



CAPE COD HYDRANGEA SOCIETY

FALL 2020

IN THIS ISSUE:	1	Presidents' Message
	2	Thanksgiving: Time to Say Thank You
	3-4	Members in the Spotlight
	5	Photo Gallery: The Year of the Hydrangea
	6-8	Plant Patents and Trademarks
	9-10	The Tool Shed
	11-14	Hydrangea Pollinators
	14	Photo Gallery: Lunch Bunch
	15	Crocker Nurseries
	16	New Paniculata Cultivars
	17	A Busy Year at Heritage
	18-20	Mal's Corner... Autumn Musings
	21	Welcome New Members

www.thecapecodhydrangeasociety.org

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Fall 2020

It is hard to believe that we have begun the second year of our two-year term as co-presidents of CCHS. And what a first year we had! Challenges and obstacles were the new norm while providing us with opportunities to learn, think "out of the box" and try to stimulate interest in innovative ways for our CCHS members.

We have been utilizing the free time provided by the pandemic to add to, update, refresh and enhance our bylaws and position descriptions. The next projects will



be to improve both our website and Facebook page. We would certainly appreciate your assistance and expertise in this area.

Come January we will be forming a committee to work on a calendar to guide members on the required care needed by your hydrangeas throughout the year. We have also started planning for our spring membership meeting. We simply cannot abide having to cancel another meeting, so we will have a virtual backup plan.

Since we were unable to gather for our annual dinner this month and we will most certainly not be holding our holiday party in December, we'd like to take this opportunity to let you know that we are thinking of you and to extend our warmest holiday greetings.

May 2021 be a year of new hope for each of us!

Linda Coven *Pat Vigliorolo*

Linda Coven
Co-President

Pat Vigliorolo
Co-President

PS: Just a reminder...As our gardens are starting to wind down after a particularly showy blooming season followed by intense drying heat and moderate to severe drought, please remember that watering needs to continue until frost. Without vigilant watering, there is a good chance that you could lose hydrangea plants in your garden.

Thanksgiving... The Perfect Time to Say Thank You

Those of us who garden on Cape Cod have much to be thankful for, including our generally mild summers and winters and the wonderful array of hydrangeas that thrive in our maritime environment. We are also fortunate to have so many dedicated CCHS members working tirelessly to help us all learn to be better gardeners.

With Thanksgiving just weeks away it seems a particularly appropriate time to say thank you to several of these members who are stepping down from their committee responsibilities after many years of service. First is Elizabeth Payne who hosted the organizing meeting of the Society at the Sturgis Library in 2007 and who has been serving as our historian.

A big thank you also goes out to Tom and Judy Bartha for their years running the Propagation Committee. Many of us learned what we know about propagating hydrangeas from classes run by them. Judy has also maintained our website, an increasingly important information source for our society.

Additionally, many thanks to Paula Rushworth who has led the maintenance team for our CCHS display garden at Heritage for the last three years. Each year, from early spring until the Heritage CCHS Christmas trees are decorated, Paula has tirelessly inspired and led her army of volunteers.

There is also a behind the scenes non-member volunteer who deserves our thanks. In fact, he is so behind the scenes that only four CCHS members have even met him. He is Suzanne Boas' neighbor and friend Gary Allumbaugh who lives in Atlanta. For the last three years he has been responsible for the design and production of our quarterly newsletter, solely in the name of friendship. Thank you, Gary, from all of us at CCHS.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to the many CCHS members who have stepped up over the last three years to write articles for our newsletter. We so appreciate your sharing your gardening knowledge and writing talents with us.



Elizabeth Payne



Tom and Judy Bartha



Paula Rushworth



Gary Allumbaugh



Newsletter Contributors

Judy Berrien

Peter Berrien

Peg Black

Mary Bowker

Joan Brazeau

Marcia Chapman

Carol Condon

Mal Condon

Mary Kay Condon

Linda Coven

Pat Daly

Sarah Dunbar

CL Fornari

Jeanie Gillis

Betsey Godley

Joan Harrison

Joyce Jenks

Susan Lloyd

Pat McDonald

Paula Rushworth

Sharon Taylor

Hillary Thompson

Pat Vigliorolo

Emily Woudenberg

Members in the Spotlight

by Suzanne Boas



Wendy and Tom Miller... New Members

Our CCHS Heritage display garden volunteers may not think of themselves as goodwill ambassadors, but Tom and Wendy Miller would beg to differ. During a visit to Heritage this past spring, the couple, who recently retired to East Harwich, met a number of our garden volunteers and were so impressed with both their knowledge and their friendliness that they decided on the spot to join our society.

The Millers are not new to the Cape, having owned a rental property here for 22 years. They have now made that rental property home, moving the last of the furniture from their 1800s-era colonial in Lyme, CT in August. And, of course, starting to plant hydrangeas.

Married for 34 years, Tom and Wendy both enjoy exercising and getting out in nature. They met playing wallyball which is a fast-paced version of volleyball played on a racketball court; these days they prefer hiking, biking and kayaking. They also enjoy traveling. In 1993 they quit their jobs and traveled around the U.S. for a year in a 34-foot Winnebago, visiting more than 40 national parks. Thirteen years supporting ESPN's X Games also took Tom to France, China, Dubai, Norway, Mexico and Brazil as well as multiple trips to Los Angeles, Austin, and Aspen. The couple has also enjoyed bike and barge trips in Holland, Germany and France.

Wendy and Tom are career IT professionals who have watched that field change enormously through the years. They began their careers as mainframe programmers at General Dynamics, worked at IBM for several years, where Wendy transitioned to Project Management and Tom to a Database Administrator. Wendy received her Master's degree in Organizational Behavior and went on to become an adjunct professor at Quinnipiac University and Connecticut College teaching Group Dynamics while also working as a Project Manager at UnitedHealthcare (Optum).

The Millers are currently serving on the Nauset Newcomers' technology committee and are looking forward to getting involved in our society's plant-related activities. This past summer they were docents at Carol Condon's garden during the hydrangea festival. Let's make sure we give them lots more opportunities to learn and get their hands dirty with CCHS! ■





Member in the Spotlight

by Pat Daly

Joy Bogstad...from Flour to Flower

When Joy and Gary Bogstad were married, they knew that they would return to Massachusetts one day, but it took them nearly thirty years. Born in Springfield, MA, Judy was raised on her family's horse farm. Her decision to attend the University of California at San Diego and her subsequent marriage made for a long stay in California.

The mother of two children, Joy worked as an elementary physical education teacher specializing in nutritional instruction. When the California education system experienced massive cutbacks in funding, Joy changed careers. As a culinary master baker, she supplied local Marriott restaurants with "masterful" confections for 24 years. Upon retirement she and her husband returned to Massachusetts, specifically the Cape Cod area.

While looking for a home on the Cape, they acquired two properties—one in Plymouth and another in Hyannis. Initially they chose to live in Plymouth on a five-acre parcel complete with horses and to utilize the Hyannis property as a rental. Being no stranger to horses, Plymouth was a natural choice for Joy. These were show horses and the Bogstads enjoyed all the experiences the horse shows provided. However, Joy, like many retirees, had extra time on her hands and marketable skills, so she applied for and accepted a baking position at Panera. Soon after, she was promoted to Baking Market Manager of the South Shore and worked for Panera for 10 years.

It was during this time that Joy attended a hydrangea lecture by Joan Harrison and accepted Joan's invitation to help her in organizing our Cape Cod Hydrangea Society. Joy has been an active member since our society's founding in 2007, involved in the planning and maintenance of the CCHS display garden at Heritage Museums and Gardens and participating in many of our other activities and events. Last year she logged 300 volunteer hours at Heritage.

This year, mentored by CCHS co-president, Linda Coven, Joy was certified as a MA Master Gardner.

Joy has had a very interesting career and retirement. This "busy bee" has gone from "flour to flower" and both CCHS and Heritage are the fortunate beneficiaries of this energetic, busy bee! ■



"Bread feeds the body indeed, but flowers feed also the soul."

—The Koran



Paniculatas and Arborescens Extend a Glorious “Year of the Hydrangea” at Heritage

At the beginning of 2020, The National Garden Bureau designated this as the “Year of the Hydrangea.” And, what a glorious year it has been for those of us committed to growing and nurturing hydrangeas on Cape Cod! After a spectacular display of *H. macrophylla* all across the Cape in July and August, the season was extended by another wonderful show from magnificent paniculatas and antiquing arborescens. These photos were taken in mid-September at Heritage Museums and Gardens. ■





Plant Patents and Trademarks: What's in a Name?

by Joan Harrison

Naming plants accurately when writing about them can get challenging due to precise rules established by the ICNCP (International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants). The first word in a scientific plant name is the genus or group to which the plant belongs (*Hydrangea*). The second word is the species name (*macrophylla*, *paniculata*, *quercifolia*). This is followed by the cultivar name ('Nikko Blue'). The first two words are italicized. The cultivar name is not written in italics but is enclosed in single quotes. Many of the hydrangeas we are familiar with follow this simple naming convention.

- Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Ayesha'
- Hydrangea serrata* 'Tokyo Delight'
- Hydrangea paniculata* 'Limelight'

The explosion of interest in hydrangeas in recent years has led to a flood of new plant introductions. At the same time the plant breeders, naturally, want to protect their investment in plant development while simultaneously developing marketing strategies. This is where the naming of plants along with plant patents and trademarks comes into the picture.

Patents

The agency authorized to grant all patent and trademark rights for use and control in United States commerce is the USPTO (U.S. Patent and Trademark Office). Plant patents last for 20 years and are not renewable. (Trademarks last for 10 years and are renewable.) Someone submitting a claim for a patent on a new and distinct variety of hydrangea would submit detailed paperwork describing the parentage of the new plant and its characteristics, among other things. A goal of securing a patent is to give the patent holder the right to exclude others from propagating the plant unless royalty fees are paid.



Trademarks

Plant breeders have their own system for identifying particular plants under consideration during plant trials. The one plant out of many that proves itself worthy of bringing to the commercial market may have, up to that point, an unremarkable name. Consider the case of the cultivar named 'PIIHM-1'. Would you, as a consumer, gravitate to a hydrangea with that name at your local nursery? Probably not. In the commercial world, a catchy name works better to attract customers. The breeder in this case is Michael Dirr. The name selected for marketing purposes is 'Twist-n-Shout.' By placing the symbol for trademark immediately after the name, the owner signals intent to trademark a plant name with the USPTO. Once that process is complete, the trademark symbol is replaced with the symbol for registered.

Trademark: ™ Registered: ®

There is an important principle that tends to lead to a great deal of confusion. A plant trademark is a legal right to a monopoly on a name, but not to the plant itself. Even if you follow the rules to obtain a registered trademark, you are not preventing anyone from propagating and selling your plant.

Legal protection for the plant comes from obtaining a plant patent. What happens if a plant has a registered trademark but has not been patented? Anyone can sell that plant but the catch is, they have to use the cultivar name and not the trademarked name. If Twist-n-Shout® had not been patented, I could sell it as H.m. 'PIIHM-1'. But would consumers be interested in buying it under that name?

Obtaining a plant patent is an exacting process, but an important step if the breeder wants to recoup some of the expenses of developing the plant. With a plant patent, you can require any party wanting to grow your plant for sale to follow your rules. Often this means liners may only be purchased from approved sellers. ("Liners" refer to very young plants, often grown from cuttings, grown for sale to retailers or wholesalers who then grow them to a larger size for selling to consumers.) More importantly, you are entitled to royalty payments for every plant sold. The amount per plant is generally very low (maybe only pennies per plant) but if the sales take off (like all of the plants in the Endless Summer® collection), the financial rewards can be substantial.

Plant labels at point of purchase provide clear information about trademarks and patents: Twist-n-Shout® *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'PIIHM-1' PP20,176. (The "registered" superscript after the name indicates the trademark has been registered with the appropriate agency. The trademark name is followed by genus (*Hydrangea*), species (*macrophylla*), and cultivar ('PIIHM-1'). PP indicates the plant is patented and the patent number is provided.

Plant patents are matters of public record. To learn about, in this case, Twist-n-Shout®, put the words "plant patent" along with the patent number (20,176) into an Internet search engine, and the documentation used to secure the patent will appear. You



H. macrophylla 'Twist-n-Shout®' PIIHM-1

can do this with any patented plant you are interested in learning more about. Research into Twist-n-Shout® reveals how the plant came into existence:

The cultivar originated from controlled cross-pollination of *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Penny Mac' (unpatented) by *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Lady in Red' (U.S. Plant Pat No. 15,175) in Athens, Ga. in 2003, and was selected from the progeny seedlings of this cross by continued evaluation for reblooming, increased resistance to mildew & improved leaf and flower characteristics."

The patent application adds (among other things) relevant information as to how the new plant differs from both of the parent plants.

Trademarks applied to plant names and plant collections

Blue Jangles® is one of the hydrangeas in the Let's Dance® series. Notice that both the plant name and the series name are trademarked. Not every plant in the series is trademarked. I found myself having to look up the proper designation for every plant every time I mentioned one in writing



H. macrophylla 'Cityline® Paris' not *H. m.* 'Paris'

until I got smart and developed a list of the plant names as they legally need to appear. A glance at the list tells me it's Let's Dance® Rhythmic Blue® and Let's Dance® Big Easy. One plant name is trademarked and one is not.

And then there's Cityline® Paris, not to be confused with *H. m.* 'Paris', introduced by Mouillère in 1928. As a test I put the latter name in an Internet search box. Even though I wanted to find information about Mouillère's plant, all that popped up (repeatedly) was Cityline® Paris. The international nomenclature code mentioned at the beginning of this article was designed to prevent this kind of confusion. There was supposed to be one name, and one name only, officially recognized as the name of a particular plant. To have the same name, Paris, representing two different plants causes consumer confusion.

Confusion as a result of trademarked names

I recently came across the name of a paniculata that was unfamiliar to me, so I looked it up online. It was called White Caps™. Here's what I found:

WHITE CAPS™ HYDRANGEA TREE
Hydrangea paniculata 'Dolly'

A showy Hydrangea with an impressive succession of creamy white flowers that bloom summer through fall. As a tree-form, makes an excellent accent in the landscape. This RHS Award of Garden Merit winner puts on a grand show in the garden.

Okay, I thought, I already know this plant as *H. p.* 'Dolly'. The trademarked name is part of a marketing effort and, indeed, they changed the names of two other paniculatas I am quite familiar with ('Phantom' and 'Silver Dollar') to Tidal Wave™ and Low Tide™. They are part of the Garden Debut® collection of plants. Further research led me to this notation:

WHITE CAPS™ HYDRANGEA
Hydrangea paniculata 'Dolly' aka
Royal Star™ Dolly Hydrangea

So, I went down the Royal Star™ rabbit hole and found hydrangeas called Royal Star™ Phantom and Royal Star™ Silver Dollar. These names appeared in an online catalog for NextGen (Next Generation Landscape Nursery). In attempting to track down if they originated these new trademarks, it appears (hard to be sure) that they, too, are names created by Garden Debut®. How many aliases does one plant need? I have no objection to a plant breeder coming up with a trademarked name once their plant is ready for market. But the marketing practice of making up (and trademarking) new names for hydrangeas that already have established, accepted, names adds unnecessary confusion.

My final takeaway as a result of researching plant trademarks and patents is that a career as a patent attorney is not in the cards for me! ■

Editor's note: If you would like to learn more about this topic, Joan has several online articles to recommend. Just email her at JoanofMA@hotmail.com.



The Tool Shed

by Linda Coven



Fall is fully upon us with a myriad of garden chores to be completed before winter sets in. For this issue of the Tool Shed I want to focus on my favorite solutions for two important but sometimes tedious gardening jobs—weeding and winter protection.

A wonderful device introduced to me by fellow CCHS member Joy Bogstad, the Grebstk Crack Weeder Crevice Weeding Tool is great for weeding garden beds as well as removing grass, moss and weeds from gaps between paving stones. It gets into the tightest areas with surprising precision, and it's perfect for lifting out smaller tap rooted weeds intact. It is a staple in my tool belt. Perhaps you could consider asking Santa to put one in your stocking this holiday season.

Grebstk Crack Weeder Crevice Weeding Tool

Amazon.com: \$18.98



Before the December holidays arrive, we all need to be thinking about winter protection for our recently planted hydrangeas and those which have not proven bud hardy in past years. For these winter protection jobs, I recommend Shrub Jacket & Season Extender frost blankets, reusable covers for plants and bushes which provide protection from deer and rabbits as well as weather. A more attractive alternative to burlap, they are made from breathable, non-woven polypropylene fabric with a leaf motif that blends into the landscape. These jackets have drawstring ties at the top and bottom and come in small, medium, large, 5'x7' sheets and 5x30' rolls. I purchased the rolls to wrap cages for my *H. macrophylla* 'Revolution' plants that require protection yearly from the wind tunnel in my backyard. An important reminder: hydrangeas must be defoliated and vacuumed before being covered.



Shrub Jacket & Season Extender Frost Blankets

Amazon.com:

Sm. (3) \$36.00, Med. (3) \$40.24, Lg. (3) \$40.39 5x30' roll \$53.67

Gardeners.com:

Sm. \$16.95 ea, Med. \$18.95 ea, Lg. \$21.95 ea, Sheet \$19.95 ea.





Another solution is five-gallon white buckets. They can be used for winter protection on first year and perhaps second year small plants. I recommend white rather than black buckets for sun diffusion. Just drill 4 holes in the lip of the bucket and secure it to the ground with long landscape pins. Remember, as with the Shrub Jackets, hydrangeas should be defoliated and vacuumed before they are covered.

5-gallon White Buckets

Amazon.com: \$32.99 (3)



Finally, I recommend Greenhouse Film Polyethylene Covering in white for larger jobs. This is what I use when I am storing potted hydrangeas outdoors during the winter in a protected area such as a raised bed or outdoor shower. If you are storing 3-gallon or smaller containers wait until the plants are fully defoliated and vacuumed of any leaf debris. Lay the plants on their sides—you can even stack them if you have a number of them—then staple the poly to the raised bed.



Greenhouse Film Polyethylene Covering

Amazon.com: Many sizes & prices

Putting your garden to bed for the winter can be a big job, but hopefully these suggestions will make your work easier. ■



Hydrangea Pollinators

by Peg Black



If Cape Cod had an official flower, it would be the hydrangea. It is widely planted and beautiful in the summer when we spend most of our time outdoors. I love the chiseled, large green leaves and dense covering of blue, purple, pink, and white flowers that last for weeks. In the Fall many hydrangeas have a gorgeous antique red color that extends the season even further. Arguably, it is one of our best garden plants. But it is not enough anymore for a garden to be beautiful and filled with the large gorgeous mophead flowers that hydrangeas are best known for.

In the wild, hydrangeas do not look like the cultivated ones we grow in our gardens. Wild hydrangeas produce very few of the showy, brightly colored flowers we love, but instead produce masses of inconspicuous fertile florets that attract bees, wasps, butterflies, moths and flies in search of pollen. In the process of collecting, these insects fertilize the florets, resulting in fruit and seeds for the next generation of hydrangeas growing in the wild. Pollination and reproduction in the wild are critical to keeping the species alive.

Almost the entire flower of wild *Hydrangea arborescens* is made up of fertile, pollen-bearing florets, with very few sterile florets around the outer edge.



Flowers of wild *Hydrangea arborescens* (Smooth hydrangea)

The blooms of hydrangeas take three basic shapes: lacecap, mophead, or panicle. Each flower is a cluster of florets that are both sterile and fertile. Lacecap flowers have a flat shape with a row or two of sterile, colorful florets around the outer edge and a mass of small fertile, star-shaped florets in the center. The showier sterile florets cause pollinators to take notice of the plant as they fly by. Those pollinators that land on the flower then zero in on the pollen produced by the fertile florets in the center.

Infertile florets around the outside are colorful and showy. They wave to pollinators as they fly by and beckon them in.



Lacecap flower of *H. macrophylla* 'Blaumeise'

Small, fertile florets loaded with pollen are star-like.

Almost all mophead florets are sterile.



Mophead flower of *H. macrophylla* 'Cityline Mars'

Mophead flowers, the showiest and most beloved of all hydrangea species, are composed almost entirely of sterile florets with just a few fertile florets hidden deep inside that go largely unnoticed by pollinators. Mother Nature, in concert with human hybridizers, did not set up mopheads to do much of anything important except look gorgeous. In the process of cultivating and hybridizing many of today's hydrangeas, the fertile florets that produce pollen have been sacrificed for the showier, more colorful sterile ones. Pollen production and insect feeding on mopheads is virtually non-existent.

Along with lacecaps, recent studies have shown that Cape Cod's two native hydrangeas, *H. arborescens* (also known as Smooth Hydrangea) and *H. quercifolia* (Oakleaf Hydrangea) do a much better job of attracting pollinators than the showy mopheads. Wild hydrangeas, however, do the best job of all.

The hydrangea in my garden that is a pollinator magnet is *H. arborescens* 'Haas Halo'. It looks like a wild hydrangea but with much larger flowers. It has a mix of sterile and fertile florets, but far more fertile ones than sterile. Every day it is in bloom it is covered with bees and other pollinators.

Small, greenish, fertile florets fill the center of the flower.



H. arborescens 'Haas Halo'

Fewer large, white, sterile florets line the outside edge.

Tucked below the many sterile florets are tiny fertile florets waiting for pollinators to find them.



H. arborescens 'Incrediball'

The majority of *Hydrangea arborescens* cultivars we grow in our gardens, 'Annabelle', 'Invincibelle', and 'Incrediball', have more sterile florets than fertile ones. Once again, through hybridization and years of cultivation, the fertile florets have been sacrificed for the showier, sterile ones. But the *H. arborescens* we grow still have quite a few fertile flowers that attract more pollinators compared to sterile mopheads.

Oakleaf hydrangeas (*H. quercifolia*) are also a good source of pollen for bees and wasps. Their large open flowers are a wonderful combination of fertile and sterile florets.

Smaller fertile florets can be seen below the pink sterile florets.



H. quercifolia 'Alice'

White and pink sterile florets fill the outside of the flower.

H. quercifolia

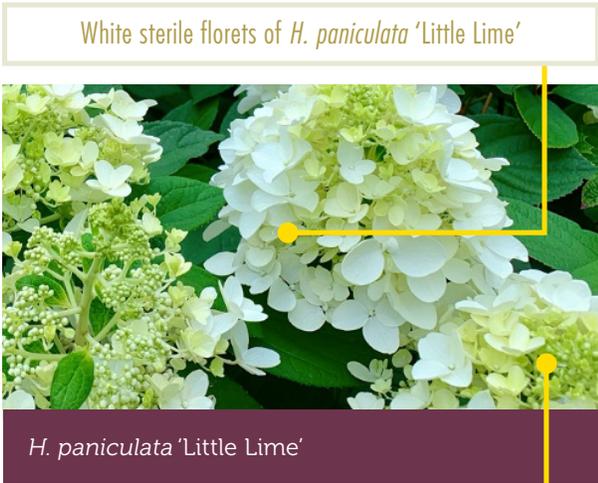


Like the oakleaf (*H. quercifolia*) and the smooth hydrangea (*H. arborescens*), *H. paniculata* flowers have a mix of both sterile and fertile florets. The fertile florets stay green while the sterile white florets become tinged with pink as they age. Generally, the larger and more open the flower, the more fertile florets it has. *H. paniculata* 'Tardiva', one of the largest, most open of the paniculata cultivars, unsurprisingly has the largest numbers of fertile florets.

One of my favorite hydrangeas is *H. serrata* 'Tuff Stuff', also known as mountain hydrangea, is native to the higher elevations of the mountains of Japan. I liked it even more when I realized just how many fertile florets there are in every flower.

Both the climbing hydrangea (*H. petiolaris*) and its cousin (*Schizophragma hydrangeoides*) are loaded with fertile florets as well as sterile ones and are very beneficial for pollinators.

More studies are being done all the time to identify those hydrangea cultivars that are the most attractive to pollinators. Though I do not grow *Hydrangea radiata* 'Silverleaf', it is a very beneficial hydrangea to have in our gardens and one I expect we will be hearing more about. *Hydrangea aspera* 'Macrophylla' is another pollinator magnet we do not often see, possibly because it does not do well below Zone 7.



White sterile florets of *H. paniculata* 'Little Lime'

H. paniculata 'Little Lime'

Small green fertile florets on the inside of 'Little Lime'.

In the center are small fertile florets, waiting for honeybees to land.



H. serrata 'Tuff Stuff'

Large, colorful infertile florets of surround the outer edge.

So why is it important for us to know if hydrangea flowers are fertile or sterile? Attracting pollinators to our gardens and providing food sources for them is a growing trend that is here to stay, especially as the population of bees, butterflies, moths, flies, bats, and even birds is dwindling. I would rather cut off my arm with a rusty saw than get rid of even one of my mopheads. But if I should lose a mophead in a storm, drought or other climatic event, I will replace it with a hydrangea that is beneficial for bees and other pollinators and able to survive our fluctuating temperatures on Cape Cod. I will definitely find room for another *H. arborescens* 'Haas Halo' and *H. serrata* 'Tuff Stuff'. An abundance of bees, butterflies, moths, and other pollinators means a garden is not just a thing of beauty, but it is healthy too! ■

Again, we see small green fertile florets in the center of the flower.



Schizophragma hydrangeoides

...and fewer large, white sterile florets around the outer edge.

Lunch Bunch: Drip Irrigation Demonstration

August 12th dawned hot and dry—very appropriate weather for a “Lunch Bunch” demonstration of how to install a drip irrigation system. Thirty-eight CCHS members, including 10 new members, convened at Mal and Mary Kay Condon’s home for Linda Coven’s and Mal Condon’s class. Given the lack of rain on the Cape this past summer, more efficient watering was on everyone’s minds. ■



Crocker Nurseries... Family-owned and Serving Cape Cod for 45 years

by Judy Berrien



David Crocker founded Crocker Nurseries in 1975 after graduating from the University of New Hampshire with a minor in plant science and design. For the last 45 years he has been running his nursery with family members and a dedicated team of professionals. A Massachusetts Certified Horticulturist (MCH) since 1983, David can be found year-round working alongside his wife Ann Marie and daughter Rebecca Crocker-Carvalho in one of their greenhouses or other facilities spread over seven acres on Route 137 in Brewster.



David Shea, an MCH since 1995, has been with the nursery for over 25 of those years and does all of the ordering of Crocker's trees and shrubs. During that time, he has seen a dramatic increase in demand for hydrangeas, which are Crocker's best-selling deciduous shrubs. In the past few years, their top customer picks have been 'Endless Summer', 'Nikko Blue' and 'Limelight', but they regularly carry more than 50 different varieties of hydrangea, including a selection of paniculata standards.

Shea visits the growers he buys from, even traveling to the west coast to ensure the products that Crocker carries are grown correctly. The nursery guarantees their trees and shrubs for one year after purchase, so they want to make sure their plants are very high quality.

Shea will work with customers on special orders, try to accommodate requests when plants are available and also offers delivery of trees and shrubs across Cape Cod.

In 1990 Crocker began their popular "Hydrangea Dollar" program and hydrangea festival. The idea of their rewards program came from another garden center in western MA. Calling Crocker's program "Hydrangea Dollars" seemed fitting because of the popularity of hydrangeas on Cape Cod and also because hydrangeas are blooming during the program's redemption period which generally runs from the end of June through the latter part of July. "Hydrangea Dollars" can be used during this time to get 50% off non-sale items which Crocker sees as a way to reward customers who have spent money all spring.

The team at Crocker is available to answer questions and is proud of their excellent customer service, their many long-term and knowledgeable staff, and the quality and wide variety of the plants they offer, including hydrangeas. Every year they grow tens of thousands of perennials and annuals, including varieties not available in other nurseries.

For our society, however, it is their commitment to a full range of hydrangeas that is most important! ■





Spring Meadow Nursery Introduces New Paniculata Cultivars

by Suzanne Boas

This past July Spring Meadow Nursery introduced three new panicle hydrangea cultivars which will be available to gardeners in limited quantities beginning in 2021. ■



Fire Light Tidbit™

Fire Light Tidbit™ is a dwarf hydrangea similar to the popular *H. paniculata* 'Bobo'®. Appropriately sized for the front of the border, this hydrangea has a bun-shaped habit and large, rounded blooms. The late-season blooms emerge a creamy, light green-white and quickly begin to turn raspberry pink. This compact cultivar will grow to 2-3' tall and 3' wide.



Quick Fire Fab™

Quick Fire Fab™ is an early blooming hydrangea with large, football-sized and shaped blooms and densely packed cruciform flowers of a creamy green color. Soon after, watermelon hues appear at the base of the bloom and work their way up toward the tip. A fast grower, it reaches heights and widths of 6-8'.



Limelight Prime™

Limelight Prime™ is an improved, more refined version of its namesake, 'Limelight', but with darker leaves, stronger stems, a more compact habit, and strong, upright growth. The blooms emerge a vivid lime-green and maintain that color until they transition into a bubble gum pink, and then a deep punch pink. A compact version of the classic, it reaches heights of 4-6', and widths of 4'.

All three cultivars have USDA Zone 3-8 hardiness.

Tim Wood, Spring Meadow's head of product development explains, "We're not just introducing plants because we have them, we're really looking for strong improvements. We're looking for hydrangeas with unique coloration schemes, for plants that will fill gaps in the market, and that can be used in new applications."

More information about the new *H. paniculata* varieties can be found at:

LimelightPrimeHydrangea.com

QuickFireFabHydrangea.com

FireLightTidbitHydrangea.com

A Busy Year in the Heritage Display Garden

by Paula Rushworth



Maintaining the Heritage Museums and Gardens' hydrangea display garden requires the hard work of many people. Thank you to all the CCHS volunteers who have spent time in the display garden this past year planting, pruning, weeding and tending to the beautiful hydrangeas.

It is both a team effort and such fun to be with fellow hydrangea gardeners of every experience level, sharing information, stories, and laughs while maintaining the garden.

During the early part of the spring, Heritage Museums and Gardens was closed due to the governor's COVID orders about non-essential work. Once those restrictions were lifted, we were able to meet at the display garden as a team and get to work!

Like so many convenings, Hydrangea University was virtual this year. However, a great number of HU participants and other hydrangea enthusiasts, curious to see the outstanding collection of hydrangeas, made their way to the display garden during the Hydrangea Festival and throughout the summer. Their praise and comments were wonderful for our hard-working maintenance team and docents to hear.

It has been a pleasure to serve as the display garden Maintenance Coordinator for the last three years. Barbara Marsala is the new maintenance team coordinator. She has been a dedicated member of the team since 2014 and brings with her considerable plant knowledge and skills. I know she will do a wonderful job. ■



Barbara Marsala, new maintenance team coordinator on the left along with new CCHS member Jane Yanginger on right.



Stalwart members of the maintenance team: from the top, Ginny McCabe, Emily Woudenberg and Joyce Halpert.

"Play in the dirt because life is too short to always have clean fingernails."

—The Prairie Homestead





Autumn Musings

2020 has been a most uncommon year with negativity impacting so many aspects of our lives. Gardening fortunately has been a blessing for sure. Someone wisely once said "When the world fails, and society disappoints, there is always the garden." Very appropriate for these times.

We are spending more time outdoors in our gardens which is definitely the better, and safer, place to be. Gardening has had a very positive effect on us gardeners and on all aspects of the horticultural industry in 2020. My wholesale grower friends are smiling and so are the Cape's independent nurseries because we've been re-doing and expanding our gardens and landscapes and spending money for plants, supplies, and hardware. Gardening has surely been a silver lining during these trying times.

Hydrangea macrophylla blooming in July was very good, the best here since 2013. In the display garden at Heritage we were treated to splendid displays on several of our legacy *H. macrophylla* cultivars that have not bloomed for many years. And they were gorgeous!



Unfortunately, the superior blooming was short-lived in all but the well-watered and nicely afternoon-shaded locations. The hot and dry conditions became severe by the end of July and the "dry" has continued right up to last week when we had our first decent rainfall (over 1") since early June. I'm quite pleased to have been rain-confined in my office these last two days (today is October 30th) as the soft but steady rain is being totally absorbed into the good earth. And it has been a substantial rain, just over 2.75" on my gauge so far. Truly a blessing!

It's Autumn—Not Fall

I much prefer the word autumn to define the last three months of the year. It sounds so much better than fall, which more reminds me these days of something I should be trying to avoid. It's a splendid weather time on the Cape with chilly early mornings, warmish afternoons, and often almost windless days. Given the lowering temperatures, plant transpiration drops significantly which is a big benefit during this dry period. The falling temperatures and shortening day length (the one aspect

of the season I do not welcome) have ended the above ground growing season. Normally it takes a killing frost of a couple of nighttime hours of 28° to fully defoliate our hydrangeas. This autumn the leaves on most *H. macrophyllas* are already crispy dry, full of cercospora and leaf spotting, and will likely fall with today's rain and wind.

Stake and Tie Your *H. paniculata* Standards

I know a few of you planted standards this spring. They create such a great specimen display and many of the new *H. paniculata* introductions are just spectacular as trees. Staking and tying them is an especially sound practice for the initial two or three years to encourage and sustain good overall form and straightness. I recommend a 3-stake arrangement for better stability. Standards tend to be top-heavy and our winter winds can give them quite a shaking. Too often this shaking can disturb the root ball's stability and lead to root exposure and occasionally even failure. Stakes can be left in place year-round. I leave the ties in place too, just slacked off from mid-spring to late autumn as the trees need to endure some wind to encourage lateral root growth, nature's way of improving stability with maturity.

There's Still Time to Plant

Root growth continues, albeit slowly, until root zone soil temperatures drop below 50°. This typically doesn't occur here until the end of November or the first week or so of December. So, you can still plant! Many of us have a plant or two that has been in our "to be planted holding area" since we purchased them at half price at a nursery sale a month and a half ago. They are patiently sitting atop the ground waiting for our shovels.





Conventional Planting

You have a few planting choices. If you know where you want to plant them, just get on with it! The procedure is no different than what you do in the spring. Give each new plant a \$100 start in terms of effort. I have commercially planted as late as mid-December and not lost a plant. Water new plants in well to stabilize root/soil contact. If you are digging late in November, keep in mind that frost heaves can push the root ball upward exposing the roots. Apply a 3" to 4" insulation blanket of mulch, hay, or leaf compost if you're late in the month and trying to beat a hard frost.

Container Planting Time

Maybe this is a good time for you to try the "Pot-n-Pot" or "Bag-n-Pot" technique. I have talked about this subject a lot because container growing *H. macrophylla* is a very successful approach if you want predictable blooming. For most of the cultivars introduced over the last several years it is the better way to go, at least until you develop plants with big strong root mass. The "Bag-n-Pot" technique might be a good place to start. The plant goes in the bag which then goes into the larger deco pot, but not until next spring. A 3-gallon size bag is a good manageable starter—approximately 9" in diameter and 10" deep. The bag's non-woven fabric is durable and workable, plus most come with sewn-on handles. Type in "grow bags" on Amazon and stand back!

Your plant can be one that's been waiting to be planted or maybe it's one of your persistent non-bloomers. Either way, it is easy to plant or replant. And, rather than trudging out into your garden bed in a foot of snow this winter to check on your plant, you'll be watching over it in a cold but dry location you've chosen that's out of the weather. How grand is that? I'll comment in next spring's "Corner" on what to do to complete your magnificent *H. macrophylla* "Bag-n-Pot" creation.

The Last Ditch Approach

If you still have a plant you haven't gotten tucked safely away before Thanksgiving, here's your salvation exercise for Turkey Day morning, providing the ground is not frozen. Anywhere in the outlying area of your property, dig a hole big enough to fully accept the plant and container combo. Push all the soil around the plant and dump a watering can's worth of water on it. Yes, this is desperate—but better the root ball has some insulating effect from being in the ground rather than sitting totally exposed above ground still waiting to be planted.

Those are my musings for this edition of Mal's Corner. Keep your new plants watered, even with a watering can if your irrigation has been turned off and enjoy your garden time. It is "a better place to be." ■

"Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go."

—Unknown



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Gillian Casselman & Gary Stebbins
Newark, NJ

Andrea Keating
Hanover, MA

Sue Schofield
Dennis, MA

Melissa Caughey
West Barnstable, MA

Maureen & H. Arthur Montgomery
Mashpee, MA

Susan Smith
Brewster, MA

Laura & John Coates
Yarmouth Port, MA

Joan Novack
North Dighton, MA

Dottie & Bruce Stewart
Dennis Port, MA

Lisa Gianelli & Jeffrey Levinson
Auburndale, MA

Jack & Catherine Ruma
Dennis Port, MA

Our New Mailing Address!

Effective September 5, 2020, the mailing address for our Society changed to:

CCHS
PO Box 2
Cummaquid, MA 02637

Mail sent to the former PO Box in Dennis will be forwarded to the new PO Box for only 12 months. Please update your records and use the new address going forward.



CCHS Board of Directors 2020

Co-Presidents Pat Vigliorolo
Linda Coven

Vice President [Open]

Treasurer Rick Murray

Asst. Treasurer Peter Berrien

Secretary Caroline Weiss

Membership Emily Woudenberg
Jane McGinnis

CCHS Committee Chairs 2020

Display Garden Mal Condon

Curator

Display Garden Barbara Marsala

Maintenance

Facebook Marcia Chapman

Curators Paula Rushworth

Historian [Open]

Hydrangea U. Joan Brazeau

Newsletter Suzanne Boas

Nominating Emily Woudenberg

Publicity [Open]

Speakers [Open]

Sponsorships Cathy Sampson

Social Affairs Joyce Halpert

Technology [Open]

Ways & Means Mary Kay Condon