



Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society

Perennial Notes

April 2004

We now have a Web site!

<http://www.madison.com/communities/wisconsinhardyplantsociety/>

COMING EVENTS!

April 21, 7:00 p.m., Olbrich Gardens. Speaker Richard Hawkey, Chicago Botanic Garden, will discuss *More Plant Evaluations at the CBG*.

May 22, 9:00-Noon. WHPS Annual Plant Sale at The Pet Lodge in Middleton. See page 2 for important info about the plant sale and opportunities for you to volunteer. A flyer about the plant sale is enclosed. Please circulate the flyer to friends and neighbors and invite them to the sale! Please bring your own plastic and cardboard flats to collect and carry plants home from the sale. **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: We need volunteers to help at digs in April and early May. Contact Ruth Cadoret, 233-4504; rcadoret@wisc.edu NOW to volunteer.**

May 15, all day. Trip to Clinton, Iowa. Bickelhaup Arboretum tour and area nurseries. **This trip has sold out!**

June 11-20, 2004. WHPS Biannual Tour to Gardens of the United Kingdom. Waiting list only.
Contact Frank Greer (608-233-4686, fgreer@sbcglobal.net)

July Garden Tours—More info in the June newsletter.

- July 14, Schumann Drive in Fitchburg
- July 28, Blackhawk neighborhood

And coming up next year
Trip to Virginia in April 2005

August 18, 7:00 p.m. Olbrich Gardens Potluck supper and tour of the gardens.

September 10-12, Door County Gardens and Nurseries. (Look for trip flyer to be mailed to members in mid summer).

..... WHPS Search for New Treasurer

We are sorry to say that Barb Herreid, our terrific treasurer for the past five years, will be resigning her position at the end of summer to enjoy her new life (and house and beautiful shade garden) near Wisconsin Rapids. We appreciate the excellent job she has done as treasurer, and wish Barb and her husband much joy and pleasure in their new surroundings.

And that means that WHPS needs to find a new treasurer. We are fortunate that Barb has given us this notice, because she will work with the new treasurer to provide orientation and guidance before she leaves us.

We are looking for someone who can:

- Process dues and maintain membership records
- Manage checking account/bank reconciliation
- Compile financial records:
 - Ledger showing revenue and expenses
 - Annual report for board meeting in November
 - Year-over-year comparison of income/expenses
- Work with travel committee to process income and expenses for each trip
- Work at annual plant sale and oversee the check-out process as well as final accounting of revenues/expenses
- Send out annual donations with letters
- Send out emails/postcards to membership as needed— the emails are an automatic program
- Print labels for newsletter
- Attend board meetings

If you are interested in becoming treasurer of WHPS, please contact Barb Herreid as soon as possible at barb.herreid@usa.xerox.com or call (608) 271-9483.

Knowledge of Microsoft Word and Excel is extremely helpful.

Other events of note

Plant Sales

April 17—Shorewood Hills Garden Club Cocoa Mulch Sale (cocoa mulch is \$5.00 (22-27 lbs) 2 cubic ft; Rice and cocoa mulch is \$6.00 (22 lbs) 2 cubic ft, duck do 20+ \$5.50. Sale continues **May 1** with plant sale. Both days, the sale runs from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Village Fire Station.

April 23-24 (7 a.m.-4 p.m.) Plant Sale at Gail Cyrkiel's, 2721 Sommers Avenue, Madison (just behind Bongo Video on Atwood). Selling many plants (including grasses) thinned from her gardens in Viroqua and excess plants that have been ordered. Call 249-0707 or 608-634-3652 for more info.

May 2—Dahlia Tuber Sale, 1-3:30 p.m. Sale is held in Olbrich's Atrium, and sponsored by the Badger State Dahlia Society. For information, call 608-271-4943.

May 6 (4-6 p.m.), May 7 (7 a.m.-6 p.m.), May 8 (7 a.m.-noon) Nancy Hogan's Plant Sale at 5673 Rankin Lane, Waunakee (Westport) From Northport Drive, 1.5 miles West on High M to Woodland, or from Middleton, Allen Blvd., proceed East on Highway M for approx. 5 miles (just past Highway K) to Woodland. Go North on Woodland for about 3/4 mile - White house, gray shutters, with Rock Garden in Front - Corner of Rankin Lane and Woodland. Perennials, grasses, fushia, cactus, coleus, rock garden plants, etc.

May 7 (9 a.m.-6 p.m.) and May 8 (9 a.m.-1 p.m.) Olbrich's Spectacular Spring Plant Sale. Proceeds benefit Olbrich Botanical Gardens. For more information call 608-246-4550.

May 8—Friends of the Arboretum Native Plant Sale, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., McKay Center at Arboretum.

May 22-23, Badger Bonsai Society Annual Show, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Olbrich Gardens. Over 50 quality bonsai on display; two demos each day at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Members will be on hand to answer bonsai related questions; vendors area with pre-bonsai, bonsai, pots, tools, etc. Admission \$2.00 For more information call Bob at 608-249-5227.

May 23, Hosta Sale & Auction, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Olbrich Gardens. Sponsored by Madison Hosta Society. For information, call 262-786-1758.

August 7, Iris Rhizome Sale 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Olbrich Gardens. Sponsored by Madison Area Iris Society. For more information call 608-825-7423.

August 14 (10 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) and 15 (noon-4 p.m.) Daylily Sale, Olbrich Gardens. Sponsored by the Wisconsin Daylily Society. For more information, call 608-274-4921.

Garden Tours

July 16 (10 a.m.-4 p.m.) and 17 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.), Olbrich Home Garden Tour. Tickets for Olbrich Botanical Society members are \$8 in advance and \$10 on the day of the tour. General public tickets are \$10 in advance and \$12 on the

WHPS Volunteers needed for Digs and Plant Sale

JUST WHAT IS A PLANT DIG ?

A plant dig is a fun and productive social event/work party that is the source of many of the plants sold at our annual plant sale. Volunteer workers go to the home of a gardener, the dig host, and help pot up plants to be donated to the sale.

AND WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO HOST A DIG?

Dig hosts get help dividing or removing plants they don't want or have too many of. Some hosts have areas they want to clear out prior to reworking and want to find homes for the displaced plants. Most also have special plants they want to share. And, it is fun having a bunch of other gardeners all working together, talking plants. There is great satisfaction in seeing many flats of plants produced in the work of just several hours and knowing your plants will contribute to WHPS mission.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR THE VOLUNTEERS?

Besides being fun and a chance to contribute to WHPS, you get to see a garden at a time of year when it's not generally offered on tour. It's a chance to ask the gardener questions about their garden and usually a plant division or two or three or more go home with each volunteer.

THE DETAILS – WHO DOES WHAT

WHPS—supplies volunteers, pots, soil, labels and marking pens—all delivered to the host prior to the dig. We pick up extra potting material after the dig and provide transportation for the plants to the sale. In unusual and compelling circumstances we can arrange for care of the plants between the dig and the sale.

DIG HOST—has enough plants to fill 4 or more flats. This sounds like a lot, but the flats fill up fast when many hands are helping. The host should have a general idea how many plants they expect to donate and the sizes pots required so the dig coordinator can arrange, more or less, to get enough materials delivered. A place to mix the potting soil is needed – a wheel barrow or tarp on the ground or large tub works well. If possible, the host will provide a place to sit and work, although many digs are accomplished without this. The host usually prefers to dig the plants, or closely directs the digging. Finally, the host cares for the plants until the time of the sale.

DIG VOLUNTEERS—divide plants, pot up, write labels, help dig if asked, water and mix soil. Volunteers should bring hand pruners or knives to use for dividing plants .

SPECIAL NEEDS VOLUNTEERS—transport plants to the sale site, pick up and deliver potting mix and other materials to the dig sites.

Please contact Dig Coordinator Ruth Cadoret (233-4504; rcadoret@wisc.edu) or to volunteer for the day before and day of the sale contact Stephanie O'Neal (256-6108; sone2@aol.com)

Tired of DISPOSABLE
annual gardening?

Plant a garden that
renews itself from

The
Flower
Factory



The Midwest's largest selection
of perennials, hostas and
ornamental grasses.

Opening April 24
Weekdays 10 a.m.-7 p.m.
Sat. & Sun. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

4062 Highway A
Stoughton
(608) 873-8329

Beauty With God's Help For You

AMERICA'S BEST[®]
A ~ FLOWERS ~ T
GARDEN CENTER

www.americasbestflowers.com

One mile East of Madison just off County BB (Cottage Grove Rd.)
1/2 mile south at 4311 Vilas Hope Rd., Cottage Grove, WI 608-222-2269
E-mail: ed@americasbestflowers.com • Fax: 608-222-1234

We have the largest garden center in
Dane County—two acres of blooming color!

Open Year Round
Monday-Friday 9-8
Saturday-Sunday 9-5

Growing Gloves for Foxes



I started growing foxgloves about 10 years ago, and quickly fell in love...maybe it has to do with their heart-helping qualities, or maybe it has to do with the beautiful, non-demanding character of the plant. I'd always lusted after delphiniums, but soon found that they are creatures of the wind...they're here and gone, especially if there's a wind.

Foxgloves, on the other hand, are biennial or perennial wonders. Their sturdy stems hold them erect even on my wind-swept site, and the tall columns of flowers lend a cottage air to any garden.

I started my affair with *Digitalis purpurea*, the lovely biennial with deep pink snapdragons sculptured on a stately 4' stalk. *Digitalis*, of course, is the heart medicine, and too much of it is as fatal as too little; the foxgloves are not the plant for the site where the elves eat the stems. But I own dogs and they've never been the least bit interested in having a healthier heart, so I've taken to growing foxgloves with abandon. *D. purpurea* led me to *grandiflora* and *lutea*, which are both more perennial, and yellow to boot. However, the flowers on these two are much smaller and more delicate, so they don't lend the pizzazz to the garden that *purpurea* gives. Then I tried *thlaspi*, which has a totally different growth pattern but maintains the lovely, deep pink bells of *purpurea*. *Thlaspi* is only about 24" tall, and the bells nod downward, but the leaves are pubescent with silvery long fur. Many of the foxgloves come from Spain, so I was a trifle worried that I was buying annuals...but *thlaspi* surprised me...it thrived in garden soil and disappeared in the rock garden. It seeded itself around.

Then I tried *ferruginea*...oh, heart be still...*ferruginea* is a totally different look. A column of slightly closed, sort-of-golden flowers rise to 4'. It reminds me of the women of the Middle East, with their closed faces and shawls, but it still has an imperial splendor about it. It doesn't seem to like severe, dry winters.

And then there was *laevigata*...slightly more open than *ferruginea*, with a white lip. It still has the gold of *ferruginea*, but it seems a little more forgiving of our climate.

Now I'm on to *obscura* (a cherry-gold combination), *nervosa*, *parviflora*, *lanata*, and *nevadensis*. They may not be more than annuals here, but I love the exotic look of all these beauties, and seed is cheap.

There is a form of *purpurea* that is pure white, and it is a lovely addition to the semi-shade garden.

The only one that has been sort of a disappointment has been *mertonensis*...though it has strawberry blooms that are very large, it has sputtered in the garden. But I'm giving it a third chance, and maybe a fourth. According to *Hortus Third*, it is a cross of *purpurea* and *grandiflora*, so it should be hardy, so maybe I'm just not giving it the loving care it needs.

If you're not familiar with biennials, they are plants that form leaves/rosettes the first year, bloom the second, and

then die. The most perennial of all of them seems to be *lutea*, although I've had seedlings and plants of *thlaspi* for about six years as well. Foxgloves usually form large basal rosettes, and the flowering stem can reach up to 5' if the plants are happy. *Grandiflora*, *lutea*, and *thlaspi* grow much shorter...to about 2' here, and tend to have less of a spire look to them than some of the others. All contain the drug *digitalis*, which is poisonous in larger doses, so if you have animals or children who will eat anything, this probably doesn't belong in your yard.

The seed is miniscule...like grains of fine sand, and the new seedlings are so small that hundreds fit in a 4" pot. Sometimes, if you sow the seed early enough (like January), *purpurea* may bloom the first year. There is even a cultivar called 'Foxy' that reliably blooms the first year. Foxgloves tolerate full sun to a half-day of shade. They add vertical accents to the garden and often have extended bloom if the first flowering stems are cut back when they fade. Often *purpurea* blooms in early June and again right at the end of the season. If you leave the last flowering stalk standing or shake its contents around the mother plant, you will have a continuous supply. *Purpurea* seems to like good garden soil; *ferruginea* seems to prefer drier conditions. But if you start foxgloves from seed, you will have enough babies to try them in lots of places. And if you grow them, then the foxes will appear soon after to try on their gloves.

—Jean Bawden

Jean Bawden operates Earthspirit Farm, 4385 Oak Hill Road. Opening for the season on May 15, selling hostas, dwarf iris, Japanese and Siberian iris, peonies, shrubs, and daylilies. Call 835-8907 or e-mail bdn7458@mailbag.com for a catalog.

The Search for Native Fungi is On!

Wisconsin Mycological Society Foray

Madison Interest Group
Indian Lake County Park
Saturday June 19, 2004
10:00 am

Foray Leader: Daniel L. Lindner Czederpiltz

Directions: Indian Lake is on the south side of Hwy. 19 a few miles west of Hwy. 12. To get there from Madison, take Hwy. 12 to Hwy. 19. Head west on Hwy. 19, and after a mile or two Indian Lake is on your left (to the south). The road into the park dead ends in a large parking lot, which is where we will meet. Bring a lunch.

Contact: Daniel L. Lindner Czederpiltz at dlindner@wisc.edu or Betsy True at BTrue@wisc.edu

A Late Summer Journal Page

Suddenly, the daylilies are over, and their bare stems interrupt the eye's progress as I survey my beds. The early-blooming hostas are in that raggedy stage that makes me remember why I didn't used to like them—and with just a little effort, I think, I can transform them back to glossy mounds again. I need to cut off all those stems! And shouldn't I cut down the *Campanula lactiflora* entirely? It isn't pretty in its brown state, and it interferes with the graceful curves of the waving tall clumps of *Miscanthus*. And when did that Henry Kelsey climber send out those eight-foot feelers? If only they weren't so wickedly thorny!

Well, it isn't "just a little effort," of course, and furthermore, getting into it by this back door, so to speak, I am suddenly aware of a thousand things that cry out to be done NOW, while it has become a bit cooler, and I have just watered.

Trimming up tired plants leads me to look into all the beds, and see, for instance, where some precious small plants are swamped by the stunning growth of a young *Hosta* 'Abba Dabba Doo', and how ready the little *Primula* 'Wanda' is for dividing. Wanda has already made a three-foot patch, from one original plant three years ago, and I can make a curving six-foot drift out of the sturdy plants today. I love the brilliant pink of Wanda's short-stemmed clumps in May, and they last for simply weeks. What a sweep of color that will be! I haul off the weed-bag full of trimmings, dump it on the compost and get out my tools for digging. My pet Smith and Hawken Border Fork and Spade, just the right size and weight for me. I prefer the fork, as it doesn't cut roots; it is narrow-tined and sharp, and still lifts a nice clump, as the tines are close together.

Carefully moving two plump sedges out of a cramped corner, I notice two ruby-red lanterns on *Trillium rubrum*; wonderful! They have made seed pods for me! One has fallen off and I take it inside to save it from mice, ants, and birds; the other I leave

on the stem in case it needs to ripen further. I got those from Gene Bush; better e-mail him and find out how to propagate those darling plants. These have really red blossoms, not just dull maroon, and I would love a little forest of them. No luck with *Arisaema sikkokianum*; I thought sure I would have a bunch of red berries this year. And wouldn't THAT be fun! *A. ringens* didn't set seed either. I hope they aren't sterile.

It is supper time when I finally look at that berm and like the way it looks—*Lamium* 'Pink Pewter' is pretty in bloom, but messy and too big in the middle of a bed, and taking it out has freed up the entire area around that hosta, showing off the pale standing fronds of 'The Ghost' fern as well. Several *Epimediums* and small *Astilbes* are set off by better placement, too, and some actually got moved all the way out to the new bed under the old spruce. Now that garden looks more finished too! And then I see about a hundred seedlings of the Nakoma pass-along pink primrose in the nicely composted bark path across the way. Oh shoot. Another job. But wait: I think I had better leave them until spring, and put them in situ. If I try to pot them up I will lose many, and putting them in the beds now is too risky. Who knows what this weather is going to do?

Tired and happy, I truck all the tools up the hill and look back: everything is in balance. But couldn't I use just a touch of deep purple right there, with all the gold variegated hostas behind it? Right beside the gaudy, bushy *Persicaria*, with its limey green leaves with their purple chevrons? And right under the golden Full Moon maple? Better go to the Flower Factory tomorrow. I am sure I will find *Cimicifuga simplex* 'Purpurea' there. Deep, deep purple leaves, and white spikes in October. Just what I need!

—Joan Severa

Rotary Gardens 2004—Awesome Alliums to Zany Zinnias!—And More!

Don't forget to see spring bulbs at Rotary Gardens. Features in 2004 include a new garden hyacinth collection (53 taxa), muscari collection (21 taxa) and camassia collection (8 taxa). The "Awesome Alliums" collection of 50,000 bulbs representing 54 taxa will be back and peaking in early June. Over 300,000 spring blooming bulbs will bloom between late March and late June.

Come enjoy the newest garden area at Rotary Gardens. The Fern & Moss Garden contains meandering paths, streams, pools, a waterfall and 170 different taxa of ferns. Over 50 additional fern taxa will be incorporated into this area in 2004. Native Wisconsin mosses cover the "moss island" and thousands of minor bulbs will add color as the ferns emerge among rare woody plants. An adjacent area has also been developed as the Hosta Hollow, featuring choice hostas and companion plants. Come see why Rotary Gardens is a National Display Garden for the American Hosta Society.

Seasonal collections for 2004 will feature Zany Zinnias! (a collection of 157 varieties) and our All-America Selections Display Garden. This AAS garden will not only display current winners, but we've researched commercially available bedding plant winners from the earliest year of the All-America Selections (1933 through 2005). To date, we have located over 180 varieties still being offered and will plant these in "chronological clumps" in display beds at our Horticulture Center.

In addition to seasonal collections, we will also have our 6th Annual Unusual Annuals program of 200+ varieties planted and labeled throughout the grounds. Tropical plants will be found in abundance in our Tropical Twist berms and a Hispanic Vegetable Garden will be installed this spring as well.

—Mark Dwyer

..... **Member tips and info**

Recipe from January Potluck

Baked Curried Fruit

- 1lb. bag of fresh cranberries, washed & trimmed
- cans of fruit (pears, peaches, pineapple, apricots, mandarin oranges, etc.) in their own juice or light syrup, __ drained, about 8 cups total
- 1 stick margarine or butter, melted
- 3/4 c. brown sugar
- 1 1/2 T. corn starch
- 1/2-1 tsp. curry

Mix everything together in a casserole dish and bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour.

Enjoy!

—Jennifer Allen

WHPS Members Featured in Magazine

Pat and Chuck Bell and their garden are featured in the March/April 2004 issue of *Chicagoland Gardening* (p. 52). Pat and Chuck are WHPS members from St. Charles, Illinois who regularly make the nearly two-hour drive up to our meetings. I was one of a group who drove down to tour their garden last summer and can certainly understand why it was chosen for the magazine. It is a truly fabulous garden—beautifully designed and filled with wonderful plant material. The WHPS is mentioned twice in the article! Check it out.

—Jane LaFlash

Stretching the Cocoa Mulch

If you like the look of cocoa bean mulch but find the cost daunting to put in many flower beds, try using less expensive (or free) mulch to provide cover and prevent weeds and use the cocoa bean mulch as top dressing. It lasts a long time and provides a clean look to the beds.

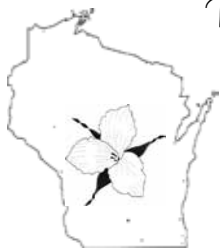
—Stephanie O'Neal

Would you like to host a fall (or winter) garden tour?

If you would like to host a garden tour in October or February, please contact Jane LaFlash at jlafash@wisc.edu or 608-243-1208.

Got a garden tip or idea for our members to use in their garden? Contact Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society



**January 2004
Newsletter
925 Waban Hill
Madison, WI 53711**

President—Frank Greer (608-233-4686, fgreer@sbcglobal.net)
Vice President—Diane Scharkey, dscharkey@aol.com
Recording Secretary/Olbrich Liaison—
Terri Maliszewski-Kane, terrimk1@hotmail.com
Treasurer—Barb Herreid, barb.herreid@usa.xerox.com
Board Members at Large
John Cannon, jtcannon@facstaff.wisc.edu
Jane LaFlash, jlafash@wisc.edu
Phyllis Sanner, phyllis_sanner20002000@yahoo.com
Joan Severa, 271-5778, jlsevera@charter.net
Mary Trewartha, 238-8106, marytrewartha@yahoo.com
Co-Chairs, Travel Committee—
Ed Hasselkus, erhassel@facstaff.wisc.edu
Sandy Allen, DSAMR@chorus.net
Chair, Ways and Means Committee—
Web site—Rita Thomas, rita_thomas@charter.net
Publications—Stephanie O'Neal
(608-256-6108, sone2@aol.com)

Someone you know interested in joining WHPS?

Contact WHPS Treasurer Barb Herreid at barb.herreid@usa.xerox.com or call (608) 271-9483