



Perennial Notes

January 2011

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society—an unincorporated nonprofit association

WHPS COMING EVENTS!

All regular meetings are 6:30 social time, 7:00 p.m. program at Olbrich Gardens Commons, 3330 Atwood Avenue, Madison, unless otherwise noted.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, February 11-13, 2011

WHPS Booth at the WPT Garden Expo. WHPS will once again have a booth at the Garden Expo. We'll also be sponsoring a presentation at noon on February 12 by Dr. Laura Jull, UW-Madison Associate Professor and Extension Specialist for Woody Ornamentals—**Low Maintenance Woody Plants for the Home Landscape. You can be a part of the Expo by volunteering for 2 1/2 hours at the booth.** It's a great chance to catch up with friends and encourage others to join our organization. Email Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com.

Wednesday, February 16, 2011, *Just What is Micro-propagation?*

Just what is tissue culture? How has it affected what gardeners find in new plant materials? Does it really affect plant vigor as many think? In the 1970s, Dr. Deborah McCown started Knight Hollow Nursery, Inc., a high-technology business in Middleton specializing in the cloning of elite germplasm for the nursery industry, in order to produce rhododendrons and azaleas for northern Midwestern gardens. That focus expanded and today Knight Hollow produces over 100 different plant clones. Dr. McCown will demystify micro-propagation for us in this talk.

Wednesday, March 16, 2011, *Rock Garden Plants, an Integral Part of an Interesting Garden*

(Joint meeting with the WI-IL Rock Garden Society). Betty Ann Addison, long-time grower of rare plants—especially rock garden alpiners, but including perennials, wildflowers, conifers and rhododendrons—will bring photos of the finest specimens and show us how to use them with garden plants in the landscape. Choosing a site, using rock, preparing soil, background and companion plantings and use of water features will be illustrated and explained. A garden integrating evergreens, rocks, alpiners, groundcovers and flowering shrubs in suitable habitats make for good looking, lower-maintenance gardens that are interesting year round. Owner of Rice Creek Gardens for over 40 years, she is now landscaping with her new company, Gardens of Rice Creek, where she designs and builds out-of-the-ordinary landscapes. A small alpine nursery at her home is open most Saturdays in season. GardensofRiceCreek.com.

Wednesday, April 20, 2011, *The WHPS England Road Show*

Every other year, the WHPS offers a trip to England. Many of us have heard attendees talk about the fabulous sites visited and now we get to see them through the eyes of one of our most respected horticulturists, Jeff Epping, Director of Horticulture for Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Anyone who has heard Jeff talk will know that we will see lush images with a

lively commentary. Whether you are thinking about attending the next trip or you just want an armchair tour of fabulous English gardens from the perspective of a horticulturist, this talk will be inspiring. We know you will take some ideas away for the 2011 season!

Saturday, May 14, 2011, WHPS Plant Sale. 9-noon at West Madison Agricultural Research Station. It's a perfect time to pick up plants for your garden that you know will do well in our area. Plan to donate plants, or if you have a lot to donate, have a dig. or volunteer to help at a dig. We'll be setting up for the sale the day before and volunteers are needed for a variety of duties that day, as well as the day of the sale. Email sone2@aol.com with questions/to volunteer.

Saturday, May 21, 2011. *Buying Spree at Klehm's Song Sparrow Nursery* 9:00-10:30 a.m., 13101 East Rye Road, Avalon, WI.

2011 GARDEN TOURS

Wednesday, May 11, 2011 WHPS Garden Tours, Midvale Area. We'll visit the gardens of Ruth Cadoret, Rhoda Braunschweig, Lois Kinlen, Phyllis Lathrope, Ted Streseman and Vic Wayland.

Thursday, July 14, 2011 WHPS Garden Tours, West Side of Middleton. We'll tour the gardens of Betsy True, Ron Meerhoff/Michael Rhoads, Conrad Wrzesinski, Linda Grosz and Jennifer Ondrejka

2011 TRIPS (look for brochure mailing in April)

June 4-5—A bus trip to Green Bay/Sturgeon Bay area.

July 20-24—Gardens in northern Ohio.

September 17—One-day bus trip to the Rockford, Illinois area.

Dues Due by March 1, 2011

Those of you who paid dues ONLY through 2010 have received your Membership Renewal Form. Please pay your 2011 dues by March 1, 2011.

If you have already paid your dues through 2011, you will not receive a dues renewal form.

Have you visited our website?
www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.com

Other Events of Note

Rotary Botanical Gardens 8th Annual Spring Symposium

Your Garden: Maximized! March 26, 2011

Parker Education Center (7:45 am–4:00 p.m.), Registration begins at 7:00 a.m. See www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org under the "Events" section for more details including itinerary, speaker biographies, registration information and a pre-event option on Friday night.

Featured Speakers and Topics include: Jeff Epping (Olbrich Botanical Gardens) "Small Trees with Big Impact"; Doreen Howard (Author, Garden Writer, Photographer) "Heirloom Edibles for Containers and Small Spaces"; Ed Lyon (Allen Centennial Gardens) "Stunning Plants for Dazzling Effects in Limited-Space Gardens"; Mark Dwyer (Rotary Botanical Gardens) "Landscape Design Tips for the Smaller Garden"

This event will also include snacks, beverages, silent auction items, freebies and a delicious lunch.

Call Mark Dwyer at (608) 754-1779 with any questions.

Another great year WHPS Fiscal Year ending 10-31-2010

Income

Present Year		Last Year
6,905.00	Membership	5,630.00
6,538.00	Plant Sale	7,092.00
75.00	Misc. Income	216.00

Expenses

6,000.00	Donations	5,500.00
4,932.00	Speakers	1,340.00
768.00	Plant Sale	560.00
2,083.00	Newsletter, office supplies, postage, Expo	3,357.00

The bank balance as of 10-31-2010 is \$17,626.00.

The society's membership as of 12-31-2010 is 647.

During the December 2010 business meeting the membership voted to distribute \$6,000 for donations. They are paid out early January 2011, bringing the account down to \$11,626.00.

Donations

\$2,000	Olbrich Gardens
\$1,000	Longenecker Gardens Endowment Fund
\$1,000	Janesville Rotary Gardens
\$1,000	Allen Centennial Gardens
\$500	West Madison Ag Research Station
\$500	Secrest Arboretum-Wooster, Ohio

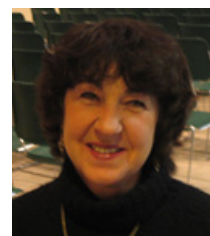
These donations are made with proceeds from the Annual Plant Sale. Memberships pay speakers and other expenses.

—Diane Scharkey and Jane LaFlash

Many thanks to our members for their continued membership and for supporting the plant sale with plant donations and shopping!

Thank you Rita!

Rita Thomas is stepping down from the board after many years of service. WHPS would like to thank Rita for creating and maintaining our initial website. She has also been invaluable in helping with the Garden Expo booth and the plant sale. Rita will remain an active member of WHPS.



We also want to welcome two new board members—Linda Marx and Eleanor Rodini—and look forward to their participation!

Plant Family Tree May Help Identify Species Vulnerable to Invaders, Climate Change

From UW Press Release

UW-Madison botany professors Ken Cameron, Thomas Givnish, Kenneth Sytsma and Don Waller have been awarded a five-year, \$2.93 million grant from the National Science Foundation to study shifts in Wisconsin plant diversity. They will take advantage of Wisconsin's variable landscape and vegetation, as well as a treasure trove of data from surveys conducted more than 50 years ago to explore the roots of plant biodiversity and its role in allowing plant communities to respond to global change.

They will attempt to develop a far more complete picture of Wisconsin's plants' evolutionary history, their physical traits, and how these affect the way plant species respond to shifts in landscape structure, neighboring species, and climate change.

Key to their project are records of extensive surveys of sites across Wisconsin collected by UW-Madison ecologist John Curtis and his students, starting in the 1940s. The team has re-surveyed more than 350 forest and prairie plots, providing an exceptionally detailed picture of ecological change.

"Here in Wisconsin, we have the luxury of being able to track plant species dynamics for hundreds of species across more than 350 sites," says Cameron, director of the Wisconsin State Herbarium. "Comparing the past and present and using some genetics, we will try to predict where biodiversity is going in the future."

The researchers are using genetic bar-coding—sequencing several key genes—to construct a phylogenetic ("family") tree for all 2,500 native and introduced plant species growing in Wisconsin. The tree will contribute to a wider "tree of life" for all North American plants and give the Wisconsin team a tool to analyze how genetic connections and diverging physical characteristics affect the distributions of plant species over sites. Several hundred species are being scored on up to 50 significant traits, allowing the researchers to judge their relative importance in determining plant distributions and changes in abundance.

Better understanding these patterns of genetic variation will also help ecologists judge which characteristics leave plant populations vulnerable to further changes in landscapes and climate. That knowledge may be useful around the globe.

—Submitted by Jill Hynum

Ed Hasselkus—a growing legacy

Most members of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society are convinced that Ed Hasselkus literally knows everyone in the world of horticulture. While that's not really true, it's not completely implausible either. Ed's been actively involved with horticulture since his UW undergraduate days in the 1950's. By his own admission, he's "influenced the lives and careers of about 3,000 students over 33 years"—a feat he ranks among his proudest achievements.

If Ed knows a lot of plant people on a first name basis, the same is true of plants themselves. Since 1966, Ed has been the Curator of the Longenecker Horticultural Gardens at the UW-Madison Arboretum, where he watches over a research collection of woody plants numbering in the thousands. It is an outdoor laboratory where Ed—and many of those former students—have planted dozens of trees and shrubs, watching them prosper or perish.

For Ed, it's all about living with plants, taking notes on his observations, all the while searching for the best form, best fruit or foliage color, the most disease resistant, the fastest growing specimens. He's still hard at it sixteen years after he officially retired from the UW. Ed points out that he's "planting as heavily" at Longenecker as he ever did.

More than that, he's still "critically looking at plants," and in 2010 actually de-accessioned more plants than he added to the gardens. Among the plants that didn't make the grade were a lilac that "sprawled" and a crabapple with "too many water sprouts." If Ed didn't like those traits, he knew landscape professionals and home gardeners would like them even less.

But Ed has also had legendary successes with Longenecker plants like Whitespire and White Satin™ birches, and continues to nurse new plants through the long process from discovery to market. Among the latest introductions about to make horticultural hay is 'Northern Glow™' Maple. In 1979 Ed started with the seed of what was an apparent *Acer pseudosieboldianum* (Korean Maple) from the Arnold Arboretum. He's had a longtime interest in this particular maple and always tries to acquire new accessions when he can. As it grew, Ed noticed three important differences about this Korean maple:

- * It had hybrid vigor and thus was not so slow growing
- * It had very deeply incised leaves
- * It had bronze leaf color in Spring

All of these characteristics made it an ideal candidate for the commercial nursery trade; so Ed sent cuttings to a major grower in the Pacific Northwest for further evaluation. J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. liked what they saw, built up their stock of Ed's maple, and ultimately introduced it to the nursery trade. Thirty years after acquiring the original seed, Ed's maple is making a splash. It was selected for inclusion in the 2010 New Varieties Showcase of the Farwest Show, a collaboration of Northwest breeders, growers, landscape designers and contractors. Here's how they described it:

'Northern Glow™' Maple

Acer pseudosieboldianum x *palmatum* 'Hasselkus'

Introduced and offered by J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co

Selected by Dr. Ed Hasselkus, professor emeritus,

University of Wisconsin-Madison

A small ornamental tree that combines the grace of a Japanese maple with the cold hardiness of a Korean maple. A choice tree for courtyards and small gardens in northern climates where Japanese maples have failed to thrive. Refined, deeply cut green leaves clothe an upright and spreading tree that will eventually grow to 20 feet tall by 24 feet wide. Foliage turns bright orange-red to deep red in autumn. Grow in full sun to part sun in slightly acid, well-drained soil with average moisture.

You may have noticed that the original plant bears Ed's name. Although members of the WHPS would rush to buy a plant labeled 'Hasselkus,' that's not generally the case with most members of the plant purchasing public. That means plants get renamed with sales potential in mind. So Schmidt's employees came up with the maple's trademarked moniker: Northern Glow™. Ed's name is still there for those who know where to look and who understand plant naming conventions. If you want to buy it, however, you'll have to ask for it by its new name.

When the WHPS visited Klehm's Song Sparrow Nursery last May, Roy Klehm noted that he hopes to offer Northern Glow™ in 2011. Klehm's is one of the few nurseries where you could probably ask about Professor Ed's new maple and they would know who and what you meant.

Roy, a long-time friend of Ed, usually comes to Longenecker each year to visit him and see how all the plants are doing — and if any of them might have commercial potential. Roy is also one of the few nurserymen who has named plants in honor of Ed and clearly indicates it in his catalog descriptions. There's a red-violet Hemerocallis (daylily) with "precise white, wire-edged ruffling" called 'Gentle Ed', *Aronia melanocarpa* (black chokeberry) 'Professor Ed' and *Nyssa sylvatica* (Black Tupelo) 'Carolyn,' a tree named for Ed's granddaughter.

— Linda Brazill

Blog: Each Little World

<http://eachlittleworld.typepad.com>

Woody Plant Introductions from Ed Hasselkus

Amelanchier x grandiflora 'Strata'

Betula populifolia 'Whitespire'—Ed notes the original Whitespire birch from 1957 was removed this year because it was "falling apart." He notes that the Whitespire has become much more popular than he ever envisioned; something that failed to happen with the Strata Serviceberry. Ed says that one "got lost in the shuffle" of so many *Amelanchier* introductions happening all at once.

Betula populifolia x White Satin™—The Arboretum's White Satin birch is about 35 years old, and Ed says it shows no birch borer evidence.

Cercis canadensis "Columbus Strain"

Juniperus communis var. *depressa* 'Petite'

continued on next page

Woody Plant Introductions...continued from previous page

Juniperus horizontalis 'Wisconsin'—This was Ed's first introduction 40 years ago and is still for sale in the nursery trade.

Pinus resinosa 'Wissota' – Profs. E.R. Hasselkus & Harold Pellett

Phellodendron lavalleyi 'Longenecker' (Eye Stopper™)—Ed got the seed of this cork tree from an AHS seed exchange. Since it can be invasive, he was looking for a male plant as a way around this potential problem. Mike Yanny of Johnson's Nursery told Ed it was worthy of introduction because it had good fall color and the most "corky" bark. Mike named it. Currently only Johnson's and J. Frank Schmidt nurseries are licensed to grow Eye Stopper. Since its leaves look very similar to ash, sales of this tree are likely to rise significantly as replacement for diseased ash trees.

Ed noted that since the Arboretum has the "finest collection of Ash trees in the state," the Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture offered to get a grant to try to protect them from the ash borer. But Ed prefers to wait and watch to see what happens and learn from the cultivars that survive.

**Got a story idea? A tip?
Know of a member in the news?**

Let us know. Email sone2@aol.com if you have information regarding articles or photos of our members' gardens, or if you'd like to see us do an article on a particular topic. Is there a helpful tip you'd like to share—just send it along.

.....**Member News, Tips, etc.**.....

Online Pleasures

One of my consolations for missing the garden during the long winter months (and, I must admit, during gardening season, too) is to visit garden websites and podcasts. Two of my favorites are **A Way To Garden** (awaytogarden.com), Margaret Roach's marvelous website; and **Garden Rant** (gardenrant.com), another juicy one with lots of links to other websites, etc. I also check out **Robin Hood Radio's podcast**, available on iTunes, where Margaret holds forth on various garden topics with a host every Monday.

—Shirley Dumas

Do you have a favorite website, podcast or blog you'd like to recommend? Just email it to sone2@aol.com

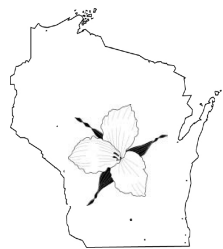
WHPS T-shirts!

At \$10 each, WHPS T-shirts are a real bargain. Sizes currently available are medium and large.

To order a T-Shirt, contact Jane Gahlman at jmgahlman@hotmail.com (or call her at 608-837-2317 and leave a message).

Visit our website:
www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.com

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society



**JANUARY 2011
Newsletter**

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