



# Leaflet

A MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY PUBLICATION



## Letter from the Interim President

Dear Members,

Annual Meeting of Members! Festival of Trees is expanding!

The announcement you have been waiting for is here! You are invited to attend the Annual Meeting of Members of Massachusetts Horticultural Society to hear the announcement of the next President and Executive Director and to hear him speak.

The Annual Meeting of Members is scheduled for Thursday, October 17, 2019 at 5:30 pm in the Hunnewell Building at The Gardens at Elm Bank. Seating is limited so please register [here](#).



Festival of Trees is expanding! The perennially popular showcase of beautifully decorated trees and the fun of participating in the Raffle for over 65 trees opens the day after Thanksgiving, November 29.

Due to popular demand, this year's Festival of Trees includes extended lights in the gardens and extended dates to view them along with our outrageously popular train display - Snow Village.

So make plans to visit our Festival of Trees from November 29 to December 15 when the Raffle will be drawn for decorated trees and their gifts. Lighted gardens, trains, horse drawn wagon rides, fire pit with s'mores and new food trucks are all part of the experience and fun.

And if you just can't get enough of the lights, trains and holiday cheer, come back with family and friends just to enjoy the garden light displays, Snow Village and s'mores for two extra weekends this year –

## Upcoming Classes & Events:

### Guided Garden Tour

Wednesday, October 9  
6:00 - 7:30 pm

### Hands-on Floral Design

Three Wednesdays  
October 9, 16, and 23  
7:00 - 8:30 pm

### Herbs & The Plague

Wednesday, October 16  
10:45 am - 12:30 pm

### Guided Garden Tour

Thursday, October 17  
11:00 am - 12:30 pm

### Dig, Divide, Store

#### Dahlias

Thursday, October 17  
10:00 am - 11:30 am

### Floral Pumpkins

Saturday, October 19  
10:00 - 11:30 am

### Arnold Arboretum Tour

Tuesday, October 22  
10:00 - 11:30 am

### Dig, Divide, Store

#### Dahlias

Saturday, October 26  
10:00 am - 11:30 am

### Ikebana

Tuesdays, November 5  
through December 10  
6:30 - 8:30 pm

### Geniuses of Place Symposium

Tuesday, November 5  
1:00 - 5:00 pm

### Shibori Indigo Dyeing

Tuesday, November 14  
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

December 20, 21, 22 and 27, 28, 29.

Until then, I hope to see you in the color-drenched gardens.

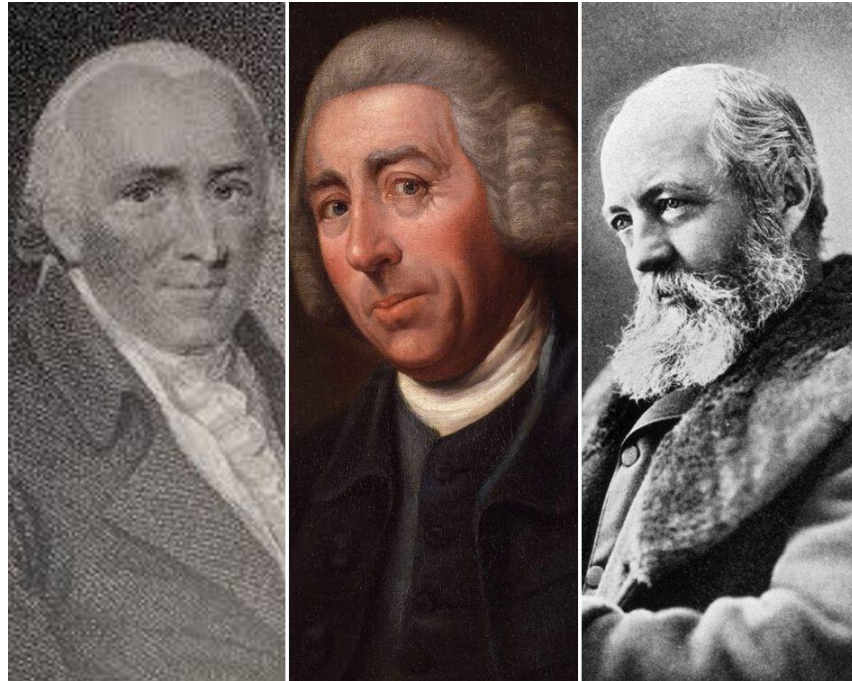
Suzanne Maas  
Interim Director and President

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## Geniuses of Place Symposium

Tuesday, November 5, 2019

1 - 5 pm



Massachusetts Horticultural Society is thrilled to offer an afternoon of insight into the people who became influencing factors and cultivated the foundation and appreciation of landscape design. Join us for an afternoon lecture series on the design principals of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, Humphry Repton, and Frederick Law Olmsted.

Presenters John Phibbs and Ethan Carr will show us how these revolutionary minds stripped away, shifted, and designed areas that combined architecture with a closeness to the landscape. Followed by a facilitated panel discussion, the audience will have a chance to ask questions and discuss the presentation.

Meet, mingle, and enjoy the company of like-minded individuals at the reception following the event.

John Phibbs has run Debois Landscape Survey Group in Chalford, England since 1978. Dubois is dedicated to the management and conservation of historic landscapes of all kinds. Phibbs led the tercentennial celebrations of the birth of Capability Brown in 2016, and published two books on Brown.

Phibbs was awarded an MBE by the Queen for Services to Landscape Architecture in 2017.

Ethan Carr is a professor of landscape architecture and the director of the Master's of Landscape Architecture program at the University of Massachusetts. He is a landscape historian and preservationist specializing in public landscapes.

Carr has written two award-winning books, *Wilderness by Design* and *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma*. He was the volume editor for *The Early Boston Years, 1882-1890 of the Papers of Frederick Law Olmsted*. His latest book is *The Greatest Beach, a history of Cape Cod National Seashore*.

*Early bird tickets are available through October 20 for members and professional affiliations - \$70.*

After October 20 - \$85.

Early bird tickets are available through October 20 for non-members - \$85. After October 20 - \$100.

To register for this event, click [here](#).

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## The Boston Ikebana International Chapter receives Japanese Foreign Minister Commendation

The Japanese Foreign Minister awards commendations on a yearly basis. This year 63 commendations were awarded. Of the 63 commendations, 14 were given to either US or Canadian groups. The Boston Ikebana chapter was the only Ikebana chapter to receive this coveted commendation.

Massachusetts Horticultural Society is so proud to be a sponsor and home base for so many meetings and classes of the Boston Ikebana International Chapter.



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## Autumn Olive--A Challenging Invasive!

By R. Wayne Mezitt  
Trustee Chair

Chances are you're noticing this ubiquitous shrub this fall along roadways, at the edge of the woods and perhaps even in your own yard. Heavy clusters of red, pea-size berries bunch-up along each branch, contrasting attractively with the silvery-green foliage. Its green berries form in early summer, turning red as cooler nights arrive and persist on the bush until they drop weeks later or are taken by birds. Few plants produce fruit so profusely as the autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*): a single mature plant can produce 25 or more lbs. of berries every year!



Originally introduced to the USA from Asia in the 1830's, for many decades autumn olive seemed to be well behaved. It excels as a species that grows in sunny areas where few other plants can survive, improves barren soil fertility, stabilizes steep slopes, forms windbreaks in desolate regions and produces fragrant flowers, cover and edible fruit for wildlife. In 1963 the heavy-fruited cultivar 'Cardinal' was selected by the USDA, and soon thereafter it began multiplying explosively. Its seedlings quickly dominated major open-field areas, began out-competing native plants; it is now considered one of the toughest invasive invaders in much of the eastern USA and into Canada.

In a single season autumn olive can grow 6 ft. or more, maturing as a spiny-branched multi-stem shrub in only a few years at 15 ft. or more high and wide. Its green leaves are 2-3" long with wavy edges, showing their silvery undersides when the wind blows. Sweetly-scented ivory-colored flowers perfume the air in early June. Because its roots produce nodules that convert nitrogen from the air into a form usable by plants, it thrives in even the poorest and driest soils, rapidly forming nasty, impenetrable thickets that deer avoid browsing.

Controlling autumn olive is challenging because of the fecundity of its seed and its knack of aggressively



re-sprouting from cut stems. Spring-germinated seedlings can reach 3 ft. or more by fall, often producing fruit even as year-old plants. Younger seedlings are relatively easy to pull out by hand. Older plants have shallow roots, and any broken-off when pulled can grow into new plants.

Interestingly, its copious, attractive, astringently-flavored fruit is extremely high in carotenoids, especially lycopene (17x more than tomato!), Vitamins A, C and E; for generations many Asians have relied upon the plentiful berries as a valuable resource to make flavorful juice and preserves.



If autumn olive appears in your yard, try to remove it before it establishes and starts seeding-in. You'll need to be diligent, surveying your garden every year to identify and dig-out young seedlings before they become established and more difficult to remove (but still worth the effort!). Heavier infestations can be treated with herbicides, but the vigor of the species often renders those results ineffective.

Some have suggested (tongue-in-cheek, perhaps) that we emulate Eastern traditions and employ a defensive action to "reduce" the seed population--try picking the berries and processing them into your own homemade "[Invasive Preserves](#)"!

*R. Wayne Mezitt is a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation nurseryman and a **Massachusetts Certified Horticulturist**, now chairman of **Weston Nurseries of Hopkinton and Chelmsford, MA**, and owner of "**Hort-Sense**", a horticultural advisory business. Wayne currently serves as Trustee chairman for Massachusetts Horticultural Society at **The Gardens at Elm Bank** in Wellesley MA.*

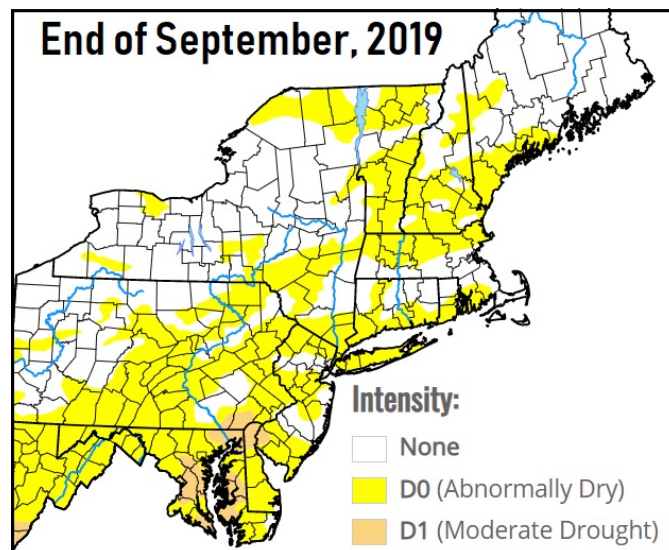


## October Horticultural Hints

by Betty Sanders  
Lifetime Master Gardener

**Drought watch.** Most of New England experienced a drier-than-usual late summer and early fall. If we don't get more rain soon, you will need to water trees, shrubs and any new plantings. Even established plants need lots of water before entering that long, dry spell when water is unavailable after the soil freezes.

**Put the summer garden to bed.** In the vegetable garden, finish harvesting your herbs and vegetables early this month. Green tomatoes can be ripened indoors on windowsills if frost threatens. Root vegetables such as carrots and potatoes store well in cool humid locations. Don't let this year's diseases and insects carry over to next year in the fallen leaves and plant debris in your vegetable and ornamental beds. Remove all the debris, bag it, and trash it. Do not compost vegetable garden plants.



**Autumn leaves are spring nutrients.** Mow leaves into the lawn this fall and be rewarded with healthier soil for the lawn next spring. If you use a bag attached to the mower to catch the chopped leaves, spread those chopped leaves as a mulch around trees and shrubs, and also in your perennial beds. The leaf-grass mix can also be added to the vegetable garden or, of course, your compost pile. Healthy leaves in garden beds can be left in place now, or, if you are a neatnik, rake leaves off beds, chip them up by running over the leaves repeatedly with your mulching mower, and return them to the beds. They will return the nutrients to the soil over the winter. If you are into neither mowing nor raking, spread a layer of compost over the garden beds and let Mother Nature do all the work of breaking down your leaves.

**Dig and divide** overgrown summer bloomers. Siberian iris with dead centers will benefit from the division. On bearded iris, look for any pinholes in the tubers. These indicate iris borers and mean a quick trip to the garbage. Healthy plants can be divided and replanted either in your garden or as gifts for friends. For tubers (dahlias), bulbs (caladiums), rhizomes (cannas) or corms (gladiolus), they need to be gently lifted, then allowed to dry out of the sun. Carefully remove most of the dirt and check for insect or disease damage. Store healthy ones in paper bags in a cool dry place.

**Lime time.** Lime your lawn and garden this month. Rain, freezing and thawing and snow melt all help to get it into the soil before the spring growing season begins.

**Re-potting season.** October is the month to re-pot any house plants that have outgrown their container. Never go up more than one or two inches (for very large plants) in pot size when repotting. Remove any rotten or mushy roots. Pry apart matted or circling roots, and cut off those that are too compacted. Doing this ensures so the remaining roots will reach out into the new soil. When re-potting, start with a coffee filter (or similar) over the pot's drain hole to contain the soil, then add a layer of soil. Hold the plant at the level you want it to sit and add soil around it to stand it upright (with large plants you may need an assistant). Firm the soil but do not pack it down. Water thoroughly until it runs out the bottom. Set the container aside and add more water until you are certain the entire pot is wet. Use a pot saucer to catch any overflow and place the plant in its new home.

**Watch the temperature forecast.** In the vegetable garden, dig your potatoes and harvest winter squash before that first frost hits. Frost on a pumpkin is quaint; frost on a butternut squash turns it to unusable mush. Harvest winter squash with one inch of stem attached. Clean, then dip in a 10% bleach solution and dry before putting away for the winter.

**After the first frost.** After your first frost, clean the vegetable garden of all old plants and vines, dropped fruit and leaves. Do not add garden debris to your compost as it may carry disease or insect eggs which can over-winter. Remove and discard any plastic used under your plants to prevent carrying disease or insect eggs over to next season.

**Late October** is the ideal time to put in new spring bulbs. If you plant daffodil and hyacinth bulbs in the middle of the flower border, new growth from perennials will hide the yellowing foliage next spring. Remember large bulbs need to be 8 to 12 inches deep, small bulbs six inches. Lime, which is beneficial to all spring bulbs in New England's acidic soil, should be placed at the bottom of the hole with the bulb and then sprinkled over the top of the planting area. The lime also helps to disguise the scent of the bulb and deter squirrels and chipmunks.

*You can read more of Betty's horticultural advice at [BettyOnGardening.com](http://BettyOnGardening.com).*

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## The Sweetest Spot

*by Neal Sanders  
Leaflet contributor*

We dined on the last four ears of corn last night. They were the remnant of the third and final

'square' we planted back in early August. They weren't as sweet as what we were picking three or even two weeks ago, but the kernels were still far tastier than anything you can find in any supermarket's produce aisle. This morning we enjoyed peaches so sweet and tart they exploded in our mouths. We picked them last Sunday at an orchard in Harvard. And, today I enjoyed a full tomato with lunch. It was sliced, fat and juicy, as the topping of a turkey sandwich. The tomato was sunshine embedded in a piece of fruit; simultaneously sweet and acidic.



This is the sweet spot of the gardening season. There is a half-bushel bag of Macoun apples in the basement that will likely have been consumed by the time you read this (and will have been replenished by yet another half-bushel, assuming we can find a free afternoon to go picking). We're down to under twelve hours sunlight, yet our squash plants are still producing two or three zucchini a day (admittedly down from a peak of half a dozen or more, which we palmed off on our neighbors).

The sweet spot is the final few weeks of summer and the first ones of autumn. The apples and peaches are something we've looked forward to since midsummer; the corn is now in the rear-view mirror – though we had the wisdom to blanch, skin, and freeze several bags of peak-summer-season corn kernels that we will enjoy this winter. Also in the freezer is a six-month supply of green beans, which I can now enjoy without thinking about fighting the Mexican bean beetles that vexed us through July and August.

The last weeks of the vegetable gardening season are nearly effortless: the beets are plump, the arugula is verdant without ever have known the flea beetles that left the May crop looking like green Swiss cheese. The leeks are growing fat without human assistance, as are the fennel, carrots and chard. These crops are conveniently placed around the perimeter of the vegetable garden, making picking and watering far easier than when we had to snake hoses around the now-vanished cucumbers and peppers.

The flower garden has also entered its sweet spot. Our *Veronia* lettermani 'Iron Butterfly' grew unobtrusively all summer, content to be in the (literal) shadow of the rudbeckia and coreopsis. Last week, our four shrub-sized plants began showing small, purple flowers. This afternoon, there were twelve (!) monarch butterflies happily feasting on its nectar. Nearby, the *Coelestinum* (perennial ageratum) draws bees like a magnet. Both are easy-to-grow natives that belong in every New England garden.



It won't last, of course. In the pre-dawn hours some night this month, the temperatures will dip down into the low thirties and the zucchini will turn to limp mush. Before October is done, the forecast will show nighttime lows in the twenties, and we will rush to pick everything that is salvageable. But, by then we'll be down to ten hours of sunlight a day and the sun's angle will be all wrong anyway. We'll cut down the now-spent perennials and cart them off to the transfer station.

But I'll have the memory of those final ears of corn to cherish. As well as the apples and peaches, the tomatoes and zucchini. Oh, and those monarch butterflies. Those, I'll especially cherish, and we can pull up the videos of their dance to enliven a gray, winter day.

Neal Sanders' 13<sup>th</sup> mystery, 'Never Too Old to Lie' was published earlier this year and is available on Amazon and in bookstores. He's currently at work on 'A Murder on the Garden Tour'.



If you are a Massachusetts Horticultural Society supporter age 70 ½ or older with an IRA, you have an opportunity to make a QCD donation that supports The Gardens at Elm Bank and our educational programs. QCD donations help you meet your required minimum distribution (RMD) requirement, and avoid income tax you would otherwise have to pay on mandatory withdrawals.



For additional information on QCD donations, click [here](#).

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## From the Stacks:

By Maureen T. O'Brien,  
Library Manager

*An orchid in a deep forest sends out its fragrance even if no one is around to appreciate it.*

— Confucius

*Orchidaceae*, the orchid family, is one of the largest, most diverse and widespread family of flowering plants. Orchids are beautiful, exotic looking and often the subject of myth and folklore. Confucius was an admirer of orchids, which were the subject of many of his writings.

The name orchid is derived from the Greek word “órkhis.” Orchids share the following characteristics: three petals, three sepals that are easily mistaken for petals and a waxy tube-like structure that is known as a column. The column is a fusion of the plant’s male and female organs.

### **Featured Collection — Books on Orchids**

The [American Orchid Society](#) was founded at Massachusetts Horticultural Society in 1921, with Albert Cameron Burrage (1859–1931) as its first President and Edwin Hale Lincoln (1848-1928) as its official photographer. Lincoln’s rare *Orchids of the North Eastern United States* can be seen locally at the [State Library of Massachusetts](#). Our Society has the glass plate negatives for the book, of which 359 and can be seen [here](#). The Society’s Botanical Print Collection with 44 images of orchids can be seen [here](#).

Burrage was the longest serving president (1921 to 1931) of the Society. He made his fortune as an industrialist and attorney, but he is best remembered as an avid horticulturist and philanthropist. He was widely known as a cultivator of rare orchids. He maintained the largest collection of orchids in the country at his residence “Orchidvale” in Beverly Farms, Massachusetts, where he grew over 12,000 orchids. In 1920, his exhibit of 1800 varieties of orchids took up the entire floor at Horticultural Hall in Boston. The nothogenus (hybrid) *Burrageara* was named for Burrage, its hybridizer. It is beautiful and one of the easiest orchids to grow.

He received the Society’s George R. White Medal of Honor in 1922 for establishing an outstanding collection of exotic orchids, and in 1925 he received the Lindley Medal from the Royal Horticultural Society of England for an exhibition of *Cypripediums* displayed in a natural setting at the Chelsea Flower Show in London. Burrage was a generous benefactor to the Society: he funded awards, created an endowment for the Library and produced numerous exhibits. At his death he bequeathed his 2000 volume library to the Society. It included an extensive and fine collection of works on orchids from around the world.

### **View a Podcast that Features Images from our Collections...**

Listen to a *Rewind* podcast that features vintage Victorian horticulture prints used by WGBH in conjunction with some of its earliest Victory Garden television shows [here](#). Scroll down the page and see close ups of some of the images from the Library.

### ***In the Windows – Books on Orchids***

A search of the word “orchid” on the Society’s online [catalog](#) brings up 324 results. Some of these books are rare and unusual, others contain beautiful images of orchids and others provide useful information on orchid species, culture and care.

### ***Our Collections are Growing...***

The Library relies on the generosity of its members to build and preserve its Collections. This month we thank Stephen Klein, Sarah Cummer, Penni Jenkins, the Lenhardt Library at the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Estate of Betty Ferris for their donations in kind that enrich our Library. Do you want inspiration for donating to our collections? Consider donating a book from the Society’s Amazon [\*\*Wish List\*\*](#).

### ***Stop by the Library’s Exhibit at the Annual Meeting—October 17, 2019***

We have some treasures to show from our archives!

### ***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. We want people to use these books as resources and for pleasure. Although some of the books are old, the information in the books rarely get dated. One recent visitor from Minnesota was thrilled to find a beautifully illustrated book that was over 100 years old (we already had 3 copies in better condition) that he was planning to gift to a friend. Reusing books is more eco-friendly than buying new or recycling.

The Library is open on Thursdays from 9 am to 1 pm, at other times by chance or appointment. Before you venture over, we suggest you email [mobrien@masshort.org](mailto:mobrien@masshort.org) or call 617-933-4912 on days the Library is not scheduled to be open. A benefit of Society membership allows members to borrow our most of our recent books. Have a book and cannot come in when the Library is open? You can leave it at our new Gatehouse when the [\*\*Gardens are open to the public.\*\*](#)



Image: [\*\*Oncidium Kramerianum, Ecuador\*\*](#) from our botanical print collection, Louis Van Houtte (1810-1870.)

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