



# Perennial Notes

November 2013

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.

**Wednesday, November 13, *Why Grow That, When You Can Grow This?* with Andrew Keys.** The recently released *Why Grow That When You Can Grow This?: 255 Extraordinary Alternatives to Everyday Problem Plants* is garnering much praise and for good reason. Pining to grow lilac but lack the full sun? Try the fragrant pink and white flowers of Korean spice viburnum. Love the drama of canna but need something hardier? Try the bold foliage of variegated fleece flower. Boston-based author, garden designer and lecturer Andrew Keys offers hundreds of all-star alternatives that replace—and often outshine—popular problem plants. Each profile in his book shows the problem plant and offers three alternatives that include three or more of the original plant's characteristics—hardiness, shape, color, texture, light, and size. The host and producer of *Fine Gardening's Garden Confidential* podcast, Keys' writing has appeared in *Fine Gardening* and other magazines, as well as on his blog, *Garden Smackdown*. <http://www.gardensmackdown.com/> **NOTE:** There will be three opportunities available from 5:00-7:00 p.m. before the meeting—the gift shop and conservatory will be open and the new garden lighting will be on to enjoy while walking around the outdoor gardens.

**Wednesday, December 11, *Annual Meeting, Seed Exchange and Member Potpourri.*** We'll be confirming Officers and Directors for the new year and announcing Board recommendations for donations from this year's Plant Sale proceeds at our **Annual Meeting**. We hope you've been taking photos of your garden or gardens you have visited, to present at our popular **Member Potpourri**. Plan on taking up to 10 minutes to present your photos, PowerPoint presentation or video. **Contact Stephanie O'Neal at [son2@aol.com](mailto:son2@aol.com) by December 6 if you would like to participate.** And don't forget to bring seeds you've collected to the **Seed Exchange** before and after the program. For an excellent article on **Seed Exchange FAQ**, visit our Website at [http://www.wisconsin-hardyplantsociety.com/documents/Seed\\_Exchange\\_FAQ\\_9-2002.pdf](http://www.wisconsin-hardyplantsociety.com/documents/Seed_Exchange_FAQ_9-2002.pdf) Questions? Contact Seed Exchange Coordinator Jane Gahlman at 608-837-2317, [jmgahlman@hotmail.com](mailto:jmgahlman@hotmail.com).

### 2014 Programs and Events!

**Sunday, January 19, 2014 *Member Potluck*, 10:00 a.m.-noon.** Enjoy great food, take a walk through the tropical conservatory and, with some cooperation from the weather, take a walk through the winter gardens. The buffet opens at 10:00 a.m., so plan on setting up your potluck items before then. Juice and lemonade will be provided (there is also a soda machine available). Bring your own plates and utensils. It's a great chance to get together with fellow members and compare notes on the events of the past year. **Join us!**

**February 7-9, 2014, *WHPS Booth at Wisconsin Garden Expo*** Eleanor Rodini—[erodini@library.wisc.edu](mailto:erodini@library.wisc.edu), 608-257-2984—is coordinating the WHPS booth at the Garden Expo, and volunteers who sign up to work a shift at the booth will receive a free entrance ticket to the Expo—contact Eleanor if you are inter-

ested. WHPS is once again sponsoring a speaker at the Expo, **Roy Klehm, noted peony hybridizer and founder of Beaver Creek Nursery and Song Sparrow Farm and Nursery.** His presentation, ***My Mentoring Horticulture Heroes: Key people who mentored me and their contributions to gardens and landscapes***, will no doubt be one of the highlights of the Garden Expo.

**Wednesday, February 19, 2014 *Mike Yanni, Johnson's Nursery***

**Wednesday, March 19, 2014 *Gene Bush, Munchkin Nursery, Depauw, Indiana***

**Wednesday, April 16, 2014, *Chris Hansen, GreatGarden-Plants.com***

**Friday, May 16, 2014, *Volunteer to help setup for the WHPS Plant Sale.*** We'll have sign-up sheets starting in February. Your help working at plant digs, transporting plants to the sale site, helping to set up for the sale and working the day of the sale will assure the continued success of this key WHPS event.

**Saturday, May 17, 2014, 9-Noon, *Stop by the WHPS Plant Sale*** and find great buys on hundreds of perennials for sun and shade, woody plants ranging from vines to shrubs to trees. And there are always a few interesting annuals, bulbs and other gardening surprises!

**Sunday, June 1, 2014, *WHPS Buying Trip to the Milwaukee Area***

**June 13-22, 2014, *WHPS Tour of Northern England.*** Contact WHPS President Frank Greer at [frgreer@sbcglobal.com](mailto:frgreer@sbcglobal.com), 608-233-4686, for more information.

**Monday, July 14, 2014, *WHPS Tour of Gardens in Windsor***

**Saturday, August 9, 2014, *WHPS Trip to Chicago Botanic Garden***

**Wednesday, August 20, 2014, *Member Potluck and Evening Tour of Olbrich Gardens***

**Monday, July 21, 2014, *WHPS Tour of Gardens in Black Earth/Mazomanie***

**Friday-Saturday-Sunday, September 12-14, 2014, *WHPS Trip to Iowa***

**Wednesday, September 17, 2014, *Pat Hayward, Plants Select, Denver, CO***

**Wednesday, October 15, 2014, *WHPS Program, TBA***

**Wednesday, November 19, 2014, *Jeff Lowenfels, author of Teaming with Microbes***

**Wednesday, December 10, 2014, *WHPS Annual Meeting, Member Potpourri and Seed Exchange***

## OTHER EVENTS OF NOTE

**November 2-March 2, 2014, *Plants of the Dinosaur Age***, Olbrich Botanical Gardens. See prehistoric plant species up close, including figs, breadfruit, ferns, palms, and cycads while you learn about the amazing plant-eating dinosaurs that roamed the Earth millions of years ago.

**November 22-January 6, 2014, *Nutcracker in the Castle, The Paine Art Center and Gardens***, The Nutcracker story unfolds in the Paine "castle" with the historic rooms elaborately decorated as the fantastic scenes of the beloved holiday fairy tale. During evening candlelight tours, the magical settings shimmer in the glow of more than seventy Christmas trees. Special actor-guided tours with live music and youth ballet performances further bring the fantasy to life. New this year: Visit the Sugar Plum Fairy's Cupcake Factory and dine on her scrumptious confections! \$11 Adult; \$7 Youth (5-17); Members free. [http://www.thepaine.org/events/Nutcracker\\_in\\_the\\_Castle\\_2013.htm](http://www.thepaine.org/events/Nutcracker_in_the_Castle_2013.htm)

**Saturday, December 7-Monday, December 31, 10:00 am-4:00 pm daily *Olbrich's Holiday Express: Flower and Model Train Show*** Twinkling lights, festive poinsettias, tiny landscapes, and large-scale model trains. Admission for Olbrich Botanical Society members is free. Admission for the general public is \$3 for adults, and \$2 for children 3-12. Children 2 and under are free. Admission to Bolz Conservatory is included.

**December 13-15, 19-23, 26-29, *Holiday Light Show*, 4:30-9:30 p.m.** ,Rotary Botanical Gardens, Janesville. Admission \$5.00 adult, \$3.00 (age 3-15). Twenty acres, 300,000 lights, 100 individual displays, 2,000 half-gallon milk jug luminaries, 53 decorated evergreens, 6 miles of extension cords. Santa, live reindeer and camel, holiday shopping, musicians on most nights.

**Tuesday, December 31, *US Bank Eve at Olbrich***, Enjoy New Year's Eve family fun at Olbrich. See the Bolz Conservatory and Olbrich's Holiday Express: Flower and Model Train Show. US Bank Eve will feature activities for families with young children. Sponsored by U.S. Bank - Madison. Visit [www.usbankeve.com/madison](http://www.usbankeve.com/madison) for more information.

*If you know of an upcoming garden program, tour, trip or other information of note, contact Stephanie O'Neal at [sone2@aol.com](mailto:sone2@aol.com)*

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## Upcoming at Allen Centennial Gardens in 2014

**January-May** (selected Saturdays) *Gardening classes at U.W.-Madison* 9:00 am-11:00 a.m. by Ed Lyon and guest speakers. Free admission and dates/details supplied through ACG Volunteer and Friends of ACG membership and emails.

**May 24**, 9:00 a.m. - Noon. *Hosta Sale* at Allen Centennial Gardens. The sale will include divisions from the Gardens' 500+ cultivar collection as well as new cultivars purchased through Q & Z Nursery. Divisions will be larger than the standard single crown generally sold in retail. All proceeds are a fund raiser for ACG.

**May 10**, 10 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.. *Family Gardening Day* sponsored by *Science Alliance* held at U.W.-Madison D.C. Smith Greenhouses, Steenbock Library and Allen Centennial Gardens. Free, family fun event: Tour the D.C. Smith Instructional Greenhouse, Visit Allen Centennial Gardens for helpful ideas for ways to improve upon your garden, Check out the Steenbock library for the Library Gardening Collection and UW-Extension materials for Master Gardeners, Explore hands-on activities, Get a 4-pack of vegetable plants and transplant them at Allen Centennial Gardens, Make a terrarium, Use your 5 Senses to Experience Plants, Make and wear your own Plant Nursery Necklace, Learn about gardening tools that make gardening accessible for all abilities and More.

**June 22**, 1:00-4:00 p.m. *Special Plant Auction and Runway Show*. A fund raising auction of plants not found in Midwest nurseries and garden centers as well as garden products and accessories. The auction will showcase new, rare and unusual through a silent auction as well as a unique runway show for the most sought-after offerings. All items will be unique and garden-focused - there will be no local business gift baskets or tchotchke! Cash bar and tour the gardens. Held at Allen Centennial Gardens.

More details at [allencentennialgardens.org](http://allencentennialgardens.org).



### A New Friends Membership Program

2014 marks our 25th anniversary which we will celebrate with special displays and new events through the Friends of Allen Centennial Gardens' program.

**May: Family Gardening Day & Hosta Sale**  
**June: Special Rare Plant Auction & Runway Show**

**September: Out-of-State Bus Tour of private & public gardens, garden centers & nurseries**

*Standard benefits of membership include gardening classes Jan.-May, discount on Wisconsin Gardening magazine, reciprocal agreement with over 200 US public gardens, discounts to local businesses, member newsletter and access to member events.*

*For event details and benefits, join the Friends of Allen Centennial Gardens.*  
[allencentennialgardens.org/membershipclasses](http://allencentennialgardens.org/membershipclasses)

## August 2 Tour of Kohler-Sheboygan Area Gardens

On Friday, August 2, WHPS members boarded a Badger Bus for a one-day garden tour of Kohler and Sheboygan area gardens. Our first stop was the American Club courtyard gardens in Kohler. The hotel surrounds these enclosed gardens, offering a view to guests staying or dining at the club. Each of these courtyard gardens—the Prairie Woodland, Lantern, Gazebo, and Fountain—is named for a prominent feature in each respective garden. In the center of the Fountain courtyard is The Greenhouse, a charming antique solarium from Chorley, Lancashire, in the north of England. The Greenhouse was meticulously dismantled, transported halfway around the world and reassembled piece by piece to stand in its current home at The American Club, and sells coffee and treats to enjoy in the outdoor courtyard seating areas.



Many of us took the opportunity to visit the Kohler Design Center to see the latest in plumbing fixtures and the museum/arts and industry gallery before walking through the garden community of Kohler to Cucina, an Italian restaurant in the Shops at Woodlake complex where we enjoyed a three-course lunch.

Our next stop was the 450-acre Christopher Farm and Gardens in Sheboygan. The property borders the shoreline of Lake Michigan and is owned by Jay and Doris Christopher, who purchased the initial 37-acre farm in 1997. Christopher Farm and Gardens was established to "promote the enjoyment, understanding, and conservation of the native plants, trees, animals, and the Lake Michigan shoreline found in the habitat of Sheboygan." Our guided walking tour gave us an overview of the 50 acres of landscaped gardens, including a woodland, prairie, apple orchard, kitchen and cutting garden, many conifers, Asian and children's garden, koi ponds and waterfalls, an outdoor amphitheater and miniature railroad track (16-inch gauge width), complete with a passenger boarding platform station and a walkway crossing. I was impressed with the size and scale of the landscape and the attention given to detail in the various themed garden areas.

Our last stop was a private garden in Eldorado, WI. Larry and Sarah Conrad live and garden on two acres of land on the former site of the 150-year-old Oak Lawn Cheese factory. We all enjoyed wandering about Larry's collections of magnolias, many conifers, hypertufa containers, beds of daylilies and hostas. Most of us were ooing and aahing over the towering stands of Oriennpet lilies in full fragrant splendor. We were also treated to a tour of their house, where Larry has created and displays many magnificent stained glass lampshades and windows.

—WHPS Trip Coordinator John Cannon

### 2014 Plant of the Year™

*Panicum virgatum* 'Northwind' takes the spotlight as the 2014 Plant of the Year™ awarded by the Perennial Plant Association©.



Roy Diblik of Northwind Perennial Farm introduced *Panicum virgatum* 'Northwind' in the early 1990s. It came from seed he collected in 1982 near railroad tracks off of Highway 25 in South Elgin, Illinois. As the seedlings grew, Roy noticed one unusual plant growing upright, rather than arching, with beautiful blue-green leaves.

Roy says this about his find: "I think the habit of this plant with its distinct upright growth habit, its durable

lifestyle, and appreciated architectural essence has helped it find a welcomed place in many gardens. This is one of uncountable naturally occurring hybrids that occur with all native plants... we just need to keep our eyes open."

We salute Roy Diblik for his keen eye, and for offering 'Northwind' to the nursery world. In addition to this plant's lovely physical attributes, it is drought tolerant and not finicky about soil conditions. It also tolerates wet feet, making it a stylish choice for rain gardens. Foliage turns brilliant gold in fall. And like most switchgrasses, it's tough as nails. 'Northwind' fits into smaller mixed plantings, where it provides an upright, visual accent.

— Excerpted from Hoffman Nursery Blog Posted 8/1/2013  
<http://hoffmannursery.com/panicum-northwind-plant-of-the-year/>

### 2014 Hosta of the Year

'Abiqua Drinking Gourd' has been selected the 2014 Hosta of the Year by the American Hosta Society. It is described as striking and distinctive with the fascinating cup shape of its huge 8" by 8" leaves. The foliage is a stunning blue-green in color with a heavy texture and substance that resists slugs. Plants will reach 18" high and 24-36" wide, and the leaves hold up under the hottest August temps. The cups created by mature leaves can be as deep as 3", and hold their shape all summer long. Slug resistant, and hardy in zones 3-8.



### Some quickie garden tips

- Use a pruning saw to neaten the edges of beds
- Use a bungee cord to secure a load in your wheelbarrow
- Label dahlia tubers (or others) with a permanent marker before storing for the winter
- To remove the salt deposits that form on clay pots, combine equal parts white vinegar, rubbing alcohol and water in a spray bottle. Apply the mixture to the pot and scrub with a plastic brush. Let the pot dry before you plant anything in it.
- Set up a PVC pipe in ground to store coiled hose; can use the hole in top of PVC to hook spray nozzle

# Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society



## November 2013 Newsletter

211 S. Fair Oaks Avenue  
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**Do you have a question about your membership?** Contact Jane LaFlash at [whps05@yahoo.com](mailto:whps05@yahoo.com), 608-243-1208.

..... **Member news, tips, etc.** .....

### In the news...

 Nice article by board member Ed Lyon on *Gardening Trends* in **Wisconsin Gardening's** online October e-Newsletter—[http://statebystategardening.com/state.php/wi/newsletter-stories/gardening\\_trends/](http://statebystategardening.com/state.php/wi/newsletter-stories/gardening_trends/)

 WHPS received some terrific recognition in the *Wisconsin State Journal* after our Plant Exchange in September—[http://host.madison.com/wsj/news/local/around-town-group-promotes-perennial-plants/article\\_a691925d-f785-52fe-805a-ae5aba6fa999.html](http://host.madison.com/wsj/news/local/around-town-group-promotes-perennial-plants/article_a691925d-f785-52fe-805a-ae5aba6fa999.html)

### Volunteer for WHPS in 2014!

If you haven't volunteered for the Garden Expo or the Plant Sale, you're missing a great chance to make some new friends while contributing to the success of two important WHPS events. The Garden Expo is an opportunity to talk about our activities and events and promote membership to the biggest garden audience in the state, and our Plant Sale allows members to purchase quality perennials from member gardens at great prices and introduces our organization to members of the greater Madison gardening community. And the funds raised are donated in full to worthy garden programs/causes.

### Digital Photo Images Wanted for WHPS Garden Expo Booth and Website

Currently, our greatest need is for images of the WHPS Plant Sale at the West Agriculture Station, plant digs and the Plant Exchange. We also welcome images of meetings, speakers and our local garden tours. If you have digital images you are willing to share, please contact [lynnbelanger7300@gmail.com](mailto:lynnbelanger7300@gmail.com). You can also post the photos directly to [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com):  
Login: [whps100@yahoo.com](mailto:whps100@yahoo.com); Password: Love2garden



**WHPS is now on Facebook!**  
<https://www.facebook.com/WisHardyPlantSociety>

*The lesson I have thoroughly learnt, and wish to pass on to others, is to know the enduring happiness that the love of a garden gives.*  
— Gertrude Jekyll

Visit our website: <http://www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.com>