

GardenNOTES

 NORTHWEST HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

FALL 2007

AUTUMN IS FOR PLANTING!

AS THE DOG DAYS of summer begin to cool and shorten, gardeners begin to feel the stirrings of autumn plant fever—an intense but more contemplative version of the malady that strikes in spring. Luckily, there is a ready cure for this condition: the Northwest Horticultural Society's annual fall plant sale at Warren G. Magnuson Park in Seattle.

This two-day event is a wonderful opportunity to find a wide assortment of the choicest, healthiest plants around from more than 35 specialty growers in the Puget Sound area—just in time for fall planting season. “By planting now, you get a season’s worth of growth while the garden is asleep,” plant sale co-chair Anita Dunn reminds us. That means a lot less watering for you, and bigger, more established plants for your garden by the time spring arrives again.

This year, NHS is partnering with Great Plant Picks to help you select some of the best performers for your garden. Staff from the Miller Botanical Garden will be on site, handing out brochures and advice, and vendors will make a special effort to label plants that



are GPPs. To learn more about this educational program for gardeners in the Pacific Northwest, see page 7.

In addition, pots donated by A Garden of Distinction, a recently closed garden store, will be for sale. The pots are from northern Thailand and winter proof.


Once again, the plant sale will be held at Warren G. Magnuson Park, located at 7400 Sand Point Way in Seattle. On Saturday, there is a game at Husky Stadium, so avoid traveling through the Montlake area. Directions for approaching the park from I-5 are on page 3. Free parking is available.

Each year volunteers work together to make this sale a success. Joyce Hawkins and Lois Willman are looking for members willing to set up and take down the sale, distribute and pick up

Find choice plants from more than 35 growers at the NHS Fall Plant Sale on September 14 and 15.

signs in the neighborhood, cashier, write sales slips, work the hold and member donations areas, and help at the membership table. Email Lois at merriam@scattercreek.com if you can help.

If you have plants to donate from your garden, Carol Edmondson and Barbara Reisinger would love to hear from you. Plants should be potted and labeled with the name of the plant, the price, and any other information about the plant that will help the buyer give it a good home. Email Carol at edcatlick@yahoo.com or Barbara at nhs@barbarareisinger.com if you have questions.

Proceeds from the sale fund NHS programs and grants. We hope to see you there! 

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, NOON TO 6:30 P.M. ~ SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 9:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.

MEET THE GROWERS

NHS FALL PLANT SALE

See any familiar faces? Each year over 35 specialty growers bring a variety of choice, and in many cases, hard-to-find plants to the NHS sale. Along with providing exciting plants for your fall gardening projects, these experts are available to answer questions about plants they grow.



Our thanks to Anita Dunn for providing most of these photos.

COVER PHOTOS

Top—RHR Garden Plants: hard-to-find specialty plants

Bottom—Foliage Gardens: ferns and related plants

1. **Botanica:** uncommon and under-used perennials
2. **Bouquet Banque Nursery:** fat, juicy, healthy, 2-gallon perennials
3. **Cascade Gardens:** hardy bamboos and more
4. **Chimacum Woods:** beautiful, healthy and unusual rhododendrons
5. **Coldsprings Garden Nursery:** unusual and durable perennials and shrubs
6. **Cultus Bay Nursery:** fabulous shrubs and perennials
7. **DeGro Flower & Garden:** uncommon perennials and some temperennials
8. **Edwards Nursery:** hardy perennials, trees, and shrubs
9. **Fairmeadow Nursery:** evergreen oaks, perennials, NW native trees & shrubs
10. **Fancy Fronds Nursery:** large selection of common and rare ferns
11. **Keeping It Green Nursery:** hardy orchids, unusual woodland plants and natives
12. **Lee Farm & Nursery:** trees, shrubs, perennials, grasses, and hardy fuchsias
13. **Madrona Nursery:** special perennials and some native plants
14. **Mount Forest Farm:** hostas, ferns, and shade perennials
15. **Munro Nursery:** shade-tolerant plants perennials, shrubs, and trees
16. **MVN:** grasses, groundcovers, perennials
17. **Naylor Creek Nursery:** hostas, epimediums, asarums, and shade perennials
18. **Northwest Perennials:** specializing in GPPs as well as tested and uncommon perennials
19. **Old Goat Farm:** healthy, unique plants
20. **Oudean's Willow Creek Nursery:** carnivorous and bog plants
21. **Overland Enterprises:** drought-tolerant perennials for sun or shade
22. **Ramble On Rose Perennials:** perennials
23. **Rhododendron Species Foundation:** rare rhododendron species and companions
24. **Robinwood Nursery:** eclectic selection of perennials and specialty shrubs
25. **Species Unlimited:** species rhododendrons and azaleas
26. **Steamboat Island Nursery:** uncommon perennials, shrubs, vines, and grasses
27. **Swan's Trail Garden:** unusual perennials
28. **The Greenery:** species rhododendrons, woodland natives, and companion plants
29. **Walker Mountain Meadows:** trees, plants for water gardens
30. **Wind Poppy Farms:** grasses, sedges, rushes, water plants, and perennials



Gardeners at the sale appreciate information provided by growers.

**DIRECTIONS TO THE NHS PLANT SALE
AT MAGNUSON PARK**

NORTHBOUND I-5:

- Exit NE 65th St. (Exit 170)
- At stop sign, go straight (across Ravenna Blvd) onto 8th Av NE to NE 65th St.
- Turn right at NE 65th Street.
- Go east on NE 65th St for about 2 miles. At NE 49th St. the arterial bears right onto Princeton Way NE and curves back around to the left and onto NE 65th St. Continue on to Sand Point Way NE.
- Turn left onto Sand Point Way NE and go about 2-3 blocks. The park is on your right.
- Turn right into the park at the main gate. Look for signs to the plant sale. The sale will be in a large hangar on your left. There is a large parking lot just beyond it on the right.

SOUTHBOUND I-5:

- Take exit 171 for NE 71st/NE 65th Sts.
- At the stop sign at the end of the exit ramp turn left onto NE 71st St and cross over I-5.
- You are now on NE 70th St. Go to Roosevelt Way NE (one way street going south).
- Turn right onto Roosevelt Way NE and go five blocks to NE 65th St.
- Turn left (east) onto NE 65th St and follow directions above to Magnuson Park.

**WESTBOUND ON 520
FROM THE EASTSIDE:**

- As you approach I-5, get in the right lane and take the exit for I-5 toward Vancouver BC.
- On I-5 Northbound exit at NE 65th St.
- Follow directions for Northbound I-5 to Magnuson Park.

NOT SHOWN

- Image Custom Ironworks:** metal accents—trellis, gates, fences, custom plant stakes
- Kerstons Nursery:** dwarf and slow-growing plants
- Namaste Gardens:** unusual trees, shrubs, perennials, herbs, and succulents
- Terra Nursery:** dwarf conifers and Japanese maples
- White Picket Gardens:** unusual perennials, drought-tolerant plants, salvias, hebes, and herbs

PLANT BUYING STRATEGIES

SUE LEWICKI

WHO AM I to give advice on how to shop for plants? After all, a few weeks ago I was in a Seattle nursery when I happened to see Charles Price and Glenn Withey shopping. I had a strong urge to follow these well-known garden designers and buy every plant they did—and in the same number. I was sure they knew the newest, coolest, and best plants for their clients, as well as for me.

Well, we don't always have a team of fantastic garden designers to follow around. Besides, they might be buying all sun plants, and I have a shady garden. So I began thinking about how I shop for plants.

PLAN A: BUY PERENNIALS

As a young “plant collector” with a fairly blank canvas, my early plan was to buy every perennial that was different or new, and that I sometimes knew absolutely nothing about. My one requirement was to try and buy plants large enough to divide into at least two parts, so that I could buy only one of each kind. I would check on what the plant needed culturally when I arrived home. If a plant started to die where I planted it, I moved it to a different spot. If it did not improve, I moved it somewhere else. If the darn plant died anyway, I would chalk it up to experience and try not to buy it again.

After awhile, I ended up with an acre filled mostly with perennials and a heck of a lot of work. For a variety of reasons, I needed to cut back on the

time it takes me to maintain my garden. So I developed a new plan.

PLAN B: GET RID OF PERENNIALS

1. Don't buy any more perennials.
2. Sell or donate many of the perennials already in my garden.
3. Only buy plants if I knew exactly where I was going to put them in the garden.

During this period, I bought several trees and shrubs and cleared my garden of high maintenance or low impact perennials. I have now developed an even better way of shopping.

PLAN C: SHOP WITH A LIST

Before I buy plants, I go to lectures, read about new introductions, check out the Great Plant Picks brochure or website, and go on tours to see plants in a garden setting. I make lists of plants

that excite me along the way. I also ask others who might have grown these plants to share their experiences. Finally, I consider how the plants will look in my garden and where I will put them. Then, I make a wish list.

I cannot say I buy only plants on this list, but if it isn't on my list, it becomes a “container plant.” I think my garden is all the better for it. Often now, I can buy a larger shrub or tree because I am not buying as many plants.

By the way, I did not shame myself by following Charles and Glenn around the nursery that day, scooping up plants right after them; but if I had not had my trusty list with me that day, I just might have. 📖

Sue Lewicki is an NHS member and a Snohomish County Master Gardener who maintains her one-acre garden in Bothell.

TIPS FOR BUYING TREES AND SHRUBS



WHENEVER POSSIBLE, I like to buy trees and shrubs in leaf or bloom to ensure that they have the correct leaf and flower color, and that they are healthy. I also take the time to check the root system of plants—whether perennial, tree, or shrub. Tightly compacted roots just don't do as well as those that have a little growing room.

I love to buy plants in the fall, because I can usually count on our autumn rains to keep the roots moist, and we still have at least a month or two of moderate weather ahead for the plants to settle into the garden. My favorite place to buy plants in the fall is the NHS plant sale. With so many specialty growers in one place, I know I can find some of the unusual plants that are still on my list. 📖

~ WELCOME NEW MEMBERS ~

Paula Bessette
Linda D. Boles
Becky Bumgarner

Dan Corson
Gina Crumbaker
Carolyn L. Evans

Janis Hadley
Susan Harmon
Corinne Hill

Monica Quill
Kusakabe
Neal F. Lessenger

Toni Loomis
Robert Meadows
Maureen Morris

Leslie Morris
Stephen Ross
Natalie Yusen

VOLUNTEER PROFILES: LISA IRWIN AND SUE DICKSON

ROBIN FARRAR MAASS

After co-chairing the NHS plant sale for several years, Anita Dunn and Ann LeVasseur are handing the responsibility over to Lisa Irwin and Sue Dickson, two NHS members who came to gardening through their love of art. We are pleased to introduce next year's co-chairs.

Lisa Irwin was an art major in college who took horticultural classes and worked at a nursery. This led to her interest in growing plants. "I'm mostly self-taught," she says. Buying her first home a few years later helped launch her gardening life. As a beginning gardener she was most interested in flowers, but as she matures as a gardener she finds herself more interested in foliage and year-round plants.

She has worked as an artist doing hand-colored photographs, and spent several years working in marketing at Microsoft. When she quit a few years back, it was to do more art, gardening, and volunteering, at that time with the Northwest Bookfest.

"Then people started asking me for help with their gardens, and a friend encouraged me to start my own garden design business," Lisa says. That led to the founding of Dru Gardens six years ago. As if her clients' gardens and her Magnolia garden (which was on this year's Board Tour) weren't enough, Lisa also gardens at her vacation home on Whidbey Island. "They're two very different environments," she says. "I love trying different plants, and I use my own gardens to experiment."

Lisa joined NHS four years ago, and became a board member this year. Her increasing involvement with the plant sale began last autumn when she interviewed Anita Dunn for *Garden*



Sue Dickson and Lisa Irwin

Notes. This led to Lisa shadowing Anita at the 2006 plant sale and accepting the co-chair position for the 2008 sale.

Of her goals for the 2008 sale, she says, "We just want to have fun, make some money for NHS, and help interesting growers introduce new plants to the public."

"I FEEL LIKE THE LUCKIEST person in the world because I get to garden for a living," says artist and garden designer **Sue Dickson**. Her four-year-old garden design business, The Artful Garden, drew her to NHS several years ago. "I'm into oral traditions and I'm into mentoring, so NHS is a natural fit. The plant thing brings it all together."

Sue credits her interest in "earthy"

outdoor arts like pottery making and basket making with leading her to gardening. She worked at City People's Garden Store, then confesses she became a "crazy gardener" when she bought her first home. She got a horticultural and design degree at Edmonds Community College, then worked at Woodland Park Zoo for two years before starting her own garden design business. She is especially intrigued with color and the new introductions of drought-tolerant plants from the Southern Hemisphere and Mediterranean. "I love learning about plants," she says. "It's so fun."

Sue's NHS involvement began with volunteering at the Northwest Flower and Garden Show, and progressed to helping with the 2006 plant sale. "I ended up being the only person with a truck," she remembers. "Then Ann LeVasseur snapped me up and got me interested in co-chairing next year's sale."

Sue lives and gardens in Columbia City. She has a pottery studio in her backyard, where she throws her own pots and works on developing the iridescent glazes of Raku pottery. She combines her love of basket weaving with pottery by weaving feathers and other natural materials into the rims of some of her pots. 📷

Robin Maass is a regular contributor to Garden Notes who enjoys writing, painting, and gardening.



AN INTRODUCTION TO BOTANICAL LATIN

A Back to School Primer

BY DANIEL SPARLER

TAXONOMY, binomial, nomenclature, class, order, genus, species . . . Swirling in the faces of hapless gardeners—new and old alike—is a bewildering whirlwind of seemingly alien terms we feel compelled to comprehend. Don't be discouraged! Even the most incipient of budding gardeners already knows quite a few components of botanical names. Aster, Begonia, Clematis, Dahlia, Eucalyptus, Fuchsia, Gardenia, Hosta—these are all valid scientific names of well-known genera (*genera* is the plural of *genus*) that we love to grow. Let's begin our study or review of the basics by addressing a few essential elemental questions.

~WHAT

Botanical Latin refers to the established system of nomenclature for all plants. **Nomenclature** is the scientific naming of living things according to universal principles. **Taxonomy** in general is the science of naming and classifying living things.

~WHY

In a word, the goal of taxonomy (using the vehicle of botanical Latin) is **clarity**. In a broader phrase crafted in 1658 by Thomas Browne, taxonomy provides the "surest path to trace the Labyrinth of Truth." We are all aware of the drawbacks of the willy-nilly use of common names for plants (See "A Plea for Latin" on pages 6-7 of the Spring 2007 issue of *Garden Notes*), but, you may ask, why must we employ Latin, an impossibly complicated language, and a dead one to boot? In brief, Latin for centuries was the lingua franca used by

all intellectuals in the western world, and cumbersome and irksome though it may be, it's the only show on the road, and one that will serve you worldwide—from Tukwila to Tokyo to Timbuktu.

~WHO

We all should thank (or blame, depending on perspective) an 18th century Swedish botanist named Carl von Linné. He is better known, however, by the Latinized (aha!) version of his name, **Carolus Linnaeus**. Born exactly 300 years ago, Linnaeus was the first to articulate clearly and consistently a system for defining genera and species, and to stick to this binomial (two name) system for classifying all plants and animals. In fact, the publication of his groundbreaking 1753 book *Species Plantarum* is considered the starting point for our current system of botanical nomenclature. His big idea was that every living thing should have a distinct and unique, two-part name consisting of a *genus* (like a surname such as Rountree), and a *species* (like a given name such as Nita-Jo). The important point for us is that every plant we grow should be known by one, and only one correct name.

~WHEN AND WHERE

We no longer have the likes of the immortalized Linnaeus among us, so who are the shadowy figures these days who foist on us such vexing name changes as *Phaioppleps nigricans* when we had just learned how to pronounce and spell the old name of *Sisyrinchium striatum*? More importantly, where do these plutocrats live? Answer: All valid plant names are

decided by the **International Botanical Congress**, which consists of thousands of botanists from all over the world who meet every six years, most recently in Vienna in July of 2005. The results of each meeting are published as the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*. This becomes the bible that all serious botanists consult, although the IBC's decisions may take years to filter down to nurseries and plant growers, if they ever get there.

~HOW

And now, the moment you've all been waiting for . . . a succinct, immediate and **foolproof method** of how to learn botanical Latin and begin to use it in your very own home and garden! Sorry to let you down, dear readers, but there is no magic bullet, or even a quick and dirty solution to the maze, or labyrinth if you will. However, there is no need for despair: As with all aspects of horticultural endeavor, a slow and steady approach is best. In subsequent issues we will be addressing several topics relating to botanical nomenclature. These will include such burning questions as, "What do the darn names mean, anyway?" and "Why do we have to deal with three grammatical genders?" Finally, we will address the mega question that is certainly on everyone's lips, "How am I supposed to pronounce the bloomin' thing?" Until next issue, happy gardening to all! 🍷

When he is not torturing the English language, Daniel Sparler, who recently joined the NHS board, torments plants in his Seward Park garden.

SPREADING THE WORD

THE GOSPEL OF GREAT PLANT PICKS

BY LYNNE THOMPSON

SOMETIMES I FEEL as though I'm a Great Plant Picks evangelist, proclaiming the Good News to whoever might be within earshot—friends, family, neighbors, clients, people walking their dogs, or even dogs on their own.

"You need this!"

"This is what you've been searching for your whole (gardening) life!"

"The Promised Land is yours—if you just visit our website at www.greatplantpicks.org. There, you too can find the key to heaven on earth *in your own backyard!*"

So, of course, it was a pleasure to have Melody Hooper ask me to write about Great Plant Picks for the autumn issue of *Garden Notes*. For those who might still be unfamiliar with Great Plant Picks, let me tell you, err, *explain*...

Great Plant Picks (GPP) is an educational outreach program based at the Elisabeth Carey Miller Botanical Garden in Seattle. In 2000, Richard Hartlage, garden director at the time, initiated Great Plant Picks as a way to fulfill the Miller Garden's mission of sharing gardening information with the public. Richard invited professional horticulturists from Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia (west of the Cascades) to meet three times a year to nominate, discuss, evaluate, and select plants that are tried and true for gardens

in this region. You can find the criteria used in making these selections on our website or in our booklets.

As you might imagine, the discussions between committee members can be lively. Plants have been referred to as *dumpy, boring, and one dimensional* (this is a tough crowd), as well as *extraordinary, remarkable, and whimsical*.

All committee members volunteer their time to Great Plant Picks. They come from a variety of horticulture backgrounds—botanical gardens, large and small nurseries, garden centers, wholesale nurseries, and garden design firms. The committee also depends on the advice of other experts. So far, we have created three advisory groups: one for ferns, one for rhododendrons, and one for roses.

That explains a little bit about who we are, but what does this mean for you?

Since our first year, we have named 489 plants as Great Plant Picks, with

approximately 100 more slated for award in 2008. Each year we print an informational booklet that announces the new Picks and groups all GPPs into helpful categories such as Waterwise Perennials and Shrubs, Perennials for Shade, and Great Small Trees. We hand out tens of thousands of booklets at flower and garden shows, garden centers, garden clubs, and through mailings.

Besides publishing the booklet, we print a colorful reference poster with beautiful images of the plants. Posters are available to home gardeners for a small donation.

Mainly, we've been focusing a lot of attention on our website, creating an online educational resource for gardeners and gardening professionals. Each GPP has its own "fact sheet" with photos, detailed cultural information, and—what I especially like to emphasize—suggested planting combinations.

The bottom line for you is this: we've done all the work to provide you with an easy-to-use resource for learning about plants that thrive in our region.

Look for us at the NHS Fall Plant Sale. We will have GPP booklets and posters available to help you with your shopping. And remember, visit our website at www.greatplantpicks.org and *See the Light!*

Lynne Thompson is coordinator of the Great Plant Picks program.



A CELEBRATION OF CARL LINNAEUS

Interested in learning more about Linnaeus? On Friday, October 5 at 7:30 pm, the Northwest Perennial Alliance presents A Celebration of Carl Linnaeus, featuring Magnus Liden, curator of the Linnaeus Garden. The lecture will be held at Kane Hall, University of Washington. For more information, visit www.n-p-a.org.

NHS LECTURES 2

DATE, DAY & TIME	EVENT NAME	FEATURED SPEAKER	TYPE OF EVENT
September 14 (Fri) 12:00 noon – 6:30 p.m. September 15 (Sat) 9:00 a.m – 3:00 p.m.	NHS ANNUAL FALL		
October 10 (Wed) 6:45 p.m. Reception 7:15 p.m. Lecture	Designing Mixed Borders for Sun & Shade	Bob Hyland	Slides & Lecture Wednesday Evening Lecture Series No reservation required
November 14 (Wed) 6:30 p.m. Reception 7:00 p.m. Meeting	NHS ANNUAL M		
Lecture immediately following the annual meeting	Bloedel Reserve—Pacific Northwest Treasure	Richard Brown	Slides & Lecture Wednesday Evening Lecture Series No reservation required
January 9 (Wed) 6:45 p.m. Reception 7:15 p.m. Lecture	The Flora of Seattle in 1850: The Landscape Before Urban Development	Raymond J Larson	Slides & Lecture Wednesday Evening Lecture Series No reservation required
March 12 (Wed) 6:45 p.m. Reception 7:15 p.m. Lecture	Behind Every Good Plant . . . Is A Great Story	Alice Doyle	Slides & Lecture Wednesday Evening Lecture Series No reservation required
April 9 (Wed) 6:45 p.m. Reception 7:15 p.m. Lecture	Making Chicken Salad from Chicken Sh*t	Judith & Dick Knott Tyler	Slides & Lecture Wednesday Evening Lecture Series No reservation required
May 14 (Wed) 6:45 p.m. Reception 7:15 p.m. Lecture	Gardens in Perspective	Jerry Harpur	Slides & Lecture Wednesday Evening Lecture Series No reservation required
June 11 (Wed) 6:45 p.m. Reception 7:15 p.m. Lecture	New & Useful Plants for the Landscape & Garden	Don Shadow	Slides & Lecture Wednesday Evening Lecture Series No reservation required
October 8 (Wed) 6:45 p.m. Reception 7:15 p.m. Lecture	The Synergy that Creates Great Gardens	Richard W Hartlage	Slides & Lecture Wednesday Evening Lecture Series No reservation required
November 12 (Wed) Lecture immediately following the annual meeting	Classic Northwest Garden Gems: Japanese Maples and their Conifer Counterparts	Fran Sharp	Slides & Lecture Wednesday Evening Lecture Series No reservation required

ELISABETH C. MILLER LIBRARY WILL BE OPEN FROM 5:00

DESCRIPTION	MEMBER /NON	LOCATION
PLANT SALE	FREE	Warren G. Magnuson Park 7400 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle
Bob Hyland is co-owner and manager of Loomis Creek Nursery, a retail nursery in New York's Hudson River Valley that specializes in perennials, grasses, shrubs, and tender plants for the mixed border. He will discuss the art and practice of creating dynamic, colorful, four-season borders planted with a mixture of shrubs, perennials, ornamental grasses, annuals, and bulbs.	\$5/\$10	NHS Hall / UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle
MEETING		NHS Hall / UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle
Prentice Bloedel's belief that "Nature can do without man, but man cannot do without nature," inspired the wonderful gift of his estate to the Northwest. Richard Brown, executive director of the Bloedel Reserve and garden photographer, will share the story of the evolution of this once private residential estate into a nationally significant public access garden.	\$5/\$10	NHS Hall / UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle
Ray Larson, lead gardener at the residence of the UW president, will discuss his master's thesis—the first comprehensive attempt to research major plant species and ecosystems that existed in Seattle before it was settled by Euro-Americans. His lecture will provide a look at the past to help gardeners identify garden-worthy plants that once thrived locally and deserve more use today.	\$5/\$10	NHS Hall / UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle
Alice Doyle, co-founder of Log House Plants, has pioneered programs that have introduced two generations of gardeners to new and uncommon plants. Alice will share the intriguing tales behind some exceptional plants from around the world and describe the experience of horticultural discovery—the people, the places, the plants, the hunt, and the community that cares.	\$5/\$10	NHS Hall / UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle
Judith and Dick Kroll Tyler are the owners of Pine Knot Farms, a hellebore nursery in Virginia, and the co-curators of the Garden of Winter Delights at the J.C. Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh, NC. Judith is the co-author of <i>Hellebores: A Comprehensive Guide</i> , which features Dick's remarkable photographs. They will share with us how to build, plant, and furnish a garden using the imagination rather than a big pocketbook.	\$5/\$10	NHS Hall / UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle
Jerry Harpur, the internationally acclaimed garden photographer, explores how the explosion of newly available plants and new approaches to garden design have transformed gardens around the world. With his photographs—dramatically capturing each garden vignette at its peak—he will demonstrate how gardeners and garden designers have used their imaginations to create inspired gardens.	\$5/\$10	NHS Hall / UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle
Don Shadow is owner of Shadow Nursery, a wholesale nursery in Winchester, Tennessee, specializing in woody ornamentals and rare and unusual plants. He is the co-author with Paul Cappiello of <i>Dogwoods</i> . He will share with us his choice of new North American native and Asian plants appropriate for American landscapes and gardens.	\$5/\$10	NHS Hall / UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle
Richard Hartlage, manager of the Landscape Architecture Group at AHBL, will demonstrate how equal parts of horticulture and landscape architecture create a synergy that makes for great gardens. His work crosses several styles—playful, serious, dramatic, tranquil, or exuberant—and is always unexpected. He uses materials ranging from the familiar to the newest on the market.	\$5/\$10	NHS Hall / UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle
Fran Sharp, West Coast sales representative for Iseli Nursery in Boring, Oregon, was the sales manager of Brigg's Nursery for many years. Iseli Nursery is a wholesale grower of rare and beautiful dwarf conifers, Japanese maples, bonsai, and other ornamental trees and shrubs. Fran will show us how to use these wonderful plants in our landscapes.	\$5/\$10	NHS Hall / UW Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

October Preview

BOB HYLAND

DESIGNING MIXED BORDERS FOR SUN & SHADE

Wednesday, October 10, 2007



BOB HYLAND, CO-OWNER of Loomis Creek Nursery located in New York's Hudson River Valley, is coming to Seattle in October to share with NHS members his secrets for putting pizzazz into plantings. He will discuss the art and practice of creating dynamic, colorful, four-season borders planted with a mixture of shrubs, perennials, ornamental grasses, annuals, and bulbs.

In 2003, Bob and his partner, Andrew Beckman, opened Loomis Creek Nursery, a retail business set on a twenty-five-acre lot that used to be a dairy farm. Along with an 1830s farmhouse, the property hosts a collection of theatrical demonstration borders—in sun and shade—that feature the owners' favorite perennials, grasses, shrubs, tender plants, and a Gothic-style greenhouse. No wonder the nursery quickly became a favorite destination for local plant-lovers. Bob sums up the philosophy that makes their nursery a success: "Our goal is to grow, sell, and showcase distinctive, cutting edge garden plants to adventurous gardeners." Bob and Andrew (garden editor for Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia) are especially fond of plants that add drama, color, and structure to the garden, and they strive to offer under-used, out-of-the ordinary species and cultivars to their customers.

In Bob's earlier career days he held management positions at Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania and at the San Francisco Botanical Garden in California. More recently, he was the vice president of horticulture and operations at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Bob is the author of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's all-region guide, *Designing Borders for Sun and Shade*, published in 2006.

Ruah Donnelly, author of *Where to Buy the Best Plants in New York and New Jersey*, asked why two delightful, knowledgeable men would work their hands to the bone running a nursery. "Most of us have a pipe dream of starting a little nursery," Bob says. "The original passion is all about plants." 📷

November Preview

RICHARD A. BROWN

BLOEDEL RESERVE— PACIFIC NORTHWEST TREASURE

Wednesday, November 14, 2007



IN THIS CHOREOGRAPHED FEAST for the senses, Dick Brown, the executive director of the Bloedel Reserve, will provide NHS members an opportunity to see how the Reserve changes throughout the year. The program is based on an exhibit featuring his photographs, *Four Seasons at Bloedel Reserve*, that will be on display in the Miller Library in October and early November.

Dick will begin his NHS presentation with a brief introduction to the 150-acre estate garden, and after the main program—consisting of seasonal images set to music—he will remain to answer questions.

Dick has a long history in horticulture. Early on in his working life, sometime around 1963, he decided to accept an offer to garden "for a woman" in Seattle who had an exceptional collection of plants.

This woman just happened to be Elisabeth C. Miller. While working for Mrs. Miller, he graduated from the University of Washington with degrees in math and botany.

In 1968, Mrs. Miller invited Dick to meet one of her houseguests, Dr. Russell Seibert, director of Longwood Gardens. This led to a Fellowship in the *Longwood Graduate Program in Public Garden Administration* and a move to Delaware.

After completing this program and working for the American Horticultural Society for a few years, Dick had lunch with his former employer, Betty Miller. She told him about a new position open at Bloedel Reserve. Nine months later he moved back to Seattle to accept the job—with a wife, two sons, an English bulldog, and an orange cat. On November 1, 1976, Dick began working at Bloedel Reserve. He has been there ever since.

Dick definitely has staying power: he has been an NHS member for forty years, serving on the board of directors and as president during this time. Currently he sits on the advisory board for NHS. 📷

SUNFLOWER POWER

BY DANIEL MOUNT

IN HOOTERVILLE, a housewife named a sunflower “Rudolph” and watered him daily, believing he would grant her one wish. If you were a child of the '60s like me, you might remember *Green Acres* and the sunflower that Lisa (played by Eva Gabor) named Rudolph. You might chuckle at her misguided beliefs—not realizing the sunflower’s power and the spell it cast over mankind for millennia.

This sunflower is *Helianthus annuus*, a western U.S. native and a member of the aster family. Of the sixty-seven species in the genus, the hardy annual *H. annuus* is the most famous.

The first evidence of its cultivation dates back to 2300 B.C.E. At that time, the native North Americans were already selecting plants with the largest seed and revering the plant as a symbol of endurance and strength. The sunflower was traded throughout the Americas, reaching as far south as Peru. The Incas, not only enamored with the sunflower as a food plant but also as an emblem of spiritual devotion, adorned their sun temples with pure gold sunflowers.

When the Spanish brought the nutrient-rich seeds of the “Marigold of Peru” back to Europe, they were grown merely as a curiosity. Though some monks grew them in cloister gardens, seeing in their sun-following flowers a model for obedience, their popularity waned as the novelty wore off.

In 1697, Czar Peter visited the Netherlands and fell in love with the sunflower, giving it new life. He brought it back to Russia, where farmers soon realized its food potential. They selected ever-larger plants, eventually coming up with the variety known as ‘Russian Giant.’ (Rudolph, the sunflower in

Green Acres, is the most famous member of this variety.)

By the 1870s, Russian immigrants brought their giant sunflowers to Canada, and then to the U.S. It did not take long for American farmers to change their minds about this “weed.” By the 1880s, ‘Russian Giants’ were appearing in seed catalogs and they soon became a standard in the American farm garden.

Then in 1966, a sunflower had fifteen minutes of fame on a sitcom, and well, nothing happened. But in the background, researchers and back-to-earthers were rediscovering that the sunflower was a nutritional powerhouse. The '70s saw a boom in sunflower production. Oil-rich cultivars, with easily harvestable heads, were filling thousands of acres of North Dakota, Kansas, and other western states. Today, sunflowers are second only to soybeans in the worldwide production of cooking oil.

In 1987 the sunflower’s popularity exploded. And it started in the most unlikely of places: Manhattan. The Metropolitan Museum of Art hosted an exhibit of Van Gogh’s paintings, and among them were his sunflowers. Suddenly sunflowers were appearing on everything from address books to T-shirts to mugs. The demand for sunflower bouquets brought new pollen-less cultivars into the market, such as ‘Sunbright’ and ‘Sunrich Orange’.

This frenzy flooded the market with many new cultivars. From the diminutive ‘Dwarf Sunspot’ at twelve inches, to the gigantic ‘American Giant’ topping out at sixteen feet, there is a sunflower for any size garden. The color

range now stretches beyond the typical gold to maroon-and-claret at one end of the spectrum and lemony yellows at the other. The numerous new shaggy-headed doubles like ‘Teddy Bear’ have won the hearts of the masses.

Their ease of cultivation has made them popular, from kindergartners to grandmas. Even the likes of Christopher Lloyd did not shrink from using them in his sunny summer borders. Like Mr. Lloyd, I am fond of the red cultivars, especially ‘Infrared’ and ‘Prado Red’.

Though best sown directly into a sunny spot with well-drained, moisture-retentive soil in spring, I have found sunflowers remarkably adaptable. They grow in hardpan, clay, or sandy soils with no problem, even flowering with only half a day of sun. They reseed freely in the perennial borders I tend, but if I don’t like their location, I dig them when they get their second set of leaves, being careful to move some of the soil with them. A broken taproot markedly reduces the chance of survival.

Being captivated (though sometimes disappointed) by all the new cultivars that are available, I have not grown a ‘Russian Giant’ in years. But I plan to change this, even though the sunflower’s anthropomorphic stature may tempt me to give it a name and water it daily. I want to look up at his big nodding head and make a wish—and wonder if granting wishes is one of the sunflower’s many powers. 🌻

Daniel Mount writes regularly for Garden Notes, exploring the relationships between plants and people. He works as a gardener and designer in the Seattle area.

EXCITING PLANT INTRODUCTIONS FROM THE WILD: PART ONE

BY RIZANIÑO “RIZ” REYES

THE RANGE OF NEW perennial introductions we're getting from the wild is seemingly endless! Although the loss of Heronswood Nursery was devastating, Dan Hinkley and a growing surge of plant explorers and nurserymen continue to botanize the globe and work with growers overseas to bring new plants to western gardeners. I'm ecstatic to be a part of this effort to seek out enticing new introductions.

For seven years I have been evaluating plants from China to determine what might be the next great garden find. I received some of the plants I am growing from collaborations with Chinese plantmen; others I collected during my first expedition to

China. Here are a few of my favorites:

Some of the most sought after shade perennials from China being cultivated today are those in the genus *Podophyllum*—the famous Chinese mayapples. Encountering colonies of them in a moist woodland was thrilling. The most spectacular of all is *Podophyllum delavayi*. With palmate foliage mind-bogglingly mottled in shades of maroon and deep purple, it is found in the higher elevations of Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, and like most mayapples, it takes a few years to establish in the garden. Protect it from slithering slugs as it comes up in early spring, and provide adequate water during the growing season. All

mayapples benefit from an organic mulch and an application of a slow-release organic fertilizer in early spring.

We can also thank China for the *Corydalis* genus. One of my most exciting finds in Sichuan was a species identified as *Corydalis temulifolia*. From a distance it looked like a shimmering bronze-leaved bleeding heart. Upon closer inspection, I saw that the foliage was faintly spotted in white, topped off with masses of breathtaking lilac blue flowers. “We have nothing like this in our gardens,” I said to myself. “I have to bring this back!” Upon my return to the states, however, I learned that someone else had beaten me to it—plant breeder Thierry Delabroye introduced a selection

PURPLE HAZE: THE NOT-SO-LOWLY CATMINT

BY MARY PALMER

WHILE WORKING at a struggling specialty nursery in the mid nineties, I was in charge of the display gardens. One day, to my great surprise, the management gave me a small check to purchase new plants. One of several that made the cut was a tidy mound of small gray green foliage with a pleasing aromatic fragrance. The tag read *Nepeta* ‘Walkers Low’. Not knowing what this was, I looked it up and silently thought, “Good grief, it's a catmint . . . this is the best I could do?” It was planted, and in short order perky spires of lavender blue complimented its companion, a purple sage. Bees immediately made themselves at home. Eventually, the catmint spilled onto the narrow strip of lawn surrounding the garden and became a nuisance to mow around (my chore at that time). After feeble attempts to shove it aside, I simply mowed over it. It perfumed the air and didn't look much worse for the wear. It swiftly grew back and

flowered again! What a perfect plant! Hey, this catmint is ALL RIGHT!

Years later, I find myself gardening in a large forest clearing. Deer and mountain beavers make their presence known, feasting on the banquet of delectable delicacies. These two creatures can really wreak havoc in a garden. Ahhh, life in the country! Catmint, my old friend, comes to the rescue. The herby scent is quite distasteful to native wildlife. Catmint is now liberally planted in close proximity to tasty specimens.

‘Walkers Low’ is my catmint of preference. I am trialing others such as *N.* ‘Dropmore’ and *N. nervosa* ‘Blue Moon’, but so far ‘Walkers Low’ seems more robust in my garden. All three obtain a height of 18–36 inches, depending on sun and shade exposure. While preferring full sun and decent drainage, they are not fussy, and once established, quite drought tolerant.



Lilium majoense

called 'Chocolate Stars'. The plant gets quite large compared to other *Corydalis*, reaching up to two feet high and almost three feet wide when in full bloom in April. In the two years I've grown this plant it has not gone to seed or become weedy, nor has it gone summer dormant. It is definitely worth searching out for a moist, shady location.

I've had *Thalictrum sp. aff. ichangense* for three years now, but I've only recently been successful propagating it from seed. This diminutive little charmer fits nicely in a pot or a partially shaded location in the garden. What makes this species exceptional are the silver markings on the purple and grey-green foliage and its continuous spray of pink or white blooms from late spring to early fall.

One of my personal favorites for flowers and foliage is *N. subsessilis*, originally from Japan. In my garden, it's a large sturdy plant sporting uncharacteristically large leaves with serrated edges and flower spires the size of small delphiniums. Unlike the others, it prefers a cool, moist root run and some afternoon shade. It is also an excellent cut flower. And did I mention that the blossoms are edible?

Everyone knows cats favor *Nepeta* for its intoxicating properties, their preferred species being *N. cataria* (catnip), which is higher in volatile oils. Butterflies and bees lust after the blossoms' abundant nectar, no matter the variety. In days gone by, as well as the present, catmint was an important herbal remedy for humans, reported to relieve a number of ailments from sinus headaches to chickenpox to flatulence. In old England, chewing the root was said to make a gentle person fierce and quarrelsome, and legend has it that a certain hangman was unable to do the deed until he had partaken of the root! I hope none of us ever has to cope with that dilemma.

Perhaps catmint is not so lowly after all. I hope more gardeners will enjoy the beautiful and versatile *Nepeta* for all its sensual pleasures and grow it as a special treat for our garden friends, the butterflies and bees. 🐝

Mary Palmer will help you find catmints and other cool plants for your garden at Boxhill Farm Nursery in Duwall. You can check out her gardening photo website at http://public.fotki.com/BambooMary/my_green_house

Lilium majoense is a rare and fairly new species lily I've also propagated from seed. Its large bell-shaped flowers are cool cream green with heavy purple speckling in the center. They sit atop slender stems five feet tall. It thrives surprisingly well in shade with limited irrigation. Oh, I should mention that it's wonderfully scented as well. As with any lily, moisture and excellent drainage are absolute musts, and adequate air circulation is beneficial to fight off prospective problems like botrytis early in the season.

In the next issue of *Garden Notes*, I'll talk about plants for winter and early season interest. Until then, happy fall gardening! 🍂

Rizaniño "Riz" Reyes is the Soest Gardener at the Center for Urban Horticulture and the owner of RHR Horticulture. Look for his plants at the NHS Plant Sale—rumor has it there may be a few of these for sale.

~ THANKS TO OUR 2007 PATRONS ~

The lecture series would not be possible without the tremendous support of our wonderful patrons. Their generosity enables NHS to provide a world-class educational program for Northwest gardeners. Thank you, patrons!

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MILLER LIBRARY NEWS

KAREN PREUSS



**ELISABETH CAREY MILLER
MEMORIAL LECTURE 2007**

**Graham Rankin
“The Most Beautiful
Gardens in Wales”**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2007
AT 7:30 P.M.**

**MEANY HALL FOR THE
PERFORMING ARTS,
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON**

GRAHAM RANKIN, director of operations at Aberglasney Gardens in Wales, is this year's Miller Lecture guest speaker. The author of *Magnolia: A Care Manual*, published in 1999 by Laurel Glen Publishing, Rankin will lead his audience on a visual tour of some of Wales' most beautiful gardens. A particular focus of the lecture will be the recent, and ongoing, restoration of the abandoned 400-year-old garden at Aberglasney and its planting for the next century.

An estate whose existence dates back to the 16th century, Aberglasney suffered from centuries of neglect until it was purchased in 1995 by the Aberglasney Restoration Trust. Since then, the ten acres of gardens have been gradually and carefully restored. At its heart is an Elizabethan/Jacobean cloister and parapet walk, now fully restored. Other areas of the garden include a stone gatehouse, estimated to have been built in the 1600s, a Pigeon House Wood planted in the early 1800s, and a yew tunnel that historians and archaeologists suggest dates back to the 18th century.

Perhaps the most unusual and most talked-about garden at Aberglasney is the Ninfarium, built in 2005. The



Graham Rankin

brainchild of Rankin, the Ninfarium is a unique garden created within the ruinous central rooms and courtyard of the mansion. As described on the garden's website, “the remaining walls were stabilized and the entire space is covered with a glass atrium,” inside which a collection of warm temperate and sub-tropical plants, including orchids, palms, magnolias, and cycads are on display. The name Ninfarium is derived from the gardens at Ninfa, south of Rome.

Aberglasney today is a thriving public garden. Events such as Shakespeare in the Garden and a Traditional Winter Fair take place throughout the year, along with classes on horticultural topics and art exhibitions. Intimately involved in the restoration of

Aberglasney have been Frank Cabot, Penelope Hobhouse, and Hal Moggridge. Once a “garden lost in time,”

Aberglasney now looks toward the future. (And we're told the estate is the home to ghosts, which we hope Rankin will tell us about in his lecture!)

The Miller Lecture and reception are

free, thanks to generous funding by the Pendleton and Elisabeth Carey Miller Charitable Foundation. It is sponsored with the Elisabeth Carey Miller Botanical Garden, the Elisabeth C. Miller Library, and the Northwest Horticultural Society. Ticket requests will be accepted beginning Monday, September 24. If you are interested in receiving a ticket to the Elisabeth Carey Miller Memorial Lecture, please send your name and complete mailing address to info@millergarden.org or phone 206-362-8612. Tickets will be mailed to you immediately upon request.



**Thank You for Two
Wonderful Years**

I WANT TO THANK everyone in NHS for making the past two years so special for me. It has truly been a joy to get to know so many of you, and I count many of you as good friends.

Individually, and as a group, NHS made me feel welcome from the very first time I set foot in the Miller Library, and I have loved being the manager of this remarkable library, working with the most marvelous staff and with all of you.

By the time this newsletter reaches your mailbox, I will have begun a new life in New York City (the Bronx, to be exact). While my move to New York is exciting and cause for much personal celebration, it's sad to leave behind so

many wonderful people. So, come visit me in New York! (Just not all at once....) I look forward to staying in touch with many of you and hearing about all the goings-on here in Seattle. And I'll be sure to plan visits to Seattle

around NHS lectures, so you will see me again! 📷

Karen Preuss is manager of the Elisabeth C. Miller Library.

**The Elisabeth C. Miller
Library is open:
Monday 9 A.M. to 9 P.M.,
Tuesday–Friday 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.,
and Saturday 9 A.M. to 3 P.M.
(Closed Saturdays in August)**

NHS BULLETIN BOARD

— SAVE THE DATE —

2008 NHS Spring Symposium

The Ornamental Plant:

From Third Century Athens to Your Garden

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2008, 9:00 A.M.—4:00 P.M.

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[HTTP://WWW.SDHORTSOC.ORG/MEDSKY.HTM](http://www.sdhortsoc.org/medsky.htm)

Editor's Note

A Call for Contributions and Comments

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING you'd like to say to other NHS members about plants, design, or gardeners? *Garden Notes* is always looking for new writers, so please call if you'd like to brainstorm ideas.

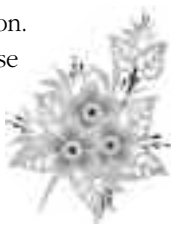
I'd like to thank the many members who already contribute to this newsletter. Your generosity and talent keep it going—a bouquet of flowers to all of you. Thanks, also, to those who take time to read *Garden Notes* each season.

Readers, if you especially enjoy an article, please let the hard-working author know. Writers thrive on feedback. And whether you love or hate a particular article, please let *me* know. It gets lonely at the computer without you.

You can reach me at melody.hooper@verizon.net or (425) 788-3650.

See you at the plant sale!

Melody



— 2007 FALL CLASSES —

September

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 10:00 A.M.—12:00 NOON

Water-wise Gardening with Shelagh Tucker & Phil Wood

LOCATION: TUCKER GARDEN/CARKEEK PARK AREA

FEE: MEMBERS \$25.00 NON-MEMBERS: \$35.00

Shelagh and Phil will share the story of their collaboration to replace a brown lawn with an exuberant combination of plants, stonework, and recycled material from a historic Seattle building.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 10:00 A.M.—12:00 NOON

Xeric Gardening with Shon Robinson

LOCATION: CENTER FOR URBAN HORTICULTURE
& MANDT GARDEN/SEATTLE

FEE: MEMBERS \$25.00 NON-MEMBERS: \$35.00

Shon will show how good design, soil preparation, and plant choices combine with well-maintained watering systems to create xeric gardening.

October

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 10:00 A.M.—12:00 NOON

Fall & Winter Containers with Jim Fox

LOCATION: WELLS-MEDINA NURSERY/MEDINA

FEE: MEMBERS \$25.00 NON-MEMBERS: \$35.00

Jim will talk about how they plant containers for year-round interest at the nursery, including a discussion of plant choices and planting techniques.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 10:00 A.M.—3:00 P.M.

Autumn Highlights with Glenn Withey, Charles Price, & Carolyn Jones

LOCATION: DUNN & MILLER GARDENS/SEATTLE

FEE: MEMBERS \$45.00 NON-MEMBERS: \$65.00

(LUNCH INCLUDED)

Experts from the Dunn Garden and Miller Botanical Garden showcase the autumn glory in these two estate gardens and discuss maintenance tasks they perform in the fall season.

November

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 10:00 A.M.—12:00 NOON

Wreath-making with Greg Graves & Gary Waller

LOCATION: OLD GOAT FARM/ORTING

FEE: MEMBERS \$55.00 NON-MEMBERS: \$75.00

Greg and Gary will help you design and create your own wreath for the holiday season.

To register contact Karin Kravitz: nwhort@aol.com or (206) 780-8172. 

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

OKAY. I ADMIT IT: I'm totally addicted to plants. I had so much fun at plant sales last spring, I can hardly wait for the big NHS plant sale September 14 and 15. But I can't decide which is the best part about our sale: the availability of hard-to-find plants, the opportunity to gain first-hand information from growers, or seeing the smiling, glowing faces of fellow plant addicts, carrying their new-found treasures.

And that's what is so great about the Northwest Horticultural Society—the comradeship with fellow gardeners and all the learning opportunities available through lectures, tours, classes, and talking to experts. We also continue to improve communication through our website and e-news. Of course, our *Garden Notes* alone is worth the price of a year's membership.

I hope you will encourage your friends and neighbors to join NHS, because as our membership grows we can offer more choices and benefits to our members. We also support the Miller Horticultural Library (a wonderful resource we should all use more), give grants, and donate scholarships to horticulture students. Everything we do makes me proud to be a part of this organization.

Happy planting,
Nita-Jo



RICHIE STEFFEN

Aster x frikartii 'Jungfrau', is a Great Plant Pick that blooms from late July into October. Learn more about Great Plant Picks—a feature at the NHS Fall Plant Sale this September—on page 7.

Garden NOTES

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