



Perennial Notes

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society, Inc.

January 2020



Grants Program Update

Allen Centennial Gardens Amazing Sprouts Program – \$500 given in 2019 – Yes, we plan to continue the Amazing Sprouts program. This year we partnered with the Eagle Heights preschool, Eagle’s Wings, and plan to continue this relationship. It was an amazing experience, with four sessions in 2019. The content was hands-on, student-driven, and lessons open-ended, allowing kids to explore, be creative, and ask questions around a general topic. Each week focused on something different including composting, insects, parts of a plant and food. The first three took place in the Garden with the final week in Eagle Heights community garden, adjacent to their neighborhood. Many of the children had never been to the community garden before, even though they lived close by.

This [link](#) includes a broad summary of all the activities and lots of photos, should you want more info. Thanks again to WHPS for your support of this program, it was an awesome success!

– Ben Futa

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.

Questions about our events? Email wisconsinhps@gmail.com for specific info.

Sunday, Jan. 19, Potluck Brunch and Presentation – Bring your own utensils and a dish to share: set up time 10:00 am.; food line 10:30 am. Water, juice, coffee and tea will be provided. Frank Greer will present *Gardens Remembered*. Frank will walk us through a few gardens of WHPS members who are no longer with us. Weather permitting, enjoy a walk through the gardens after the potluck!



Friday-Sunday, Feb. 7-9 , WHPS Booth at the PBS Wisconsin Garden & Landscape Expo. WHPS is also sponsoring a seminar from 2:15-3:15 pm. on Saturday, Feb. 8 – *Grass to Garden* with Speaker Rita Thomas. Rita has tracked the design and structure of her garden’s development since 1985 — from trees to shrubs to native and unusual perennials and landscaping. Join Rita for a unique view of the amazing transformation from grass to garden.

Wednesday, Feb. 19, WHPS Meeting – Forty Years a Gardener: a Madison Gardener’s Reminiscences, with speaker Frank Greer. (Note: This presentation was cancelled last year due to weather.) Frank will discuss his favorite plants, people, places and recommendations for gardening success. More importantly, he will discuss thoughts for preparing for garden enjoy-

ment later in life by simplifying a gardener’s world. Frank is known for his Nakoma shade garden, his love of epimediums and the beautiful containers of annuals that share his driveway each year.

Saturday, Feb. 22, WHPS Workshop: Pruner Clean-Up and Sharpening, hosted by Betsy True, 10:00 am.-12:30 pm. Bring your bypass 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 bypass pruners. NOTE: she will discuss general sharpening and upkeep, but the specific brands demonstrated will be ARS, A.M. Leonard, and Felco. Bring your bypass pruners and any maintenance supplies you have. Supplies will also be provided at the workshop. Registration is limited, but we are often able to add individuals from the waiting list, so register [here](#).

Wednesday, March 18, WHPS Meeting: What I Learned from 20 Years at Rotary Botanical Gardens, with speaker Mark Dwyer, who recently left his position as Horticulture Director at Rotary to create his own business, Landscape Prescriptions by MD (www.landscapeprescriptionsmd.com), with a strong focus on landscape design/consultation, public speaking and writing projects.



Wednesday, April 15, WHPS Meeting: Pollinators in the Garden, with Speaker Krissa Skogen, Ph.D., Conservation Scientist at Chicago Botanic Garden. She is also an adjunct professor in Bio-



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Tribute to Ed

by Glenn Herold
see pg. 3.



Perennial of the Year

by Mark Dwyer
see p. 6.



WHPS Looking to 2020

see p.4.

WHPS Events (cont. from p.1)

logical Sciences at Northwestern University. Her research interests include: reproductive and pollination biology; plant-insect interactions; floral trait evolution; demography; population genetics; large-scale anthropogenic threats to biodiversity; understanding the causes and consequences of plant population and species decline; Onagraceae, Sphingidae, microlepidoptera. She believes that understanding the diversity of life starts by uncovering the evolutionary histories and relationships between interacting organisms and landscapes. As a botanist, she is fascinated by the rich diversity of flowering plants (angiosperms) and the insects that interact with them – both pollinators and antagonists – and how these interactions may help explain the great diversity we see today.

Friday, May 29, One-day Bus Trip to Blumenladen in New Glarus, Nick Engelbert's Grandview outside of Hollandale, Aspen Ridge in Mineral Point and Dick-eyville Grotto. NOTE: More info to come in brochure mailing in early Spring.

June 10-18, WHPS Trip to England – SOLD OUT!

Thursday, July 16, Evening tour of member's gardens on Madison's east side.

Wednesday, July 22, Evening tour of member's gardens in the Mt. Horeb area.

Sunday, July 26, One-day Bus Trip to Milwaukee Area: Heritage Flower Farm, Vineyard of River Hills (with wine tasting) and Dragonfly Farm. NOTE: More info to come in brochure mailing in early spring.

Wednesday, Aug. 12, WHPS Member Potluck and Walk Through Olbrich Gardens

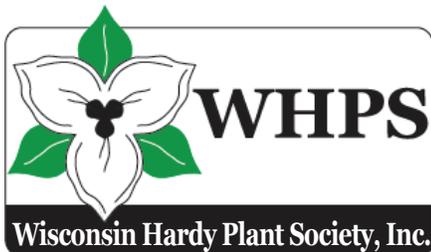
Wednesday, Sept. 16, WHPS Meeting: Brent Heath of Brent & Becky's Bulbs



Wednesday, Oct. 21, WHPS Meeting: Speaker Frank Fitzgerald, an award-winning Landscape Architect with Cunningham Group in Minneapolis whose work has been featured in Fine Gardening and Better Homes & Gardens.



Wednesday, Nov. 18, WHPS Meeting: TBA



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Linda Marx, ljmarx@chorus.net, Program Committee

Kitty Rankin, kitty.rankin@gmail.com, Grants Committee, Newsletter

Dues 2020

On Monday, December 16 all members received an email letting them know if they owe dues or not. If you owe dues, you can either pay your dues online at our website – www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.org – or through a membership form you can print out from there. Please plan on paying your dues by the end of February.

Workshop Suggestions?

The WHPS Workshop Committee will be meeting the end of January and would like your input on the kinds of workshops you would be interested in. Please email your suggestions or any comments on our workshops to Chair Emily Buckingham at emilybuckingham@gmail.com.

Interesting Reading

- Jane LaFlash suggests this interesting article on garden nomenclature from *The Harvard Gazette* – [A rose by any other name – could be confusing.](#)

- And if you are looking for books to bring children into the gardening fold, you might want to take a look at *Little Green Thumbs: 12 Garden-Filled Picture Books for Spring*, by Devon A. Corneal at the website [Brightly](#).

- Article from UW-Madison Department of Entomology Insect Diagnostic Lab on [Longate Hemlock Scale](#).

WHPS Board Update

Board – At the November meeting of the WHPS Board, new officers were elected to a three-year term: Stephanie O'Neal, President; Jane Gahlman, Immediate Past President; Emily Buckingham, Vice President and Secretary; Diane Scharkey, Treasurer. The board also selected five new directors who were unanimously elected to a three-year term at the December Annual Meeting: Ben Futa, Andrea Diss-Torrance, Mark Dwyer, Alissa Karnaky and Vickie Kaufman (see p. 4).

Donations – This year, thanks in large part to sales of hellebores, conifers and peonies at WHPS Meetings and purchases from Brent & Becky's Bulbs in 2019, the Board selected, and members voted unanimously, to donate the following funds: \$2,500 to Olbrich Botanical Gardens; \$1,250 to Rotary Botanical Gardens; \$1,250 to Longenecker Horticultural Gardens; and \$1,250 to Allen Centennial Garden (includes sponsorship of *Resilient Landscapes* symposium March 27-28).

WHPS 30th Anniversary!

This year the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society is enjoying its 30th Anniversary. Look for emails and other announcements as we plan to celebrate this event throughout the coming garden season. Members are encouraged to email us with thoughts of your favorite WHPS events, trips, tours and other memories (send to sone2@aol.com).

Prof. Edward R. Hasselkus: Plant Evaluator and Mentor

By Glenn Herold

Thursday, December 19, 2019

Reprinted from the [The Cottage Gardener blog](#)

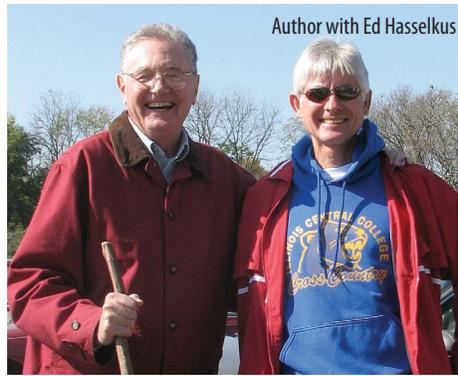
NOTE: WHPS has benefitted greatly over the past 30 years from the expertise and contributions of Ed Hasselkus, including his invaluable contacts in the horticulture world that continue to allow us to bring speakers and topics of importance to Wisconsin gardeners.

No horticulturist in Wisconsin is more renowned than UW-Madison Professor Emeritus Edward Hasselkus. Ed, as he prefers to be called, is a lifelong Wisconsinite. Born on a vegetable farm in Dousman, he received his bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. degrees from UW-Madison and was appointed to the horticulture faculty after graduation, where he stayed his entire career. During his 33-year teaching career, he mentored over 3,000 undergraduates and 35 graduate students, among whom I was fortunate to be included.

Ed taught plant identification classes each year to horticulture and landscape architecture students, as well as "Production and Maintenance of Landscape Plants" every other year. That class included a field trip to Door County, where he introduced students to many of his favorite vacation spots and restaurants, in addition to exploring native plant communities and visits to nurseries.

In his plant ID classes, Ed would lead students around campus and at the UW arboretum. Undergrads had a tough time keeping up with his pace, which resulted in his nickname, "Fast Eddie!" Ed was very approachable as a teacher. Whereas some professors kept their distance from students, Ed relished their camaraderie and students would flock to him in an effort to absorb some of his vast plant knowledge.

Besides his teaching appointment, Ed had an affiliation with the UW Extension and travelled the state to talk with nursery personnel and growers. His position as curator of Longenecker Gardens at the UW Arboretum, a title he assumed in 1966, made him the perfect candidate for this task. Longenecker Gardens is named for Prof. Bill Longenecker, who advised Ed as an undergraduate. At the arboretum,



Ed would field test cultivars of woody plants that were introduced to the industry and evaluate them for hardiness, disease resistance and aesthetic qualities. While all plants were being evaluated, he especially took a liking to crabapples, lilacs and magnolias. The arboretum now has some of the best collections of these plants in the world.

Ed was not a plant breeder or hybridizer, but his evaluations led to the introduction of nine plants into the horticulture industry. In my opinion, those that have made the biggest impact on the industry are 'Whitespire' Birch and Northern Glow® Maple. 'Whitespire' Birch is a white barked birch that is resistant to bronze birch borer, an insect that has devastated the paper birch and European white birch. It was introduced in 1983. Anywhere you go in the country, you are likely to see 'Whitespire' Birch. A more recent introduction, released in 2010, is Northern Glow® maple. It is a hybrid between the Korean maple and the Japanese maple, incorporating the hardiness of the Korean maple with the aesthetics of the Japanese maple. Appropriately, it was given the cultivar name 'Hasselkus.'



'Whitespire' Birch



Northern Glow® Maple



Acer 'Hasselkus' fall leaf



Nyssa sylvatica 'Carolyn'

Two of his introductions, *Nyssa sylvatica* 'Carolyn' (Black Tupelo) and *Fothergilla gardenii* 'Julia' (Dwarf Fothergilla) are named in honor of his granddaughters.

Ed never named a plant after himself, but Roy Klehm of Beaver Creek nursery in Barrington, Ill., introduced two plants which he named after his friend and mentor. *Aronia melanocarpa* 'Professor Ed' is an improved form of Black Chokeberry and *Hemerocallis* 'Gentle Ed' is a daylily with, fittingly, Badger red and white flowers.



Hemerocallis 'Gentle Ed'

Ed has received numerous teaching awards, including the Liberty Hyde Bailey Award from the American Horticultural Society in 2005, but he never put himself above his students or nursery workers. He is a "people person" as well as a "plant person." Despite his accolades, he was, and remains, a very approachable person. Though he is now well into his 80s, I still enjoy getting together with him and always come away with additional plant knowledge. Many of his students, both undergrads and grads, have gone on to distinguished horticultural careers, and are quick to name Ed as the reason for their success. As Ed said, "My entire career has been bringing people and plants together," and "People who like plants are always nice people." Though Ed is no longer "Fast Eddie," he still leads the pack in Wisconsin horticulture.

— Cedarburg resident Glenn Herold was professor of horticulture at Illinois Central College, East Peoria, Ill., from 1979 to 2011. He earned his B.S. in biology and M.S. in horticulture from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is past-president of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society and holds memberships in the American Hosta Society, American Conifer Society, The Maple Society, Wisconsin Woody Plant Society and Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society. Want to see his garden or invite him to tour yours? Do you have comments about his articles or gardening questions? Contact him at the email address plantmanGlenn@gmail.com.

Looking forward to 2020!

FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT STEPHANIE O'NEAL, WHPS PRESIDENT, 2020-2022

WHPS is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2020! In that time, we have only had four Presidents: Steve Lesch from its founding to 1992; John Cannon from 1993-1995; Frank Greer from 1996-2016; and Jane Gahlman from 2017-2019.



And now I've been elected President to represent WHPS for the next three years. I want to thank Jane Gahlman and our previous presidents for their excellent guidance and service, and I hope I can do them proud over the next few years. And I want you to know that our Board works all year to continue our goal of encouraging interest and education in hardy plants and their use in Wisconsin landscapes. It's so exciting to have been a part of this group from its early years, and I look forward to taking part in our future.

Before I bought my house on the South side of Madison in 1996 when in my 40s, gardening had never been a part of my life, with the exception of planting a row of marigolds and trimming my mom and dad's Bridal Wreath Spirea in the 60s, and a huge houseplant obsession in the early 70s. In fact, when I bought my house in February, there was six inches of snow on the ground and I didn't even look at the yard behind the garage (about half of my 8500 square foot garden is back there) until late March. When I finally saw the four-foot slope behind the garage and the other topography, I knew I didn't want to be mowing in my older age, so I started reading up and thinking about filling the garden with plants, paths and groundcover. In 1997, a friend and avid gardener gave me the gift of a WHPS membership. I started going to meetings, the Garden Expo, garden tours and plant sales – and a new obsession was born. My garden now has no lawn, many perennials (most from the WHPS Plant Sale) and over 147 shrubs and trees (yes, I know, too many). Having retired two years ago from my job as an executive assistant, I'm now attempting to edit my garden to make it easier to tend and allow me time to actually sit now and then to enjoy my own personal woodland.

In 1998, President Frank Greer sent out a note in the newsletter asking for someone

to help format the newsletter and I volunteered, having some experience (though no graphics training) putting together newsletters in my then job as Program Director at the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce. I've been editor of the newsletter since then, and joined the board shortly thereafter. I've coordinated the Garden Expo booth, the Plant Exchange, the Plant Sale (for over 13 years) and I also assist as an admin for our Facebook page. Lately, I've been working with the board to help recruit new members who can add knowledge, experience, energy and enthusiasm to the future growth and success of WHPS.

I want each of our members to feel that excitement, and I hope all of you will find a way to participate, from attending meetings, workshops and member gatherings, volunteering at the Garden Expo booth, taking a trip or a garden tour, contributing suggestions or articles to our newsletter, or hosting an open garden. If you have any questions, or ideas for future programs, events, etc., please send them to me at sone2@aol.com.

Wishing us all a great gardening year in 2020 and on to the next 30 years of WHPS!

JOHN CANNON RETIRES FROM BOARD

I have been a member of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society since its inception. Started as "The Perennial Society" by a small group of gardeners in 1989, I have been involved as the society not only changed its name but has grown into what it is today.



WHPS presently has approximately 800 members and has attained nonprofit status, has a great newsletter, a website, and a growing social media presence. There are numerous free workshops and new member socials to attend and a WHPS grants program which is in its infancy. WHPS has made annual donations to area gardens totaling over \$92,000 to date.

Through attending monthly meetings, touring local member's gardens, creating slide shows of past travels to share, volunteering for plant digs and sales, attending potlucks and many other events, I have enjoyed meeting, learning and sharing with other gardeners over the years.

I have also taken an active role by volunteering for the society over my long tenure as a member on the board. I served as its second president from 1993 to 1995, as secretary from 2012 through 2016, and until recently served with the travel committee from 2011 into 2019.

I believe it is beneficial that an organization maintain some continuity on the board over time to help ensure smooth operations and to lend a historical perspective if needed. I will continue participating in WHPS activities, and I know that the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society continues to have and recruit a strong and talented slate of active board members to lead the society going forward.

IN ADDITION TO JOHN, FOUR OTHER DIRECTORS ARE RETIRING FROM THE BOARD THIS YEAR:

- **Donna Freiman**, who coordinated digs for the Plant Sale, has helped coordinate the WHPS Garden Expo presence and participated in the Workshop Committee.

- **Terri Malisewski-Kane** has been our long-time coordinator of setup and cleanup for the Potlucks and our Olbrich Liaison.

- **Shirley Scriver** has been the coordinator of the WHPS booth and speaker at the Wisconsin Garden Expo for the past few years and served on the Trips Committee.

- **Conrad Wrzesinski** will continue to serve on the Grants Committee and contribute articles to our newsletter. Conrad – along with Frank Greer and Lynn Belanger – was also instrumental in our achieving our 501(c)3 status as an organization.

We thank all of our directors – past and present – for their volunteer efforts on our working Board!

NEW BOARD DIRECTORS

ANDREA DISS-TORRANCE

Andrea is currently the Invasive Forest Insects Coordinator in the Division of Forestry at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and her writings frequently appear in Wisconsin publications discussing the emerald ash borer. She has held open gardens for WHPS members over the past few years that highlight some of the willow garden structures she has created. Andrea and her husband are currently building a greenhouse to allow for better storage of the tropicals and annuals that cover her deck in summer.

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MARK DWYER

Mark Dwyer owns and operates Landscape Prescriptions by MD (www.landscapeprescriptionsmd.com) in Janesville, WI, which is a horticultural consulting firm offering landscape design and consultation work as well as public speaking and writing engagements. Mark was formerly the Director of Horticulture at Rotary Botanical Gardens (Janesville, WI) for 21 years and has degrees in landscape architecture and urban forestry.



BEN FUTA

Ben believes that gardeners, through their gardens, will save the world.

He is passionate for connecting people to plants, and one another, through public gardens. Ben is most interested in the potential of urban landscapes to provide meaningful, authentic, and transformative horticultural experiences through community engagement and co-creation of green space. Ben is the Director of the Allen Centennial Garden at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



Ben grew up gardening on 5.5 acres in northern Indiana. For more than 20 years, he cultivated his green thumb under the enabling influence of his parents. A childhood hobby for gardening evolved into a professional passion for public horticulture through internships with the Lurie Garden in Chicago's Millennium Park and Fernwood Botanical Garden in southwest Michigan.

Ben's experience at Lurie and Fernwood shaped his outlook that public gardens are more than the sum of their plants: they must also embrace the "culture" of horticulture, creating gardens and programs with, rather than for, diverse audiences.

Ben is also a passionate planting designer. His particular interest lies in designing mixed perennial gardens that embrace ecology as an essential component, harnessing the power of nature to create a more resilient, harmonious, and rewarding gardening experience.

ALISSA KARNAKY

Alissa Karnaky is a southerner who discovered her love for plants after moving to Wisconsin for college. Faced with her first winter without greenery, houseplants followed her home to her dorm room and she hasn't been able to stop nurturing plants ever since.



Alissa enrolled in the master gardener program in her mid-20s and began growing vegetables in community plots until purchasing a home allowed her to branch into perennials and woody plants. Her home garden is in a woodland that harbors many native plants, including sizeable communities of spring ephemerals. It is a work in progress as many rampant invasives, including creeping bellflower, goutweed, and lily of the valley, colonized the property.

A few recent acquisitions Alissa is excited about include her first hardy cypripedium orchids and a number of Asian woodland plants, including *Syneilesis palmata*, *Ligularia japonica*, *Deinanthe bifida* and variegated *Cimicifuga japonica*.

Alissa's winter plant project is an orchidarium featuring jewel orchids, bromeliads, and miniature orchid species. Her indoor tropical plant collection includes an over 50 year-old Peruvian apple cactus, several plumeria, and other treasured plants brought back from her travels.

Alissa works at the School of Pharmacy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in alumni relations. She received her bachelor's from Lawrence University. She enjoys playing her flute and piccolo, hiking, cycling, and traveling when not gardening.

VICKIE KAUFMAN

Vickie will be the new coordinator of setup and cleanup for the WHPS Potlucks. She enjoys being in any kitchen and believes sharing food can lead to good fellowship.



2020 – Other Events of Note

Key events of interest in the coming garden season are listed but please visit the following websites for more info on events.

- [Allen Centennial Garden in Madison](#)
- [Boerner Botanical Gardens in Milwaukee.](#)
- [Chicago Botanic Garden.](#)
- [Green Bay Botanical Garden](#)
- [Lynden Sculpture Garden in Milwaukee](#)
- [Mitchell Park Horticultural Park \(The Domes\) in Milwaukee](#)
- [Morton Arboretum, Lisle, IL](#)
- [Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison](#)
- [Paine Art Center and Gardens in Oshkosh](#)
- [Rotary Botanical Gardens in Janesville](#)
- [University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum](#)

Feb. 1-2, 2020, [Madison Orchid Growers Guild "Orchid Quest," Olbrich Botanical Gardens](#)

Feb. 2-8, 2020, [WBAY Home & Garden Show, Lambeau Field, Green Bay, WI](#)

Feb. 7-9, 2020, [Wisconsin Garden & Landscape Expo, Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI](#)

Feb. 14-16, 2020, [Fox Cities Home & Garden Show, Fox Cities Exhibition Center, Appleton, WI](#)

Mar. 7-22, 2020, [Olbrich's Spring Flower Show](#)

Mar. 18-22, 2020, [Chicago Flower & Garden Show, Navy Pier, Chicago, IL](#)

Mar. 20-29, 2020, [96th Annual REALTORS® Home & Garden Show, Wisconsin State Fair Park, West Allis, WI](#)

April 27-28, [Allen Centennial Garden Resilient Landscape Symposium](#) – info for WHPS Members on page 8.

Apr. 30-May 3, 2020, [Art in Bloom, Milwaukee Art Museum](#)

New members

The following members have recently joined WHPS:
Don & Lori Brill, Nancy Miller, Mary Schatz, Melanie Palmer & James Steindl.
Welcome!

Perennial Plant of the Year for 2020

This year, the Perennial Plant Association has selected *Aralia cordata* 'Sun King' as their Plant of the Year for 2020. In our November 2017 newsletter, Mark Dwyer, at that time Horticulture Director at Rotary Botanical Gardens in Janesville, published an article about 'Sun King': **King of the Shade – 'Sun King' Japanese Spikenard**. Below is a reprint of that article, along with an addendum of his thoughts in light of the Plant of the Year selection.

I've not been this excited about a relatively new perennial for the shade in many years! The golden Japanese spikenard (*Aralia cordata* 'Sun King') first caught my eye in 2010, and since the time of our first planting of one specimen in 2011 at Rotary Botanical Gardens in Janesville, WI (zone 5), I've now installed over 40 more specimens of this colorful, statuesque and textural perennial in many of our part-shade and full-shade gardens. It is nice to see the momentum of established popularity and performance this perennial continues to enjoy each year and it comes as no surprise to me.

I was formerly familiar with the straight species (green form) of this plant (*Aralia cordata*) for many years, and our two gigantic specimens at the gardens would reach 7' tall every year with showy white bloom clusters in summer, followed by purple (inedible) berries. This species is native to Japan, Korea, and portions of China. The fine young shoots of this perennial (called mountain asparagus or "udo") are a delicacy in Japan (tastes like asparagus) and the roots can also be consumed as you would parsnips. My interest, however, was in the huge, green, subtropical appearance of this large herbaceous perennial in the shaded garden. Then along comes 'Sun King' that has, in my opinion, become one of the most exciting perennial introductions in the last 20 years.

Barry Yinger, plantsman extraordinaire, was said to have found this gold form at a department store nursery in Japan. This tough perennial offers superior, bold texture in the shaded garden and now the compound, golden leaves offer excellent "illumination" in those locations as well.

Reaching 3'–6' tall once established, this perennial prefers rich, moist soils with ad-



equate drainage, but has not been overly choosy with soil conditions beyond the drainage requirements. Extra pampering will certainly benefit growth rate and the progression towards maturity. 'Sun King' also exhibits the excellent hardiness (to zone 4) and shade tolerance of the species. I did see a specimen in hardiness zone 3 and it looked like it was thriving. It is important to note that in dappled shade or areas where some sun is available, the foliage reads as a solid gold. In darker locations, it still offers interest as a "strong chartreuse." Our original specimen (now eight years old) reaches 5' in height annually and is a real focal point in the dappled shade of our gazebo garden. I have seen 'Sun King' placed in full sun and while the foliage is quite bright in spring, leaf burning or washing out to a blanched white once summer arrives is typical. Some degree of shading is vital for maintaining the integrity of the foliage intensity and protection from strong winds will help keep the foliage intact.

Without a doubt, the foliage is the primary asset of 'Sun King' Japanese spikenard. However, the reddish stems offer some interest, as do the white summer flower clusters that later transition to deep purple berry clusters. Pollinators enjoy the flowers and while the berries are inedible to humans, many birds will avidly consume them. This perennial is also touted as deer resistant and the frequent deer in our garden have left them entirely alone.

Consider adding this stalwart perennial in to the shadier garden as an accent, fo-

cal point, mass planting or for all of these purposes. I think it has become the essential backbone of our shadier gardens and deserves all the accolades it continues to receive.

Availability can still be a challenge but consider locating this plant and giving it a try.

Addendum: I continue to be absolutely amazed by not only the significant ornamental impact of this colorful perennial but its apparently durability in a wide range of garden conditions (keeping in mind that the contribution in mature size and intensity of gold foliage coloration are dependent on the site conditions and amount of lighting). Specimens in decent soil with average moisture and some degree of direct sunlight during the day are the most robust and colorful, with a welcome subtropical look in our Midwest gardens. Both the white flower clusters and subsequent fruiting (dark maroon) of this plant have some value in the garden as well. This is a "slam dunk," a larger perennial that every shade garden should include in multiple locations!

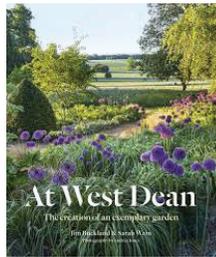


Favorite garden books of 2019

Linda Brazill, [Each Little World blog](#), Thursday, December 12, 2019

I have been gardening for enough years that I am rarely interested in “how to” books on the subject. I want to read about the history and philosophy of gardening, about the people and the places that have been or currently are influential. I want big stories and back stories. So this is a list based on those personal preferences.

I read *Head Gardeners* late last year and it sent me off to find *At West Dean: The Creation of an Exemplary Garden* by Jim Buckland and Sarah Wain, the gardening duo who have salvaged and reimagined the landscape and gardens associated with West Dean College. First, this is a beautiful book in terms of its large size, design and photography. As well as endless full color images of the gardens, there are sensitive black and white photos of the gardeners working on projects of all sizes. Thus it is a book about the people who do the work as much as a look at the results.



Though none of us garden on the scale of West Dean, the book is filled with valuable ideas — even lessons — for us lesser mortal gardeners. They employ a “house color” as a unifying element on signs, furniture etc. They constantly deadhead and give their perennials annual performance reviews that look at how a plant performs, when it’s at its peak, when it needs attention and of what kind. There is a fair amount of discussion given to the lack of on-site housing for garden staff and other issues of concern to professional gardeners and those who love these kinds of gardens.

One noteworthy point is that the measurements are given in both the European and American systems which is a huge help in visualizing the gardens. West Dean gets an average of 41” of rain per year and is subject to late and severe frosts, which means we share some gardening issues.

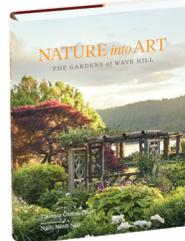
Heroes of American Horticulture by Barbara P. Robinson. An informative look at a varied group of men and women who have greatly influenced 20th century gardening in the U.S.: garden designers, directors of botanical gardens and plant

explorers. Even though I was familiar with about half of this group, I still learned lots.

It did seem at times, however, that the author was connected in some way to many of those she profiled. Perhaps that is a given when you are a gardener yourself, like Robinson, who has worked with Rosemary Verey and Penelope Hobhouse.

Good concept for a much-needed book, but I’m not sure if Robinson was the best person to write it. I would have liked a bit more in-depth profiles and there was little or no criticism about the members of this group or their work.

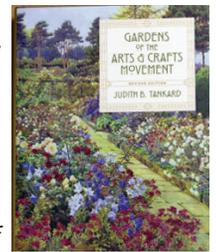
Nature into Art: The Gardens of Wave Hill by Thomas Christopher. My husband and I visited Wave Hill twenty years ago and it is still fresh in my mind. It was an outstanding natural landscape with equally outstanding gardens then, and this new book suggests it has only improved over the intervening years. I bought this book sight unseen based on the author and the publisher (Timber Press) and was not disappointed.



This is another book that is well designed and awash in superb photographs by Ngoc Minh Ngo, and the color is not souped up and unrealistic. The front and back endpapers is a map of the gardens with each area indicated by name and number; each garden has its own chapter. Wave Hill is the first place I ever saw a monocot garden and a trough garden and the most amazing Blue Atlas Cedar I’ve ever seen. They were unforgettable in person and come across equally well in this book.

What surprised me most about this look at Wave Hill is the amount of information and ideas — including very specific tips — is presented for home gardeners, which is very unusual in a book like this. Among the tidbits included is information on everything from caring for aquatics to getting seeds off to a proper start. The book also includes a list of titles for further reading which are as quirky and personal as Wave Hill. A great book about one of America’s great gardens.

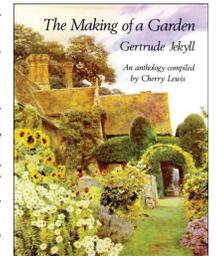
Gardens of the Arts and Crafts Movement (revised edition) by Judith B. Tankard. I was already familiar with Judith B. Tankard’s book (with Alma Gilbert), *A Place of Beauty: The Artists and*



Gardens of the Cornish Colony, so I had no qualms about buying the revised edition of her book on Arts and Crafts gardens from Timber Press. The very first image on the title page of the book is of Folly Farm, whose gardens are being reinvigorated by Dan Pearson. If you read UK garden magazines you will have seen images of this glorious garden’s refurbishment.

Tankard is a respected garden scholar, so you can read her book from that perspective, covering both American and British gardens. She also looks at contemporary gardens where Arts and Crafts concepts and elements remain relevant. You could use it as a travel guide, as Tankard provides four pages listing gardens to visit here and in the UK. Or, like me, you can just settle back and swoon over the beauty of these gardens in photographs, paintings and drawings.

The Making of a Garden Gertrude Jekyll, An Anthology compiled by Cherry Lewis. When I first started gardening, the plethora of books on every aspect of the subject that are available today did not exist. As a result, all my first garden books came from second-hand bookstores. I continue to buy older books, like this one, that catch my eye. Not only is this book a collection of Jekyll’s writings, it is illustrated with her own photographs and drawings, as well as watercolors by contemporary artists.



The book is divided into four sections by seasons. Within the spring section, for example, are Jekyll’s writings on rock gardens, Hellebores, woodland plants and scents of the season to name just a few topics. This is a perfect way to capture the quintessence of Jekyll: just open the book at will and read what catches your fancy that once upon a time captured hers as well.



211 S. Fair Oaks Avenue, Madison, WI 53704

January 2020 Newsletter

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

In Remembrance

• **Barbara Ann Borman** – Dec. 17, 2019 – Her lovely Maple Bluff garden tours are remembered by many of our members.



• **Sue Christofferson** – Dec. 11, 2019 – Though she suffered through many health difficulties she was not deterred – her enthusiasm and interest in gardening kept her smiling through her volunteering at the Plant Sale and her regular attendance at meetings and on garden trips and tours.



• **Rita Dupuis** – Oct. 4, 2019 – Rita was a regular on the trips to England and volunteered at Plant Sales, the Expo Booth and held many tours over the years of her colorful and floriferous Waunakee garden – she was a pro at mixing annuals and perennials. If you were visiting her gardens and looked at a plant twice, it was yours and you were taking it home.



• **Ed Knapton** – Nov. 6, 2019 – America's Best Flowers was a long-time business member and supporter of WHPS. Our hearts go out to Carol on the passing of her husband and America's Best Flowers Founder Ed Knapton, and on the closing of the retail nursery on December 24, 2019. Their central presence each year at the Wisconsin Garden Expo will be sorely missed.



ACG Resilient Landscape Symposium Mar. 27-28



Early Registration January 13-19!

The 2020 Allen Centennial Garden Resilient Landscapes Symposium (full info at their [website](#)) is an not-to-be-missed event for anyone passionate about plants, the people who grow them, and their potential to change the world. The future of horticulture will be defined by our capacity to embrace the science and art of planting in a way that honors the culture in horticulture. The Symposium on March 27-28 will offer an array of speakers and topics that will encourage participants to embrace the potential of plants to cultivate, sustain, and foster diverse elements of healthy and resilient communities.

Among the many speakers and topics: Rick Darke, *Landscape and Community Dynamics and the Art of Observation*; Jennifer Jewel, *The*

Earth in Her Hands: 75 Extraordinary Women Working in the World of Plants; Barbara Deutsch, *Landscape Performance to Demonstrate Impact*; Mickey Fearn, *"Flippin' It": Synergizing the Environmental Justice and Conservation Communities*; Ava Bynum, *Understanding the Culture in Horticulture*; Kate Kennen, *Phytoremediation – Pollution Purging Plants*; Rebecca McMackin, *Brooklyn Bridge Park – Lesson (so far) in Built-Ecology*.

As a co-sponsor, WHPS will be able to offer its members special early-bird access (\$95 for one day, \$175 for both days) to attend the March 27-28 event at Union South, 1308 W. Dayton St., Madison.

An email will be sent prior to January 13 to all of our members providing information on how to register during the January 13-19 early-bird registration period.