



Notes from

HORNBAKER GARDENS, Inc.

NEWSLETTER No. 83, MARCH 2018

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2018 Perennial Plant Of The Year: *Allium* 'Millenium'



Allium 'Millenium'

The Perennial Plant Association has named *Allium* 'Millenium' as the 2018 Perennial Plant of the Year. This relative to the common onion is a workhorse in the late summer garden. Introduced in 2000, it has become a big hit with gardeners because of its masses of spherical, rose-purple blooms, uniform habit, and neat shiny green foliage that remains attractive all season.

'Millenium' (Yes, its registered name has only one "n".) has a lot going for it. The dark green foliage is always attractive, and the 2" flower spheres are plentiful and last for four weeks late in the season, standing around 15" tall. It is extremely hardy to at least Zone 4, and probably into Zone 3. It seeds into the garden much less than most other *Allium* varieties, and cutting the plant back in the fall will reduce reseeding even further. The plant is a good grower and can be easily divided in spring or fall.

This fantastic sunny perennial is a butterfly magnet. It attracts pollinators, but is not bothered by deer and rabbits. Plant it in masses for an incredible show, or combine it with other late flowering plants such as *Solidago* 'Little Lemon', which is about the same height and which provides beautifully contrasting yellow blooms.

'World Cup' Is 2018 Hosta Of The Year

The American Hosta Growers Association has named 'World Cup' as the Hosta of the Year for 2018. 'World Cup' forms a large, upright clump of deeply cupped, moderately wavy, deeply corrugated, bright gold foliage. Pale purple flowers top the clump in late June or early July. The clump will stand nearly 2' tall and 3.5' wide when mature.

Bright gold hostas can really brighten up a shady area. They benefit from some morning sun to make them shine. Picture 'World Cup' surrounded by a mass of a smaller, blue hosta such as 'Deep Blue Sea', or standing side by side with a similar sized hosta such as 'Love Pat' or 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd', both of which are blue, cupped and corrugated.

The Hosta of the Year program was started in 1996 to bring attention to hostas that growers recognize as being outstanding. A complete list of previous winners appears in our brochure called Hosta Highlights under the Plants/Hostas tab in our website.



Hosta 'World Cup'

New Plants

HOSTAS:

Wavy, rippled, dare we say “squiggly” foliage is highlighted in at least four of our new hostas this season. The blue, rippled leaves of **‘Waterslide’** look like water splashing in the shade



Hosta 'Waterslide'



Hosta 'Wiggles and Squiggles'

garden. This medium sized hosta exhibits foliage with heavy substance and holds its blue color well into the summer season. **‘Wiggles and Squiggles’** is a great name for this second new hosta. The long, slender, bright yellow leaves of this smaller hosta are so “squiggled” that they just can’t seem to stay still. Plant it in morning sun for best yellow color.

A pair of new sports from the ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ family also have wavy foliage, not as rippled as the first two, but still wavy enough to add texture to these dwarf to small hostas. Both **‘Church Mouse’** and **‘School Mouse’** form cute clumps with coarsely wavy blue-green leaves of heavy substance. ‘Church Mouse’ has subtle lighter margins, and ‘School Mouse’ has more pronounced creamy yellow margins.

A couple of big boys are worth mentioning. **‘Jurassic Park’** forms a giant mound with enormous, cascading green leaves that have heavy substance and wonderful puckering. It’s a vigorous grower that can reach 4’ tall and 5’ wide. **‘Blue Perfection’** is also an extra-large hosta that is a fast grower. Its waxy, light blue leaves are enhanced with a fair amount of morning sun. This sun tolerant hosta also has very fragrant, lavender flowers.

DAYLILIES:

We have several new daylilies this year. The real show stopper is probably **‘Storm Shelter’**. This stunning, high quality, tetraploid produces 5 inch wide, mauve colored blossoms with an enormous deep eggplant purple eye that

extends to nearly the edge of the petals. Piecrust edges have a wide picotee margin that matches the eggplant color of the eye zone.

Earlybird Oriole™ joins its sister, **Earlybird Cardinal™**, with a new color providing early and extended bloom. Ruffled pumpkin orange blossoms have a deeper orange eyezone that highlights the yellow throat. The petals have attractive ruffling that show off its rounded petals and unique coloration.



Daylily 'Storm Shelter'

PERENNIALS:

Three low growing groundcover **Sedums** are worthy of consideration for sunny areas. **‘Little Miss Sunshine’** forms a compact, tidy clump of dark green, glossy foliage 6-8” tall and is covered with bright yellow flowers from early to midsummer. Two new stars with blue foliage are touted as being improvements on *Sedum caucicola*, which has long been one of our favorites. The blue-green foliage of **‘Popstar’** forms a dense, full habit, 10-12” tall, with cheery, salmon colored flowers in late summer. **‘Superstar’** is similar, but with a smoky gray overlay on the foliage and rosy pink flowers. All three of these Sedums are extremely drought tolerant and are hardy to Zone 3.



Sedum 'Little Miss Sunshine'

We look forward to seeing the new **Coreopsis ‘SunKiss’**, not only because of its large, 3-inch, golden yellow flowers with burgundy red centers, but also because it is listed as hardy to Zone 4, which should make it very hardy for our area.

Hybridizers are working to make **Echinaceas** (Coneflowers) more



Coreopsis 'Sun Kiss'

compact. Two new varieties top out at 16 inches. **'Prairie Splendor Rose Compact'** has large, rose pink flowers on a compact plant. It blooms early and extends into fall. **'Santa Fe'** has large flowers in shades of reddish-orange to pinkish red and blooms all summer long.

For shade, check out the new ***Pulmonaria* 'Twinkle Toes'**. Its dainty, light periwinkle blue flowers cover a low, mounded habit in spring, followed by silver splashed leaves. Let 'Twinkle Toes' dance among your hostas while they are just starting to stir.

TREES AND SHRUBS:

Customers have fallen in love, as we have, with the dwarf **Japanese Maple**, 'Rhode Island Red'. This year we are pleased to offer a couple of new dwarfs. **'Sharp's Pygmy'** is a compact dwarf with green leaves which turn a dramatic red in the fall, then giving way to a great branch structure in winter. It will grow to 4' tall and wide in 10 years. The other new dwarf is **'Mikawa yatsubusa'**, a small, nearly spherical, densely foliated tree. The leaves emerge light green with red tips and margins, turning green, then fiery red in the fall. It will grow to 6' tall and 4' wide in 10 years.

If you are concerned with hardiness of Japanese maples at your location, you might try ***Acer x pseudosieboldianum* North Wind®**. This hybrid **Korean Maple** is a great substitute for a Japanese Maple, being hardy to Zone 4. Its foliage emerges red in spring, turns green in summer, and orange and red in fall. Garden size is listed as 20' tall and 15' wide.

New flowering trees include a **Red Horsechestnut**, ***Aesculus x carnea* 'Fort McNair'**. This rounded, very symmetrical tree puts on a striking show with bright reddish pink flowers in spring. It grows to 35' tall and 25' wide. A **Weeping Redbud**, ***Cercis canadensis* 'Pink Heartbreaker'**, displays lavender pink flowers on weeping branches in spring. It is drought and heat tolerant and grows to 12' tall with an 8' spread.

Now to conifers. If you are looking for a substitute for a Blue Spruce, try the new **Serbian Spruce**, ***Picea omorika* 'Silberblue'**, a pyramidal tree with beautiful dark green needles with silvery blue undersides. The upright growth habit shows off the silver blue color. It grows 25' tall with a 15' spread and is hardy to Zone 4.

Many customers have not seen the stunning show of variegated needles put on by our **Dragon's Eye Pine**, even though it grows close to our lane after you pass The Barn, because it variegates in mid to late summer. Lovers of conifers would do well to try ***Pinus densiflora* 'Golden Ghost'**, or the new ***Pinus densiflora* 'Burke's Red Variegated'**, with its striking display of bright green and yellow needles.

Speaking of variegation, check out two new **variegated**



Aesculus 'Fort McNair'



Echinacea 'Santa Fe'

Japanese White Pines. ***Pinus parviflora* 'Ogon jamome'** is a stunning, rare, variegated form with yellow banded needles. Garden size is listed as 10' tall and 8' wide. A dwarf form, **'Tanima no yuki'**, has a garden size of 3' tall and 2' wide, and forms an irregular mound with striking variegated green and white needles with pink new growth tips.

New flowering shrubs include ***Weigela* Czechmark Trilog™**, which is covered in spring with a profusion

of red, pink and white blooms on a bush 3.5' tall and wide. A new **Rose** receiving a lot of hype is **At Last®**, featuring sweetly perfumed, sunset orange, fully petaled blossoms all season long on a disease resistant shrub.

Flower arrangers will want to grow two new ***Symphoricarpos*** varieties because of the berries they put on in the fall. This shrub, generally known as Coralberry, grows around 30" tall and wide, and the variety called **Candy™** has candy pink berries. The new **Galaxy™** is better called Snowberry because of its bridal white berries.

***Vitex* Blue Puffball™** is a new shrub well worth growing. It grows 3-4' tall and wide in a perfect ball, and is covered with deep blue, fragrant flowers from June through September. Not too many people are aware of *Vitex* because it is listed as a Zone 6 plant and because older varieties grew so large that they didn't fit into most gardens very well. However, the roots are hardy, so the plant can be cut back in spring, just like a Butterfly Bush, and the shrub will grow to full size each season and bloom on the new growth. We have had an older variety growing 8' tall and putting on a great show in our gardens for the last 10 years. It got destroyed during our redo of the gardens along the parking lot, so we look forward to planting this new, more compact Blue Puffball™ somewhere in our gardens this year.

HOURS:

From April 10 through July 10, we will be open Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday noon to 5:00 p.m. From July 11 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.

Calendar of Events

All events are free unless otherwise noted. Please bring a lawn chair.

Saturday, April 21 at 10 am

Spring Garden Maintenance: As the growing season gets started, we'll demonstrate how to divide a variety of perennials, including hostas, daylilies and grasses. Most perennials are hardy and easily divided. In addition, we'll share the proper pruning techniques for various shrubs, including hydrangeas, lilacs, spiraeas, and several others. Your shrubs can perform so much better with some regular, simple pruning.

Saturday, April 28 at 10 am

Introduction to Bee Keeping: Local bee keeper and enthusiast, Nathan Norman, will provide an overview of what's involved in becoming a bee keeper yourself. His presentation will include information on equipment needed, types of hives, hive maintenance, types of bees, and help as to how and where to obtain what's needed. This honey of a workshop (around one hour) is designed to give you enough information to help you decide whether you want to get serious about this fascinating activity. Please call our office to **sign up** so we will know what size group to accommodate.

Saturday, May 5 at 10 am

New Plants for 2018: The Hornbakers will show off new plants for this year, and tell why they are excited about them. Again this year, we want to treat

you to breakfast! Join us at 9:30 for a delicious continental breakfast before learning about the new hostas, daylilies, perennials, annuals, and trees & shrubs for 2018!

Saturday, May 12 at 10 am

Kids' Containers for Mother's Day: Here's a chance for the kids to come get their hands dirty and create something pretty for Mom, for Mother's Day. We'll give them some ideas, and help when needed, to get something potted up for Mom. They can bring their own container, and we will have a good selection of inexpensive containers available here. Cookies and lemonade will follow.

Saturday, May 19 at 10 am

Arboretum Walk: The Hornbakers have been planting trees and shrubs on their 40 acres for over 30 years. Join Rich and Dave for a stroll around the grounds while they point out and discuss some of the highlights. Several varieties of Beech trees will be featured, along with many other unusual and standard plants, including conifers.

Saturday, May 26 at 10 am

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 Hornbaker Blogg will provide information

on how to get started and assist you along the way. You simply bring your creativity and ideas! 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. Fee: \$35.

Saturday, June 2 at 10 am

Terrarium "Make & Take" Workshop: Terrariums are a popular way to add a little green to an indoor space. We will outline the basics of design, planting and care, and assist participants in building their own glass terrarium. We have various sizes of vessels to choose from. All materials and plants are included. Fee (\$25-\$60) depends on the container you choose. Free to observe. Please call to reserve your spot.

Friday, June 8 thru Sunday, June 10

Open House and Hosta Walk: Join us for our annual open house. The hostas will 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 number of hostas. Workshop details will be announced in the next newsletter.

**Saturday, September 15 —
6th annual Artisan Market**

Tunnel of Fun

Last fall, we got the area for the Children's Garden seeded with grass so that kids can romp up and down the slopes and climb on a huge old trunk of white oak that has been worn smooth by weather and time. The really fun thing seems to be the tunnel that Dave and the crew built into the hillside. It's made with a 5' diameter plastic culvert and covered over with an earthen ramp, which is itself fun to run down.

Two bus loads of second graders from Princeton came out late last fall for a field trip and they had a ball going round and round, in one end of the tunnel and out the other, then dashing around in a circle to go through the tunnel again. Lots of shrieking and laughing—exactly

the reaction we were hoping for.

Over time, we plan to add more fun elements to this play area. Kathy would have loved it. The play area is near the stream in the front yard, where a

sandy beach along the stream is destined to draw children. Won't it be fun to get the kids sandy and wet before you haul them home? You are welcome.

