



# Perennial Notes

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society, Inc.

January 2018



## Wisconsin Garden Expo – Inspiring Visitors for over 25 Years

By Mark Dwyer, Director of Horticulture, Rotary Botanical Gardens, Janesville, WI

I've attended every WPT Garden Expo since 1999 as an interested gardener in need of inspiration, as well as a representative of Rotary Botanical Gardens in Janesville, WI. I have enjoyed watching this event grow and continue to be a much-anticipated event for so many of us. There are folks now driving 5-6+ hours to this event, staying overnight and enjoying the full spectrum of what this event offers. I have also had the privilege of presenting various topics during the educational sessions, where I also shamelessly promote Rotary Botanical Gardens!

This will be the 20th year in a row

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## WHPS coming events!

All regular meetings are at 6:30 pm. social time, 7 pm. program, at Olbrich Gardens Commons, 3330 Atwood Av., Madison unless otherwise noted. The WHPS workshops are free to members unless otherwise noted. Registration is required.

**Sunday, Jan. 21, 2018 – WHPS Potluck Brunch**, Olbrich Gardens Commons. Bring your own utensils and a dish to share: set up time 9:30 am; food line 10:00 am. Water, juice, coffee and tea will be provided. Speaker Jeff Epping of Epping Design and Consulting will review his work on the grounds at Epic in Verona.

**Friday-Sunday, Feb. 9-11, WHPS Booth & Speaker at the Wisconsin Garden Expo.** Stop by the WHPS Booth as you tour the Exhibitions and enjoy *40 Years of Gardening: A Madison Gardener's Reminiscences* with speaker Frank Greer on Sunday, February 11 at 2:15 pm. Frank will discuss his favorite plants, people, places and recommendations for gardening success. More importantly, he will discuss thoughts for preparing garden enjoy-

ment in the final years and simplifying a gardener's world.

**Saturday, Feb. 17, WHPS Workshop: Pruner Clean-Up and Sharpening**, 1:00-3:00 pm. Bring your hand pruners in need of maintenance and learn how to care for them in this informal workshop. WHPS member Betsy True will show how to disassemble, clean, sharpen, and oil your pruners. NOTE: she will discuss general sharpening and upkeep, but the specific brands demonstrated will be ARS, A.M. Leonard, and Felco. Bring your pruners and any maintenance supplies you have. Supplies will also be provided at the workshop.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/whps-workshop-pruner-clean-up-and-sharpening-tickets-41561844596>

**Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2018, Radio Gardening with WI Public Radio host Larry Meiller.** Reminisce with WPR popular Garden Talk host Larry Meiller as he reflects on the radio show history and



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## WHPS Bus Trips for 2018

Details and Brochure will be sent in April

**Saturday, July 7 – Oshkosh area** including the Paine Art Center and Gardens, a nursery, and private gardens.

**Wed-Thurs, July 18-19 – Sheboygan/Manitowoc area** including Christopher Farms, Bookworm Gardens, Solaris Farms-Reeds-

ville; Abler Art Glass Gallery-Kiel, and West of the Lake Garden-Manitowoc.

**Wed-Thurs-Fri, Sept 12-14 – Door County** including Green Bay Botanic Garden, Garden Door, Ridges Sanctuary, nurseries, and private gardens.



Nancy Hogan

see p. 4.



Feverfew

– see p. 6.



2018 Plant of the Year

– see p. 6.

## WHPS coming events (continued from p.1)

how the garden talk program evolved from it. Quite a bit of it is humorous, so we should have fun! He will tell some garden stories but claims he has nothing much close to gardening advice. There's also talk about long-range goals for the garden talk show and he will offer some quick thoughts on public radio in general. Some fun facts about Larry: he once ran an airport in Jamaica for an afternoon; he was run off the road in the middle of nowhere in Pakistan and while there, spent 15 million dollars on a USAID project in 14 days; while in Nicaragua he was accused, at gun point, of working for the CIA; he sat with the pilot and copilot on a passenger plane trip in the Caribbean. Larry Meiller is a Professor emeritus in the Department of Life Sciences Communication (LSC) at UW-Madison and is host of *The Larry Meiller Show*, a 90-minute call-in talk show heard each

weekday at 11 am. on Wisconsin Public Radio. He and his radio guests talk about the environment, health, consumer issues, finance, gardening, and many others. Larry also teaches broadcast classes and advises up to 100 undergraduates. He was the longest-serving faculty member of the UW's student radio station, WSUM, and played a key role in launching the station on air and in developing its organizational structure. Larry lives in Madison with his daughter.

**Monday, Mar. 5 – WHPS Workshop: Seed Starting**, 6:30-8:30 pm. Learn tips for successful seed starting. Save money, grow unusual varieties and get a jump on spring. WHPS member JoAnne Kriege will cover methods for indoor sowing under lights, winter sowing, and hardening off. Come and rub elbows with other gardeners and get seeds to take home with you. Supplies are provided.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/whps-workshop-seed-starting-tickets-41561868668>

**Wednesday, Mar. 21, Head Gardener at Home: A Peek into the Home Garden of Olbrich's Horticulture Director.** Jeff Epping, Director of Horticulture at Olbrich Gardens, will cover the gardening challenges and joys facing every home gardener



and useful designs he's developed to enhance his environment, save time and, of course, add beauty to the yard (no mow grass front yard). Then you'll have the opportunity to visit his home garden along with four other home gardens on a July 11, 2018, WHPS garden tour. Jeff Epping has been Director of Horticulture at Olbrich Botanical Gardens for over 20 years. He oversees the horticultural operations and garden designs of over ten inspirational display gardens, showcasing the best plants for south-central Wisconsin. Epping and his staff have practiced and preached sustainable gardening for years, which is reflected in their award-winning garden designs and environmentally conscious cultural practices. Their designs put plants at the forefront to create gardens that celebrate the region, enhance the senses and satisfy our innate desire to connect with the natural world.

**March 21, Special Pre-program Plant Sale – Hellebores!** WHPS will hold a limited sale of Hellebores from 6-7:00 pm. and again after the program. Look for more information in your WHPS email for the program in early March.

**Saturday, April 7 – WHPS Workshop: Pruning Trees & Shrubs**, 10 am.-noon. Join David G. Stevens, UW Arboretum's Longenecker Horticultural Gardens curator, for a hands-on woody plant pruning workshop. He will demonstrate correct tree pruning techniques to help ensure healthy tree structure and proper wound closure as well as renewal pruning for plant vigor. Tools of the trade will be discussed and participants will get to try their hand at using different pruning equipment.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/whps-workshop-pruning-trees-shrubs-tickets-41561920824>

**Wednesday, Apr. 18, Abelia to Ziziphora: 30 Years of Plant Evaluation at Chicago Botanic Garden, with speaker**

**Richard Hawke.** The Chicago Botanic Garden has been evaluating and recommending superior garden plants to home gardeners and the green industry since 1988. Richard Hawke will give an overview of the evaluation program and present a variety of proven plants from 30 years of trials, including new selections and old favorites. Richard Hawke is responsible for the comparative evaluation of over 1,000 perennials and woody plants each year. He is the principal author of *Plant Evaluation Notes*, an author and contributing editor for *Fine Gardening*, and writes for other horticulture publications such as *Perennial Plants*, *The American Gardener*, and *Nursery Management*.



**Wednesday, May 2, WHPS Workshop: Bonsai 101**, 6:30-8:30 pm. View photos of Karl Bethke's bonsai trees, learn what it takes to grow bonsai, and see a demonstration of how to take an inexpensive shrub (like a juniper) and turn it into a starter bonsai.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/whps-workshop-bonsai-101-tickets-41561971977>

**Tuesday, May 15 – WHPS Workshop: Expanding Your Shade Garden Palette**, 6:30-8:00 pm. Has the lighting in your garden



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## WHPS coming events (continued from p.2)

changed as your trees have grown? Are you finally coming to terms with not being able to grow full sun plants in areas of your garden? Are you wishing you had more ideas for part to full shade plants? Come and see a wide variety of perennial and woody shade plants crammed into Jane LaFlash's small urban lot, and learn where they can be purchased. Suggested materials to bring: pen and notebook and a Flower Factory catalog. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/whps-workshop-expanding-your-shade-garden-palette-tickets-41561993040>

**Saturday, May 19 – WHPS Workshop: Unusual Spring Perennials**, 1-2:30 pm. Come visit and learn about Lois Kinlen's incredible garden collection of epimediums, trillium, and hopefully lady slipper, if in bloom. Questions are welcomed. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/whps-workshop-unusual-spring-perennials-tickets-41562111394>

**Saturday, May 19 – Klehm's Song Sparrow Nursery Buying Opportunity**, 8:00 am.-noon. Details in the April newsletter.

**Thursday, June 28, WHPS Evening Garden Tours: Stoughton (Janet Aaberg, Lynene & Dan Harmon, Susan Liimatta) details TBA**

**Tuesday, June 12 – WHPS Workshop: Children in the Garden**, 3:00-4:30 pm. The goal for Ann Munson's garden of 38 years is to create an oasis in suburbia. No lawn remains on the 3/4 acre lot (except for two

tiny triangles). The garden creates a habitat attractive to birds, insects, toads, frogs, and all animals (except for rabbits and ground hogs). Very little organic material leaves the garden. Removed trees are chipped and become paths, trunks left to decompose, snags left for birds and insects to inhabit. Fallen leaves become mulch, weeds become compost, birch twigs become wattle. Fun is included in the plan. For my 4 grandkids visiting weekly, there is a playhouse, teepee, hammock, and climbing trees. The two ponds, stream connecting them and goldfish provide lots of kid entertainment. Especially popular are the hundreds of tadpoles that become toads in early summer. The toads then help to control slugs and other insects. "For me, the garden is my creative outlet, sanctuary, and reason to collect wonderful plants!" Join us on June 12 as Ann discusses the development of this fun and educational garden.

**June 16-25, 2018 – WHPS Tour to England—North Wales, Shropshire, and Herefordshire. SOLD OUT!**

**Saturday, June 24 – WHPS Workshop: Grasses and Interesting Perennials to Enrich Your Garden Design**, 3-4:30 pm. Join us for this workshop held at The Flower Factory, led by co-owner Nancy Nedveck. Nancy will discuss planting and placement of ornamental grasses to complement and brighten your garden from late spring through winter. She

will also show us some interesting perennials that can provide accents and emphasis at various times throughout the season. And you know there will be time to shop before and after!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/whps-workshop-grasses-and-interesting-perennials-to-enrich-your-garden-design-tickets-41562195646>

**Wednesday, July 11, WHPS Evening Garden Tours: Madison west side (Jeff Epping, April & John Hoffman, Wendy Sundby, Jean & John Matthews, Eric Sandgren) details TBA**

**Wednesday, Aug. 15, 2018 – WHPS Potluck Dinner and Walk Through Olbrich Botanical Gardens**

**Wednesday, Sept. 19 – Speaker Gary Whittenbaugh: Small Conifers in the garden with an emphasis On Troughs**

**Wednesday, Oct. 17 – Speaker Will Radler, creator of the renown Knock Out™ roses and WHPS member, shares a casual evening on 'what he does' in the gardening world.**

**Wednesday, Nov. 14 – Speaker David Stevens, curator of UW Arboretum Longenecker Gardens will focus on the American Chestnut and the 4 chestnut trees in the Longenecker collection**

**Wednesday, Dec. 5 – Annual Meeting, Member Potpourri and Seed Exchange**

## Other events of note

**February 2-3, Orchid Quest 2018**, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Saturday 9 am.-4:00 pm. and Sunday 9 am.-3 pm. Presented by Orchid Growers Guild of Madison. Free admission and parking. <http://www.orchidguild.org/orchid-quest.html>

**February 9-11, Wisconsin Garden Expo**, Alliant Energy Center, Madison. Friday 12-8:00 pm., Saturday 9 am.-6 pm., Sunday 10 am.-4 pm. <https://www.wigardenexpo.com/>

**March 7-15, 2018 Southern California Travel Experience**, sponsored by Friends of Allen Centennial Garden. Contact Benjamin Futa, Allen Centennial Garden Director, at [bfuta@wisc.edu](mailto:bfuta@wisc.edu).

**March 17, Rotary Gardens Spring Symposium, speakers TBA**

**May 18-26, 2018 Gardens of Kent Trip led by Jeff Epping**, sponsored by Olbrich Gardens and Burkhalter Travel; <http://www.olbrich.org/events/regionalinternational.cfm>

**April 5-8, Art in Bloom: A Tribute to Art and Flowers**, Milwaukee Art Museum. View stunning art-inspired floral installations in the newly renovated Collection Galleries, and botanic and landscape features in the Calatrava-designed Quadracci Pavilion. Browse marketplaces filled with flowers, clothing, beauty products, garden accessories, and more from local vendors and artisans. Attend presentations on flowers, food, and sustainability. <https://www.travelwisconsin.com/events/fairs-festivals/art-in-bloom-130004>

**April 13-14, Allen Centennial Gardens**

**Symposium – HortiCULTURAL Landscapes: Telling the Story of Place through Plants, through Plants**, explores stories from four exceptional public gardens across the United States. Public gardens tell the stories of their communities' natural and cultural commonwealth. Through the art and science of interpretation, they use these stories to build strong communities through provoking important conversations among their audiences. Through the process of interpretation, it connects people to plants and also connects people to one another. This is the power of plants and public gardens. DeJope Residence Hall, Mendota Room, 640 Elm Drive, Madison. Tickets go on sale February 1. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/horticultural-landscapes-symposium-tickets-37424914928>

# Remembering Nancy Hogan

– by Lois Anderson

Nancy Hogan, long-time member of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society, Wisconsin Daylily Society, and the WI-IL Rock Garden Society, passed away in October 2017. I met Nancy on a WHPS garden tour bus. She invited me to sit with her. That was the beginning of many daily and extended WHPS garden tours with her. She taught me how to prepare daylilies for the annual Wisconsin Daylily Society sale. Nancy had many wonderful gardens at their house, including a large rock garden at the front driveway, a garden of cacti, many daylilies, and other perennials, shrubs, and trees throughout the property. She and her husband Joe worked tirelessly on their gardens. Their garden was one of the featured gardens on an Olbrich garden tour and on a 2001 WHPS evening tour. One of Nancy's many activities included having an annual spring plant sale at their house. All of the proceeds went to her grandchildren. – Lois Anderson



I too have very fond memories of Nancy – a true lady, always dressed up even when working in her raised bed full of cactus. Another impressive plant she had was standing cypress lining a garden path looking like little soldiers guarding the bed. I've had some over the years but never impressive like Nancy's. I benefitted from knowing Nancy, a true gardener. – Diane Scharkey

I remember Nancy as a dear friend and passionate gardener. We belonged to Mendota Garden Club among other organizations and often spent time chatting about our love for growing things.

The world is a sadder place without her. – Rita Dupuis

I will always think of Nancy in early spring. She would fill her house with plant seedlings in preparation for the season ahead. We remember Nancy for her great sense of humor, for her lovely garden, and for all of the contributions she made to WHPS over the years. – Stephanie O'Neal

## Garden Expo (cont. from p.1)

that Rotary Botanical Gardens has had a booth at this event and we find it to be an invaluable way to promote our nonprofit garden and mission of education to an ever-growing number of attendees from an expanding "radius of interest." We hand out basic information, a calendar of events and ultimately just encourage people to come visit!



Of course, the late (and beloved) Shelley Ryan of The Wisconsin Gardener (WPT) was instrumental in the start of this event so many years ago, and what started as a small gathering has snowballed in to what I believe is the premier Garden Expo/Show in the Midwest. Increasing attendance is noteworthy of course, but I think the most significant and well-received shift in this well-organized event is the emphasis on a wide range of educational opportunities ranging from lectures to demonstrations and hands-on activities. There is something for everyone.



The trade show area continues to feature a bustling mix of displays, vendors, non-profits, botanical gardens, plant societies and other offerings. Mingling and networking throughout the Garden Expo is a valuable tool as we all gather to get a taste of spring and prepare for the busy gardening season ahead.

I recommend that everyone mark the weekend of February 9-11 on their calendar, check out the lecture schedule early and chart out your best way to maximize the memorable WPT Garden Expo! [www.wigardenexpo.com](http://www.wigardenexpo.com); <http://www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org/>



(NOTE: Dwyer will once again host a number of seminars over the weekend: *Shrubberies for Impact*; *Sensational Seasonals*; and *The "Belly Button" Garden*.)

## WHPS Grants

A reminder to members that we now have a grants program. The WHPS will award up to \$500 to a community group, school, or other organization for a project that promotes the use of herbaceous perennial plants in the landscape. See details and an application form on our website.

<http://www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.org/grants.html>

## Donation for 2017 Approved

At the Annual Meeting in December, the Board recommended and the membership approved the donation of \$2,000 to Olbrich Botanical Gardens. As you all recall, the amount of funds available for donations has been greatly reduced due to cancellation of the 2017 Plant Sale, the funds of which have completely supported our donation program in the past. The donation for Olbrich was recommended due in large part to the role Olbrich plays in supporting WHPS programs.

## Members in print

**Fine Gardening** Jan/Feb 2018:

*Bold, Shade-Loving Rodgersias* by Richard Hawke (p35)

*Midwest Regional Picks – Plant It and Forget It* by Erin Presley (p78)

**Wisconsin Gardening** Jan/Feb 2018:

*Delightful New Bites for the Plate and Palate* by Ben Futa (p51)

**Midwest Home Magazine** (Minnesota) May 2017:

*Landscape Architect Frank Fitzgerald's Minneapolis Garden Retreat*

<http://midwesthomemag.com/living/landscape-architect-frank-fitzgeralds-minneapolis-garden-retreat/>

**Chicagoland Gardening** Jan/Feb 2018:

*Crazy for Conifers* – about WHPS business members Susan and Rich Eyre of Rich's Foxwillow Pines (p54)

# Going Native

—this excerpt by Barry Yeoman published in *National Wildlife* April-May 2017 is courtesy of Tom Cottingham

Among the birds of North America, few are as elegant as cedar waxwings, with their black costume-ball masks and yellow tail tips. “Whoever once gets within a good view of them and notes the exquisite coloring of the feathers cannot but envy the birds their garb,” enthusiast H. W. Weisgerber wrote a century ago. “The tint is more delicate than that of Japanese silk.”



A cedar waxwing wolfs down a flowering dogwood berry.

Waxwings are particularly fond of fruit, so it's fortuitous when, on an autumn day, they happen upon a flowering dogwood. The berries of this native tree are rich in fat, and a flock will descend on them at once, plucking the fruits individually and swallowing them whole.

Found in backyards as well as forests across the eastern United States, the flowering dogwood feeds dozens of other fruit-loving bird species, along with foxes, skunks, bears, and black bears. Its berries are also high in calcium, and the calcium in its leaves nourishes land snails that songbirds such as wood thrush eat. In recent decades, however, dogwood populations have nose dived throughout the species' range. The culprit: a nonnative fungal disease called dogwood anthracnose. While there's no definitive proof how the fungus landed on this continent, the prime suspect is kousa dogwood, a popular landscaping tree imported from Asia.

With big berries, flaky bark and an abundance of blooms, kousas are attractive trees. They also brush off anthracnose like we brush off the common cold. Sometime after kousa was first introduced to the United States by novelty-seeking nurseries in the 19th century, it likely unleashed the disease on defenseless native trees that had not evolved with the fungus. As Americans watched their flowering dogwoods die starting in the 1970s, landscapers encouraged them to replace the trees—with more kousas.

Kousa dogwood was first imported from Asia in the 19th century. Unlike native dogwood fruit, kousa berries are not eaten by native wildlife. “They're not part of the food web,” explains one scientist.

## “Nothing Eats Them”

Fewer flowering dogwoods means less food for fruit-feeding creatures, from waxwings to bears and foxes. The caterpillars of spring azure butterflies also miss out on a key food source. And kousa berries? They're monkey food, which makes them valuable in Asia but not in North America. “Nothing eats them here,” says Doug Tallamy, a professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware. “They're not part of the food web.”

Kousa dogwood is just one of scores of exotic plants imported by the U.S. garden industry that have triggered widespread and unforeseen ecological damage. Hemlocks from Japan ferried in an insect called the hemlock woolly adelgid, which has destroyed native hemlock canopies in at least 17 states from Maine to Georgia, depriving streams of the cooling shade that brook trout need to survive. (The adelgid has invaded almost half of the native hemlock's 2.3-million-acre eastern range.) Japanese knotweed, with its aggressive horizontal stems, has crowded out indigenous vegetation eaten by invertebrates, and scientists suspect the loss of these animals may, in turn, be starving green frogs. Autumn olive, a woody shrub, has taken over grasslands, making it harder for birds such as grasshopper sparrows and bobolinks to nest successfully.

We don't know what the next invader will be. But we can guess it will pass into the country unimpeded. That's because the United States has a feeble system of regulating garden imports. Each new species is presumed harmless until proven otherwise—and by the time a verdict arrives, the harm is often beyond repair.

## Blacklists Versus Whitelists

There are essentially two ways governments can regulate how new ornamental plants enter a country. Blacklists spell out which plants are banned; everything else is allowed. Whitelists specify which plants can be imported; everything else is prohibited.

The United States uses a modified blacklist system. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) maintains a list of 112 “noxious weeds” deemed risky to crops, livestock and the environment. There is also a small “graylist” of plants, identified by USDA scientists, that could potentially cause harm and are temporarily barred until they can be evaluated. Otherwise, new plants that arrive at American ports of entry are allowed into the country if they pass a U.S. Customs and Border Protection inspection, which looks for nonnative pests like insects and mites as well as pathogens like fungi and bacteria.

The problem with this system, say some scientists, is that it permits many potential invaders to escape scrutiny. “Blacklists are generally species by species,” says Dan Simberloff, an ecologist at the University of Tennessee—Knoxville. “They're very piecemeal, and there are thousands and thousands of species.” For most new exotic plants, “it's a *carte blanche*,” he says, “even though we haven't even given a thought to whether they'd likely be invasive.”

By contrast, Australia and New Zealand use whitelists that keep out all new exotic trees and other plants until they've been cleared as low risk (with importers footing the bill for the assessments). “They have some of the world's most unique flora and fauna, and they have every business to protect it,” USDA botanist Indira Singh says of these two countries. “There's no garden in the world that's worth endangering millions of years of evolution.”

Advocates of a whitelist system say the same precautionary principle should apply to the United States. “When you introduce a plant, it is often decades before it exhibits its invasive qualities,” says Tallamy. “The way introduced plants have behaved so far, it's much safer—and it's the only practical thing—to consider them guilty until proven innocent.”

## Industry Pushback

Such an approach could be a hard political sell, however. Whitelists would likely meet resistance from both free-trade advocates, who see such lists as trade barriers, and the horticulture industry, which thrives on variety. “In concept, it seems like a great idea,” says Gregg Robertson, a lobbyist for the Pennsylvania Landscape & Nursery Association. “But nobody has the resources to test all the plants that possibly could be tested.” Craig Regelbrugge, senior vice president for the industry group AmericanHort, argues that if the government imposes sweeping import restrictions, “you're going to have bad actors smuggling stuff in in their socks.”

## “Biological Pollution”

Heatley and I first met in Louisiana's Barataria Preserve in 2010, when he was overseeing an ongoing project to bulldoze the Chinese tallow trees that had overrun the 23,000-acre wetlands. “Biological pollution,” he calls the trees. With diamond-shaped leaves that turn burgundy in the fall, tallows were once considered desirable ornamentals. Then the trees took over native ecosystems—altering the soil chemistry, shading out sun-loving plants and degrading habitat for bird species like the red-bellied woodpecker and ruby-crowned kinglet.

Among the places tallows have invaded are Louisiana's cheniers, coastal ridges that migratory birds use as stopovers. “Their sap is toxic, and they hold a lower number of insects than native trees,” says Michael Baldwin, an ecologist with the U.S. Geological Survey. “From a distance, they might look like a good resting point, but in reality they might be an ecological trap.”

Other exotics, like autumn olive, conquer disturbed settings such as old pastures and highway-construction sites. “They're so tough that they can grow in just about any environment,” says Ellen Nibali, a horticulturist at the University of Maryland Extension. “You drive down the road and you should see eastern red cedar or dogwoods coming

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# Button, Button, Who's Got the Button?

– article and photos by Conrad J. Wrzesinski

Taking a cue from the title of the children's game, *Button, Button, Who's Got the Button?*, is a plant that graced my mother's garden that was called buttons, as shown below. While growing up, little did I know of the history of this plant or the different varieties available. Feverfew is the name most commonly used to identify this plant.



Tanacetum parthenium

Botanically, feverfew is *Tanacetum parthenium* and is native to the Balkan countries and regions of the Caucasus Mountains.

Previously, some references listed the plant as *Chrysanthemum parthenium*. Over time, the plant has had the distinction of being moved among five different genera.

Feverfew is an herb that has long been used in the treatment of a variety of medical problems, including migraine headaches, toothache, arthritis, and fever. The ancient Greeks called the herb Parthenium. According to legend the plant was used medicinally to save the life of a person who had fallen from the Parthenon during its construction in the 5th century BC. Pedanius Dioscorides, the first-century Greek physician, used feverfew to reduce fever. Today feverfew supplements are readily available.

Feverfew is a dense, bushy, mounded, clump-forming herbaceous perennial that typically grows from 12 to 24 inches tall. The pinnately lobed leaves are deep-

ly cut, with a strong aromatic scent that is somewhat reminiscent of the scent of chrysanthemum foliage. Feverfew provides a lengthy summer bloom from June to late September. Feverfew does well in any good garden soil. Plant in full to part sun for best flower display.

Depending on garden location feverfew can overwinter here in USDA-Zone 5a. A fall mulch can also be helpful. Plants also readily self-seed.

Feverfew is well-suited for both the flower and herb garden. For foliage contrast and flower, I have used feverfew as a companion plant among daylilies. Feverfew is also excellent for fresh cut flowers or used with other cut flowers in a bouquet. The flowers can also be dried.

Two named cultivars of note include:

- *Tanacetum parthenium* 'Aureum' is a popular dwarf cultivar often called Golden Feverfew. Sprays of small white daisies like blooms rest atop the decorative aromatic foliage, which emerges a golden chartreuse color. The low bushy mound lends itself well for edging.
- *Tanacetum parthenium* 'White Bonnet' is an attractive globe-shaped double white, which is pictured in a plant from our garden.



Tanacetum parthenium 'Aureum'

Unnamed feverfew varieties are also fairly common, as illustrated in the cute white miniature daisy-like bloom in a plant from our

garden. During a summer garden tour in Green Bay I observed a feverfew with at-

tractive yellow miniature daisy-like flowers. The owner told me she could not recall a cultivar name for her plant. She graciously provided



Tanacetum parthenium 'White Bonnet'

me with a small self-sown seedling, which I placed in sandwich bag for lack of a better container. The plant did survive the summer transplant to our garden, but unfortunately did not sufficiently establish to withstand the following winter. So far, I have been unable to find a replacement.

Feverfew has no serious insect or disease problems. Even the rabbits and other munching critters avoid the plant.

## WHPS Dues for 2018

– by Jane LaFlash

By now those who owe dues for 2018 have received an email offering members two options to renew. You can renew online with a credit card (there will be a small processing fee for this option) or you can print out the renewal form and mail it in with a check. Click [here](#) for a link to either option on our website.

Paper renewal forms will be sent out in mid-January. If you could renew before then, it would save us the time, paper, and postage of sending you a paper form. To remain on our mailing list, renewals are due by March 1, 2018. If you plan to have family members join you for events/trips, please sign up for a family membership. Remember, trips are for members only. Thanks so much for renewing quickly.



## 2018 Perennial Plant of the Year - Allium 'Millenium'

This year's selection by the Perennial Plant Association of its 2018 Plant of the Year® is *Allium 'Millenium'*, the butterfly magnet. The PPA describes this plant on its Website – <http://www.perennialplant.org/>: *this herbaceous perennial, relative to the common onion, is a work-horse of the late summer garden. Bred by Mark McDonough, horticulture researcher from Massachusetts, 'Millenium' was introduced through Plant Delights Nursery in 2000 where it has proven itself year after year earning rave reviews. This cultivar is the result of a multigenerational breeding program involving Allium nutans and A. lusitanicum (formerly Allium senescens ssp montanum), selected for late flowering with masses of rose-purple blooms, uniform habit with neat shiny green foliage.*

The Plant is hardy to Zone 3 and grows best in full sun to a height of 10-15 inches.

The *Allium 'Millenium'*, is available at Brent & Becky's Bulbs and WHPS gets 25% of your purchase as a donation. Simply visit <https://www.brentandbeckysbulbs.com/site/view/836> and select "Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society" from the organization drop down menu. Hit "GO" to be sent to the Brent and Becky's website to order.

# 2017 WHPS Tour of Wisconsin State Herbarium – UW Department of Botany

– by Jean Halverson

The Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society arranged a tour of the UW Botany Department Garden and Herbarium this past summer. We started with the garden in front of Birge Hall, where we were given a map of the garden plus the layout. I believe both are on display in the garden. The layout states this garden is the first in the world to be laid out based on the new Angiosperm Phylogeny Group (APGIII) system.

Monocots are planted in a smaller bed on one end of a small plaza. A longer and wider set of beds is on the other end with dicots arranged in a rough spiral with groups 8 and 9 in the center. Plants in each bed have a common ancestor.

The Newton Apple Tree (pictured) is in this garden. A graft of the apple tree that inspired Sir Isaac Newton's theory of gravity was given to U.S. Rep. James Sensenbrenner, who donated it in 2001. The tree produces lots of apples, which aren't tasty, and seeds aren't viable. It's not unusual to find fallen apples with one bite out of them.

We moved inside Birge Hall, home of the botany department, for a tour led by Dr. Ken Cameron, director of the herbarium. UW-Madison has one of the last individual botany departments, since most have been consolidated with zoology or biology departments. The UW Department was established in 1848, and the Board of Regents in 1849 directed the establishment of a "cabinet of natural history." Increase A. Lapham from Milwaukee, a self-taught expert in all natural sciences, donated 1500 specimens collected in Wisconsin to start the herbarium.

Birge is an old building, very beautiful inside and out, but it can have heating and cooling issues. A wing was added in the 1970's to house all of the herbarium. It's a two-story addition with temperature control and a strong floor to support the cabinets containing around 1.3 million specimens.

This has been designated as the official site of the state herbarium, although all UW campuses have herbariums. It's among the largest in the world. Among universities, only Harvard, Berkeley, and Michigan have larger herbariums.



The Newton Apple Tree

There are often multiple specimens of a single species, showing the diversity. The specimen usually arrives already pressed. The pressed specimen is affixed to acid free paper using Elmer's glue, and a label is added with bar coding and collection information. We watched a student worker mounting a specimen, laying the specimen on the paper so stems, etc., aren't crowded. He then added the label and laid weights on the specimen to hold it in place while it dried. Dr. Cameron mentioned several times that he'd love more volunteers to help with the backlog of mounting around 100,000 specimens. Even an hour or two a week would be appreciated, and he is offering a free parking space behind Birge Hall. Volunteers to transcribe labels, etc., into the database are also needed. This would be a home-based volunteer opportunity, maybe for a cold winter day. If you are interested in any volunteer opportunity, contact a curator at <https://herbarium.wisc.edu/>

Many specimens come from the public. For any endangered species, take a photo, which will be mounted. Specimens are shared with scholars around the world. Since a cabinet may not be opened for a number of years, prevention of infestation, especially by cigarette beetles, is a major concern. Any shared specimen is put in a freezer for several weeks upon its return, before being returned to the cabinet.

There are almost a million data records at the [Virtual Flora of Wisconsin](https://herbarium.wisc.edu/). This searchable site says, "This site is a collaborative effort between the herbaria of the UW-Madison (WIS) and the UW-Steven's Point (UWSP), along with most of the other herbaria located in the state of Wisconsin."

(Steven's Point herbarium is the Robert W. Freckman Herbarium.)

Searching can be done by common or botanical name, as well as location and probably other criteria. Dr. Cameron showed a large wheel-shaped poster that listed species found in Wisconsin. They took leaf tissue from specimens of each species and sequenced the DNA to set up this "family tree," looking for patterns between endangered and invasive species. For example, tansy is invasive, but an endangered species *T. bipinnatum* is found in Door Co. What might happen if the common tansy gets near that population? Cross with it or crowd it out? Searching the database for *T. bipinnatum* shows how photos are mounted for an endangered species, and, of course, this DNA research can result in plant classification changes!

The herbarium has the third largest collection of lichens (207,500 specimens) in North America. How are these stored or mounted? The rock or bark containing the lichen is chipped away and stored in a little packet with the bar coded label attached. They also have mosses, algae and fungi specimens. Fungi specimens collected by George Washington Carver were discovered by accident in 2016. While clarifying some details about this, I discovered an article from Madison.com on the Herbarium Website about this discovery: <https://herbarium.wisc.edu/news/>

A tour of the greenhouse was included but it was a hot day, I was tired, and I didn't stay for that. Many thanks to the WHPS for this opportunity, one of the advantages of belonging to too many organizations!

*Like other gardeners, I belong to a variety of gardening clubs and the North American Rock Garden Society was the first, many years ago. The local chapter is the Wisconsin-Illinois Rock Garden Society. This club focuses on alpine plants, the usually small plants native to higher altitudes that have been coaxied to grow in our gardens. Allen Centennial Garden on the UW-Madison campus has a very nice rock garden showing a variety of these plants in different settings. – Jean Halverson*



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*Have questions about your membership?*  
Contact Jane LaFlash at [wisconsinhps@gmail.com](mailto:wisconsinhps@gmail.com) or (608) 243-1208.

## *Going Native (cont. from p.5)*

up—sassafras and persimmon and all kinds of native plants. Instead you'll see autumn olive and euonymus and barberry—a huge assortment of foreign weeds."

One of those weeds, Japanese barberry, remains popular among some commercial gardeners: "the backbone of most of their bland, cookie-cutter landscaping sites," writes Jesse Elwert Peters, a garden design consultant in Saratoga Springs, New York. Because barberry is unappealing to caterpillars, the plants create a "protein desert" for birds, which need these insects to feed their young during the breeding season, says Jeffrey Ward, chief scientist at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station's forestry and horticulture department. Barberry also produces the humid microclimates favored by deer ticks that transmit Lyme disease. "It's a real public-health issue to be having these invasive shrubs out there in the woods," Ward says.

Lovely to look at, Chinese tallow trees were popular U.S. ornamentals—until they began overtaking native ecosystems. These exotic trees have altered soil chemistry and degraded habitat for the ruby-crowned kinglet and other bird species.

### **Paradigm Shift?**

Japanese barberry, autumn olive, Chinese tallow, Japanese knotweed, kousa dogwood—all are products of a permissive import system. They are also products of a conventional wisdom that says garden plants don't need to be part of the local food chain. Ecologists say this ethos must change; residential landscapes need to help compensate for shrinking wildlife habitats and diminished food sources in the wild.

"People tend to view the natural world as separate from the human world," Heatley says. "Our landscape aesthetic supports that mindset: 'We live over here, and nature's on that side of the fence.' But nature is where you live."

### **Promoting Native Plants**

Through its Garden for Wildlife™ program, the National Wildlife Federation has long urged homeowners and others to cultivate plants native to their region. Not only are nonnative landscaping species risky—with the potential to escape and cause harm to

ecosystems—they do not provide the food that local wildlife need.

Recently, the Federation launched a new tool for computers, tablets and smartphones that helps gardeners pick by zip code the best native plants for wildlife in their specific area. See [www.nwf.org/nativeplantfinder](http://www.nwf.org/nativeplantfinder).

NWF also helps schools and community organizations plant native species through its Trees for Wildlife™ program. During the past decade, this program has planted more than a quarter-million native tree seedlings nationwide. To learn more, visit [www.nwf.org/trees](http://www.nwf.org/trees).

### **A personal note from Tom Cottingham**

*Native Plants have been features of Wisconsin Landscapes for tens of thousands of years, providing food cover for wildlife in our gardens. The intense variety of native wildflowers, shrubs and trees create a rich palate for our landscape/gardens bringing birds, insect pollinators and butterflies to our own yards.*

*Consider having a no-mow lawn, clean up garden beds in spring (harbors good insects over winter), use leaves for sheet mulching, and the non-use of pesticides which is most important in the life and benefits of all creatures to live in a healthy environment in our own gardens. All these help create diversity and a safe area to attract wildlife to your own yard and garden.*

*With your own personality create a garden with flora that is unique to Wisconsin. This creates a healthy environment in your garden that helps bring many seasons of color, interest, and diversity in your gardens and your Life.*

## *New members*

The following members have recently joined WHPS: Botannaca, Roxanne DePaul, Douglas Milks, Dorilee Miller, Peg O'Donoghue & Steve Veazie, Sally Ratay, Marjorie Rice, Mary Kay Thompson, Christine Zimmerman.