

January 10, 2000

Winter offers the gardener a time for reappraisal when thoughts on next year can slowly marinate as one grey day follows another and reality is shelved. Of all seasons this is the one that promises freedom. Freedom for imaginative vagrancy where gardening in the mind is at it most potent and everything seems possible.

—Mirabel Osler, *Winter Wonder, The Garden*, December, 1999.

COMING EVENTS!

January 16 11 AM to 2 PM Olbrich Gardens. *Annual pot luck brunch with the Hosta Society*. Speaker will be WHPS member Dennis Buettner (Milwaukee garden designer, Allen Centennial Garden) who will speak on garden design; will include Milwaukee area gardens we plan to visit next summer. Coffee and juice provided. Bring a dish to pass and your own utensils.

February 16 7PM Olbrich Gardens. Greg Speichert, owner of Crystal Palace Perennials, St. John, Indiana, will speak on *Water Plants for the New Millennium*. He will cover new varieties and the directions breeders are going which will give you an idea of what is on the horizon.

February 18, 19, 20 Garden Expo at Dane County Expo Center. *Volunteers are needed* for the WHPS display booth; call Stephanie Bloomquist at 274-8326 to volunteer.

March 15 7PM Olbrich Gardens. Frank Greer, *A Few of My Favorite Perennials-Or, Tales of One Thousand and One Plants*.

April 19 7PM Olbrich Gardens. Pam Duffy from the Northbrook, Illinois, will introduce her new book *Continuous Bloom: A Month-by-Month Guide to Nonstop Color in the Perennial Garden*.

April 28-30 *Trip to Southern Illinois* to see the wildflowers and other natural wonders of Shawnee National Forest. *See enclosed brochure*.

May 20, 2000 *WHPS members and friends annual plant sale*. At the Pet Lodge in Middleton. Start making your list of plants to bring today!!

Other Events of Note

February 1, 2000 7 PM Olbrich Gardens. Glen Spevacek, WHPS member, will be speaking on *Basic Garden Design* as part of the Gardens for a New Millennium series. *Admission*.

February 5-6, 2000 10-5 PM, Dane County Expo Center. Orchid Growers' Guild presents *Orchid Quest 2000*. *Admission*. The 13th annual winter orchid show will be one of the largest in the Midwest.

February 13, 2000 1 PM Olbrich Gardens. *Wisconsin Daylily Society* will host Darrell Apps, a Wisconsin native, and now New Jersey daylily hybridizer and nursery owner.

February 15, 2000 7 PM Olbrich Gardens. Ed Hasselkus, WHPS member, will speak on *Great Garden Conifers* as part of the Gardens for a New Millennium series. *Admission*

February 29, 2000 Olbrich Gardens. *Horticulture Magazine Symposium-Bordermaking: A Master Class-Inspiration, Design Techniques and the Best Plants*. Features Dan Heims (Terra Nova Nurseries) who has introduced all those new Heucheras and Tiarellas. *Admission*.

November 4, 2000 Olbrich Gardens. *Gardening from the Catalogue*. WHPS and Olbrich Gardens annual fall symposium. Speakers will be Tony Avent (Plant Delights Nursery), Roy Klehm (Klehm Nursery), John Elsley (Wayside Gardens) and Hans Hansen (Shady Oaks Nursery). *Admission*.

Dues are due!

Enclosed in this newsletter is your dues notice for 2000. Take a moment to fill out the dues form and send in your check for another great year of gardening with your friends in WHPS!



..... A profile on Pulmonaria People—Beth Chatto

On 8th April, 1999, Fran Pattinson and I were lucky enough to have the opportunity to spend a very pleasant and interesting afternoon in the company of Beth Chatto and a key member of her valued staff, David Ward, at The Beth Chatto Gardens in Elmstead Market near Colchester in Essex.

Beth Chatto and her gardening achievements are legendary and it was very kind of her to set aside some of her very busy time for Fran and me. Much of Beth Chatto's vast knowledge of plants has been learned through her many years of "hands on" gardening experience but she does acknowledge the influence of Sir Cedric Morris and his friendship during the early years as a gardener. It was Sir Cedric who collected, in Portugal, the pulmonaria which Beth later named P. 'Mournful Purple'.

Although Beth Chatto does not consider herself to be a 'Pulmonaria Person,' she has been responsible for introducing and/or naming several pulmonarias over the years. I'm sure that most of you grow at least one of these: P. 'Beth's Blue'; B. 'Beth's Pink'; P. 'David Ward' Award of Good Merit (AGM); P. 'Mournful Purple' and P. 'Tim's Silver'. There are others.

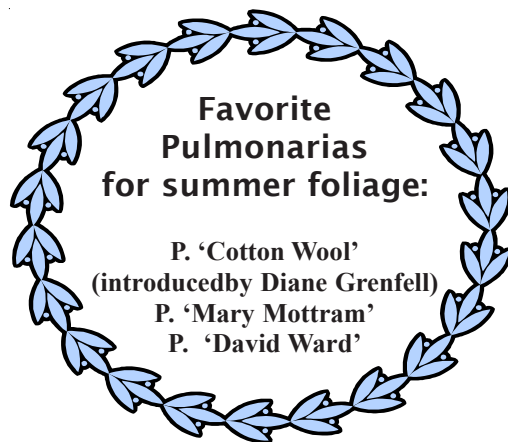
Fran and I were shown the actual place where P. 'David Ward' was discovered. David actually noticed that a plant of *Pulmonaria rubra*, which was growing in the shade of an oak tree near Beth's kitchen window, had 'sported' some variegated foliage. He was able to propagate this sport and it has become a much loved and easily recognized pulmonaria. Although it was discovered in Essex, both David Barker and I find it rather difficult to grow well in our gardens. However, during the 1998 Autumn Weekend in Dundee, it was wonderful to see a magnificent specimen of P. 'David Ward' growing by a stream in one of the gardens we visited. Having seen that example of it, I can understand why some people made the mistake of thinking, especially from a distance, that P. 'David Ward' is a hosta! You may remember that P. 'David Ward' was one of the few pulmonarias to be given an AGM after the Royal Horticultural Society Trials last year and the only one to receive this award for foliage.

In addition to the plant named after him, David has been responsible for introducing two other pulmonarias: P. 'Coralie' with reddish flowers and P. 'Mado', named after his daughter, with pretty sky blue flowers.

P. 'Tim's Silver' was also found in Beth's garden. Tim, the person who noticed it growing in one of the borders, was a student who was very keen on horticulture and he was doing some part-time work for Beth Chatto. Again, David Barker and I find P. 'Tim's Silver' a very tricky plant to grow well but I believe that it is not a very vigorous pulmonaria in any situation.

All parts of the Beth Chatto Gardens are lovely. Beth's woodland was looking super and the many pulmonaria growing there seemed well contented. We also visited the stock bed area and had the opportunity to see P. 'Beth's Pink' growing next to P. 'Leopard' which was the true plant originating from Graham Stuart Thomas who introduced it. During the Pulmonaria Trials there had been some speculation that 'Beth's Pink' and 'Leopard' were the same. Vanessa Cook (holder of the National Pulmonaria Collection) maintained that this was not the case because, whilst both plants have similar colored flowers (reddish pink) and foliage (dark green with whitish blotches), 'Beth's Pink' has a more lax habit than 'Leopard'. Having the two plants side by side, it was easy to see that they were different.

Miss Sally-Ann Turner, *The Pulmonaria Group Newsletter*, October, 1999, Essex, England
(email: willowgreen@ukmax.com)



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● Gardens have suddenly become fashionable—the new rock 'n' roll, according to a some self-appointed style pundits. It is an old saw, but basically a sound one, that few people garden before they reach their mid thirties. However, there is now a cohort of younger gardeners recruited from a wealthy and style-conscious generation, one seemingly apathetic towards environmental concerns. The new gardening, like the New Labour Party, appears to be more concerned with image than substances. Today's TV gardens are not those of the plantsman or plantswoman, nor are they cottage gardens (definitely out of fashion, again); instead they represent the outdoor recreations rooms of a plutocratic urban and suburban elite. Their milieu is one of hard landscaping—everybody must have a 'deck'—and plant containers, containers that tend to be filled, for practical reasons, with the readily available peat-based composts.
● —John Akeroyd, *Spreading the Word*, Hortus, Autumn 1999.
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Musings of A. Hort Hound

Searching for Inspiration

It is the morning of December 11. I feel like a prisoner trying to find some inspiration to release myself from the obligation to get this newsletter done. Fortunately, I found it.

I found it in the morning hoar frost transforming the landscape of Curtis Prairie and Longnecker Gardens, as well as the thin sheet of ice which has formed across the surface of Lake Wingra for the first time this season, flocks of seagulls tippy toeing across its surface.

I found it in the hundreds of Canadian geese flying overhead, only broken by the near apparition of three large flocks of sandhill cranes flying in tandem and whooping their way to the south.

I found it in the garden, whose lightly frozen soil crunches under foot, as I observe the first tufted tit mouse I have seen on the feeder in more than 15 years. Six frosty pillows of *Tsuga canadensis* 'Gentsch white' are the focal point in the magical low intensity light of early winter. At no other time of the year are they more eye catching.

Necklaces of epimediums lead off down the paths. The coppery-bronze foliage of *Epimedium rubrum* is the most ornamental, in sharp contrast to the deep purple foliage of *Epimedium X versicolor* 'neo-sulphureum'. But my favorite, lacing the feet of the hemlocks is the still highly glossed green foliage of *Epimedium X perralchicum* 'Frohnleiten.' I think back to that early November night when I picked up Darrell Probst flying in from Boston for the Great Shady Gardens Symposium, my epimedium and tricyrtis hero. After a late dinner I showed him his room and assumed that he would be off to bed. Wrong! At 11:15 PM (12:15 AM Eastern time) Darrell appeared on the stairs and announced he was ready to tour the garden.

Out we go, like two kids in a darkened candy shop trying to find the chocolate covered peanuts. Even the dog shakes her head in disbelief. I was amazed at his ability to identify epimediums in the dark from three or more feet away. It was Darrell who positively identified E. 'Frohnleiten' for me after all these years.

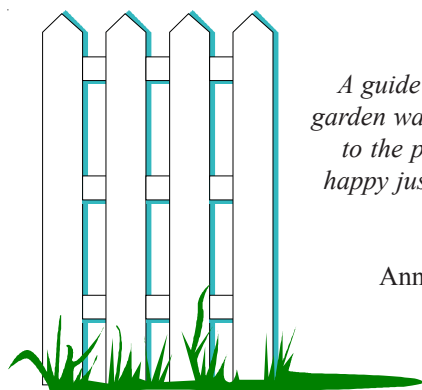
My attention is caught by the pale, tawny clumps of *Habenochloa macra* in perpetual motion in a brisk southwesterly breeze. Fortunately I started a half dozen new clumps around the garden this past spring for just this kind of moment. No other ornamental grass seems capable of making this winter show under the large white oaks in a Wisconsin garden.

The *Hydrangea petoliaris* throws out its lateral branches adorned at the tips with the large frost covered dried florets, dressing the trunk of a white oak in a most beautiful fashion. I cannot help but imagine this display continuing up its full 50-foot length in years to come.

Nearby the white striped bark of *Acer pennsylvanicum* stands out in the December sunshine. I marvel at this year's growth on this woody plant which is now as deep as the blood red of our native dogwoods.

Other outstanding late winter foliage delights the eye. Of all the ferns, any of the members of the genus *Dryopteris* look resplendent, maintaining their upright habitus and green foliage long after other ferns have collapsed into the dried leaf cover. Clumps of the golden feverfew (*Chrysanthemum parthenium* 'Aureum') still glow like jewel islands in a sea of the deep green-purplish foliage of *Ajuga reptans* 'Jungle beauty.' Large plants of *Corydalis ochroleuca* remain covered with green tinged white flowers, and *Corydalis cheilanthifolia*'s finely cut foliage never looks more bronzed that at this time of year.

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A guide to a garden may offer an understanding of the time and context in which the garden was made and the preoccupations and intentions of the designer. This should add to the pleasure of visiting the garden, but people often refuse a guide saying they're happy just to look. We seem to have lost the idea that thinking and looking might be a happy partnership.

Anne Wareham, *Thinking in the Garden*, *Journal of the Hardy Plant Society*, 21, No. 2. Autumn 1999

Of Mites, Heat, and *Impatiens balfouri*— Or, the Three Scourges of My Summer Garden

Oh, how I lusted after that pot of *Datura brugmanii* at the farmers market one May morning this spring. It brought to mind the huge pots of angel's trumpets decorating the Mediterranean style garden on the Isle of Mainau on Lake Constance. It stood three feet tall with enormous, six-inch, double, ruffled trumpets of purple and white. The "sold" sign hanging from this magnificent specimen tortured my very soul. Of course there were "dinky" plants of the same for sale, but nothing else would do at the end of my driveway, greeting admiring guests to my son's high school graduation party in a couple of weeks.

You can be sure that I was at that stall by 6:30 AM the following Saturday morning as the truck was unloading, and having secured my prize, enjoyed letting other frustrated hort nuts bewail the "sold sign" on the plant of the day on "Capitol Square." And it did look wonderful for my son's graduation, generating lots of "what is it?" comments from even non-gardeners, to my great satisfaction. But, oh, how I was to pay the price for my lust and greed.

Within two weeks, its leaves begin to mottle with yellow, a telltale sign of the legions of spider mites that blitzed my showstopper plant almost overnight. The battle raged for the next three months. I sprayed the enemy with three different insecticides and repeated washings with a high pressure water nozzle, all to no avail. Even if the mites waned at times, as soon as my guard was down for 30 seconds or more, they were back in full force. Mrs. A. Hort Hound gave me continual grief about "how bad that plant looks" no matter where I tried to conceal it in the garden from her probing, critical eyes. In a final act of frustration towards the end of August, I hurled my now pitiful specimen, with tremendous force on to the compost heap!! This plant was not an angel's trumpet. It was a devil's rod.



Other scourges included slugs, chipmunks, and water worms.

The chipmunks were at their all-time worst, achieving a record garden population. Repeatedly, a choice, tender perennial specimen that I had been babying for years would be found in a state of complete collapse. Invariably, a bit of probing would reveal the chipmunk's tunnel just beneath its crown, which spelled the death of the plant in the heat of summer. Within a two-week period, I live trapped 12 of these little darlings on the back terrace.

The water worms, which have been a nuisance in my

pond for several years, proliferated to unprecedented numbers in the heat and humidity, clogging the pond filters every two weeks and completely shutting down the fountain.

Black aphids so viciously attacked the water lettuce that I never had but the puniest display of this floating pond plant, which in other years I had tossed onto the compost heap by the bushel basket full.

Though the slugs were a problem, they were not as bad as they could have been, given the very moist, warm conditions of this summer. They would have been much worse if I hadn't followed the advice of the Roman writer Columella, placing "the skinless head of an Arcadian ass" under the hostas. Now, that beats stale beer in a custard cup, any day!



I have saved the saga of worst scourge until last.

A few years ago, a dear friend gave me a paper cup full of seedlings at a March meeting of the WHPS. I was intrigued that any seedling would be sprouting in the garden at this early date and was eager to try this lovely pink and white impatien from the Himalayas. She did warn me at the time that it germinated 101%.

The first couple of years I was enthralled with its flowers, which put on a lovely show in August and September in the shade garden. But, in the spring and summer of 1999, with the excessive rainfall and heat, the seedlings sprouted 202% and grew to state champion heights of 45", enveloping the paths, rock walls, fence lines, and entire portions of the garden.

Every day I would find piles of *Impatiens balfouri* rooted out by Mrs. A. Hort Hound (having always taken a dislike to this plant), dotting the garden. Even after weeks and weeks of this ruthless activity, two seedlings continued to sprout for every one removed.

It was truly an extreme example of a plant gone amok! To think I have always coveted seeds of *Impatiens glandulifera* also from the Himalayas, which reportedly grows to heights of eight feet or more. This would be nothing less than garden suicide.



Anyone know where you can get napalm on the black market?

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The Garden in Art

Did anyone visit the American Arts and Craft Movement exhibit at the Terra Museum in Chicago this fall? Several serendipitous experiences came together which helped me to focus on this period of art history, and renew my appreciation for it.

First was a stay in the Inn at Little Washington, Virginia on a gorgeous October weekend. On the nightstand in my room was a copy of the book **The Gardens of William Morris** by Jill Duchess of Hamilton, Penny Hart, and John Simmons (1999, Stewart, Tabori & Chang, New York).

William Morris, the founder of the Arts and Crafts Movement in England, was the greatest textile designer of the Victorian era. Though we usually associate his name with interiors (fabrics, wallpapers, carpets) he was even more concerned with the exteriors of buildings and their surroundings.

His love of nature was a ruling passion. Trees, flowers, birds, and rivers were a source of inspiration and the wellspring of his art. He transformed petals, leaves, flowers, and curling stems to the interior walls and windows of his houses and took the concept of the "rooms" of a house outside into the garden.

There was a cross fertilization between the plants and flowers on his drawing board and those flourishing in his own garden. His perfect garden was indeed as rhythmical and structured as his textile patterns. The great Arts and Crafts designer team of Gertrude Jekyll and Edwin Lutyens were among his ardent admirers and disciples.

The Inn at Little Washington is totally furnished with Morris designs in wall paper, curtains, upholstery, and carpets and is very much like being in an Arts and Crafts Garden.

Back to Chicago and the Terra Museum. I was particularly struck by the display of Arts and Crafts flower vases made by midwestern potters in the early part of the past century.

Overbeck Pottery of Cambridge City, IN, had a gorgeous vase (circa 1911) decorated with a hosta motif-large green leaves with the typical lavender flowers. Others were decorated with nasturtiums, lilies, chinaberry, hydrangeas, iris, poppies, and pine trees in the typical Arts and Crafts fashion.

More recently, Mrs. A. Hort Hound acquired an Arts & Crafts vase made by the Red Wing Pottery in Minnesota. It is green brushware and decorated with cattails and sandhill cranes. It is now kept filled with fresh flowers in the bathroom suite and serves every miserable winter day as a reminder of the garden in art.

Excerpts from *The Explorer's Garden*

by Dan Hinkley, 1999



I equate the excitement of the herbaceous border to that of unpacking each year the trunk in which we store our collection of antique Christmas ornaments, accumulated from friends and family over many years. The unwrapping of each is in essence its rebirth, of its heritage and intrinsic beauty. The yearly resurrection of these moments may be all too brief, but their anticipated departure is made more palatable by the knowledge and comfort that they will reappear the following year with equal portent and (hopefully) greater ebullience.



When all is said and done, it will forever be the garden that sustains me and provides my purpose. But what is all this commotion that I feel, that we all feel in our hearts and minds? It is not just plants; it can't be. If we garden for the right reasons, we garden in reverence for this sphere that we inhabit as it hurls through space. We as gardeners gather like druids to celebrate the mind-boggling complexities that our gardens embody. Our gardens become an aggregate of history and moment blended with equal parts of tantalizing reality, polished by perfect light.



...to call for a moratorium on movement of non-native species into our cultivated spaces has ramifications for conscience and morality as well as impracticality. Before we heed the call to shut the barn door now that the horses are out, we must first ask if that closure is more unnatural than allowing the interface of the natural world with our human condition to continue. Life, diversity, and the forces of change that mold our natural world are stronger than anything we as humans can imagine, or that we can force upon the planet.



Practicality is the gardener's worst enemy. "This plant is from Florida-of course I can't grow it in my Michigan garden"; "I saw it growing in standing water-it will never tolerate my well-drained, sandy loam." Not so fast! Common sense all too often results in a stiff, boring inventory of plants and a garden that looks mass produced. Throw all preconceived notions out the window, plant wildly, laugh at failures, and smugly savor the successes. Dan Hinkley, *The Explorer's Garden*, 1999.



Associated with each species in my garden is a gallery of memories, garnered in the process of collecting, growing, and propagating. In what country, in what year, with what friends, on what day, did this plant become my acquaintance? The richness of these memories is as important as the plant itself, which in turn hides within its biology its own remarkable heritage. What flower, what fragrance, what pollinator? To what is it related, where does it grow in nature, who originally found it and introduced it to the gardener's palette?



For nearly as long as I can remember, I have gathered plants, one by one, like so many pebbles picked along a rocky shore. These have been sorted and assembled, forming an aggregate of somewhat discernible shape and an understandable, pleasurable substance.



The joys of studying plants in art unfold in various stages—first the straightforward thrill of recognition; followed by appreciation (keenest in those who have tried it themselves) of the artist's skill in capturing the likeness of leaf and petal; and finally, except perhaps in obvious cases like roses and lilies, curiosity about the artist's choice and whether it carries a significance which might be guessed if one knew more about the plants' uses, names, and history.

—Celia Fisher, *Flowers of the Sun, Moon and Stars: a Study of Compositae in Art*, *Journal of the Hardy Plant Society*, 21, No 2. Autumn 1999.



The herbaceous border was the crowning glory of many a garden in the early years of this century, but its labour-intensive nature and the need for a high level of planning no doubt lost it many admirers. Today's interest in natural plant species and ornamental grasses has tended to rekindle enthusiasm for the perennials that were the essence of the herbaceous border, helped along by designers suggesting new ways of growing them.

—Noel Kingsbury's "Snippets" *Hortus*, Autumn, 1999.



Waking one morning to frost, and the clothes on the line stiff as boards, I am enticed to take a look at the garden. Rime, outlining the spires and corymbs of plants left standing and the cone-like seedheads of eryngiums, spiky as porcupine quills, has turned my plants into artifacts. Bone hard, jewelled, expensive. How fortunate. Neglect has paid off. An unkempt garden has its own reward, visually and practically.

—Mirabel Osler, *Winter Wonder*, **The Garden**, December, 1999.



*The first rains of September ought to bring up sheets of the almost blue flowers of *Crocus speciosus* in borders and shrubberies, as surely and as suddenly as they do the mushrooms.*

—E. A. Bowles, **The Garden in Autumn**

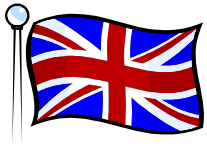
Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society

January 10, 1999 Newsletter

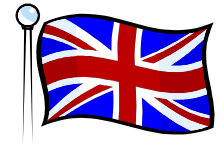
925 Waban Hill

Madison, WI 53711

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Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society Tour of English Gardens



June 17—June 26, 2000

Note: *You must be at Gatwick Airport outside of London on the morning of June 17*

_____ I am interested in participating in this tour and have enclosed a check for \$100 made out to the WHPS to reserve my place.

On receipt of your check, conditions of the tour will be mailed to you. Estimated cost will be between \$1750 and \$2000, depending on number of persons. Cost includes all hotels, breakfasts and evening meals, as well as bus transportation. One Lunch is included. Entrance fees to all gardens are included. Tips for tour guide and bus driver are also included.

Note: *Air fare is not included. Get the best deal you can. We hope to set up an e-mail communication for exchanging tips on air fares.*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ FAX: _____

Name of preferred roommate: _____

Note: *There is a single supplement charge of probably \$300-400. We will make every effort to find you a compatible roommate if need be.*

Would you be interested in arriving at Gatwick Airport on June 15th and spending the night of June 16th at the Copthorne Hotel and catch up on jet lag before the tour begins? (Extra charge, of course)

YES _____ NO _____

Please send this form and your check (made out to WHPS) for \$100 to:

Frank R. Greer
925 Waban Hill
Madison, WI 53711

Questions? Frank Greer 608-233-4686
Ed Hasselkus 608-238-1451

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society

Membership Renewal 2000

Please submit this information page along with your dues check.

NAME _____

ADDRESS () change in address?

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

Type of Membership

() INDIVIDUAL.....\$8.00

() FAMILY.....\$12.00

() BUSINESS.....\$25.00 (includes 1 free ad in newsletter)

() I have included a few extra dollars for further support to the society's programs.

I am interested in helping out with the following activities:

() Programs

() Plant Sale

() Mailings

() Community Projects

() WHA-TV Gardening Expo

() Publications

() Tours

() Hospitality

Other local plant societies I belong to:

Expertise I have that may be useful to the Society: computer, journalism, publishing, public relations, horticulture, landscape profession, etc.:

Please mail completed form and checks made out to The Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society (WHPS):

Barb Herreid, 2788 Florann Drive, Fitchburg, WI 53711; 271-9483