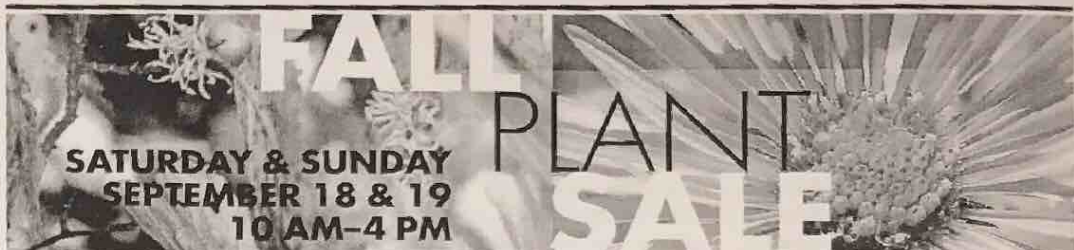


What's Inside

- 2 ... Bog Master: A Conversation with Ed Miller
- 3 ... Native Alternatives
- ... Drawing Winners
- ... Arboretum Facebook Site
- ... Update
- 4 ... "Pubs" Committee Renamed
- ... Plant Sale: A Primer
- Insert ... Book Review

the LANDIS ARBORETUM

THE NEWSLETTER



Fall Plant Sale Features Native Plants—and You

—Jeff Schworm

Fall is, of course, an opportune time to plant many types of trees, shrubs, and perennials. The soil temperatures are still warm, and moisture is usually dependable. To enable our visitors to capitalize on these conditions, the Arboretum's annual fall sale of out-of-the-ordinary trees, shrubs, and perennials will take place on Saturday and Sunday, September 18 and 19, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Our Fall Plant Sale will feature plants native to the Northeast, as well as a selection of perennial offerings from several suppliers, for fall planting. In addition, this year's sale will feature an inventory closeout from another local nursery. All this adds up to great savings and a busy planting season for you.

Why are we featuring plants indigenous to the region? Native plants have adapted

to local and regional conditions over thousands of years and therefore tend to be hardy and vigorous. The great diversity among native plants creates interest in any garden during all seasons. Their use in landscaping produces a better environment. Native plants provide food and shelter for birds, butterflies, and other desirable wildlife. Many help to enrich the soil. Their root systems enable rainfall to percolate into the soil, reducing erosion and runoff and improving water quality. While it's interesting to discover new hybrid varieties, it is all the more interesting to reach out and touch the link to our past represented by native plants.

The fall sale will also include seasonal and locally grown flowers and produce from Solstice Mountain Farm and Mildred's Meadow. Sample the cider—the perfect accompaniment to the goods at the Bake Sale.

The always-popular Book Sale will be held in the Barn as usual.

The exhibit of Samuel E's sculpture in the gardens is complete, and we are looking forward to having Samuel E on site to discuss his work.

The selection of unusual and sought-after plants was a big hit in the spring—and resulted in one of the most successful sales ever. With you in mind, we would like to top the spring sale this fall!

Although sometimes we seem to focus on a tree or a species, or on a building or project, the Arboretum is really all about you. We want to shift the emphasis back on you, the people who help make the Arboretum what it is. We hope to see you—members and prospective members—at the Fall Plant Sale.

Landis 5K: Off and Running

—Jonathan DiCesare

Planning is well underway for the Fourth Perennial Landis Arboretum 5K Forest Run.

We anticipate another tremendously successful race with even more runners this year. The start gun will go off on Saturday, September 18, at 9:30 a.m.—and will also signal the start of the Fall Plant Sale weekend events.

Register for the run between 8 and 9 p.m. The Albany Running Exchange will handle the timing and finish line logistics. Beautiful Arboretum-enjoying weather is on order and should be delivered right on time, just the kind of weather

we have had for the last three Forest Runs.

The race will feature Landis Arboretum's accolade-winning 5K course, highlighting the unique collections, the landmark Great Oak, and the tremendous views over the Schoharie Valley. The season is perfect to showcase the wild meadows and the Van Loveland Perennial Garden's late summer blooms and the wild meadows.

This signature Landis Arboretum Fall Plant and Bake and Book Sale will begin at 10 a.m. on both the race day and Sunday. Come and plan for an entire day of

fun and enjoyment at the Arboretum.

Extensive behind-the-scenes race preparations are ongoing. The race committee is further enhancing the course. Improvements include widening narrow parts of the course and increasing the extent of the wood-chipped sections.

The race committee welcomes additional volunteers. We need people to reach out to sponsors, to assist in marketing to runners and walkers, and to help with the physical work on the race course. Of course, we will also need race day volunteers.



A very close finish...

Last year's crew experienced a great sense of accomplishment—and a good reason for not running! Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Susan Sagendorf at 518-234-8970 or ssagendorf@yahoo.com as soon as possible. Registration details will be available shortly on the website and in a Constant Contact e-mailing.

THE LANDIS ARBORETUM NEWSLETTER is published quarterly for its members. The Arboretum's mission is to foster the appreciation of trees and other plants and their importance in our environment.

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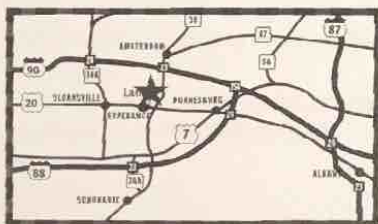
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The Arboretum is located at 174 Lape Road, Esperance, NY. It is one and one-half miles north of Route 20 in Esperance. Follow the signs from the village to Lape Road. The Arboretum is one-quarter mile straight ahead. Visit our website for more information and directions.



Bog Master: A Conversation with Ed Miller

—Nolan Marciniac

The Bog Garden—a fascinating horticultural world in miniature—has proved to be a great favorite with visitors to the Arboretum. Ed



Miller, curator of the Native Plant Collection and creator of the Bog Garden, took the time to talk about how the

garden came to be.

What is a bog? and what is the difference between a bog and a fen? a swamp? a marsh?

A bog is a type of wetland in which the moisture comes mostly from rain. Fens are similar but have most of their moisture provided by a mineral-rich stream or spring source. Fens with little mineral inflow are called "poor fens" and verge on becoming bogs. Those with high mineral content are called "rich fens" and often have quite different flora than bogs. Marshes are wetlands with mostly grasses, including sedges and rushes. Swamps can be considered flooded forests. Few species of trees can survive continuous flood, so most swamps dry out in the summer.

How did the Arboretum's Bog Garden begin?

When I started to think of just where I would plant the woody species native to New York [as part of the Native Plants Collection], I realized that we needed a bog environment. Bog environments are rare south of the Mohawk River and certainly are not on the Landis property. A wetland botanist friend and I visited a man-made bog garden at an environmental center near Rhinebeck. It had been created with bulldozers and truckloads of peat moss. Expensive, but worse: it required a boardwalk to make the plants accessible to visitors.

We considered possible bog locations at the pond on the trail to the Great Oak and also at the entrance to Willow Pond. The water source in both cases would have been too laden with minerals to make a healthy bog. When I found out that our area gets 50% more rainfall than evaporation, I realized we could have a bog that gets all of its water as precipitation.

This led to our concept of a bog in a waterproof container. It could have been just a depression in the ground lined with a rubber sheet. I was afraid that such a garden wouldn't be so good in a public garden, and raising the raft to waist level seemed like a good idea for both visibility and safety. I made a small test

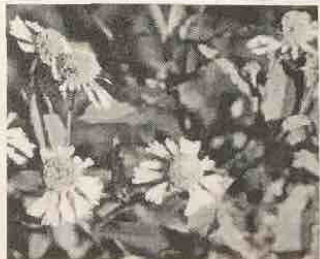
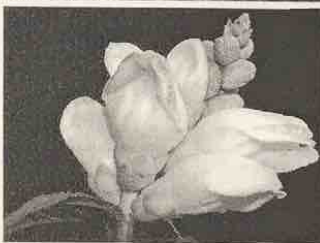
garden at my home, and it seemed to work.

Is the Bog Garden self-sustaining?

I believe the Bog Garden is self-sustainable—but with a little help from its friends. For instance, some plants are so happy they will take over. I have had to prune the bog birch and sweet gale severely. I will have to do the same for the tamarack and, hopefully, the black spruce. A couple of years ago, sedges and grasses got out of control, and we had to take everything off the raft and replant the non-grassy stuff. ... The grass problem should take care of itself as the pH of the Bog Garden becomes more acidic. ... The sphagnum moss hasn't been very happy, and every year my botanist friend Nan Williams has given us fresh moss and other plants from her property in Massachusetts.

Where do you go from here?

We have constructed a small raft, covered with soil and anchored in the pond at the very beginning of the Native Plant Collection Trail. This raft has a different role than the raft in the bog garden, where we want to duplicate conditions in a northern acid bog so that pitcher plants, bog shrubs and trees will be happy. The new raft accepts the water conditions as they are (around neutral pH) and does not have sphagnum moss. Instead, we used a silty loam similar to a river bank, and we have planted appropriate flowers. Not in bloom yet but planted are: cardinal flower (top), turtlehead (center), blue vervain, monkey flower, and sneezeweed (bottom)—I prefer to call it Helen's flower—and boneset.



Sneezeweed photo, left, by Jennifer Anderson @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database.

Native Alternatives To Invasive Plants

—Fred Breglia, Director of Horticulture and Operations

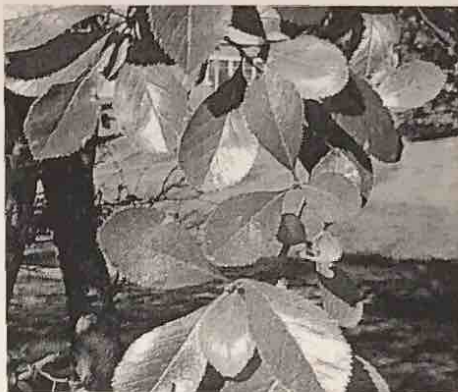
First in a series of two articles.

Looking back over the database entries on common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), I am able to read the first field notes written when Fred Lape first introduced this tree to the Arboretum in 1951. That entry comments, "Common buckthorn seems to be able to live at Landis." A few years later, he added, "Buckthorn seems to be adapting to our site and is even reproducing on its own!" His third entry remarks, "The buckthorns are growing exceptionally well and reproducing readily." Another entry reads, "Buckthorn trees are sprouting up in new areas and beginning to spread to new locations." And Lape's final entry laments, "The buckthorns are showing up everywhere and we now have to work at controlling their spread by cutting them."

Common buckthorn is a small tree that can grow to 22 feet in height with a trunk up to 10 inches wide. Native to Eurasia, buckthorn was introduced to North America primarily for fence rows. As with many other invasives, the buckthorn's hardiness and ability to thrive in a variety of soil and light conditions seemed attractive.

Exotic buckthorns are an ecological threat to native plants because they tend to form dense thickets, crowding and shading out natives, thus completely obliterating them.

The same qualities that make buckthorns invasive also apply to the ornamental olives *Elaeagnus umbellata* and *E. angustifolia*. Some alternative small trees that have the same tough-site growing abilities in addition to wildlife value are American mountain ash



(*Sorbus americana*) and chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*, *A. arbutifolia*). The autumn-blooming native witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) produces a very attractive flower that often lasts until snow is on the ground, and the Canadian serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*) boasts beautiful white flowers in spring and, if you can bear the birds to them, some very tasty fruit in summer. And let's not forget the native staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*), an overlooked landscape plant that can live almost anywhere, has unbeatable red fall color, and is among the top food sources for overwintering songbirds. For shady sites try blue beech or American hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*).

Norway maple *Acer platanoides* and sycamore (planetree) maple *Acer pseudoplatanus*, two of the most common street trees, have become a threat to our native ecosystems. Both trees produce lots of large leaves that shade out most of their competition. These trees also produce thousands of seeds and have

the ability to grow in dry infertile soils, making them very invasive. Try instead our wonderful native maples: red, sugar, and silver (*Acer rubrum*, *A. saccharum*, *A. saccharinum*). These maples have an attractive fall color, form an ample canopy, and can even be used for maple syrup. Or try our native oaks: red, black, scarlet, white, chestnut, and pin (*Quercus rubra*, *Q. velutina*, *Q. coccinea*, *Q. alba*, *Q. prinus*, *Q. palustris*). These oaks not only possess a nice canopy and attractive fall foliage but also add wildlife value in the acorns they produce.

Another invader, tree of heaven *Ailanthus altissima*, is probably the last species I would plant at the pearly gates. A much better choice is our native bitternut hickory (*Carya cordiformis*), which has a wide-spreading canopy, making it a nice shade tree. It also produces valuable nuts that wildlife love. Or plant black gum/black tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*), which has one of the most brilliant red fall colors of all native trees.

Black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*) are two trees that have also been overused and are now considered invasive. Consider instead hawthorns (*Crataegus* spp.), which have nice showy flowers and ornamental fruit that is a great food source for birds, or perhaps birches (*Betula* spp.), which have unusual bark and are rather fast growing. If you prefer conifers, choose either pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*) or eastern white pine (*P. strobus*). All these native trees can tolerate nutrient-poor soils and are very drought tolerant.

Membership Drive Drawing Winners

We are pleased to announce the winners of the Membership Drive Drawings held for those who joined or renewed during the Spring Plant and Book Sale.

Winners will receive their choice of a copy of Fred Lape's book or a free Landis class or activity valued up to \$25.00.

The winners are:

Friday, May 14 (Pick of the Pots Sale):

Ann and Shawn Bevins

Saturday, May 15:

Carol Bruso

Sunday, May 16:

Jean Hickey

Please help us develop the Arboretum's support and promotional mechanism by befriending our Landis Arboretum Facebook site and encouraging your friends to do the same.

Bill Combs, photographer extraordinaire, has created a CD of most memorable scenes at Landis. This beautiful slide-show makes a grand computer screensaver.

Bill has offered his limited edition CD free to everyone—member and prospective member—who visits www.landisarboretum.org and contributes \$5 or more before November 1. Your contribution is very much needed.

UPDATE

Robert Rubin submitted his resignation as Landis Arboretum's executive director effective July

They Are A'Changin': "Pubs" Committee Now Communications Committee

—Louise Polli

The Arboretum's Publications Committee has been rebranded as the Communications Committee, reflecting the expansion of its work beyond traditional print media and the inclusion of various forms of electronic communication.

The name and the responsibilities may be different, but the commitment to Landis remains the same.

Nolan Marciniac, Chair

Nolan recalls his first visits to the Arboretum when he was a child accompanying his father, a game warden, on patrol. He vaguely remembers Fred Lape waving to them as they passed the Farmhouse. Nolan has served on the Publications Committee since 2004 and was drafted by Board President Anne Donnelly to chair it in 2008. He "hopes to give to the Arboretum one-twentieth of what she's given."

Nolan's career as a high school English teacher (now retired) has been invaluable to the committee's focus on communication.

Kristin Fox

Residents of Esperance, Kristin and her husband Ben, also a volunteer, enjoy hiking the Arboretum's trails and attending educational programs with their young son. Kristin's experience with electronic communications will increasingly be in demand as the committee expands its use of Internet-based media.

She is currently an associate professor of chemistry and director of the Biochemistry Program and Undergraduate Research at Union College.

Sue Gutbezahl

Every time you browse through the Landis Newsletter, you are looking at the handiwork of Sue, our very own graphic designer. When she first started volunteering at the Arboretum, Sue kept her professional background to herself, preferring to work in the greenhouse, at plant sales, and during clean-up days. After someone "snitched," she was asked to contribute her expertise to the Arboretum's printed materials.

Sue describes herself as a "full-time volunteer for Landis."

Wilma Jozwiak

Volunteering is a big part of Wilma's life, something she "always makes room for." She also serves as the Membership Chair and has the formidable task of maintaining our database of members. A strong advocate of the Newsletter's shift to an electronic format, and of greater utilization of social networks, Wilma hopes we can reach new and larger audiences that do not yet know about Landis.

The committee looks forward to her retirement from the Capital Region BOCES—and so does she!

Lee Lattimer

As a student at SUNY Cobleskill, Lee served as a lab assistant for Anne Donnelly and earned a degree in Wildlife Management. He

and Anne became good friends, and Lee accepted her invitation to serve on the Publications Committee. He's known for his attention to detail, research of botanical names, and his work to ensure that "things are done right."

Lee helps out wherever needed, whether staffing the Acorn Shop at the Plant Sale or assisting Science Educator George Steele with a Landis program. He's recently been named the Arboretum's historian.

Louise Polli

My husband Gus and I signed up with Susan Sagendorf, Volunteer Coordinator, at one of the plant sales and can now be considered "perennial volunteers."

I have written newsletter articles, press releases, and whatever else Anne or a Board member requested. My editing background also helped to fill a niche that existed on the small but hard-working committee.

The relationship Gus and I have with the Arboretum brings us closer to Schoharie County, where we met while working in Cobleskill more than 30 years ago.

Outside of Nolan's home are two 40-foot bur oaks, started from acorns gathered at Landis many years ago. When he looks at those trees, Nolan muses, "An encounter with the Arboretum grows and roots itself, matures and bears fruit."

More than a Plant Sale: Books, Baked Goods, Farmers Market and 5K Run

- Volunteers from Arboretum-sponsored Boy Scout Troop 501 will be available to help those needing assistance in getting purchases to their vehicles.
- Starting times and dates for the sale are firm. Purchases may not be made prior to the sale. The Arboretum cannot set aside plants prior to the sale.
- Arboretum plant experts will be available all weekend to answer your questions and to provide suggestions and advice on plant selection, site requirements, and proper planting and care techniques.
- Cars must be parked in our upper parking area next to the Meeting House.
- Limited handicapped parking and drop-off space is available. Please inform the parking attendants of your needs.
- Dogs are not permitted at the Plant Sale. (Dogs should never be left in cars because temperatures rise quickly inside vehicles.)
- Restrooms and picnic tables are available for your convenience.
- Have your membership card handy for quicker checkout. (10% discount for members.)
- All purchased items must be removed by 4 p.m. Sunday. Landis does not make deliveries and is not responsible for items left after 4 p.m.
- Donate books: Plant and gardening-related books are needed. No condensed books, please. Please deliver to the Arboretum prior to Wednesday, September 15.
- Donate plants: This is a great way to help the Arboretum and your own flowerbeds. Please pot at least 2 weeks prior to the sale. Label with a stick with Latin name/common name. We will do the pricing.

More?

- Call the Arboretum at 518-875-6935.
- E-mail us at: fred@landisarboretum.org or info@landisarboretum.org.
- Check our website: www.landisarboretum.org.