

THE HORT REPORT

NEWSLETTER OF THE MARYLAND HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY, INC | WINTER 2023

IN THIS ISSUE:

EARLY SPRING BLOOMERS
BUGGING OUT
WINTER COLOR
HOUSEPLANT PESTS
AND MORE!

Cornus sericea 'Bud's Yellow'



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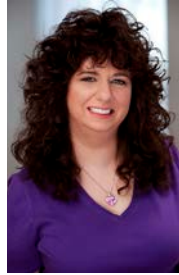
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I'm one of the few people I know who absolutely loves Winter. My husband, Brad, and I start it off by putting our once-live Christmas tree out into the woods. We've been doing it for a while now, and each year, it's cool to see how the former year's tree has returned to the earth, and this one is ready to provide shelter for local birds.

I think they see us coming, as they seem to chirp, "Well, it's about time!"

I used to think that I loved Winter because my birthday is in early February, and—I'm sure you'll be shocked by this—I absolutely love celebrating it. Always have and always will. I joke that the only way it would be better is if I could hire a marching band to follow me around all day with a spotlight... and sparklers. This isn't hubris; I think everyone should be able to celebrate the day of their birth like that—except for my husband, who refuses to let me tell servers that it's his birthday if we go out to eat. He hates being the center of attention.

While some folks don't like Winter because it's cold and it snows, the season happens to be a fantastic time for gardeners. As you'll see in our stories, in the best of instances, starting your garden—at least the planning of it—should be now. But there are other things you can do to prepare besides looking at seed catalogues or online gardening center websites.

What can you do, you may ask yourself?
You can kill invasive insects—now.

Last year was the first time I had seen the insidious Spotted Lanternfly. When I first saw one fly by the front porch, I turned to Brad and said, "Isn't that pretty?"

Yeah, until I found out that they feed on 70 species of plants and can destroy crops. I've been killing those little buggers ever since. Brad read about a natural spray he could make that uses vinegar to kill them. He went out and sprayed all over a tree that was covered—absolutely covered!—with them.

All was well, until they—as a group—decided to fly off the tree at the same time and into his face. That didn't end well.

After reading Jennifer Forrence's piece "Bugging Out," I now know how to find their eggs. I'm on a mission to annihilate them. I also want to put Pat Sherman's "Knock and smush" method into action. And remember, if you're cold outside while you're doing it, keep stomping your feet; it will help you keep warm!

Calling All Cooks! Do you ever cook up something using plants or veggies that you've grown from your garden? If so, we want to hear from you! We'd like to include an article with a recipe in future issues, if possible. Reach out to me at TheMicheleWojo@gmail.com. Thanks to Nancy Blois for doing the first "Garden of Eatin" piece for us. Her recipe sounds delicious!





Early Spring Bloomers to Support Pollinators and Migrating Birds

By Heather Rosenthal

Gardening to support wildlife is the biggest trend in horticulture. This is good news for us gardeners since encouraging beneficial insects and birds to our gardens just adds an extra layer of interest. Hummingbirds, butterflies, and songbirds are the *je ne sais quoi* all gardens need—and the best way to support this wildlife is to incorporate native plants into your gardens.

Asters and Solidagos (goldenrod) are the keystone plants to support pollinators and migrating birds in the fall. However, selecting early spring bloomers for the returning birds and emerging insects is not as straightforward

As usual, this is a case of too many plants, too little time. Even choosing to look beyond our hardworking Rhododendrons (which include Azaleas), the list of Mid-Atlantic native plants blooming between February and May is extensive.

So, after considering a wide range of early spring-blooming natives with exceptional ecological value, I narrowed the focus further to only include those widely available in nurseries (so that eliminates some favorites such as trillium, lady slipper, and trout lily). Even within the narrow scope, I made some tough choices on what dear plants to eliminate, which is a good opportunity to continue this conversation together (see note at the end of the story).

Let's start with flowering groundcovers and work our way up to the flowering trees.

FLOWERING GROUNDCOVERS

Perhaps one of the most notable native groundcovers for shade is green and gold (*Chrysogonum virginianum*). This vigorous, evergreen plant has star-shaped yellow flowers atop hairy leaves and stems, which often give the plant a lovely blueish-gray appearance. The flowers bloom mostly between March and June, and in addition to being attractive to bees and butterflies, they produce seeds that are eaten by songbirds.

Both moss phlox (*Phlox subulata*) and woodland phlox (*Phlox divaricata*) are tough plants that tolerate a variety of conditions while producing prodigious early blooms in an array of cheery pinks, purples, and whites. These early April-through-May blooms are magnets for butterflies and are often visited by hummingbirds as well. Sun-loving *P. subulata* grows to about 6" (spreads twice as much) while the fragrant *P. divaricata* grows about 12" and, as its common name suggests, prefers partial shade. Creeping phlox (*Phlox stolonifera*) has similar genetics to *P. subulata*, and while they are often planted interchangeably, *P. stolonifera* is more of a summer bloomer.



FLOWERING PERENNIALS

Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*), with its purplish pink buds opening to fragrant sky-blue flowers, heralds the arrival of spring. These clusters of long flowers are a favorite of hummingbird moths and long-tongued bees. This shade-loving ephemeral—in the borage family—forms clumps of about two feet tall and one foot wide that all but disappear from the landscape by late spring, making room for the flowers that flourish during the summer.

The eye-catching red tubular bloom of the Wild Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) is understandably a magnet for hummingbirds as well as a variety of other pollinators. This adaptable garden favorite prefers partial shade and blooms March through July. Unlike the bluebells, the attractive mounded foliage of the columbine persists through fall, usually untouched by nibbling herbivores.

Another early bloomer that can also be considered as a groundcover, especially in wet areas, is golden ragwort (*Packera aurea*). This selection might raise an eyebrow or two since it naturalizes so readily, but native evergreen groundcovers are especially beneficial because they can compete better against non-native species that often plague our landscapes. Plus the mass of purple buds that turn to yellow daisy-like flowers is striking and enjoyed by many pollinators and songbirds.



Mertensia virginica

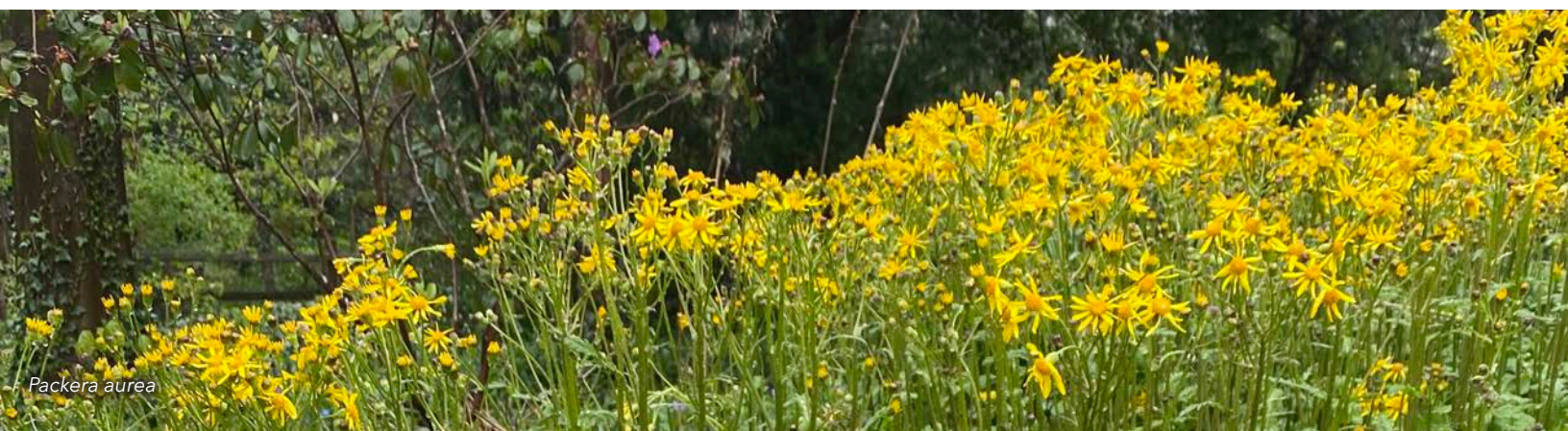
FLOWERING SHRUBS

When the sweet smell of the Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) begins to permeate the air in March, you know spring is finally breaking. One of the season's earliest bloomers, the spicebush is the host plant for a variety of Lepidoptera including the Spicebush Swallowtail butterfly. The ecological significance of the *Lindera* continues throughout the year as the female plant produces drupes of shiny red berries that are a great energy source for fall migrating birds. This deciduous shrub grows about 8-15' tall, prefers partial shade, and produces a good yellow fall color.

On the sunnier side of your garden, consider planting Atlantic ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*) for prolific clusters of blooms in May. In addition to being an early nectar source for pollinators, the ninebark provides cover for songbirds and supports dozens of Lepidoptera, including the unicorn caterpillar moth. The straight species has green leaves and can grow up to 10' tall, however many of the cultivars, such as 'Tiny Wine', grow half that size and have brilliant maroon foliage with bronze undertones and pink flowers in spring. This is a beautiful addition to the landscape with good ecological value. Additionally, it is an excellent replacement for the invasive Red Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*).

On the topic of spring-blooming native shrubs that are great replacements for invasive non-natives, let's include early blooming red chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*) for its brilliant red-orange fall foliage that makes a good replacement for the invasive burning bush—not to mention its display of brilliant red berries that will feed birds over the winter.

A list of spring-blooming native shrubs wouldn't be complete without a viburnum, and blackhaw viburnum (*Viburnum prunifolium*) with its high ecological value, is a real winner. This large shrub has an upright and rounded format and produces a profusion of flat-topped white flower clusters in the spring that attract a variety of small bees, flies, and ants to the nectar. The leaves are a particular favorite of the spring azure butterfly. Overall, the blackhaw supports more than 100 species of Lepidoptera. The fruit drupes ripen over the summer, turning from various shades of pink to black and are a delicious treat for birds, mammals, and humans alike.



Packera aurea

SMALL FLOWERING TREES

In early April, the tiny purple bud-like flowers densely packed along the bare branches of the eastern redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) signal the beginning of spring. This burst of color after a gray winter is not only a welcome sight for us gardeners, but also for a wide range of wildlife, including a variety of small birds that feast on the protein-packed insects devouring the sweet nectar.

Dogwood trees have long been synonymous with a spring landscape. We are fortunate to have two native dogwoods: the April-blooming flowering dogwood (*Benthamidia florida* [formerly *Cornus florida*]) and the late spring-blooming pagoda dogwood (*Swida alternifolia* [formerly *Cornus alternifolia*]). Although these beautiful, small trees have significant ecological value and make lovely landscape statements, they are also susceptible to a variety of diseases. So it might be time to start considering some alternatives such as the fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*).

The fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*), has fragrant, airy white blooms that form drooping clusters from May to June. These blooms are followed by small fruit clusters that turn a rich bluish-black when ripe in the fall and are an excellent food source for birds and other wildlife. The fringe tree is small but mighty. It grows in a variety of conditions—tolerant of pollution, Black Walnut, and clay soils.

An honorable mention in the small tree/shrub category is the Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*). Although the deep maroon flowers in spring are discreet, the year-round ecological value is significant—including being the sole larval food for the zebra swallowtail butterfly. The pawpaw is known for its edible custard fruit and tropical foliage not often present in the native landscape.

Whether you choose to add one or all of these plants to your gardens, know that you will be contributing to the better health of our planet by supporting our vulnerable ecology.

Happy Gardening!

What are your favorites? Please share your choices or comments on our [HSM Member Only Forum](#).



BUGGING OUT

THE CREEPY CRAWLIES THAT YOU NEED TO WATCH OUT FOR IN WINTER

By Jennifer Forrence

If a mild day draws you into the garden in winter, while you are poking around, take a look for pests. Believe it or not, some things can be addressed right now without resorting to chemicals.

I spoke with Pat Sherman, horticulturist and former Head Gardener at Cylburn Arboretum. She's a big proponent of what she calls the "knock and smush" approach to Integrated Pest Management. During the summer season, with things like tent caterpillars or sawfly larvae on dogwoods, Pat knocks or grabs the offending pest out of the plant (with gloves) and smashes it on the ground (stomping on it with her boots), or bags and disposes of it.

Pat's approach can be used in winter to eliminate some pests before they hatch and to remove others, and will give purpose to your garden visits.



Spotted Lanternfly

BAGWORMS

Bagworms, which are the larval or caterpillar stage of a moth, can do serious damage or even kill plants, especially conifers. The cocoons of this moth are obvious in winter. The male "bags" (cocoons) of this pest will be empty (because he heads out to procreate and then his work is done, according to Pat), but the bags made by females can contain from 200 to 1000 eggs (with help from the male). Bagging them and disposing is the easiest approach.



Bagworm

PRAYING MANTISES

Most of us were taught that praying mantises were all to be treasured. But this isn't always the case. In fact, there are several species in this area and only one is native (Carolina praying mantis). Two others, Chinese and European mantis, are [invasive species](#). More and more experts recognize that [Chinese mantis](#) and European mantis are nonselective predators of beneficial insects, and have no demonstrated value in pest management.

Once you see a large Chinese mantis eat a monarch or small hummingbird or even gobbling up the native Carolina praying mantis, you may agree. The [egg masses](#) of the different species are fairly easy to distinguish and can be removed and crushed, or cut open and submerged in water. They are particularly easy to spot in the winter landscape.



Spotted Lanternfly egg mass

If you have had leaf spot on a plant, winter is a good time to enhance your garden hygiene by picking up the leaves from under this plant and disposing of them. Pat also recommends adding a light covering of clean mulch underneath, as "water splash" can carry the spores from old leaves up to infect next year's leaves.

SCALE INSECTS

[Scale insects](#) are a large and diverse pest of woody and herbaceous plants, which live by sucking sap from the plant. This can lead to distorted foliage, twig dieback or defoliation.

Some scales excrete sticky honeydew, which leads to sooty mold and ant infestations, causing further damage. Scale can be armored or soft, and may be large and obvious or tiny, but many can be mechanically removed (i.e. by physical means).

If you see scale on a tree or shrub in winter where you can reach it, see if you can remove it by rubbing or scrubbing with a soft brush. Once dislodged from the plant, scale generally desiccates or is eaten by predators.

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY

[Spotted lanternfly](#) is a particularly destructive invasive pest that is probably in some or many of our gardens already. This plant hopper feeds on grapes (wine!), stone fruits (peaches!) and apples (pie!), though its primary host is tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*).

And in areas where it has spread, it is just gross, covering trees, patios, outdoor furniture, etc. A wide variety of trees are potential hosts, including oaks, maples, willows, and walnuts. Like scale, they live by sucking the sap out of host plants (which is harmful) and excreting honeydew which leads to sooty mold (also harmful).

Look for their distinctive egg masses on any of these trees, but also on lawn furniture and grills, buildings or really any flat surface. Winter is the perfect time to do this before they hatch. Penn State has a great [video](#) on identifying and destroying the egg masses of this destructive pest.

WELCOMING WILDLIFE IN WINTER

By Beverly Davis

In winter gardens, wildlife will want the same things they've wanted all year: water, food, and shelter.

Water is the biggest draw. Birds and other creatures really need a drink. My busy little pond is only the size of a soup kettle, half-full of leaves and with some perching sticks bridging the surface. There's a shallow birdbath on a pedestal and another on the ground for good measure.

If you can maintain some open water with a bubbler or other device that would be ideal. Or you can be like me and go out at all hours to break the ice or pour in some warm water as needed. In really cold weather, I bring a big pot saucer inside to thaw at night, and replace it in the morning full of warm water. This always attracts a crowd of thirsty birds and animals.

If you feed birds, include suet in winter and add cracked corn and nuts as well. There are plenty of nearby feeders in my city neighborhood, so I merely toss an occasional handful of seed under the bushes to attract entertainment for my indoor cats. (Keeping those cats inside is one of the most important ways we can protect birds and small mammals!)

Chipmunks are staying snug in their seed-stuffed homes underground now, but various small rodents, squirrels, rabbits, raccoons, as well as the occasional groundhog or opossum will visit the site, and even foxes have been seen to take a bit of birdseed. Perhaps, like the cats, they're most interested in the white-footed mice.

When the birdseed is finished, there will be plenty more to eat if you can let summer's stalks, leaves, seedheads, and fruits remain in the garden and resist "cleanup" until well into spring. If you must tidy up, don't discard those materials—put them in a quiet corner where the small life cycles they support can go on developing. Bees, bugs, beetles, butterflies, and moths will be among the lives you preserve.

Avoid shredding, blowing, or bagging fall leaves; all those standing dead annuals will keep them in place if you just shepherd them gently into the flowerbeds. Leaves accumulated in beds and under shrubs and trees shelter the eggs, larvae, pupae, and adult insects and spiders that birds and mammals eat all winter and depend on in spring to raise their young. Small mammals, frogs, toads, snakes, salamanders, and even turtles find extra protection from cold and predators in leaf litter.



White-throated Sparrow

Sticks and stones make popular habitat as well. Try to have plenty of welcoming cracks and crannies. A woodpile or even a rock pile is like an apartment building. I have a dry firewood stack and an even more interesting woodpile of rotting logs. In autumn, I make a brush pile of fallen branches—large and small—stacked loosely to provide shelter and foraging opportunities for those foxes, raccoons, rabbits, mice, and birds, as well as any number of essential invertebrates. Dead, decaying wood is actually full of life. Collect discarded holiday trees and greens to add to your pile.

Thick evergreens provide cover for birds and give them a place to roost at night. My favorite yard tree is an old Eastern Redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) that produces copious berries and is never without birds—usually whole flocks of them. The same goes for some shaggy yews and boxwoods.

Over the years, the lawn that came with my house has shrunk to beautifully weedy insignificance while native perennials, trees, and shrubs have crowded in. Oaks and buckeyes, hollies, beautyberries, pawpaws, native honeysuckles, and Virginia creeper have reintroduced themselves. They'll provide food for wildlife well into the new year.

A relatively new development is a patch of self-seeded asters and goldenrods replacing a Japanese maple and (horrors!) English ivy groundcover. This patch teemed with pollinators in the fall and is now supporting untold future pollinators where it stands. There's no going back.

Of course this winter is the best time to plan the bed of native flowers, research the grasses, shrubs and trees, and design the little water source or the big stumpery that will provide cover and forage for next winter.

Hmmm...I have a few square yards of lawn yet to be replaced.

Beverly Davis is a Naturalist and Board Member at Cyllburn Arboretum Friends.



Plant This!

Cornus sericea 'Cardinal'

By: Jennifer Forrence

Dr. Richard Bitner, an instructor at Longwood Gardens, once said that when designing a garden you should “start with winter,” by which he meant that you lay out the winter garden first before even considering what summer flowers you might use. What remains and shines in winter, I remember him explaining, was the structure upon which you should build the rest of the garden.

Dr. Bitner had learned this approach from the owner of a fabulous garden on the west coast and laid out a formula for us that something like 40% of your garden should be focused on its winter look, 30% on fall, 30% on summer, and don't worry about spring because it takes care of itself! (I am not confident I have remembered the exact proportions correctly, but I am sure I have the underlying sentiment right.)

It was a good lesson for me. I spend more time looking at my own garden in winter—as the other seasons find me taking care of other people's gardens—so I really appreciate a good-looking landscape in the off season. And I follow this advice when designing for others, making sure the garden doesn't disappear when deciduous plants lose their leaves, and that there is always something to delight the eye in winter.

The dominant color palette of winter is often shades and forms of brown and gray, which is why the brightly colored stems of red twig dogwoods are such a gift. Red twig dogwoods are a shrubby dogwood with brightly colored stems. They are all deciduous. When the leaves fall, the

stems punctuate the gray and brown background, enlivening it with shades of maroon, red, pink, and yellow, including stems with multiple colors from top to bottom.

The primary dogwood species grown for their colored stems are *Cornus sericea* (formerly *C. stolonifera*) (red osier dogwood, native to North America), *Cornus alba* (Tartarian dogwood) (native to China, Korea, and Siberia), and *Cornus sanguinea* (blood twig dogwood, from northern Europe and northwestern Asia). They share their tolerance for wet soils and their tough nature. They also share the fact that the youngest shoots have the best color, which is why pruning is important to their use as an ornamental plant. Their flowers, however, are not particularly showy—modest white umbels in May or June—though they are attractive to butterflies and pollinators. The resulting fruit—white or blue or purple drupes—is enjoyed by birds.

Native *Cornus sericea* has many garden-worthy cultivars to help you get the size and winter stem color that will work in your garden. My top pick, if you have room, is *C. sericea* 'Cardinal.' Its winter color is multifaceted, from a deep coral to pink, while its lighter color makes it stand out in the winter landscape—so it is a favorite to use in winter pot displays. At 6-9 feet tall, it is a large shrub. If you desire or need a smaller shrub, consider *C. sericea* 'Arctic Fire,' which has uniform dark red stems of 3-4 feet. Even smaller, at 2-3 feet, is *C. sericea* 'Kelsey,' with a neat and tidy habit and bright red-to-orange winter stem color.

This new column will feature a favorite seasonal plant of an HSM member.

Perhaps the most fabulous winter color is found in a cultivar of the European dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) called 'Midwinter Fire.' The lowest part of the stems is almost yellow, and the tips are red. In between are shades from orange to pink. Board member Nancy Blois combines it in her garden with deciduous *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Gold' for a stem-and-berry combination that can't be beat.

Although the shoots are stunning in winter, the summer look can be a bit plain, with simple ovate green leaves on stems which have lost their vivid winter color. So if you want something jazzier during the growing season, consider *Cornus alba* 'Ivory Halo,' which has a cream and green variegation to add good foliage contrast to a summer border. (I love its look, but I have had some fungal issues with it which in some cases required treatment.) The winter stem color is a rich burgundy.

An alternative is *C. sericea* 'Pucker Up!'® the leaves of which—as the trade name suggests—are small and puckered, providing a wonderful textural contrast to most other leaves in the garden. It is a small shrub—more like 3' tall—and, in my experience, slow growing. The downside to the slow growth is that I haven't felt empowered to prune it so extensively, and so its winter color isn't as dramatic. But its unusual leaf texture has made it a keeper in my garden. I'll work on the pruning as I continue my relationship with this great plant.

Finally, if red isn't your thing, consider *C. alba* 'Bud's Yellow.' Its 6–7 foot bright yellow stems stand out in the winter landscape, and look fabulous with winter blooming yellow witch hazels and spring daffodils. The cut stems of this—your end of the winter pruning—are great in spring pots, adding height to containers full of lettuces and pansies.

Red twig varieties are readily available at your local garden center, so make room in your garden for one or more of them. Combine them with similarly colored holly berries, contrast them with evergreens, plant them against a contrasting white wall or a gray fence, or let them stand as a sentinel at the top of a rise as a dramatic focal point.

They will help take your garden from its fall color riot to its burst of spring bulbs without missing a day of beauty.



Houseplants: An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Q&A

Now that our houseplants are safely inside to protect them from freezing winter temperatures, we might have started to notice some changes in the health of the plants or perhaps even a few more pests flying around. To help us figure out what to do about these unwanted pests, we talked to Neva Hurley, a horticultural assistant at Cylburn Arboretum, working for Baltimore City. She is the main grower at the six greenhouses located at the Arboretum, so she's encountered many of these issues on a commercial scale during her tenure.

What are some common indoor plant pests?

Some common pests are scale, mealybugs, aphids, whitefly, spider mites, thrips, and fungus gnats.

Yikes! How do you know if you have these pests?

Each pest has their own individual attributes and ways to identify them. Doing a routine check of your plants, leaves, and stems is a good idea so that if there is a pest, you can catch it before they get out of control. If you see discoloration, yellowing, stippling, stunted growth, black sooty mold, white patches, or twisted leaves, there is a good chance you have a pest of some sort.

What do some of these common pests look like?

- Scale are round, seemingly stationary, generally brown bumps on stems or leaves that sometimes secrete shiny sticky sap. They fall off when you pick at them. Generally easy to spot.
- Mealybugs are oval-shaped fuzzy-looking white bugs. They are also one of the easier types of plant pests to spot. They tend to live in the crevices of plants, but can be found in a variety of places.
- Aphids are pear-shaped, $\frac{1}{16}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ of inch, and come in a variety of colors, including green, black, red, yellow, brown, and gray. They love to live on undersides of leaves.
- Whitefly are tiny winged white insects that fly when leaves are moved. They tend to be on the bottoms of leaves.
- Spider mites are a variety of colors including red, brown, yellow, and green. They are one of the harder ones to see as they look like dots without the aid of a microscope. Some types leave a webbing that looks like a spider's web. They like to live on the bottoms of leaves.
- Thrips are tiny cigar-shaped insects that come in white, yellow, or brown. If you shake a leaf or bloom of the possibly infected plant over a white piece of paper, you will easily see them. Leaves will tend to look dirty or faded after being eaten.
- Fungus gnats are dark tiny flying insects that infest the soil of a houseplant and can thrive in overly wet environments. They tend to hang around the soil of the houseplant.

Houseplants: An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Q&A

Continued

What are the signs?

Scale may leave a sticky substance called “honeydew” on the plant. They can cause leaf yellowing, dropped leaves, dieback, and stunted growth. Mealybugs suck sap and cause almost exactly the same result as scale. Aphids also suck the sap, but tend to feed in clusters on new growth, which can cause stunted/deformed growth, yellow leaves, and leaf drop. Whitefly also suck the juices from the plant and cause the leaves to turn yellow and drop leaves. Spider mites suck the chlorophyll from the leaves, leaving a stippling effect on them, which can result in eventual death of the leaves.

Some types also produce a webbing on the leaves. Thrips cause damage that looks like silvery streaks. Heavily infested leaves appear brownish or silvery, and growing points may become contorted/twisted.

Fungus gnats don't eat the leaves, but they eat root hairs, and the plant will eventually show its distress with wilting, yellowing, and distress.

How do you treat them?

For the home owner with houseplants, you can try to remove a small amount of them with a Q-tip or maybe wipe down the leaves with water, which would be a mechanical method. In summer, hosing them down so that the bugs get pushed off the leaves and stems with water is an option.

Leaving them outside in an appropriate setting for their light/water needs afterwards can also be helpful, as there are insect predators that may get rid of the rest of your problem bugs for you.

There is also horticultural oil, neem oil, and insecticidal soap which can be applied to your house plant and purchased generally from garden centers. Read labels carefully, and apply carefully as well. They may require a few applications.

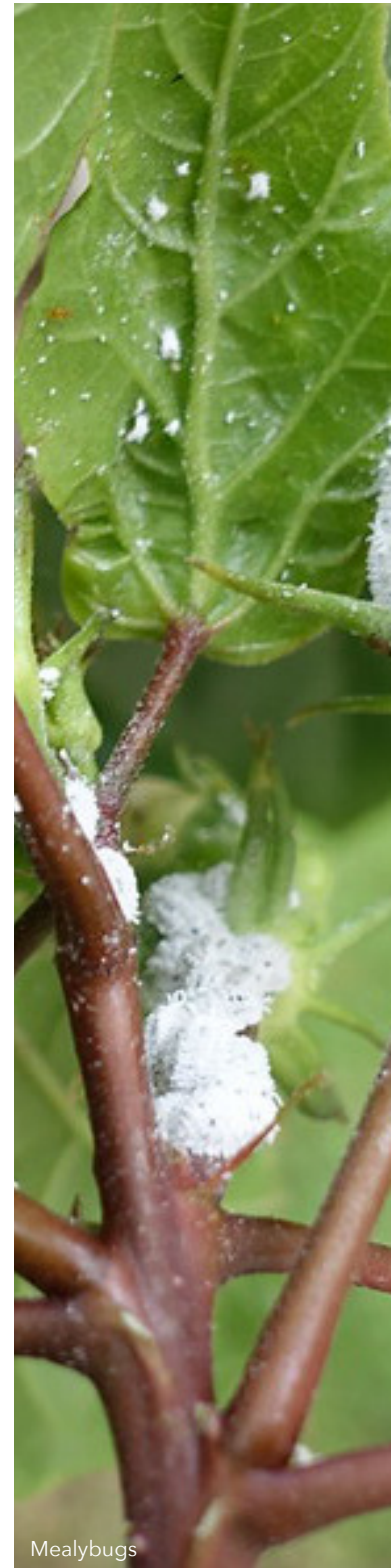
The pests we mentioned in this article can be treated with these pesticides.

Are the treatment methods different for commercial greenhouses?

It depends on the circumstance. Usually we try to employ the least caustic solution to the problem at hand first—especially if the pest numbers are low enough—which might mean we are first trying some of the suggestions I mentioned here before, just as the average plant owner might be doing. If these do not work—or perhaps the infestation is too far along for that solution and we have the desire/need to address the issue more strongly—we have other chemicals at our disposal to do so. These are not chemicals that are allowed to be sold to the general public, and are only for greenhouse use.

Do you recommend biological controls for house plants?

Currently, biological controls are not well-marketed for the general house plant owner. They are expensive; you need to use a good amount of the product to see effectiveness, and you need to use them immediately when you receive them. You can definitely purchase them and try, but they don't give the general public much as far as instructions on how to use currently to obtain best results. It may change in the future, but they are currently most effective in a greenhouse setting.



Mealybugs

Houseplants: An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Q&A

Continued

Is there any way to prevent these pests?

Not really, but there are things you can do to reduce likelihood of an infestation.

Check your houseplants regularly for issues is important. I also like to think about it this way—if you tend to keep a plant happy by watering it correctly, giving it the amount light it desires, keeping good sanitation around the house and plant, and fertilizing it when needed, the pests will not overtake the plant as readily. Just as humans who take care of themselves by giving themselves healthy food, sleep, etc. tend to avoid health issues and have a stronger constitution, plants are similar in that way. If a plant is already stressed in the environment that it's in, it will be much more susceptible to a pest that comes along than one that is healthy and well cared for. It will be harder for the pest to win against the plant.

Do indoor plants also get diseases like outdoor plants?

Yes, definitely.

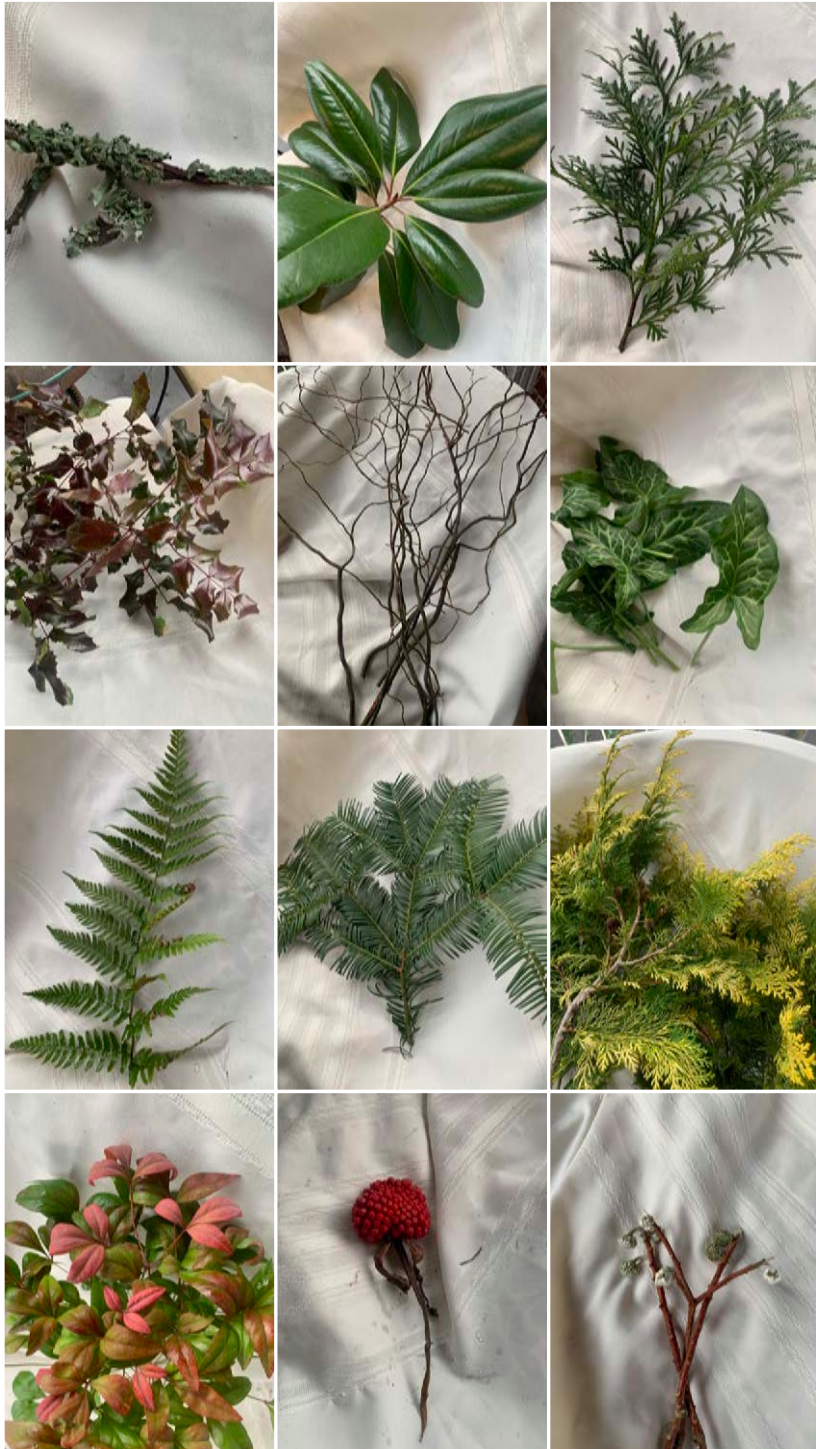
Perhaps that is the subject for another day.



Whiteflies

WINTER ARRANGEMENTS

We asked long time HSM member Nancy Grabowski, who often brings stunning arrangements to our lectures, what she puts together in winter when little is blooming. Here's what she showed us.



PLANTS INCLUDED IN ARRANGEMENT:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <i>Salix matsudana</i> 'Tortuosa' | <i>Hydrangea arborescens</i> |
| <i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i> 'Crispifolia' | <i>Arisaema serratum</i> (fruit) |
| <i>Cephalotaxus harringtonia</i> | <i>Nandina</i> 'Firepower' |
| <i>Thujaopsis dolobrata</i> | <i>Magnolia grandiflora</i> |
| <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i> | <i>Edgeworthia papyrifera</i> |
| <i>Dryopteris erythrosora</i> | Assorted mosses and lichens |
| <i>Arum italicum</i> 'Pictum' | |
| <i>Matteuccia struthiopteris</i> | |

Photos and arrangement by HSM member Nancy Grabowski.



Garden of Eatin'

This new column will feature cooking/baking with food from your own garden.

BY NANCY BLOIS

Salvia officinalis is a hardy perennial that is the source of culinary sage. *Salvia* 'Berggarten' is an especially attractive variety, with rounded, felted silvery gray-blue leaves. It can get quite shrubby, reaching to two feet in height and three feet wide. Although it is said to have violet-blue flowers in summer, mine has never flowered in the many years I've had it.

Preferring full sun, the plant tolerates alkaline soils and is generally care-free, but does require excellent drainage. Its large leaves make it the perfect sage for dishes that call for fried sage leaves.

If, like me, you look at those and think "Too fussy!" take heed—it's actually surprisingly simple.

In the dead of winter, it's so gratifying to serve something you just picked from your garden, and Berggarten's evergreen leaves are available year-round. Several years ago, I spied a package of butternut squash ravioli in the frozen foods case at Costco, thought it looked interesting, and bought one. The recommendation on the package was to serve the ravioli with brown butter sage sauce. I browned some butter and dropped the sage leaves in, and, to my delight, they sizzled and crisped immediately. In addition to the great flavor, the crispness of the leaves was a satisfying counterpoint to the ravioli.

Of course, I haven't seen that product at Costco since. Similar squash or pumpkin ravioli is readily available in many markets, but I've been making my own. That first package was squash pasta with a cheese filling, but I've been using egg pasta with squash filling.

There are any number of recipes online if you'd like to try it. Some use store-bought sheets of pasta or even wonton wrappers instead of the pasta, and any roasted winter squash will work. Although many recipes simply use roasted and seasoned squash, I like to add a bit of ricotta and grated Pecorino Romano. If, as I have, you've burned more butter than you've browned, here's an [excellent tutorial](#).

Salvia officinalis 'Berggarten' is an attractive plant in all seasons—with the added bonus of providing something delicious—from your garden, even in January!

BUTTERNUT SQUASH RAVIOLI WITH BROWN BUTTER SAGE SAUCE

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS:

- A large butternut squash, or any similar winter squash
- ½ cup ricotta cheese
- 1 cup grated Pecorino Romano
- Nutmeg, garlic, salt, pepper, or any other desired seasoning
- 2 12-ounce packages of pasta sheets or about 30 wonton wrappers
- 1 egg, beaten
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 12 sage leaves

DIRECTIONS:

1. Squash can be peeled, cubed, and tossed with olive oil, salt, and pepper, or alternatively, halved, seeds removed, and the halves oiled and placed face down on a baking sheet.
2. Roast the squash at 400 degrees, until soft and a little caramelized. Cool slightly, and mash the squash with the ricotta and half the Pecorino Romano as well as any seasonings you prefer.
3. Place a tablespoon of filling near a corner of each wonton wrapper. Brush the edges with egg; fold over to make triangles, and seal well. Ravioli can be formed in a similar fashion.
4. Bring a large pot of water to a boil.
5. While the water boils, prepare the [brown butter sauce](#). As soon as you remove the butter from the heat, drop the sage leaves into it.
6. When the ravioli is done, transfer it to the buttery skillet, and gently toss it in the sauce.
7. Shower with freshly grated Parmesan.

Transfer to plates and enjoy!

Perennially Inspired

February 18, 2023

New location!

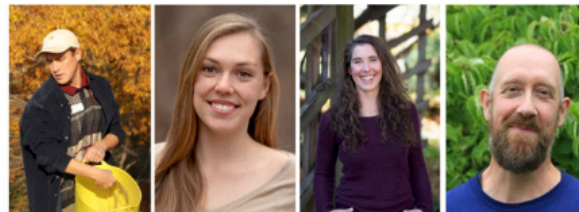
Maritime Conference Center | Linthicum Heights, MD



PPA and HSM are partnering once again to bring you a stellar educational program—in person and at a new location! Join us at the Maritime Conference Center for diverse and inspirational sessions, and networking; plus continental breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack.

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Promo code: **2023MAdiscount**
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SPEAKER PROGRAM

Embracing Change in the Landscape: Naturalistic Design to blend Ecological and Social Perspectives

Ryan Drake, McCausland Natural Areas Manager for the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania

Ryan Drake is the McCausland Natural Areas Manager at the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania where he works with a team to manage 110 acres from naturalistic gardens to site reclamation. He previously worked as the Ecological Horticulturist in leading the design and advocacy for newly constructed gardens at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. He is interested in promoting new urban forms through environmental planning and design. Ryan received his B.S. in Community and Environmental Sociology and in Studio Art from the University of Wisconsin – Madison where he began his career in public horticulture.

Ryan Drake will discuss recent projects at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden that are rooted in the sand prairies of Iowa. He will explore the process of place-making and collaboration in the construction process and in creating diverse and functional design utilizing ecological succession with native plants. Finally, he will reflect on the influences of plant exploration, curation, and urban form in his work in Des Moines and his current work at the Morris Arboretum.

Native Pollinators of the Mid-Atlantic

Samantha Nestory, Engagement Manager and Naturalist for Stoneleigh: a natural garden

Samantha Nestory is the engagement manager and naturalist at Stoneleigh: a natural garden in Villanova. In her position, she develops educational programming, coordinates public events, and manages the volunteer program. Previously, she worked as a horticulturist at Stoneleigh for nearly four years. Samantha has also worked with Sarver Ecological, an ecological consulting firm, and the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania. She is passionate about native plants, ecological gardening, and insect conservation, and she is strongly committed to educating the public about these important issues.

“Pollinator” is a term that has gained massive popularity over the past couple of decades as our knowledge and understanding of our ecosystems have grown. Unfortunately, many people only associate this term with popular pollinators, such as European honeybees and butterflies – but there’s so much more to the world of pollinators. Join us as we learn about native pollinators that don’t get the spotlight and how we can support these incredible movers and shakers in our gardens and landscapes.

- \$125 PPA and Horticultural Society of Maryland Members | \$145 Non-Members
- In Person at *The Maritime Conference Center (note: new venue!) 692 Maritime Blvd, Linthicum Heights, MD
- Please visit the venue’s resource center webpage for safety policies.
- Register by February 15, 2023.

Coming Together in the Indigenous Garden at Olbrich Botanical Gardens

Erin Presley, Horticulturist for Olbrich Botanical Gardens

Erin Presley left her heart at Olbrich Botanical Gardens while interning there in 2005. After earning a bachelor’s degree in Horticulture from the University of Wisconsin-Madison she gardened for nearly a decade in the private sector before returning to Olbrich in 2014, where she tends the Herb, Woodland, and Pond Gardens. As the 2022 inaugural winner of the American Public Gardens Association’s Gerry Donnelly Future Leaders award, she is never shy when it comes to sharing her passion for gardening and has appeared on the PBS series Let’s Grow Stuff, Wisconsin Public Radio’s Garden Talk, Cultivating Place with Jennifer Jewell , and is a contributor to Fine Gardening magazine.

Milkweed soup tasting and sweetgrass braiding were just two experiences that brought together local Ho-Chunk tribal members and garden visitors in the Indigenous Garden at Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison, Wisconsin, in 2021 and 2022. The Indigenous Garden created opportunities to connect, converse, and appreciate the history and majesty of food plants significant in Midwestern First Nations cultures. Horticulturist Erin Presley describes the collaborative process and heartfelt community support surrounding the Indigenous Garden as an example of how public gardens like Olbrich are using the potential of plants to expand our audience and cultural relevance.

Natives, Selections and Cultivars Explained At Last

Uli Lorimer, *Director of Horticulture for Native Plant Trust*

Uli Lorimer is the Director of Horticulture for Native Plant Trust. He oversees the facilities and operations at Garden in the Woods and at Nasami Farm in eastern Massachusetts. Uli brings 20 years of experience working with native plants in public gardens with previous positions at Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Wave Hill Garden and the US National Arboretum. He is a tireless advocate for the use of native plants in designed spaces through his public speaking, writing, lectures and media appearances. Uli feels most grounded with his hands in the soil.

With a dizzying array of native plants, selections and cultivars on the market, how are gardeners able to make great choices for their gardens? Does it matter how these plants were propagated? Are cultivars of natives the ecological equivalents of species? This talk will explore in greater depth these questions along with discussions of nascent efforts within the Northeast to improve the native plant supply chain.

LECTURE SERIES: SPRING 2023



Abra Lee
Planting Your Path

Tuesday, February 21 at 7:00 pm, virtual

In this conversation Abra will discuss her garden roots from the dirt road country of the rural South to a lesson in family history that helped define her life’s purpose.



Jillian De Gezelle
The Botany, History and Culture of Cacao

Tuesday, March 14 at 7:00, virtual

This presentation will highlight some of the many fascinating aspects of cacao—the botanical source of chocolate!

Welcome to New Members!

The HSM and the Hort Report would like to introduce and give a hearty welcome to our newest members:

Leia Booher

Jane Brown & Family

Jessica Busch

Chesapeake Landscapes

Maya Clark

Ruth Clausen

Norman Cohen

Effie Davenport

Maureen Donovan

Dejan Ernestl

John Gazarek

Nancy Johnston

Deborah Lippincot

Kalie Lyles

Sandra Markowitz

Armen Mirzoian

Nature's Image, Inc.

Timothy & Kimberly Sparklin

Todd Steiner

Mark C. Taylor

Thanks for joining us. We're glad to have you here!

We also want to give a shout-out to all of our renewing members as well. We appreciate that you continue to be part of our gardening family!

TRIPS ABROAD!

- **Trip to Cornwall, Bath, and Chelsea Flower Show:** May 13-25.
- **Splendors of Northern France:** June 29-July 11.
Includes 3 and 4 star hotel accommodations for 12 nights, visits to Monet's Giverny, Chateau de Mirosmesnil with an award-winning kitchen garden, visit to the futuristic Les Jardins d'Eretat, as well as a tour of D-Day beaches and trip to Le Jardin de Agapanthe, one of the most beautiful gardens in Normandy.

Trips are co-sponsored by The Horticultural Society of Maryland and the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland.

For more information on these trips, contact Claire Jones: 443-927-6285, Jonesb1@comcast.net, or ClaireJonesLandscapes.com.