

# THE DIRT

*Vermont*  
Nursery and  
Landscape Association  
Green Works

Summer Issue 2021, Volume 47, Issue 2

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**Dear Fellow VNLA Members & Friends,**

How lovely to see smiles, expressions, and hear laughter out from under cover these past weeks! Cautiously operating in this 'new again' unmasked living feels strange but good! I hope you too, are all finding the joy in these moments. Woo-hoo, nothing like a Brand New Day!

...Brand New HOT days...The heat is ON! That's for sure and if you're like me, attached at the hose, you're looking daily, hopefully, to the skies for that rain. And then the rains came. The weather shifts sure give us pause as we think about our landscapes, cityscapes and living in a world where the weather become more and more extreme.

Our practices in design, implementation, and management of our landscapes are in constant conversation and hopefully action toward a focus on health, production, AND beauty. Though not a new topic, it's clearly an ever evolving one and encouraging to know **WE** can be at the forefront of change. Planting for life, health, repair, and beauty, so Woo-Hoo to all you do!

Happenings are ON at the VNLA, an upcoming Summer Celebration and social gathering on August 18 at Horsford Gardens & Nursery (see the article on page 4). Also on the horizon are two VPOC events, our 3<sup>rd</sup> project with Green Mountain Habitat For Humanity and a VT Blooms Initiative project in Vergennes. And don't forget to get your recycling ON. Our Plastic Pot Recycling Program has begun. Drop off locations and information can be found here: <https://vnlavt.org/2021/04/07/pilot-program-for-plastic-pot-recycling-for-vnla-members/>.

Your participation in these and other great programming events help make VNLA a place for positive change and an important support of the things we love most, our landscapes and plants. Now that we can feel safe, it's a wonderful way to welcome in a Brand New Way!

Onward as we look forward. Big Cheers for that!

Ashley



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**Dick Conrad and courtesy of Judith Irven and their gardens.**



# THE BUZZ

*the low down on what's up!*

## Join us for a VNLA Summer Gathering Celebration!

Earlier in the year once it looked like vaccinations in VT were taking off we began looking for a venue to host a summer meeting and trade show. After a few phone calls it became clear that many venues were not quite prepared to book events for the summer season. THE VNLA Program Committee met in May to brainstorm some alternatives. Hence, we decided on a evening to celebrate being able to gather again as friends and colleagues.



Horsford Gardens & Nursery has graciously agreed to host such a gathering and we hope you can join us on **Wednesday, August 18, 2021** beginning at 5:30 pm and going until dark. We will gather to talk about last year, this year and everything in between. Horsford's will offer some tours of the nursery and gardens and we will spend a little time talking about the new Plastic Pot Recycling Program.

Food and drinks (non-alcoholic) will be served and you are welcome to BYOB if you would like to drink something a bit stronger. For added entertainment we will also hold the first ever VNLA corn hole tournament beginning at 6:45pm. You can register your "team" upon arrival. We will also have the Viking game "Koob" set up for anyone who wants to play. We will be asking for a registration fee to cover the cost of the food. Please click [HERE](#) to register.

While we are disappointed we could not host our traditional summer meeting and trade show, we hope some of our vendors can join us for the evening as well as many of our VNLA members and friends. If all goes well, we are scheduled to have our Winter Meeting & Trade show at UVM in person on February 10, 2022 so mark your calendars!

## The VNLA Plastic Pot RECYCLING is HAPPENING!



Thanks to Prides Corner Farm's collaboration with the VNLA, we have held our first two collection weeks in July of #2 and #5 plastic pots. The photo above is a Prides truck picking up a loaded pallet of pots at Gardener's Supply in Williston to eventually be trucked to and recycled by East Jordan Plastics in East Jordan, MI. A big **THANK YOU** to Prides Corner for making this happen! A big **THANK YOU** to the VNLA Committee: Ray DeFeo of Prides Corner Farm, Melita Bass, Ralph Fitz-Gerald of Horsford Gardens & Nursery, and Kristina in the office. They have been working behind the scenes to develop and implement this program, from securing drop off sites, to building and delivering bins for collection, and everything in between. Lastly, a big **THANK YOU** to our members who agreed to be the collection sites so VNLA members can recycle pots! They are: Evergreen Gardens, Waterbury Center; Gardener's Supply Co., Williston and Lebanon, NH; Greenhaven Gardens & Nursery, New Haven; Horsford Gardens & Nursery, Charlotte; and Pembroke Landscaping & Nursery, Bennington.

**WHAT CAN BE RECYCLED:** All containers/plastic pots of any size (1gal, 2, gal, etc) with the designation/symbol #2 and #5 plastics can be recycled. Pots must be separated into groups: #2 plastics in one group and #5 plastics in another group. **ALL POTS MUST** be empty with no tags or trash. They do not have to be cleaned. See complete details at [www.vnla.org](http://www.vnla.org).

**NEXT RECYCLING WEEKS/LOCATIONS:** **August 9, 2021** - Gardener's - Williston; Horsford's, Evergreen Gardens and **August 16, 2021** - Greenhaven, Pembroke, and Gardener's -Lebanon, NH.





# Update from the VNLA Volunteer Project Outreach Committee

We are happy to announce we're back in business with **Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity** for our 3<sup>rd</sup> project together! They have just completed another multi-family unit on Hinesburg Road in South Burlington. Landscape plans were drafted pre-COVID and have been recently reviewed and discussed by the VNLA Volunteer Project Outreach Committee (VPOC) to determine the next steps for installation. We've compiled a list of materials and have our sights set on an installation date in early October. We'll be looking for folks to help supply plants, compost, deliveries and volunteer. It's a great event that makes a **BIG** difference not only to the residents but the entire community!! We look forward to meeting up again and digging in all together! For more information on the event and to volunteer, please email Ashley at [arobinsonld@gmail.com](mailto:arobinsonld@gmail.com).

We're excited to return to this event and look forward to creating a positive, lasting impact on so many people. Please come join us to help green up the cityscape! You can view our last project [HERE](#).

In addition to the event with GMHH, an opportunity arose for a VNLA VT Blooms Initiative project in Vergennes. The owner of Daily Chocolate in Vergennes, VT, Dawn Wagner, has volunteered to plant and maintain a newly established 'bump out' on Main St in collaboration with the VNLA VT Blooms Initiative. To facilitate, VPOC members, Dawn and the City of Vergennes discussed plans for the space. Seeing this as a great opportunity to bring the community together, help local business owners and enhance a public space, VPOC got to work! This VT Blooms event will be held **Saturday, July 31<sup>st</sup>**. Next time you are in Vergennes please keep a look out for this new planting on behalf of the VNLA and its members who have donated their time, materials, and labor. Here is a list of who has contributed thus far and a complete list will be located on the VNLA website:



**Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity**  
You're invited to our **Open House!**  
Drop-in and take a tour of a completed Habitat home! Everybody is welcome and guests are encouraged.

**When & Where**  
Wednesday, July 14th, 3pm-6pm  
57 Hinesburg Road, South Burlington, VT  
Parking available in the Price Chopper Plaza

- Ashley Robinson, Landscape Designer, Vergennes, VT- Design, Delivery & Labor
- City of Vergennes
- Crafted Landscapes, LLC, Gabe Bushey, Vergennes, VT - Stone, Delivery & Labor
- Greenhaven Gardens & Nursery, New Have, VT- Perennials & Mulch
- Horsford Gardens & Nursery, Charlotte, VT - Perennials & Compost
- Red Wagon Plants, Hinesburg, VT- Perennials, Annuals & Delivery
- Rocky Dale Gardens, Bristol, VT - Perennials
- Daily Chocolate - Labor, Design & Management

THANK YOU all for your support of this community event!!

You may recall last fall the VNLA launched the Vermont Blooms Initiative, a planting program meant to improve/enhance public outdoor spaces across our towns and throughout Vermont. VNLA members can choose small projects they identify and then the VNLA and its members help secure the plants, materials, and labor needed to complete these

projects. These projects are intended to be relatively simple and easy to implement. The projects completed last fall were located at: Jeffersonville Family House at Mann's Meadow, the Vergennes Elementary School, and the Platt Memorial Library. You can read more about those projects and see photos at <https://vnlavt.org/2021/01/14/vermont-blooms-initiative/>

See an opportunity in **YOUR** community ripe for a VT Blooms Initiative project? Send it along! We are encouraging everyone to get involved to help make a difference. These little projects go a long way!



*Top: The next location of the VNLA Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity planting project happening in October.*

*Bottom: A VT Blooms Initiative project from last fall that took place at the Platt Memorial Library in*



# The 2021 Industry Awards Program Update

The Industry Awards Program will mark 13 years since this it was established by the VNLA! At our June board meeting one of our topics of discussion were the dwindling amount of submissions we have received over the past 12 years. In it's first year we received 15 submissions. Since that time the number has fluctuated greatly. In 2020 we only received 2 entries. Can we chalk this up to the COVID year from hell? Probably. But the truth is with such low participation we have to wonder is this program sustainable?

In our discussions we talked about what could be some of the stumbling blocks for our members to showcase all the amazing work our member landscape professionals are implementing every season. Last year we simplified the entry guidelines by broadening the eligibility and judging requirements in hopes that would remove further barriers for those who could participate in this program. No project is too small and we encourage members to enter any "specialty" projects, maintenance properties, etc.



This year we have decided to change the entry deadline from December 31, 2021 to **January 17, 2022** in hopes this shift in the timeframe will make it easier. **NOW IS THE TIME** to start thinking about potential projects to enter, especially where photographs are concerned.

All award winners are honored and promoted in the following ways: media press releases and on social media platforms, an award trophy and display board to be viewed at the VNLA Winter and Summer Meeting and at the 2023 Vermont Flower Show, a slideshow of each winning project on the VNLA website, and winning projects are featured in a 4 page print publication in *Seven Days Newspaper* and in *The Dirt*, the VNLA quarterly newsletter.

We hope many of our members will take part in this program this upcoming session so the VNLA can promote our members and the incredible projects they are working on. You can find the entry forms/guidelines [HERE](#).

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# With Deep Sadness . . .

**Dr. Harrison Flint, Extension Ornamental Horticulturist at the University of Vermont, together with Fred Abbey, owner of Gardenside Nursery in Shelburne were the founders of the VNLA in 1964.** Back then the group was known as the Vermont Plantsmen's Association VPA. Dr. Flint passed away on April 11, 2021. Below you will find an excerpt taken from the *History of the \*Vermont Association of Professional Horticulturists (formerly the VPA) - 1964 - 2005* written by Dr. Norman Pellett, Professor Emeritus, UVM followed by an article about Dr. Flint's life.



*dealings, the public had experienced with unscrupulous nursery salesmen and landscapers during the first half of the century, the group composed and adopted a code of ethics for their members.*

*As with other statewide organizations, the mileage from Newport to Brattleboro didn't make it easy for the members to get together often, so the winter meeting was the main one held for many years. The varied interests of the members sometimes caused problems too. Landscapers felt they had little in common with greenhouse growers, and greenhouse growers claimed different challenges from those of nursery growers.*

## **The History of The Vermont Plantsmen by Lewis Hill**

*Lewis Hill of Greensboro wrote the following article in the 1991 winter issue of The Dirt, News Quarterly for The Vermont Plantsmen's Association, Inc.:*

*"In the early 1960's a small group of Vermont nurserymen began to discuss the need for a statewide organization. Vermont already had dairy, sheep, poultry, apple, maple, beekeeper, potato and other agricultural groups. Even several floral producers, such as the gladiolus growers, met regularly.*

*After three or four preliminary gatherings, with the help of Harrison Flint, Ornamental Horticulturist with the UVM Extension Service and several officials from the Vermont Department of Agriculture, the growers composed a set of bylaws and a statement of purpose. They held their first official meeting at the Vermont Farm Show in February, 1964, in the Barre auditorium. Because of the lack of space, and since no one took the new group very seriously, they were assigned a small room under the stage in the auditorium.*

*Some thirty nursery growers, greenhouse operators, and landscapers met in the hot, crowded quarters that day to listen to the plans of the organizers. They adopted the following statement of purpose: "The object of this organization shall be for the purpose of improving the condition of floriculture and ornamental horticulture, and to help beautify the state with plants, through promotion, education, legislation, mutual benefits, and information of public interest."*

*Most of the officers elected that day were growers who had been active in getting the association started. They were Fred Abbey, president; Lewis Hill, Greensboro, vice president; Richard Salter, Reading, executive secretary; and Richard Stevens, Springfield, treasurer. The executive committee consisted of H. Parks Holcomb, Marlboro; Marvin Carley, Brattleboro; and Grace Clark of Bristol. After much discussion, the name Vermont Plantsmen's Association was chosen (feminists had not yet become active). To counteract the unpleasant*

*During those early years the group became better organized and grew rapidly during the 1960's and 1970's when several other plant oriented groups joined. Speakers tended to discuss mostly plant propagation and culture, with topics such as fertilizers, pest control, new varieties, as well as reports of experimental programs taking place at the University of Vermont. New fertilizers and chemicals for insect, disease and weed control were being introduced rapidly, and many of the topics dealt with their use. Membership increased as it became increasingly important for growers to keep informed, and both the meetings and newsletter, The Potting Bench, helped accomplish this.*

*Under the guidance of later Extension Horticulturists, first Norman Pellett, and presently, Leonard Perry, the group organized field trips to other New England states and to Canada, and began to hold twilight summer meetings at growers' places of business. Meetings attracted exhibitors of both nursery plants and related products, and these added interest to the gatherings as well as financial help. The Blue Cross/Blue Shield insurance service, successfully managed by (first, Richard Salter, then) Mary West for many years, also attracted new members.*

*Summer meetings at Lake Champagne (in Randolph Center) allowed members to enjoy Phil Hodgdon's famous barbecues and offered a chance for members to get together, picnic and swap ideas and plants. The group also sponsored bus tours to nurseries and display gardens in New England and Canada. The spring flower show grew from small gatherings in Barre to many large, colorful exhibits in Burlington malls and also included educational lectures."*

You can read the entire **History of the \*Vermont Association of Professional Horticulturists (formerly the VPA) - 1964 - 2005** at <https://vnlavt.org/about-us/history/>.

*\* Please note that another name change for the Association occurred in 2008 and we became the Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association.*

On the following page you will find an article about Dr. Harrison Flint and his life.



# The Passing of Legendary Plantsman and Professor Harrison Flint

by Michael Dosmann, Keeper of Living Collections,  
Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University

Harrison Flint, Purdue University Professor Emeritus of Horticulture, died on April 11. Respected as both scholar of woody plants and inspiring educator, his passing is mourned by his family, colleagues, and students.

Over his near 30-year career at Purdue University (1968 – 1997), Flint advised over 300 horticulture undergraduates, including some 150 in a special program he created called the Professional Plantsman (PLANTPRO) and later renamed the Public Horticulture major. These and other students he adopted went on to populate gardens, arboreta, universities, and other institutions across North America and beyond.

Professor Flint instructed several classes at Purdue, including one on planting design (co-taught with landscape architecture faculty), as well as a non-technical, horticulture writing course. However, it was HORT 217 – Woody Landscape Plants – for which he was best known. This arduous yet rewarding class taught 1000s of horticulture, landscape architecture, and urban forestry students not just to identify trees and shrubs (often when leafless), but also their stress tolerances, landscape usage, and cultural histories. For those wanting more, there was HORT 527 – Advanced Woody Plant Systematics – which required deep-thinking, independent scholarship, and a great deal of writing. While on the road for weekend field trips to gardens across the Midwest, students and professor held philosophical discussions and quizzed each other using Rehder's Manual.

Flint was a prolific author in popular and trade magazines, often recommending plants of merit to horticulture. One of his several books (Landscape Plants for Eastern North America) became a respected textbook and go-to reference for landscape architects and horticulturists. In its 2nd edition, it continues to be held in high regard for Flint's trustworthy, objective assessments. He dedicated the book to his students. His counsel to the nursery and landscape industries, as well as the public gardens community, was often sought out and always respected.

Flint's keen understanding of woody plants' stress tolerances was borne out of his own experiences as a scholar. Much of his and his graduate students' research focused upon cold hardiness in trees as a function of provenance, integrating ecological perspectives into horticulture.

The antithesis of a self-promoter, Flint was a modest man who expressed clear interest in other's well-being and a strong dedication to social issues. While on sabbatical he partnered with Alabama A&M University to find ways to strengthen minority representation in the field of horticulture; while on another sabbatical at Iowa State University, he delved into agricultural bioethics. Flint received multiple awards for his teaching and advising. In 2002 he was honored with the prestigious Arthur Hoyt Scott Medal from Swarthmore College, the pinnacle in American horticulture. That same year, accepting the American Public Gardens Association's Award of Merit, he emphasized to conference attendees how public gardens must exist for all, not just prominent donors and those who could afford admission fees.

Flint, a native Vermonter, received his BS and PhD from Cornell University, and his MS from Michigan State University, all in horticulture. Prior to joining the faculty at Purdue University, he was on the faculties of the University of Vermont and University of Rhode Island. He was also Associate Horticulturist at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University where he curated the living collections with Donald Wyman.

Flint is survived by his wife Terrie Kercher; daughter Lynn, and sons Joe, Bill and John; stepson Shane and stepdaughter Tracy; as well as their spouses and grandchildren. Plans for a memorial service this summer are forthcoming. Because of his dedication to students, contributions in memory of Flint may be made to the **HLA Horticulture Scholarship** (<https://connect.purdue.edu/s/givenow?appealcode=18036+so&dids=003505>) at Purdue University.

*Reprinted with permission from the American Public Garden Association, where this article was published.*





# The Vermont Blooms Passport Program!

The Vermont Blooms Passport Program was launched in mid-April and there is one month to go before we will be selecting our winners! The goals with this new program, in lieu of not holding a Flower Show, are to connect the public to our member businesses as well as our landscape professionals and associates. People have begun to mail in their stamped passports!

We have 18 VNLA member businesses participating. Members of the public could pick up a passport card and visit 10 or more businesses, get their passport stamped and then mail it in for the drawing. Visiting all 18 businesses gets your passport entered into the grand prize drawing! Passports must be submitted by August 31, 2021.

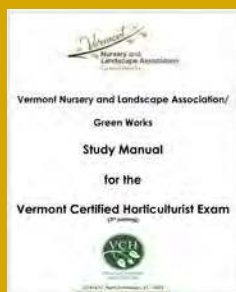
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4. [Evergreen Gardens of VT, Waterbury Center](#)
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13. [Miller Hill Farm, Nursery & Gardens, Sudbury](#)
14. [Peet Farm Greenhouses, Cornwall](#)
15. [Red Wagon Plants, Hinesburg](#)
16. [Rocky Dale Gardens, Bristol](#)
17. [Sam Mazza's Farm Market, Colchester](#)
18. [von Trapp Greenhouse, Waitsfield](#)



We want to thank all our participating businesses and we hope to expand/build upon this for the next season. In the meantime we are looking forward to drawing the winners on September 13 just in time for Fall planting!



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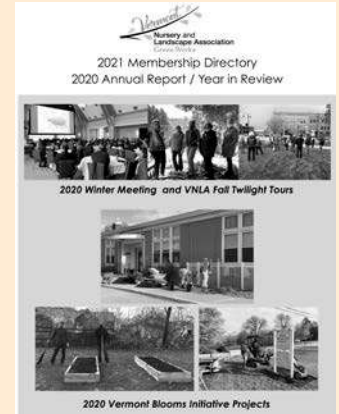


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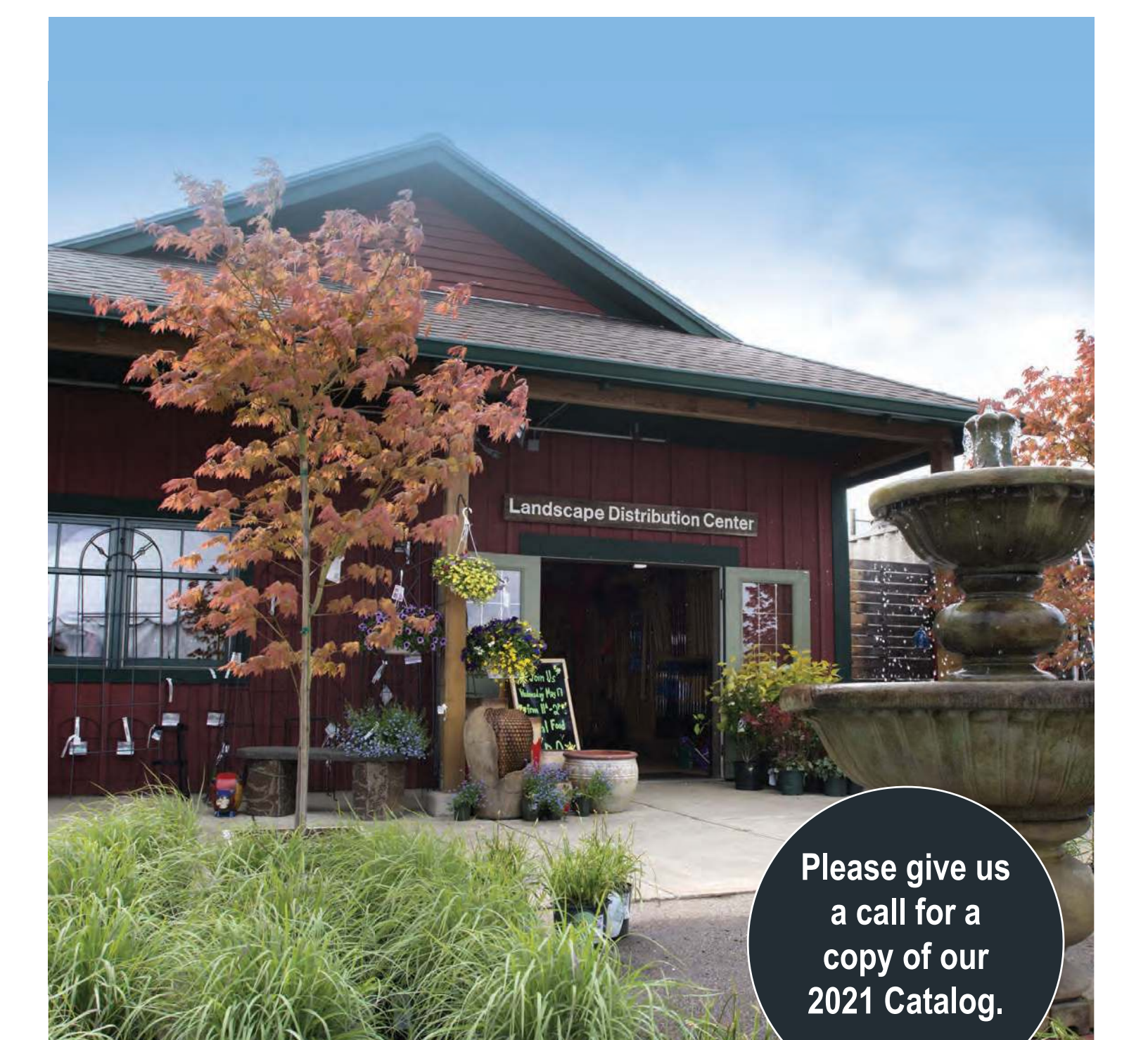
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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Massachusetts Nursery & Landscape Association Green Industry Virtual Forum Year Long Webinar Offerings**  
 Next one: 8/14/21  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**August 18, 2021**  
 5:30 pm - Dark  
**VNLA Summer Gathering Celebration**  
 Horsford Gardens & Nursery  
 2111 Greenbush Road  
 Charlotte, VT 05445  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**September 8, 2021**  
 3:00-4:00 pm EDT  
**Ecological Landscape Alliance**  
**Webinar: Designing for Dry Stone Walling in the Landscape**  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**September 9, 2021- 5:30 pm**  
**VNLA Summer Twilight Gathering**  
 Greenhaven Gardens & Nursery  
 2638 Ethan Allen Hwy.  
 New Haven, VT 05472

**September 13 & 20, 2021 @ 7:00 pm**  
**September 18 & 25, 2021 @ 11:00 am**  
**Massachusetts Gardening Symposium:**  
**Inspiration for Next Year: Specialty Gardens - ALL VIRTUAL**  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**September 15, 2021**  
 12:00 pm EDT  
**Ecological Landscape Alliance**  
**Webinar: Water Infiltration and Improved Soil Carbon Storage**  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**September 22, 2021- 2pm**  
**UMASS Extension**  
**Ornamental Tree & Shrub ID & Insect Walk @ Berkshire Botanical Garden**  
 Stockbridge, MA  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**October 6 - 9, 2021**  
**APLD International VIRTUAL Design Conference**  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**December 6-10, 2021**  
**2021 Irrigation Show and Education Week**  
 San Diego, CA  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

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# LEONARD'S CLIPPINGS!

by Dr. Leonard Perry, UVM Horticulture Professor Emeritus

## Summer, 2021

### PSS Department and Campus News:

- The University of Vermont has received nearly \$400,000 in support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to support an interdisciplinary team's use of "serious game" technology to test how policies across the food system can better support access to healthy foods. The two-year

in social-ecological systems. An important goal of this work is the creation of applicable and predictive models to inform best management practices.



- There were/are several **major construction projects on campus**, including these (courtesy [uvm.edu/arch](http://uvm.edu/arch)). The renovation of the Billings Library (completed) included a phased approach for the historic structure and the upper level of the 1984 addition. The Special Collections were relocated from the Howe Library to Billings. The objective of the

Scheduled completion is 2022. The Patrick/Forbush/Gutterson Complex (noted in previous issues), is receiving an upgrade and expansion to UVM's athletic facilities to better accommodate health, fitness, wellness, academic, athletic, events, and related programs. Scheduled



completion is 2022. The UVM Recital Hall (photo, Redstone campus) has completed (October 2020) a transformative renovation and expansion. Nearly every aspect of the Hall has received an upgrade with new lighting, new acoustical treatments, and refurbished seating and flooring. Additionally, there is a 4,550 square foot expansion that provides green room space for performers, rehearsal space for students and faculty, and storage space for instruments. In accordance with the University of Vermont's "Environmental Design in New and Renovated Buildings" policy, the project was designed, at minimum, to meet LEED Silver Level criteria.



grant will support research on the systemic barriers between civic-minded farm businesses and communities with disproportionately low access to fresh, whole foods. The cross-campus partnership will employ serious games -- video games which are not for entertainment purposes -- that can test how different scenarios might play out in real life. Led by food anthropologist Amy Trubek, the team includes PSS systems ecologist Scott Merrill (photo), food systems scientist Caitlin Morgan, applied mathematician Eric Clark, and health policy expert Julia Wolfson, a partner at Johns Hopkins University. In the lab, PSS faculty member Scott Merrill uses experimental gaming as a novel technique for collecting data to examine decision making



Firestone Medical Research Building (next to water tower across from Jeffords and Hills Buildings, green in photo, Jeffords is to the left off-photo) is to construct approximately 60,000 gross square feet of new laboratory research space adjacent to the Health Science Research Facility (HSRF) and move an equivalent amount of space from the Given Building into the new structure. This building is being designed to meet a minimum of LEED Silver Certification.

- Donors to the University of Vermont's Grossman School of Business have made substantial philanthropic investments over the past eight years, helping to elevate its status and making it more competitive among business

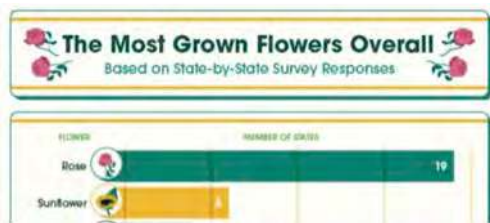






schools in the U.S. and around the world. More than 350 donors stepped forward, committing \$18.8 million to complete the most recent challenge ahead of the June 30, 2021 deadline.

### In Other News:



Spring Hill Nurseries developed a list of 20 popular flowers, and surveyed gardeners in all states on their favorites. **Top ranked flowers** by far were the rose (top in 19 states), followed by sunflower (6 states), and tied (4 states each) were daffodil, hydrangea, and peony. Peony was ranked top in Vermont. Of this list of 20, 5 didn't rank in any state—gerbera, dahlia, petunia, gardenia, and violet even though the latter is the state flower in 4 states.

([www.springhillnursery.com/blog/most-popular-flowers-grown-by-state](http://www.springhillnursery.com/blog/most-popular-flowers-grown-by-state)).

Are you **incorporating pollinator gardens** into client landscapes, educating customers on them, or incorporating this focus into retail? If not, check out what the world's largest retailer and a huge plant seller (yes, WalMart) announced this spring for a pollinator health policy. Maybe some ideas for your own business? (thanks for some of this info from Jennifer with Ball's GreenTalks, other from Walmart news release).

Among other items related to produce sourcing, they will be:

- Encouraging suppliers to phase out the use of chlorpyrifos and nitroguanidine neonicotinoids where applicable, and to avoid products with a level 1 bee precaution rating.
- Encouraging live-plant suppliers to label pollinator-friendly plants (plants grown without neonicotinoids, flupyradifurone and sulfoxaflor) for sale in their retail stores.
- Avoiding the selling of invasive plant species.
- Educating customers about pollinator plants for home gardens.
- Incorporating pollinator habitat at Walmart locations or in local communities.

In addition, Walmart has:

- partnered with solar developers to establish pollinator habitats around solar panel arrays as in South Carolina and Minnesota (photo).



- had more than 1.3 million annual and perennial pollinator-promoting plants with carry tags in Walmart stores this spring
- through the Walmart Foundation, recently granted funding to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability to leverage citizen science data to monitor pollinators more cost-effectively.

Ball Publishing just released the 19th Edition of the greenhouse industry's go-to reference book—**The Ball RedBook** (2 volumes). George J. Ball, the founder of the company that bears his name, published the first RedBook

in 1932, and each edition since has grown in size and scope.

**Volume 1: Greenhouse Structures, Equipment, and Technology** includes the most detailed, current technology and crop production information available, adding robotics, controlled environment agriculture, LED lighting, cannabis greenhouses and artificial intelligence to the already vast collection of topics.



**Volume 2: Crop Culture and Production** has expanded to include more than 200 crops, as well as all of the factors of plant growth needed to understand the technical and cultural aspect of plant production. Some of what's new includes new hybrid geraniums and begonias, Sunfinity-type helianthus and an expanded section on SunPatiens. There's also a detailed, all-inclusive section on hemp/cannabis.

Order as a set or individually through IPG Books at [www.ballredbook.com](http://www.ballredbook.com) (thanks to Ball GreenTalks e-newsletter for this summary)

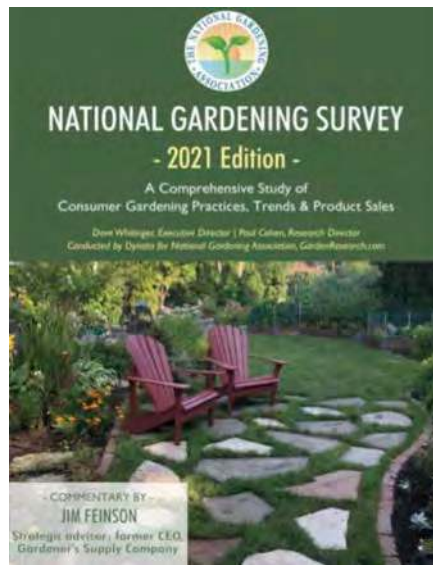
The **annual National Gardening Survey** was released on Earth Day (April 22) this spring. Along with this 361-page compendium of gardening activity last year, and purchasing trends for this year, is a companion survey *What Gardeners Think*, a special 426-page report on gardeners' attitudes and gardening behavior. How did your season so far match these predicted trends?

Some of the highlights include:

- As we know, **gardening was up** last year, in fact there were 18.3million new gardeners. Two-thirds of

gardeners overall tried a new gardening activity, and two-thirds had a hard time finding at least one product last year. Flower gardening is catching up to food gardening.

- Almost half (42%) increased gardening due to the pandemic. **Most (88%) intend to maintain or increase (36%) their gardening this year.** Gardening more was especially noted among “gardening cohorts of younger gardeners, gardeners with children, apartment/condo dwellers, and black and gardeners of color.”
- While **all age groups gardened for mental health and emotional benefits**, older gardeners often cited reasons of home beautification and exercise, while younger gardeners often cited reasons of growing food and gardening as a family activity.
- **Growing cannabis** was shown as an interest of one third of households who currently don’t garden, by half of respondents age 18-44, and only one in eight of those over 55.



- **Gardening shopping channels remained fairly consistent**, with online retailers small, and home centers/mass merchandisers the largest.
- Also this year were *questions on cut flowers*, sponsored by the Slow Flowers Society ([www.slowflowersjournal.com](http://www.slowflowersjournal.com)). Over half Americans surveyed (57%)

said buying *domestic* flowers is somewhat to very important. A similar number (58%) said that buying *local* flowers is somewhat to very important. “Four in ten U.S. adults (41%, 104.6 million) report spending some amount of money on cut flowers in 2020, with an average household expenditure of \$63, or an estimated \$6.55 billion spent by U.S. households last year on cut flowers.”

(Purchase of this surveys ranges from \$1,295 - \$4,200, you can read more of this summary online: [www.garden.org/newswire/view/dave/114/2021-National-Gardening-Survey-released](http://www.garden.org/newswire/view/dave/114/2021-National-Gardening-Survey-released)).



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# THE LAB

putting it under the lens . . .



## Observations from the UVM Plant Diagnostic Lab

by Ann Hazelrigg, Ph.D.

Early cool wet conditions in the state set the stage for anthracnose in maple, oak, ash and sycamore. The damage from this fungal disease is mainly cosmetic and will not normally impact the health of the tree, especially if it is a larger older tree. Trees may undergo defoliation in spring shortly after leaf out but are often able to flush a new set of foliage and recover if they are healthy and vigorous. Symptoms vary by host but often the angular spots and blotches follow the leaf veins since that part of the leaf stays wetter longer. Raking and destroying leaves in the fall will reduce inoculum for next year. For more information on lifecycle and management <https://ag.umass.edu/landscape/fact-sheets/maple-anthrachnose>.

Maple leaf blister is another fungal disease that can be confused with anthracnose. I cannot always tell the difference between the two diseases from pictures; I need to look at the spores under a microscope.

Like anthracnose, maple leaf blister is mainly cosmetic and unlikely to threaten a healthy tree. Anthracnose and leaf blister can occur on a tree at the same time but leaf blister spots are a mix of lighter brown and black and are more rounded and raised compared with the irregular blotches caused by the anthracnose pathogen. The fungus overwinters in bud scales and



attacks developing leaves early in spring. With the right weather conditions, the infection can spread rapidly and attack most of the leaves in the canopy.

The fungus *Taphrina* also infects new oak leaves as the buds open in the spring but symptoms often do not develop until later in the growing season. As the infected leaves mature the fungus grows within the epidermis. The lesions appear raised on the upper surface of the leaf while on the underside they appear convex. When many lesions develop they can coalesce to cause a total collapse of the foliage. The pathogen produces spores from the blighted sections of the foliage but these spores do not cause additional disease within the same growing season. These spores spread to twigs and bud scales where they remain dormant until next spring to start the cycle again. When trees are severely diseased on an annual basis, growth can be stunted and vigor is reduced, making trees more susceptible to opportunistic pests and pathogens. <https://ag.umass.edu/landscape/fact-sheets/oak-leaf-blister>.

Another species of *Taphrina* can infect peach to cause peach leaf curl. Infected leaves can be deformed and often have a pink color. By the time you see this disease, it is too late for any type of

Top: Suspected maple anthracnose.  
 Middle: Leaf blister on red maple. Photo by Alicyn Ryan, University of Florida. [www.Bugwood.org](http://www.Bugwood.org).  
 Bottom: Peach leaf curl. Photo: K. Peters, Penn State University.





fungicide control. The spores overwinter in bark crevices and bud scales and primary infection occurs from bud swell until the first leaves fully emerge. Rains wash the spores into the buds and long periods of cool wet weather are ideal for infection. We typically do not see this disease every year, it just depends on how prolonged the cool wet conditions are in the spring. Commercial orchardists often spray a fungicide during dormancy in late fall or early spring to control the disease. For more information: <https://extension.psu.edu/disease-of-the-month-peach-leaf-curl>.

With recent rains, the galls on cedar have expanded again and are dispersing spores carried by air currents to apple hosts. Watch for the bright yellow orange leaf spots on the apple host.



*Cedar apple rust spore horns 6-14-21.  
Photo: A. Hazelrigg, Williston.*

The pear leaf blister mite is an eriophyid mite that causes raised bumps or blisters on pear leaves. The damage is often misdiagnosed as a plant disease. These bumps eventually turn brown or black as the tissue dies. Defoliation can occur and severe infestations can cause scarred pear fruit. Eriophyid mites are very small carrot-shaped arthropods in the spider family. Eriophyid mites are also responsible for the pink galls on maple leaves. For home gardeners, this problem is mainly cosmetic.



*Pear leaf blister mite damage on espaliered pear 6-14-21.  
Photo: A. Hazelrigg.*

**Potato leafhopper.** This pest has already been seen in New England so watch for damage on vegetables and small fruit in addition to apples and maples. This pest overwinters in the south and shows up on storm fronts in June. As the pest feeds it releases a toxin that causes ‘hopperburn’, a yellowing on the leaf edges that can result in dead areas. The threshold for this insect is very low and damage can occur rapidly. This symptom can sometimes look like drought/heat stress injury but if potato leaf hopper is involved, you should see the sideways running nymphs on the leaf undersides.



*Top: ‘Hopperburn’ symptoms on Acer rubrum,  
Steven K. Rettke of RCE.  
Bottom: Nymph and adult potato leaf hopper. Iowa State  
University.*

The UVM Plant Diagnostic Clinic is open for commercial landscapers and nursery operator disease and pest questions. It is best to email me first since the building may not be accessible. Contact me at [ann.hazelrigg@uvm.edu](mailto:ann.hazelrigg@uvm.edu).







# News from the VT Agency of Agriculture, Foods & Markets

By: Judy Rosovsky, VT State Entomologist

## Reminders, Moths and More.

### Reminders-

**One:** Do yourself a favor, when the truck from the grower pulls in, hop on and randomly look at 5 plants. Ask yourself these 5 questions: Are there any signs of live insects? Insect damage? Diseases? Cankers on the stem? Are they root-bound? If they are root-bound they are home-bound – don't take them off of the truck. A plant can usually handle one stressor, like bound roots, but two or more will not bode well for its long-term health. University of Vermont Plant Pathologist Ann Hazelrigg reminds us that root-bound plants may have been subject to winter injury, especially if they were stored above ground, and it is quite likely that this spring they were subject to drought stress. That makes them susceptible to pathogens like fungi and an untimely death. But a healthy plant lives long and leads to happy customers. Unhealthy plants mean unhappy customers. Check your plants before they come off the truck.

**Two:** Scott Lewins from UVM Extension reminds us that the 2<sup>nd</sup> flight of leek moths is in progress. Go to <https://list.uvm.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A1=ind2106&L=VTVEGANDBERRY>, click on June 2021 and scroll to Leek Moth Update. You can reduce damage by taking several steps, including introducing Trichogramma wasps, deploying row covers at night and topping your onions prior to storage. If you use conventional or organic pesticides be sure to time them correctly.



**Three:** Please be sure to look for the spotted lanternfly. This polyphagous pest from Pennsylvania hitchhikes easily and has been transported all over New England. This time of year the black nymphs with white spots are active, and a bit later start looking for the 4<sup>th</sup> instar nymphs, which are red with white and black spots. Adults appear in the fall. VAAFM staff are deploying SLF traps in VT but the more eyes that are looking for this new pest, the better.

### Regulatory Updates-

Plants infested with box tree moth (*Cydalima perspectalis*) were sent to 6 states and 1 distribution center, and from South Carolina they were sent to 209 locations in 42 states, including 1 plant sent to VT. That plant has been collected and destroyed. The US closed the border to Buxus, Euonymus and Ilex sp. If you are concerned about this destructive moth contact your industry representatives. The U.S. is pursuing the goal of eradication but Canada has not declared this as a goal yet. See <https://extension.psu.edu/box-tree-moth> for images and information.



Leek moth damage to garlic scape and leaf



Top: Root-bound is home-bound - don't accept plants with problems.

Middle: Photo courtesy of Cornell/CALS.

Bottom: Spotted lanternfly nymphs. Photo courtesy of Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture.

The USDA is moving forward with deregulating the chrysanthemum disease Chrysanthemum white rust. The next step is that they will publish a notice of the proposed changes in the Federal Register, which will include a risk analysis, and then there will be a 60 day comment period.

An Asian Giant Hornet, *Vespa mandarinia*, has been found and confirmed in a new county,





Snohomish county, in Washington. It does not appear to be related to the previous AGH introductions in Canada or in Whatcom county. Go to <https://agr.wa.gov/about-wsda/news-and-media-relations/news-releases?article=32455> for more details.

### Gypsy Moths in VT-

Perhaps you've noticed a rain-like sound on your roof or in your yard, but the sun is shining. You ask yourself, what could be making that sound? It's the frass, or poop, produced by caterpillars eating leaves and passing those leaves through their digestive system. They rain down from the trees. You'll notice pieces of oak leaves on the ground, and you'll see hairy caterpillars crawling up your siding and your trees. It's been about 30 years since we've seen them, but Gypsy Moth (GM) caterpillars have come back and are defoliating like they've never been gone.

Ordinarily the Agency of Natural Resources Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) monitors insect plots with traps for several invasive and damaging insect species, which allows FPR to predict the likelihood of a defoliation event taking place the following year. But the year of 2020 was not a typical year, due to COVID-19, and insect plots were not monitored. Aerial surveys weren't flown either, to safeguard the pilots and the FPR crews. They pursued some creative alternatives to gather information, such as climbing fire towers and mountains to see what insect or disease damage could be viewed, but the systematic overflights that are so helpful to understanding where insect damage has occurred were cancelled. We knew from our own observations and from citizen reports that GM were on the



upswing, but without the data from the monitoring plots and aerial surveys we weren't sure whether there would be a population outbreak this year. Now we know. Areas from Swanton to Benson, including Monkton, are seeing large numbers of hairy caterpillars with red and blue dots climbing up their trees and house walls and whatever else stands still long enough to be swarmed.

Bruce Parker of the UVM's Entomology Research Laboratory had done a graphical analysis of historic GM outbreaks in VT and determined that these population upsurges took place every 6-10 years (Parker *et al.* 1989). But since 1991 the fungus has kept the GM population down to very low numbers. The reason that we are seeing a resurgence of this caterpillar is that we have had at least one dry season a month since 2016. We are now in the midst of a natural experiment to see how much rain it will take for the fungus to come back and eliminate the GM.

By the end of the month, the caterpillars should start to form cocoons and pupate. Two weeks after that, they will emerge as adult moths. They are not a distinctly colored moth, but they fly slowly and are out during the day so they will be noticeable. The females of the European Gypsy Moth do not fly, so wherever the female caterpillars ended up making their cocoons is where they are going to lay their eggs. If you see a beige, somewhat oval-shaped blob on your tree trunks, scrape them off and dump them in soapy water.

Landscapers who see GM caterpillars defoliating ornamental shrubs and trees can help by making sure the target plants are well watered. Most shrubs and trees can survive some defoliation but the stress of an insect attack

Top: Gypsy moth frass.

Middle: Gypsy moth caterpillar on a beech leaf.

Bottom: Gypsy moth pupal cases, female moth and being egg mass. Photo courtesy of Karla Salp, Washington State Dept. of

Agriculture, [www.Bugwood.org](http://www.Bugwood.org)





combined with drought stress can have an adverse impact on plant health. Do what you can to enhance the health of the preferred GM food items. Unlike the Emerald ash borer, GM don't kill trees outright, but repeated defoliation can lead to plant mortality, especially in conjunction with one or more additional stressors.

Products containing the bacterial biocontrol *Bacillus thuringiensis var. kurstaki*, (such as DiPel, Foray or Thuricide), are registered for use in Vermont and are good for controlling the caterpillars but they are most effective in the earlier instars, before it grows larger than 1/2 inch. Any product registered in Vermont for outdoor use on caterpillars can be used. Other methods of control include putting sticky bands around tree trunks to prevent the caterpillars from climbing up the trees. In the late summer and fall, look for the beige egg masses and scrape them off and dump them in soapy water.

Adult GM don't feed, but the males will fly around during the day and may be a bit of a nuisance. The females don't fly, so they will lay their eggs close to wherever they spun their cocoons. FPR and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets are discussing whether to help to coordinate spray


treatments for next spring. This year insect plots will be monitored and aerial surveys will take place, so we will have the data we need to determine if more defoliation will occur. With luck there will be enough rain for the fungus to return and take care of this problem for us. See <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/agency-agriculture-food-markets-news/gypsy-moths-are-making-comeback-vermont-why> for more information.

And by the way, recent discussions about the misuse of ethnic names have led to a movement to rename the gypsy moth abbreviation to LDD, for *Lymantria dispar dispar*, its Latin name. In future the moth will be referred to as LDD.

#### Reference cited-

Parker, B.L., K.E. McGrath, S. Mouton, and H.B. Teillon. 1989. History of the major forest insect pests in Vermont. A joint VT Agr. Exp. Station and State of VT publication, RR57. University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont. 32 pp.

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# Wait a Minute!

By: Margaret Skinner and Cheryl Frank-Sullivan,  
UVM Entomology Research Laboratory

Over the past year we have highlighted several un-bee-leivable beneficials that are attracted to flowers, especially habitat hedges containing species visited by pollinators and natural enemies of all types. Expert landscapers should have an awareness of what beneficials look like and how they work, so pesticide applications are delayed to give nature time to balance things out.

Aphid outbreaks are a great example of the value of watchful waiting. Aphids are small pear-shaped, soft-bodied insects that feed by sucking sap, usually on the undersides of leaves or along plant stems. There are over 5,000 species and at least 450 of them are agricultural pests, many on trees, shrubs and flowers. Leaves fed on by aphids curl up or become deformed. Aphids also secrete sticky honeydew on the leaves and other surfaces. Sooty mold may grow on the honeydew making an ugly mess. Populations tend to increase rapidly in the early spring before natural enemies catch up to them. They often are worst when the weather is hot and dry. Some people freak out when they see a few aphids on the leaves of their favorite plants and call on a landscaper to **“GET RID OF THEM!”**.

Instead of reaching for the insecticide, we encourage people to **“WAIT A MINUTE”**, and watch what happens. Usually, first you will see a few clumps of aphids. Then a few weeks later there might be more aphids, but also aphid mummies (Fig. 1). These are aphids that were parasitized by a tiny wasp. The egg



*Aphid infestation with several aphid mummies (marked with red arrows) (L); wasp parasitizing an aphid (R).*



*Top: Lady beetle larva fasting on aphids (L); adult*



*Syrphid fly larva feasting on aphids (L) and the adult stage (Top L and R), pupa and eggs (bottom L and R).*

it laid in the aphid hatched and consumed the body contents of the aphid, leaving only a tan hardened pupal case. The adult parasite cuts its way out of the mummy, and is ready to attack another live aphid.

Each time you check the aphids, there should be more mummies. That’s a sign they are impacting the aphid population. There also might be what looks like a miniature black and orange gila monster lizard (Fig. 2). That’s the larval stage of a lady beetle. They are voracious aphid predators, as are the adults. The larvae pupate on the leaf and look like a dead and dried up adult. The eggs are yellow and shaped like a cigar.

Look a little closer among the aphids and there may also be some tiny greenish or reddish maggots, some with white stripes. These are likely larvae of hover or syrphid flies. Syrphid flies are bee mimics that tend to hover in one place when they fly.

Adults feed on flower nectar and pollen, and contribute to pollination, while the larvae feed on aphids. They pupate on the leaf and look like a greenish teardrop. The eggs look like a grain of rice.

Later on, if the aphids persist, you may find the larva of *Aphidoletes aphidimyza*. This is a tiny fly (midge) that occurs naturally in small numbers. The larvae are bright orange or yellowish and feed aggressively on aphids and other





soft-bodied insects (Fig. 4). This species is produced for commercial sale and landscapers sometimes release them to help nature along. Lacewings may also appear searching for a tender aphid morsel (Fig. 5). Both the adults and nymphs actively feed on aphids along with many other generalist predators.

These are only a few of the diverse wildlife that exists on plants, and contribute significantly to the balance of nature. If all goes well, slowly the populations of these and other natural enemies will increase, while aphid populations decline. That is, if you don't spray an insecticide that disrupts the natural cycle and population dynamics of aphids and their enemies. Even organic insecticides like insecticidal soap can disrupt the natural balance of our ecosystem. **SO, Wait A Minute, and Watch** your aphid infestation rather than reaching for an insecticide, and if you can, encourage the public to do the same. Planting habitat hedges of flowering plants will support populations of these beneficials to help manage pests and maintain a healthy natural balance.



*Aphidoletes larva feasting on an aphid (L) and adult midge (R).*



*Lacewing larva eating an aphid (L), and adult stage (R).*

**About the Authors:** Dr. Margaret Skinner is the UVM Extension Entomologist and Research Professor. Cheryl Frank Sullivan is an Entomologist & PhD Candidate. Together, they provide extension outreach to growers and landscapers and conduct research on IPM focusing on biological control. Businesses interested in establishing a habitat hedge tailored to their commercial operation should contact Cheryl Frank Sullivan at [cfrank@uvm.edu](mailto:cfrank@uvm.edu) 802-656-5434. More information about the Univ. of VT, Entomology Research Laboratory can be found at <https://www.uvm.edu/~entlab/>

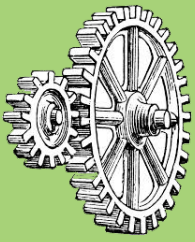


This work is supported with funds from the Vermont Nursery & Landscape Association, the USDA Crop Protection & Pest Management Program, National Institute of Food & Agriculture and Univ. of Vermont Extension System. Images obtained from the web and are not available for general reproduction.

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# THE IDEA FACTORY

*tips & trends, food for thought...*

## The TICK PROJECT

More than 400,000 people a year are diagnosed with Lyme disease in the U.S each year. The Tick Project is a 5 year project being spearheaded by the Cary Institute and led by Rick Ostfeld and Felicia Keesing, both who have been studying Lyme disease and ways to stop it for over 25 years.

You can learn more about the TICK PROJECT [HERE](#).



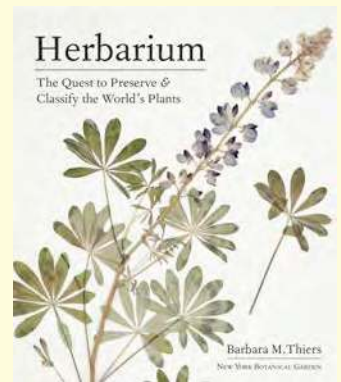
## GYPSY MOTH GETS A NEW NAME!

*The Entomological Society of America announced on July 7, 2021 they have removed “gypsy moth” and “gypsy ant” as recognized common names for these two insect species. These changes are in conjunction with their new ESA program to review and replace insect common names that may be inappropriate or offensive. You can read the full press release [HERE](#).*

**In May, 2021 the USDA released the 2020 Floriculture Crops Summary. The 2020 wholesale value of floriculture crops is up 9% over 2019’s valuation with an estimation in sales in the U.S. of \$4.80 billion. You can read/download the full 62 page report [HERE](#).**

## A Plant Lover’s Book

***Herbarium***  
***The Quest to Preserve and Classify the World’s Plants***, by Barbara M. Thiers



“*Herbarium* is a fascinating enquiry into this unique field of plant biology, exploring how herbaria emerged and have changed over time, who promoted and contributed to them, and why they remain such an important source of data for their new role: understanding how the world’s flora is changing. Barbara Thiers, director of the William and Lynda Steere Herbarium at the New York Botanical Garden, also explains how recent innovations that allow us to see things at both the molecular level and on a global scale can be applied to herbaria specimens, helping us address some of the most critical problems facing the world today”.

“At its heart, *Herbarium* is a compelling reminder of one of humanity’s better impulses: to save things—not just for ourselves, but for generations to come”. *Workman Publishing*





# STRICTLY BUSINESS

*no kidding ...*

## One Year Later . . . ‘Nimble’ is still the name of the game. by Jacki Hart

A year ago, I’m pretty sure that most of us thought that COVID-19 wouldn’t be an issue by fall, or winter at the very latest. Most people I spoke with last spring figured we were in this for a sprint, and things would be back to normal quickly. Few predicted a marathon. Even fewer predicted the situation we’re wading through 14 months later with the highest case counts and hospitalizations ever.

As I write this in early May, there are ‘lockdowns’ of various descriptions across Canada. All are meeting resistance from every corner of our communities, including from weary parents, frustrated entrepreneurs, anxious athletes and lonely kids. Vaccine roll outs are an unmitigated failure when compared to per capita vaccination rates in many other countries. Between the anti-vaxer groups, the Astra-Zeneca bad press, slow clinic set ups and line-ups longer than supply can accommodate – the truth is that we’re not yet out of the woods in Canada. As a country compared on the world stage, in my opinion, we’ve done both lockdowns and vaccinations ineffectively.... Leaving us embarrassingly far behind the US, the UK and much of Europe (per capita) with ‘the jab’ as a means to an end. Here’s a link to a website that provides interesting data – a 12 month timeline of COVID activity in any country you choose – here, it’s set to Canada: <https://www.worldlifeexpectancy.com/country-health-profile/canada>.

So, your business.... And COVID-19.... For some, it’s a boom. And unfortunately, for others, a bust. In the horticulture profession, where most of my readers dwell, the upswing of demand for backyard improvements and ‘staycation’ upgrades have set record sales and profits. Amid cumbersome protocols and changes to how people and



equipment are moved around, many businesses are thriving like never before. Will the COVID bubble burst once travellers are free to head across the borders again? Likely so. In the meantime, it’s important to keep

your eye on both the near and farther horizon.

Whether your company is booming or struggling to make it through government-imposed activity and restrictions, now is an important time to be strategic. While none of us have a crystal ball, you’ve got a year of this pandemic under your belt now, to see the trends, and navigate your way ahead. But remember my famous line: “If you’re aiming at nothing, you’ll hit it with huge accuracy”.

A year ago, most business owners were panicking. Budgeting for the worst, hoping for the best. And now, there’s a mix of record-breaking success, devastating losses, and everything in between. Regardless of whether the last year has molded new opportunities or restricted the potential in your business, you’ve got to stay in the game and remain nimble. Ready and willing to pivot when things change – whether the economy in your region is ‘opening up’ or ‘locking down’ or some murky shade of grey in between.

Now that we all know how each of these social measures extremes affects our business rhythm, we all must remember how important it is to check in on our strategy – with a variety of scenarios sketched out in preparation for the months (years) ahead. Staying on top of your numbers – your payables, receivables, cash flows, sales funnel, overhead etc is crucial. And also it’s vital to keep your eye on the horizon and ear to the ground... what’s the ‘pulse’ of your team? And of your clients’ interest and ability to spend



money on your services or products? What opportunities could you grab that didn't exist a few months or a year ago? How can you support your community, contributing to something larger than your business (even just by volunteering) ... to help keep your staff engaged and customers loyal?

Take a look around your business community. Notice the businesses that are thriving. Check them out. Talk to them. Follow them online. What's different? How have they pivoted? Are there ways in which your team can help you to think creatively? To be more nimble?

There are opportunities out there for many entrepreneurs right now. And I believe that you're one of them. Keep your momentum going, and keep your eye on the horizon.... Surely I won't be writing about this next May, and we'll all be taking inventory of the lessons learned through this pandemic. Onwards!

Until next time, be well.

**About the Author:** *Jacki Hart is president of Consulting by Hart in Ontario, Canada. She is an entrepreneur, advisor, business consultant, and workshop facilitator with a career in the Green Industry spanning 35 years. Jacki is one of Canada's first women to hold the North American Green Industry certificate for business management excellence. Jacki also manages the Prosperity Program and Peer to Peer Network for Landscape Ontario.*



*Jacki writes for other trade magazines and will be a regular contributor to our business column. CBH is a consulting firm that "passionately believes that entrepreneurial success depends on sustained forward momentum - across all areas of business - both the visible and the invisible. To learn more about CBH visit [www.consultingbyhart.com](http://www.consultingbyhart.com).*



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# THE PLANT LOUNGE

wiry stems, hairy leaves and bodacious blooms. . .

## *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Pink Avalanche'

by Ray DeFeo, Prides Corner Farms

No other plant says summer better than a Hydrangea. If you travel along the seashore, the blue-flowering *macrophylla* varieties dominate the show. In shadier areas throughout the northeast, the native *arborescens* and selected varieties brighten up the area. If you're looking for the hardiest species for cooler, sunny areas around northern New England, it's the *Hydrangea paniculata* that will bring color from July right up to frost.

For many years it was the straight species, better known as Pee Gee Hydrangea, that could be seen in large shrub or tree form dotting many landscapes around New England. *Hydrangea paniculata* flowers are often used in arrangements, especially for summer weddings, and they dry well for long-lasting bouquets or wreaths for around your home. These plants are very hardy and can withstand the winters into the far northern reaches of the area.

Plant breeders have been working for many years to develop and select varieties that improve on the *paniculata* characteristics everyone enjoys. Varieties with larger flowers, such as Phantom, where one bloom will fill a vase. Earlier blooming types, like Quick Fire and Quick Fire Fab now have flowers starting in June. Flowers aging with brighter pink hues like Vanilla Strawberry, Limelight Prime and Flare extend the flower season, mixing with the



autumnal show of leaves. Smaller varieties like Bobo, Little Lime, Firelight Tidbit and Strawberry Sundae have been developed to fit in modern landscapes as yards become smaller.



Top left: *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Azure Skies'; center left: *Hydrangea arborescens* *Incrediball*® (*Abetwo*) *Incrediball*®; bottom left: *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Limelight'. Top right: *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Firelight Tidbit'; bottom right: *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Avalanche'. Photos courtesy of Prides Corner Farm.

One new variety arrived this year that has many of these qualities. Pink Avalanche has large blooms, (12" or more), held high on sturdy stems, surrounded by dark green foliage. The overall size (five feet by five feet), is a condensed version of the original that will fit into

landscapes without overpowering its neighbors. The flowers start opening in early- to mid-July with bright white florets that seem to shine in the sunlight. The cascade of pink hues will start forming at the base of the flowers in September and flow up each flower head, adding a glow to the fall garden.





The VNLA/Green Works mission is to support and strengthen the horticulture industry of Vermont by creating greater awareness of the benefits of landscaping and promoting the professional services and products of our members.