean (Lablab purpureus, syn. Dolichos lablab, Zones 9-11, 12-6). Perennial in their native regions—the former hails from Central America, the latter from tropical Africa—both grow quickly from seed, with their twining stems reaching 10 to 20 feet in length. They produce sum-

Above, left: The fragrant blooms of corkscrew vine turn from white to lavender-pink to dusty rose. Below, left: Hyacinth bean cloaks an arbor with its large, heart-shaped leaves and spikes of purple pealike blooms.

mer-long flowers that attract bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. The flowers of both, along with the pods, are edible.

The scarlet runner bean bears red flowers that stand out boldly against its green trifoliate leaves. A couple summers ago, I sowed seeds around my scarecrow, Miss Scarlet. The vine accessorized her in eye-catching color all summer.

"Hyacinth bean is a reliable choice as an annual vine here in the Midwest," says Denny Schrock, Master Gardener coordinator at Iowa State University in Ames. "Even before the panicles of rosy blooms appear, the purple-maroon tones of the foliage provide interest. The flowers are followed by clusters of purple-podded beans that are even showier than the blossoms,"

### Sources

Almost Eden, Merryville, LA. www.almostedenplants.com. Renee's Garden Seeds, Felton, CA. www.reneesgarden.com. Select Seeds, Union, CT. www.selectseeds.com. Summer Hill Seeds, Whittington, IL. www.summerhillseeds.com.

### **CLIMBING HIGH**

A vine's stems lack the rigidity to stand upright, yet that doesn't stop it from reaching great heights in no time. Contemplating how a vine achieves this, I find myself in good company. Both Asa Gray, perhaps the most influential American botanist of the 19th century, and his friend, Charles Darwin, were fascinated by and published detailed observations about the climbing mechanisms vines employ. They noted that some vines cling to vertical surfaces with aerial roots or specialized adhesive tendrils. Others simply lean on or droop over nearby structures or plants. And some vines climb by twining their stems, petioles (leaf stems), or tendrils around any handy, appropriately sized support.

Whatever the strategy, it affects the type of climbing structure needed to display the vine to best effect. As you consider vines for your garden, keep in mind how and what they will climb. (For ideas for vine supports, see page 52.)

adds Schrock. He grows it on a steel-framed arbor that leads from his deck to the backyard, where it "loves the heat and humidity of summer, providing an attractive display until the first freezes of fall," he says.

### BLOOMS OF UNUSUAL SHAPE

The cup-and-saucer vine (Cobaea scandens, Zones 9-11, 11-4) is perennial in its native Mexico and tropical South America, as well as the warmest regions of the United States. Elsewhere, it is grown as an annual. Using tendrils to attach to its support, it will climb as much as 20 feet in one season.

Its distinctive blooms appear in late summer and fall; each three-inch flower is composed of a "cup"—the fluted petals and "saucer"—the flower's calyx. The blooms emerge pale green and mature to purple with a honeylike scent. 'Alba' is a white-flowered selection.

This vine benefits from an early start, so sow seeds indoors eight to 10 weeks prior to your last expected frost. "It can grow well in the maritime Pacific Northwest, but is best if started early, or started the





Top: The flowers of cup-and-saucer vine open pale green, maturing to vibrant purple. Above: The Mexican flame vine attracts monarch butterflies, among other pollinators.

## MORE QUICK-GROWING CLIMBERS TO CONSIDER

Name	Height (feet)	Flowers	USDA Hardiness, AHS Heat Zones
Eccremocarpus scaber (Chilean glory vine)	8–12	Tubular, one-inch, red-orange flowers; blooms late spring to fall	10–11, 12–1
<i>Ipomoea alba</i> (Moonflower)	15–20	Fragrant, white blooms to six inches across, open at night blooms summer to fall	; 10–11, 12–5
<i>Ipomoea lobata</i> (Spanish flag)	6–15	Racemes of tubular flowers open red, turn to orange, yellow, white; blooms summer to fall	10–11, 12–7
Maurandya scandens syn. Asarina scandens (Creeping gloxinia)	3–8	Tubular, two-lipped lavender flowers with lighter throat; blooms late summer to fall	9–11, 10–7
Rhodochiton atrosanguineus (Purple bell vine)	10–12	Tubular, pendant, deep purple flowers with red or pink calyx; blooms summer to fall	10–11, 10–7
Thunbergia alata (Black-eyed Susan vine)	5–8	Yellow, orange, or white funnel-shaped flowers usually with dark centers; blooms summer and fall	11, 12–3
Thunbergia grandiflora (Blue trumpet vine)	6–10	Drooping, sky-blue flowers with yellow throats; blooms in summer	10–11, 12–6





autumn before and kept in an unheated greenhouse," says Wingate. "It will overwinter in really mild spots, such as along the coast, and in those cases, becomes quite rambunctious," she says. It thrives in full sun, but appreciates some afternoon shade in warmer climates.

#### POPULAR WITH POLLINATORS

All sorts of bees and butterflies will flock to a blooming Mexican flame vine (Pseudogynoxys chenopodioides, syn. Senecio confusus, Zones 9–11, 12–7). It grows rapidly—six to 10 feet in one season—producing fourinch, coarsely toothed, dark green leaves that offer an attractive foil for the orange one- to two-inch blooms.

"The brilliant orange wheels of daisylike flowers begin in the winter here [in Texas]," reports Irish. "If the plant does not freeze, then it is a good source of striking color for the entire spring, summer, and even the fall," she adds.

Mexican flame vine is perennial in its native habitat of Mexico to Central America, but it is grown as an annual in all but the warmest regions of the United States.

Because it takes a long time for seedgrown plants to reach the flowering stage, it is best to purchase young plants that can be placed in the garden as soon as the soil warms in spring. Best flower production is in full sun and plants are quite drought-tolerant once established.

Supported by fences, trellises, arbors, light posts, and mailboxes, annual and tender perennial vines can quickly lift your garden to new heights with their high-climbing foliage and colorful blooms. With so many to choose from, deciding which ones to try first may be your biggest challenge.

Rita Pelczar is a contributing editor for The American Gardener. She gardens in North Carolina.

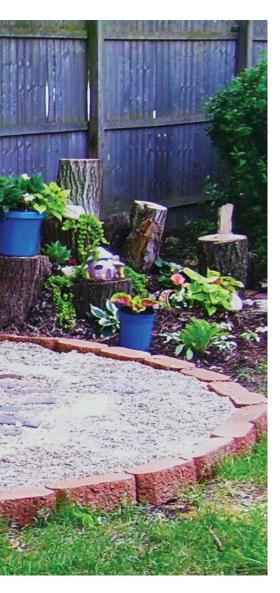


# Hack a Small Patio

You can easily create a beautiful garden space for relaxing and entertaining without breaking your budget by using reclaimed material and a bit of creativity. BY SHAWNA CORONADO

ACKING IS the concept of breaking traditional rules to discover a creative way to accomplish something—a clever trick that saves cash for the thrifty or solves a problem elegantly. Whether the hack is for gardening, computing, cooking, or anything in between, "hacking" your way through daily challenges is fast becoming a new lifestyle choice because the best hacks are easy, smart, and they save us money.

My garden has always been a hotbed for green and organic garden hacks. With a limited budget, I am constantly on the lookout for alternative ways to build a useful, beautiful, low-cost, and low-input garden. Here I offer a couple of hacks I've discovered for creating a lovely patio area with reclaimed sand, bricks, and stones.



#### **BUILD A "FLOATING" PATIO**

WHEN YOUR property is filled with tree roots or rocky areas that make adding garden structures difficult, hacking an environmentally-friendly solution is easy: simply float a patio or a fun, ground-level art accent right on top of the obstructions.

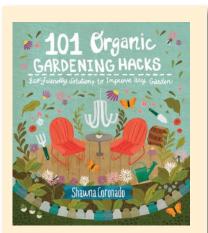
#### **SUPPLIES NEEDED**

- Shovel
- Thick landscaping fabric
- Sand or paving base
- Flat items including bricks, pavers, steppingstones, broken cement, rocks, log cuts, flagstone, non-hazardous construction materials, metal
- Pea gravel, lime screenings, or granite

#### STEP BY STEP

- 1. Mark off your building area shape and design on the ground. The area should be flat and relatively level.
- **2.** Do your best to dig a 6- to 8-inch trench around the outside of your project area. This will allow standing water to drain off the area. This does not have to be perfect and can just involve several drain holes, but it allows for water to run off.
- 3. Cover the project area with a permeable cloth cover of some kind that will allow water to drain but will prevent worms from coming through and mixing the rock base. Landscape fabric or weed barrier is the logical choice for most installations.

continued on next page



This article is adapted from 101 Organic Gardening Hacks by Shawna Coronado, Cool Springs Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2016. Used with permission of the publisher.



Mark the perimeter of a flat area for your patio, dig drainage holes, and cover with a permeable cloth cover such as landscape fabric.



Using flat, recycled materials from construction sites, such as bricks and broken cement, create a pattern on the ground.



Adjust and readjust the pattern as necessary until the design is to your liking.

- **4.** Arrange reclaimed material of all types in an attractive pattern on top of the fabric.
- **5.** Fill between the arranged material with a base of sand and rough gravel to help steady the reclaimed materials. Hardware and big box stores often have discounted broken bags.
- 6. Pour pea gravel over the top. For a firmer surface that can be used as a patio, use lime screenings or crushed granite that can be tamped down.



Cover the materials with a layer of sand and rough gravel. Top with pea gravel, lime screenings, or crushed granite.



### HACK A GROUNDCOVER PATIO

THE EXPENSE OF building or rebuilding a patio can be quite high. If you'd like to add a patio or expand upon an existing construction, hack the project. There are plenty of free or very inexpensive materials that you can combine with groundcover to create a functional and natural outdoor living area. Pavers, patio blocks, stepping stones, or bricks are cheap and sometimes free, and they blend well with low-growing plants in a patio area. This can be non-permanent, dependent upon your needs. Having plants beneath your feet while entertaining is such a green delight. Best yet, you can grow low-maintenance, drought-tolerant groundcover plants such as hen-and-chicks (Sempervivum spp.), sedums, and thyme in order to save yourself money and time.

In the photo, you can see how concrete pavers were used (approximately 57 pounds each). Square patio blocks and pavers typically range from 12 inches to 24 inches in length and width. Measure the area you would like to fill with a groundcover patio, then leave three inches to four inches between pavers to accommodate your plants. Avoid gaps any wider than that because it will encourage more weeds to fill in that space.

Shawna Coronado is an author, photographer, blogger, and green-lifestyle advocate who lives in Warrenville, Illinois.

#### **SUPPLIES NEEDED**

- Concrete pavers, bricks, stepping stones, or tiles
- Drought-tolerant soil mix (see below)
- Organic fertilizer
- Sand for leveling
- Shovel
- Rake
- Level
- Drought-tolerant groundcover plants

#### **STEP BY STEP**

- 1. Remove all grass or plants from the building area.
- 2. Amend soil with plenty of rich compost for drought conditions, leveling with more soil, and raking the area flat. (A good water-retentive soil mix hack is 1 part organic potting mix with worm castings, 1 part organic composted manure, and 1 part plain compost.)
- 3. Mark the area for block placement based on your measure-
- 4. Place a 2-inch layer of sand over the area and level again carefully.
- 5. Place pavers in position, carefully maneuvering into your chosen pattern. (Geometric designs work best for groundcover-filled patios so that the straight lines enable the plants to spread and
- 6. Mix the remaining drought-tolerant soil with organic fertilizer and fill the areas between bricks with the fertilized soil.
- **7.** Plant the plants, then water well and wait for your plants to grow in.

## **HOMEGROWN HARVEST**

## Spinach—A Nutrient-Packed Cool-Season Green

by Karan Davis Cutler

YTH BUSTERS now agree that cartoonist E.C. Segar chose spinach as Popeye's secret weapon not because it was high in iron—as most of us thought—but because it was high in vitamin A. To be fair, spinach is higher in iron than most vegetables, although plant-based iron is not well absorbed by the body. Our favorite sailor's bulging biceps are probably better attributed to spinach's substantial amounts of vitamins A, C, K, E, B<sub>2</sub> (riboflavin), B<sub>6</sub>, and B<sub>9</sub> (folate), as well as minerals such as magnesium, calcium, and potassium.

While I'm delighted that spinach is a superfood, I cultivate it mainly for the delicious ways it can be enjoyed in salads, quiches, soups, and dips—not for building mega muscles. And it's easy to grow in my Vermont garden.

Spinach (Spinacia oleracea) is an annual vegetable that likes cool weather and plentiful moisture. There are three types of spinach—all taste much alike and can be eaten raw or cooked. Savoy spinach has crisp, thick, dark green, crinkled leaves that are especially cold-resistant; they are more difficult to clean but hold up better when cooked. Flat-leaf spinach has smooth, medium-green leaves that are easier to wash; it's the type most used for baby-leaf crops (leaves harvested when still small). Semi-savoy spinach is a good compromise, with leaves that are less crinkled than savoy, less smooth than flat-leaf.

Not all spinach seeds are alike either. Round seeds typically produce flat-leaf varieties, prickly seeds savoys, but the rule isn't hard and fast. Botanists like to point out that neither type is technically a seed but is a tiny, one-seeded fruit, or utricle, encased in a hard capsule.

#### **GROWING GUIDELINES**

Spinach plants are both heat- and light-sensitive. Temperatures above 75



'Bloomsdale Long Standing' is a popular heirloom selection of savoy spinach.

degrees Fahrenheit (F) and days longer than 14 hours cause plants to bolt—to send up flower stalks, making them inedible—so success comes in the cooler, shorter days of spring and fall. Even slow-bolting cultivars such as 'Olympia' and 'Corvair' won't thrive in summer's

## **PLANTING BASICS**

Getting Started Sow seeds directly in garden in very early spring for spring to early summer harvest; in late summer or early fall for fall and early winter harvest.

**Spacing** Plant seeds half-inch deep, two inches apart, thinning six to 10 inches apart. Space rows about 12 inches apart.

Days to Maturity Harvest in 23 to 50 days, depending on variety and leaf maturity.

heat. Or, as one of my local farmers put it, "Spinach ain't beans."

In addition to short, cool days, spinach needs full sun and light, moist soil that is organically rich, drains well, and is neutral to slightly alkaline (pH 6.5 to 7.5).

Growing spinach in most regions is pretty straightforward: Direct-sow seeds as soon as the soil can be worked for spring/early summer harvests, and about six weeks before the first hard frost for fall/early winter harvests. To get a head start on spring crops, sow seeds about four weeks before the first frost in the fall, then overwinter the seedlings by covering them with a foot of straw secured by a heavy floating row cover (rated AG-50 or more). Remove the row cover and straw when warmer weather resumes in spring.

Set seeds a half-inch deep, two inches apart, then thin to six to 10 inches once

the seedlings are three to four inches tall. Overcrowding curbs growth and encourages bolting. Spinach also grows well in window boxes and pots. Use containers that are at least eight inches deep and give plants plenty of room.

Seeds will sprout in near-freezing soil, but 55 to 68 degrees F is optimal; germination rates plummet when the soil temperature tops 70. Most resources claim spinach is difficult to transplant, but that hasn't been my experience. Springsown seeds rot in the soppy clay soil of my garden, so I start them in individual pots on the deck. Because the pots are outdoors, the seedlings don't need to be acclimated before I transplant them. Gardeners with summers hotter than you-know-what may need to begin fall crops indoors, then give plants some shade outdoors before setting them out in the vegetable bed.

As vegetables go, spinach matures in a New York minute. Most varieties are ready to pick as a baby-leaf in 25 days and fully mature in 40 to 45 days. To have a continuous supply, I replant every 10 days until the weather is either too hot or too cold.

Spinach is a heavy feeder, but garden soil rich with organic matter normally contains all the nutrients it needs. If you're growing it in containers or if plants aren't thriving, sidedress once or twice during the growing season with diluted fish emulsion to provide an extra

#### Sources

Harris Seeds, Rochester, NY. www.harrisseeds.com. Johnny's Selected Seeds, Winslow, ME. www.johnnyseeds.com. Sow True Seed, Asheville, NC. www.sowtrueseed.com. W. Atlee Burpee & Co., Warminster, PA. www.burpee.com.

shot of nitrogen. Make sure to provide constant moisture—spinach is 92 percent water-and mulch to discourage weeds, cool the soil, and retain moisture for the shallow feeder roots.

#### PESTS AND DISEASES

Few pests—not counting rabbits—bother spinach, but downy mildew, a fungal disease, sometimes plagues plants, especially those spaced too closely or subject to prolonged periods of rain. The leaves of affected plants have a bluish-white or gray fuzz on their undersides or yellow spots on the topsides. You can treat the diseased plants with a fungicide, or you can just pull and discard them. Most of today's cultivars have at least some builtin disease-resistance. To discourage soilborne diseases such as fusarium, plant spinach in a different spot each year. Aphids, which can spread viruses, can be washed off with a strong spray of water.

## SPINACH SUBSTITUTES FOR WARM CLIMATES

During hot weather, spinach lovers can try these heat-tolerant substitutes: Malabar spinach (Basella alba) and New Zealand spinach (Tetragonia tetragonioides). Their flavors and textures are similar to those of spinach. Malabar is a vining tropical that requires a trellis; it loves heat, full sun, and slightly acidic, fertile soil. New Zealand spinach has a spreading habit, rambling two feet or more. It likes moderate conditions, organically rich soil, a neutral pH, and plenty of water. Both plants are perennial in frost-free regions but usually grown as annuals. -K.D.C.



Malabar spinach is a tropical vine with leaves that have a flavor reminiscent of true spinach.

#### RECOMMENDED VARIETIES

In 2016, I had best results with two hybrid semi-savoys, both new to me: slow-to-bolt 'Indian Summer' and downy-mildew-resistant 'Carmel'. 'Space' is a superb smooth-leaf cultivar that is also highly resistant to downy mildew. I still like the open-pollinated heirloom savoy 'Bloomsdale Long Standing', which has no disease resistance but does have great flavor. All of the above mature in 35 to 45 days, but can be harvested earlier as baby spinach.

Smaller varieties that are good choices for containers include 'Baby's Leaf', which matures in 30 to 40 days, and 'America', which matures in about 50 days. 'Red Kitten', a red-stemmed spinach, is especially pretty but bolts quickly, so it is best grown as a baby-leaf; it can be harvested in as little as 23 to 34 days.

While 'Winter Bloomsdale', 'Samish', and 'Giant Winter' can mature in about 45 days, these cold-hardy varieties are particularly good choices for fall plantings that are covered over winter to provide a very early harvest in spring.

Spinach seeds don't store well—germination rates drop significantly in a year or two-which gives you a good excuse to try new cultivars every year.

#### ENJOYING THE HARVEST

Plants produce edible leaves for about a month. Begin harvesting as soon as the leaves are large enough to use, either by picking individually or by cutting the whole plant. If you leave two inches of growth above the crown, the plant may resprout. Spinach, especially savoy spinach, requires several washings to remove all the grit that collects in the leaves. Store unwashed or use a salad spinner or paper towels to remove excess water from washed spinach before packing loosely in a sealed plastic bag and refrigerating. Storage life is about five days.

As for the foremost spinach question—"How do I get my kids to eat it?"—take a look at the bonanza of spinach dessert recipes online. If you can't unload Chocolate Spinach Brownies with Peanut Frosting or spinach ice cream, which is delightfully green, I'd give up. Plant sweet corn, instead.

Karan Davis Cutler is a freelance writer based in Bridport, Vermont.

## A Plant Buyer's Primer

by Scott Aker

TARTING WITH healthy, vigorous plants is one of the keys to a successful garden. That's why you need to do a little homework before you head to your local nursery and, once you're there, spend some time inspecting prospective purchases. This is especially critical if you are planning to invest money on trees and shrubs.

Here are some tips for what to look for when shopping for new plants:

#### ■ Check the roots of trees and shrubs.

Large leaves and robust growth might attract you to a particular specimen, but the vigor of the roots is paramount. Ask your nursery if the stock was repotted and if so, when. If the plant was recently potted, you are likely to pay more for the larger pot size, not necessarily a larger root system. Ask if you can slip the plant out of its pot so you can inspect the roots. Plump white or light tan roots are a good sign of active growth. Roots should not be brown, shriveled, or malodorous. If there are lots of weeds growing in the pot, be sure that you are looking at tree or shrub roots and not weed roots. A potbound plant may still be healthy, but the older roots, though still plump, will be darker.

#### ■ If possible, choose small and vigorous. Small plants generally become established faster than large ones. If you plant a small, vigorous plant at the same time as a large plant, the small plant will often be larger and healthier than the large one after a short time because it gets through the establishment phase faster. Annuals that are larger may have become potbound. The top growth of perennials may be deceptive—less heat in spring may mean a delay in growth of leaves and stems, but as long as the crown and roots radiating from them are healthy, they should grow nicely when the weather warms.



This container-grown cypress shows healthy top growth and a robust root system.

There is one exception to this rule: Avoid annuals that seem unusually short, even if they are otherwise healthy. They may have been overtreated with a growth regulator to keep them short and give them a longer shelf life in the nursery. Weeks after planting, they may struggle to grow, even with ample nutrients and water.

■ Note pests and diseases. Some pests pose serious problems, while others are benign. You are likely to find a spot on a leaf

#### TIPS FOR BUYING PLANTS ONLINE

When you can't see the plants that you are buying, it's important to check up on the vendor before you place an order. Comments from other buyers on rating services such as Garden Watchdog (http://davesgarden.com/ products/gwd/) can give you an idea of how online nurseries perform in terms of accurate and timely order fulfillment, how well plants are packed for shipping, the size of the plants sold, and how customer service is handled.

Inspect plants very carefully when they arrive; if there are problems, promptly contact the vendor. Plan to get the plants into the garden as soon as possible for best results. —S.A.

or a few insects on any plant you want to buy. Most of these issues are nothing to be too concerned about. For instance, a few aphids, though noticeable, are easy to deal with by blasting them off the plant with a stream of water from a hose.

Many diseases are caused by unfavorable environmental conditions. There are lots of fungi that cause small leaf spots in the right weather conditions—don't worry about buying a plant with a leaf or two with spots. Powdery mildew might be a problem when the plants are packed together in the nursery, but is likely to diminish in the garden where air circulation is better.

## Gardening Q&A with Scott Aker

#### WHY IS MY COMPACT IRONWEED COMING BACK TALL?

I planted a dozen 'Iron Butterfly' ironweed plants (Vernonia lettermannii) in my garden about three years ago. The first two years, they topped out at about two feet, but now some are three or four feet high. Some of the plants are still short, but are being crowded out by the tall ones. What can I do to keep them short?

I gather that you left the attractive fluffy seed heads on the plants. 'Iron Butterfly' is a compact selection of the species, and the seeds have undoubtedly germinated and grown into full-sized plants more typical of the species. Remove the tall plants and dispose of them. If you'd like more of the shorter 'Iron Butterfly' plants, dig, divide, and replant them in early fall.

#### PREVENTING RODENT DAMAGE TO SWEET POTATOES

I live in Chesapeake, Virginia, and have a problem with voles eating my sweet potatoes before I can harvest them. How can I protect my crop from these critters?

Voles like to hide, so remove piles of mulch, leaves, or debris that offer them shelter. If you are using straw or another organic mulch on the sweet potatoes, try growing them in beds covered with sheets of black plastic instead, or you can install a barrier of hardware cloth on the perimeter of your sweet potato bed. If all else fails, try growing the sweet potatoes in large tubs; you can get a surprisingly robust crop, and voles are less likely to be able to find them. —S.A.

Send your gardening questions to Scott Aker at saker@ahsgardening.org (please include your city and state with submissions).

However, plants that show signs of certain pests or diseases are to be avoided. Notches in the leaves of azaleas and rhododendrons and other evergreens might indicate an infestation of black vine weevil or Japanese weevil, which is much more difficult to eradicate because these weevils feed on both roots and leaves. Check branches

of trees and shrubs for scale insects. On a small specimen, you can get rid of the pests by dunking the whole plant in a solution of three tablespoons of horticultural oil mixed into a gallon of water, but this treatment is more difficult for a large shrub or tree. Check annuals like basil and coleus for whiteflies, which are hard to control and can easily infest other plants.

Reject plants with diseases that are persistent—such as downy mildew and canker. Turn over leaves of impatiens and coleus to look for signs of downy mildew, which defoliates these plants over time. Check woody plants for sunken places on the trunk or branches that may indicate a canker disease. Dead branch tips might be caused by a bacterial disease or drought stress. You can prune off the dead tips, but it's better to choose a healthier specimen.

The bottom line when shopping for plants is: The health of the roots is far more important than any pest or disease issue with the top portions of the plant. ...

Scott Aker is head of horticulture and education at the United States National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.



The notches on these rhododendron leaves are caused by hard-to-control black vine weevils.

## TRAVELER'S GUIDE TO GARDENS

## Ashton Gardens: A Blooming Oasis

by Julia Polentes



Each spring, waves of colorful tulips welcome visitors to Ashton Gardens in Lehi, Utah.

N LEHI, Utah—just 25 miles south of Salt Lake City—a splash of green interrupts the arid landscape. This is Ashton Gardens, the centerpiece of Thanksgiving Point Institute, a nonprofit, family-centered learning complex founded by Karen and Alan Ashton. The gardens span over 55 acres, boasting features such as the largest artificial waterfall in the Western Hemisphere and 15 unique themed areas that delight visitors from far and wide.

#### A FAMILY AFFAIR

Following a computer science career that included the co-founding of a successful software company, Alan Ashton turned his attention to other projects. His wife, Karen, loves the outdoors and had always dreamed of having a big, beautiful garden. Together, they decided to create a garden to share with their community.

The plans for the garden soon expanded to include two museums and a demonstration farm, which are now part of Thanksgiving Point Institute. Named in reference to a Bible verse, the organization's mission is to draw upon the natural world to "cultivate transformative family learning." Although the garden initiated the whole institute, it was the final component to open—in 2000—reflecting the immense care and thought that went into creating it.

Before breaking ground, Karen and landscape architect Leonard Grassli toured gardens around Europe for inspiration. Some of these European influences are evident at Ashton Gardens, from the stately fountains in the Italian Garden to the elaborate Parterre Garden. Garden Director Esther Henrichsen notes that Ashton Gardens also pays tribute to its own American heritage through its programs. "The Pony Express went right through our garden, and the Overland Trail," she explains. "Before that,





Top: The lushness of Ashton Gardens makes a striking contrast to the desert scrubland and mountains around it. Above: The ornate cascading fountains of the Italian Garden are inspired by designs from gardens of 16th-century villas in Tivoli.

some areas were summering grounds of local Native American tribes."

#### **GREENING THE DESERT**

With only 14 inches of rain a year, Lehi can be a challenging place to garden. This means that Ashton Gardens must be "very careful with our water," says Henrichsen. And, in some ways, the surrounding environment is actually an asset. "The sagebrush-colored hills beyond the gardens contrast sharply with the garden foliage.

It's really striking," she points out. Additionally, the dry climate is ideal for the many varieties of roses that populate the Rose Garden.

The gardens have also made efforts to adapt to Salt Lake Valley's climate, providing an example for locals looking for water-thrifty options for their own landscapes. In the past year, a dry garden was created, showcasing many regional natives. These include several species of both penstemon and buckwheat (Eriogonum spp.),

#### Additional Information

Ashton Gardens, 3900 N. Garden Drive, Lehi, Utah 84043. (801) 768-2300. www.thanksgivingpoint.org.

- Hours: Open March 25 through October 28, Monday through Saturday. 9 a.m.–7 p.m.
- Admission: Adults \$15; seniors and children (3-12) \$12; 2 and under free. Add \$5 to admission during Tulip Festival.
- Ashton Gardens participates in the AHS's Reciprocal Admissions Program. AHS members showing a current membership card receive free admission (home address must be further than 90 miles from garden).

Other nearby sites to explore: Red Butte Garden, Salt Lake City, UT. www.redbuttegarden.org. Timpanogos Cave, American Fork, UT. www.nps.gov/tica/index.htm. Tracy Aviary, Salt Lake City, UT. www.tracyaviary.org.

four-winged saltbush (Atriplex canescens), Oregon boxleaf (Paxistima myrsinites), and thimbleberry (Rubrus parviflorus). It also makes use of more than 12,000 species tulips, which thrive in the harsh conditions similar to those of their native Middle Eastern mountains.

#### TULIP TIME

Ashton Gardens is well known for its annual Tulip Festival, and for good reason. This year the festival will run from April 14 through May 6, featuring over 300,000 tulip bulbs in bloom—hundreds of varieties—along with over a million perennials, annuals, and flowering trees throughout the gardens. Last year, the event drew more than 100,000 people, and even greater numbers are expected this year.

In addition to the tulip festival, the gardens offer several other family-friendly events throughout the year, including a storytelling festival in August, a scarecrow festival in the fall, and Luminaria, a spectacular year-end display of lights and holiday festivities.

Julia Polentes is an editorial intern for The American Gardener.

## **GARDENER'S NOTEBOOK**

## Horticultural News and Research Important to American Gardeners

#### BEEBALM TRIAL RESULTS FROM MT. CUBA CENTER

The Mt. Cuba Center recently published a research report on the performance of 40 different species and selections of beebalm (Monarda spp.) grown in the center's trial garden near Wilmington, Delaware. A member of the mint family, the genus is popular for its large, brightly colored flowers, for supporting a wide variety of pollinators, and for being relatively easy to grow. In addition, many species are native to North America. The genus does have a few challenges, including a tendency of certain species to spread aggressively, and susceptibility to powdery mildew, a fungal disease that causes defoliation.



The three-year trial evaluated the beebalms on qualities such as floral display, habit, powdery mildew resistance, and leaf retention. The highest ratings went to M. fistulosa 'Claire Grace', M. 'Dark Ponticum', M. 'Violet Queen', and M. 'AChall' (Grand Marshall™).

For gardeners looking to try something out of the ordinary, George Coombs, Mt. Cuba's research horticulturist and the author of the study, recommends 'Purple Rooster', which has darker purple blooms than any other cultivar and a distinct vertical shape as



Among monarda selections that performed well in Mt. Cuba's three-year evaluation are Grand Marshall, left, and 'Purple Rooster', above. Both exhibited excellent disease resistance.

well as exceptional resistance to powdery mildew.

In terms of attracting pollinators, spotted beebalm (M. punctata) was the clear winner, although Coombs points out that it's not reliably perennial in USDA Hardiness Zones 6 or colder and often looks ratty later in the season.

The report also incorporates the results of a citizen science project comparing pollinator diversity and frequency, identifies and describes compact selections and less-cultivated species with potential. To read the complete report, visit www.mtcubacenter.org.

#### PLANT FIBER OPTICS

Through the process of photosynthesis, plants create food by collecting energy from the sun or other light source. To do so, plants use photoreceptors—proteins that detect light—on their leaves and stems. But the fact that many plants have photoreceptors in their roots, which typically are not exposed to light, has puzzled

scientists for years. A group of researchers from South Korea recently found an explanation, using Arabidopsis thaliana, a plant with photoreceptors in its roots that is commonly used in experimental research.

The study, published in December 2016 in the online journal Communicative & Integrative Biology, involved placing light detectors in the soil at this plant's root tips to see if the plant was sending light down to its roots. Sure enough, they sensed red light. This finding supports the theory that certain stem tissues act like fiber optic cables, internally reflecting light down to photoreceptors in the roots. The amount of light that travels in this way is not sufficient for photosynthesis, but when the researchers blocked the light from the photoreceptors, root growth was severely stunted. The reflected light activates a process that controls root growth and gravitropism—the way roots grow downwards in response to gravitational pull. However, exactly how plants move light to their roots through stem tissues remains a mystery.



#### GRACE ELTON JOINS TOWER HILL

In February, Grace Elton became CEO of the Tower Hill Botanic Garden in Boylston, Massachusetts. Previously, Elton had



**Grace Elton** 

been the director of horticulture at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond, Virginia, since 2011. Prior to joining Lewis Ginter, Elton served as adjunct professor and arboretum supervisor at the Ambler Arboretum of Temple University

in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

"Grace brings the talent and knowledge required to lead this 175-year-old society and its 30-year-old garden," says James Karadimos, president of the Worcester County Horticultural Society, which oversees Tower Hill. "She is well positioned to strengthen Tower Hill's reach and reputation, while staying true to our mission."

To learn more about Tower Hill, visit www.towerhillbg.org.

#### BUTTERFLY WEED TAPPED AS TOP PERENNIAL

The Perennial Plant Association (PPA) has named butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa, USDA Hardiness Zones 4-9, AHS Heat Zones 9-3), its Perennial Plant of the Year for 2017. The plant earned this distinction because of its excellent deer



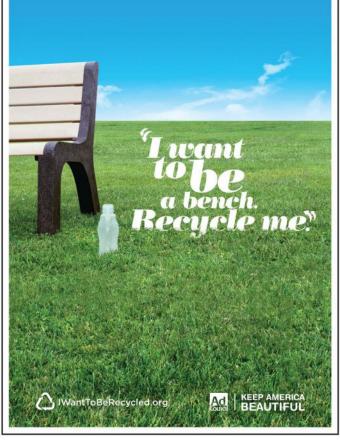
The bright orange flowers of butterfly weed produce nectar that attracts many pollinators.

resistance, drought tolerance, and attractiveness to both pollinators and people. Native to much of eastern and central North America, butterfly weed makes a low-maintenance garden plant that thrives in full sun. This milkweed relative takes its time emerging in spring, but soon produces eye-catching umbels of bright orange to yellow flowers in late spring through to midsummer on upright stems that reach two to three feet in height. The flowers' nectar draws moths, bees, wasps, ants, beetles, and even hummingbirds. Its narrow, lance-shaped leaves serve as a larval food source for many kinds of butterflies-including monarchs.

Headquartered in Hilliard, Ohio, the PPA is a trade organization for growers, horticulturists, garden designers, and educators involved in the herbaceous perennial plant industry. For more information about the organization and to view a complete list of winners of its Perennial Plant of the Year distinction, visit www.perennialplant.org.

Written by Associate Editor Viveka Neveln and Editorial Intern Julia Polentes.







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## **GREEN GARAGE®**

## Supports for Climbers

by Rita Pelczar



ROVIDED A structure to accommodate its climbing habit, a vine can create a dramatic vertical display in a garden. (Suggestions for outstanding annual and tender perennial vines can be found in the article that begins on page 32.) The support itself can be decorative or simply utilitarian, but a robust vine requires one that is sturdy, while a more delicate climber can be well served by a lighter one.

The Powder-Coated Steel Garden Obelisk from Plow and Hearth (www. plowhearth.com) provides vigorous vines with a classically styled ornamental framework. Available in antique copper or bronze finishes, and in five-, seven-, or eight-foot heights to suit vines of different sizes, the obelisk has a diameter of only 11 to 14 inches, making it especially useful in tight spaces.

From Gardener's Edge (www.gardeners edge.com), a six-foot-tall Windmill Obelisk provides instant visual interest. The black powder-coated steel frame is topped by a windmill-shaped weathervane that turns gently in the breeze. The four-sided frame, with its horizontal bars, offers a twining vine an attractive scaffold to climb. If your vine grows tall, you may want to trim it or train it downward so it doesn't interfere with the motion of the weathervane.

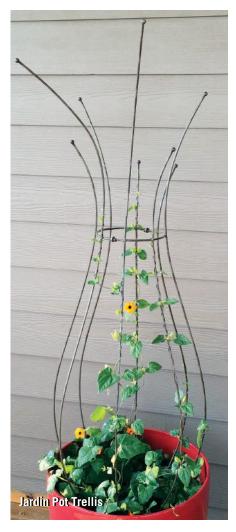
For growing vines against a wall, Gardener's Supply Company (www.gardeners. com) offers the 7-Foot Essex Half-Round Trellis. The 151/4-inch-wide support has a matte-black finish that resembles wrought iron, and it's suitably sized to handle exuberant vines such as morning glories (Ipomoea spp.), sweet peas (Lathyrus odoratus), or canary creeper (Tropaeolum peregrinum); it also works well for more subdued clematis (Clematis spp.). Sinking the lower portion of the support into the ground is sufficient for smaller vines, but for heavy ones, you may want to secure the top of the trellis to the wall so it doesn't fall forward under the vine's weight.





The Jardin Pot Trellis, also from Gardener's Supply Company, is great for more delicate climbers, such as blackeyed Susan vine (Thunbergia alata) and twining snapdragon (Maurandya scandens), that are grown in containers. It is suitable for a container 14 inches or more in diameter and arrives as two rustic-finished steel pieces that assemble easily to create a support with a graceful hourglasslike silhouette. Alternatively, each piece can be used separately as halfround supports. The trellis provides over 40 inches of climbing space.

Lee Valley Tools (www.leevalley.com) offers the 48-inch Maypole for vines in large containers. Its black powder-coated steel central stake features an attractive finial at the top from which polypropylene strings radiate. The central pole should be sunk 12 inches into the soil to secure it. The strings-which you can place at any suit-







able angle, are held in the soil by galvanized steel pegs. For larger vines, including vining vegetables such as peas, pole beans, or Malabar spinach (Basella alba), an 86-inch Maypole is available.

I love simple solutions like the Bamboo Kit with Garden Connectors from Gardener's Edge, which provides an easy and inexpensive way to support vines in any informal ornamental garden or vegetable



patch. Slender bamboo stakes—available in four-, five-, and six-foot lengths-slide easily through the holes in the flexible silicon rubber connectors, allowing you to create the style of trellis that suits you-from a teepee to an A frame to a piece of lattice. Each pole can be sunk into the ground at your desired distance. It's ideal for supporting peas and beans, including the ornamental scarlet runner bean (Phaseolus coccineus) and hyacinth bean (Lablab purpureus). It's also the perfect support for a child-friendly, vine-clad "tent."

In addition to saving space in the vegetable garden, growing cucumbers on a trellis allows the fruits to hang, so that they develop long and straightand away from ground pests. The Deluxe Cucumber Trellis from Gardener's Supply Company is a sturdy, double-panel, A-frame structure made of powder-coated steel; each panel is about 32 inches wide by 48 inches high. It's easy to fit your hand through the four-inch grid openings in the panels for harvesting, and it folds flat for storage at the end of the growing season. The trellis is available in red, green, and black.

These and other vine supports will make the most of your ground space while providing productive and attractive vertical accents in all of your gardens.

Rita Pelczar is a contributing editor for The American Gardener.



## Recommendations for Your Gardening Library

#### Fresh from the Garden

John Whitman. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2017. 544 pages. Publisher's price, hardcover: \$49.95.

GARDENERS OF EVERY level of experience will find *Fresh From* the Garden essential. In it, John Whitman lays out in clear and



concise prose the best organic practices for successfully raising a wide variety of edible plants. Although this book purportedly addresses gardening in cold climates (defined as wherever temperatures can drop below 20 degrees Fahrenheit), most of the content would be applicable in warmer regions as well.

Chapters on where and how to plant, dealing with inevitable prob-

lems, and harvesting lead the reader step by step through the essentials. Whitman also provides invaluable insights based on his own lengthy experience with growing food. Perhaps this personal touch is why his discussion of organic amendments is one of the best I have ever read. Regarding weed control, I found his burdock and thistle eradication strategies encouragingly doable. And readers may be surprised to learn that a large number of weeds we pull and compost are good to eat!

In the section on pests, the book details the damage each type inflicts on the plant and offers effective organic methods for their control. Whitman also encourages readers to embrace beneficial insects and describes how to attract and support them. One feature I particularly appreciate is that key words in each chapter are bolded, followed by a definition providing intext enlightenment without the need to jump to the glossary.

More than half of the book is devoted to growing specific plants from asparagus to watermelon, arranged alphabetically by common name across 370 pages. For each plant, Whitman includes cultural information, culinary uses, the nutrition facts for each, lengthy lists of available varieties, and relevant commentary. Even the most advanced vegetable grower will find new and useful information.

This is not a book for armchair reading—you'll need a sturdy table to handle its nearly six-pound weight! But those six pounds will provide you with a single, encyclopedic source of detailed, time-tested, organic gardening advice that will help you raise your best produce yet.

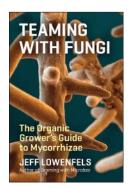
-Keith Crotz

Keith Crotz lives in Chillicothe, Illinois, where he has retired from intensive vegetable production after 34 years. He serves as a board member of Seed Savers Exchange.

#### Teaming with Fungi

Jeff Lowenfels. Timber Press, Portland, OR, 2017. 172 pages. Publisher's price, hardcover: \$24.95.

MOST PLANTS form beneficial associations known as mycorrhizae with certain soil-dwelling fungi. The word mycorrhizae



comes from Greek—"myco" for fungus, and "rhizae" for roots—because these interactions involve these two elements. Jeff Lowenfels's new book, *Teaming with Fungi: The Organic Gardener's Guide to Mycorrhizae*, is a thorough yet accessible look at mycorrhizal fungi and their critical role in plant health and survival.

Lowenfels has written two other books: *Teaming with Microbes* (2010) and *Teaming with Nutrients* (2013). He

urges readers to peruse "them all if you want to understand how plants, mycorrhizal fungi and other microbes, and nutrients interact in the soil—they are all interrelated parts of the soil food web." For those readers starting with his newest book, however, I wish he had presented a little more of the basics of the soil food web here so one could dive in with a firmer understanding of the larger ecological context for mycorrhizae.

That said, I advise that you settle into a comfortable chair as Lowenfels delves into some serious science. He begins with important definitions for fungal terms such as hypha, glomalin, septa, and others needed to comprehend mycorrhizae and how they work. He also explains types of mycorrhizal fungi that colonize various plant families; examples include Ericaceae (heathers and heaths), Orchidaceae (orchids), and members of Monotropaceae (Indian pipes, *Monotropa* spp.).

Next, Lowenfels spends a healthy number of pages explaining why, when, and how mycorrhizae are leveraged in agriculture, horticulture, silviculture, hydroponics, and lawncare. He also includes a chapter on how to collect and culture your own mycorrhizal fungi for inoculation purposes. The final sections comprise a resource list, further reading, and an index—but no glossary or citations.

Mycorrhizal fungi are an important but still poorly understood aspect of gardening. I recommend this book for the intermediate to advanced gardener, and certainly for anyone who grows plants professionally.

-Robert Kourik

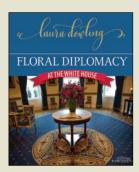
Robert Kourik is the author of 16 books on sustainable gardening, the most recent is Understanding Roots, Discover How to Make Your Garden Flourish (Metamorphic Press, 2015).

#### **GARDENER'S BOOKS**

## Floral Inspiration

CPRING MAY BRING a profusion of colorful flowers and fresh foliage to our gardens, but indoor floral arrangements can bring this abundance into your home in any season. Whether you're thinking of dipping your toes into floral design or would like some inspiration to break out of a design rut, these recently published books will certainly awaken your imagination.

In Floral Diplomacy at the White House (Stichting Kunstboek bvba,



2017, \$45), Laura Dowling shares her experience serving as chief floral designer for the White House from 2009

2015. The book offers an insider's look into Dowling's process of creating arrangements for countless holidays, and diplomatic events. Often, the featured arrangements were intended to convey deeper, symbolic messages that reflected the intentions of the White House specific to each event.

Louesa Roebuck and Sarah Lonsdale's Foraged Flora (Ten Speed Press, 2016,



\$40) bursts with stunning, full-page photographs by Laurie Frankel of enchanting arrangements that celebrate nature's beauty through the

seasons. Each month of the year gets a chapter, featuring arrangements composed entirely of foraged and gleaned flowers from around Roebuck and Lonsdale's homes in California. The authors' musings on discovering beauty all around them and their philosophy of foraging provide plenty of food for thought.

Portrait photographs of gorgeous bouquets or the individual flowers that



compose them grace almost every page of The Flower Book (DK, 2017, \$40) by Rachel Siegfried, a floral designer and cut-flower

grower in England. The book opens with a chapter detailing Siegfried's design process, informed by how plants grow naturally. Detailed profiles of her favorite seasonal blooms follow-60 in all— complete with buying, growing, and display advice for each.

—Julia Polentes, Editorial Intern



## **REGIONAL HAPPENINGS**

## Horticultural Events from Around the Country

#### NORTHEAST

CT. MA. ME. NH. NY. RI. VT

**RAP** APR. 1–23. **Spring Flower Exhibit.**Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens.
Buffalo, NY. (716) 827-1584.

www.buffalogardens.com.

**RAP** APR. 4. **Drought-Tolerant Plants for Shady Tree Beds.** Workshop. Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Brooklyn, NY. (718) 623-7200. *www.bbg.org.* 

APR. 4. **The Wild Seed Project.** Lecture. Merryspring Nature Center. Camden, ME. (207) 236-2239. *www.merryspring.org.* 

APR. 22. **Great Gardens and Landscaping Symposium.** Woodstock Inn & Resort. Woodstock, VT. (207) 502-7228. www.pyours.com/symposium.

**RAP** APR. 22–0CT. 29. **Chihuly.** Art exhibit. New York Botanical Garden. Bronx, NY. (718) 817-8700. www.nybg.org.

**RAP** APR. 22 & 23. **Hydrangea Pruning Workshop.** Heritage Museum & Gardens. Sandwich, MA. (508) 888-3300. www.heritagemuseumandgardens.org.

**RAP** APR. 30. **Earth Gardens & the Seeds of Life: Planting a Traditional Garden.**Workshop. Justin Morrill State Historic Site Gardens. Strafford, VT. (802) 765-4288.

www.morrillhomestead.org.

#### Looking ahead

**RAP** MAY 6. Spring Ephemeral Wildflowers of the Northeast. Class. Berkshire Botanical Garden. Stockbridge, MA. (413) 298-3926. www.berkshirebotanical.org.

#### MID-ATLANTIC DC, DE, MD, NJ, PA, VA, WV

**RAP** APR. 1. **Pruning Workshop with the Gardeners of Bamboo Brook.** The Frelinghuysen Arboretum. Morristown, NJ. (973)
326-7601. *www.arboretumfriends.org.* 

APR. 15 & 16. **Daffodil Show.** Washington Daffodil Society. Fairfax, VA. (703) 273-2250. www.thewashingtondaffodilsociety.org.

APR. 22 & 23. **Spring Plant Sale and Earth Day Celebration.** Leonard J. Buck Garden. Far Hills, NJ. (908) 234-2677. www.somersetcountyparks.org. Botanical gardens and arboreta that participate in AHS's Reciprocal Admissions Program are identified with the *RAP* 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.ahsgardening.org/rap.* 

APR. 22–29. **Historic Garden Week**. House and garden tours. Garden Club of Virginia. Various locations, VA. (804) 644-7776. www.vagardenweek.org.

**RAP** APR. 24. **Nature's Interconnections: Spring Ephemerals.** Guided walk. Adkins Arboretum. Ridgely, MD. (410) 634-2847. www.adkinsarboretum.org.

**RAP** APR. 29. **Arbor Day Tree Sale.** Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park. Erie, PA. (814) 453-5323. *www.leaferie.org.* 

#### Looking ahead

**RAP** MAY 5 & 6. **Spring PlantFest Plant Sale.** Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Richmond, VA. (804) 262-9887. *www.lewisginter.org*.

MAY 19. Smithsonian Botanical Symposium: "Exploring the Natural World: Plants, People and Places." National Museum of Natural History and the U.S. Botanic Garden. Washington, D.C. (202) 633-1000. www.botany.si.edu.

#### SOUTHEAST

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

**RAP** APR. 1. **Spring Plant Sale.** Sarah P. Duke Gardens. Durham, NC. (919) 684-3698. www.gardens.duke.edu.

APR. 1–30. Whispering Wings Butterfly Experience. Exhibit. Brookgreen Gardens. Murrell's Inlet, SC. (843) 235-6000. www.brookgreen.org.

**RAP** APR. 6–8. **Spring Plant Sale.** Wing Haven. Charlotte, NC. (704) 331-0664. www.winghavengardens.org.

**RAP** APR. 8. Epic Tomatoes for Southeastern Gardens. Seminar. Huntsville Botanical Garden. Huntsville, AL. (256) 830-4447. www.hsvbg.org. **RAP** APR. 22. **Annual Plant Sale.** Western Kentucky Botanical Garden. Owensboro, KY. (270) 852-8925. *www.wkbg.org.* 

APR. 24. The Importance of Evergreens in the Garden. Lecture. The American Hydrangea Society. Atlanta, GA. (404) 814-4000. www.americanhydrangeasociety.org.

**RAP** APR. 29. **Spring Plant Sale.** Smith-Gilbert Gardens. Kennesaw, GA. (770) 919-0248. *www.smithgilbertgardens.com.* 

#### Looking ahead

RAP MAY 13–0CT. 29. Winged Wonders: Step into the World of Butterflies. Exhibit. The North Carolina Arboretum. Asheville, NC. (828) 665-2492. www.ncarboretum.org.

**RAP** MAY 25. **Planting for Pollinators.** Class. Boone County Arboretum. Union, KY. (859) 384-4999. *www.bcarboretum.org.* 

#### **NORTH CENTRAL**

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

**RAP** APR. 22. **The Basics of Growing Roses.** Class. Holden Arboretum. Kirtland, OH. (440) 946-4400. www.holdenarb.org.

**RAP** APR. 22. **Spring Affair.** Plant sale. Nebraska Statewide Arboretum. Lincoln, NE. (402) 472-2971. *www.plantnebraska.org.* 

**RAP** APR. 22 & 23. **Woodland Wildflower** and Tree Sale. Lincoln Memorial Garden. Springfield, IL. (217) 529-1111. www.lincolnmemorialgarden.org.

**RAP** APR. 29. **Arbor Day Festival.** The Dawes Arboretum. Newark, OH. (740) 323-2355. *www.dawesarb.org.* 

#### Looking ahead

**RAP** MAY 6 & 7. **Plant Sale.** Iowa Arboretum. Madrid, IA. (515) 795-3216. www.iowaarboretum.org.

**RAP** MAY 6. **Spring Garden School.** Workshop. Seed Savers Exchange. Decorah, IA. (563) 382-5990. *www.seedsavers.org.* 

**RAP** MAY 6 & 7. **Central States Dahlia Society.** Chicago Botanic Garden. Glencoe, IL. (847) 835-5440. *www.chicagobotanic.org.* 

**RAP** MAY 11–14. Spring Garden Festival **2017.** Greater Des Moines Botanical Gar-

den. Des Moines, IA. (515) 323-6290. www.dmbotanicalgarden.com.

#### SOUTH CENTRAL

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

RAP APR. 1. Integrated Pest Management. Class. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. Austin, TX. (512) 232-0100. www.wildflower.org.

RAP APR. 8 & 9. South Texas Botanical Gardens Orchid Show. South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center. Corpus Christi, TX. (361) 852-2100. www.stxbot.org.

RAP APR. 11. Butterfly Gardening Class. Botanical Garden of the Ozarks. Fayetteville, AR. (479) 750-2620. www.bgozarks.org.

APR. 20-22. National Society for Louisiana Irises Convention. Dallas, TX. (214) 352-2191. www.irises-dallas.org.

#### Looking ahead

RAP MAY 5 & 6. Spring Plant Sale. Overland Park Arboretum & Botanical Gardens. Overland Park, KS. (913) 685-3604. www.opkansas.org.

AZ, CO, NM, UT

RAP APR. 7-9. Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale. Desert Botanical

## Chagall Art Exhibition at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in Florida

THE MARIE SELBY Botanical Gardens in Sarasota, Florida, is celebrating the artwork of Marc Chagall and the nature that inspired it with a six-month-long ex-



The Lovers by Marc Chagall

hibition running through July. "Marc Chagall, Flowers, and the French Riviera: The Color of Dreams" features two paintings from a private collection that have never been publicly exhibited, as well as The Lovers (1937), on loan from the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Archival photographs and Chagall's personal possessions are also on display, along with multiple reproductions of his stained glass work showcased among the plant collections in Selby's glass conservatory. Various floral displays evoke the dreamlike world of Chagall's artwork, such as "floating oil jars where orchids and bromeliads are 'poured' out, plus a 'starry sky' created by tillandsia floating from the ceiling," says Jennifer Rominiecki, Selby's president and CEO.

Outside in the gardens, the horticultural team spent months designing and building vignettes reminiscent of the South of France, the surroundings that inspired Chagall during the later years of his life. For example, the vibrant purple blankets of blooming salvias call to mind France's fields of lavender. Cultural performances, classes, and lectures are taking place throughout the exhibition. Visit www.selby.org for more information.

-Julia Polentes, Editorial Intern



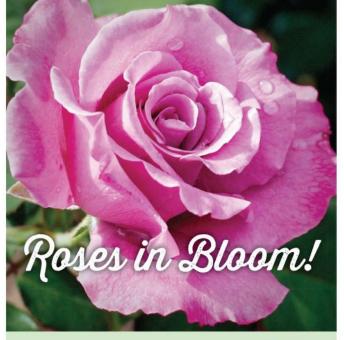


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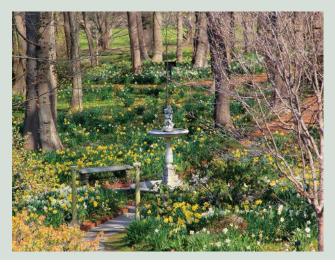
## Spring Celebrations from Coast to Coast

AS BULBS AND other spring ephemerals burst into bloom, festivals around the country celebrate spring in spectacular ways. Here are a few options to consider attending this year.



The Skagit Valley Tulip Festival, held during the month of April, has no central location; instead, visitors drive through fields—such as the one shown above—between the towns of La Conner and Mount Vernon, Washington, to view 350 acres of tulips. The tulips, grown by RoozenGaarde/Washington Bulb Co., Inc., and Tulip Town, begin blooming on a date that varies from year to year—you can find "bloom updates" online—and last for about three weeks. A multitude of tulip-related events run concurrently throughout the Skagit Valley. For more information, visit www.tulipfestival.org.

**Dallas Blooms**, shown right, is a Texas-sized spring extravaganza at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden. Running until April 9, this year's event features more than half a million spring-blooming bulbs and other plants that bring the theme, "Peace, Love and Flower Power," to life. Master Gardeners will lead special tours throughout the displays, and weekends are packed with related events including a '60s music festival. Toward the end of April, the garden's 3,000 azaleas provide a fitting finale for the garden's colorful spring display. For more information, visit www.dallasarboretum.org.





Beginning around mid-April, more than 50,000 daffodils herald the start of "Gateway to Spring," shown left, at Blithewold Mansion, Gardens & Arboretum in Bristol, Rhode Island. This chorus of color continues through May as hyacinths, tulips, Spanish bluebells, ornamental onions, and countless flowering trees join in the symphony. Garden guests can avail themselves of various special events coinciding with these displays, such as guided walks or 'Daffodils at Dusk,' a soirée complete with refreshments, live jazz, and a scavenger hunt. For more information, visit www.blithewold.org.

—Julia Polentes, Editorial Intern

Garden. Phoenix, AZ. (480) 941-1225. www.dbg.org.

**RAP** APR. 11 & 18. Waterwise Landscapes. Class, Red Butte Garden, Salt Lake City, UT. (801) 585-0556. www.redbuttegarden.org.

**RAP** APR. 15. Habitat Hero: Wildscaping 101 + Plant Walk. Class. The Gardens on Spring Creek. Fort Collins, CO. (970) 416-2486. www.fcgov.com/gardens.

RAP APR. 29. Trees for Santa Fe. Class. Santa Fe Botanical Garden. Santa Fe, NM. (505) 471-9103. www.santafebotanicalgarden.org.

#### Looking ahead

**RAP** MAY 12 & 13. Spring Plant Sale. Red Butte Garden. Salt Lake City, UT. (801) 585-0556. www.redbuttegarden.org.

**RAP** MAY 15. Workshop: Perennial Dividing and Planting. Betty Ford Alpine Gardens. Vail, CO. (970) 476-0103. www.bettyfordalpinegardens.org.

## **WEST COAST**

CA, HI, NV

APR. 5-9. San Francisco Flower & Garden Show. San Mateo, CA. (415) 684-7278. www.sfgardenshow.com.

**RAP** APR. 6. Tending a Native Garden. Class. Regional Parks Botanic Garden. Berkeley, CA. (510) 544-3169. www.nativeplants.org.

RAP APR. 8. Medicinal and Edible Plants of SoCal. Talk. Fullerton Arboretum. Fullerton, CA. (657) 278-3407. www.fullertonarboretum.org.

**RAP** APR. 22 & 23. Earth Day & Botanic Bling. Garden market and activities. Descanso Gardens. La Cañada Flintridge, CA. (818) 949-4200. www.descansogardens.org.

RAP APR. 22 & 23. John Druecker Memorial Rhododendron Show. Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens. Fort Bragg, CA. (707) 964-4352. www.gardenbythesea.org.

#### Looking ahead

MAY 6. Monterey Bay Rose Society Annual Rose Show. Watsonville, CA. (831) 722-7958. www.montereybayrosesociety.org.

#### NORTHWEST

AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY

APR. 15 & 16. Hortlandia. Plant and art sale. The Hardy Plant Society of Oregon. Portland, OR. (503) 224-5718. www.hardyplantsociety.org.

RAP APR. 20. What's Eating My Vegetable

Garden? Class. Idaho Botanical Garden. Boise, ID. (208) 343-8649. www.idaho botanicalgarden.org.

RAP APR. 27. Introduction to Organic Gardening for Herbs, Vegetables, and Fruits. Class. Bellevue Botanical Garden. Bellevue, WA. (425) 452-2750. www.bellevuebotanical.org.

APR. 29 & 30. Glide Wildflower Show. Glide, OR. (541) 498-2268. www.glidewildflowershow.org.

#### Looking ahead

**RAP** MAY 11–JUNE 1. Local Wildflower Class. Alaska Botanical Garden. Anchorage, AK. (907) 770-3692. www.alaskabg.org.

#### CANADA

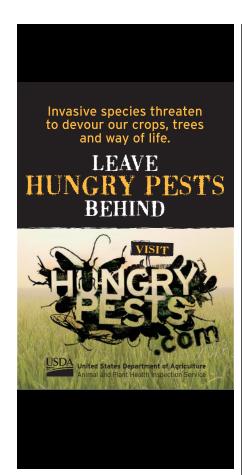
RAP APR. 29. Plant Faire. Plant sale, educational sessions. Royal Botanical Gardens. Burlington, ON. (800) 649-4769. www.rbg.ca.

#### Looking ahead

MAY 12–22. Canadian Tulip Festival. Ottawa, ON. (800) 668-8547. www.tulipfestival.ca.

**RAP** MAY 13. Converting Lawn to Native Meadow Workshop. Horticulture Centre of the Pacific. Victoria, BC. (250) 479-6162. www.hcp.ca.

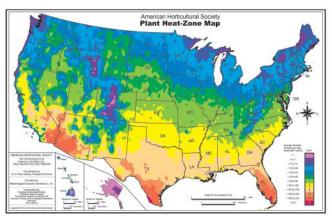






### PRONUNCIATIONS AND PLANTING ZONES

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.

Aesculus pavia ES-kyew-lus PAY-vee-uh (USDA Hardiness Zones 4-8, AHS Heat Zones 8-1)

**A. pavia var. flavescens** A. PAY-vee-uh var. flay-VESS-enz (5–9, 9–5)

Basella alba buh-SEL-uh AL-buh (10-11, 11-5)

**Callaem macropterum** kah-LAY-ee-um ma-CROP-ter-um (8–11, 11–6)

Cassia bakeriana KASS-ee-uh bay-ker-ee-AH-na (9–11, 12–9)

Cercis canadensis SUR-siss kan-uh-DEN-siss (5-8, 8-1)

**Chionanthus virginicus** ky-o-NAN-thus vir-JIN-ih-kus (4–9, 9–1)

**C. retusus** C. reh-T00-suss (5–9, 9–3)

**Cobaea scandens** koh-BEE-yuh SKAN-denz (9–11, 11–4)

**Cochliasanthus caracalla** kok-lee-ah-SAN-thus kair-uh-KAL-uh (9–11, 11–5)

Cornus florida KOR-nus FLOR-ih-duh (5-8, 8-3)

**C. mas** C. MAHS (5-8, 8-5)

**Gardenia jasminoides** gar-DEEN-ee-uh jaz-mih-NOY-deez (8–10, 12–1)

Halesia diptera hal-EEZ-yuh DIP-ter-uh (5-8, 8-5)

H. tetraptera H. teh-TRAP-ter-uh (4-8, 8-4)

**Lablab purpureus** LAB-lab pur-PUR-ee-us (9–11, 12–6)

*Lathyrus odoratus* LATH-ih-rus o-doh-RAY-tus (0–0, 8–1)

*Lindera benzoin* Iin-DAIR-uh BEN-zo-in (4–9, 8–1)

**L. obtusiloba** L. ahb-T00-sih-lo-buh (4–9, 8–1)

*Magnolia* × *soulangeana* mag-NOLE-yuh soo-lan-jee-AN-uh (5–9, 9–5)

Monarda fistulosa moh-NAR-duh fis-tyew-LO-suh (3-9, 9-1)

**M. punctata** M. punk-TAY-tuh (3–9, 9–1)

**Phaseolus coccineus** fas-see-O-luss kok-SIN-ee-us (9–11, 11–4)

Pseudogynoxys chenopodioides soo-doh-jih-NOX-iss chen-o-po-dee-OY-deez (9-11, 12-7)

Sassafras albidum SASS-uh-frass AL-bih-dum (4–8, 8–3)

**Sophora secundiflora** so-FOR-uh seh-kun-dih-FLOR-uh (8–10, 12–7)

**Spinacia oleracea** spin-AY-see-uh o-luh-RAY-see-uh (0–0, 8–1)

**Tetragonia tetragonioides** teh-truh-GO-nee-uh teh-truh-GO-nee-oy-deez (0–0, 12–1)

**Tropaeolum peregrinum** tro-PEE-o-lum pair-eh-GRY-num (9–10, 10–5)

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## PLANT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

## Gardenia—Belle of the Garden

by Margene Whitler Hucek

ARDENIAS ARE not easy to grow in most parts of the country, but their intensely fragrant flowers and beautiful glossy, deep green leaves make them irresistible

to many gardeners. Native to Asia, gardenia (Gardenia jasminoides, USDA Hardiness Zones 8–10, AHS Heat Zones 12-1) is a slow-growing evergreen shrub that reaches five feet tall with a similar spread. Its waxy flowers, which bloom in late spring or summer, are up to four inches in diameter, range from pure white to ivory, and are single or double, depending on the cultivar.

Gardenias can grow outdoors year round in regions with mild winters, such as the Deep South, but elsewhere, they are best grown in containers that spend summers out-

doors and are brought indoors in winter. Luckily for gardenia fans, breeders are developing selections that better withstand low temperatures. I live in central Virginia (USDA Hardiness Zones 6b to 7a) and had not been able to grow a gardenia outdoors over winter until the introduction of 'Frostproof', a fairly new cultivar that is hardy to zero to 10 degrees Fahrenheit (F). Other cold-tolerant cultivars include 'Kleim's Hardy' and 'Chuck Hayes'.

#### PLANTING AND GROWING OUTDOORS

Site gardenias in part or light dappled shade and consistently moist, well-drained, acidic soil with a pH of 5.5 to 6.5. Once plants are established, apply a fertilizer for acid-loving plants in mid-March and again in June. Do not fertilize in the fall.

Gardenias prefer to be planted high in the ground. Because their roots grow near the surface, remove weeds by handpulling only. If necessary, prune to retain a plant's shape immediately after summer flowering. Because gardenias set their flower buds for May blooms in late July and early August, be sure to finish all pruning by mid-July.



'Kleim's Hardy' is a cold-tolerant gardenia that can be grown north of USDA Hardiness Zone 8.

Sooty mold on leaves often indicates the presence of sapsucking insects such as whiteflies and aphids, which excrete a substance that supports the growth of mold fungi. If spraying the plant with water doesn't control the problem, use an insecticidal soap.

Bud drop can be caused by a late spring frost, over- or underwatering, low humidity, or not enough sunlight.

#### Sources

Brighter Blooms Nursery, Fort Mill, SC. www.brighterblooms.com. Jackson & Perkins, Hodges, SC. www.jacksonandperkins.com. Monrovia, Azusa, CA. www.monrovia.com.

In Zones 6 and 7, choose one of the cold-hardy selections and situate plants in sheltered locations—such as near a fence or building. Some gardeners in these cool-winter regions also cover their plants

with mulch during the coldest months for an added layer of protection. Plants may die back to the ground, but survivors will put out fresh growth in spring.

#### A DEMANDING HOUSEPLANT

Many of us have been captivated by a lush, blooming gardenia at a local garden center and brought it home, only to have it fail. Unfortunately, gardenias are very difficult to grow indoors without a greenhouse or sun room, but if you are inclined to try, here are a few tips: Provide a bright location—a south- or east-facing window, away from drafts, is ideal. Keep the daytime tempera-

ture between 65 to 70 degrees F and night temperatures below 65 degrees F. Apply a fertilizer for acid-loving plants when in full growth. Move the plant outdoors to dappled shade during the summer or, if kept indoors, provide some shade with a curtain or blind.

A lack of adequate humidity indoors invites spider mite, mealybug, and whitefly infestations. To boost moisture levels, grow your gardenia elevated on pebbles in a tray of water, mist the plant daily, or place it among other plants. If you see any sign of infestation, spray the plant well with water or use an insecticidal soap.

To avoid bud and leaf drop, keep the soil consistently moist, but not soggy. While gardenias do require more attention than most houseplants, having a healthy one in full fragrant bloom is possible—and well worth the effort.

Margene Whitler Hucek is a freelance writer living in Keswick, Virginia.

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