

'Abiqua Drinking Gourd' Is 2014 Hosta Of The Year



'Abiqua Drinking Gourd'

The American Hosta Growers Association has named 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd' as the 2014 Hosta of the Year. This excellent hosta has been around for many years and it is nice to see it get the recognition that it deserves.

Generally listed as a medium-large to large hosta, 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd' has outstanding blue color with a heavy leaf that is slug resistant. The uniqueness of the plant, however, lies in its wonderfully corrugated and puckered, large, cup shaped leaves that easily look as if they could be used to drink from. Water actually sits in the leaves after a rain.

We like to plant it with 'Paradigm', which is a nicely puckered yellow with blue margins, or with a bright yellow such as 'The Shining', 'Bumblebee', or 'Fat Cat'.

New Plants For 2014

A complete list of our new plants for 2014 is posted on our website, but permit me to tell you about some that have me excited.

HOSTAS: I always like the really big ones. 'Blueberry Waffles' (\$20) is a monster with huge round leaves of deep blue color and excellent waffling texture and substance. 'Chief Sitting Bull' (\$18) forms a giant green mound with unruly foliage that is thick and corrugated.

'Bridal Falls' (\$18) is an exciting sport of 'Niagara Falls'. It forms a large clump of arching, cascading, green foliage with creamy margins, piecrust edging, and deeply impressed veining.

I recently saw a clump of 'Margie's Angel' (\$20) at the Missouri Botanical Gardens and decided that this one is a must-



'Bridal Falls'

have. The dark green margins contrast vividly with rich gold centers on leaves of heavy substance. It is listed as a medium, but the clump I saw was on the large side of that.

A little smaller is 'Easy to Love' (\$18), a medium small clump with sharply contrasting blue-green centers and wide, white margins. 'Smiley Face' (\$20) is so cute it will make you smile. It forms a small, tight mound of rich yellow foliage, topped with dark purple flowers.

New dwarfs include 'Baby Booties' (\$15), a compact cutie, green with white edges and lots of flowers; 'Lemontini' (\$15), a mini with chartreuse spring foliage, maturing to bright yellow, slightly shiny and wavy.

TREES AND SHRUBS: New trees and shrubs get my blood flowing more than any other group of plants. I am a dangerous man with a wholesale catalog in my hands, as evidenced by three pages worth of new varieties on our New Plants list. But that's how an arboretum gets established.

As much as I like Autumn Blaze® maples, I think it's time to plant some other excellent varieties. A new one that sounds very exciting is Summer Sensation® (*Acer rubrum* Summer Sensa-

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HOURS: From April 10 through July 6, we will be open Monday through Saturday from 8:00 to 5:00 and Sundays 12:00 to 5:00. Closed Easter Sunday. From July 7 through October 10, we will be closed on Sundays, but will continue to be open Monday through Saturday 8:00 to 5:00.

NEW PLANTS

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tion®) a red maple with glossy, red new growth, providing a nice splash of spring and summer color, and deep burgundy fall color.

Last fall, I concluded that **sugar maples** (*Acer saccharum*) are as intensely colored as any. Autumn Fest® is a new variety with fiery orange-red fall color. Like most sugar maples, it can grow up to 50' tall and 40' wide. For smaller spaces, try Apollo®, a columnar selection with dense branching, growing only 25' tall and 10' wide, providing a spire of intense orange and red color in the fall.

Another compact tree for smaller spaces is a new **Tulip Tree** (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) called 'Little Volunteer'. Its smaller form has proportionally smaller leaves, turning bright yellow in the fall. It is around 1/3 the size of a regular Tulip Tree, growing 20-25' tall and 10-15' wide.

New flowering trees include two new **Magnolias**, one of which is a yellow Magnolia called 'Goldfinch', a small tree only 10-12' tall and 6-8' wide, with large yellow flowers in spring. It is very hardy to Zone 4. The other is Centennial Blush™, a pink Star Magnolia hybridized by noted tree expert Michael Dirr. Its pink buds open to delicate pink flowers that cover the plant in spring. It forms a small tree, 12-18' tall and 10-15' wide, and is hardy to Zone 4.

New **hydrangeas** continue to impress us. One drawback to the fantastic Vanilla Strawberry® is that it is such a vigorous grower. Unless you have room for it to grow to 8' tall, it must be pruned back regularly. A new variety called Strawberry Sundae® is touted as being a compact version, topping out at 5', but with the same white flowers, turning to pink and then red.

Three new compact forms of the **Oakleaf Hydrangea** will make this type usable in more landscapes. Gatsby's Gal® has large, pure white flowers and grows 5-6' tall. 'Munchkin' has white flowers that turn to pink shades and gets only around 3' tall. The flowers of 'Ruby Slippers' start white, but then turn to a gorgeous, deep pink on a plant only 3.5' tall. The Oakleaf Hydrangeas all tend to have good fall foliage in shades of mahogany and red.

We have several new varieties for you conifer fans. Several customers have asked for **Hinoki Cypress**. We have shied away from them only because they probably require a little extra as far as their placing and care are concerned. But we are trying out four dwarf varieties

because there is nothing that compares to the beautiful, cupped, rich green foliage of the Hinoki. You just can't afford to bake these cuties in full sun. Site them in a protected spot, if possible, where they get some morning or filtered light and afternoon shade. They like moist but well drained soil, so keep them watered.

Swiss Stone Pines (*Pinus cembra*) are fairly slow growing, but they are beautiful specimens that don't eat up a lot of space, and they are very hardy. We have two new varieties, 'Algonquin Pillar', a narrow form, and 'Blue Mound', a compact, wider selection. Both have the soft, fluffy, blue/green needles that make the Swiss Stone Pine so attractive, and will grow, eventually, to a height of 15-20'.

"Soft and fluffy" describe a couple of other interesting **pinus**. 'Catherine Elizabeth' is a dwarf Japanese White Pine (*Pinus parviflora*) with soft textured foliage that clumps and mounds, creating a little sculpture, and growing 3' tall and 5-6' wide with age. The Korean Pine (*Pinus koraiensis*) has soft needles that are tri-colored: blue, green and white. Its loose, pyramidal form, with fluffy tufts of needles, gives it somewhat of a pom-pom appearance. It is a very hardy, upright tree, growing to 30' in height.

Serbian Spruces (*Picea omorika*) are tough, hardy conifers with a lot of character. You might take note that the name of the Weeping Serbian Spruce formerly known as 'Pendula' (one of my favorite conifers) has been changed to 'Gotelli Weeping'. Collectors might be interested in a couple of new ones. 'Pendula Brunns' is a very narrow, spire-like tree that was the 2006 Collector's Conifer of the year. The other new one, 'de Ruyter', is an upright grower with irregular, sculptural habit. Some shoots on it have blue needles and some green, which gives it unique character and texture.

We had a new yellow **Arborvitae** last year, *Thuja occidentalis* 'Jantar', that we really liked. But we only had a few and they sold so quickly that hardly anyone got to see them. We have several this year. 'Jantar' is an eye-popping yellow in the spring, turning more amber in the fall and winter. It grows 20'tall and 5' wide, and is hardy to Zone 4.

DAYLILIES: We got some unnamed seedlings from hybridizers Bob Ellison and Fred Smith a few years ago that we think are especially nice. Molly decided to have a contest on Facebook to name three of them. She posted the pictures and asked people to submit names. After checking to make sure that submitted

names were not already names of registered daylilies, we chose the winners. 'Party in My Cabana' is the fun name for a burgundy rose and pastel rose bicolor with lemon yellow bubbled edges and a green throat. The second winner, 'Tango at Dusk', is a good description for this pastel lavender-pink with a wide purple eye, ruffled purple edges, and a yellow throat.

The third winner was 'Saucy Senorita', a great name for a vibrant red-orange self with an orange throat. All three of these newly named daylilies are available this year, along with eight other new varieties. Thanks to everyone for all the creative suggestions. There will be a few more to name later this year, so be sure to follow us on Facebook if you want in on the fun.

PERENNIALS: Looking for some

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'Pendula Brunns'



'Party in My Cabana'

NEW PLANTS

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good fall bloomers? Try two new **Anemones**, 'Diana' and 'Emily', both of which are members of the new Pretty Lady® series. Both have pink flowers from late summer into the fall, 'Emily' having lighter pink flowers, and have been bred for their compact habit, growing 12-16" tall.

A new **Baptisia**, 'Cherries Jubilee', is a member of the Decadance® series, and sports unique maroon and yellow flowers that age to gold.

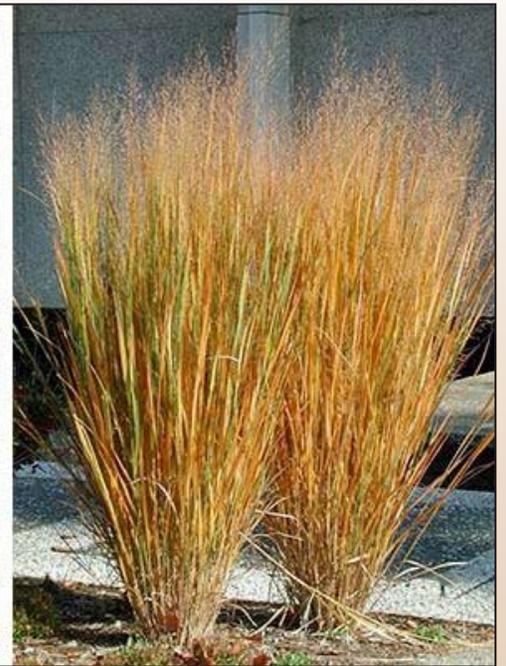
Eight new **Echinacea** varieties include three yellow ones, including 'Pineapple Sundae', the first double yellow coneflower. Shorter coneflowers are always in demand, and the new 'Amazing Dream' promises deep pink blooms on a compact clump only 24 inches tall.

Several new **Heucheras** include 'Vienna', which features both multi-toned orange-red foliage and a multitude of rose pink flowers. The miniature 'Sweet Tart' is a Little Cutie® coral bell with tangy lime colored foliage and bicolored cerise and hot pink flowers all season.

Hybridizers keep working to get smaller **Russian Sage** (*Perovskia*) plants, and now we have 'Lacey Blue', which forms a compact mound only 12-18" tall, but with large, lavender-blue flowers during the last half of the growing season.

Hen and Chicks are easy-to-grow, drought tolerant plants. 'Pacific Blue Ice' has icy blue-green rosettes with a unique cupped form. 'Rocknoll Rosette' sports orange to wine red leaves flushed apple green at the base.

Panicum 'Northwind' Is 2014 Perennial Of The Year



Panicum virgatum 'Northwind'

The Perennial Plant Association has named *Panicum virgatum* 'Northwind' as this year's Perennial of the Year. 'Northwind' was selected from a batch of seed-grown plants in South Elgin, Illinois, in 1983, and has been propagated from divisions ever since. It was selected because of its striking, steel blue color, a wider leaf, and its slender, very upright growth habit. Compared to most other varieties of

switch grass, whose arching foliage forms clumps nearly as wide as tall, 'Northwind' shoots straight up into an erect, refined clump of grass suitable for any sunny bed. In late summer, it is topped with a haze of showy, finely textured panicles that are wonderful in flower and grass arrangements.

A mature clump of 'Northwind' can stand 6' tall, which is a bit taller than most other varieties. Switch grass is

adaptable to just about any soil, and is not only quite hardy (Zone 4), but also drought tolerant, due to its deep roots. Switch grass is seldom bothered by deer.

Switch grass looks great in any prairie planting, but 'Northwind', with its upright, refined habit, makes for an outstanding selection as a focal point in any sunny bed.

Gardening Together Workshops

In 2014, we will again host a series of Saturday workshops that we call "Gardening Together". We'll keep the workshops short and to the point, but you may want to bring along lawn chairs. All except for the miniature garden workshops will be free.

Saturday, April 26 at 10 am

Pruning 101: Your shrubs can perform so much better with some regular, simple pruning. Rich and Dave will discuss when and how to prune various shrubs, including hydrangeas, lilacs, spiraeas, and several others.

Saturday, May 3 at 10 am

New Plants for 2014: The Hornbakers will show off new plants for this year, and tell why they are excited about them. They are so excited that they want to treat you to breakfast! Join us at 9:30 for a free breakfast before learning about the new hostas, daylilies, perennials, annuals, trees and shrubs for 2014!

Saturday, May 10 at 10 am

Veggies R Us: Rich and Dave are avid vegetable gardeners. This workshop is geared to the inexperienced gardener who wants some general guidance on how to get started and what and when to plant different veggies. You can produce a lot of veggies in a small space.

Saturday, May 17 at 10 am

Outdoor Photography: We are thrilled to have Mike Vaughn here to share tips and techniques on taking photos outdoors. Mike is well known locally for his outstanding photos of sporting events, wildlife and outdoor beauty. Whether you are a beginner or a seasoned photographer, you are sure to pick up some great ideas.

Sunday, May 18 at 1 pm

Kathy O'Malley on color in the garden without flowers: WGN Radio personality (of Kathy and Judy fame), avid gardener, and our friend, Kathy O'Malley, will share her ideas on having color in the garden using foliage. Kathy is a knowledgeable and experienced gardener and is always fun to listen to. (Catch the Kathy and Judy Show on WGN Radio 720 AM on Saturday mornings from 10:00-12:00.)

Saturday, May 24 at 10 am and again at 2 pm

Saturday, June 28 at 10 am

Saturday, Sept. 20 at 2 pm

Miniature Gardens: This is a hands-on workshop for all ages in which you will learn how to create and care for your very own miniature garden. Molly will provide information on how to get started and assist you along the way. You simply bring your creativity for this cute and fun workshop! Fee includes your container, soil, and plants. You pick out and purchase your choice of miniature accessories, at a special 20% discount for workshop participants. Reservations are required, so please call to reserve your spot. Be sure to specify the morning or afternoon session. Cost \$30

Saturday, May 31 at 10 am

Ask an arborist: When we have a tree question, we ask local arborist Dennis Taylor. Now is your chance to listen to Dennis talk about the basics of tree care, and ask him any questions you might have on plant healthcare, selection, installation, diseases and insects, corrective pruning, tree enrichment, and root issues.

Saturday, June 7 at 10 am

Gardening to attract hummingbirds and butterflies: You can attract more hummingbirds and butterflies to your garden by simply choosing the appropriate plants. Molly will show you these plants and also discuss other ideas to make your gardens a friendly and inviting space for these beauties.

Saturday, June 14 at 10 am

Pruning Perennials with Jane Morris: Jane Morris, previously our head gardener for 12 years, says that early June is the ideal time to take out the pruners to pinch and cut back perennials to control height and shape and make for sturdier, more floriferous plants, thus preventing sprawling plants and the need to stake. This continues to be one of our most popular workshops for our customers, as well as our employees! Jane has her own business, The Garden Goddess, advising clients on pruning and other general gardening techniques and timing.

Saturday, June 14 at 1 pm

Basic Garden Design with Jane Morris: The basics of good garden design are the same whether a person is planning and planting a small intimate area next to their patio, or a two acre property. Learn about form, line, texture, color, repetition, contrast, focal points and more to create an outdoor space you love. Learn how to use all types of plants: annuals, perennials, evergreens, shrubs and trees, and man-made items to bring these design basics to life.



Landscape Design Services

Dave and Rich find that they are doing more landscape designing every year. When you think about it, choosing the right plants for the right place is the most important step in creating a beautiful landscape. And the choices can be so overwhelming that a person doesn't know where to start.

Dave graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in horticulture, and more importantly, grew up and was educated at Hornbaker Gardens. Rich is an old man with a lot of experience who also received most of his horticultural education at Hornbaker Gardens.

We often can help you with plant selection, at no charge, while

you are here, especially if you have pictures and simple drawings with dimensions of the space to be planted. For more involved jobs, it is usually best for us to come see the site, take our own pictures, and discuss some ideas with you while we are there. We have a software program which allows us to drop plants into the pictures so that we can show you what the proposed mature landscaping will look like. For more involved design work we simply charge an hourly fee.

Our crew also does installation of plant material in case you want us to do it all. Give us a call, and we'll be glad to help.

Events At Hornbaker Gardens

Kids' Containers for Mother's Day: Saturday, May 10, at 10:00 a.m.—Here's a chance for the kids to come get their hands dirty and create something pretty for Mom or Grandma, right before Mother's Day. We'll give them some ideas, and then help them, as needed, to get something nice potted up. They can bring their own container, and we will have a good selection of inexpensive containers available here. Cookies and lemonade will follow.

Open House and Hosta Walk: Our annual Open House and Hosta Walk will be held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 13, 14 and 15. The hostas should be looking great at that time. Refreshments will be served, and drawings for prizes will be held each day. We will also have a selection of specially priced plants, including a good selection of hostas. There will be two excellent workshops on Saturday as mentioned in the Workshops article.

Artisan Market at Hornbaker Gardens: The second annual Artisan Market at Hornbaker Gardens is planned for Saturday, September 6th from 10 am – 5 pm! Join us in our beautiful country setting for a day filled with fine artists including a potter at work, delicious home-baked items, live music, wine tasting with August Hill Winery, fresh-picked local produce, Kramer's Kitchen food truck, and more. Mark your calendars now and plan to spend a beautiful, fall day in the country.



Truckload Of Pottery

We mentioned at the end of the 2012 season, when we had a big pottery sale, that we were going to get in a full semi load of pottery. We got our order in too late to make it happen in 2013, but it is on its way this spring. Lots of new shapes and bright colors! We can hardly wait to get it in and start unpacking it. It may or may not be delivered, unpacked and ready by opening day, but we will make it happen as fast as we can.



Art Classes At The Gardens

We are excited to announce upcoming art workshops by Melody Best here at the gardens. Melody is a fine art instructor in oil, watercolor and acrylics. Melody demonstrated the theorem painting technique at our Artisan Market last September and filled up the fall class she conducted here. We are accepting registrations for 2014 classes including one watercolor class.

Saturday, May 3, 2014: Mother/Daughter Theorem Class. Early session 10-12:30 or afternoon session 1-3:30. \$45 covers both people. All materials provided.

Saturday, May 24, 2014: Floral Watercolor Painting Class. 10 am – 3 pm. Cost \$65. Bring a bagged lunch and your own watercolor supplies. Beverages and snacks provided.

Saturday, June 7th, 2014: Theorem Painting Class. 10 am – 4 pm. Complete 2 pieces. Bring a bagged lunch. Cost \$65. All materials provided.

