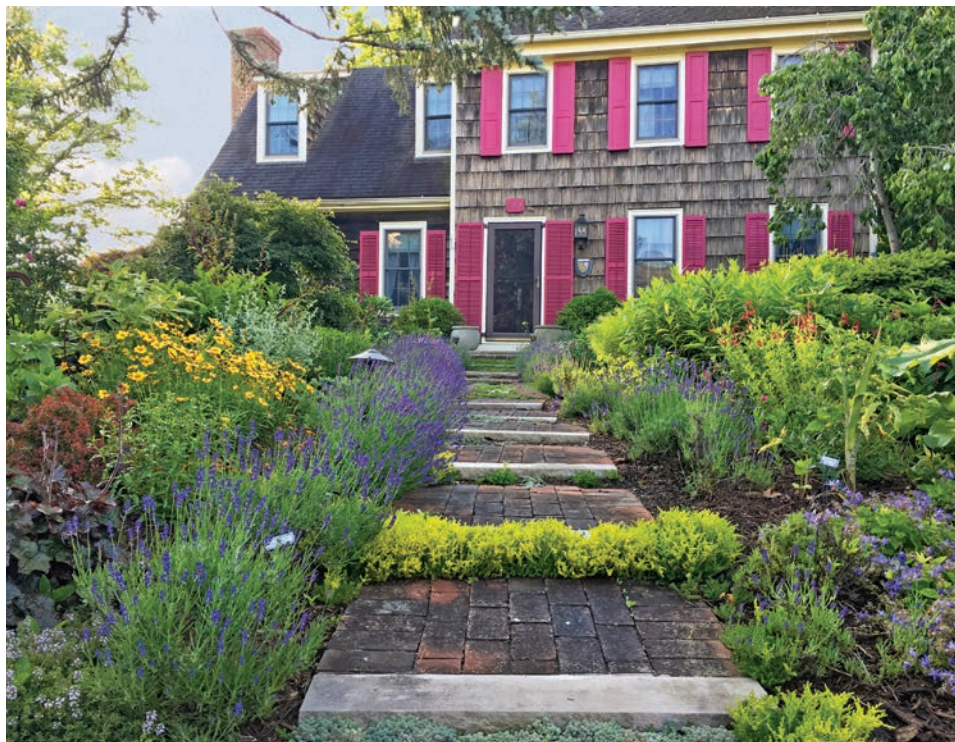




# THE HORT REPORT

NEWSLETTER OF THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF MARYLAND, INC. | SEPTEMBER 2017



## The Quest for HERBAL PERFECTION

By Holly Shimizu

Often when herbs are available at our local garden centers they are incorrectly identified, leading to confusion about which is the right plant for specific uses. The situation is better than it was 30 years ago but there is still a need for improvement and clarification. We grow herbs for their chemical compounds, the oils that give them their flavor, fragrance and other herbal qualities.

A great example is Oregano. Usually the plant for sale is *Origanum vulgare* (Wild Marjoram), which has pretty purple flowers that bees love and a weedy growth habit. The plant has almost no flavor and will be a huge disappointment if you had in mind adding a spicy oregano flavor to food. The flavorful Oregano is best selected by your nose and can be found most reliably at a good herb specialty nursery. It should be labeled as *Origanum vulgare* ssp. *hirtum* or as

*Continued on page 4*



*Origanum vulgare* ssp. *hirtum*

PHOTO ABOVE: Holly Shimizu's image of her front garden in early summer.

### LECTURE SERIES

Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 12, 7:30 p.m.

**KELLY D. NORRIS**

*Planting for the Future*

"Garden evangelist" Kelly D. Norris, author of *Plants With Style* and executive director of the Greater Des Moines Botanic Garden, will discuss trends in 21st century horticulture. Book signing.

Tuesday, OCTOBER 10, 7:30 p.m.

**ELLEN ECKER OGDEN**

*The Art of Growing Food*

Ellen Ecker Ogden, author of *The Complete Kitchen Garden* and co-founder of the Cook's Garden seed catalog, will show how to transform an ordinary garden into an extraordinary kitchen garden, with an eye toward beauty and productivity. Book signing.

Tuesday, NOVEMBER 14, 7:30 p.m.

**DOUGLAS TALLAMY**

*Restoring Nature's Relationships at Home*

Douglas Tallamy, University of Delaware professor of entomology, will discuss the crucial importance of biodiversity in the home garden. He is the author of the influential *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*. Book signing.

Tuesday, DECEMBER 12, 7:30 p.m.

**HOLLY SHIMIZU**

*Great Gardens of Japan*

Horticulturist and garden consultant Holly Shimizu will share insights and images from her recent visit to the great gardens of Japan. She will discuss the qualities that make Japanese gardens so intriguing and explore their spiritual nature. Shimizu was the executive director of the United States Botanic Garden from 2000 to 2014.

For more information, visit  
[www.mdhorticulture.org](http://www.mdhorticulture.org)

## COMING HSM EVENTS

### ANNUAL PLANT & SEED SWAP

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2017

Starts 6:30 p.m. and ends at 7:15 p.m.

For members and their guests.

This is the “one for one”

swap before the September lecture.

Take your plants and seed packets—marked with botanical name—to the front of the Vollmer Center, then look for plants to add to your garden.



### JANUARY PLANT FORUM

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2018

1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

For HSM members only.

Free but you must register in advance.

### PERENNIAL PLANT ASSOCIATION & HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF MARYLAND SEMINAR

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2018

8:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sheppard Pratt Conference Center, Towson, MD

Please join us for the annual winter seminar.

Details to come.

### SPECIAL EVENT WITH FERGUS GARRETT

THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2018

Garrett is the head gardener at Great Dixter, the exceptional English garden of the noted gardener and garden writer, Christopher Lloyd. Details to come.

### ANNUAL GARDEN TOUR

SUNDAY, JUNE 3, 2018

The 2018 tour will feature gardens of northern Baltimore County. Details to come.

*For more information, visit*  
[www.mdhorticulture.org](http://www.mdhorticulture.org)

Lectures are held in the Vollmer Center auditorium at Cyburn Arboretum, 4915 Greenspring Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21209. Members are required to show a current membership card for admission to lectures. Guests of members also receive free admission.

## HSM Honor Roll

*We thank the following volunteers (members as well as non-members) who have supported the Society's programs in recent months.*

*For the “Epic Tomatoes” Workshop:* Paula Simon, Helene Clapperton and Karen Offutt

*For the Tool Drive:* Bev Compton; Katja Kleine and Brooke Petruzzelli, representing MUGS (Mondawmin Urban Green Space); Lenel Srochi-Meyerhoff and Bill Yonkers

*For the Garden Tour Committee:* Nancy Raskin, chair; Ann Betten, Nancy Blois, Anne Gossett, Nancy Grabowski, Donna Imhoff, Tanya Jones and Crystal Patterson

*For the Garden Tour and Preview Party:* Ann Betten, David Blois, Nancy Blois, Max and Carol Bloom, Gail Carter, Helene Clapperton, Carol Clark, Amy Clements, Dan Clements, Catherine Cook, John Fisher, Mary Joan Foley, Sherrell Goggin, Lucy Gozkowski, Molly Guenzer, Shirley Hatch, Linda Kolosky, Karen Leib, Ellen Levin, Haakon Maxwell, Lenore Nil, Rose Nouveau, Bonnie Pavlak, Nancy Raskin, Jenni Riley, Bev Rogers, Mary Jo Sherrod, Megan Shook, Cathy Umphrey and Cynthia Wilber

*For the Sponsorship Program:* Sally Barker

*For the Program Committee:* Paula Simon, chair; Nancy Blois, Helene Clapperton, Muffin Evander and Mary Jo Sherrod

*For Meetings Hospitality:* Nancy Blois, Jennifer Forrence, Pat Sherman and Donna Watts

*For the Plant Raffle:* Nancy MicKey

*For the Communications Team:* Pat Cieslak, telephone messages; Helene Clapperton, webmaster; Carla Hackley, Facebook manager; Nancy Raskin, event coordinator; Kate Blom, John Fitzpatrick and Maggie Neely, May mailing

*For the May 2017 issue of THE HORT REPORT:* Nancy Taylor Robson, contributor; Ann Betten, Ashley Kidner, Bruce Marlin, Ray R. Weil and The Perennial Farm, photographs; Joel Cohen and John Fitzpatrick, proofreaders.

## Welcome New Members!

Karen Blandford  
& Jonathan Herz

James Boynton

Barbara Coleman

Melanie Crowder

Karl Gercens III

Kaela Grealish

Marguerite Greenman

Priscilla Griffith

Marcia Herman

Doug & Bonnie Hicks

Diana Keener

Annetta Kushner

Polly Lacoco

Doris Lin

Margaret Manswell

Mary Ellen Massey

Sayra Meyerhoff

Jenny Ohler

Robin Page

Ann Powers

Colleen Prosser

Denis Radford

– International

Landscape & Design

Tara Robinson

Lois Rys

Kitty & Tom Stoner

Martha Sykora

Alex Tomaszewski

Kerri Watts

Samuel J. Westrick

# *Gaillardia x grandiflora*, Blanket Flower

By Harry Merritt

Here it is, almost the end of official summer. Why write now about a flower that's one of summer's boldest and brightest?

Because, with any luck, the flower—*Gaillardia x grandiflora*, common name Blanket Flower—is still blooming in all its red and orange or yellow glory. And it may still be blooming until frost, as mine did last year.

I bought my first *Gaillardia* a few years ago, not because they are native to Maryland—they're not—and not because they are very attractive to bees and birds—they are. I bought them because they are pretty and not the least bit subtle, not to mention irresistible.

I planted them in the full sun they desire, watered them, then wondered what became of them. Either the location, behind a low stone wall, was bad or something got them. I bought more and planted them along the border of a bed that's very sunny and somewhat rocky and visible from the house. Here, they are thriving, except for when curious rabbits pull out a stem or two. (The rabbits don't seem to eat them, though.)

The genus *Gaillardia* was named in 1788 in honor of Antoine René Gaillard de Charentonneau (born 1720), a French magistrate described as a “patron of botany.” The person doing the naming was Auguste Denis Fougeroux de Bondaroy, a French scientist. My reading tells me the plant *G. aristata*, from which *Gaillardia x grandiflora* derives, is native to the American Southwest. The common name, Blanket Flower, apparently stems from the plant's resemblance to the colorful blankets made by certain Native American tribes.

According to the Missouri Botanical Garden web site, *Gaillardia x grandiflora* is a tetraploid hybrid, from a cross between a 3-foot-tall perennial wildflower *G. aristata*—go to [www.swcoloradowildflowers.com](http://www.swcoloradowildflowers.com) to see images of this beauty—and a 2-foot tall *G. pulchella*. “It arguably



*Gaillardia x grandiflora* ‘Arizona Sun’

inherited its perennial habit from the former and its long flowering period and rapid growth rate from the latter,” the site says.

There are many cultivars of *Gaillardia*, with big daisy-like flowers in orange, red or yellow and combinations thereof. ‘Arizona Sun,’ for example, has bold reddish orange blossoms with a border of yellow. ‘Arizona Red’ is true to its name, a bold red. The Mesa series of Blanket Flowers includes ‘Peach,’ a peach color ringed by yellow.

Blanket Flower grows in a variety of soils, but prefers well-drained soil and plenty of sun. The plants are low-maintenance and relatively free of disease. They make an excellent choice for

garden borders if you like “bold.”

There is conflicting intelligence on whether deadheading leads to a longer season of bloom. I deadhead mine, dropping the spent blooms for the birds, and rejoice when new blooms appear.

## PLANT FACTS

*Gaillardia x grandiflora*

**Common Name:** Blanket Flower

**Family:** Asteraceae (Daisy) (formerly Compositae)

**Hardiness:** USDA Zones 3 to 10

**Size:** 2 to 3 feet tall, spreads 1 to 2 feet

**Culture:** Full sun, medium, well-drained soil.

**Availability:** Even the big box stores sell them.

## REFERENCES

Missouri Botanical Garden, [missouribotanicalgarden.org](http://missouribotanicalgarden.org)

North Carolina State University Extension, [ncsu.edu](http://ncsu.edu)

Southwest Colorado Wildflowers, [swcoloradowildflowers.com](http://swcoloradowildflowers.com)

*Perennials: Every Gardener's Guide to a Picture-Perfect Perennials Garden* (Beekman House)

Harry Merritt is editor of The Hort Report.

PHOTOS: Wikicommons



# The Quest for HERBAL PERFECTION

Continued from page 1

*O. heracleoticum*, also called Greek Oregano. If you desire a very strong Oregano flavor try the one known as 'Hot and Spicy' (*O. vulgare* ssp. *hirtum* 'Hot and Spicy'). For a slightly sweeter spice flavor I am partial to the Hardy Sweet Marjoram (*Origanum x majoricum*), a cross between Sweet Marjoram (*O. majorana*) and Wild Marjoram (*O. vulgare*).

To make matters worse, some herbs growers raise Oregano, Mint, Thyme, Lavender, Rosemary and other Mint family plants from seed. If they cross freely during pollination the resulting seed produces a wide array of physical and chemical variations depending on their parentage. It is often impossible to put an accurate label on these plants beyond guessing what they are from their characteristics. Excellent herb species and selections that hybridize readily should be vegetatively propagated either by cuttings or division.



*Calamintha nepeta*

One herb that I love to use with mushrooms, as was done in Roman kitchens, is known as Nepitella (*Calamintha nepeta*). It is from Italy and provides a combination flavor of Oregano, Mint and Basil. But Nepitella is hard to find and since *Calamintha* species cross-pollinate readily there are many relatives of true

Nepitella around. Try to find a specialty herb nursery that has kept its Nepitella plants true to the species.

The same is true for Mints. At first I decided I would never grow another Mint because of the way they aggressively overpowered their neighbors. But then I realized that they are essential for flavoring food and beverages so I selectively planted two of the best Mints available in large containers with excellent soil and in an area with plenty of water.

My first and favored Mint is known as Red Stemmed Apple Mint (*Mentha x gracilis* 'Madalene Hill'). The flavor blends both spearmint and peppermint resulting in a pleasant taste for all sorts of foods and teas. For a sweeter Mint that has a hint of citrus I grow a Bergamot Mint



*Mentha aquatica* var. *citrata*

(*Mentha aquatica* var. *citrata*) that combines beautifully with fruit both fresh and cooked. Harvest throughout the growing season and cut back after flowering.

Given the huge number of Thymes that are available it is helpful to know which ones to grow for specific reasons. In the kitchen my favorites are the Narrow Leaf French Thyme (*Thymus vulgaris* 'Narrow Leaf French'), Orange Balsam Thyme (*T. vulgaris* 'Orange Balsam'), and Lemon Thyme (*Thymus x citriodorus*). Each offers a distinctive thyme flavor as well as being great garden plants. They are also well used in



*Thymus x citriodorus*



*Thymus herba-barona*

containers. If the garden would look good with a spot of golden foliage I also use the Golden Lemon Thyme (*T. x citriodorus* 'Aureus'). For a low-creeping Thyme that has good chemistry and is tough as a ground cover I recommend Caraway Thyme (*Thymus herba-barona*).

Two herbs that are the same genus and species and look identical could have different chemical components. This could be the result of genetic variations, interbreeding, environmental factors, growing conditions or elevation. If the essential oils are extracted and analyzed, a specific reference to a chemotype is often given. Thyme is one that often has chemotypes and it would be referenced this way: *Thymus vulgaris* ct. *linalool*. The *linalool* chemotype has a slightly sweet woody note and is antimicrobial and considered safer if the oil is being applied to the skin.

Confusion still occurs when it comes to true French Tarragon (*Artemisia dracunculus* 'Sativa'). The true French Tarragon cannot be grown from seed and can only be propagated vegetatively



*Artemisia dracunculus*



Tagetes lucida

by either stem or root cuttings or division. Often the plant for sale is what we know as Russian Tarragon (*Artemisia dracunculus*), which grows easily from seed and has no value for its flavor—it is weedy. And if you see a plant labeled as Mexican Tarragon (*Tagetes lucida*), it is used as a substitute for French

Tarragon in areas where it is too hot to grow real French Tarragon. It has an anise-like flavor, is hardy to USDA Zone 9 and is native to Mexico and Central America.

When Hyssop is mentioned several plants come to mind. First is the herb Hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis*) which is a lovely Mint family sub-shrub with blue flowers that has uses in herbal medicine and was used as a culinary herb. It has a skunk-like odor. In descriptions of Bible plants the herb Hyssop is mentioned. It refers to what we now know as Syrian Hyssop (*Origanum syriacum*), also called Zataar, used for thousands of years in the Mediterranean region. It has a flavor of oregano, thyme and marjoram all in one. It is not easy to grow because it needs extremely good drainage, does not like our humidity, and is hardy in USDA Zones 9-10.



Hyssopus officinalis



Agastache foeniculum

The other Hyssop to grow is Anise Hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*), which is a favorite for bees and other pollinators, grows easily for us and tastes like licorice candy and basil. My absolute favorite is the *Agastache 'Ava'* because of the gorgeous deep pink flowers, long blooming season and its ability to attract abundant

hummingbirds. Eating the individual flowers gives a burst of sweet, refreshing flavor that is ideal for salads and toppings for many foods. Surprisingly, since most *Agastaches* are short-lived, it has been a perennial in my garden.

The other complication with herbs, as with many other plants, is the double and triple naming and renaming that happens. I have my own experience with this. I gave several people plants of a gorgeous *Artemisia* sp. that I had gotten from Joanna Reed, one of the greatest gardeners I have ever known. I had it labeled as *Artemisia* sp., from

Joanna Reed. Several years later it was in the trade as *Artemisia 'Joanna Reed'*. Now, I try to keep accurate records of where and when I purchase or exchange my plants so I can have a handle on their names and source. It comes in handy when someone asks me for specifics or I need to check further into a plant's background.

With many of our garden plants, especially native plants, we want to encourage seed-grown plants. The propagation of natives from local populations provides a healthy gene pool. With so many plants being propagated by tissue culture, we end up having less genetic diversity. With herbs, it is the chemistry within the plant that makes it useful to us and so we need to be confident that we are using quality material. Be selective and remember this: The nose knows!



Agastache 'Ava'

Many Maryland nurseries and garden centers sell herbs. Here are a few options:

Blooming Hill Nursery  
18700 Frederick Road  
Parkton, MD 21120  
410-357-0225

Valley View Farms  
11035 York Road  
Cockeysville, MD 21030  
410-527-0700  
Valleyviewfarms.com

Hillcrest Nursery Inc.  
21029 Gunpowder Road  
Millers, MD 21102  
410-239-7781  
Hillcrestnursery.com

White House Nursery  
17422 Falls Road  
Upperco, MD 21155  
410-239-7202  
Whitehousenursery.com

Putnam Hill Nursery  
2015 Putnam Road  
Forest Hill, MD 21050  
443-722-2012  
Putnamhillnursery.com

Willow Oak Flower  
& Herb Farm  
8109 Telegraph Road  
Severn, MD 21144  
410-551-2237  
Willowoakherbs.com

For more information:

Herb Society of America  
440-256-0514  
Herbsociety.org

Horticulturist and garden consultant Holly Shimizu, former executive director of the United States Botanic Garden, will be the Society's December speaker on a different topic: Gardens of Japan.

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# American Landscape Institute: New Learning Opportunities at CCBC

**H**ave you heard about the American Landscape Institute? It's the innovative new scholarship and training program that its creators hope will "attract, educate and train the next generation of landscape and horticultural professionals."

This month, a dozen students, already employed in the landscape industry, will start Friday classes in sustainable horticulture at the Community College of Baltimore County in Hunt Valley. The institute, supported by several major landscape firms in the Baltimore area, will pay 80 percent of the students' tuition. The students will pay the remaining 20 percent, but the money will be returned to those who complete the seven-semester certificate program in 2019, allowing the students to graduate free of debt.

The institute, which combines one day of classes with four days of on-the-job training, is the brainchild of Andreas Grothe of New World Plants. He completed a similar apprenticeship program as a young man in his native Germany.

"It really started with me, my professional career and life," Grothe said of the institute. His training "helped me tremendously," he said, allowing him to enjoy a successful and rewarding career in the world of flora. "I wish that for other young men and women."

The institute also addresses a recurring problem in the landscape industry: how to get and keep good, well-trained help. "The labor pool is not exactly teeming with energetic young people, clamoring to work a 10-hour day, in all types of weather, getting their hands and their cell phones dirty in the process," Martha Pindale, ALI's executive secretary, wrote in an article for the Maryland Nursery, Landscape and Greenhouse Association. "How can we as an industry get a new generation to stop posting on Snapchat or Instagram long enough to pick up a shovel and consider making horticulture their lifelong career?"

Grothe and other industry leaders met with Dr. Bradley Thompson, the head of CCBC's sustainable horticulture program, to work out details of the ALI program. Then, last January, Pindale said, she, Grothe and Thompson

began visiting high schools in the Baltimore area, "getting the word out" about the institute and the world of horticulture.

Thompson wants young people—some of whom "think landscaping means mowing lawns and using weed whackers"—to know that there is tremendous career potential in horticulture.

The ALI program offers "an intense, streamlined version" of CCBC's certificate program in sustainable horticulture, with a full day of classes on Fridays and two "mini-semester" both Januarys. The courses cover all major aspects of horticulture: Woody Ornamentals I and II, Soils and Fertilizers, IPM, Turf Management, Plant Propagation, Computer and Basic Graphics, Herbaceous Plant Materials, and Landscape Maintenance, Installation and Construction.

As of *THE HORT REPORT'S* deadline, 12 students were enrolled, including two 2017 high school graduates and "a couple who have been out of high school a few years," Pindale said. Several others, from local families in the industry, signed up to enhance their knowledge and skills, Thompson said.

"Please emphasize that we are looking for more students," said Grothe, who hopes one day to have an ALI exchange program with Germany.

The institute is also seeking more financial support. It has applied for non-profit status, which would allow it to apply for grants to expand the program.

"Our goal is to have a second cohort" of students, Pindale said, and perhaps have classes in horticulture for Spanish-speaking landscape workers.

"We'd like to see this spread," Pindale said, "and make it a national movement."

*For more information, visit [Americanlandscapeinstitute.org](http://Americanlandscapeinstitute.org). Donations—not yet tax-deductible—may be made by credit card through the ALI website or by check mailed to ALI, 21301 Dunk Freeland Rd., Freeland, MD 21120.*

A REMEMBRANCE

## Jean Reese Worthley, 1925 - 2017



*Jean Reese Worthley*, one of Maryland's foremost lovers of nature and a founding member of the Horticultural Society of Maryland, died April 9 at the age of 92.

Mrs. Worthley led the society from 1986 to 1988, following in the footsteps of her husband, Elmer, a botany professor who was the organization's first president (1969 to 1977). Many Marylanders knew her as "Miss Jean," the host of "Hodgepodge Lodge," a nature series for children on Maryland Public Television in the 1970s, and as the co-host, with her husband, of MPT's "On Nature's Trail."

"Hodgepodge Lodge" was "instrumental in bringing the wonders of nature to children who didn't usually have the opportunity to explore it," MPT said in announcing Mrs. Worthley's death. "It's said she taught with a gentle outlook and inquisitive spirit. Each week, 'Hodgepodge Lodge' featured a different aspect of nature, from pine cones to groundhogs. It was said that Miss Jean was 'sort of like a naturalist Mr. Rogers' with her quiet demeanor and kind way."

Those gentle qualities were noted by people who knew Mrs. Worthley through the Society.

"The first memory I have of her is her wonderful laugh," said Leigh Barnes, herself a former HSM president. "She had a distinct voice to go along with her laugh."

"It was so wonderful to meet her after all the years of watching her television program with my children," Barnes said. "She was always just who she was, no airs, nothing put on, just Jean, and that was plenty."

In a 2012 interview for *THE HORT REPORT*, Mrs. Worthley described herself as "just a placeholder" president of the Society. "It was 1986 and Doris Brumback pleaded

with me, saying that they were in desperate need. ... I did it for a couple of years and I was very lucky Darlene George was the executive secretary. She was a big help—she held everything together."

Born in California, Jean Reese earned a degree in biology from Goucher College, served in the WAVES during World War II, then received, in her words, "a diploma in entomology and zoology with a minor in biological field studies" from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

As the director of two preschools in Maryland, Mrs. Worthley led many interpretive nature walks for the children. That experience led to her being hired to do the nature program by MPT, which had built a studio near the Worthley farm in Owings Mills.

In 1971, Mrs. Worthley's husband started teaching a botany class twice a week in their home. After his death in 1991, she led the classes until 2012, though by then they met only monthly.

The last three decades of Mrs. Worthley's life were spent on her property in Finksburg, Carroll County. Catherine Cook, who did the 2012 interview with Mrs. Worthley, described the place as "18 acres of magnificent specimen plantings collected over the decades."

Her home was "a fine reflection of who she was: no frills, warm and inviting," Barnes said. "I remember all the bird feeders she had dangling from a long clothesline in her back yard.

She was studying all manner of feeders—probably to outfox the squirrels."



# 26th Annual HSM Annual Garden Tour

Thank you to our garden owners, sponsors and volunteers for making this another great tour!



Clockwise from top left: Committee members show their excitement about the glorious garden tour day ahead, from left to right: Mary Jo Sherrod, committee chair Nancy Raskin, Catherine Cook, Helene Clapperton and Nancy Blois; garden designers Pierre and Nancy Moitrier with garden owner, Lois Tuwiner; dedicated garden tour volunteers Carol and Max Bloom in the Stoner garden; volunteers Bonnie Pavlak and Lenore Nil immersed in the Tuwiner garden; volunteers mix and mingle between gardens 1 and 2. PHOTOS: Paula A. Simon

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Nancy Raskin, *President*  
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 Paula A. Simon, *Designer*

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Peter Bieneman, *Manager*  
 Jackson Lehman, *Gardener*

## MEMBERSHIP

For information about membership or to join, visit the society's website: [www.mdhorticulture.org](http://www.mdhorticulture.org) or telephone Catherine Cook at 410-821-5561.

## Benefits of Membership

Newsletters and membership directory; admission to the spring and fall lectures and the annual garden tour; and discounts on workshops, trips and special events.

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[www.mdhorticulture.org](http://www.mdhorticulture.org)

The Horticultural Society of Maryland, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) educational organization.

# Chelsea Flower Show & Cotswolds Gardens Tour



Members and friends enjoyed two beautiful weeks in May visiting some of the most notable gardens in England. There is talk of running this tour again so stay tuned. Yes, that is Fergus Garrett, middle, checking his schedule for Mary Jo Sherrod.

PHOTOS: Claire Jones and Darlene Wells