



Leaflet

A MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY PUBLICATION



Letter from the Interim President

Dear Members and Friends,

It's snowing. The trees are decorated, inside and out. We are in the holiday spirit. We warmly invite you to visit the Festival of Trees for a bright spot in your holiday celebrations. Take a break from the crush of shopping, start a family tradition, or just ratchet down the stress by walking the pathways through the snow topped gardens and trees. The gardens sparkle with lights and families relax around the fire pit or make s'mores with little ones. It's a joy to be here! I hope you will join us.

Suzanne Maas
Interim Director and President

Upcoming Classes & Events:

Festival of Trees

Thru December 29

Gingerbread Houses

December 14
10:00 - 11:30 am

Botany for the Home Gardener

6 week course
Tuesdays, January 7 -
February 11
6:30 - 8:00 pm

Tour Harvard's Glass Flower Collection

Thursday, January 16
1:30 - 3:00 pm

FESTIVAL OF TREES

A delight for visitors of all ages during the holiday season

November 29 - December 15, 2019



This year, our 11th Annual Festival of Trees runs through Sunday, December 15th. There are more than 70 uniquely decorated trees for you to admire, over 12,500 feet of lights to be inspired by, a Snow Village to explore and s'mores to eat until your heart's content (and your fingers sticky).

On December 15th we raffle off all the beautifully decorated trees. Did you enter the raffle to take one home?

This year we are extending our festival dates for you to enjoy our

wonderful lights in the gardens, Snow Village and s'mores by the fire.

Extended Dates for Lights & Trains

December 20 - 22, from 4 - 8PM

December 27 - 29, from 4 - 8PM

(Please note: there are no raffle trees during extended dates.)



For complete **Festival of Trees** and **Extended Date** details,
click [here](#)

Volunteers Welcome

If you are interested in helping with Festival of Trees and during the Extended Dates, please sign up [here](#).

BOSTON FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW 2020 March 11 - 15

Adult Photography Competition

Deadline: January 17, 2020

For complete class descriptions, rules, guidelines, time line, judging criteria, and entry information click [here](#)



Youth Photography Competition

Deadline: February 1, 2020

The Youth Photography competition is open to junior photographers (16 and under) who use flowers and nature as their subjects.

Youth Photography rules and guidelines can be downloaded [here](#)

PROGRAMS & EDUCATION

If you haven't had a chance to take a peek at [our seasonal course catalog](#) I invite you to do so! A copy may have hit your mailbox or you might have picked one up at our annual [Festival of Trees](#) event. We're expanding our programs and offerings in more ways than ever before. While we will still hold true to our excellence in horticulture-based classes, keep your eyes open for new class topics such as basket weaving, fermentation, relief printing, and more! I invite you to check the [Upcoming Classes](#) tab on our website frequently as we're constantly adding new classes and workshops. As you read through your hardcopy catalog, I'll let you in on a secret - there are already more

educational offerings scheduled and up on our website.

Not only are we revamping our adult educational offerings, we've been working on our youth programming as well. You will see various Family Workshops listed throughout the year as a way to enjoy and learn about the gardens in every season, plus families will create a craft to be enjoyed by everyone. Jump in the fun and grab a table at our next [Gingerbread House workshop on December 14th](#). As we continue to introduce young faces to the world of horticulture, our [Plantmobile](#) has a complete list of new programs and is ready to visit any classroom or community event. New outreach topics along with a streamlined booking process help to make this resource available year-round. As we start into the winter months and look towards spring, I invite all school and youth groups to start making your reservations for this wonderful asset!

Allison Dush
Director of Programs & Education

CALENDAR & COURSES

2019-2020 Fall and Winter



Annual Fund

**If you haven't made a donation to our Annual Fund this year,
please consider making a contribution... and watch us
continue to grow in 2020!**



DONATE



December Horticultural Hints

*by Betty Sanders
Lifetime Master Gardener*

Protect against freeze and thaw. Winter is tough on your perennials and bulbs, but it isn't the cold that poses the greatest danger. Instead, it's the freeze-and-thaw cycle of early and late winter that can – quite literally – pop plants out of the ground. Once the ground is frozen in your perennial beds and over bulb plantings, add a layer of straw, pine needles or (better yet) branches cut from evergreens that will not pack down over the winter. Evergreens should be mulched with a heavy layer of straw or leaves to protect the roots.



Protect against Thumper and friends. Newly planted trees and fruit trees are magnets for hungry rabbits and rodents whose regular food supply is substantially reduced by the onset of winter. Wrap vulnerable trees and shrubs with wire mesh or heavy paper to make those plants harder to get to.



One last trip up the ladder. The strong winds we experienced in late November likely filled your gutter with plant debris and, especially, pine needles. Before downspouts become clogged and ice up, take a few hours to do a final clean-out of accumulated material. Those hours will mean far fewer problems once sub-freezing temperatures become the norm.

Live tree? Think ahead. If you are planning for a living Christmas tree to be planted outside after the holiday, dig the hole now, cover the soil with a tarp and plan to plant it as soon as possible after Christmas Day.

Break the salt habit. Home improvement and hardware stores are filled with bags of salt-based de-icers for your sidewalk and driveway. Leave them be. Instead, use sand to make your sidewalk and driveway safe. Why avoid salt? Because it will cause serious damage your lawn or plantings along the pavement. Also, while sometimes recommended, using fertilizers as de-icing agents leads to over-fertilizing and can kill plants and lawns.



To see more of Betty's horticultural advice, please visit BettyOnGardening.com.

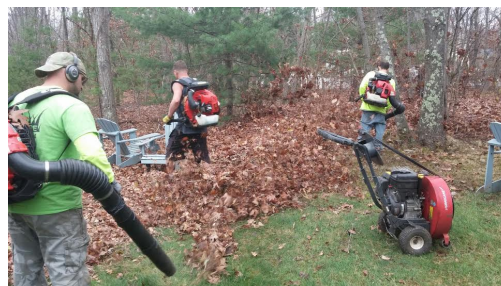


All the Leaves Are Brown

*by Neal Sanders
Leaflet contributor*

Last week, I was making my way down the back road that connects my town with its exurban neighbor. A bucolic relic of another century, the winding lane follows the contours of the land; dipping and rising with the terrain. In the last decade, however, it has sprouted Houses of Unusual Size.

Ordinarily, I can traverse its five-mile course in about eight minutes. Last week, it took more than 15. Why? A seemingly endless conga line of dump trucks was parked along the byway, each blocking a lane, and frequently positioned at the top of a rise. The purpose of the trucks was to collect the leaves being blown off the spacious lawns of those new homes by a small army of landscaping firm employees armed with mobile turbines.



I have a thing about leaf blowers. And it's not a good thing. Leaf blowers are the single most unnecessary invention ever foisted off on the gardening public. They are a way for lawn care firms to hit up homeowners for the pointless expense of multiple visits at what would otherwise be the winding-down part of the season.

Leaves fall from trees for roughly ten weeks in New England. For that period of time – mid-September through early December - every morning brings a fresh crop of leaves, culminating in a cascade of crispy brown ones from oaks. Lawn care companies come out weekly (why not daily?) and blow their customers' leaves into a pile where they are then sucked via a giant vacuum hose into a truck, to be hauled away to a landfill. As soon as the truck departs, of course, the winds pick up and blow newly fallen leaves onto those pristine lawns. To those 'home grown' leaves are added a bonanza of additional leaves from neighbors' lawns. By the next morning, it is as though no lawn service ever visited the site.

In my rational view, there is just one sane thing to do with the leaves that fall on your lawn: run a lawn mower over them periodically. We did that with our own lawn for 15 years. Every week, I spent 45 minutes with our lawnmower set at two-and-a-half inches, and I chopped whatever leaves were on our lawn into a fine mulch.

What we discovered was a simple, elegant truth: leaves left *undisturbed* on a lawn will form an impenetrable mat that prevents winter moisture from getting through to the soil and promotes the growth of mold. Leaves *chopped up* by a lawnmower and left on a lawn decompose in a few weeks and become... fertilizer. No matter how deep the leaves, the lawnmower minces them. Then comes the miracle of microbes: bacteria and such munch contentedly on the leaves over the course of the next three months. When spring comes, the melted snow reveals a clean, green lawn that has miraculously received exactly the nutrients required to grow the new set of leaves on the surrounding trees.



So, why do so many homeowners, and especially those with Houses of Unusual Size, put themselves through this? Asking the question would just annoy them. And, of course, it's their money. They pay to have their leaves hauled away and then pay again to fertilize their lawn in the spring to make up for the nutrients that the decaying leaves would have otherwise provided.

Five years ago, I sold our lawnmower because we dispensed with the idea of a lawn at our new home. But now we have an enormous garden, and those plants need protection against the winter's cold. What do we use? Leaves, of course. Now, we actively solicit our neighbors to give us their leaves (they do, with varying levels of suspicion). One day, our own trees will be large enough to provide all the leaves we need. Until that day comes, we'll make do with the neighbor's hand-me-downs.

Neal Sanders is at work on his 14th mystery. 'A Murder on the Garden Tour' will be published in March 2020. You can find his books on Amazon.com.

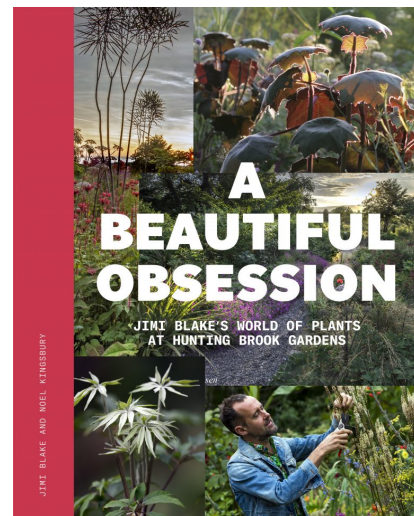
Holiday Books: A Sampling of New Releases to Inspire and Share

Reviewed by Patrice Todisco

A Beautiful Obsession: Jimi Blake's World of Plants at Hunting Brook Gardens

by Jimi Blake and Noel Kingsbury, Filbert Press, 2019

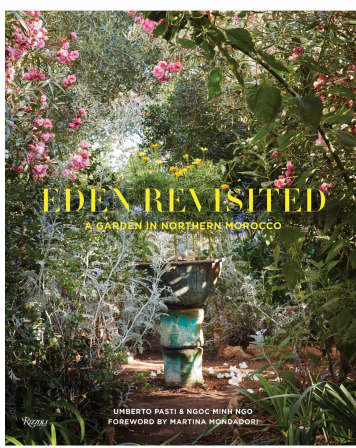
Hunting Brook Gardens, in County Wicklow Ireland, is a visionary, experimental garden and landscape where Jimi Blake grows and collects plants from all over the world. In the boldly designed and executed, *A Beautiful Obsession*, Blake and co-author Noel Kingsbury journey throughout the garden, providing insights into its evolution and the extraordinary range of plantings and ideas found within. Blake's unique personality, enthusiasm for the unusual, and generosity of spirit is captured on every exuberant page. At Hunting Brook Gardens, gardening is a serious pursuit which brings joy and is fun, attributes that infuse *A Beautiful Obsession* with creative energy.



Eden Revisited: A Garden in Northern Morocco

by Umberto Pasti & Ngoc Minh Ngo, Rizzoli, 2019

"I dreamt that this place was my body and my body was a garden." Thus, Italian writer and horticulturalist Umberto Pasti,

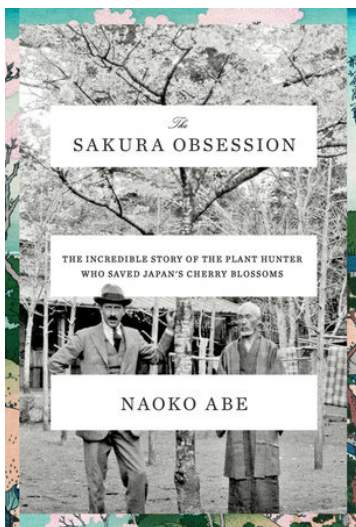
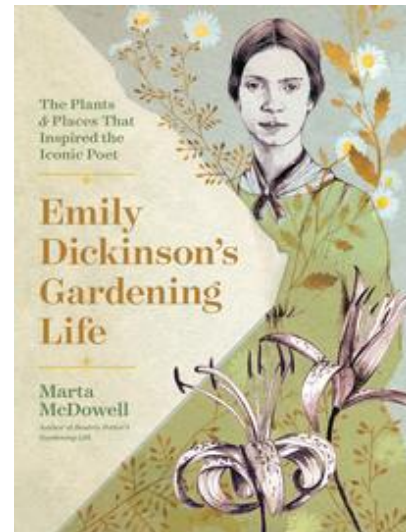


describes his first visit to Rohuna, a village forty miles south of Tangier, Morocco where no *nazrani* (foreigner) had been before. Soon after, he purchases two acres of land and employs almost all of the area locals to create a garden. More than twenty years later Rohuna is a place of incomparable beauty, serving as a living horticultural museum for the region. *Eden Revisited* tells the story of the communal endeavor which created and preserves the garden to this day. A paradise, beautifully evoked in text and photographs, Rohuna provides a parable for the timeless power of gardens to heal and transform communities.

Emily Dickinson's Gardening Life

by Marta McDowell, Timber Press, 2019

A garden exists in a place, whether discovered or familiar. For Emily Dickinson, that place was a stately Federal-style house in Amherst, Massachusetts. The axis of her world, it is where she lived, wrote, and nurtured her passion for plants, compiling the herbarium of 424 flowers referenced in her poetry. Combining Emily's poems, excerpts from letters, contemporary and historical photographs, and the story of the garden's restoration in *Emily Dickinson's Gardening Life*, Marta McDowell invites the reader to enter the seasonal world of the enigmatic poet, providing an intimate portrait of her gardening universe. A revised edition of the earlier book that launched McDowell's career, it was Emily Dickinson's garden that brought her to garden writing and this "do-over" of a previous book is an elegant reminder of how gardens and landscapes nurture the creative life.



The Sakura Obsession: The Incredible Story of the Plant Hunter who Saved Japan's Cherry Blossoms

by Naoko Abe, Alfred A. Knopf, 2019

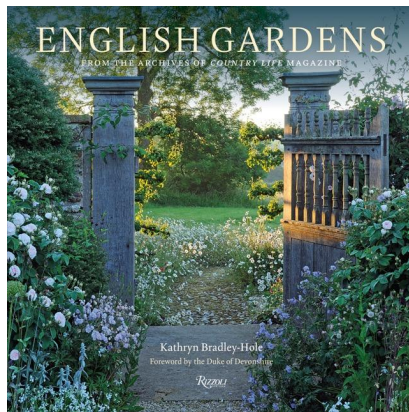
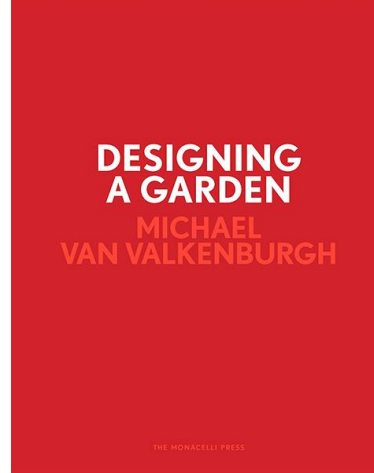
Perhaps no flower is as closely associated with Japan as the cherry blossom. In *The Sakura Obsession*, Japanese journalist and author, Naoko Abe, reveals the story of how the Englishman Collingwood "Cherry" Ingram, became the world's leading expert on cherry trees and, in the process, assured the species' diversity in that country, as well as its popularity worldwide. Ingram, the first person to artificially hybridize cherries, introduced more than 50 varieties to Britain while tending more than 100 varieties at his home in Kent, including the *Taihaku* or "Great White," then nearly extinct in Japan. Both a cultural history of the cherry blossom and biography of Ingram, *The Sakura Obsession*, is a reminder of how easily plant species can become endangered, and the need to preserve bio-diversity in a rapidly changing world.

Designing a Garden: The Monk's Garden at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

by Michael Van Valkenburgh, The Monacelli Press, 2019

While there are many books about gardens, few comprehensively trace the process of their creation in entirety. *Designing a Garden*, illuminates the challenges, questions and decisions that inform the making of built landscapes, regardless of their scale. The project, the Monk's Garden at the venerated Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, is public, complex and somewhat precious. Its realization unfolds in a series of carefully crafted chapters, representing key elements of the design. With

the goal of demystifying the process, Van Valkenburgh hopes to provide inspiration to newly minted landscape architects and home gardeners alike - a bit like sharing the secret sauce. A fan of cooking and cookbooks, Van Valkenburgh shares the necessary ingredients. What's left for the reader to provide is the optimism to explore the open-ended, creative process of garden-making as part of their personal journey of discovery.



English Gardens: From the Archives of *Country Life Magazine*

by Kathryn Bradley-Hole, Rizzoli, 2019

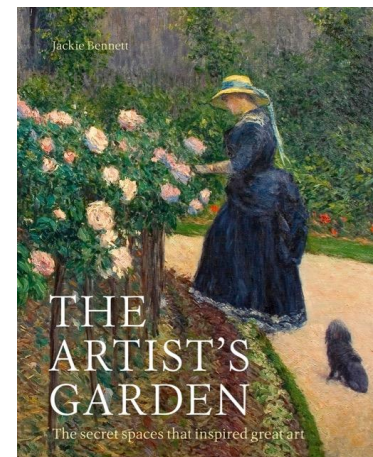
England is a nation of gardeners with a deep love for plants and a passion for country living. Both are celebrated in the lavishly photographed 500-page *English Gardens* in which 62 gardens are curated by Bradley-Hole, gardens editor of *Country Life Magazine* for 18 years. Illustrating the evolution of country-house gardens, from the historic to the contemporary, all were photographed during Bradley-Hole's tenure at the magazine and together they provide a focused and detailed illustration of English gardening in the twenty-

first century. Gardens are organized in stylistic groups (topiary, kitchen garden, plant collections and collectors) with overviews providing background on parks, glasshouses, lawns and eco-gardening. Key aspects of horticultural history illuminate the styles, interests, and historical references that make the "English" garden unique. *English Gardens* captures the essence of English garden-making in all its "astonishing variety, wit, and inspiration."

The Artists Garden: The Secret Spaces that Inspired Great Art

by Jackie Bennett, White Lion Publishing an imprint of The Quarto Group, 2019

A cultural history of the role gardens and landscapes served in the creative lives of some of the world's greatest painters, *The Artist's Garden* journeys to the gardens, studios, and houses where they lived and worked. Ten individual artists, from DaVinci to Dali, are profiled alongside a series of artists' communities, including those of the New England Impressionists in Connecticut, Maine and New Hampshire. Each featured property is open to the public, with the story of its evolution and preservation interwoven with that of the artist who lived there. Beautifully designed, *The Artist's Garden* features color photographs and historic images on every page as well as biographies, timelines, and garden plans. Whether singly or collectively, the artists profiled combined garden making with their art. Some were knowledgeable gardeners, some harbored a carefully nurtured design philosophy, and some embraced natural landscapes including the vineyards, olive groves, and fields of the countryside. All were inspired by the complex and transformative process of garden-making.



Patrice Todisco writes about gardens and parks at the award-winning blog [Landscape Notes](#).

From the Stacks:

By Maureen T. O'Brien,
Library Manager

Featured Collection – Memorabilia

The Library is a repository of memories embodied in ephemera and other tangible objects. We recently received the late Betty Ferris' apron from the 125th Flower Show in 1996. The apron was adorned with pins of flower shows Betty volunteered. This apron held memories for Betty while she was alive and now embodies memories of past flower shows for the future. Another item of interest that we found in one of the pockets—a collapsible scissors that Betty used to manicure plants at the show.

In the Windows – Books on Crafts

Winter is an ideal time to work on crafts associated with the garden. It is also the time to plan next year's foraging in the landscape for your winter activities next year. A sample of adult and children's books on crafts appear in the windows during December.

Our Collections are Growing...

The Library relies on the generosity of its members to build and preserve its Collections. This month we thank the Estate of Marion Ryan for its donation in kind that enriches our Library and the Fain Foundation for its generous contribution to the Edwin Hale Lincoln Preservation Project.

Come Visit the Library...

Drop into the Library when the lights are on to browse or go shopping. The Library has a section of horticulture books for sale at bargain prices. They make wonderful eco-friendly gifts or additions to your personal reference library. For hours or to make an appointment visit our [webpage](#).



Image: Apron with memento pins donated by the Estate of Betty Ferris



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