



# Perennial Notes

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society, Inc.

September 2022



Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)

## A Redbud Story

by Jane Harris Cramer

The saga of "Bud" began before it ever came to our yard. On March 1, 1976 an icy rain began to fall across southern Wisconsin. It continued over the next few days, lasting almost a week. Too cold to melt, the freezing drops coated trees, power lines and utility poles until, burdened with inches of ice, they began to snap and crash to the ground. The resulting "Wisconsin Ice Storm of March 1976" resulted in damage exceeding \$50,400,000 (1976 dollars). One of the unlucky victims was a small clump birch that shaded our front yard. When the debris was cleared away, I already had a vision of what would take its place.

As a child in Chicagoland, I loved the pinkish purple clouds that emerged in spring to decorate woodlands and suburban gardens. These early blooming redbuds (*Cercis canadensis*), flowered even before their leaves emerged to offer a beautiful, happy promise of the season to come. So, in the summer of

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## WHPS coming events!

Questions about our events? Email [wisconsinhps@gmail.com](mailto:wisconsinhps@gmail.com) for specific info.

**Wednesday, September 21, 6:30 pm, WHPS Meeting (IN PERSON and VIA ZOOM):** Speaker

**Bill Quade**, Senior Manager of Horticulture at Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC, will talk about the history of Biltmore Estate and gardens, how the gardens are maintained and some of his favorite plants. Quade has been



with the Biltmore Estate for over 24 years, starting as a crew member, then crew leader, then landscape manager, leading to his current position as Senior Manager-Landscape. His responsibilities include planning, prioritizing, and implementing horticultural operations throughout the estate, in addition to leading the horticulture crews in maintaining the gardens and grounds. **Special Pre-Meeting Event - Garden Book Exchange:** As part of our September meeting, we're hosting a book and magazine exchange. Bring any materials you want to pass on related to gardening or related topics. There will be tables at the back of the meeting room where you can add your contributions and browse what others have brought. Anything left on the tables at the end of the night will be donated to Olbrich's library.

**MAKE A DAY OF IT! Sunday, October 9, noon-3 pm, WHPS Day at the Radler Rosarium**, Greenfield, WI. This is a rare, behind-the-scenes opportunity to see the work of [Rose Innovations](#) while also enjoying the unique features of the garden including a trickling stream, colorful



goldfish, sculptures, waterfalls, the observation deck and, of course, roses! WHPS member Will Radler, owner of Rose Innovations and creator of the Knock Out family of roses, is donating 100% of the entrance fees (minimum of \$5 per person is encouraged) from that day to WHPS. On a past day trip, WHPS members enjoyed lunch at [That's Amore](#) (a "Milwaukee's Choice top Italian restaurant," open 11 am-8 pm), 5080 S 108th St., Greenfield, WI.

Before or after you go to the Rosarium, you'll want to do some



late-season shopping at [Heritage Flower Farm](#), which will be open that Sunday from 9 am-5 pm and is located at 33725 Janesville Dr. (County Rd L) Post office address Mukwonago, "but really in Town of Waterford." Owner Betty Adelman also invites us to "Come and walk our Autumn Garden - about 1/2 an acre of autumn beauty - planted with a riot of trees, shrubs, grasses, vines, perennials and annuals that bloom or berry in autumn. Butterflies abound.

(continued on page 2)



**Flight in the garden**

see p. 6.



**What's in a word?**

see p. 8.

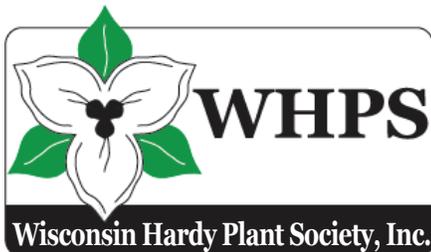


**Fall planting**

see p. 7

## WHPS Events (cont. from p.1)

You can also walk the other paths in our 3 acres of plants. We grow nearly 1000 taxa of heirloom plants, a few prehistoric, most collected at least 100 years ago- some forgotten, some rare, all hardy." Betty has also recommended a couple of her favorite food establishments in the vicinity: [LD's BBQ](#), 2511 Main St, East Troy; and [The Elegant Farmer](#) HWY ES & J · 1545 Main St, Mukwonago. A few other sites within easy driving distance (depending on what direction you are coming from) include Boerner Botanical Garden, Milwaukee Domes and Rotary Bo-



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tanical Gardens.

**Saturday, October 15, 10:00-11:30 am, Tour of Longenecker Horticultural Gardens with Curator David Stevens** – focusing on fall color. WHPS members will meet at the entrance to Longenecker Horticultural Gardens near the Arboretum Visitor Center, 1207 Seminole Highway, Madison.



**Wednesday, October 19, 6:30 pm, WHPS Meeting (IN PERSON and VIA ZOOM): Developing, Selection and Introducing New Woody Plant Cultivars in Wisconsin, with speaker Michael Yanny**, owner of J.N. Plant Selections (Johnson's Nursery Originals). Yanny credits the late Herbert Trautman



of Trautman Nurseries for teaching him the propagation and plant selection skills he has used throughout his career. Based primarily on Trautman's recommendation, Yanny was hired by Johnson's Nursery in 1980, at only 23 years of age, to start a propagation department. He spent 30 years as the head plant propagator at Johnson's before transitioning to senior horticulturalist and starting his own company, JN Plant Selections, LLC. His focus has been on developing commercially viable cultivars of native species or "nativars," with wider adaptation, stronger growth rates and added ornamental characteristics. The Firebird® Crabapple, Redwing®, Highbush Cranberry Viburnum and Pink-a-licious™ Spirea, are some of the many plants Yanny has selected, named and introduced over the course of his career. He works with many nurseries and his plants are in different nationally branded plant programs. He is a key contributor to the Chicagoland Grows® plant introduction program and has worked with the HGTV plant brand and their woody shrub lines. In 2014, he received the Invader Crusader Award from the Wisconsin Invasive Species Council for helping to build bridges between the nursery industry, regulators and the conservation community. In 2016, Yanny was awarded the Wisconsin Distinguished Agriculturalist Award, which recognizes individuals who have provided leadership, service and other contributions to the broader agricultural community.

**Wednesday, November 16, 6:30 pm, WHPS Meeting (IN PERSON and VIA ZOOM): Hardy Plants in the Healing Garden Setting. With speaker Mark Dwyer**, Edgerton Hospital & Health Services Healing Garden Manager and owner/operator of Landscape Prescriptions by MD. Mark will discuss the Edgerton Hospital Healing Garden, its plantings and other favorite plants for healing gardens



**Wednesday, December 7, 6:30 pm, WHPS Annual Meeting and Party with Seed Exchange and Trash to Treasure Exchange.**

**Wednesday, January 18, 2023, 6:30 pm, WHPS Meeting (VIA ZOOM ONLY): Topic TBD, with speaker Andrew Brand**, Director of Horticulture, Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens. Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens has 19 acres of cultivated land and 300 acres in total. The botanical gardens include a mix of nonnative plants and plants that are native to the Eastern Seaboard. The native plants and near-natives are mixed with non-native plants that make for interesting combinations. He joined the CMBG in 2018 as the curator of living collections, a job in which he worked with staff horticulturists to choose plants for the collections. Now, as Director of Horticulture, he continues to oversee the collections but also manages 11 full-time horticulturists, as well as interns and seasonal employees. He arrived in Maine after 27 years as Nursery Manager at Broken Arrow Nursery — a small nursery specializing in rare and unusual trees, shrubs and perennials in Hamden, Connecticut. Brand has said, "I've spent most of my life doing plant production and growing plants and trees and shrubs and perennials. And now I'm surrounded by gardens full of not just trees and shrubs and perennials, but thousands of different types of annuals that are so new to me, and other plants that I've never seen before...it kind of reinvigorates you...At least for me, that's what I've felt has happened...just a whole new zest for gardens and gardening."



## 2022 – 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](#)

**Continuing thru September 11, Summer Floral Show- Faerie Gardens, Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory, Milwaukee, WI.**

**August 8-October 30, Sunset-10 pm, The Nature of Light: An Exploration After Dark**, The Paine Art Center and Gardens, Oshkosh. See website for cost details. [More info.](#)

**August 31-October 29, 2022, Gleam: Art in a New Light**, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison, WI. Explore the Gardens in a whole new light through the lens of illumination created with the collaboration of a team of art professionals, lighting designers, artists, marketing/branding specialists and horticulturists. [More info.](#)

**Thursday, September 8, 1:00 pm, Free Nature Lecture - Aldo Leopold, Phenology (Seasonal Events in Nature) and Climate Change**, with speaker Stanley Temple, Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin. The Parkwood Hills Garden Club is inviting WHPS members to attend a free lecture in the community room at Alicia Ashman Library, 733 N. High Point Rd. Prof. Temple will discuss how Wisconsin naturalist Aldo Leopold's meticulous phenological observations have provided us with an unparalleled record of when plants bloomed, birds migrated and other natural events occurred, aiding research on climate change.

**Saturday, September 10, 10 am-4 pm, 30th Annual Walk in the Woods Art Fair**, Hawthorn Hollow Nature Sanctuary & Arboretum, Kenosha. [More info.](#)

**Saturday, September 17, 1-3 pm, Fall in the Native Plant Garden**, UW Arboretum, Madison. Free. [More info.](#)

**September 16-October 30, Tuesday - Saturday, 5:30-10 pm, China Lights**

### Plant Sales

**Saturday, Sept. 17, 9 am-5 pm & Sunday, Sept. 18, 10 am-4 pm - Wood County Master Gardeners Fall Plant Sale.** Held in coordination with Maple Fall Fest in Marshfield, WI in Marshfield Wildwood Park by the zoo. Plants grown from seed by WCMG members are jumping worm free.

**September 28, - October 1, 9 am - 3 pm daily, Edgerton Hospital Healing Garden** (lobby), Prepackaged and ready to go, there will be over 15 varieties of ornamental onions (Allium) for sale! Proceeds benefit the healing garden.

**Saturday, Nov. 5, 9 am-3 pm - 40th Annual Madison Herb Fair**, Olbrich Gardens, Madison, WI, sponsored by the [Madison Herb Society](#). This year's theme - Easy Herbs for Everyone.

2022, Boerner Botanical Gardens, General Admission: \$22-35. [More info.](#)

**September 24 - November 6, Fall Floral Show**, Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory, Milwaukee, WI.

**Sunday, September 25, 1-2 pm, Garden Stroll**, UW Arboretum, Madison. Free. [More info.](#)

**Wednesday, September 28, 5-6 pm, What's in Bloom? Tour**, with Michael Jesiolowski, Rotary Gardens Director of Horticulture, Rotary Botanical Gardens, Janesville. Free for RBG members; \$10 non-members. [More info.](#)

**Saturday, October 8, 1-3 pm, Conifers Garden Tour**, UW Arboretum, Madison. Free. [More info.](#)

**Saturday, October 8, Harvest Folk Festival, Allen Centennial Gardens**, Madison. Cultural performances offer members of the University community and beyond the opportunity to experience cultural harvest performances by Hmong, Indigenous, African American, Eastern European, and Scandinavian performers. [More info.](#)

**Saturday, October 15, 1-3 pm, The Colors of Fall Garden Tour**, UW Arboretum, Madison. Free. [More info.](#)

**November 19 - January 3, Holiday Floral Show**, Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory, Milwaukee, WI.

**November 25 - Dec. 30 (intermittent), Holiday Light Show**, Rotary Botanical Gardens, Janesville. See website for details on dates and cost. [More info.](#)

**Sunday, November 27, 1-2 pm, Garden Stroll**, UW Arboretum, Madison. Free. [More info.](#)

## Share your favorite garden daytrips

We'd like to hear from our members about favorite day trips you have taken so we can offer other members information they can use to plan their own garden excursions. Please [email us](#) to provide places you have visited: public gardens, nurseries, restaurants and other interesting stops along the way.

## MAPS - Invasive Insects of Concern

Check out these useful maps showing the presence of several invasive insects of concern for gardeners posted in June of this year by PJ Leisch, Director of the UW-Madison Insect Diagnostic Lab: <https://insectlab.russell.wisc.edu/wi-invasive-insects-maps/>. All have been confirmed in Dane County.

## New WHPS members

The following members have recently joined WHPS:

Peggy Brown, Madison, WI; Rosanne Cheeseman & James Van Deurzen, Mazomanie WI; Debra Denzer, Sheboygan Falls, WI; Daniel Einstein, Madison, WI; Laurie Kaufman, Haslett, MI; Randall Luchterhand, Marshall, WI; Larry Neuman, Fitchburg, WI; Pamela Pierce, Madison, WI; Sam Snellings & Emily Serrell, Madison, WI; Mary Tremaine, Madison, WI; Marvin Wickens, Madison, WI; Kathleen Woit, Madison, WI. Welcome!

## Members in the news

*Garden Gate* magazine, October 2022, page 54, "Better Than Indoors" - features Minneapolis garden of WHPS member Frank Fitzgerald.

## About the WHPS Grants Program

The Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society will award up to \$1500 to a community group, school, or other organization for a project that promotes the use of hardy plants in the landscape. Grants can only be awarded to a nonprofit organization or a group that is associated with a nonprofit organization.

Funds may be used for educational

purposes, plant material, hardscaping and supplies. Priority will be given to projects in the state of Wisconsin that are supported by WHPS members and to organizations with nonprofit status who have not received previous donations or grants from WHPS. Grant requests can be submitted at any time and will be reviewed by the board members of the

WHPS or a designated subcommittee. If a grant is awarded, a progress report is requested six months after the award funds are received. A verbal report of your project may be requested at the December annual business meeting of the WHPS.

Apply at our [website](#).

## Portal Sensory Garden Grant Update

Portal inc., is a nonprofit service organization in Ozaukee County providing community focused learning experiences for adults with disabilities for over 55 years. Portal is creating Nature's Palette, a 32' by 42' sensory garden where individuals can learn about plants, birds and butterflies, participate in hands-on gardening and relax while enjoying a garden that stimulates the senses.

Steve Pericak of Portal, Inc. says, *We are happy to report that 100% of all the plantings, bushes, trees, etc. have been installed into the new Sensory Garden. Burton Landscaping company has done a wonderful job with the installation. Just last week they installed a fence around our garden so our friendly deer family won't continue to eat the variety of plants and bushes.*

*We do need to add the musical component pieces to the garden. This exciting collection of tuned outdoor musical instruments from the percussion family is designed specifically for outdoor use and guaranteed to strike a chord. A wide variety of styles and options are available, with everything from tuned musical chimes, mirrored chimes, an oversized bell tree, a clever twist on a T-rung traditional folk instrument and enormous tubular bells.*

*Seating is the final component needed in the garden. Garden furniture allows everyone to relax and enjoy the surroundings of our lush, colorful garden. The garden bench will need some care and maintenance from time to time, so we will purchase one that is all weather to tolerate Wisconsin seasons.*

*We are very excited to see the garden come to life. Everyone is looking forward to spending time in the garden.*



Photos above: top, original site; middle, while under construction; and below, as of July of 2021.

*“Money can't buy happiness.  
Except at the garden center.”*

*– Unknown author*

## In Remembrance - Agate Nesaule, Marshall Finner

### Agate Nesaule – June 29, 2022

Agate Nesaule of Madison passed away June 29 at the age of 84. She was an accomplished writer who wrote in a variety of genres: novels, literary criticism and memoir.



As a novelist, she wrote *In Love with Jerzy Kosinski* (2010) and *Lost Midsummers* (2018). As a literary critic, she wrote primarily about Doris Lessing and the Latvian playwright and poet, Aspazija. She was an active supporter of the Aspazija Museum in Jurmala, Latvia. Agate will be remembered, though, long into the future for her 1995 memoir *A Woman in Amber: Healing the Trauma of War and Exile*. Her memoir was the winner of the 1996 American Book Award and will be republished this fall by Soho Press. Agate was a long-time member of WHPS, attending meetings regularly and joining us on many trips over the years.

Jane Gahlman – My memories of Agate: “I first met and got to know Agate Nesaule on the WHPS trip to Ireland in 2008. We happened to sit next to each other at breakfast one morning and got talking about books. She mentioned that she wrote a book called *A Woman in Amber: Healing the Trauma of War and Exile* and I said that I would have to buy it and read it. She downplayed it by saying, ‘Oh, don’t buy it, just get it from the library.’ Well, I did buy it and read it and it is a wonderful memoir of her early life in Latvia during WWII and then as a ‘displaced person’ in the U.S., where she taught herself English by reading *Gone With The Wind*. She went to college at Indiana University, got her doctorate at UW-Madison and then taught English and Women’s Studies at UW-Whitewater. Agate had a beautiful garden in Madison a couple of blocks from Olbrich Gardens. Whenever I saw her I always asked, ‘What are you reading?’ She gave me many wonderful book suggestions, including *The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession* by Andrea Wulf, which turned out to be one of my favorite books.

Frank Greer also knew Agate from the 2008 WHPS trip and recalls enjoying her memoir: “The creation of a garden figured

very prominently in a German concentration camp in her autobiography *Woman in Amber* – I still remember this part of her book.”

Agate had many deeply-rooted interests. First, always, was her love for her son, Boris, her nieces, her friends and colleagues. She also was a skilled gardener. Her favorite tree was the birch, which she associated with Latvia. In her backyard she had a birch with a trifurcated trunk, an auspicious sign in Latvian culture. Agate’s yard was filled with a variety of flowers. On her deathbed, she implored her gardener, a dear friend of hers, to continue his care for her garden.

### Marshall Frederick Finner–July 5, 2022

Marshall Frederick Finner passed away on July 5, 2022, at the age of 95. He was born in Dodge County and grew up on the 360-acre family farm in Trempealeau County. He received UW degrees in agricultural and mechanical engineering, beginning a long career as a professor at UW-Madison. In 1983, he became Director of UW Agricultural Research Stations until his retirement in 1994, when he was given the status of Professor Emeritus.



Marsh and his wife Sandy were early members of WHPS and hosted tours of their Verona garden in 1997 and 2003. Former WHPS president Frank Greer recalls, “The Finner garden was in the boon-docks of western Dane County -- I visited it twice, once when it was new and later in a more mature state. I suspect this was on the WHPS tours, as I would have never found the place otherwise. It was dominated by a very large and high waterfall. As I recall, it had views of the surrounding countryside and large plantings of perennials and grasses.” Jane LaFlash remembers the 1997 garden tour as her first as a WHPS member, and notes that it was designed by the late Wisconsin landscape architect Dennis Buettner (the original master designer of Allen Centennial Garden). Here is the Finner’s garden as it was described in the May 12, 1997, edition of this newsletter...*designed by Dennis*

*Buettner, who has described the garden as ‘A private paradise designed for a professional couple who enjoy gardening. A barren construction site surrounded by a native hardwood forest was transformed into a series of garden environments, including a prairie garden. This oasis includes a stream-fed pond and a dramatic waterfall viewed from the upper deck. A romantic belvedere overlooks this magic kingdom and offers views of the surrounding countryside.’*

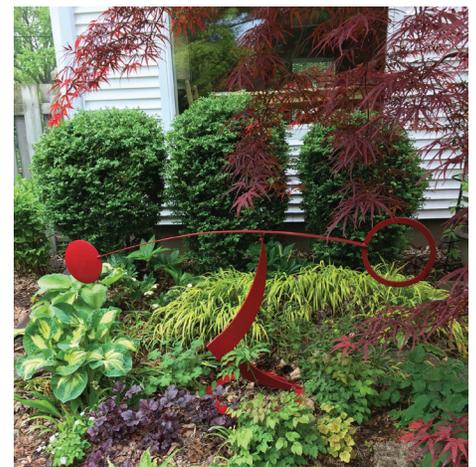
We offer our sincere condolences to his wife, Dr. Sandra Osborn, his daughters and their extended family.

## Hosting an Open Garden

by Jane LaFlash

We want to see your garden!

Hosting an open garden gives you the opportunity to invite other members to visit your garden at very short notice, when you think it’s looking especially good. All you have to do is contact us a few days to a week (or more) ahead at [wisconsinhps@gmail.com](mailto:wisconsinhps@gmail.com) with your name, address, a short description of your garden and the date and times you will be open, and we will send out an email invitation to our members. Last year fifteen member’s gardens were opened (some more than once) on dates ranging from April 6 to December 19 with visitor attendance ranging from 30-100. Feel free to email us with any questions. We have already enjoyed a variety of lovely and interesting member gardens this year – will yours be next?



Jane LaFlash, 2022 Open Garden

# Flight in the Garden – And a Gardener’s Delight!

by A. Hort Hound

Like most of you, I am very fond of the birds in the garden. The bird watching gurus tell me that you need three things to attract birds – shelter, food and water. I have added many conifers over the years. I put out feeders only in the winter months and keep a poultry water heater (Farm & Fleet) in at least one bird bath to keep it ice free in winter.

In my relatively small garden, I have noted significant fluctuations in the bird population over several decades – typically 4-5 pairs of cardinals, white- and red-breasted nuthatches, various woodpeckers, many robins, a brown creeper or two, flocks of juncos and mourning doves, a tufted titmouse, goldfinches, and numerous sparrows and house finches. It seems in recent years there have even been a few robins around most of the winter, but I have no idea what they find to eat (in the summer they continuously scratch up the bark mulch to feast on the jumping worms)! A red-tailed hawk is a frequent visitor to the neighborhood, whose presence is made known by the complete absence of all other birds on the feeders and bird bath. There is a resident barred owl who is more frequently sighted in winter than in the warmer months, adored for his predatory activities (as in RABBITS!).

The spring migrants are eagerly awaited every year, including rose-breasted grosbeaks, indigo buntings, scarlet tanagers, Baltimore orioles and yes, even turkey vultures. There are numerous migratory warblers, but the only one I can identify is the ruby-crowned kinglet, hence the most admired, of course.

But my very favorite birds are two reliable summer residents – the pewee flycatcher and the ubiquitous house wren. The pewee flycatcher faithfully arrives around Memorial Day, presumably attracted to the canopy of white oaks. Though I only occasionally observe him sitting on the wall of the pond, it is his wonderful, soulful call (peee-a-weee, often followed by a



Pewee Flycatcher

string of descending notes) that is always a delight and a calming influence as I momentarily pause to take it in (as I write these lines, I listen to his song).

The wren, who arrives punctually but much earlier during the first few days of May, is a much more active garden resident, who makes more noise per cubic inch than any other bird I know. I awake to his vociferous trilling every morning as he announces both his presence and the looming rise of the sun. I am frequently startled by his scoldings announcing my unwelcome presence as I round the corner of the house into the back garden, at any time of day.



House wren

For decades I have kept a pair of gourd-nesting sites outside the kitchen window, swinging from an antique, hand-forged butcher’s shop double meat hook, for continuous viewing. I like to think of these as part of my southern roots, repurchasing them periodically over the years from a farmer who sells them as wren houses at the state farmer’s market in Asheville, NC. (He also sells them to use as houses for purple martin colonies.) For my part of the ongoing relationship, I take them down in the fall and meticulously remove all of the current year’s nesting material with a pair of blunt nose pliers. (Yes, this takes a while!) Two small tubular sunflower seed feeders take their place for the winter months of birdwatching.

The wrens’ repetitive nesting pattern is a marvel and they have never missed a year. Upon their arrival, they spend sev-



Gourd wren houses.

eral weeks building a platform of sticks in BOTH gourds. Their favorite material are the small dead twigs that they pick off the nearby hemlocks. Watching them maneuver 3–4-inch twigs into a one-inch opening is always entertaining as I prepare breakfast or load the dishwasher. After completing this task, they select one of the two gourds for their first nest of the season and build a cup of softer materials on the platform in which to lay their clutch of 5-7 (occasionally up to ten) nickel-sized eggs. The incubation period is about 12-15 days and then the feeding frenzy begins, lasting another 15-18 days.

The parents nonstop feeding activities are exhausting just to watch, and as a gardener I relish the many insects going down the tiny hatches! After fledging the young, the parents do not get time off for good behavior, for within a day or two, they return to the second gourd and after a few adjustments to the stick platform, build another soft cup to hold the new eggs, and start the process all over again. Thus, for all of June and July, there is nonstop entertainment out the kitchen window. By early August, they disappear, presumably starting their annual migrations back to the Gulf Coast and into Mexico. Wrens do return year after year to the same nesting site as I have witnessed. However, I have read that wrens are not terribly faithful – and in fact, it is not unusual for the male to select a second female for the second clutch of eggs in any

(continued on page 7)

## Flight (cont. from p.6)

given season. (#Me Too? There ought to be a law...)

I learned a valuable lesson in wren husbandry several years ago when my reliable source of wren gourds moved on from the Asheville farmer's market. Ordering new gourds "online," I quickly noted that sparrows routed the wrens from their first nest and gobbled up the eggs. The size of the hole in a gourd is critical – no more than 1.25 inches in diameter. I had new gourds made with smaller one-inch openings, and the wrens returned for their successful second nesting that year.

Some of you may ask, as part of this kitchen window drama, whether or not I have ever witnessed the baby wrens fledging from the gourd? It is obvious when that time is near, as the cheeping of the babies becomes much more audible, and the little heads can be seen popping out of the gourd, seizing food from the parents' beaks. Yet, before late June of this year, I had never observed the actual fledging, until one day over lunch I noticed a baby bird hanging on to the edge

of the gourd's opening. I quietly stepped out the back door and took a ringside seat in a chair three yards from the gourd for a once in a lifetime experience.

Over the next two hours I observed five baby wrens leaping into space and fluttering down with rapidly beating wings. Four out of five landed on the terrace pavers between my seat and the kitchen window. A fifth fluttered over the fence into the neighbor's yard. The third fledgling poked around the planted pots in its path, hopped over to my foot, and then jumped up to my knee. After giving me a quizzical look, it flew off clumsily into the garden. Not to be out done, the fourth baby fluttered down to ground, also poked around

in the flowerpots, then hopped over to my foot, jumped up onto my knee, then to my shoulder and then..... up to the top of my head, where it remained poised for a minute or two!! Needless to say I was astonished, and regret that there was no way to permanently capture this sequence of events.

Surprisingly, there were still two birds remaining in the gourd, one of whom was clearly the runt of the hatchlings. Though I watched for another hour or so, they did not make the leap and were still there at nightfall. However, by the time I was downstairs for breakfast the next morning, they had flown the coop, and all was quiet, once again.

*"Gardening is cheaper than therapy, and you get tomatoes."*

– Unknown author

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Help Us Raise Needed Money!  
**Bloomin' Bucks**  
with Brent and Becky's

Thinking about buying bulbs for next spring? You can help the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society raise money with any order you place at Brent & Becky's Bulbs. Simply visit [bloominbucks.com](http://bloominbucks.com) and select "Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society" and hit "GO" to be sent to the Brent and Becky's website Bloomin Bucks. Order any item, in any quantity – bulbs, tools, books, supplements, gift certificates and more – and 25% of your purchase will be donated to the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society. This applies to phone and mail orders as well – just be sure to mention WHPS

or write us in as the organization you would like to support. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, donations like these are essential to continue our mission.

And don't forget that you can also support WHPS when you shop with Amazon. Navigate to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and search for the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society to designate us as your charity of choice.



Martagan 'Claude Shride' by Brent & Becky's.

# What's in a Word? Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Plants

By Chris Neumann and Kelly Kearns

Words can have different meanings depending on the context. The legal or scientific use of a word can carry a different definition than when used in everyday conversation. Keeping track of these differences is important when we discuss plants and gardens. This is the first of a series of occasional articles about words used by gardeners, horticulturists, botanists, and environmentalists that can cause confusion.

An oft heard statement is, "It is illegal to pick trilliums and orchids in Wisconsin." But is that true? Like so many questions in life, the short answer is: It depends. The long answer is found in the laws about private lands and about Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern species at both the federal and state levels. We'll summarize the legal definitions and look very briefly at the history of the acts. And then, to answer the above question, we'll discuss the protections these designations provide, looking at the differences as applied to plants and animals, and the differences between Wisconsin and federal law.

The U.S. Endangered Species Act was passed on December 28, 1973 to provide, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "a legal mechanism for the conservation of endangered and threatened species and the ecosystems upon which they depend." The 1973 act was the successor to the earlier Endangered Species Preservation Act of 1966 and the Endangered Species Conservation Act of 1969.

Wisconsin had passed its state endangered and threatened (E/T) species law in 1972, building on previous state conservation laws and the 1966 and 1969 federal acts. Under the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the state created rules and identified which species to protect. All species listed under the federal act that occur in Wisconsin are also regulated as protected in Wisconsin once added to the state E/T list.

Wisconsin's and the federal definitions of the terms Endangered and Threatened are similar. Wisconsin Endangered Species are defined as "Any species whose continued existence as a viable compo-

nent of this state's wild animals or wild plants is determined by the Department [of Natural Resources] to be in jeopardy on the basis of scientific evidence." Wisconsin Threatened Species are "any species which appears likely, within the foreseeable future, on the basis of scientific evidence to become endangered." The federal definitions can include subspecies and regional populations. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the federal administering agency.

"Special Concern" is a term used by several states to designate species which appear to be headed for threatened or endangered status. In Wisconsin it is an advisory term and does not have legal protections associated with it.

The types of protection afforded E/T animals are significantly different from those for E/T plants. Again from Wisconsin:

Animals – "It is illegal to take, transport, possess, process or sell any wild animal that is included on the Wisconsin Endangered and Threatened Species List without a valid permit."

Plants – "No one may process or sell any wild plant that is a listed species without a valid permit. On public lands or lands you do not own, lease, or have the permission of the landowner, you may not cut, root up, sever, injure, destroy, remove, transport or carry away a listed plant without a permit. There is an exemption on public lands for forestry, agriculture and utility activities."

The federal act offers similar protection for E/T animal species. Essentially, you can't



Snow trillium, *Trillium nivale*, is listed as threatened in Wisconsin. It is not federally listed. Half the size of the common great white trillium, snow trillium is the earliest blooming trillium in Wisconsin appearing in late March or early April.

touch them anywhere without a special permit. But, for plants, as a U.S. Fish and Wildlife publication states, "It is not prohibited to destroy, damage or move protected plants UNLESS such activities occur on lands that are under Federal jurisdiction or on other lands in violation of State laws."

As seen, Wisconsin's law provides protection for E/T plants on ALL public lands in the state. There are specified fines and possible jail time for violating these laws. But please note, for private lands, the landowner, or someone with permission of the landowner, is free to pick, mow down, dig up, or give away endangered and threatened plants. They just can't be sold.

In addition, Wisconsin E/T plants are not protected if in the way of a forestry, agriculture or utility project. In reality, if there is any form of environmental review required for a project, records for the area will be checked by DNR staff for E/T species. Developers are told of any species known in the area and of the regulations. They are asked to take measures to prevent destruction of the species and their habitats. Where feasible, this is usually done.

So, is it illegal to pick orchids and trilliums? Per the DNR, "The wildflower law that protected plants such as orchids, trillium and bittersweet was taken off the books in 1978." Wisconsin has about 1,800 native plant species. 130 of these are listed as state endangered or threatened. Of the 46 species of orchids found in Wisconsin, seven are listed as endangered or threatened and seven more as

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Eastern prairie white fringed orchid, *Platanthera leucophaea*, is listed as endangered in Wisconsin and threatened federally.

## Redbud (cont. from p.1)

1976, we planted a redbud to replace the lost birch. Little more than a “whip” at the time, it flourished in its early years and was somewhat unique in that it had a single trunk rather than a multiple stem form. As our landscape matured, the area surrounding Bud was transformed from lawn to garden, first hosting vegetables and then, as the tree spread its branches, transitioning to shade-tolerant and finally shade dependent perennials.

Approximately 15 years after planting, Bud had its first significant Nature-directed pruning experience. On a steamy summer afternoon, a powerful thunderstorm struck the neighborhood and ripped a large branch from one side of the tree, leaving a lop-sided, damaged figure behind. A wise arborist told us, “Let it be. See what it will do.” And we did. Bud responded by twisting around, rebalancing and reaching its limbs out and up. Though we provided limited editing, it truly chose its own shape. As it rose beyond our reach, we turned pruning tasks over to trained arborists. Various other tree health concerns arose now and then, but Bud grew on. Its unique form and glorious spring displays make it a point of interest in the neighborhood, and we were happy to share it with passers-by.

As years went by, the spreading branches grew heavier and sagged lower. They blocked a flagstone path beside the tree, and we had to carefully negotiate around limbs that shaded the front lawn. With an eye to the future, we nurtured two redbud seedlings (which we whimsically named “Bud Light”) and added them to our backyard landscape. Roughly ten years ago Nature intervened again – a heavy, late-winter snow took down a large section of the crown, opening the center to sunlight. Undaunted, Bud healed and reached even more broadly than before. We puzzled about how to provide the right kind of support for our aging friend and discovered the answer on a visit to Anderson Japanese Gardens in Rockford - tree crutches! In 2016 we added the first crutch to Bud’s lowest limb, followed soon by a second on the other side of the tree as well as a cable for added support.

Today, in summer 2022, Bud still stands. Its base and largest limbs are gnarled and hollow, but still provide sufficient nutrition and strength to sustain it. Once again, next spring as the weather warms, we will anxiously watch for the small pink blossoms to unfold and offer us another year of enjoyment.

## Word (cont. from p.8)

Special Concern. Of the five trillium species native to Wisconsin, one is listed as threatened. So, 39 orchid and 4 trillium species do not have any more protection than any other native plant.

Two final notes. For all state lands, and on most other public lands, it is illegal to damage or remove ANY plants. Foraging for edible nuts, fruits, berries, mushrooms

and wild asparagus is allowed on DNR owned lands. Any other plant collecting may only be done with permission of the property manager. Lastly, which should go without saying, as plants legally belong to the property owner, it is illegal to damage, destroy or take plants or anything else from property you do not own or for which you do not have the owner’s permission.



Left, “Bud” in 2011, before crutches



Left, recent photo with all the gnarls and splits and crutches. Members who participated in the Evening Garden Tour on Madison’s near West side May 19 were able to see Jane and Bob Cramer’s beloved redbud in person.



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