



Notes from

HORNBAKER

GARDENS

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Gardens Undergoing A Facelift

As we looked at the plantings in the Hosta Ravine this spring, we realized that there were many hosta clumps in there that we don't even sell anymore. Also, we had allowed quite a few plants to go to seed, especially some Pulmonaria, which had seeded itself all over the place. So we decided that a facelift was in order.

We really have an outstanding work crew this year, and I tip my hat to them for the hard work they put in to transform the Hosta Ravine. First, they went through and dug out all the stuff we didn't want in there anymore, weeding the area as they went. Then David, Molly and I decided what to plant. We hauled over hostas (including a mass planting of 'Orange Marmalade') and other shade perennials to fill in the spaces.

After that, the crew went to work again, planting, fertilizing and watering. They finished the beautification with a mulch job that really dressed up the gardens.

We still have a portion of the Hosta Ravine to work on, but we have also turned our attention to the sunny beds in the front yard, doing the same thing with them as we have done in the Hosta Ravine. We'll never get all the gardens transformed by Open House, but there will be quite a few changes for you to see in the gardens by then. So we encourage you to take your time when you are here, and stroll through the gardens to admire the new plantings and appreciate all the hard work the crew has done.

Git Yer 'Maters Here

I got a little carried away this spring and ordered in over 35 varieties of tomatoes because they all sounded so good. Some are heirloom and many are some of the most recent hybrids to come on the market. Come check 'em out.

Garden Poppers



Garden Popper

You've bought and planted some new hostas, leaving room for them to grow to their full size without crowding their neighbors. So what can you plant between them this first year to fill the space and put on a good show? We have the answer with our Garden Poppers. These are compact combo containers perfect for a shady spot. We call them Poppers because you can pop them right into your garden to add some needed pop. Or pop one into a small piece of pottery and set it in the garden or in a shady area on your porch or patio.

HOURS: Through July 7, we will be open Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday noon to 5:00 p.m. We will be closed on Thursday, July 4. From July 8 through October 10, we will be open Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and we will be closed on Sundays.

Open House June 7, 8, And 9

Our annual Open House and Hosta Walk will be held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 7, 8, and 9. The hostas should be looking great at that time. Refreshments will be served, and drawings for prizes will be held each day. We will be firing up our grill to sell sandwiches for lunch on Friday and Saturday. We will also have a selection of specially priced plants, including a good selection of hostas. Look for specials on some of our Shop items. You never know what we might decide to feature. The Open House specials list will be available on our website by June 6th.

Workshops: Jane Morris, our former head gardener, will be presenting two workshops on Saturday of Open House. At 10:00, the workshop is entitled Pruning Perennials. Learn how to cut back your perennials now in order to enjoy fuller, stronger and more floriferous plants later in the season. At 1:00, Jane will be talking on Basic Garden Design. Jane is a personable and knowledgeable speaker with a lot of helpful tips to make you a better gardener.





White Fringetree



'Rainbow's End'



'Gentle Giant'



'June Fever'

These Caught My Eye

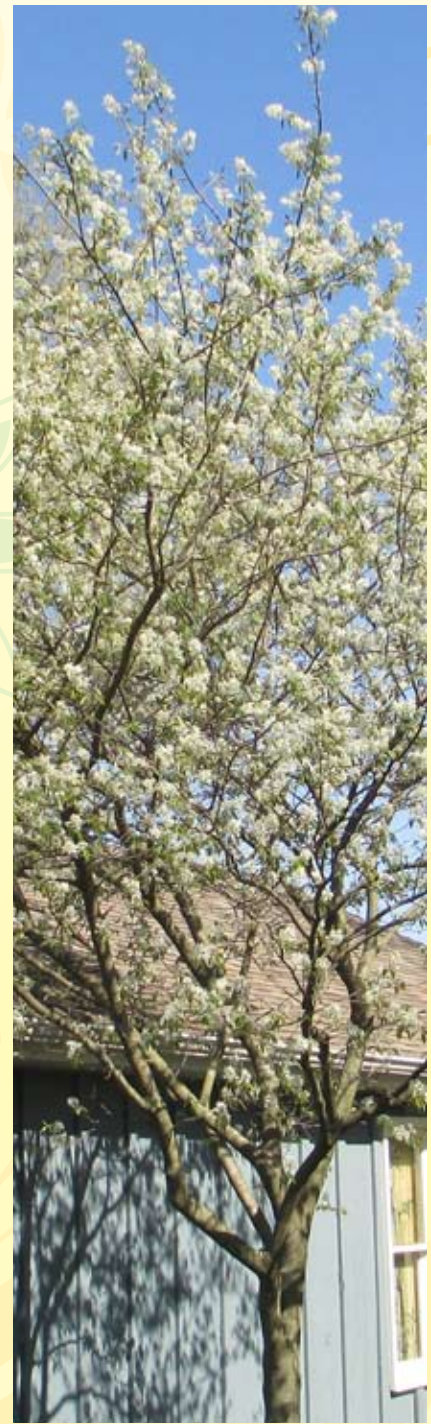
I love the way some plants just keep making me appreciate them more year after year. I've written about 'Autumn Brilliance' Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*) before. It really put on a nice show early this spring with its delicate white flowers. This fall, it will impress me again with its blend of fall colors. This is an excellent small tree that gets 20-25' tall and 15-18' wide. The leaves are small ovals which allow filtered light to penetrate below. Watch for the Cedar Waxwings to come and strip the berries from the tree in late summer or early fall.

The White Fringetree (*Chionanthus virginicus*) is another small tree that makes me go "Wow" every spring. The white fringe flowers are showy and fragrant in spring. This plant grows as a large shrub or small tree and is somewhat variable in size, running from 12-20' tall and wide.

Some hostas caught my eye too, of course. Our clump of 'Rainbow's End' in the display gardens has matured into a real show-stopper. It's a medium small hosta with spring colors of yellow, chartreuse and dark green which jet into each other to the point that you aren't sure which color is jetting into which. Later, the yellow portion will turn nearly white.

Another hosta that I think will be a great one is 'Gentle Giant'. We got some in last year, and they have sized up quickly, so this hosta is a real grower. True to its name, it will be a giant hosta with soft, gentle blue color, deep veining, and good substance. Give this monster some space.

I just have to mention one more hosta. The other evening, Kathy and I took a walk down into the recently refurbished Hosta Ravine. It was around 7:00, and the sun was behind a cloud bank, so it was dusky down in there. One hosta absolutely glowed. It was 'June Fever'. Lighter, brighter, and shinier than its parent, 'June', 'June Fever' can really brighten up a dark area.



Serviceberry

Many Trees Lost To The Drought

We have received reports from many customers about trees that they have lost over the last winter. Especially hard hit were Japanese Maples and Redbuds, many of which had been in the ground for years. Certainly, these losses can't be blamed on the harshness of the winter, which was fairly mild. It seems more likely that trees have succumbed to two years of hot, dry summers. In most cases, trees that were lost probably went into the winter with too little moisture in the ground.

With all the rain we have had this spring, it would seem that we will never have to worry about ground moisture again, but we all know such is not the case. The lessons to be learned are: 1. During dry summers, don't forget to water your trees and shrubs, as well as your flower and vegetable gardens. And 2. Make sure your trees and shrubs go into the winter with some moisture in the ground.

To really get water down to the roots of a tree, you will probably need to lay a hose on the ground and let the water trickle in and go down deep. A light watering up on the surface is not going to do the job. In fact, frequent light waterings can reduce a tree's tolerance to drought conditions by promoting too much growth in the surface roots while leaving the deeper roots underdeveloped.

The trees and shrubs are loving this wet spring and are putting on lots of good growth. Weather conditions can change from wet to dry very fast, so keep those trees and shrubs in mind later in the season.