



Perennial Notes

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society, Inc.

April 2026



Geum, Cocktail Series

Geums – Cheers to Spring!

from Ganshert Nursery

After the cold and dreary winter, Wisconsin gardeners have much to do and to look forward to when spring arrives. There is, of course, the work of spring cleanup and preparing the garden for a new growing season. There is also the anticipation and excitement revolving around spring blooms. We of course have the harbingers of spring, such as forsythias, lilacs, lenten roses and peonies, but perhaps you are looking for something a little bit different?

There is one group of perennials that we here at Ganshert Landscapes love to incorporate into the landscape that provide long-lasting color in spring. The *Geum* species, otherwise known as avens, are a great option for a sunny to part shade bed. You may be familiar
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WHPS coming events!

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

NOTE: In-person meetings are at Olbrich, unless otherwise stated, links to YouTube meetings are sent the week of the scheduled meeting.

Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 6:30 pm - Social Time, 7 pm - WHPS Meeting (IN PERSON and via ZOOM): Maximalist Garden Style for Joy and Abundance with Speaker Teresa Woodard.

Noted garden writer Woodard is author of *Garden to the Max* (Timber Press 2025) and co-author of *American Roots: Lessons and Inspiration from Designers Rethinking Our Home Gardens* (Timber Press 2022). While many are drawn to the maximalist style, it's not as simple as throwing everything and the kitchen sink and seeing what sticks. There's artistry in curating collections that won't look like a hoarder's mess. There's finesse in using bold colors without appearing gaudy. There are tricks for daringly growing tropical plants outside their traditional growing zones. And there's a skill to magically layering plants without creating garden chaos. Every gardener is familiar with the impulse to buy more plants, any plants, all the plants. And, increasingly, gardeners and designers want to invite a plethora of beneficial insects, pollinators, and biodiversity to their gardens. Having a maximalist garden is definitely aesthetic; yet it also brings vitality back to the earth, in an abundant expression of more.



Wednesday, May 20, 6:30 pm - Social Time, 7 pm, WHPS/MAMGA Joint Meeting (IN PERSON and RECORDED): Versatile Plants for a Variety of Spaces with speaker Chris Felhaber, Oakwood Village University Woods Auditorium, 6205 Mineral Point Rd. NOTE: This is the first of a yearly planned joint meeting in spring of the WHPS and Madison Area Master Gardeners.



Our human landscape is ripe with possibilities for gardens. Each space brings its own opportunities and challenges. Versatile resilient plants are essential to filling them, creating rich, dynamic spaces. These plants do exactly that, bringing beauty and nourishment to our communities no matter the setting. Chris has promised us an enjoyable evening full of these plants to ponder for use in our own gardens.

Chris's goal is to raise the public's consciousness and appreciation of enriching, progressive horticulture. He strives to make rich, dynamic and engaging plantings ubiquitous, so we no longer visit gardens - we live in them. Chris believes we may all lead better lives by making the world a more beneficial, beautiful and equitable place. Chris is a horticulturist at Chanticleer Garden. He regularly writes, teaches, and speaks on plants, gardening, and the capacity of gardens to improve our world. He is the Perennial Plant Association Mid-Atlantic Regional Director, a co-host on *The Native Plant* podcast and runs a garden design consulting service. For the past decade, Chris
(continued on page 2)



Rotary Gardens update

see p.12



Invasives

see p. 7.



WHPS day trips

see p. 3 & 4.

WHPS Events (cont. from p. 1)

has engaged in public and private projects - comparing their ability to stimulate positive change within communities. This work has led him to conclude that dynamic gardens at existing sites of social infrastructure provide the greatest impact and value, thus establishing new baselines of beauty and ecology.

Thurs, May 28, 6-7:30 pm - Special Invitation: Experience Breezeway Iris Garden. Come meet George Bacon, Region 8 Vice President of the American Iris Society, and stroll acres of stunning irises at peak bloom.



Breezeway Iris Garden is a family business, started by George and his mother Doris on 80 acres just outside Madison. They trial 100s of iris each season and sell all classifications of Bearded Iris on their [website](#). Enjoy an evening with WHPS friends in a beautiful garden. The garden is located at 4600 Rome Corners Rd., Brooklyn, WI 53521.

Wednesday, June 3, WHPS/MAMGA Garden Tour - Nakoma, Near West Side of Madison, WI - Gardens of Frank Greer, Alice Page, Wendy Adams - SAVE THE DATE - Email will be sent to members with info, locations, map.

Thursday, June 11, Day Trip to Southeast Wisconsin Nurseries and Gardens - see page 3 for more info.

Wednesday, July 15, WHPS / MAMGA Garden Tours - West Side of Madison, WI - Gardens of Jeff Epping, Kitty Rankin, Jean & John Mathews - SAVE THE DATE - Email will be sent to members with info, locations, map.

Thursday, July 23, Day Trip to Fox Cities/Green Bay Nursery and Botanical Gardens - see page 4 for more info.

Saturday, August 29, 10 am Tour of Landscape Designs Nursery, 3290 Elvehjem Rd., McFarland. Join fellow WHPS gardeners for a tour of Landscape Designs with owner Steve Lesch. His nursery has a wide variety of hardy native, nativar and hybrid nativar trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials. While exploring his expansive nursery, Steve will lead a tour and share his insights and experience with Blooming and Color in the Autumn Landscape. After the tour, you are welcome to shop and bring some autumn color into your garden. Steve is extending a 25% discount to WHPS members who shop that morning. The nursery's expansive inventory for this season is now available at the [website](#).



Wednesday, September 16, 6:30 pm - Social Time, 7 pm, WHPS Meeting (IN PERSON and via ZOOM): Asian Maples For The Midwest: Not An Oxymoron. Speaker John Miyazaki of Gurnee, Illinois, will discuss a range of Asian maples that can be grown in the upper Midwest (not just *Acer palmatum*).

Saturday, September 19, noon-3 pm, WHPS Hosts Open Garden Day at Will Radler's Garden at Rose Innovations, 10020 W. Meadow Dr., Greenfield, WI. At first glance you'd never know that hidden within the 2-acre garden, the rigorous business of breeding and testing roses is well underway. By all appearances, the Radler Rosarium is a tranquil escape full of interesting perennials, shrubs and trees. A bit of exploration reveals unexpected water features, fireplaces and unique statuary. If you take a closer look, the complex research and development of new roses is revealed. Enjoy a fall tour of this beautiful garden. Parking and a children's playground are across from the garden entrance. The \$5 suggested donations at entrance will be given to WHPS.



Wednesday, October 21, Program TBD

Thursday, November 18 - 6:30 pm - Social Time, 7 pm, WHPS Meeting (IN PERSON and via ZOOM): The Creation of Prairie Oaks, presented by Emily Buckingham.



Wednesday, January 20, 2027 - ZOOM MEETING - Program TBD

Wednesday, February 17, 2027 - Program TBD

Wednesday, March 17, 2027 - Program TBD

Wednesday, April 21, 2027 - Program TBD

I love spring anywhere, but if I could choose, I would always greet it in a garden.

- Ruth Stout



2545 Dahle St, Madison, WI 53704

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WHPS Board members can be contacted at wisconsinhps@gmail.com

WHPS One-Day Trip to Southeast WI

Thursday, June 11 – Southeast Wisconsin

Thursday, June 11, Trip to SE WI Nurseries and Gardens

Date: Thursday, June 11

Cost: \$55

Tour Leader: JoAnne Kriege

Departure Time & Place: Approximately 7:30 am, from Floor and Decor parking lot, West Broadway, Monona

Return Time: Approximately 5:45 pm

Registration Deadline: May 22, (no refunds after May 22)

What's included: Bus, driver's tip, admission to Dale Sievert's moss garden

What's not included: No lunch or beverages provided. Bring your own sack lunch and drink, and water/water bottle for the day

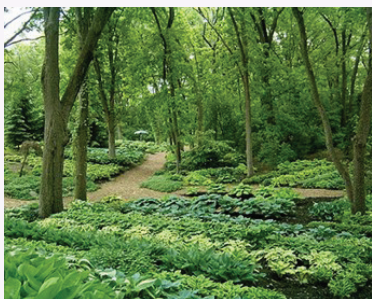
Highlights: This one-day bus trip will include the private garden of Dave and Barbara Bendlin; three nurseries, and Dale Sievert's moss garden.

Register via [Eventbrite](#) for this trip.

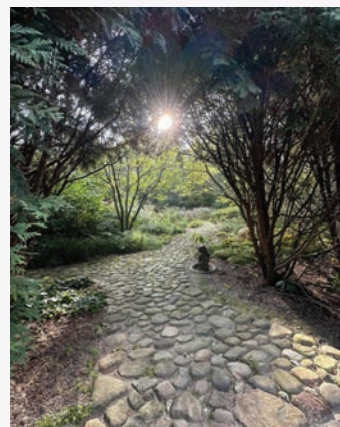
Private Garden of WHPS members Barbara and David Bendlin, Milton. This stunning garden features perennials, unusual trees and shrubs, a gorgeous stone-clad shed, garden art, ponds and an adjacent prairie. Barbara was the WHPS sponsored speaker at this year's Garden Expo, where she shared the fascinating journey of their garden.



Al's Autobody and Hosta Emporium, Walworth. An exciting opportunity for us to walk the trails and shop for hostas at Al Ritchie's property. Al runs an autobody shop on five acres of mixed oak, hickory and walnut trees. He started landscaping around his shop with hostas and has never looked back. He offers hundreds of varieties for sale, including his own registered cultivars, such as Al's 'Compadre' and 'Burlesque'. Al's is renowned for the annual Hosta Fest hosted around the Memorial Day Weekend. Check his [website](#) now to purchase \$100 gift certificates at a discount, which can be spent on your visit! [March 19-April 9, 20% off of a \$100 gift certificate (maximum 2 per person); April 10-May 8, 15% off of a \$100 gift certificate (maximum 2 per person)]



tion for garden enthusiasts, Northwind Perennial Farm is a former dairy farmstead nestled on 10 acres and specializing in over 300 species of hardy perennials and native plants, including an amazing number of sedges. It features gorgeous display gardens in eco-friendly settings and a unique garden shop with antiques, local art and garden accents to inspire you.



Heritage Flower Farm, Mukwonago. Charming nursery specializing in growing and preserving over 1,000 varieties of rare, old-fashioned, heirloom plants. Founded in 1998, the farm focuses on "plants with a past," providing stories and historical context.



Private Garden of Dale Seivert: "The Moss Man," Waukesha. Spectacular one-acre private garden featuring an extensive moss collection, Japanese-style garden, a sunken garden, a hillside garden, and a cactus and succulent garden. The owner, Dale, and his gardens were recently featured in the book *Garden to the Max* by Teresa Woodard (WHPS April speaker). Dale has drawn inspiration from his extensive worldwide travels. He will be on hand during our visit to sell and sign copies of his own book *Nines and Tens*, which highlights – in text and gorgeous photos – his favorite natural and man-made places in the world that rank as a "nine or ten." [Additionally, Dale has generously offered to provide one free copy of his book for every five people in our group, which we will distribute as door prizes.]

Questions about this trip can be directed to our [WHPS email](#).



Northwind Perennial Farm, Burlington. A premier destina-

WHPS One-Day Trip to Fox Cities/Green Bay

Thursday, July 23, One-day Trip to Fox Cities/Green Bay

Thursday, July 23, One-day Trip to Fox Cities/Green Bay Nursery and Botanical Gardens

Date: Thursday, July 23, 2026

Cost: \$60

Tour Leader: Janet Aaberg

Departure Time & Place: Arrive by 7:15 am for 7:30 am departure at American Center Park & Ride, 5601 Eastpark Blvd., Madison

Return Time: Approximately 6 pm

Registration Deadline: July 3 (no refunds after July 3)

What's included: Bus, driver's tip, and admission to Green Bay Botanical Gardens. (GBBC does not recognize reciprocal membership with buses)

What's not included: No lunch or beverages provided. Bring your own sack lunch and drink or water/water bottle for the day.

Highlights: one-day bus trip will include the private Vandenheuvel Quarry garden, Green Bay Botanical Garden, Rose Hill Gardens Nursery, and Sarah and Larry Conrad's private garden.

Register via [Eventbrite](#) for this trip.

Vandenheuvel Quarry Garden, Seymour. The VandenHeuvel quarry garden in Seymour, Wisconsin, is a private, extensive rock garden created by Carl and Karen Vandenheuvel, featuring massive limestone, boulders, hostas, conifers, perennials and a sunken garden. PBS has an interesting video about this garden.



Green Bay Botanical Gardens, Green Bay. GBBG has 47 acres filled with more than 120,000 plants from Wisconsin and around the world. We will have three hours to explore these beautiful gardens. Picnic tables and benches are available if you wish to eat your lunch at that time. Our tour



is non-guided, however there is an app with audio and a map available to use. We will also be honored with a 10% discount at the gift shop.

Rose Hill Gardens,

Hobart. Rose Hill Gardens in Hobart, Wisconsin, is a nursery with 2.5 acres of sun and shade gardens to enjoy. Additionally, given the time of the year, we have been told that many of the perennials will be sold at 20% off.



Sarah and Larry Conrad Private Garden, Eldorado. Larry and Sarah Conrad live and garden on two acres of land on a former site of the 150-year-old Oak Lawn Cheese factory in Eldorado, Wisconsin. They have collections of Magnolias, many conifers, hypertufa containers, beds of daylilies, hostas as well as stands of Orienpet lilies. Also, Larry has created and displays many magnificent stain-glass lamp shades and windows.



Questions about this trip can be directed to our [WHPS email](#).

Other gardening events of note

Key events of interest 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](#) in Chicago
- [Green Bay Botanical Garden](#) in Green Bay
- [Lynden Sculpture Garden](#) in Milwaukee
- [Mitchell Park Horticultural Park \(The Domes\)](#) in Milwaukee
- [Monk Botanical Garden](#) in Wausau
- [Morton Arboretum](#) in Lisle, IL
- [Olbrich Botanical Gardens](#) in Madison
- [Paine Art Center and Gardens](#) in Oshkosh
- [Rotary Botanical Gardens](#) in Janesville
- [University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum](#)

Sunday, April 12, 2–3:30 pm, Behind the Scenes: Plant Production Walk, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. Join horticulturist Amanda Dix for an inside look at Olbrich's greenhouses during peak production time, covering what it takes to grow and produce all the new plants throughout the garden. \$28/\$23 member. Registration deadline April 5.

Wednesday, April 15, 5:30–7 pm, Spring Into Gardening Walk, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. A lively outdoor garden walk covering spring pruning basics, perennial clean-up and division, soil prep, and mulching, with additional tips for protecting pollinators and other beneficial garden organisms. Instructors Erin Presley and Samara Eisner, Olbrich Botanical Gardens. \$24/\$18 member. Registration deadline April 8.

Thursday, April 16, 7–8:30 pm, Gardening for Hummingbirds, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. Learn how to create a



2026 PLANT SALE

Sunday, May 17th, 11 am to 2 pm

MADISON AREA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

in cooperation with Dane County Extension

Parking Lot of Dane County Extension Office - 5201 Fen Oak Drive, Madison

From our garden to yours, we offer hundreds of perennials for sun or shade, Wisconsin natives, as well as annual flowers, vegetables, and herbs grown in our greenhouse. Master Gardeners will be available to answer your gardening questions. Plants are priced to sell. Cash, check and credit/debit cards accepted.



Visit www.mamgawi.org/plantsale for more information, including plant inventories.



Follow us on Facebook for plant sale updates: facebook.com/mamgawi.org

Grand Opening April 23 at 8:30 am.

- over 1,000 varieties of annuals, perennials, and vegetables
- Locally grown vegetable plants & seeds
- Events and Classes

www.kopkesgreenhouse.com

1828 Sand Hill Rd, Oregon, WI 53575
(608) 835-7569

backyard hummingbird sanctuary using perennials, annuals, wildflowers, shrubs, trees, and feeders. Covers ruby-throated hummingbird identification, habitat, migration, nesting, and the best plants to attract them. Instructors: Kathi and Michael Rock. \$18/\$14 member. Note: This walk is currently full; contact edufford@cityofmadison.com to join the waitlist.

Saturday, April 18, 1–3 pm, Magnolias Garden Tour, UW Arboretum, Madison. Celebrate the return of spring on a flower-filled stroll through Longenecker Horticultural Gardens' dazzling collection of 110 magnolia trees. Tour led by David Stevens, garden curator and Magnolia Society International board member. Free; registration required via Eventbrite by April 14.

Saturday, April 25, 1–3 pm, Early Signs of Spring Garden Tour, UW Arboretum, Madison. As trees begin to leaf out, dutchman's breeches, twinleaf and rue anemones might be blooming in the woodland gardens, and prairie smoke in the prairie gardens. Susan Carpenter, garden curator, will lead this tour of the Native Plant Garden. Free, no registration required.

Saturday, April 25, 1 pm, Speaker Tim Alderton, JC Raulston Arboretum (Topic TBA), Wisconsin-Illinois Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society, West Madison Agricultural Research Station, 8502 Mineral Point Road, Verona, WI.

Tuesday, Apr 28, 6:30 pm–8 pm Wildflowers of Door County, Door County Master Gardeners, Crossroads - Collins Learning Center, 2041 Michigan St., Sturgeon Bay, WI. Renowned Door County Naturalist Charlotte Lukes will describe and share pictures of the spectacular display of ephemerals that carpet our forests in the spring in Door County.

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Other Events (cont. from p.5)

Saturday, May 2, 1–3 pm, Lilacs Garden Tour. UW Arboretum, Madison. Established in 1935, the Longenecker Horticultural Gardens' lilac collection is the third largest in the country. Join David Stevens, garden curator, to explore lilac history, lore, culture, and color. Free; registration required via Eventbrite by April 28.

Saturday, May 2, 1–3 pm, Modern Meadow Plantings and Their Maintenance, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. Learn design principles for creating low-maintenance contemporary meadow gardens, including how to select and sustain wildflowers, grasses, and perennials that support local ecology. Instructor Kasey Eaves, Vivant Gardening Services. \$30/\$25 member. Registration deadline April 25.

Friday, May 8, 6–7:30 pm, Planting a Mini Porch Prairie, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. Following a presentation on creating and caring for a porch prairie, participants plant an 11" container with native plants that benefit birds, bees, and butterflies — container included to take home. Instructor Eric Manges, Eric Manges Nature. \$40/\$35 member. Registration deadline May 1.

Saturday, May 9, 1–3 pm, Spring Highlights Garden Tour, UW Arboretum, Madison. Explore the wonders of spring flowering woody plants in Longenecker Horticultural Gardens, as garden horticultural specialist Neil Schmidt presents seasonal highlights from the Gardens' expansive collection. Free, no registration.

Wednesday, May 14, 6–7:30 pm, Spring Lecture Series: Keystone Plants and Soft Landings—Planting for Native Bees, Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Pollinator conservationist Heather Holm explains how "keystone plants" support native insects and demonstrates "soft landing" planting techniques that create layered habitats beneath trees and shrubs. \$15/\$12 member/\$10 volunteer.

Saturday, May 16, 2026, 9 am–4 pm, Festival of Spring. The Paine, along the 1600 block of Congress Avenue, Oshkosh, WI. Festival of Spring is a free outdoor event featuring the Paine's annual spring plant sale and numerous vendors of original art, fine crafts, plants, and garden supplies. As a great source for a wide selection of perennials, the Paine's plant sale offers thousands of "tried-and-true" plants as well as new and hard-to-find varieties.

Saturday, May 16, 10 am–2 pm, Friends of the Arboretum Native Plant Sale, UW Arboretum, Madison. Shop for more than 130 species of native grasses, woodland, prairie, and savanna plants in the large tents on the lawn near the Visitor Center, available while supplies last. Organized by Friends of the Arboretum, open to the general public. Free to attend; plants for purchase.

Saturday, May 16, 11:30 am, Garden Tour, Allen Centennial Garden, Madison. Tours feature Allen Centennial Garden's many diverse spaces and reveal the gardener-sense behind each. The 45–60 minute tour meets by the southeast corner of the Agricultural Dean's residence. \$5 suggested donation; free for Friends of ACG members.

Tuesday, May 19, 6–7:15 pm, Spring Lecture Series: Plant Community: Gardens as Social Infrastructure. Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. A lecture exploring how gardens can move beyond their fences to become accessible, enriching spaces woven into daily community life. Instructor Chris Fehlhaber. \$15/\$12 member/\$10 volunteer. Walk-ins welcome.

Wednesday, May 20, 10 am–2 pm, What's In Bloom Garden Tour, Rotary Botanical Gardens, Janesville. Discover what's currently

in bloom, learn insider gardening tips, and get a behind-the-scenes look at the gardens' vibrant landscapes. Tours are on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Free for RBG members; \$10 for non-members. Reserve a spot in advance.

Wednesday, May 20, 5:30–6:45 pm, Beat the Weeds! Savvy Tips for Early Weed Prevention, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. An outdoor garden walk focused on weed control, including how to establish low-growing perennials to crowd out weeds, common weed identification, and practical tools and tips to reduce effort through the season. Instructor: Erin Presley, Olbrich Botanical Gardens. \$24/\$18 member. Note: This walk is currently full; contact edufford@cityofmadison.com to join the waitlist.

Wednesday, June 4, 6–7:30 pm, Spring Lecture Series: Native Shrubs and Ecosystem Services, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. Learn how to select native shrubs that support pollinators, wildlife, and resilient landscapes, including options for screening, wet or dry sites, and butterfly habitat. \$15/\$12 member/\$10 volunteer.

Plant Sales 2026

- **Monday, April 21, Online Perennial Plant Sale Opens, Olbrich Botanical Gardens,** Madison. Browse a curated selection of hardy, garden-tested perennial plants selected by Olbrich horticulturists for color, texture, and pollinator appeal. Available online while supplies last.
- **Saturday, May 3, 9 am–1 pm, Perennial Plant Sale Pick-Up Day, Olbrich Botanical Gardens,** Madison. Pick up pre-ordered perennial plants from the annual sale and receive guidance from garden staff on planting and care.
- **Saturday, May 16, 10 am–2 pm, Friends of the Arboretum Native Plant Sale,** UW Arboretum, Madison. Shop for more than 130 species of native grasses, woodland, prairie, and savanna plants, available while supplies last. Open to the general public. Free to attend; plants for purchase.
- **Sat, May 23, Plant Sale, Door County Master Gardeners,** Peninsular Agricultural Research Station, 4312 WI-42, Sturgeon Bay, WI. Locally grown plants for your home garden. Annual, native, and perennial flowers will be available along with vegetables and herbs.
- **Saturday, June 6, Daylily Sale 2026, The Daylily Society of Southeast Wisconsin,** Brookfield Farmer's Market, Brookfield Central High School, 16900 W. Gebhardt Road, Brookfield, WI.
- **Thursday, June 25, plant pickup, Summer Pollinator Plant Sale, Olbrich Botanical Gardens,** Madison. Pick up pre-ordered pollinator perennials selected for their high nectar and pollen value. Online ordering required in advance.
- **Friday-Saturday, July 31-August 1, 9 am-5 pm, Madison Arena Iris Society Rhizome Sale,** West Madison Agricultural Research Station, 8502 Mineral Point Rd., Verona WI. Mark your calendar now!

Inspire Action through Outreach: Invasive Species Action Awareness Month

—by Melinda Myers

June has been recognized as Invasive Species Action Awareness Month in Wisconsin. This is a great opportunity for you to share your knowledge about the importance of managing invasive plants in our state.

Invasive plants escape the boundaries of our landscape, moving into natural spaces and waterways. They outcompete and displace native plants, degrading natural habitats, increasing the risk of soil erosion, negatively impacting water quality, and so much more.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WI DNR) has declared the month of June as Invasive Species Action Awareness Month to help boost the awareness of this threat and enlist others to make a difference. You can help by sharing information about invasive species as you post on social media, visit gardens and share gardening information throughout June and beyond.

Encourage other gardeners and homeowners to avoid adding invasive plants to their gardens, water features and landscapes. There may be some online retailers that are not aware of the regulations or choose not to follow them. Purchase plants from reputable and local retailers whenever possible. The WI DNR's [website](#) is a great resource to consult before purchasing plants.

The website lists the plants prohibited for sale, possession, and introduction into our state. These prohibited plants are rare or not yet present in the state, but do have the potential to cause harm. Those listed as restricted plants are already here and established, so elimination is not practical, but we can stop adding more to our gardens and landscapes. These plants can't be sold or moved into the state, but possession is allowed.

We as gardeners can also help by selecting plants best suited to the growing conditions and keeping them healthy. Vigorous plants, including native species, are better able to outcompete invasive plants.

If you'd like information on how to manage invasive plants that may already be in your garden, the WI [DNR website](#) and the [University of Wisconsin Weed Science Department](#) provide information to help with identification and control of these problem plants.

Gardeners can minimally slow the spread of some invasive species, like dame's rocket, by removing the flowers before they set seed. Digging - roots and all - is even better, but may only be possible with certain species and small populations.

Invasive plant debris must be disposed of properly, though composting is usually not the best option. Most of us do not create compost piles that reach high enough temperatures to kill these weeds, insects and disease. To prevent them from invad-

ing natural areas, it is best to bag and dispose of invasive plants in the garbage. Always check with your local municipality for recommendations before adding these to the trash.

Mowing or repeatedly cutting back can slow the spread and, in some cases, eliminate the infestation of some invasive plants. Timing and persistence are key to success. Smothering, by covering the infestation with black weed barrier for at least one or two seasons, is another solution that may help manage some invasive plant infestations.

If you decide to opt for chemical control, please read and follow label directions. Make sure the product selected is labeled for this purpose, the application rates and timing are followed, and wear the recommended safety equipment.

If you discover invasive plant populations in public spaces and waterways, please report them to the WI DNR. Sharing this information with the WI DNR makes them aware of possible new infestations and allows them to explore options for containing the spread.

You can find even more resources and information in my Strategies for [Managing Invasive Plants handout](#). The recording of the accompanying webinar, sponsored by and co-hosted with WI-DNR and University of WI Madison Natural Resources Institute-Aquatic Invasive Species Program, is still available to watch. Visit my [webinar](#) and scroll down to the Strategies for Managing Invasive Plants webinar recording.

Thanks for all your help in increasing awareness and encouraging gardeners to be part of the solution. Together we can make a difference!

Melinda Myers is a Wisconsin-based gardening expert, author, and columnist.



Garlic mustard courtesy of www.MelindaMyers.com

LANDSCAPE DESIGNS, INC

Open Tuesday thru Saturday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

April 15 thru October 31st, 2026

See our Spring 2026 online availability at:

landscapedesigns.bz/

LDI Nursery
3290 Elvehjem Rd., McFarland, WI

608-209-3436 • LDI Nursery Manager,
608-233-4215 • Steve Lesch



'Geum' (cont. from p. 1)

with one of our native avens, *Geum triflorum*, or prairie smoke. While this diminutive native is lovely, we want to bring to your attention a newer, splashier group of avens bred by Brent Horvath of Intrinsic Perennial Gardens. Introducing the Cocktail Series of Avens! Bred in the Midwest, this hardy group will have you saying, "Cheers to Spring!" There are 12 boozy varieties in this group with fun names like 'Alabama Slammer', 'Champagne', 'Cosmopolitan', 'Gimlet', and 'Mai Tai' – to name a handful. Two of our favorites that we'd like to highlight are 'Sangria' and 'Tequila Sunrise'.



Geum 'Sangria'

Let's begin with 'Sangria', which is our most-used variety, and for good reason. 'Sangria' features vibrant, upward facing, bright red flowers that are held above a healthy mound of green leaves. Flowers are semi-double with a tidy ring of yellow stamens. Blooms start a bit later than some avens, more toward the end of May, but this workhorse blooms profusely for many weeks – oftentimes into July. We have seen them bloom sporadically throughout the summer without deadheading, and 'Sangria' can rebloom in August if the conditions are right. Confirming our bias toward this gem, the Chicago Botanic Garden awarded it a 5-star rating in its [Geum trial](#) (2007-2015). 'Sangria' was noted for its superior flowering, robust habit, winter hardiness, site adaptability, and attractive foliage. Sangria works well in the front to middle of the border with its mound of foliage in the 12-16" range, but the wind-responsive flowers are held above, in the 30" range. This is a sterile variety, so it is well behaved. As an added bonus, it is rabbit and deer resistant.

The Cocktail Series of Avens come in a variety of colors, so if red is not what you are looking for, another bright variety you can lift your glass to is 'Tequila Sunrise'. This cheery perennial has semi-double flowers of bright yellow with red-brushed edges. You can expect 'Tequila Sunrise' to start blooming in mid-May and last into mid-June. The blooms are upward to outward facing and are supported by vibrant burgundy stems that add a touch of contrast. Foliage is similar to 'Sangria' but a lighter green, and smaller. 'Tequila Sunrise' is a more petite variety, with the foliage only reaching 6-8" tall and the flowers held above at 18-20" in height. This variety is also well behaved in the garden and is rabbit and deer resistant. Deadheading can encourage more of these delightful flowers into summer.

As you are looking forward to spring this year, think about the places in your garden that could use a shot of early season color. With varieties ranging in color from deep orange, lemon yellow, cherry pink, creamy white, soft peach and eye-popping red, there is sure to be an avens that hits the spot. Cocktail party anyone?



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2026 WHPS Grants Awarded

—by Kitty Rankin, WHPS Board

The Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society has awarded its 2026 grants to six gardening projects in Wisconsin. Members may remember that we changed the structure of our grants program so that, instead of accepting and considering grants year round, we now have a once-a-year deadline and consider all proposals as a group. This year, twelve projects from around the state were submitted and considered. Six projects were selected for funding, for a total of \$8,050. These are:

- \$1500 to the **Aldo Leopold Nature Center** in Madison to revitalize an unmanaged drainage basin formerly full of invasive species. It has been cleared, drainage issues addressed and engineered soil added. They now propose to create a native sedge meadow with seeds, plants and shrubs.
- \$1500 to the **Garden Club of Greater Milwaukee** to help create a perennial garden that will serve as a monarch flyway in Lakeshore State Park in Milwaukee. This part of the project

will be located in the Kid's Prairie where they will be planting 2000 hardy native monarch-attracting perennials.

- \$1500 to the **Green Bay Botanical Garden's Northeast Wisconsin Pollinator Corridor**. Five additional perennial gardens, including 1150 perennials, will be added to a network of connecting sites, attracting monarchs and other pollinators to public lands in Green Bay's Muir Park, Marquette Park, Fort Howard Park, Sullivan Park and the Metro Boat Launch.
- \$850 to **Period Garden Park**, a public garden in Madison that was formerly the front yard of one of the historic houses on Mansion Hill. Maintained by volunteers since it was established in 1977, it is undergoing a much needed restoration. This project will renovate a full-sun border along the sidewalk leading into the park. They propose to restore the garden's balance and richness with plants that are appropriate to its historic setting.

- \$1200 to **Red Smith public school in Green Bay** to expand its orchard and to plant pollinator perennials in existing beds. The orchard and gardens will be part of the educational curriculum for children at elementary and middle school classes. The Rusty Patched Bumblebee has been documented in the area.

- \$1500 to **South Wood County Historical Corporation** to enhance a new handicap entrance to the county's historic house museum. Garden beds will be established around the new accessible ramp. Small trees, shrubs and pollinator plants will be part of a low-maintenance garden, connecting history and environmental stewardship.



The Flower Factory Nursery will be selling only on Saturdays at the Dane County Farmers' Market for the 2026 season starting April 11. Selections include natives, pollinator, rain-garden and proven-hardy plants.

www.theflowerfactorynursery.com

If you would like to help us build the Grants program, you can contribute directly through a "Donate" tab on our [website](#). Your donations can be made directly in amounts ranging from \$5 to \$250 using the following check box:

- **Grant Program: Funds local school and community projects** (Projects awarded are located in Wisconsin or in the counties of Illinois, Iowa or Minnesota directly adjacent to the Wisconsin state line. Awards are up to \$1500 and may be used for educational purposes and plant materials only.)

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WHPS Committee Volunteer Positions Available

We're looking for member volunteers to help fill a few open committee roles - an easy and rewarding way to get more involved with WHPS without committing to a full board position! All roles come with training, lots of support and the opportunity to make some fabulous gardening friends.

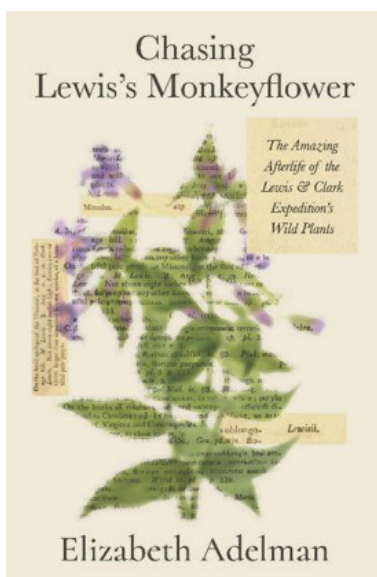
Open positions include:

- Program Logistics: Coordinate with upcoming speakers to ensure they're prepared for their visit.
- Speaker Dinners: This is a fun one! Join speakers and a few board members for a pre-program dinner at a local restaurant.
- Hospitality: Help organize refreshments and activities for our summer potluck and December annual meeting.
- Webmaster: Assist with occasional updates to our website and event calendar using a user-friendly backend.

If you're interested in getting more involved, contact wisconsinhps@gmail.com. We'd love to have you join us!

Members in the news

A New Book - *Chasing Lewis's Monkeyflower: The Amazing Afterlife of the Lewis and Clark Expedition's Wild Plants*, by Elizabeth Adelman. Owner of WHPS Business Member Heritage Flower Farm, Betty Adelman has written a book about the Lewis and Clark Expedition and the plant specimens the great explorers gathered on their way—and of their amazing afterlife. A botanical detective story rooted in the fruitful ground of human misbehavior. . . [with] a delightful epilogue cover[ing] expedition plants the home gardener might consider planting and why, and an appendix lists all the plants discovered. - Kirkus Reviews.



WHPS new members

The following members have recently joined WHPS:

Christine Albert, Cambridge, WI; Judy Baker, Cambridge, WI; Mary and David Earll, Fitchburg, WI; Laura and Rene Gomez, Minong, WI; Kristyn Greenfield - Bloom! Landscaping, Wauwatosa, WI; Jill and Kevin Grulke, Madison, WI; Rosemary Heald, Brookfield, WI; Andrea Herries, Madison, WI; Mary Lou Kaepfel, Madison, WI; Kit Keller and Paul Rushing, Cedarburg, WI; Laura Kenyon - Rotary Botanical Gardens, Janesville, WI; Dennis Krautkramer, Madison, WI; Richard and Judith Krieg, Evanston, IL; Jane and Joseph Lehman, Oregon, WI; Cindy Lundey, Madison, WI; Brittany Magrady and Alex Beld, Madison, WI; Jane Mooney and Dan Greer, Oregon, WI; Janell Morehead, Madison, WI; Diane Packett, Oregon, WI; Karen Park, Waunakee, WI; Amy Rambow-Larsen and Lance Larsen, Middleton, WI; Naomi and Dean Roell, Middleton, WI; Linda Rogalski, Madison, WI; Susan Sundquist, Madison, WI; Donald Troendle, Cincinnati, OH; Kay Wang, Argyle, WI.

- Welcome!

Contact 811 Before You Dig

It is imperative that gardeners locate underground utilities before disturbing the soil, but many people are unaware or overlook this important step. Here is an easy, step-by-step guide to keep your home protected as you enjoy digging in your garden!

HOMEOWNERS GUIDE TO DIGGERS HOTLINE®

DIAL 811 OR VISIT: DIGGERSHOTLINE.COM

- 1. NOTIFY**
Notify Diggers Hotline by calling 811 or making an online request 3 business days before work begins. Diggers Hotline will transmit information to affected utility operators.
- 2. WAIT**
Wait 3 business days for affected utility operators to respond to your request. On average, between 7-8 utility operators are notified for each request.
- 3. CONFIRM**
Confirm that all affected utility operators have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities Diggers Hotline notified.
- 4. RESPECT**
Respect the marks. The marks provided by the affected utility operators are your guide for the duration of your project. If you are unable to maintain the marks during your project, please contact Diggers Hotline to ask for a relocate.
- 5. DIG CAREFULLY**
Dig carefully. If you can't avoid digging near the marks (within 18 inches on all sides), consider moving your project to another part of your yard. If you must dig near the marks no mechanized equipment can be used within 18 inches of the marks; only hand digging is allowed.

Plant Sale Volunteers Needed

—by WHPS President, Caroline Bohler

Thank you to everyone who purchased plants online through the WHPS Plant Sale in March! We received 88 orders for 671 plants, resulting in over \$10,000 in sales. All proceeds go to WHPS so we can continue our mission.

To assist customers with this new format we will need two shifts of volunteers on the two plant pickup days at West Madison Agricultural Research Station, 8502 Mineral Point Rd, Verona, WI (just past the Beltline and Menard's).

A sign-up email will be sent to members in early April to help on the following days.

9AM-NOON ON FRIDAY, MAY 15

Volunteers needed to unload plants, box up orders, etc.

8AM-12PM ON SATURDAY, MAY 16

Volunteers needed to help locate and distribute orders, load cars, etc.

Thanks again to everyone who has purchased plants from this year's sale!

Host an Open Garden this year



Did you know that, in addition to the organized garden tours that WHPS offers twice a year, you can host an open garden? This gives you an opportunity to share your gardens on a short notice when you feel they are looking especially good. You can do this anytime in spring, summer or fall. Even if you have an area that isn't perfect or is under construction, the gardeners visiting understand, and it may pique their interest as to what you are planning. The average attendance of an open garden is around 30 people.

All you have to do is contact us a few days to a week (or more) ahead at wisconsinhps@gmail.com with your name, address, a short description of your garden and the dates and times you will be open. Feel free to email us with any questions.

We know we have many members with lovely gardens, and we'd like to see them. As an added incentive to host an open garden, one of our members has offered to provide a sheet or bundt cake for your event!



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What is a hardy plant?

Hardy plants are evergreen and deciduous woody plants – including trees and shrubs, herbaceous (non-woody) perennials and bulbous plants that live three or more years. Hardy herbaceous perennials are capable of surviving unfavorable conditions (such as cold weather or lack of moisture) by dying back each fall and returning to growth the following year in the spring.

Rotary Botanical Gardens – Meadow Garden Grant Update

Rotary Botanical Gardens, a 16-acre public garden in Janesville, continues its path to create gardens that deliver more biodiversity, beauty, support for pollinators, and less maintenance in caring for turf. A generous \$1,500 grant from the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society gives us the opportunity to reimagine their old Storywalk garden into a new perennial garden that will be called the Meadow Garden.

The Storywalk area was largely an annual display area, surrounded with large amounts of grass and for the past few seasons did not have much of an identity, as the Storywalk moved to its new home in the Nancy Yahr Children's Garden. The design is one of a meadow, with plenty of ornamental grasses, punctuated with flowering perennials, as well as a few small trees. Numerous spring flowering bulbs are also part of the plant palette. Gravel paths will run through the gardens, to give visitors an opportunity to better observe the plants up close. Their first step was to remove the turf, which was largely completed with the use of a sod cutter. All but the 2' perimeter was removed, as this 2' patch is responsible for providing erosion control, so that soil does not end up on the brick paths.



Drone view of site before turf removal.



Grass has been removed and awaits path construction and additional perennials, now be used



Carex pregracilis planted on the edge of the path to eventually replace the turf grass.

The plan is to eventually remove the perimeter turf, once the adjacent *Carex pregracilis* matures and is capable of preventing erosion on its own. The turf was mowed 1-2 times a week, depending on the season, with each mowing taking between 20-30 minutes per mowing; this time can be used to maintain other parts of the garden. They look forward to using that labor savings to help upkeep the garden.

In spring of 2025, they began the process of planting the gar-



Monarda lavender 'Taffeta' stands out in front of the False indigo sculpture.

den beds with both landscape plugs and gallon-sized perennials; many of the perennials already started to flower in their first year, providing a glimpse into the potential of what the garden will be. Approximately 60% of the garden was planted in 2025, with the remaining to be planted in 2026. Species and cultivars that they did not have elsewhere in the garden were chosen and repeated throughout all the beds to create cohesion. At the north perimeter of the garden is the garden's new 15' False Indigo sculpture which is part of their Legacy Leaves program; they have planted 'Sunny Morning', Blueberry Muffin', and 'Poolside' to represent the yellow, blue, and white *Baptisia* flowers in the sculpture.

They have already seen impressive establishment and flowering of a few of the new plants, including *Monarda* 'Lavender Taffeta', *Geranium* 'Bluming', *Heliopsis salicifolius* 'Autumn Gold', and *Sanguisorba*



Bouteloua gracilis, 'Honeycomb' has been a terrific performer in the new garden.

'Plum Drops', along with large drifts of *Bouteloua gracilis*, 'Honeycomb', which has shown an impressive survival rate. One hundred *Allium* 'Ambassador' bulbs were planted this fall, along with several pockets of the late flowering *Allium sphaerocephalon*;

they intend to plant masses of pale-yellow daffodils in the Fall of 2026. Overall, they are looking to introduce over 50 new perennials to the garden with this project, adding to the Gardens' goals of increasing the diversity of the plant collection.

Rotary gardens are grateful to WHPS for giving them the opportunity to get this project off the ground and they look forward to the establishment of their newest perennial garden.

Garden Expo Thank You

—by Marty Petillo

Many thanks to the WHPS members and thousands of guests that stopped by our booth at the PBS Wisconsin Garden and Landscape Expo in February to chat with the 20 WHPS Booth Volunteers. Whew! There was a record number of expo attendees this year, and many learned what WHPS has to offer and joined our community.

Special thanks go to the volunteers:

- Friday Volunteers - Diane Flynn, Karen Kuenzi, Shirley Scriver, Brad Terp, Barbara Mathis
- Saturday Volunteers - Alice Page, Bob Klebba, Stephanie Bloomquist, Monica Macarra, Julie Sparks, Jayne Squirell, Susan Bowditch
- Sunday Volunteers - Kris Marlow, Shirley Scriver (again!), Kathleen Archer, Mary Tremaine, JoAnne Kriege, Patty Kriege
- Lead Volunteers - Marty Petillo (Sat/Sun), Lynn Belanger (Fri/Sun), (Lynn and her husband Greg set up and took down the booth), and Andrea Diss-Torrance worked with Lynn to update the booth signs and brought in her beautiful plants - everyone loved the 30-year-old rosemary! We soooo appreciate our WHPS Volunteers!

Barbara Bendlin, the WHPS-sponsored speaker at the expo for her A Garden Story to Grow On presentation, shared her experience over 30 years transforming a Milton, WI, corn/soybean field into a garden and prairie paradise. Beautiful visuals complemented her enthusiasm and passion for plants. Thank you, Barbara!

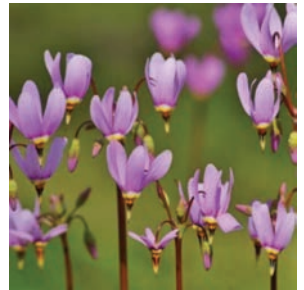
Expo attendance even exceeded the 2020 pre-COVID totals:

- 2026: Friday (5,276), Saturday (8,007), Sunday (4,034), Total (17,317)
- 2025: Friday (4,230), Saturday (5,266), Sunday (3,451), Total (12,947)
- 2024: Friday (4,112), Saturday (7,096), Sunday (3,705), Total (14,913)
- 2023: Friday (3,883), Saturday (5,778), Sunday (3,923), Total (13,584)
- 2022: Friday (2,872), Saturday (5,245), Sunday (2,654), Total (10,771)
- 2020: Friday (4,601), Saturday (8,474), Sunday (2,563), Total (15,638)



Brent & Becky's Bulbs Donates to WHPS with Your Help!

If you are starting to think about ordering plants for the coming garden season (and plants do sell out quickly), think about shopping through Brent & Becky's Bulbs which has some great plant ideas for you. Your purchases can also benefit WHPS! Bloominbucks.com with Brent and Becky's Bulbs is a progressive fundraising program designed to earn select nonprofit organizations cash for every order received through the Brent and Becky's Bulbs website. WHPS is one of those organizations. To participate, simply go to bloominbucks.com and select "Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society." Then hit "GO." Brent & Becky's website offers ideas and good buys on bulbs, perennials and other interesting plants for your garden.



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Have questions about your membership?
 Contact Chris Neumann at wisconsinhps@gmail.com or see [membership information](#).

