



We may not be able to control much that happens in the world, but at least we can cultivate our own garden.
Voltaire, *Candide*

COMING EVENTS!

May 14, 2003, 6:00 p.m. til dark. Spring garden tour in Shorewood, in conjunction with with Madison Area Master Gardener Association, at the following addresses: Hannah Pinkerton—2901 Colgate Rd.; Marv Wickens—2804 Columbia Rd.; Nancy Heiden—3505 Blackhawk Ave.; Margaret Van Alstyne—3423 Sunset Dr.

DIRECTIONS: Enter Shorewood at University Bay Drive. Columbia Road and Colgate Road are both off University Bay Drive. Oxford Road is off University Bay Drive and eventually connects with both Blackhawk Aveue and Sunset Drive.

May 17, 2003, 9:00 a.m.-Noon. WHPS Annual Plant Sale of plants from members' gardens at the Pet Lodge in Middleton Industrial Park. (See flyer elsewhere in newsletter.)

May 18, 2003. WHPS Spring Buying Trip. Destination: Nurseries in Milwaukee (feel free to make recommendations) and garden centers with a final stop at Rich's Foxwillow Pines Nursery (Hosta Happening—500+ varieties of hosta for sale to benefit Heifer International, plus, of course, his rare and unusual conifers and trees.) Cost is \$27.00 (\$5.00 extra for non-members), payable to the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society. Mail check by May 1 to: Sandra Allen, 6923 North Avenue, Middleton, WI 53562. Phone/Fax: (608) 836-9602. Email: dsamr@chorus.net. Details of schedule and time and place of departure will be mailed later. Be sure to include your full name, address, phone, email and emergency contact (name and phone number) when sending in your check.

June 5-8, 2003. WHPS Trip to Philadelphia. Trip is full. Final payments for the trip are due before May 1. Call Frank Greer at (608) 233-4686 to be put on waiting list.

July 13, 2003—Tour of the Bell's garden in St. Charles, IL. Other sites TBA.

August, 2003—WHPS Potluck Dinner date TBA

September 17, 2003—6:30 p.m. Social hour, 7:00 p.m. program. *The WOW Factor in the Garden* with guest speaker Jeff Epping.

September 27, 2003—Tour to Milwaukee led by Dennis Buettner. Will include gardens at the Milwaukee Museum of Art, Ol-

For complete info on a great opportunity to tour a member garden at various times from spring through fall, see

Other sales and tours

Dane County Farmers Market on Capitol Square starts Saturday, April 26!

Friends of Arboretum Native Plant Sale, Saturday, May 10, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., 263-7760 for more information.

Olbrich's Spectacular Spring Plant Sale, Friday, May 9, 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; Saturday, May 10, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

West Side Garden Club—Friday, May 9, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. and Saturday, May 10, 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., 3918 Nakoma Road (west of Thoreau School).

WHPS Plant Sale—Saturday, May 17, 9:00 a.m.-noon at the Pet Lodge in Middleton.

Hosta Society Plant Sale & Auction, Sunday, May 25, 10:00

a.m.-4:00 p.m. at Olbrich Gardens. For information, call 608-244-2319.

Iris Society Sale, Sunday, July 27, Olbrich Gardens.

Daylily Sale, Saturday, August 9, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and Sunday, August 10, noon-4 p.m. at Olbrich Gardens. Sponsored by the Wisconsin Daylily Society. For more information, call (608) 221-1933.

TOURS

Olbrich Home Garden Tour, Friday, July 18, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. and Saturday, July 19, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. For more information, call 608-246-4550.

ONE GARDEN THROUGH THE SEASONS

Here's your chance to see the progression of a garden from spring through fall. Fellow WHPS member Tom Cottington has a very lovely garden in Middleton and has invited us to visit on four separate dates this year. One date will be an evening time and the others early Saturday mornings, a time of day many consider gardens to be at their loveliest. Tom is a gifted garden photographer and on the July date will give an early-bird demonstration on how he sets up shots. We will also serve refreshments on the July date.

Tom has gardened in this same area for over 45 years using companion plantings of Wisconsin's native plant communities and, since 1986, has been part of the National Wildlife's Backyard Wildlife Habitat Program. His garden is located at 7421 North Avenue, west of Middleton High School between University Avenue and Fireman's Park.

Open Garden Schedule

Tuesday evening, May 6—6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Saturday morning, June 14—7:00 to 9:00 a.m.

Saturday morning, July 19—7:00 to 9:00 a.m. At 6:30 a.m., Photo demonstration and refreshments

Saturday morning, October 11—7:00 to 9:00 a.m.

What's New at Rotary Gardens in 2003?

Just an update of what is coming up this year at Rotary Gardens. We have a new, 10,000 sq. ft. education center with expanded gift shop, meeting rooms, etc. and a new horticulture center for staging all of our maintenance activities as well.

Don't forget to come see our spring bulbs. In April, our *Narcissus* display of over 300 varieties will be in bloom in the parking lot. Come throughout May to enjoy the Tulip Time! collection of over 500 varieties, and don't forget about Awesome Alliums!; a collection that the WHPS helped fund last fall. There are over 50,000 alliums representing 56 taxa. Late May and through the first weeks of June will be ideal for enjoying the majority of these wonderful bulbs representing an underutilized genus.

This spring we will be planting our new Fern & Moss Garden that will display over 150 taxa of ferns. Arranged by geographical origin, these ferns will be accented with interesting woodies with bright foliage, an assortment of companion plants and native Wisconsin mosses. The garden has two ponds, a waterfall, walking paths and a wonderful misting system.

In June, check out the dwarf bearded iris collection (54 varieties). Our *Hemerocallis* collection of 300 varieties will be in its third summer, and don't forget about all of our award-winning roses. We will be adding over 200 varieties of perennials new to the gardens throughout our display gardens and will be

landscaping our new facilities with dwarf conifers and wonderful seasonal plants.

Straying away from hardy plants, we will also have a sunflower collection (150 varieties near our new horticulture center), a morning glory collection (40 varieties throughout the grounds) and a canna collection (100+ varieties in our "collection squiggles" area). Our "Unusual Annuals" program will again feature some exciting plants, and the bananas will be back!

Our HerbFest plant sale will be on May 10-11 from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. at our new horticulture center just east of the gardens. Over 100 varieties of herbs and 100 varieties of specialty annuals will be available, as will bagged mushroom compost. **All WHPS members are invited to a pre-sale on Friday, May 9, from noon until 6 p.m.** Everything is 10% off that day only, and you get first dibs. All proceeds support the continued operation and development of Rotary Gardens.

Our fall plant sale will be September 19-21, with a presale on the 18th (you are invited!). There will be over 500 varieties of perennials, trees, shrubs, bulbs, mums, mushroom compost, etc., so mark it on your calendars.

We look forward to seeing you at Rotary Gardens this year. Spread the

Other Events of Note

April 29, 6:00-8:00 p.m. Olbrich Gardens, Commons. Roy Klehm, Song Sparrow Nursery, *Peonies: Favorites of Greek Gods and Japanese Emperors, and, New and Exciting Perennials at Song Sparrow.*

May 12, 2003, 6:00-8:00 p.m. Olbrich Gardens, Commons. Roy Diblik, Northwind Perennial Farm. *New Lessons in Plant Combinations and Compatibility.*

May 17-18, 2003, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Olbrich Gardens. **Badger Bonsai Society Annual Show.** (\$2 admission)

September 13, 2003. Bulb Symposium at Janesville Rotary Gardens—featuring Brent Heath, Jim Shields, Galen Gates, Scott Kunst, and John Elsley.

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

—Aldo Leopold

Reflections of A. Hort Hound

Ah, Winter!

It certainly was not a normal southern Wisconsin winter, but after experiencing twenty-three of them, I am convinced that the "usual" winter is one that is "not normal" according to the really old timers.

This winter started off briskly, but after Thanksgiving there were six weeks of above-normal temperatures, with virtually no snow cover. I hauled pine straw for the garden until the week before Christmas. And it was a very brown Christmas—in fact the brownest Wisconsin Christmas I can remember.

But in the garden, with its blanket of russet-colored pine straw, the deep greens of the boxwoods, hemlocks and yews accentuated the light gray bark of the mature white oaks. The epimedium foliage was not yet "fried" by the cold and the straw colored clumps of *Hakanechloa macra* danced wildly in the mild southerly breezes. All was illuminated by the golden, low angled light of the December sun.

Compared to the record December snows of two years ago, this scene was actually preferred. A blanket of fluffy snow blots out the contrasting elements of the landscape, and even December light creates a blinding reflected whiteness. The meager dustings of snow in January actually highlighted the color contrasts in brown, green and gray. By the second week of the month, it did turn bitterly cold and temperatures remained below normal for most of the remaining winter season. (How about that record low of 10 degrees on April 9th with 5 inches of snow on the ground!) I was amazed at the number of below-zero mornings despite the absence of snow, and the ground frost that reached its deepest penetration in many years.

It was hardly unexpected that snowdrops did not raise their helmets of white until the last week of March and *Adonis amurensis*

opened on the 27th of March, nearly a month later than in 2002. It was also about this time that a few gaudy Dutch hybrid crocuses in purple, white and gold opened in the pots only removed from their protective site a week earlier.

OOOH! Spring

It was in these waning days of March that I set off by car for points south. As I raced down I-39 through north-central Illinois, as usual I mused on the flat uninteresting landscape, broken only by silos and interstate overpasses, imagining what it must have looked like as virgin prairie once upon a time.

One new element that has appeared in the landscape in the past 5 years—cell-phone relay towers. In this flat domain, you can literally see from one tower to the next, each topped with a flashing strobe of white light.

I enjoy making a study of the large number of roadside ponds on I-39 and I-74, the excavations from which were used to elevate the interstate over rural two lane roads. If two overpasses are close together, there maybe one large pond between them. Sometimes two ponds are created on opposite sides of the same overpass. It is hard to understand why three small ones are sometimes arranged like beads on a string, where one big pond would do. Long, narrow, rectangular ones are also scooped out on occasion, edged with houses and boat docks. Water-skiers may be observed in the summer, but in winter, an occasional ice fisherman as well as ice skaters and pick up games of ice hockey are noted.

Near Farmer City on I-74, the largest of these "I-Ponds" advertises waterfront building sites on which several trophy houses have already been built. Imagine sitting on the front veranda, looking across calm waters to the passing frenzy of the I-system on the opposite shore. Doesn't sound the least bit appealing to me, but then I do not live in this treeless, monotonous, landscape.

In case you may be wondering why I have digressed so, signs of spring were nonexistent for the first 200 miles south of Madison! I have been told that spring advances from South to North through the central U.S. at a rate of 100 miles per

week, so it wasn't until I drove into Champaign, Illinois that I began to see the stirrings of the new season—*Cornus mas* (Cornelian cherry) in full bloom, daffodil buds showing color in the city's parks, as well as the pink buds of the blousy Japanese magnolias. Even the willow trees were displaying that yellow-green flush of early springtime. And (trumpet fanfare!!), the first blades of green grass were observed!!

The next morning I proceeded south on I-57 after awaking to the singing of bluebirds. On the outskirts of Effingham, 60 miles south of Champaign, the garish yellow flowers of forsythia flashed by. At Mt. Vernon an hour or so later, the first Prunus (cherry) in flower was noted, which then became numerous in the woodlands surrounding Rend Lake in southern Illinois. In fact, the Rend Lake golf course was an oasis of green.

Just south of the lake, the ravages of winter were noted in the columnar red junipers that spring up along the disturbed landscape of the I-system in this part of the country (like the Scotch brooms in the Pacific Northwest or the palmettos in Florida). Many had been laid flat by lost battles with ice and snow, while others had been split in two, but remained barely standing in awkward, drunken postures.

As we passed the signs for the Shawnee National Forrest, I was reminded of a past WHPS trip and the spectacular wildflowers of this wilderness area. But today there was no time for a side trip.

Turning off I-57 onto I-24 toward Kentucky, the first redbud trees began to show color in the woodlands. At a rest stop just before the Ohio River bridge, pyramidal clouds of Bradford pears (*Pyrus calleryana*) appeared in full bloom. Their falling petals dusted every surface. Though these have a rather obnoxious odor (like overripe mushrooms in the refrigerator), they are a ubiquitous feature of the landscape in the Mid-Atlantic states. Planted in epidemic numbers, they are often the only street tree in

continued on next page

new suburban areas. This is a horticultural tragedy, as these fast-growing trees only look good for 15 years or so before they split apart and self-destruct from their own increasing weight.

It was here that I also noticed the first dandelion in flower. As we approached Paducah, the blossoms of weeping cherries, magnolias, and flowering quince were sighted. I took notice of a road side motel named the "Pear Tree Inn," enveloped by more flowering pyramids of its namesake.

As we approached Cadiz, Ky, the grass was fully green. I marveled at the beauty of several highway embankments swathed in daffodils in full flower.

They reminded me of traveling in the British Isles in April, where roadside daffodils are commonplace even in the most remote parts of the country. I am told that these bulbs are sometimes provided by the MacDonald's Corporation, and planted by legions of volunteers. (Well, the arches are yellow!) What a nice thing for MacDonald's to do. Why can't they do something like this along our roadsides, rather than adorning them with the roundrels of drinking cup covers, plastic straws and paper French fry holders.

Beyond the city of Cadiz the woodlands begin to take on that filmy green haze of newly emerging leaves, accented with pale yellows, olives, reds (maple flowers) and light browns. Redbuds were in full bloom throughout the woodlands, now a gorgeous, luminous pink rather than that deep red color.

Passing into Tennessee at Clarksville, I noted the flowers of *Cornus florida* (flowering dogwood) beginning to unfurl, yet still pale green in color. On the outskirts of Nashville, the I-system embankments were truly spectacular with columns of dark green junipers marching through thickets of redbuds in their pink glory. I was sorry that I was not able to linger and take the time to make a photo.

Proceeding into Nashville itself, 615 miles south of Madison, and 6 weeks into spring, I was startled by the number of citizens mowing their grass for the first time this season. Ah! It was the smell of freshly cut grass that finally put the memories of snow shovels and

snow blowers to rest. Here spring was at its glorious peak, with masses of pansies producing pools of color along the roadside. Though flowering cherries, pears, and magnolias were winding down, peak bloom time was approaching for crab apples and even some lilacs in protected exposures. Daffodils were being replaced by armies of early flowering tulips. (If you are wondering why I hadn't driven off the road by this time, it was because my wife was driving.) Outside a restaurant in the Germantown area of the city, employees were actually setting out bedding plants—petunias, salvias, and marigolds in full bloom.

I did make a visit to Cheekwood, the city's botanical garden, and was wowed by the large number of cultivars of redbuds in flower (both *canadensis* and *chinensis*), as well as lovely cherries, halesias (Carolina silver bells) and pieris at peak. The famed wildflower garden was not as spectacular as I had recalled it seven years ago, but then there had been a considerable increase in the canopy of deciduous trees and shrubs. The *Acer palmatum* (Japanese maples) were leafing out and I took note of a very dense form—*Acer palmatum* 'Moonfire'. Its small fiery red leaves did not really make me think of the moon, but I did make a note to try to grow it in a pot, given its dense, thick habitus, despite being only 2 feet in height. I have since read that it is a better cultivar than 'Bloodgood', but requires frequent shearing to keep this shape.

The maple collection at Cheekwood is second to none in the central U.S. In the Japanese garden, there was a spectacular deep red, large-flowered Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles speciosa*) with gold stamens that was unlabeled. ("Texas Scarlet" perhaps?) Even the bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) was breaking dormancy here. (This is included for Sandy Allen's benefit.)

The next morning, I set out for the return home—615 miles and six weeks back into winter. Sort of like playing a video in reverse.

After ten hours of driving, I was appropriately rewarded with a cloudy day, temperatures in the 30's, and snow flurries flying through the air. The buds of the big fat Dutch crocuses and clumps of Adonis were now tightly closed, and not even one blade of green grass was noted anywhere.

Surprisingly, I was actually glad that I did not live in middle Tennessee. Even though I had momentarily thrilled at their spring, I was glad to have yet the entire season to look forward to! On the other hand, I was already thinking about my flight to Miami the next morning for a preview of summer!

—A. Hort Hound

Member tips

- I've never been sorry when I water the garden, rain or no. —John Cannon
- Kids love to kill Japanese beetles in a "death chamber" (bucket of soapy water). —Elise Rose
- Mulch, mulch, mulch! If you have bark paths, you can get marvelous compost by taking off the top 6" every three or four years. —Joan Severa
- Start a journal (nothing fancy needed) a composition notebook to note the date and what you did in the garden that day. It's a great way to relax after coming in from the garden, and a great place to put plant names, accomplishments and ideas for the future. —Stephanie O'Neal
- Call in sick to work! —Marlette Larson

Thank you Garden Expo Volunteers!

Special thanks to everyone who helped plan the WHPS exhibit at the 2003 WHA Garden Expo, to all of the volunteers who took the time to work our booth and to Frank Greer for his inspiring presentation..

Stephanie Bloomquist	Jane Gahlman	Sherry Lloyd
Jean Borman	Jeannette Golden	Barbara Obst
Tom Cottington	Nancy Hogan	Elise Rose
Linda Dauck	Alaine Johnson	Diane Scharkey
Rita Dupuis	Mary Kienitz	Rita Thomas
Susan M. Francis	Joan Krikelas	
Greta French	Jane LaFlash	

Volunteer for the Plant Sale

We need your help for the upcoming WHPS Plant Sale.

Have a dig or work at a dig

We would like to schedule a few more digs for this year's plant sale. Digs are easy and fun. People come to your garden and work! If you are contemplating having a dig and want to know more about how they work, or if you would like to sign up to work a couple of hours at a dig, please contact Ruth Cadoret, 233-4504 or readoret@wisc.edu.

Work the day before the sale or the day of the sale

If you want to work the day before the plant sale—a couple of hours the afternoon of May 16, or the day of the plant sale (8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. May 17), call Stephanie at (608) 256-6108, or email her at sone2@aol.com.

Contribute plants to the sale

Members are welcome to bring plants in pots, flats or bags to the sale location the Friday before the sale, May 16, from 3:00-6:00 p.m. Try to have the plants labeled or marked when you bring them, or ask a volunteer to help you mark them when you arrive.

Shop at the plant sale

Buy a wide range of shade and sun plants at bargain prices the morning of May 17 at the Pet Lodge in Middleton.

A life well lived

Ellen Van Camp, a member of WHPS, died March 12, 2003 after battling ovarian cancer for 16 months. She was 53.

Ellen was a superb gardner. Her McFarland hillside shade garden was on the 1999 Friends of the McFarland Garden Tour. Ellen had been an Arboretum guide, had taken Master Gardener classes some years ago and had a small garden design business.

Ellen was generous to one and all, sharing both plants and information, including help on trees, shrubs and flowers. She was able to identify tiny seedlings at a glance, and had an excellent memory of her successes and failures.

She will be sadly missed by many and especially by gardeners.

A Simple Pleasure

Marion Moran has been a naturalist, friend, and gardener for nearly twenty-five years. She has been a naturalist and tour guide at the Arboretum. She has taught Love and Respect for our Native Heritage in "Spirit of The Land" classes taught through MATC, Durward's Glen, University of Wisconsin Extension, the Arboretum and The Clearing in Door County. Journal writing in nature is also great for gardeners. In recent years, she was given the Environmental Person of the Year Award. I wrote to her recently, and she is delighted that other gardeners would like to share her writing and gives permission to use:

Mother's Shovel

Leaning over, I hold her shovel
the long bladed one.
and sense that I, like her, find
a simple pleasure in plying
the soil with the sharp blade.
She would bend, holding the shovel
in her right hand and with her
left, reach for the object of her digging.
I do it now and feel some connection,
or repetition of the act,
a communion with the earth
and with my mother.
The shovel is my prized possession.
It has weathered over sixty years of
turning the soil.
The handle, smooth and warm,
feels comfortable
like holding someone's hand:
a continuum.

Places to Visit This Spring

Heritage Sanctuary Conservation Park - a lovely small wooded area that last spring was a sea of trillium and other wildflowers. Head east on Cottage Grove Rd. About 0.7 miles east of Hwy 51 turn left on Meadowlark and travel a few blocks to the park.

Remember last summer on our Crestwood garden tour we visited Jane Wood's garden at 203 Bordner Dr.? Mid July was not the peak of Jane's garden so she hopes people will return this spring to view the rock wall at it's best (early May). Jane has been gardening this wall for over 50 years. It is accessible from the end of Bordner Dr. or from the stairs leading down from Rosa Rd.

—Jane LaFlash

TURKEY RUN STATE PARK

Last year we took an 8-day trip to Calloway gardens in Southwest Georgia and along the way made many stops visiting zoos, botanical gardens, caves, sandstone canyons and arboretums. But our last stop on our return trip home encompassed all that we had seen at the prior stops and much more. We visited Turkey Run State Park near Terre Haute, Indiana only 6 hours from Madison.

As a child growing up in Champaign, Illinois, my family frequently visited the park. Forty years later, I wanted to return to see if childhood memories of this beautiful magnificent park had been exaggerated or altered with age. I was not disappointed. I remember deep cut-out Canyons and maneuvering around rocks and streams, but I don't recall that it required any athletic ability or endurance. Oh the suppleness and energy of youth.

The changes noted were the stone steps and hillside path that had been worn down by many a hiker and replaced by wooden stairs with hand rails. The treacherous loose rope ladders were now wooden ladders and crossing ditches on downed trees that required one to balance precariously or crawl across was replaced by wooden bridges. However, the hundreds of steps going down and up the ravines required physical stamina.

In my younger days, I was not intrigued with the diverse plant growth or the geology of the park. Climbing over the unusual rock formations, hiding in caverns, and sunning at the public pool where the boys hung out were my only interests.

A few years ago I was given the revised and expanded edition of **Reading the Landscape of America** by May Theilgaard Watts, Naturalist Emeritus at the Morton Arboretum, copyright 1957 & 1975 by Macmillian Publishing, Co. The book is out of print and Mrs. Watts

has since passed away. I was thrilled when I found a whole chapter dedicated to the unusual landscape of Turkey Run State Park, and knew I wanted to return someday to see the Park through a different perspective. I re-read the chapter and then eagerly did as May T. Watts suggests in her preface: *I have offered my interpretations, in the hope that you will put the book down and go eagerly out...* Her insights and interpretations of the landscape of the park are still very pertinent today.

Following are some of the excerpts from her book and our experience.

Chapter 3: Canyon Story on following a stream in southern Indiana. *We had learned that the streams there at Turkey Run, Indiana, have it in their destiny to shape a ravine in their mud-pie childhood, and then knife out a canyon in their whittling youth, before their waters find middle-age spread in Sugar Creek, and old-age resignation in the Wabash.*

After obtaining a map of the trails, we decided upon Trail #3, considered rugged. It led us deep into the canyon, which attributed to most of those childhood memories. We marveled at the huge fallen slabs of rock and overhanging rocks that formed caverns and caves along the sandstone walls. When we started the trail above, the temperature was only 34 degrees, but deep into the canyon there were windless pockets of cool, damp air, where it actually felt warmer, or perhaps it was from our exertion of the hike.

As the canyon narrowed, there were no modern improvements of the trail. In reading her book I learned that in the canyon, the stream cuts through the soft shale and reaches the underlying Mansfield sandstone. To avoid wet feet from the trickling stream and carved out potholes we found we had to find footing on the sandstone, which actually was not slippery even with wet leaves and a recent rain. We crossed over and ducked under fallen beech trees, tramped through mud getting wet feet, and used fallen branches and bro-

ken off sand stone as stepping stones to step gingerly back and forth across the rivulets of the stream bed.

Along the sides of the canyon mosses grow. *Dominant among them were the liverworts. It was moist and new and young there in the steep-sided narrow canyon. Moist and new, like the conditions on the young earth when the first primitive plants came ashore. And there beside us, right at eye level were the plants that resemble, probably better than do any other living plants, those first land plants.*

She went on to describe they had no real roots, nor real leaves resembling plate-like alga. The first invasion of the land. Where the liverworts grew, the mosses grew explaining that like alga and liverworts, the mosses have not acquired tubes to carry water up through their structures, and their sperms must still swim in order to fertilize the ovum. This was the second invasion. The third chapter of the invasion were the ferns that grew where the mosses were thick. Ferns have developed a vascular system for carrying water. Above, the hemlocks represented the fourth chapter, the gymnosperms or the first naked-seed plants, and beyond them closely followed the enclosed-seed plants, the angiosperms, of the Oaks, Beech and Maples, the fifth chapter of the invasion.

Their guide noted that the pages of a botany textbook and geological periods are prominent in the narrow canyons.

May T. Watts book and the State park brochure tells us the first invasion of the land by plants probably took place in the Silurian period, 400 million years ago when Turkey Run was under the Niagaran Sea, with trilobites and cephalopods. The first seed-bearing plant appeared in the Devonian period, with primitive fish swimming overhead. The fern ancestors dominated the land in the Carboniferous period while sandstone that form the canyon wall was being laid down, compacted and cemented into solid rock. The swampy

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Turkey Run State Park...continued on next page

environment of this period gave birth to Pennsylvanian coal. The conifers appeared with the dinosaurs in the Triassic period about 200 million years ago. The enclosed seed plants appeared in the Cretaceous period about 120 million years ago and more recently during the Pleistocene Epoch the sandstone bedrock was carved into the canyons by the eroding action of glacial meltwaters.

...Both sides of the young ravine (V-shaped) were rich in growth with shagbark hickory, linden, witchhazel, bedstraw and abundant Christmas fern. There seemed to be no difference between the vegetation of the two sides...

U-shaped stage,...There were more oaks on the south-facing and more sugar maples on the north-facing side.

Further down the canyon as it becomes wider, the north and south facing walls have different plants. May T. Watts observed the north facing wall has the liverworts, mosses and bladder fern. The south facing wall is composed of lichens and mosses different from those growing with the liverworts and the first fern is a purple cliff brake, leathery and tough. On the south facing side is alum root, *Heuchera hispida*. As the canyon broadens, asters, goldenrod and other herbaceous plants move in. In dryer areas with better ground aeration the sycamores, cottonwoods and silver maples grow. This is followed by the walnuts and, eventually, young seedlings of beech and sugar maples.

At one point the trails crossed and we were above the canyon. We choose to take what we thought was an easier route. Trail 10 led us into a high canopy of trees. Pileated woodpeckers, chickadees, cardinals, blue jays, downy and hairy woodpeckers and many more we could not identify flitted and sang as we approached.

Highest was the layered canopy of beeches and sugar maples, Beneath them were spread the red-fruited shelves of flowering dogwood. Farther down came the wine color of maple-leaved viburnum. And then there was

the forest floor with its herbs and ferns among the fallen leaves.

We walked for a long time in that rich beech-maple forest. Then, abruptly, we found that we were under white oaks... the trees were of imposing age and size. No sooner had we commented on this change in the aspect of the canopy than we found ourselves in a belt of still more marked change. ...The four-layered aspect was gone. There was only one layer, the canopy of hemlock branches.

...It was as if, with a few mighty strides, we had stepped home to the woods of northern Illinois, and then had stepped further north, into a summer camp site in northern Wisconsin.

...Most of the hemlocks were astride its (the canyons) very rim.

...the cold north had delivered them down here long, long ago, driving them south before the icy cold threat of the advancing glacier.

...As it grew warmer, the oaks and hickories began to come in...Some hemlocks survived this invasion. (Watts noted that it was drier near the canyon edge.)

...The wind had brought seeds of sugar maples and squirrels had brought beech nuts. The maple and beech seedlings thrive in the accumulated leaf mold and tolerated the heavy shade. The shade is too dense for its (white oak) survival. Hemlocks do not succeed in rooting in the thick ground cover of rotting leaves.

Trail 10 intersected Trail 3, which came to the steep ladders. We instead chose to take Trail 5, considered moderate and described as with *fine trees and 140 steps going down from the west*. It was cloudy and overcast, so we only guessed we were heading west on this trail. Not so! As we ascended, Denny counted 144 steps—they lied!

Once on top, we marveled at the huge circumference of beech, maple and oak trunks and noted many beech seedlings in semi-open areas where trees had fall-

en and new growth was taking place. Unfortunately, it is difficult to find a beech tree that has not had initials carved into its trunk, and in fact one may still have mine from years past. I was fascinated with the leaf matter on the forest floor, trying to identify all the native trees that grew there. Suddenly, fallen leaves became more scarce and we found ourselves in a hemlock forest, which then opened up again to deciduous trees.

Back on Trail 3, we took a side trip to the bottom of the ladders (no need to climb up and retrace our steps) and back out to where the canyon meets Sugar Creek. We marveled at the hollows and ravines that the river had gorged out and the size and an abundance of huge Sycamores at the water's edge. Hours later, we found ourselves back at the suspension bridge that brings you back to the Nature Center across Sugar River. If memory serves me well, that suspension bridge used to have a rope strung across with a pomel seat you rode to the other side, or perhaps that was somewhere else.

There are 14 miles and 11 different trails designated as easy to very rugged. We only hiked 3.8 miles (not including back tracking). This park offers so much more, we both felt we must return.

From canyons, caves, streams, rivers, gardens of mosses and ferns, this native landscape is truly a great place to visit. Any plant lover interested in botany can marvel at the first beginnings of the plant kingdom to our present day growth all in one area.

—Sandra Allen



Revenge of the South

Crown root rot has been a major problem of Southern gardens up until this point. Many hosta and other plants become stressed by heat and drought-like conditions, and show signs of this with dried brown leaves and wilted foliage. The stems of these stressed plants look fine. The leaves show most of the damage. Crown rot starts to show by the leaves turning yellowish and off-color. Closer inspection shows the stems, at ground level, looking mushy and rotted. Looking even closer at the damaged area and the soil around it, it shows white cobwebby material and small white to reddish brown granules. These are the key identifiers of crown rot.

These little mustard seed-like granules are called sclerotia and they are the way that the disease spreads and overwinters in soil and mulch. There is no spray most gardeners can use to cure this problem.

If one suspects crown rot, the plant, and soil and mulch around it should be removed and thrown out carefully and quickly. Clean all equipment used very carefully so you will limit the chance of spreading the disease to other areas of your garden. The leaves will be damaged on edges, but the stems should look healthy.

With Crown Rot, the leaves may be off color and the stems, especially at soil level, will appear rotted and soft.

Excerpted from the Iowa State Extension Web site. An extensive article on this subject can be found at the following Web site: www.extension.iastate.edu/publications/SUL8.pdf

I cannot recommend more highly the use of the plastic bucket.

I rarely move around the garden without one. As a mixture of work-ethic and laziness, if there is such a combination, the secateurs and trowel are usually in the bottom of it, thus saving numerous trips to the shed. You can use the bucket as a traveling ashtray, or even as a hat if it starts to rain.

Well may your grand gardeners profess to suing a Sussex trug. These look wonderful in glossy magazines, placed ever so casually in the middle of the decorative vegetable garden, with a scattering of rose petals, a dew-drop or two, and a serendipitous bumble-bee. Apart from that, trugs are heavy and unsuitable for real use.

To me, the plastic bucket is the supreme gardening accoutrement, to which I'm very attached. I may well get out to dinner carrying it one day instead of my bag.

—On Gardening, Helen Dillon

Would you like to host a garden tour?

If you would like to host a garden tour (spring, summer, fall or winter), call Frank Greer at (608) 233-4686.



Don't forget to take pictures over the spring and summer to present at our member potpourri in the fall.

Several of our members heeded this advice last year and presented spectacular pictures of their gardens at the potpourri. If you haven't tried taking slide photos before, now is the time to start!

FYI—Wild Ones talk about rain gardens

The Madison Chapter of Wild Ones will meet Wednesday, April 30, at 7:00 p.m., at Sequoia Library, 513 S. Midvale Blvd. Speakers: Janet Silbernagel, Gail Simpson.

Topic: **Broken Hardscape—Sculptural Rain Gardens for Valencia Lofts**

One of the first commercial-scale rain gardens will be dug in Middleton this summer. Janet Silbernagel and Gail Simpson will talk about how they designed it and give examples of plants they will use for the shady front garden and the sunny back one. They'll show how sculpture celebrates the water in a water trellis. And they'll have suggestions for how you can think about art and design in your own garden.

For more information, contact Sue Ellingson. 259-1824, ozzie@chorus.net

Recent Sighting

Last June a number of members toured gardens in Scotland and Northern England.

One of our interesting stays in Scotland was at the hotel in Stranraer, where Hamilton Mcmillan hosted us. He showed us the curling rink his dad had built in the hotel where Bonspiels are held every weekend during the curling season. Hammie told me he would be in Regina (as in Saskatchewan, Canada) in November as part of a curling competition.

My Mother, who is almost 89, is a serious watcher of televised curling. In Canada, any major competition locally or nationally is often shown on TV. As it happened I visited my mother in November, in Calgary and sure enough there was a competition on TV: the World versus North America. Hammie McMillan, a Skip for one of the World teams, was featured in an interview, and one day I happened to be in a department store, and there on an very large screen I saw him make several great shots. I watched until the game was over, and saw how pleased he was with his game, laughing and talking excitedly with his great Scottish accent. It turned out that North America won the championship, mainly due to a spectacular shot by a Canadian woman. One of the North American players was Mike Fraboni from McFarland, obviously a world-class curler, who curls at the Madison Curling Club in McFarland. It truly is a small world at times. —Barbara Obst

Signs of Spring

It was just the quickest flash of blue on the dazzlingly bright morning of March 14, so I couldn't be sure. Then on Sunday, the 16, my husband thought he caught a glimpse of a pair flitting across the yard. Finally, on Monday, March 17, with both bluebirds perched on the mealworm feeder, it was a fact! The bluebirds were back. Happily, I had ordered my first shipment of mealworms for the season to arrive on Wednesday, March 12, so I stocked the feeder and stood back to watch. I had erected the bluebird houses just the weekend before, with the brilliant pink plastic streamers trailing from each to discourage the English sparrows from taking them. This year it was the female who was the apparent veteran from our property last year. It was she who had to teach the male how to access the mealworms. Last year, it was a male who seemed to arrive one morning with a child-bride, a female bluebird that still had the remnants of her thrush-speckles (which baby bluebirds have in common with young robins). She was so cute fluttering her wings and begging, like a baby, waiting for the male to fill his mouth with mealworms and feed her. Within a few days, however, she'd caught on nicely and was feeding herself, her speckles already fading. Every year we look forward so much to the return of the bluebirds. Once they're here, I know spring has finally arrived. —Terri Maliszewski-Kane

I knew spring was actually going to arrive, when on March 15 I saw my first robin and also noticed that the winter aconite bulbs I put in last fall were up and in bloom. A few days later, iris reticulata showed up to join the aconite. This time of year, we have a lot of people coming to our house to get their taxes done, and everyone remarks on how nice it is to see some flowers. —Barb Herreid

First snowdrop blooming March 16.—Jane LaFlash

The best part of spring so far for us was the great weather we experienced in Mexico last month. As usual, we returned to reality here in Madison, and just in time to see our first daffodils open and get hammered with a freeze or late-season snow storm. Every spring I vow to remove these bulbs from against the south side of the house. Those daffodils are the first signs of the coming spring to appear in our garden every year. They are also beaten down by the inevitable late spring snows and hard freezes. When spring finally arrives, I get caught up in the usual rush of activities and forget all about moving those bulbs. By the time summer comes, the bulb foliage has dried down leaving little trace of those daffodils and in the fall there are other chores to attend to. I know they will be back again like clockwork. Better luck next year. —John Cannon

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society



**April 2003
Newsletter
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TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

Spread the word!

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society

Plant Sale

May 17, 2003

9:00-Noon

at the Pet Lodge

2332 Pinehurst Drive, Middleton

in the Middleton Industrial Park—off Highway 14
turn right past United Building Center (formerly Fish Building Supply)

A wide range of plants for shade and sun

Native Plants

Even a few woodies!