



# Leaflet

A MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY PUBLICATION



**JULY 2022**



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## GARDEN GREETING: JULY

I'd argue that July is one of the most challenging months in the gardening calendar. We hustled through spring, cleaning up the garden and getting it planted. In June, warm days and cool nights persist as well as early summer rainfall; dewy lawns grow quickly as we admire their emerald green hue. Perennials emerge and we marvel at the changes we see daily.

In July the heat exhausts both us and the landscape. Lawns turn brown, errant dandelion wands emerge sneakily, and weeds hang on to dry soil not wanting to be pried out. The garden is looking tired—June's plant growth needs to be managed—deadheading, pruning, and staking are frequent chores. We notice holes in the landscape, places where we wish we had one more shrub, or one more perennial. Annuals and veggies are making the race to complete their lifespan. We worry about getting too much sun on our skin and hope to not collide with poison ivy, all while checking ourselves for ticks. Maybe we're lucky enough to schedule some time away from our gardens—a

vacation—but who will water for us to keep it all looking good?

Let's not be too hard on ourselves! Gardening is meant to be a hobby, a pastime. Like every hobby, it takes practice. Each July challenges you to be a better gardener. Maybe last year's weeds were so bad that you found a new technique or tool that will make future weeding sessions easier? Maybe you've mastered the irrigation or added soil amendments that make gardening easier.

One of the most inspiring days we've had at MHS this summer was our Inaugural Weed Derby. The weeds are bad, and we're still a small team so we dreamed up a team building activity that got every staff member out into the garden for two hours. I'll tell you - we had wonderful conversations, got to know each other, learned more about weeds, and gained a bit more understanding about each of our respective roles at the Garden. The big win of the day, besides the camaraderie, trophies, and ice cream, was a dump truck full of weeds. Many hands make light(er) work, and we

will be hosting a yearly weed derby from now on. Having the entire team out weeding helped some of our team gain confidence in knowing which plants are weeds - and now they are more likely to stop to pull a weed if they are out for a walk.

*Continued on next page...*

MHS Staff at the Inaugural Weed Derby





## Garden Greeting cont.

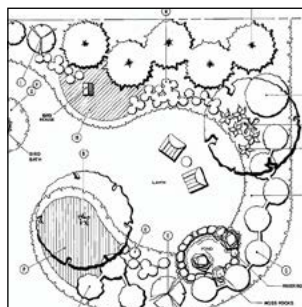
Please spend more time in the hammock enjoying your garden. Keep a notebook with you so that you can observe which areas of the garden need color during specific time periods. Take a moment to visit gardens and parks to see which annuals, perennials, and trees are flourishing in summer heat. Take notes and try to document the things you love so that you can replicate them. Learn something from their years of experience curating the combinations within their garden beds. I'm spending time learning more about the newest cultivars of Hydrangea—some that weep, some that stay under 2' tall—and I'm excited to begin adding those and a host of summer flowering bulbs to the Garden at Elm Bank—allium, lilies and lycoris to name a few. There's always room for one more plant.

Karen Daubmann  
Director of Garden & Programs

## UPCOMING CLASSES



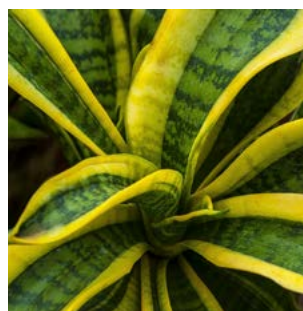
**Terrariums  
Pop-Up Class**  
July 12, 10am-1pm



**The Art of Planting  
Design: Learn to  
Design in Seasonal  
Sequence**  
July 13, 10am-2pm



**Houseplant Emergency  
Room**  
July 14, 10am-1pm



**Sansevieria  
Pop-Up Class**  
August 16, 10am-1pm

[VIEW ALL](#)

### GREEN PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Flash your membership card for a 10% discount with any of our Green Partners.



## UPCOMING EVENTS



**Music in the Garden  
Summer Concert Series**  
July 13, July 27, and August 21  
7-8:30pm



**Late Nights in the Garden**  
REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!  
July 28 & August 18, 4-8pm



**Christmas in July**  
July 23-31  
10am-4pm



**Mah Jongg in the Garden**  
FIRST SESSION ANNOUNCED!  
June 20, 1pm



### FESTIVAL OF TREES IS COMING

We can't wait to see all of the beautiful tree donations this year, from previous and new donors alike! So get your minds in a festive spirit and start thinking of your tree ideas.

MORE DETAILS WILL BE ANNOUNCED SOON.



# Olmsted Asian Garden Restoration and Repurposing



Erin and volunteers pull weeds in the first phase of the project.

By Erin Fogarty, Horticulturist — Conservation & Historic Gardens

As Massachusetts Horticultural Society's newest horticulturist, I've been quite busy getting the garden into shape since I started in May, just after finishing my MS with a focus in historic landscape restoration from University of Delaware. In all this hustle at work, one area in particular – the area I was hired to work on – brings me particular excitement: The Olmsted Asian Garden. Being able to slowly, deliberately bring an historic garden back to life – all the while keeping my mind on long-term environmental impact – is a dream of mine, and one I am so happy to be embarking on here at Elm Bank. That being said, the first step of a landscape rehab project is often difficult, and this one is no dif-

ferent. Because of the horticultural trends of 1916, when the garden was designed, we have a number of formerly ornamental species – now considered invasive – endemic within the area which have to be removed before we can move forward. Here are some of the plants we're currently tackling in the Olmsted Asian Garden, and how you can take care of them in your own home:

Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) – All multiflora rose specimens we find have to be tagged and reported to the Dover Conservation Commission prior to removal. Once a 24-hour waiting period elapses, we cut off all smaller branches and canes with pruners,

then use loppers to cut specimens to the ground. Later, we'll dig out the root systems.

Glossy buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula*) – Like multiflora rose, all buckthorn specimens have to be tagged and reported. Following the 24-hour waiting period, we use loppers or saws – depending on the size of the specimen – to cut the plant down. We then remove root systems.

Asiatic bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) – Asiatic bittersweet has complex and large root systems. For each vine, we begin by untangling it from any branches of trees in which it may have interfered. Then, we locate the base of the vine, and begin to gently pull, using a soil knife to loosen the soil if necessary. We pull the roots until we reach the end, or until we reach

another vine sharing the root system.

Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) – At this time, only shrub-sized specimens (less than 2" at DBH–Diameter at Breast Height–or 4.5' from soil level) need to be removed. Specimens are removed like buckthorn – first plants are cut down, then their root systems are removed.

English ivy (*Hedera helix*) – Removal of English ivy is best accomplished through hand removal. I grab the "node" of a leaf near the soil and pull gently. The roots are mostly lateral and creeping, so continue this until all stems and roots are gone.

The best practice to remove of invasive species is to bag them and throw them away.

## VOLUNTEER WITH ERIN IN THE OLMSTED GARDEN!



Clockwise, from far left: Asiatic bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*); Glossy buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula*); Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*); English ivy (*Hedera helix*); Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*)





# Historic Daffodil and Native Plant Garden

By Noanett Garden Club



In 2001, the Noanett Garden Club conceived of a historic daffodil garden at the Garden at Elm Bank. The garden began as a collection of historic daffodil varieties coupled with a variety of native grasses.

The garden was a community service project to celebrate Massachusetts Horticultural Society's relocation to Elm Bank. Today the Noanett Garden Club Historic Daffodil and Native Plant Garden has grown to cover 3,000 square feet and now includes important native plants such as *Liatris novae-angliae*, northern blazing star, of special concern in Massachusetts and *Veronicastrum virginicum*, culver's root, a rare and threatened species in Massachusetts that pro-



Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*)



Bloom board

vides pollen and nectar to long- and short-tongued bees. Both the garden and its mission have grown to highlight the beauty of a large variety of native perennials, trees and shrubs and acts as a teaching space advancing important conservation efforts like providing plants for pollinators and other threatened wildlife species. Noanett Garden Club members maintain and continually improve the garden, amending the soil, keeping weeds and invasive species at bay, and adding additional native plants enhancing its bio-diversity.

For years plants were identified using in-ground labels. These often broke or were inadvertently pulled out during maintenance. In 2021, the Club decided to embrace the possibilities of technology "mapping" the garden in sections and identifying the important characteristics of each plant. The garden will have a QR code that brings visitors to the MHS website. Visitors can then see the plants from the gar-

den along with photos, common and botanical names, and facts, making it the perfect tool to select plants for their own gardens. The sections will also be marked with small signs in the garden and on the garden's informational board, affectionately known as the "Bloom Board." The beauty of this system is that the information available to visitors can be easily updated and changed as the garden evolves.

We encourage you to come visit Noanett's Historic Daffodil and Native Plant Garden at the Garden at Elm Bank. While daffodil season has passed for the year, there are many native plants that will capture your attention. Your visit will leave you with a new appreciation for native plants and plenty of information to begin or expand your own native plant garden!



Mount Hood daffodil



# Spotted Lanternfly

Massachusetts Department of  
Agricultural Resources (MDAR)

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) is asking the public to keep an eye out for the invasive pest known as spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) due to the risk of egg masses being accidentally brought in on shipments of trees imported from other states. MDAR recently received reports that nursery stock from SLF-infested areas may have been sent to Massachusetts growers. Due to this, anyone who has recently purchased trees or shrubs or had them planted on their property, particularly maple or crabapple trees, is being asked to inspect the trunk and branches to ensure there are no SLF egg masses or any hitchhiking nymphs, and to report any finds to MDAR. Landscapers and plant nurseries are also being reminded to stay on the lookout for this pest.

In addition to the agricultural impacts it causes, spotted lanternfly has the potential to negatively impact outdoor activities due to the swarming behavior of this pest when the adults appear in the late summer. SLF egg masses are about an inch and a half long, and are flat and gray in color, making them difficult to detect, especially on tree bark. Because of this, any SLF may not be noticed until the nymphs hatch at the end of May or the start of June. The public is asked to look for small black insects marked with white dots. If grapes or tree-of-heaven are in the area, they will migrate to those plants. You can find out more information and photos on [MDAR's blog](#).

**If you see any signs of spotted lanternfly, please [report it to MDAR](#).**



Top down: Spotted Lanternfly egg masses; a first instar nymph, they are few millimeters long in size (Photo by Gregory Hoover); early instar SLF nymphs feeding on a honeysuckle bush

## sus-tain-a-bil-i-ty

Discovering the True Definition, Defining the New Paradigm

By Trevor L. Smith, MCH, AOLCP, LEED GA

sus tain' a-bil'-i-ty (noun) Avoidance of depletion of natural resources in order to maintain an ecological balance.

### THE PROBLEM

The most dangerous phrase ever uttered is "This is the way we've always done it." When I began Land Escapes, the latest and greatest cell phone was the flip phone, people emailed but phone and mail was preferred, and it was good to have a website but not essential. Varieties like Endless Summer Hydrangea and Knockout Roses were just about to hit the market, and N, P, K (nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium) was all you needed to know about lawn and garden care. Today I have a small computer in my pocket, clients all email but prefer text, and if you don't have an online presence you may as well not exist. Varieties like Endless Summer Hydrangea and Knockout Roses are everywhere and N, P, K is still all people know about lawn and garden care.



Sustainability isn't about how much we can "safely" take from the earth, but how much we give back.



During those intervening years, an abundance of information about the importance of native plants and habitat, the amazing world of the soil food

web, the dangers and problems with synthetic fertilizers, and stormwater runoff has been propelled to the forefront. Despite these changes many landscape designers and city planners create pretty landscapes, parks, and green spaces installed by landscape or construction crews as if they were putting together IKEA® furniture or painting by numbers. The time for "This is the way we've always done it" is over. We can no longer simply landscape for aesthetics and install without understanding. We need to evolve in our approach to the planet as we evolved in the way we communicate and do business. Just as our phones do more, our designs need to do more, and just as we needed to learn how to use those phones, we need to learn to use the emerging technologies especially when it comes to Green Infrastructure (GI).

### THE NEED

There is a deficit in the landscape industry of well-trained GI professionals. Many landscape companies follow installation instructions and specifications without a true understanding of how these systems actually work and why they are now being standardized by various government and municipal agencies. There are few resources available for GI-specific training; we need projects that will help bring awareness and hands-on

training to this relatively new industry if we plan to have a skilled workforce in the future. We can no longer environmentally afford to look at and treat the landscape as a canvas; landscapes, parks and greenspaces must do more than look nice. Every design needs to address planet and people. To address the planet means to make choices that consider the soil, water, plant species, and the impact on wildlife such as birds and pollinators. To address the people means to look beyond the factors of space and use and to make choices that consider health, education, enjoyment, and functionality

## THE SOLUTION

Architects, planners, and designers must ask more from their designs. Each project, no matter how small, should address as many environmental and human issues as possible. For example, a project could call for fifty street trees to be planted. Instead of putting in a standard tree pit, where the tree's life expectancy is five to seven years due to improper planting, compaction of the base and neglect, what if we asked for more? What if the plan was to plant the tree properly in combination with a stormwater catchment system? Knowing compaction is a problem, why not protect the base of the pit with a permeable material to prevent compaction and to allow maximum water infiltration? What if a maintenance plan was designed from the beginning to ensure that the tree lived its full lifespan, providing generations of enjoyment and

benefits?

That would be pretty awesome right? But what if we took it a step further and used the tree planting and establishment period as a GI training opportunity? Then we would have a group of entry-level workers (maybe from second chance or skills programs) who learn how to plant the trees and install the stormwater catchment system properly. They could maintain the trees for the first year in conjunction with a basic horticulture class. Then we would have a group of properly trained individuals with an understanding of the benefits of street trees, including their role in the urban landscape and in stormwater management, ready to be hired.

Once we start asking more from our designs and calling on ourselves to do more and go further we will be amazed at how powerful even the smallest project can be. Moving forward, I believe we need to evaluate each project for four major opportunities.

**Maximum Environmental Impact** – Have we addressed every environmental opportunity?

**Skills Training** – Can this project be a training opportunity for the future workforce? Is there opportunity to write into the RFP a requirement to use entry level workers or skills programs?

**Job Creation** – With this project are

we creating the need to hire additional personnel or are we creating a demand for new job opportunities, e.g., raingarden or greenroof maintenance companies?

**Community Education or Involvement** – Wherever there is an opportunity to reach out to the community and explain the project and its intention, that is a moment that needs to be capitalized on. This can be in the form of signage describing the benefits, e.g., “This Is A Rain Garden. It is designed to....” Or in the form of a community meeting or community involvement, e.g., Plant A Pollinator Garden at the Library with the Scouts or a science class.

The more everybody understands, the more inspired and environmentally aware they will become. As we work to become a part of the solution, building and educating in this manner, we will set the standards to secure a healthier, productive future for all.

## CASE STUDIES

In the following sections, I outline four small case studies along with their goals to help illustrate this new approach and to demonstrate how easy it is to rewrite the way we do things. The four case studies include The Boston Green Roof Bus Shelter Initiative, The Somerville Raingarden Project, The Upham's Corner Community Garden, and the Dorchester 100 Tree Initiative. All of these projects were grant-funded and designed to prove the approach described here



A green roof tops one of Boston's bus shelters.  
can work.

## Green Roof Bus Shelter Initiative

### Objectives

- Prove low-cost, high-impact GI method
- Prove entry level job training opportunity
- Highlight opportunity for underserved communities
- Bring GI to street level to start conversation

### Narrative

The Green Roof Bus Shelter Initiative was a trial workforce development program in which the students of Youth Build Boston installed, maintained and monitored 6 green roofs on bus shelters around the city of



Boston. The program lasted three years offsetting a combined total of 12,964 gallons of storm water. The roofs were retrofitted onto existing shelters and were planted with a hardy five sedum mix as well as seeded with native flowers. The total soil depth was four inches and the total saturation weight was twelve pounds

per square foot. The students visited the shelters once a month to capture data on rainfall, the growth and health of the plants, stormwater runoff, and green roof impact on the heat island effect. This pilot project was coupled with two major community outreach engagements along with a number of smaller projects. The first of the major engagements was a presentation of the program to a group of community leaders, and the second was to a high school science class. Finally, each shelter was fitted with info-posters depicting what was happening on the roof above and the intent of the program.

## Somerville Raingarden Project

### Objectives

- Prove low-cost, high-impact GI method
- Prove entry level job training opportunity
- Highlight opportunity for underserved communities
- Highlight examples of GI to start conversation

### Narrative

The Somerville Raingarden Project installation was a workforce development pro-

A Youth Build Boston team installs one of the green roofs on top of a bus shelter, with instruction from Trevor Smith.

gram in which the youth members of Groundworks Somerville installed and maintained two raingardens. Prior to installation, a presentation outlining the project and the further green job intent was given to the residents of the housing community where the raingardens were being installed and to the members of Groundworks Somerville. Participants were taught the importance and function of a raingarden as well as how to properly site, construct, plant and maintain a raingarden. In addition, they were

exposed to basic Green Industry skills such as plant and weed identification.

## Dorchester 100 Tree Initiative

### Objectives

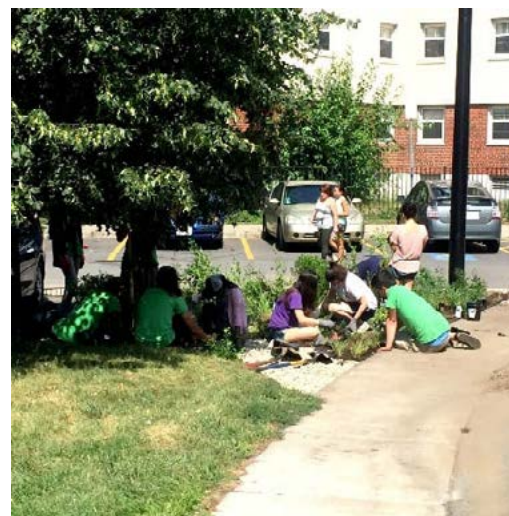
- Prove low-cost, high-impact GI method
- Prove entry level job training opportunity
- Highlight opportunity for underserved communities
- Bring GI to street level to start conversation

### Narrative

During The Dorchester Tree Initiative a group of young men from the Strive organization (a GED job skills training program) spent five weeks planting trees at various housing developments around Dorchester. In addition to learning proper tree planting and pruning techniques, the project also



Signage inside the bus shelter explains the project.



Youth members of Groundworks Somerville first learn about plant placement (top) and then dig into installation of the raingarden (bottom).



Recruits from Strive, a jobs readiness program, plant trees and documented variety and size.





Trevor shows how to create a water well around a newly planted tree (left) and demonstrates proper width and depth of a planting hole (right).

included classes in basic tree care and pest/disease identification.

The long-term goal was to teach these young men tree and landscape maintenance so that they could go on to be hired by the property management company as landscape maintenance professionals. The project finished ahead of schedule and under budget so an additional thirteen trees and forty shrubs were planted.

## Upham's Corner Community Garden

### Objectives

- Prove positive reclamation of vacant lots,
- Bring healthy local food opportunities to underserved communities

- Involve youth (Boston Food Project) and community in neighborhood improvement
- Highlight examples of GI and start conversation

### Narrative

The Upham's Corner Community Garden was a high community involvement project in which youth members of The Boston Food Project worked to repurpose a vacant lot. With the help of the neighborhood, the site was cleared and capped due to high lead levels in the soil. Raised beds were then constructed and the site was given to the care of the neighborhood. Instead of becoming more housing or remaining a blight in the neighborhood, this lot remained a greenspace and became a community gathering and nourishing space.



Volunteers assemble planter beds at the Upham's Corner Community Garden (top left). Other volunteers fill the beds with soil (top right). The Community Garden beds soon overflow with the season's bounty (bottom).

ducing new ideas that involve change. Thomas Edison faced huge push back from the whale oil and gas light lobby, but electric power prevailed.

In these four projects,

simple low-cost installations led to large impact and much needed GI was implemented addressing planet and people, with the future of the industry in mind. In my presentations, I often say if we install forty raingardens around the city, we have now created the need for raingarden maintenance. Given the opportunity to install and maintain small green roofs on bus shelters, a young person can go to a company and say they have relevant experience.



### CONCLUSION

The fact is there is a lot of work to be done. To move forward sustainably and to truly, wholly address the environmental challenges we face, we will need to adopt new methods and technologies. To find the solutions, we will need to look at the issue not in the context of the quick fix but at a larger scale. One of the biggest challenges we faced during all of these projects was convincing the decision makers to trust us and to try something that either hadn't been done before or to try something relatively new with very little supporting data.

Challenges are common when intro-

Systemic improvements begin with us asking more of our designs and the construction process. By addressing as many environmental issues as we can in each design and rewriting requests for proposals to include green job training, we can achieve both the immediate installations we need while building our future workforce. Coupled with signage or community outreach where possible, we can create opportunity and awareness and collectively help our community and heal our planet.

Trevor Smith, MCH, AOLCP, LEED GA, is Design and Education Manager at Weston Nurseries. Trevor specializes in native plant design, stormwater management and habitat creation. Trevor is also the past-President of the Ecological Landscape Alliance. You can reach Trevor at [Trevors@WestonNurseries.com](mailto:Trevors@WestonNurseries.com)





## Bert and Brenda's Challenge

By John Lee

Long about the end of June, Bert and Brenda's gardens are beginning to erupt with the most remarkable array of horticultural and vegetable abun-



dance. The rhubarb, the lettuces, the asparagus, early peas, spring greens (aka dandelions sometimes) baby kale, Jerusalem artichokes (to be dug) and spinach are now in profusion. Just weeks away EVERYTHING will be busting out of the refrigerator, crowding the counters and awaiting further attention. Every day Brenda picks a bouquet of fresh flowers which she happily distributes to her neighbors whose flower beds are already looking a bit sad after they took a week's vacation to the coast. What to do with the floral plenitude is an easy problem to solve and required little effort outside of remembering who prefers reds and pinks and who just hates yellows or purples. Seems like everyone is fond of anything blue this year (which pleases Bert who prefers any-

thing but blue).

One of the early challenges every year is the question of who is going to be responsible for what. As they get on in years, Brenda begins to explain to Bert (in words of one syllable) who is going to plant what where and how much of it. The new goat dairy on the other side of the village been producing some pretty nice feta cheese so Brenda would like to see some succession plantings of spinach because she loves her baked eggs with spinach and feta.

Bert is not resistant to such culinary machinations, but he thinks like a squirrel and is worried if there'll be enough room in the garden to fill up the root cellar again this year. They go back and forth on these sorts of questions. If she's just going to give away the flowers, why not concentrate on putting food by for the winter? She says 'we don't eat as much as we used to. In fact, we've still got some carrots and frozen beans from a year, if not two, ago. I'll either make a deal with the neighbors or one of us can do the

new farmers market behind the bank if it will make you feel any better'. Bert resigned himself to improved cooperation. End of conversation. With a Pyrrhic victory under her belt, Brenda began to get ready for the summer onslaught. There were jelly jars to wash as well as Ball and Mason jars; get out the canning kettle, the Sure-gel, a good supply of cider vinegar and an extra sack or two of sugar, paraffin, rings and lids. Canning season was almost at hand.

Bert was good in the garden but he was pretty much useless in the kitchen unless there was a question of whether the jam was sweet enough or the pickles were pickley enough. Brenda's older sister ("Mrs. D") would come over after work to help out. (insert photo of Mrs D) and keep company while the summer's bounty was canned, frozen or turned into condiments. Years ago, her husband, Francis, had come up from Massachusetts but his folks were from Maine and were quite accomplished in the kitchens of Starvation Corner so there was always a recipe to share. Early in the

### BAKED EGGS WITH SPINACH AND FETA

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees

In a cast iron pan:

Sauté 1 medium onion until translucent

Add just the right amount of chopped fresh spinach to wilt

Pour over the mixture 3-4 well-beaten eggs

Add salt and pepper to taste

Do NOT scramble; when the bottom is set, top with desired amount of feta and place in the oven on the middle rack.

The dish will be ready when eggs are puffed and slightly browned. Brenda likes her eggs sprinkled with a little fresh dill.



### DEDHAM RHUBARB RELISH

[Mrs. George S. Bishop, 295 Whiting Ave., Dedham, Mass.]

|                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 quart rhubarb, diced       | 1 teaspoon salt        |
| 1 pint vinegar               | 1 teaspoon pepper      |
| 1 quart onions, chopped fine | 1 teaspoon cinnamon    |
| 2 pounds brown sugar         | 1 teaspoon cloves      |
|                              | 1 teaspoon celery salt |

Cook rhubarb and vinegar 20 minutes; add the remaining ingredients and cook slowly about 1 hour. Seal. Makes about 4 pint jars.

*This recipe won a prize in a national contest conducted by a leading women's magazine. It is a very old recipe.*



season, everyone liked Dedham Rhubarb Relish (see photo above). It was good with most anything - lunch or dinner - and there was always rhubarb as it seemed to be about the only crop that seemed to take care of itself every year (as did the lemon balm growing next door to be made into tea). Mrs. D and Brenda would make a double batch for each of them and plan to make more as time allowed.

This time of year, they would also put up a delicious asparagus soup using up any left-over (frozen!) chicken stock or store-bought as needed.

When Brenda had time on her hands, she would begin to think about flowers for the fall and winter months. Her garden was always salted with flowers to be preserved for the darker months as well as those to be enjoyed in summer bouquets. Amongst her favorites for preservation were statice, gomphrena, celosia (at which Bert turned up his nose!), strawflowers, lavender and even thistle. These all were to be harvested at peak bloom

so that summer color could later be arranged in colorful dry bouquets to decorate quiet corners for months in the winter doldrums. This, she explained to anyone interested, was simply done the old-fashioned way by bunching individual varieties (about a dozen stems to a bunch), stripping the foliage and collected by a rubber band before hanging up-side down to dry in a dark place. She used her attic where she had hammered a row of well-spaced nails into one of the rafters so that her bunches would have plenty of air circulation. She would also strip the dried lavender petals to make into sachets which, if she didn't give them all away, she would interfoliate in her freshly washed linens or personal garments. She also claimed that Bert slept better on lavender-scented pillows. She'd read that somewhere and it turned out to be true.

Years ago, Brenda had bought an Amana Radar Range (now called a microwave) in part to heat up a quick lunch for Bert but also to preserve other colorful flowers which she had learned about doing at the Prosper Community House down the road. The lady who taught the workshop said that this method of 'drying' preserved color better than hanging even if it required a bit more time and ef-

fort. She said to use a microwave-safe container that will never be used for food preparation, to cover the bottom of it with a silica gel (about an inch was plenty) and place the blossoms upside-down and cover with more gel (enough but not so much as to squash the petals). Then put the uncovered container into the micro-wave under low heat for two to five minutes (depending on the size or depth of the bloom). Once the flowers are dried, cover the container for a bit then uncover slightly to allow the flowers to vent. Let them stand for 24 hours then gently remove them from the gel and brush off any left-over crystals. Brenda found that an acrylic hair spray tended to preserve the color a bit longer than if the blossoms were left naked. This method was good for flowers like roses, Gerbera, chrysanthemum and even tulips, she learned. Brenda

tended to think that preserving tulips and cupped roses was a bit de trop but pan-flowered roses like *Rosa rugosa* or wild roses came out quite nicely. For her, using the micro-wave to preserve her garden bounty required a much steeper learning curve unlike air-drying. She advised anyone trying this to further source up-to-date techniques in case she had missed or misunderstood a step.

As June morphed into July, Brenda served up as much of the preceding year's harvest as she could get Bert to eat. She told him that he needed to fatten up for the harvest ahead and if he wasn't going to eat it, she was going to give it to the pig. She needed the jars and freezer containers PDQ and they'd get to the pig when the weather cooled down.

### ASPARAGUS SOUP

2 large handfuls of fresh-picked asparagus

3 nobs of butter

A couple of medium-sized chopped onions

6 cups chicken stock or broth of your choosing

Sauté the chopped onions about 8 minutes or until translucent but not browned.

Cut up the asparagus into ½" pieces and add to chicken stock with a little salt and pepper to taste.

Boil and then turn to simmer until asparagus pieces are tender – about 25 minutes.

Puree the soup and decide when to eat it. This recipe will make about two quarts which will freeze for up to three months. Brenda likes it a little better with a squeeze of lemon and a sprinkle of parmigiana and/or chives before serving.

John Lee is the recently retired manager of MHS Gold Medal winner Allandale Farm, Cognoscenti contributor and president of MA Society for Promoting Agriculture. He sits on the Governor's Food Policy Council and UMASS Board of Public Overseers and is a long-time op-ed contributor to Edible Boston and other publications.



# WEEDS!

BY WAYNE MEZITT



By its very nature, the act of gardening disrupts nature's master-plan to cover every available soil surface with vegetation. Most of us who garden have in mind a different approach which favors the plants we want to enjoy more than what grows there naturally. Unless we're gardening in an already-cleared site, we need to make space for our desired plants by removing those plants that are currently using those garden spaces. We also need to continually maintain our gardens by removing weeds that crowd-out desirable plants, hoard moisture, nutrients and sunlight, host pests and diseases and look unsightly. The real secret is to choose desirable plants that will prosper by helping fulfill nature's requisite for no open-ground without vegetation.

Ask any gardener, and it's likely you'll

Above: Classic bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) root system

hear that the single most common mid-summer garden challenge is management of weeds. A weed is generally considered to be a plant that grows aggressively and reproduces quickly where it is not wanted. In fact, many plants considered weeds in some regions are valued as desirable food,

wildflower or ornamental plants in other areas. Dandelion, teasel, purslane, goldenrod, Euonymus, sweet-fern and sumac are several examples.

Weed management is complicated and more challenging than most people think, and that's probably because it's difficult to consider a lot of the factors involved. Proper weed management requires knowing the identity of the weed, understanding how it grows and determining the most effective way to eliminate it from the area under consideration.

Weeds can be categorized as annuals, biennials or perennials. All weeds germinate from seed when conditions are right and grow quickly, potentially dominating a previously pristine patch of ground. The best weed control is to eliminate them when they

first appear (pull them out while they are small!), or better, to prevent germination by mulching or applying pre-emergent weed control. Particularly with perennial types, once weeds become established in the ground, management becomes more difficult. The fundamental principle is to control weeds before they begin producing seed.

Perennial weeds re-grow from their roots and underground stems and also produce seed. Herbaceous perennials die back to the ground in winter, making them difficult to spot until their new growth appears, while the stems of the woody types are visible year round.

Some perennial weeds have stoloniferous roots that run in the ground and tend to break off when pulled, each root piece potentially growing into a new plant. Perennial vines attach

themselves to desirable plants, often winding and climbing in ways that make their removal very challenging. Some established perennial weeds require chemical herbicides to eliminate them completely. Many of these are now classified as "invasive" which designates them as a serious threat to native plants in natural areas.

Mulching with 2 to 4 inches of loose organic matter like bark mulch, ground-up leaves or wood chips helps discourage weed germination. Some gardeners use plastic or fabric mulches and chemical herbicides to prevent germination. Weed management choices depend upon a variety of style and plant-type considerations, and many people prefer to limit chemical techniques.

Effective weed management requires



Above: Quackgrass (*Elytrigia repens*) rhizomes  
Left: Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) rhizomes



planning, persistence, monitoring, and often a good measure of sweat in the summer. Some weeds can be physically harmful if poisonous to those of us who are susceptible, so taking appropriate precautions is prudent. But for all the effort needed for proper weed management, the reward of an attractive, well-maintained garden is well worth the effort.

### EXAMPLES OF WEED TYPES \*

**Annual Weeds** germinate, flower, produce seed and die in one year. Common examples in this part of New England are crabgrass, purslane, lambsquarters and ragweed.

**Biennial Weeds** germinate and grow their foliage the first year, only flowering and producing their seed after going through winter. Some typical examples in this region are garlic mustard, burdock, brome grass, evening primrose and Queen-Anne's lace.

**Perennial Weeds** have long-lived root systems that persist year after year.

- Simple root systems that are relatively easy to remove intact
  - Herbaceous (tops die to the ground in winter). Examples are dandelion, pokeweed and bull thistle.
  - Woody plants whose above ground parts are visible all year
    - Trees and shrubs: autumn olive (*Eleagnus*), buckthorn (*Rhamnus*), barberry (*Berberis*), wild rose and burning-bush (*Euonymus alatus*)
    - Vines: poison ivy, nightshade.
- Stoloniferous or persistent roots from which new plants re-grow when roots are broken off or left in the ground
  - Herbaceous: Examples are bindweed, quackgrass (evergreen), mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*), Canada thistle, hairy vetch, clover (evergreen), groundnut (*Apios americana*), horse nettle (*Solanum carolinense*), black swallow-wort (*Cynanchum louiseae*), kudzu.
  - Woody plants including:
    - Trees and shrubs: Japanese knotweed, sumac (*Rhus*), sweet fern (*Comptonia*), tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus*), bramble (*Vitis*).
    - Vines: Bittersweet (*Celastrus*), Virginia creeper, bull briar (*Smilax*), porcelain berry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*), English ivy (*Hedera*), wild grape (*Vitis*), trumpet vine (*Campsis*), wisteria.

\*Categories and list compiled by [Hort-Sense](#), 2022

Wayne Mezitt is a 3rd generation nurseryman and a Massachusetts Certified Horticulturist, now chairman of Weston Nurseries and owner of "Hort-Sense", a horticultural advisory business. He currently serves as editor for The Leaflet, an electronically-published monthly member newsletter for the Massachusetts Horticultural Society at The Garden at Elm Bank in Wellesley MA, and as chair of the Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group (MIPAG).

# From the Stacks

By Maureen T. O'Brien, Library Manager

*Writing a memoir begins a process that doesn't necessarily end with publication. You begin to think about family life and stories and relationships, and those are ongoing.*

Sue Perkins (b. 1969)

Massachusetts Horticultural Society's headquarters has been at Elm Bank since 2000. We are often asked about the history of Elm Bank and its owners. The Library maintains historical documents and images relating to Elm Bank in its Collections. The Elm Bank landscape you see today is derived from the transformation of a farm into an early Country Place Era estate by Benjamin and Elizabeth Cheney in the late 19th century.

### Featured Collection — Elm Bank: Elizabeth Cheney's Memoir

In 1870, Theodore Otis (1810-1873,) a politician and "Gentleman Farmer" from Roxbury, bought a farm in Dover as a summer retreat and christened it "Elm Bank." At the time, Elm Bank was one of the largest farms in Dover. He resided in the existing farmhouse, built additional greenhouses and raised livestock.

Benjamin Pierce Cheney (1818-1895) acquired Elm Bank for a summer retreat at auction for \$10,000 in 1874. Cheney was a well-respected and successful entrepreneur in the express and transcontinental railway businesses. As a longtime member of

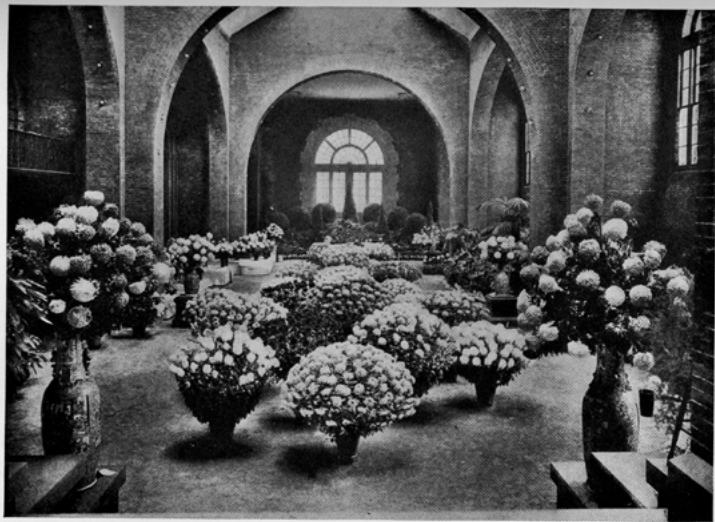
this Society, he served on a committee with H. H. Hunnewell to raise funds for the second Horticultural Hall (1865) on Tremont Street in Boston. In 1865, Cheney married Elizabeth Stickney Clapp (1839-1922).

The Cheneys increased Elm Bank to 235 acres and built a Queen Anne Victorian Mansion, additional greenhouses, the existing cottages at Elm Bank today and Cheney Bridge. They also created a dramatic landscape bordered on three sides by the Charles River that was accessible to the public.

In 1915, Elizabeth Cheney wrote a memoir for her family. The memoir is not an autobiography but gives us a filtered peak into her life and insight into the life of a wealthy Victorian woman in Boston. It contains information she felt was important for her family to know.

Mrs. Cheney grew up on Columbia Street in Dorchester and married Cheney when she was 26. They resided at 32 Marlborough Street in Boston and as their family grew, they summered at Elm Bank. She spent the final years of her life in Boston and





THE First Chrysanthemum Exhibition in the Present Horticultural Hall, 1901

Elizabeth Cheney's award-winning Chrysanthemum display at Horticultural Hall in Boston in 1901. The mums were grown in Cheney's 100-foot-long chrysanthemum house at Elm Bank.



Victorian Mansion at Elm Bank built by Benjamin and Elizabeth Cheney in 1875. Designed by the "Father of Stick Style" architecture, John A. Fox (1836-1920), it was erected among existing elms, a short distance from the Manor House at Elm Bank today.

Peterborough, New Hampshire. You can read her Memoir [here](#).

## In the Windows – Books on the Country Place Era and Books for Sale

The Country Place Era spanned the period from the post-civil war Industrial Revolution to the early

1930s. Newly wealthy American entrepreneurs built vast estates in the country as summer retreats. The Cheney and Baltzell mansions and landscape reflected the period styles fashionable in the early and mid-Country Place Era, respectively.

The Library has pre-owned horticultural books for sale, most in

the \$1 to \$5 range. Consider dropping by and picking out a book for yourself or for a gift. Second-hand gifting is an environmentally friendly way to reduce your environmental footprint. Used books fit that bill perfectly!

## Book Club

*Contributed by Barbara Owen*

What a lovely afternoon to meet in the Crockett Garden at Elm Bank and discuss *Tulipomania* by Mike Dash. It was especially interesting to hear comments from those who also or instead read *Tulipmania* by Anne Goldgar. It seemed like everyone was intrigued by the path the tulips traveled from beyond Asian mountains to the tulip farms of Holland, the amount of horticultural information and plants that were also traveling the world and the astounding contrast in the Ottoman rulers who were so incredibly brutal yet cultivated beautiful gardens.

Our next book discussions are:

**Tuesday, August 23**

*The Orchid Thief* by Susan Orlean

**Tuesday, September 20**

*Around The World In Eighty Plants* by Jonathan Drori. For those who have read this one, another option could be *Around The World In Eighty Trees* and again we might have an interesting discussion comparing the two books.

**Tuesday, October 25**

*Old Herbaceous* by Reginald Arkell

**Tuesday, November 15**

*The Gardener's Bedtime Book* by Richardson Wright

**Tuesday, December 13**

*Hands On The Land*, by Jan Albers

All Massachusetts Horticultural Society members are welcome to join our book discussion group.

Meetings are in the Crockett Garden at 1:30pm. If the weather is poor, the meeting will be held indoors.

## Our Collections are Growing

Thank you to Patricia Leuchtman for her in-kind donation to our collections.

Support our mission by donating books to the Library from the Society's Amazon Smile Wishlist.

Make sure you leave your name and we will thank you in the next Leaflet. Then come to the Library and borrow some books—one of your membership benefits! Borrowing books from a Library is a great, green way to reduce your consumption.

## Come Visit

The Library is open Thursdays from 10 am to 1 pm, by appointment and when the lights are on. Please email Library Manager Maureen O'Brien at [mobrien@masshort.org](mailto:mobrien@masshort.org) for an appointment if you want to schedule a visit.



# Thank you to our 2022 Garden Opening Sponsors

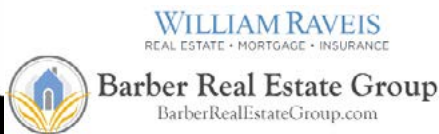
## Platinum Level



## Gold Level



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