



May 2018

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## Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

After what felt like a prolonged (and persistent) winter, we finally turned the corner into spring on the last weekend in April, and now the beginning of May suddenly feels like midsummer. No complaints here!

Our staff and the volunteers have been working hard in the gardens to regain ground after an unforgiving winter, but things are starting to look green again here: the trees have budded out, and all the early plants are making a flowery appearance. It's a great time to visit the gardens!

Unfortunately, it's a great time for critters to visit the gardens, too. Voles have left their mark in the Bressingham Garden, and rabbits seem to think my home garden is an all-you-can eat hosta buffet.

In seasons past, the hosta has been full grown before the rabbits lopped off all the leaves in a circle, to hydrate I am told. This year, the hosta was barely an inch above the ground when they mowed it down. What would usually be maturing into a lush perennial border now has a ragged edge. The rabbits went too far, so I followed suit. I stocked up on deer and rabbit repellent granules and chicken-wire fence at my local garden center -- using my Mass Hort discount of course -- in hopes of making my hosta inhospitable to rabbits and other herbivores. The buffet is closed, furballs!

But that's part of the pleasure of gardening. You invest your time, energy, and money into a vision for cultivating life, but nature will take its course. One person's prized hosta is just somebunny else's afternoon snack. And even if all of your hard work doesn't pay off in a lush perennial border this season, don't fret. Go for a walk; visit The Gardens at Elm Bank. The world will be blooming all around you.

Good luck in your gardens this summer, and join us at the Gardeners' Fair on May 12 for inspiration. (I will be looking to find more hosta to feed my rabbits.)

Warm regards,

## Upcoming Classes & Events:

### [Early Season Gardening](#)

Sunday, May 6  
10:30 a.m. - noon

### [Gardeners' Fair](#)

Saturday, May 12  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m. (member's  
entry begins at 8 a.m.)

### [Greenhouse Growing](#)

Thursday, May 17  
7 - 8:30 p.m.

### [Landscaping for Watershed Health](#)

Tuesday, May 22  
1 - 5 p.m.

### [Spring Landscape Tour](#)

Wednesday, May 30  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

### [Hands-On Floral Design](#)

Wednesdays,  
June 6 - June 20  
7 - 8:30 p.m.

### [A Night in Napa: Mass Hort's Garden Party](#)

Thursday, June 14  
6 - 8:30 p.m.



## Don't Miss the Gardeners' Fair!

**Saturday, May 12, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

**Members Hour: 8 - 9 a.m.**

It's time for Mass Hort's Gardeners' Fair and Plant Sale! A variety of vendors will be on site, offering everything you need to plan, dig, plant, and enjoy your home garden space. Allandale Farm, Boston's oldest working farm, will bring a wide selection of heirloom and hybrid tomato plants grown right on the farm! Peppers, eggplants, cucumbers and other starter plants will also be available.



The **Gardeners' Fair** will take place on **Saturday, May 12**, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. We have a special hour just for members from 8 - 9 a.m. The Gardeners' Fair is an opportunity to find rare and unusual perennials, trees and shrubs; ready-to-plant herbs and vegetables; and tomato varieties by the dozens. It's also a chance to hear talks by experts, find unique garden tools, garden ornaments and accessories, as well as other gardening necessities. The fair will feature tomatoes by Allandale Farm, and the Herb Society Plant Sale. The Mass Hort Library will be selling duplicate titles from their collection, and the Hort will be accepting donations and reselling your used tools!

Admission is \$5 per car for the general public, and free for Mass Hort members.

Mass Hort will offer children's activities and garden tours. Don't miss the Wellesley Band who will entertain at 1 p.m.; The New England Unit of the Herb Society will offer tours of their display garden; and Allandale Farm will offer a lecture on good tomato growing in the morning. The Rhododendron Society will present a Flower Show in the Hunnewell Building in addition to selling rhododendrons and azaleas. Additionally, the Mass Master Gardener Association will host its Ask a Master Gardener booth and offer [pH soil testing](#).

Interested in being a vendor? Find more information [here](#).

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## Mother's Day is May 13: Give Her Flowers All Year-Long!



Treat your Mother, or a mother in your life, to a Mass Hort membership!

We will send a special card with membership materials.

**Purchase a Membership Today!**

**Act Now and Save  
\$10 OFF Regular Rates!\***

Individual Membership: \$45 (regularly \$55)

Family Membership: \$80 (regularly \$90)

**Save \$10 by Using Promo Code: MOMS**

***Act Now! Promotion ends May 11!***

Purchase a Membership Online - OR - Call 617-933-4961

## **On Mother's Day Bring Your Family to The Gardens at Elm Bank**

Come on Mother's Day to stroll the gardens, bring a picnic, and have fun in the award-winning Weezie's Garden for Children.

All season long enjoy family programs Friday through Sunday. Programs are held 11 - 11:30 a.m. in Weezie's. Even more, from June to August, we'll have special programs on Thursdays-- including Dover Town Library's Super Awesome Fun Time and Caterpillar Club!

*\*Offer valid through midnight, May 11, 2018. Offer valid for new or rejoining members only. Offer is not valid for renewing members with renewal dates of April 1, 2018 or later.*

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## **Landscaping for Watershed Health**

Mass Hort has organized an afternoon to empower homeowners to become savvy land stewards. Join us **Tuesday, May 22, 1 - 5 p.m.** to find out how landscape design, gardening, and lawn care practices affect the health of our watershed.

Be inspired by presentations on smart fertilizing, converting lawns to meadow, incorporating pollinator-friendly rain gardens, and restoring and maintaining vegetative buffers along stream banks. No matter your watershed, you will find tips to make your landscape a more ecologically sustainable space. [\*\*Register Today!\*\*](#)

### **Our Presenters:**

#### **Restoring Vegetative Buffers**

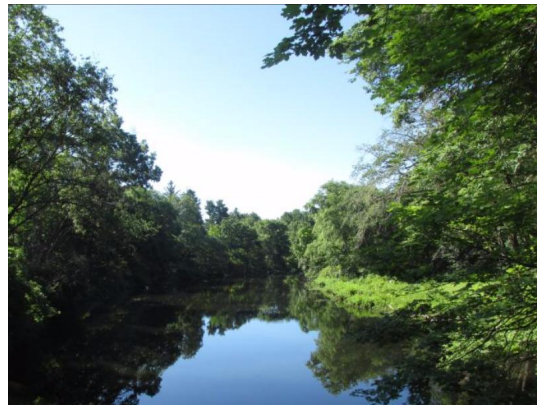
Miles Connors, Director of Ecological Services  
Parterre Ecological

#### **Why Mulch When You Can Plant**

Dan Jaffe, Propagator and Grower  
New England Wildflower Society

#### **How to Limit Fertilizer Use for the Benefit of the Charles River**

Sasha Vallieres, Program Manager  
The Charles River Conservancy



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## **Volunteer with Us!**

Check out our [\*\*NEW volunteer opportunities\*\*](#) for the spring and summer. We're currently looking for volunteers to work in the gardens, at the Gardeners' Fair on May 12, in the office and library, and with our educational programs.

We hope you can join us!

Is your business or group looking for nonprofit volunteer opportunities? We invite you to join Mass Hort for a [\*\*team building day\*\*](#) in The Gardens at Elm Bank.

To learn more, contact:

Amy Rodrigues, Volunteer Engagement





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## A Spring Tour of Historic New England Estates

We have a number of classes, workshops and events offered to inspire you and connect you to plants and the natural environment. We hope you can join us. Check out our full listings in our [Spring and Summer Calendar and Courses](#).

Many of our programs fill up, so please register early! One such program is the [Spring Landscape Tour](#), offered in partnership with Historic New England. Spend **Wednesday, May 30** touring estates of the area, starting with the Lyman grounds and greenhouses in Waltham. Then tour the Eustis Estate in Milton. Lunch will be provided and enjoyed on the estate's porch. The day will wrap up with a tour of The Gardens at Elm Bank. Mass Hort members must call Historic New England and request the member rate of \$40, 617-994-5959. Space is limited, so **please register soon**.



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## From the Stacks:

By Maureen T. O'Brien,  
Library Manager

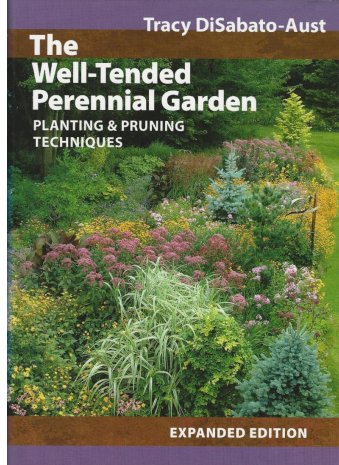
*In my garden, the square footage devoted to flowering perennials demands more time and energy than the rest of the acre and a half under cultivation.*

-Sydney Eddison

As Eddison implies, a perennial plant does not mean a carefree plant. Perennials can be short-lived, finicky thugs that require high maintenance. They can also be a joy to behold, colorful and a delight each spring as the garden comes to life. As Gertrude Jekyll said "[t]o plant and maintain a flower border, with a good scheme for colour, is by no means the easy thing that is commonly supposed." Knowing what to expect and what you can handle are the first steps in creating and editing your perennial borders.

### **Featured Book**

A well-designed perennial border is beautiful, provides season long interest and can instill garden-envy in the novice gardener. Being



perennials, these plants are supposed to return each year, although not all do or some repeat only for a short time.

*The Well-Tended Perennial Garden* (Timber Press 2003) by Tracy DiSabato-Aust is an essential resource for owners or tenders of perennial gardens. Beautifully illustrated, this book is an invaluable reference and how-to manual in one volume. It offers a variety of ways to get the information you want and need. This full featured book begins with advice on design and basic perennial planting and maintenance, followed by a comprehensive, illustrated encyclopedia of plants that provides valuable information on siting, specific plant characteristics and maintenance. It also includes appendices on ornamental grasses, a maintenance schedule by month and lists of perennials for specific needs. Using this book as a planning tool will lead to results that will elicit coveting in your

colleagues.

For those of you who want permission to downsize your perennial border, pick up Eddison's *Gardening for a Lifetime* (Timber Press 2010.) Eddison relates how age, energy and funds led her to streamline her perennial borders to allow her continued enjoyment of her edited garden.

### ***In the Windows – Perennials!***

The Library windows in May will display books on perennial design, plants and maintenance. The books are colorful and informative, and most are available for borrowing by our members.

### ***We are Still Collecting***

Since its inception in 1829, the Library relied on the generosity of its members to build its collections and often had a "Want List" in its *Transactions*. We continue to rely on of our donors. In April, the Library was the grateful recipient of a large donation of books from Friends of the Wellesley College Botanic Garden, the Wellesley College Science Library and the Wellesley College Greenhouse Library. The college has begun its [Flora Global Project](#) that will rehouse and reimagine its collections in its Margaret C. Ferguson Greenhouses. This project presented the College with a need to weed and cull its collections of horticulture and related books. The donation allowed the Mass Hort Library to add new books to our Library's collection, replace missing books, and replace books in deteriorating condition. Thank you also to Heidi Kost-Gross who donated several books and missing periodicals.

### ***Bring Your Dollar Bills to the Gardeners' Fair and Treat Yourself! May 12, 2018***

Get books, be inspired and then get to work on your garden. The Library will hold a *Book Sale* of duplicate titles at the [Gardeners' Fair](#) on May 12, 2018, at The Gardens at Elm Bank. We have a title for everyone: tantalizing—*Sex Lives of Flowers* and *Sleeping with a Sunflower*; dirty—*The Rodale Book of Composting*; poetic—*A Garden of Words*; plant aficionados—*Botanica's Roses*; historical—*Italian Gardens*; humorous—*The Transplanted Gardener* and mundane—*A-Z of Annuals, Biennials & Bulbs*. All the respected garden book publishers are represented – Timber Press, Brooklyn Botanic Garden; Firefly, Storey Communications, Rodale and more. All books and periodicals will be bargain priced. The sale includes a fine selection of duplicate books received from Wellesley. Plan to pick up a book or two along with your new plants and support your Library at Elm Bank.

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Be transported to a Night in Napa with live music, wine and hors d'oeuvres from the Napa Valley area, and raffles galore, all set within a beautiful garden estate. The entire community is invited to celebrate during our special **Night in Napa Garden Party Benefit** on June 14, 6 - 8:30 p.m.

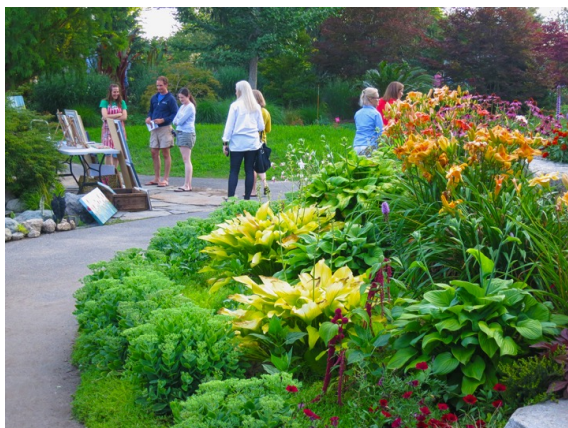
Open to members, friends, and newcomers, this event will take place in our beautiful Italianate Garden, where guests can enjoy local beer, Napa Valley wine and hors d'oeuvres prepared by Capers Catering, and the music of Them Apples. Raffle prize opportunities include wine with hidden prizes attached, a catered dinner for eight, and a wine tasting party. Our display gardens will be open for exploring throughout the evening. In the event of rain, the event will take place in our historic Hunnewell Building.

Tickets for the Garden Party Benefit are \$100. All proceeds support Massachusetts Horticultural Society. **Please RSVP by June 4.**

*A Night in Napa is possible because of the generous support  
of our Committee Members and Sponsors!*

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## Calling All Artists!



Be a part of the **Fourth Annual Arts on the Green** Evening at The Gardens at Elm Bank

On **Thursday, July 26, 5:30 - 8 p.m.**, visitors will wander the gardens, enjoy live music, and stroll through our Art Walk at this popular community event. There will also be activities, tours and refreshments. Artists are invited to participate in the Art Walk in our gardens -- display your work, offer your work for sale, and/or showcase your talents *en plein air*.

If you are interested in being one of the showcased artists on our Art Walk, please

**complete this application form** and return it as soon as possible to reserve your space. If you have any questions, please contact Amy Rodrigues at [arodrigues@masshort.org](mailto:arodrigues@masshort.org) or 617-933-4934.



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## Japanese Andromeda

By R. Wayne Mezitt

Mass Hort Trustee Chairman

Starting as early as April, stimulated by increasing hours of daylight and rising temperatures, the remarkable and fragrant flowers of *Pieris japonica* (Japanese andromeda or lily-of-the-valley shrub) begin their annual welcoming-in-the-spring ritual. Few woody plants in this region manage to consistently look so appealing as winter reluctantly releases its hold on our gardens.



Japanese Andromeda is native to eastern Asia and well-adapted to this region's climate. Long, pendant clusters of fragrant, creamy-white, urn-shaped lily-of-the-valley-like flowers adorn every branch. Ignored by browsing deer, this fast-growing, upright shrub or small tree is a wonderful pollinator plant, easy to use in any garden, sun or shade. Strikingly-contrasting new growth coincides with flowering in tones of red, orange and bronze, transforming to shiny dark green as the season advances, persisting all winter.

In addition to the species, dozens of cultivars are widely available, offering a broad range of growth habits and flower colors; here are some:

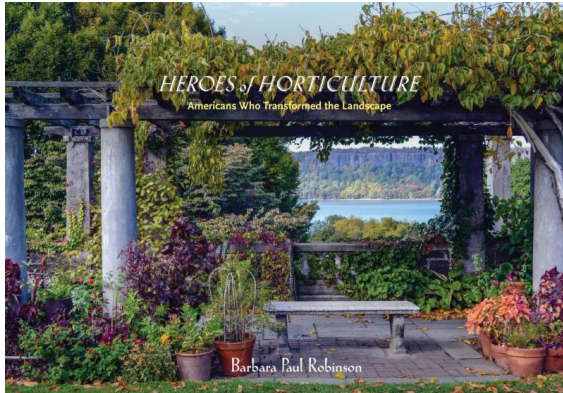
- 'Cavatine'. Pink buds open to creamy white flowers, a bit later than the species. Slow growing and dwarf, reaching only about 3 ft. after 10 years, making it ideal for planting to "face-down" plants that have been browsed by deer.
- 'Dorothy Wyckoff'. Dense, wide and upright growing to 6 ft. in 10 years. Pink buds all winter open to pink flowers and turn white. Dark green summer foliage turns bronzy in winter.
- 'Flaming Silver'. Distinctive dark green leaves edged silvery-creamy-white all year. Bright pink new growth complements the display of delicate white flower chains.
- 'Mountain Fire' and 'Red Mill'. Vividly brilliant red new shoots cover the plant, contrasting well with the pendulous chains of white flowers for several weeks each spring.
- 'Valley Rose', 'Valley Valentine' and 'Katsura'. Dark red winter buds, opening to distinctively-pink fragrant flowers. Green foliage with bronze to red new shoots.

The other species grown in this region is *Pieris floribunda*, commonly known as mountain andromeda or fetterbush. For a number of reasons, mountain andromeda, although native to the eastern USA (and more resistant to lace bug), turns out to be rather scarce on the market. Fortunately a hybrid between the two species, *Pieris* 'Brouwer's Beauty' (a [Cary Award](#) winner), is readily available at local garden centers. This is a wide growing evergreen plant with pink-purple buds which open to panicles of fragrant white bell-shaped flowers, followed with yellow-toned new growth.

Andromeda lace bug ([Stephanitis takeyai](#)) can be a nuisance on cultivars and hybrids of *Pieris japonica*. Affected foliage appears mottled with lighter-colored spots, and brownish sticky deposits on the undersides of each leaf. Spraying with horticultural oil or insecticidal soap to dislodge the insects and eggs can be effective. But a stronger application of systemic insecticide may be needed—ask for recommendations at your local garden center. Plants growing in shade are less susceptible, but any infestation should be treated as soon as damage is noticed.

R. Wayne Mezitt is a third 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.

*Reviewed by Pamela Hartford*



The eighteen heroes profiled in Barbara Paul Robinson's new book engage in horticulture ranging in scope from plants to parks, including advocacy, administration and education, as well as digging and potting up. Their lives are wonderfully told with insightful detail due to Robinson's talent in the art of the interview and her superb writing.

The first woman to be named partner (in 1976) at the New York 'white shoe' law firm Debevoise & Plimpton, Robinson took a sabbatical from law practice to work as a

gardener for Penelope Hobhouse and Rosemary Verey. Her obvious admiration for those persons so accomplished within the gardening universe was first expressed in *Rosemary Verey: Life and Lessons from a Legendary Gardener* (David R Godine, 2012), and now in *Heroes in Horticulture*.

The profiles are thoughtfully organized in conceptual groupings. Five public garden administrators are featured. Two breathed new life into important but languishing institutions: the New York Botanical Garden (Gregory Long) and the Brooklyn Botanical Garden (Elizabeth Scholtz). Three were instrumental in creating new public gardens: Marco Polo Stufano, a horticulturist with an astonishing visual flair who helped establish Wave Hill in the Bronx; Dr. Richard Lightly, who created the environmentally progressive Mt. Cuba Center in Delaware; and Steve Byrns, an architect and member of the New York Landmarks Commission who, while living in Yonkers, discovered the world renowned, decaying Untermyer Garden and subsequently devoted himself to its revitalization.

Also featured is the triumvirate who established the Garden Conservancy; Frank Cabot, Tom Armstrong and Antonia Adezio, and six horticulturally adventurous nurserymen who each had a great impact on late twentieth and early twenty first centuries gardens.

The profiles of Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, the heroine of Central Park's revival in the late 1970's and founder of the Central Park Conservancy, and Linden Miller, a horticulturist/designer for Central Park and many public parks in and around New York, are intertwined. Together, they reveal the process which fostered a paradigm change in the way public parks are perceived and managed. Elizabeth Roger's formation of the Central Park Conservancy established a public/private partnership for long-term management of important landscapes that became a template for hundreds of such organizations around the country. Linden Miller, an artist who translated her painterly medium to plants, demonstrated through the success of her horticultural transformations the truth of her mantra: "Make it beautiful and they will come; keep it that way and they will help."

Only two individuals are profiled as garden creators, as Robinson describes them, but each is exemplary. Both George Schoellkopf and John G. Fairy have created gardens which are enduring masterpieces. As a regular visitor to Hollister House in Washington CT, I can attest to the magic of George Schoellkopf's creation, a series of unexpected, beautifully linked spaces which celebrate horticultural artistry, an American Sissinghurst. John Fairy's Texas garden, Peckerwood, is "...an aesthetic experience involving all the senses."

Although each profile is complete in itself, the many shared associations and collaborations weave the individuals together, creating an engaging portrait of the impassioned universe we gardeners live in.

*Pamela Hartford is a landscape historian and preservation consultant. She lives in Salem, MA.*

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## Stewards of the Land

*By Neal Sanders,*



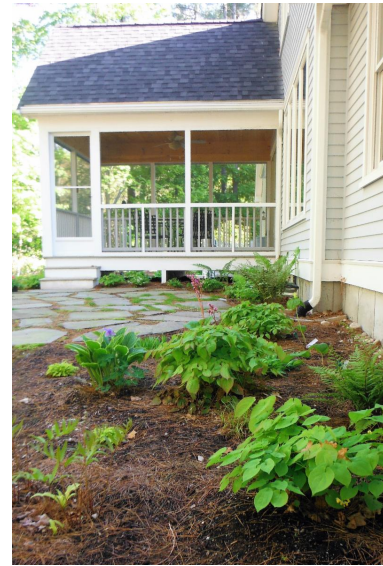


Leaflet Contributor

The town I live in, Medfield, had several incarnations before it was a suburb of Boston. It was, however briefly, the straw hat capital of the world. It was an artists' colony. It played a small but pivotal role in the King Philip War. Mostly, though, until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Medfield was a farming community.

The winding road on which I now live can be seen on maps dating back well into the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. An 'aerial view' of the town from 1888 shows farm fields and a swamp. Sometime before 1940, a modest single-family home rose on the site and two families raised children in it. Then, about 25 years ago, it became home to an invalid. The acre-and-a-half around the house reverted to pines and, unfortunately, opportunistic invasive species.

When Betty and I saw the property for the first time in April 2014, the first thing we noticed was a 50-foot-long sweep of black swallowwort, one of the nastiest introductions into New England of the past decade. Several specimens of *euonymous alatus* – burning bush – towered more than ten feet and no less noxious offspring were all over the property, including the wetlands that comprised the back two-thirds of the parcel.



My strongest memory of that first walkaround, though, was the complete absence of sound. There were no birds, no frogs, nothing. The land had gone sterile.

Last month we began our fourth year as stewards of that acre and a half we now call home. In some ways we've accomplished a lot; in others, we have so far to go.

Beginning in September 2014, we removed some 40 pines. All were over 60 feet in height with growth only at their very tips. The invasive plants and shrubs were ripped out of the ground. Except for a few remaining maples, oaks, and pines, we were left with a blank slate upon which to create a house and landscape.

The following spring we began planting a dozen specimen trees – all natives – and, except for a concolor fir, all flowering. We added native shrubs (itea, fothergilla, high-bush blueberry), then ground covers (ferns, wild strawberries, and heuchera). We also allowed in a few 'friendly aliens' such as hosta and bulbs. We continued the planting last year, adding still more trees, shrubs, and too many perennials to keep count.

Has it made a difference? An inch and a half of rain fell the other day. I went out after dark to switch over our gutters from filling rain barrels to flowing rainwater into underground pipes that feed directly into the wetlands. In the process, I frightened a frog (or toad) that had to be at least three inches in length. Amphibians have re-colonized our land.

Two years ago we put out hummingbird feeders and were promptly rewarded with at least two pair of rubythroats. That winter, we added seed and suet feeders to let overwintering and migrating birds know they were welcome. Yesterday morning, we counted at least a dozen distinct species – all nesting pairs – at our feeders. The birds are back with a vengeance, including a hawk who surveys his or her hunting ground from the top of one of the remaining pines.

Are we finished planting? Not by a long shot. This morning we made the trek out to New England Wild Flower Society's Nasami Farms nursery in Whatley to inspect their new offerings and returned home with a car full of ground covers and yet another shrub.

We are stewards of our little chunk of land. The frogs and birds were here long before us. They have an equal right to enjoy this little acre and a half. Admittedly, we deter the animals we consider pests (deer, turkeys) but welcome all others.

We occasionally even get unexpected help. A three-foot-long garter snake, whom for whatever reason I promptly named 'Herbert', took up residence near the two raised-bed vegetable gardens at the front of our property. It was a sufficient presence that Betty always made me check the area to ensure Herbert was elsewhere before she would work those plots.

Last fall, the two boys across the street brought exciting news: right as they were playing outside, our resident hawk swooped down from his aerie and grabbed Herbert. He was last seen wiggling helplessly, 50 feet in the air, as the hawk sought out an appropriate luncheon spot.

Neal Sanders' latest mystery, ***Fatal Equity***, has just been published. You can find it at Amazon and in bookstores.



## May Horticultural Hints

by Betty Sanders,  
Leaflet Contributor

**First, the Good News.** 'Real' spring has arrived. New England is drought-free with precipitation slightly above average year to date. More good news: gypsy moth populations are at exceptionally low levels thanks to last year's wet spring.

**Now the Bad News.** The deer tick population is exploding, and the Lone Star ticks (as well as others) are now firmly established in New

England. That means in addition to Lyme Disease, we are confronted with Ehrlichiosis and Babesiosis; all serious blood-borne diseases. In May, ticks are about the size of the period at the end of this sentence, but they're still carry diseases. Before working in the garden, use a spray or powder containing permethrin (a synthetic chemical that mimics an extract of chrysanthemum flowers) to treat clothing, and spray a repellent containing DEET on skin or clothing for protection. Check family pets as well as family members.



**In the flower garden.** Remove spent blossoms from spring bulbs but do not cut back, or braid, foliage until it turns yellow. Those leaves are busy producing food for next spring's flower. If you're growing peonies, fertilize and pinch off side buds to promote larger main blooms.

The garden center displays are tempting, but hold off planting marigolds, zinnias, coleus, petunias and other summer annuals until Memorial Day when the soil is warm and all danger of frost is past. These plants resent cold soil and cold nights.

**In the vegetable garden.** Before planting bare-root strawberries, enrich the soil with compost or well-rotted manure (strawberries are big feeders). Set the plants with the crown just at ground level and in a hole wide enough to spread out the roots.

Have you ever grown rhubarb? It's an easy to grow perennial - meaning it comes back every year. It's high in calcium, speeds metabolism, reduces cholesterol, and is very low in calories. Choose thin, firm, bright red stalks to serve in pies and as a side dish or relish with poultry and pork. But discard the leaves: they are toxic and definitely not edible.

It's much too soon to set out tomatoes, peppers, eggplant and melons. They need soil (not the air) warmed to at least 60 degrees. And remember they require being planted where they receive a minimum of 8 hours a day of sunlight to grow and produce. Wait until June for these summer staples.

Floating row covers can give your early crops a few degrees of protection on cold nights. Even better,

they provide a physical barrier to insects such as aphids, leaf miners, bean beetles, cabbage worms and others. It's a chemical-free way to save your crops from destruction by these pests. Row covers are not difficult to find, they are widely available online, in catalogs and at better nurseries.

**Think containers.** Do you lack a sunny space large enough for an in-ground vegetable garden? It doesn't have to be an impediment. More and more seed companies are offering vegetables intended to be grown in containers. A few containers can provide a summer's worth of fresh vegetables on your patio, alongside the driveway, or any place the sun shines. Just remember that containers will need more frequent watering, especially when the weather heats up.

**Around the yard and in the garden.** Properly applied organic mulch (wood chips, bark mulch, shredded leaves or straw) is a gardener's best friend. Use it over the root zones of trees and shrubs, but *never* against the stem or trunks. Two to three inches is all that is needed. Too much mulch keeps rain (or your water) from getting to the roots where it is needed.

As soon as your early flowering trees and shrubs (including forsythia, rhododendron, azaleas, lilacs, dogwoods, crabapples and redbuds) finish blooming, prune them back to promote the largest possible flower display next year. Pruning later in the summer removes next year's buds.

Water newly transplanted trees and shrubs immediately after planting and throughout the summer. An inexpensive rain gauge – or even a tuna can – will help you keep track of how much rain has fallen each week so you know when and how much additional water is needed on gardens, lawns and new plantings.

You can see more of Betty Sanders' gardening suggestions at [www.BettyOnGardening.com](http://www.BettyOnGardening.com).

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Connect with us



[www.MassHort.org](http://www.MassHort.org) - 617-933-4900