

# THE DIRT

A Newsletter for The Vermont Plantsmen's Association

WINTER 1991 VOL. I, NO. 3

## Vocational Education Committee Report

by Dorothy Pellet

During 1990:

The brochure on horticulture careers and careers was printed. A sample was sent to each member. Twenty brochures were taken in person or have been mailed to guidance counselors at each of the 68 Vermont high schools (six have been mailed to each of the 63 elementary and middle schools which have guidance counselors for the 7th and 8th grades. We hope they will give a brochure to parents or students who express interest in nature, science or natural resources - informing more students about vocational horticulture classes and jobs in the field.

The VPA board of directors held their

## Performance of Ground Cover and Woody Plants at UVM

by Norman Pellet and David Hecla

Some shrubs and herbaceous perennials have been evaluated for winter survival for two or more winters in Burlington VT (U.S.D.A. hardiness zone 4). These plants were grown in full sun in tripled kumpy sand soil and mulched with hardwood bark. Plants showing promise with good performance and no winter injury for two years were *Prunella grandiflora* 'Pagoda', *Geranium platyptalum*, *Geranium tinctorium*, *Rodgersia superba*, *Genista* 'Vancouver Gold', *Rhododendron* 'Pink and Sweet', *Viburnum* 'Emerald Triumph', *Spiraea japonica* 'Shirobana', and *Acer truncatum*.

Plants receiving serious winter injury include the *Geranium* 'Fendly', 'White Medallion', 'Scarlet Medallion', 'Pink Medallion' and 'Dorothy'. These

# THE DIRT

Green Works

THE DIRT Summer Meeting

Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association Green Works

# The Dirt

Vermont Association of Professional Horticulturists

Quarterly Newsletter of the VAPH Fall 2004

## VAPH Summer Meeting

Volume 36, Issue 3

Inside this issue:

- President's Letter
- VAPH Welcomes New Members
- VAPH Summer Meeting and Trade Show
- Funding Member: Dick Simon - Deer
- Member Profile - Pine Hollow Nursery
- Scenic from the U
- Proposed Revision to VT Hardiness Zone
- Executive Reports
- Supplier Profiles: GARDEN, Inc.
- Supplier Profiles: Nursery of Barre
- VT Occupational Safety & Health

The 2004 VAPH Summer Meeting was held on August 18, 2004. The meeting was hosted by Scott Gorton and Robin Gorton-Tell of Pine Hollow Nursery in N. Chittenden, VT. It happened to be one of the few rain-free days of summer.

Scott offered tours of his nursery and landscape business early in the morning. From certain vantage points you could see the location of VAPH's new office in the field. Sally Dickinson from Colville Creek Nursery demonstrated sharing, growing and M&B skills.

With over 20 exhibitors, the trade show was lively with conversation. Bonnie McCullough spoke to the members about the importance of the business.

by all VAPH committee chairs presenting informative reports. The highlight of the business

gradually and expertly served as our auctioneer with John Pades of Colville Creek Nursery and

# The Dirt

## 60th Anniversary Special Issue

### volume 52, issue 3

# THE DIRT

The News Quarterly for The Vermont Association of Professional Horticulturists

SPRING 2000

## Vermont's First Botanical Garden

What started as a job in the city streets is slowly starting to gain shape. The Vermont Community Botanical Garden is a beautiful of the City of South Burlington and the National Gardening Association. The city owns 100 acres on Dorset Street across from the Vermont National Golf Course that has been donated to the city. The city has been looking for a nonprofit organization to occupy the house and use the land for passive recreation.

National Gardening Association has outgrown its building in Burlington and for years have been looking for a new headquarters to house demonstration gardens. The two groups started talking a few years ago to explore working together and after a series of public meetings and feedback from area organizations and residents have decided to go ahead with creating the Vermont Community Botanical Garden. A volunteer Advisory Board has formed made up of city officials, NGA employees, local residents and organizations to guide the process.

Using 20 acres of the 100 VCBG plans to eventually construct demonstration gardens such as a rose garden, All-American Selections garden, wildflower garden, butterfly garden and much more. Also, due to the mission of National Gardening, the site will also be a preeminent horticultural educational program for school children and families in the children's garden, have an engaged community garden and have special theme demonstration gardens for special populations in the area such as Native American and Native American gardens. Unlike traditional botanical gardens, the VCBG will be a place where people can learn about horticulture and have fun at the same time.

## Vermont's Green Industry ...\$187 Million and Growing!

Many of you, presented a survey in late 1999, sponsored by the New England Nursery Association (NENA), with support from the New England Green Industry Fund and the Horticultural Research Institute, Dr. Leonard Perry, University of Vermont, and Dr. Lutz Beck, St. Francis University of Vermont, conducted the survey. Nearly 1600 of New England's 7700 nurseries, garden centers, landscape businesses, lawn and tree care professionals, greenhouses and florists responded to the survey, providing a snapshot of the green industry. The results document the New England green industry's growth, from \$2.1 billion in 1993 to \$3.7 billion in 1999.

The State and Nature of Vermont's Green Industry. Vermont's 400 plus green industry businesses are diversified, with a combined landscape services, 65% sell retail, 39% sell wholesale, and 1% offer other sales and services. Most of the businesses are small, 40% grow under \$250,000, and only 7% grow over \$1 million in 1998.

The industry grew from 1993 to 1998, and only in size but also in number of businesses. Over 285 companies disclosed their gross income during this time, an average of \$795 per firm, and over 50 new businesses started up.

This kind of growth means jobs. More than 4,800 people worked in Vermont's green industry in 1998, with a total payroll of \$67 million. More than 1,700 of those jobs were new since 1993. The industry could have grown even more if additional

# Green Works

VERMONT NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

THE DIRT

THE VNL Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 40, Issue 3

1964 50 YEARS growing 2014

Fall Issue 2014

NEW ENERGY

# Green Works

VERMONT NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

THE DIRT

The VNL Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 36, Issue 4

Winter Issue, 2010/11

## The 2010 Green Works Industry Awards Program Winners

Raycraft/Meyer Landscape Architecture Grand Honor Award - Landscape Design/Build Commercial

Tree Works, Ltd. - Exceeds Excellence Award - Special Projects

Landscape - Exceeds Excellence Award - Landscape Design/Build/Horticulture

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VERMONT NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

THE DIRT

The VNL Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 38, Issue 3

Fall Issue, 2012

## Summer Meeting Gathering at Horsford's

# THE DIRT

Volume 47, Issue 3

# Green Works

VERMONT NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

THE DIRT

The VNL Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 36, Issue 3

Fall Issue, 2010

# THE DIRT

The News Quarterly for THE VERMONT PLANTSMEN'S ASSOCIATION, INC.

1994 SPRING

## The VPA Office Has Moved!!!

The VPA office has moved to the following address:  
The Vermont Plantsmen's Association  
P.O. Box 24  
Underhill, VT 05489  
(802) 899-3361  
Make a note of this in your records.

## The 1st Annual Flower Show is a Success!

by V.J. Comai, Flower Show Chair

On the weekend of March 5th & 6th, at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in South Burlington, months of planning and hundreds of hours of work by a group of dedicated plantsmen culminated in the success of the first annual Vermont Flower Show.

By all accounts, the show exceeded our expectations and set the foundation for it's continued success as an annual

will serve to expand and improve next year's show and will help to fund educational programs that will benefit all VPA members.

Most importantly I feel that the show heightened the professional image of our industry, something that has been and should continue to be a primary mission of the VPA.

I would like to take this opportunity to

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VERMONT NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

THE DIRT

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# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

## GABE BUSHEY, CHURCH HILL LANDSCAPES, INC

Dear VNLA members, friends, and colleagues

We are entering into a very exciting and busy time for the Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association. There are a lot of events, opportunities, and reasons to celebrate. I want to start by talking about the renewal season. Keep an eye out for those notices and you can go to the website to renew before the end of the year. With that said I would like to ask that we all make an effort to pull new members in. I think some of the items I will talk about are good selling points to give to prospective members.



This year marks the 60 th anniversary for the VNLA. That is amazing to think about. We have a unique organization. Compared to other similar entities we have a very close-knit group that works together to put on amazing events, complete volunteer projects, and support each other. We will be celebrating this milestone in several ways. This issue being one. The winter meeting will be an opportunity to reflect, and we will be promoting the flower show in conjunction with our 60 years. I feel honored to be the President of this organization especially at a time like this. I am just the most recent person taking on this role. My goal is to build on all the hard work of my predecessors and do right by the members of this organization past and present.

Speaking of the flower show. We are working hard to put the show together. We are looking for additional volunteers, donors, sponsors, and vendors. We will be building on our most successful show ever. It is a great opportunity for people to promote their businesses, help out, or just enjoy the show. Please reach out if you would like to be involved in any capacity.

There are several volunteer projects coming up. Ashley, Ralph and the rest of the VPOC committee have been doing great work to put these projects together in coordination with other VNLA members. Keep an eye out for more information for these and other future projects.

Thank you all and enjoy the rest of the landscaping season!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gabe Bushey'.

Gabe Bushey  
President, VNLA



# VNLA Turns 60: Honoring the Past, Growing the Future



It was March 2009, the opening morning of 'Child's Play', the second VT Flower Show I had designed, and I was sitting at the central display entrance about to greet visitors, when Kristina MacKulin pulled me aside and told me firmly, but with compassion, that I had broken the golden rule of leadership. That it was 'not a solo show', but I was acting like it was. I was completely mortified - it was a hard thing to hear, and I'm sure an even harder thing for her to say, but to this day it was a pivotal lesson in both my life and my career, and one for which I am immensely grateful. Because nothing in life is a solo show, and at a key moment I had forgotten. It has been my Achilles heel since I was a child - I dive so deeply into a vision, believe in it so single-mindedly that I can't let it go, can't sleep until all the details are assembled, and overcommit both myself and those that follow.

I get lost in the adrenaline rush of creating, and then burn so brightly in the false glow of pride that follows. But up to that point I'd never had someone hold up a mirror and show me that in my self-absorption I had inflicted pain on the people standing by my side, helping me every step of the way. That the dream wasn't just mine, and it wasn't a solo show. On that day I pivoted as gracefully as I could, tried to show my gratitude and some humility, and for the last 15 years have tried not repeat the same mistake.

When I was asked to write this, the prompt was to describe 'what I had contributed over so many years to the organization to make it the way it is today.' And the answer is that I didn't contribute anything, but WE did. So, let's look at what we did together during that time.



- We expanded the Flower Show to 10k SF for a fully immersive experience, with a single looping path, with scenes, stage lighting, sound and water features.
- Transitioned the Design of the show from a single designer to a group design committee
- Formed an Environmental Best Practices committee to help educate members about many of the 'new' landscape techniques and technologies surfacing in the trade in the early 2000s (green roofs, green walls, permeable pavers, rain gardens and swales, native plants, pollinator gardens, meadows, and invasive species control).
- Cooperated with the Nature Conservancy and their PlantWise program which listed plants being sold in nurseries at the time on the VT State quarantine list
- Brought in leaders in the eco-landscape movement to speak at meetings and events like Doug Tallamy, Roy Diblik, and Claudia West, as well as the next generation of writers and designers and nursery people that followed them.

There are probably other milestones, but my memory escapes me. Tim and I no longer design and install landscapes, (we've been focusing on other community-based projects where there's a connection between plants, habitats and humans) but the core lesson remains – nothing in life is a solo show, rather all life is connected in an interdependent web, from the mycorrhizae connecting trees, to the soil microbes, to the birds and bees that perch on the shrub outside your kitchen window. We must find ways to change how we use and inhabit land and shift our perspective from 'I' to 'us' in the broadest sense. It's a leap for many people, but I believe we are guests in other species' homes, not vice versa, and given the power of the pollinator movement I think we are headed in that direction.





The true magic of the VNLA is that it already operates under the ‘us’ principle - it’s a strong tribe whose members care for each other and where cooperation is embraced over competition. Tim and I continue to come to gatherings, and you graciously greet us and welcome us in, and we look forward to every conversation, handshake and hug. It is the strength of these bonds within the Association that make miracles like the Flower Show happen.



As to the future of VNLA, my wish for the membership is that you see and understand that what you create matters, not just for you but for everyone, from the selection of which species to propagate, to the landscape design, to the installation and maintenance of those landscapes. I often described to clients that their front yard is a symbol of how we see the world and how we want the world to see us. Imagine if it wasn’t a reflection of outdated Victorian symbols of status and ego but rather an intentional and elegantly modest cohabitation. Be purposeful within this ‘us’ framework, help your clients see the difference a shift in perspective can make, and together we can play an important role in how we all move forward. Make that vision as large and bold as you can and face it together. I’ll be there to help however I can.

All my gratitude,  
Becca Lindenmeyr  
VNLA President from 2010 to 2011



# VNLA Turns 60: Honoring the Past, Growing the Future

It's hard to believe that 35 years have passed since I was first introduced to The Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association which at the time was known as the Vermont Plantsmen's Association. I was a student in Plant and Soil Science at The University of Vermont and I was selected to receive the association's annual student scholarship award. That summer, following my graduation, I went to work managing the South Forty Nursery in Shelburne under the mentorship of John Padua who was leaving the position to devote his efforts full-time to his new nursery, Cobble Creek, in Monkton. I attended my first association meeting late in the summer of 1988 at Basin Harbor Club in Vergennes where about 70 members from around the state gathered for lunch and a day marked by hands-on demonstrations including how to divide perennials and establishing a wildflower meadow. Having completed my formal education at UVM, I quickly recognized that the association and its diverse membership offered a wonderful opportunity to get to know a passionate group of professionals in all facets of the industry and continue to learn from the wealth of their experiences in the industry that they freely shared with their colleagues. A number of people in attendance that day were founding members of the association who had lead the group through it's first two decades and would remain active until their retirements and beyond.

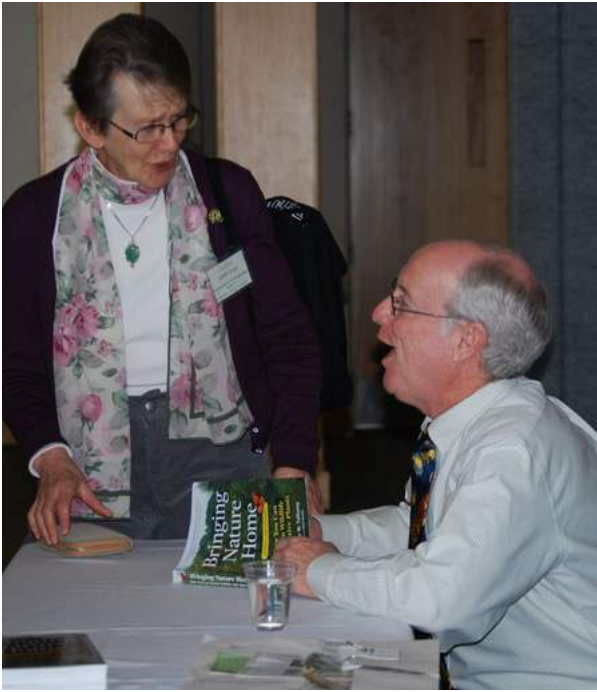
I was inspired by the shared passion and spirit of collaboration that I felt at those annual gatherings and was quickly drawn to take a more active role in the association. Within five years I had joined the Board of Directors, a role that I would serve in for eight consecutive years and would return to more than a decade later for several more, including serving 4 years as president. Throughout my years on the board and as an active member, the association grew and evolved going through two name changes and a number of different boards and leaders, and members have come and gone. The group took on new initiatives and changed its focus a number of times with varying levels of success. But, the constant throughout it all has been that shared passion and spirit of cooperation that is still the driving force of the association that we all benefit from today.

Nothing exemplifies this better than the biennial Vermont Flower Show. The association has sponsored a flower show throughout most of it six decades in existence and that show took on many different forms over the years. The foundation for our current day flower show has its roots in the early 1990's.

For several years during the late 80's and early 90's, the Flower Show was held in the University Mall in South Burlington over three days in mid-March. The association would solicit members to exhibit at the show and exhibitors would pay a registration fee to







the association for their small, typically 10ft. by 10ft. space in the Mall where they could promote their products and services. The mall did not charge the association for the space as they saw it as an opportunity to draw in more shoppers. As a result, the association found the show to be profitable, netting several thousand dollars with minimal expenses to promote the show.

Over the course of several years, interest in exhibiting at the mall fell significantly and as a new board member who was tasked with chairing the show, I was challenged to find enough willing exhibitors to make the show as profitable as it had been in the past. In conversations with past exhibitors I learned that many felt that they did not realize a worthwhile

benefit from their significant investment of time and materials to exhibit at the show due to the lack of a 'captive' audience. They felt that the vast majority of show attendees were just incidental shoppers or mall walkers who were not there because they were interested in the products and services that they had to offer.

To address this issue, a group of us got together to brainstorm ideas to revitalize the show as the association had come to depend on the annual income. We also saw it as an opportunity to raise the public perception of our profession which would ultimately benefit our entire membership. To address the problem of attracting a 'captive' audience we decided to utilize an empty store space in the mall to offer a small number of short seminars on gardening topics throughout the weekend and would invest more money in advertising and promoting the show. In addition, we recognized that very few business had the resources and employees in March to devote to creating an exhibit that would inspire show attendees with a welcome early burst of spring but if we pooled our resources and worked together we could create something pretty special.







That first 'modern day' flower show set the stage for the biannual show that we see today. The small core group of association members that planned and constructed that display through the night were rewarded and inspired when the public responded with a noticeable increase in mall traffic that weekend and well attended 'Garden Talks' in our makeshift classroom. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Inspired by what we saw over the course of that weekend our group met in the food court of the Mall late on Sunday afternoon and began to dream big. We realized that we were onto something and with the participation of a greater number of our members we could grow this show into something truly special.



In writing this, I am suddenly feeling old realizing that when I attend VNLA events there are likely a significant number of attendees who see those of us who have been around for several decades as the 'old guard'. But the gatherings continue to inspire me and I really look forward to catching up with old friends and I always come away with new information and the satisfaction that comes with being part of a group that is working toward the common good. The continued success and growth of the VNLA will rely on the willingness of members old and new to come forward and take a more active role as everyone has something of value to offer. Speaking from personal experience I can confidently say that I have received far more personally and professionally than I ever gave to this association and I look forward to watching the evolution of this dynamic group in the years to come.



VJ Comai  
VNLA President from 2012 to 2015





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# VNLA Turns 60: Honoring the Past, Growing the Future



I came to Vermont full time in 1992 when I bought Evergreen Gardens in Waterbury Center. It had fallen into disrepair and sales were declining. But at one point in the past, it had been owned by 4 Seasons in Burlington and Oliver Gardner was a member of the Vermont Plantsmen Assoc., the precursor of VAPH. That membership was still there when I came along and we thought it was a good thing to continue it. Turned out to be a major benefit for me personally since I had never run a business, had no experience with a greenhouse or retailing and needed to learn on the fly. The contacts afforded by membership were an essential part of that learning process.

Because the garden center needed so much work and I am by nature a do-it-yourselfer, I had no time to participate in the organization other than the annual meeting in Rutland and summer meetings at members facilities. We also started to take a booth at the flower show at the Sheraton since I wanted Evergreen Gardens to get exposure to the broader audience which attended the show. After a couple of years, I started to volunteer with the setup and take down of the show. At that point I was still in my sixties and able to do physical work.

After selling Evergreen Gardens in 2002, notwithstanding starting up Shaw Hill Nursery at home, it just seemed right to give back to the organization once i had some time available. Shortly after being recruited to the Board of Directors, Dave Boucher resigned as Treasurer and I was asked to fill in for the remainder of his term.

In 2003, the Flower Show suffered a major loss and VAPH, the precursor of VNLA, was out of money and membership was declining. We also lost confidence in the current Secretary. It was a time of survival and I like to think I had some part in bringing it through a period of crisis. The CPA firm of one of our members agreed to analyze the messed up accounting records pro bono and also provided needed guidance to me in my role as Treasurer. We had our own CPA firm but I had dismissed them due to excessive cost and their delays in processing our tax returns. I suppose the firm hoped to get us as a client but I had already secured a lower cost individual who satisfied our needs. To their credit there was never any pressure to consider hiring them in return for their service.



At that time, with what I'd call "loose" accounting and before credit cards, iPads and cell phones were used for transactions, a lot of cash was still being used. at the flower show. We had volunteer cashiers, cigar boxes for the money and just hoped everyone knew what they were doing and were honest. I developed a series of controls with a paper trail for cash control with written instructions for cashiers Next, I acquired registers which could be programmed with single function keys to track sales by category and could be reconciled back to the actual cash receipts. I also insisted that people carrying cash were always escorted by a committee member.

But from my corporate experience, I knew that with declining membership we couldn't survive just by cutting costs, we had to increase to the top line (revenue). We called members for extra donations and held a special meeting to push through an increase in dues to fill the deficit. It was clear that the long term effort had to be an increase in membership.

I spent several weeks along with others, travelling around the state and sitting down with members to find out what they felt mattered and how the organization could provide value for their dues money.

Along the way, I undertook a major renovation of our By-Laws in 2005. They were barely unchanged since the inception of VPA in the 1960's. I had my own ideas but refined them a review by all our living past Presidents who had the experience of running the organization and who might see flaws in what I wrote. And yes, they found some. Tim Parsons really got the ball moving to increase membership. We met with a marketing firm in Burlington to revise and modernize our image, communications and web site.

I was just along for the ride in that effort, supporting as necessary as treasurer. But we also started an outreach to provide more value for members in the southern part of Vermont. I took a couple of board members and we visited potential sites and lobbied for help with the Chamber of Commerce in Manchester culminating in staging a flower/garden show at the ice rink there. No heat in the building so i borrowed space heaters from the Agency of Ag and hauled them downstate. It was a great effort for a first try but weather was against us and results were hardly breakeven. No question though that a good time was had by all. After Tim's term was up, he and others pressured me to run for President, but I declined. As I mentioned before, I'm a worker, not a leader. I found that out toward the end of my corporate career and did not want to be a caretaker and slow down progress which was already gaining momentum.

About that time, I set up a twilight meeting at a client's home in Stowe. For years, we had an auction at our summer meetings. When the long-time auctioneer retired, we switched to a silent auction. The results were so bad that something had to change. After searching online, I deciphered the essential elements of an auctioneer's chant and volunteered to try it. Never achieved the fast babble of a pro, but had a whole lot of fun doing it. Back in Burlington, Sandy Anderson took the lead to move the Flower Show from the Sheraton to the EXPO and as it got larger it became more of a burden on several of the key players. There was a move to cancel the flower shoe entirely as just too much to handle. We needed the revenue but we were exhausted by the effort.

I spent several weeks along with others, travelling around the state and sitting down with members to find out what they felt mattered and how the organization could provide value for their dues money.

I spent time with the VT Home Builders Assoc. to see if we could combine with their Home Show. The problem was that the part that took the most effort was the part that only we could do. Ultimately, we settled on changing to a biennial schedule hoping that our market wouldn't desert us. In retrospect I think the year off actually stimulated more interest from the public. As for our members, after two years it was easy to forget all the stress and just remember how much fun it was.

After my terms in office ran out, I continued volunteering for the central display but always had this feeling that there should be more interactive things to do at the show rather than just walking around to view the central display and exhibitors. We already had the children's room and a popular series of seminars and talks. After the 2003 debacle, I drove to Boston and met with their show director for a personal tour the day before it opened to find out how they had survived a major setback a year or two earlier. I got the idea there about putting on cooking demos which were always well received.

That led to many years of coaxing chefs to come to the show for no pay, just the exposure for their restaurant. Probably the most time consuming effort of anything I've done for VNLA. The first year I

staged the demos in the main hall at the EXPO and had to line up a theater lighting specialist to mitigate the eerie color from the mercury vapor overhead lighting. After realizing that during each demo session, the vendors next to the stage were basically out of business, I moved future demos to the Blue Ribbon pavilion.

One year there was a veggie garden section in the central display and I made raised beds and arranged for the growing of a large variety of produce. Frequently I potted up a rhubarb plant in a 25 gal. pot a year in advance and forced it in my greenhouse. After that I continued to arrange for the veggie growing as needed.

My wife Carol was active in the Stowe Theater Guild. I was not into the arts but got roped into building stage sets which I did for many years. For the first year at the EXPO, I utilized about a dozen flats as background for Sarah Salatino's alpine garden and ever since then I've arranged to borrow theater pieces for our shows to "bulld" all sorts of structures. This year when the Theater Guild ran out of storage space, I managed for them to donate about a dozen flats to VNLA for our future use.





In 2017, I contacted some clivia growers around Vermont and staged an exhibit in the Blue Ribbon pavilion. Had about 35 plants in full bloom representing different colors and blossom types. The next show I shared a booth with Full Circle Gardens to exhibit and sell some of my more unusual clivia varieties. That probably was the last time I could physically move all that stuff as my back deteriorated.

I spent 30 years in the corporate world before coming to Vermont and have only one or two friends from that era. Now, in the horticultural world, I can count many friends most of which are the result of my activity in VNLA. It is such a wonderful, sharing community. All that I've achieved here was after I "retired"; and made myself available. If you don't like Vermont, you can retire and move to Florida, but if you're staying here consider service to VNLA as your retirement project. It can be a very rewarding chapter in your career.

David Loysen  
VNLA Treasurer from 2003 to 2007



I am thankful to the VNLA for the high-quality speakers they bring to the two annual meetings, for the educational opportunities of the twilight meetings, and for the great knowledge sharing among its members. I am also grateful for the awards programs.

Charlie Proutt, Horsford Gardens and Nursery.  
VNLA Member

# Welcome New VNLA Members!

We are thrilled to welcome our newest members to our organization! Please join us in extending a very warm welcome to:

- Natasha Horak
- Kristina Stykos
- Maggi Sullivan-Towers
- Cyrus Benoit
- Brian Cota
- Greg Berger
- Andrew Knafel
- Rachel Grigorian
- Mary and Tim Shields
- Evan Guerra
- Adam George

We're excited to have such a diverse group of passionate individuals join our community. Your expertise and enthusiasm will contribute greatly to our mission of supporting and promoting the horticultural industry in Vermont.

Be sure to connect with each other at our upcoming events and meetings. Welcome aboard, and here's to a fruitful and fulfilling journey together!



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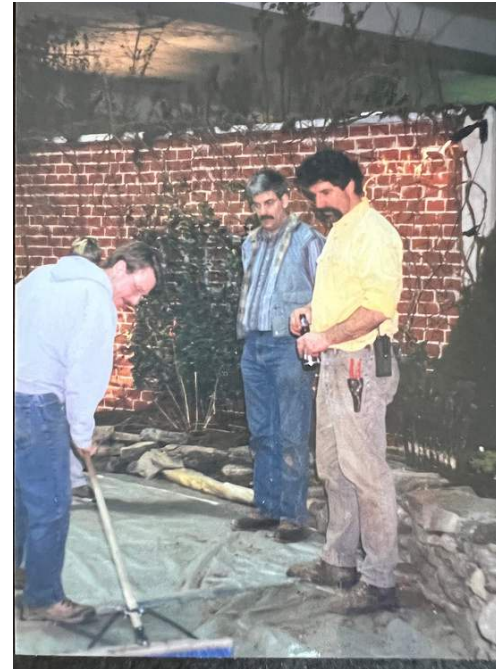




# A Story of Gardening – The 2025 Vermont Flower Show & a Bit of History!

Congratulations to the VNLA on its 60th year as a trade association servicing the horticulture professionals and their industry here in Vermont and beyond! A lot has changed since 1964 but one thing that has remained a constant over these 60 years has been a dedicated group of professionals brainstorming how to showcase their industry and its members through an organized event – the Vermont Flower Show.

**A Flower Show Flash From the Past!** In looking back over the *History of the VNLA* written by Dr. Norman Pellett in 2005 records show the first organizational meetings were held at the autumn Chrysanthemum Show that was hosted by the Commercial Flower Growers of VT. Records also show that an annual flower show was held in Burlington in October of 1967 and in November of 1968 in Middlebury. Further shows then evolved into a spring show in the 60's and 70's being held in the old Burlington Municipal Auditorium, at the Essex Junction ice skating rink and at the Armory in Berlin. In 1993 the Association put on "The Lawn and Garden Show" at the University Mall in S. Burlington from 1985 through 1993. Principal organizers at the time, Andrea Morgante, John Padua, and V.J. Comai, remain a part of the show today – remarkable!



In 1994 the newly named first ever Annual Flower Show was held at the Sheraton Hotel in S. Burlington where the concept of a central display was built by Association volunteers through volunteer work and many donations. That first show attracted 4,300 people. By 2001 some 16,000 attended the show over three days. My first affiliation with the show was in 1996 when I was brought in to consult by Chris Conant of Claussen's and other committee members. Over these many years, Claussen's has been an integral force in the implementation of the Flower Show and their dedication to this event continues and knows no bounds.

Eventually the show began to outgrow the Sheraton and in 2006 moved to the Champlain Valley Exposition in Essex Junction, VT. Here the show thrived, grew and in 2009 became a biennial show. With the help of a management firm, a chairperson, and the many, many volunteers and in-kind and monetary donations the Association received over these next years, the Vermont Flower Show has flourished into a much-anticipated event that attracts visitors from all other New England and Canada. The show had a 4-year hiatus due to the COVID pandemic – a trying time for us all. In 2023 we again opened the doors and welcomed just over 13,000 people to the 2023 show – Out of Hibernation. Spring Comes to the 100-Acre Wood. It was magical!

A very committed group of VNLA members and associates spearhead this work every show with the help of two VOLUNTEER committees and they create a masterpiece each time. There is no other flower show like this where a team of people come together to design and build a 14,000

square foot themed landscaped display. Our show celebrates the spirit of Vermont and what a dedicated group of people can accomplish together! This show celebrates what the VNLA was founded on - collaboration and enthusiasm to an industry that has grown into what it is today! Now the next show is upon us.

**The 2025 Show!** The 2025 Vermont Flower Show will be held March 7-9, 2025 and the theme is A Story of Gardening which will represent gardening through the ages as we humans learn from the past and cultivate our own gardens and plant for the future. Folks will meander through an English Cottage Garden, Zen Garden, Medieval, Islamic and Victory gardens. The Display Committee has been hard at work over the last 12 months developing the design which will be nothing short of spectacular!



The bulbs are being planted at Claussen's for forcing, the trees and shrubs donations have begun and the Flower Show Committees are meeting monthly in organizing the many details it takes to bring this show to life (these are amazing and devoted people)! There are many tasks ahead and multiple ways to contribute, participate and get involved. The VNLA continues to produce this show so they can offer their members and associates a variety of ways to get join in and promote their businesses. Please read on to see how YOU can be involved!



### **Become an Exhibitor!**

There is still plenty of time to become an exhibitor in case you have been thinking about it but been too busy to sign up yet! There are 97 booth spaces available in the Flower Show Marketplace and to-date about ½ are sold. VNLA members receive a discount.

### **Become a Sponsor!**

Another great avenue to support the show is to become a cash sponsor. There are many levels to choose from and perks that go along with those levels. Of particular interest and one of the most visible ways to market your business is to become a Tote Bag/Seed Packet Sponsor.

### **Become a Presenter at the Show!**

The Flower Show Committee is currently working on the seminar and demonstration workshop schedule for the show. We have 40 spaces to fill! If you are interested in being a speaker or doing a demonstration workshop, please contact [cheryl.vtflowershow@gmail.com](mailto:cheryl.vtflowershow@gmail.com). It is a great opportunity to showcase your talents!

### **Donate to the Show!**

The Vermont Flower Show depends on the very generous in-kind donations of VNLA members and associates to produce this show. These donations include shrubs, trees, perennials to force, hardscape materials, and equipment. We will be collecting plants in late October – early November. If you have heavy equipment you can lend for show set-up, please reach out. If you



are interested in donating and/or would like to see a list of what we are looking for please contact Gabe Bushey, VNLA President and co-chair of the Garden Display Committee ([gabe.w.bushey@gmail.com](mailto:gabe.w.bushey@gmail.com)) or Kristina MacKulin, member of the Vermont Flower Show Committee ([kristina@vnlavt.org](mailto:kristina@vnlavt.org)).

### **Volunteer for the Committee, Display Building, Show Staffing and Clean-Up!**

As the season begins to wind down a bit and you find you might have a bit of time come join us at a Flower Show Committee meeting which meets monthly. Contact Gabe Bushey for more information. As March draws near, we will be looking for volunteers to help build the show, staff the show, and clean up! Contact Gabe or Kristina if you want to add your name to any of these lists! We will be seeking help with set-up of the Grand Garden Display (Tuesday-Thursday evening – March 4-6), help in staffing the show, including the VNLA booth (Friday – Sunday – March 7-9), OR help the CLEAN-UP CREW Sunday evening and Monday. You can let us know at any time if you might be able to help in these areas!

### **Why the VNLA Does This Show!**

It's fun, its collaboration at its best and it speaks to what the VNLA is truly all about as the Association celebrates 60 years as a trade association. It is all about inspiring the future stewards of the earth - one flower show at a time, one plant at a time, one landscape at a time. You get the picture. The benefits of producing a flower show are many and far reaching. Each show promotes every VNLA member, our Association as a collective group, and the green industry in Vermont and beyond. The Vermont Flower Show is an elaborate event that inspires, educates, and entertains people of all ages and speaks to what a dedicated group of professionals can create and implement in the dead of Winter!

Through this signature event, the VNLA markets the Association, its members

and associates statewide and beyond through television, radio, print and social media platforms. It continues to be the VNLA mission to enhance and support the horticulture industry of Vermont as well as promote a greater awareness to the public of YOU – their green industry professionals that offer plants, products, and services. The Vermont Flower Show offers up a spectacular way to send that message home with the thousands of people who attend the show.

**COME JOIN US AND GET INVOLVED! In the meantime, Happy 60th VNLA. It has been a great journey so far!**

By Kristina MacKulin, past VNLA Executive Director and Flower Show Committee Member





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# Under the Lens

Late season pests and diseases are showing up on landscape trees and shrubs. **Magnolia scale** (*Neolecanium cornuparvum*) is often detected this time of year due to build up of black sooty mold on the magnolia bark and foliage. The black fungus causes no real harm to the tree but grows on the sticky excrement (nicely called 'honeydew') of the magnolia scale. Magnolia scale is a soft scale insect that attacks only magnolia trees including the popular star magnolia (*Magnolia stellata*) and saucer magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangiana*). There are two types

of scale insects-soft scales and armored scales. All scale insects have 'piercing sucking' mouthparts that remove sap from their hosts. Soft scales are usually larger than the armored scale, are often covered by a waxy secretion and produce honeydew. Armored scales, like oystershell scales, have a hard protective covering and do not produce honeydew. The magnolia scale adults are shiny brown, elliptical and convex, and can grow to ½ inch in length and are often mistaken for plant buds because of their size.

When populations are high, scale feeding can cause yellowing of the leaves, twig dieback and overall decline in the health of the magnolia. By early to mid-summer, the large female scales turn brown/purple in color and develop a white, waxy coating that disappears later in the summer. They continue to enlarge through July and give birth to the 'crawler' or nymphal stage in late summer (late August) into early fall (through September) depending on temperatures. The crawlers can be seen with a hand lens. After producing the crawlers, the female dies, although the scale covering may remain on the tree. The time to treat the infestation is when the crawlers are active from late August through September since this stage is the most vulnerable to insecticides. Adult scales are typically protected from chemicals due to their waxy coating. The crawlers can be treated organically with horticultural oil or insecticidal soap. Thorough coverage with these products is critical since they need to contact the crawler to kill them. Multiple applications may be necessary because these materials do not have any residual activity. Always consult the label of the product you are using for timing of additional sprays.

The crawlers continue to remain active until they settle on a feeding site on the branches where they remain for the winter. There is only one generation of this pest each year. Controlling scale infestations can be challenging. Scout your trees every summer and fall to control emerging infestations. Keep trees in good vigor through proper watering, mulching, and pruning of dead or infested branches since stressed trees can be more prone to attack by scale. Over fertilization can promote the build-up of scale populations so avoid excess nitrogen. If the scale insects are limited to a couple of branches, prune out and destroy those branches to eliminate the infestation. Organic dormant oil sprays can be applied to the overwintering insects in early spring before the buds open. In severe infestations, it may take a few years of fall applications for the crawler stage and dormant sprays to clean up the population.



Large female magnolia scale in September on magnolia. Photo Anika Adams

**Lilac leaf blight (*Pseudocercospora* sp.)** has been very noticeable around the state on mature lilacs causing blighting and early defoliation. The symptoms of the fungus disease start as brown spots on the leaves that begin at the edges. As the infection progresses, the spots can coalesce and cause leaves to curl and eventually drop. The fungus is favored by rainy or humid weather. Although it may look like your lilacs are dying, if you scratch just under the bark near the end of a twig and still see green and if the terminal buds for next year are obvious, the plant should be fine in the spring. Over several years of defoliation, however, the plant may be weakened. Rake and destroy infected leaves in the fall and thin the plant during winter to improve air circulation. Fungicides are rarely warranted but can be applied as protectants before the infection begins.

Lace bugs (Family Tingidae) were identified causing damage on serviceberries (*Amelanchier* sp.) in August. Both the adult and immature lace bugs (nymphs) feed on the undersides of leaves of many different deciduous trees and shrubs. There are over 125 different North American species of lace bugs, most with a different host preference including azalea, hackberry, walnut, oak, willow, chokecherry, hawthorn, plane tree, elm, basswood and fringe tree, among others. These sucking pests tend to leave a “messy battlefield” as Dr. Gordon Neilsen, late UVM Entomologist, used to say, meaning their shiny black frass or excrement creates a mess on the leaf undersides. The adults range from 1/8 to 3/8 inches long and have wings and a thorax with a pattern of veins that looks like lace. The nymphs are dark, spiny and are pointed at both ends.



Brown spots caused by lilac leaf blight. Note healthy terminal buds indicating growth potential next spring. Photo: Ann Hazelrigg

Female lace bugs lay groups of pale eggs usually along the midrib on the underside of leaves. The dark spiny nymphs hatch and go through 5-6 instars before becoming adults. The complete life cycle takes about a month or so and there may be several generations each year. Some species overwinter as eggs in the leaf or bark crevices while other species overwinter as adults.

Lace bug feeding damage causes white stippling and bronzing on the upper leaf surface but does not normally affect the health of plants. However, if leaves are heavily infested, the leaves may turn yellow and drop. Although lace bug management is normally not necessary, an azalea lace bug infestation on evergreen azaleas may require control since the loss of leaves on these plants can have a more serious impact. In general, keeping up the vigor of plants will help them withstand the damage. In severe cases, especially earlier in the summer, horticultural oil, insecticidal soap or neem can be used to manage the populations.



Cherry Lacebug adult on leaf undersides. Photo Paul Bachi, University of Kentucky Research Center

If you have a pest or disease question send pictures to [ann.hazelrigg@uvm.edu](mailto:ann.hazelrigg@uvm.edu) or send a sample to the UVM Plant Diagnostic Clinic. PDC website: <https://www.uvm.edu/extension/pdc>. Article written by Ann Hazelrigg, UVM Extension



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

Our sympathies go out to all of the growers and others who were affected by the July flooding. It is especially heartbreaking following all of the dramatic weather events from 2023, from which people were finally beginning to recover. Impacted Vermonters can find resources and referrals by visiting <https://Vermont.Gov/Flood>. The Vermont Ag Bulletin has some good information on flood response resources as well.

On a more positive note, congratulations to Jas Darland, Kristina MacKulin, the VNLA Board and Cobble Creek for a very successful summer VNLA meeting. It was a beautiful setting with excellent speakers and delicious food.

## Regulatory Updates:

182- The Neonicotinoid Pesticide Prohibition - What it is and how it will affect the regulated community

Following on the heels of similar legislation in New York, H.706, ***An act relating to banning the use of neonicotinoid pesticides***, was passed by the Vermont Legislature during the 2024 session as Act 182.

As enacted, Act 182 prohibits the sale, distribution, and use of neonicotinoid treated article seeds for soybeans and the cereal grain crops which includes corn, millet, oats, rice, rye, wheat, barley, among others, and the outdoor application of neonicotinoid pesticides to these crops; any outdoor applications to a plant during bloom; outdoor applications to crops that are harvested after bloom that are leafy vegetables, brassica, bulb vegetables, herbs and spices, and stalk, stem, and leaf petiole vegetables, and any application to ornamental plants.



Figure 1 . Treated seed, photo by Jessica Tessier, VAAFM

The result of these provisions is that, upon going into effect, corn and soybean seeds (along with other crops) treated with neonicotinoid insecticides cannot be planted in Vermont. Growers producing these crops will have to obtain untreated seed or seed treated with an insecticide other than neonicotinoids. In addition, neonicotinoid insecticides cannot be used on ornamental plants or some vegetable crops harvested after bloom. The Agency will continue to register, as a state restricted use pesticide, any neonicotinoid pesticide labeled as approved for outdoor use that is distributed, sold, sold into, or offered for sale within Vermont, unless the use of the neonicotinoid pesticide is prohibited under Act 182 which includes neonicotinoid seed treatments, and pesticides used only on ornamental plants.

Act 182 does enable the Secretary, however, to suspend provisions related to both prohibitions when certain conditions are met. For example, the Secretary may issue exemption orders for the use of treated article seeds provided the applicant completes an IPM training accepted by the Agency, the applicant submits a pest risk assessment to VAAFM, and the authorized seeds are only planted on property or properties described in the pest risk assessment. The Secretary may

also issue an exemption order the use of neonicotinoid pesticides upon a determination that an environmental emergency or agricultural emergency exists. The Agency would have to determine that the pesticide would be effective in addressing the emergency, and no other, less harmful pesticide or pest management practice would be effective. Neither exemption may exceed one year.

The prohibition related to the use of neonicotinoid pesticides becomes effective on July 1, 2025, and the prohibition related to neonicotinoid treated article seed on January 1, 2029. Of note, however, the effective dates are contingent on New York's similar law being in effect at those times. Further, Act 182 provides that in the event New York's law is repealed, so are the prohibitions provided in Act 182.

For further information please contact Steve Dwinell, [Steve.Dwinell@vermont.gov](mailto:Steve.Dwinell@vermont.gov), or leave a message at 802-828-1732.

### Opportunity to Comment on Canadian Import Regulations for Spotted Lanternfly

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency, CFIA, informed the USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of their 60-days consultation on a new directive D-24-01: Spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) – domestic and import phytosanitary requirements ending October 25. The directive at <https://inspection.canada.ca/en/about-cfia/transparency/consultations-and-engagement/spotted-lanternfly-directive> outlines phytosanitary requirements to prevent the importation and spread of spotted lanternfly including specific domestic and import requirements for nursery stock and logs of deciduous species with bark.

Please share CFIA's website link with your industry as well for comments. If they would like to include their comments in the APHIS comment package, please submit them to Fan Wang-Cahill ([fan.wang-cahill@usda.gov](mailto:fan.wang-cahill@usda.gov)) by October 4, 2024, or submit comments directly to CFIA at [cfia-ias\\_acia-eee@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:cfia-ias_acia-eee@inspection.gc.ca) and copy Fan by October 25, 2024.

### Noxious Weed and Plant Pest Stop Sales:

This summer VAAFM Plant Health staff have stopped sales for 7 species of introduced weeds that are either listed in the Vermont Noxious Weed Quarantine or have been newly designated as plant pests by the Secretary of the Agency. These include Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) and burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*) which are VT Class B noxious weeds; water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*, aka *Ponderia crassipes*) and wineberry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*), both newly designated plant pests. All of the plants were destroyed. We appreciate the cooperation from the nurseries involved.



Figure 2. Wings and characteristic red foliage and berries of burning bush, *Euonymus alata*. Photo courtesy Jennafohr, CC BY-NC, iNaturalist



These plants came from both Canadian and US suppliers. Please make sure that you, your buyers and suppliers all have copies of the VT Noxious Weed list, available on the VAAFM website.

Online catalogues do not always have the prohibited weed list for each state programmed in. It is the responsibility of the nursery to make sure you do not buy any prohibited plants. This year VAAFM designated 8 plant species as VT Plant Pests; be sure your staff and suppliers are familiar with this list too. The 8 designated plant pest species are wineberry, porcelain berry, kudzu, mile-a-minute, Japanese stiltgrass, waterwheel, water soldier and water hyacinth.

### Plant Health Updates:

The wet weather from 2023 has enhanced conditions suitable for disease proliferation. The rain from last year into this year has resulted in some root rots such as *Pythium* spp., *Phytophthora* spp., *Rhizoctonia solani*, and *Fusarium*. Consistently humid conditions have caused a lot of powdery mildew, which is typical of late season humid summers. Beech leaf disease has been reported from over 40 towns in VT to date.



Figure 4. Characteristic larval feeding pattern on elm.  
Photo by Judy Rosovsky, VAAFM.

In the introduced insect world, USDA Plant Protection and Quarantine decided not to regulate elm zigzag sawfly (*Aproceros leucopoda*). In Vermont this insect has caused severe defoliation to Siberian elms (*Ulmus pumila*) but not much damage has been seen on American elms (*U. americana*). The emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) continues to surface in more VT towns, and we've had our first (dead) spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) hitchhiker confirmed report this fall.

Please report any Tree-of-Heaven, *Ailanthus altissima*, that you see. The Agency of Natural Resources has a map of a selection of introduced species in VT, see the link at <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/4a3efe4febd24254947e600372793632/page/Elm-Zigzag-Sawfly/> or find the map and more information on all of these species and report them at [www.VTInvasives.org](http://www.VTInvasives.org)

Enjoy the fall!

Article Written by: Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFM) Public Health and Resource Management Division Plant Health Team.



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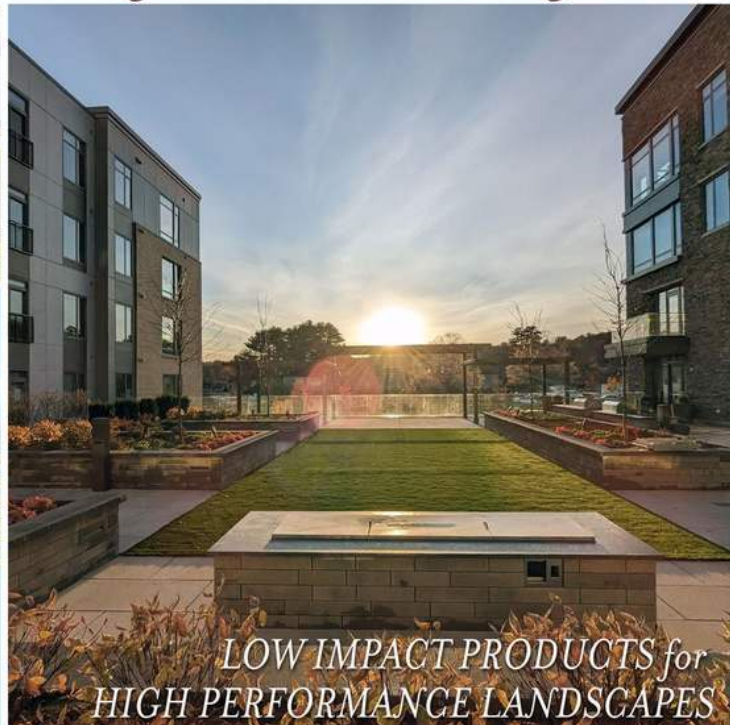
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# Betting on Biologicals to Stem the Tide of Pesticide Use in Greenhouse Ornamentals: What Some Vermont Growers Have to Say

The greenhouse environment is great for growing plants, but it is also great for growing their pests. Over the past 25 years, scientists at the UVM Entomology Research Laboratory (ERL) have been working with growers of greenhouse ornamentals to encourage them to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies, like biocontrol (Fig. 1), to avoid the need to apply chemical pesticides. A LOT has changed over the years. Biocontrol agents are more readily available and of better quality; chemical pesticides are not as effective; a neonicotinoid ban in VT is coming into effect soon; and customers prefer plants grown without them.



We recently spoke with a few growers with whom we have worked over the years who use biocontrol to learn a thing or two about why they use it, and what they like and don't like about it. This should help growers decide if biocontrol is right for them. Here's what the growers had to say:

**Walker Farm (Dummerston)** has been a family operation since 1770. Over the years the farm has evolved to provide a wide diversity of specialty crops from conifers to certified organic vegetables. They have used biocontrol for over 15 years. Jack Manix told us "We love biocontrol and using beneficials because, first, no one likes to spray with the hazardous chemicals unless absolutely necessary, and second, many of the bad bugs have built up a resistance to certain classes of chemicals. For example, Spinosad used to control thrips 100%, but has virtually no effect on them now". Jack brings up a great point because pests don't have much resistance when it comes to being attacked by a biocontrol agent. "The only problem with biocontrol, and it is no problem if you have the right people working for you who are good at scouting. If you fail to scout consistently, the bad guys can get out of hand and then it is often too late for beneficials and a spray is needed. Once you get your scouts trained and on the job on a regular basis, the biocontrol's are very effective".

**Claussen's Florist, Greenhouse & Perennial Farm (Colchester)** is the state's largest producer of greenhouse ornamentals. Established in 1972, Claussen's started dabbling with biocontrol in their production in 2009. Now, almost 100% of their crops are treated using biologicals as the first line of defense. Chris Conant said "Through the diligent and hardworking commitment of our growing staff we have been able to reduce our company's chemical use by almost 98% over the past 15 years. This obviously has a significant impact not only on the exposure and safety of our staff, our customers, and of course our environment, but also directly relates to the protection and health of the pollinator population in VT".

Fig. 1. An aphid infestation turned into 'mummies' after they were parasitized by the wasp *Aphidius*.

Given that Claussen's has 500,000 sq ft of production space, that's quite an accomplishment and it indeed does take a dedicated staff to make biocontrol work. Lori King is the head of Claussen's IPM Program. She received the Northeast IPM Center's Outstanding Achievements in IPM Award in 2022 for her tireless efforts. In addition to her IPM tasks, Lori provides annual grower tours to discuss their newest trend in biocontrol use (i.e., banker plants – plants that rear natural enemies) and to share what works and what doesn't. Lori said "I like to use banker plants (Fig. 2) because once established, there is a constant supply of fresh predators searching the greenhouses. The banker baskets are also a wonderful educational tool for the customers because they have informational signs hanging from them. I'm always trying to educate the public about biocontrols and this gives me a chance to talk with the customers."



Fig. 2. A banker plant system consisting of alyssum used to rear the predatory bug *Orius* at Claussen's.

Lori also says biocontrols have some limitations on specific crops "With the foliage that comes up from Florida, there are pests that we don't have biocontrol for here in New England.

Cuban laurel thrips and scale are a couple that we don't have any good biocontrol for here". This is further complicated by the overuse of chemicals within states where purchases of large volumes mature interior plant material originate. They ship along 'pesticide resistant' pests. Within IPM, pesticides (regardless of their chemistry) are used as a last resort when all other strategies fail if a significant problem pops up that jeopardizes the crop. Chris emphasizes "we work very hard to find alternative controls with our suppliers of biocontrols and chemical manufacturers to provide a "soft" and "non-toxic" approach to fight the toughest insects that could potentially devastating to our crops."

In general, producing "certified organic" greenhouse ornamentals is a struggle because a lot of the plant material originates from out-of-state as rooted cuttings from conventionally managed (pesticide-based) greenhouses. However, once plants land in Julie Rubaud's greenhouses at **Red Wagon Plants (Hinesburg)**, they are grown organically. Julie and her team strive to achieve a "balanced ecosystem where good bugs do battle with bad bugs". Julie uses biocontrols "because they work really well and we have not had to use insecticides as a result. The environmental cost and human health benefits are the main reason we want to avoid chemicals." When it comes down to specific pesticide chemistries, Julie said "we would never use neonicotinoids. We are certified organic and don't even use organically approved insecticides because we try to work only with beneficials".

**Honey Field Farm (Norwich)** produces greenhouse ornamentals and certified organic vegetables. They made the upfront commitment to be a neonicotinoid-free farm since launching



in 2020. Valerie Woodhouse said “we vet all of the companies we get seed or plant stock from to ensure that none of our products have been treated with neonicotinoids”. Valerie jumped right into biocontrol and realized there is a learning curve with their use. Developing a biocontrol program that works for each unique operation takes time, trial and error and a support team (other growers, University specialists, biocontrol and pesticide suppliers) to help devise a program that’s effective in cost and control. When asked about challenges, Valerie mentioned “as we’re still developing our biocontrol systems while bringing in plant stock from other growers in the spring, we sometimes catch issues once they are beyond what biocontrols can address. We’ve mainly seen this for ornamental crops with aphids. Rather than lose crops from insect damage or having to throw out ornamentals, we still resort to organic, neonicotinoid-free sprays if that’s what it takes to salvage a crop. We hope to dial in our biocontrols and scouting to reduce our need to take these measures in the future.”

The choice for Danielle Norris to commit to using primarily biocontrol at **Greenhaven Gardens & Nursery (New Haven)** was easy when she returned to the family business after graduating college in 2018. She said “I’m super grateful to the greenhouse managers before us that took the initiative to work closely with the UVM ERL and create the basis for our current program. Our job now is to continue education and adapt our program constantly.” Cat Winslow is the IPM Specialist. She said that using biocontrols (Fig. 3) “allows us to operate from a preventative standpoint rather than diagnostic treatment of issues, and to feel good about our customer and employee safety relative to chemical pesticides.



Fig. 3. Predatory mite sachets used for thrips management on calibrachoa hanging baskets at Greenhaven Gardens.

Our customers are inquisitive about our practices and concerned with the impacts of harsh pesticides, so our IPM program is something we are eager and proud to discuss with them as a selling point for our greenhouse crops. By using biocontrols, we also avoid developing resistance in pest populations so if we absolutely have to use them to save a crop, the pesticide is hopefully more effective.”

Regarding biocontrol limitations, the only one they have are aphids on calibrachoa, as do numerous other growers struggle. The ‘go to’ aphid predatory wasps perform rather poorly on this crop and hanging baskets that are high up allow outbreaks to be missed during scouting. To solve this, Cat said “we trialed treating our calibrachoa crop with Mainspring (a noenicotinoid alternative) and found it to be effective at preventatively controlling aphids while not harming our existing biocontrols that work exceptionally well on all of our other crops. We plan to include this product in our IPM program moving forward for our calibrachoas where the biocontrols fall short”.

One IPM tactic was the common thread among all these operations: SCOUTING. That is the key to a successful biocontrol program. In addition to the remark from Jack Manix, above, others have the following to say:

“Scouting usually happens every week. We do get busy and may not have time to scout from time to time, but if you are using biocontrols, scouting is a must! We spend a lot of time going over the new crop while it’s all together, placing flags in plants that have any pest. Detecting the problems early is key to good biocontrol and if you don’t scout regularly, you will miss those small areas where the problem starts, and you can react before it spreads”. – Lori King

“We scout every greenhouse once a week and order and release beneficials based on what we see when we are scouting. We also order certain beneficials on a schedule for dipping plug trays that we receive from outside sources”. – Julie Rubaud

“We religiously scout all incoming plant stock as soon as it arrives to make sure we're not introducing pests or diseases into our greenhouses. We aim to scout each greenhouse weekly from February through May, and I'd say we get through each greenhouse at least every other week.” – **Valerie Woodhouse**

“Our IPM program relies on having a good understanding of what’s going on in the greenhouses, so I scout all 7 greenhouses (14,000 sqft) once a week. All of the greenhouse employees are encouraged to be curious about insects they may see and are shown what evidence of pests and disease look like to watch out for and report. Our cultural practices in the greenhouse are also stressed to all employees for the benefit a clean greenhouse lends to our IPM program. Weekly scouting data informs any additions we may make to our weekly biocontrol shipments, as well as increasing scouting on suspicious crops. We may also deploy mechanical treatments like cutting plants back or moving them to a more isolated location. Additionally, we track trends on specific crops to better inform our scouting for future seasons and to know what to watch out for.” – **Cat Winslow**

To all the growers in VT that are using biocontrol, kudos to you! For those who are not and want to get started, feel free to reach out to us (see below) or other growers that are making a commitment to using them in their production. For more information, check out our [website](#) or the [New England Greenhouse Floriculture Guide](#). In addition, we host online Greenhouse IPM workshops every January.

About the Authors: Dr. [Cheryl Sullivan](#) is a Research Assistant Professor and Entomologist ([cfrank@uvm.edu](mailto:cfrank@uvm.edu); 802-656-5434), and Dr. [Margaret Skinner](#) is a Research Professor and the Extension Entomologist ([miskinner@uvm.edu](mailto:miskinner@uvm.edu); 802-656-5440). Together, they provide educational outreach to greenhouse and high tunnel growers and landscapers, and conduct IPM research.





# LEONARD'S CLIPPINGS!

*by Dr. Leonard Perry, UVM Horticulture Professor Emeritus*

Each semester I give a snapshot of the PSS department focus and student interest, gleaned from courses. Here's what is offered this fall, in-person unless noted. Courses (with faculty instructor and numbers of students) include: Home and Garden Horticulture (lecture online, Starrett, 127; labs 32), Intro to Agroecology (Izzo, 158), Illustrating Botanicals (Zahn, 14), Home Fruit Growing (online, Perry, 46), Backyard Composting (online, Heleba, 11), Entomology and Pest Management (Chen, 31), Weed Ecology and Management (hybrid, Kretzler, 36), Plant Pathology (Delaney, 15), Indoor Plants (online, Perry, 40), Garden Flowers (online, Perry, 44), Woody Landscape Plants (Starrett, 15), Landscape Design Fundamentals (Hurley, 53 lecture, 33 labs), Permaculture (online, White, 60), Fundamentals of Soil Science (Gorres, 120), Plant Based Healing Medicine (Elmer, 28), Regenerative Grazing (Alvez, 21).

In addition, there are several graduate level courses such as Advanced Agroecology (Izzo, 48), Sustainable Orchard Management (Bradshaw, 26), Soil Morphology (Gerlicz, 12), Landscape Construction (Acosta Morino, lab 16).

In PSS Department and Campus news:

- UVM recently earned the number one ranking on the 2024 "Best Schools for Making an Impact" list of public universities and colleges by The Princeton Review. Schools were chosen based on student ratings and responses to survey questions covering community service opportunities at their school, student government, sustainability efforts, and on-campus student engagement. <https://go.uvm.edu/zburtt>

- Faculty Feature:

Since most reading this may not know the above names with courses, even if you went to UVM in the past before these hires, I thought it might be of interest to get to know the names behind the ALE (former PSS) department, starting in this issue at the top.



**Terence Bradshaw, Associate Professor and Chair**  
**AREAS OF EXPERTISE AND/OR RESEARCH**  
Tree Fruit & Viticulture Specialist; Horticulture; Integrated Pest Management  
**EDUCATION**  
Ph.D (2015), M.S. (2011), B.S. (1996) Plant & Soil Science, University of Vermont

"My research and outreach program is designed to address sustainability issues in the specialty crop industries in Vermont, particularly apples and grapes. Specific program areas include: technical support to address horticultural and pest management needs of Vermont fruit growers; assessment of organic fruit production systems; grape cultivar evaluation; assessment of apple production systems for hard cider markets; and alternative fertilization programs in vegetable production." <https://blog.uvm.edu/tbradsha/>

Heard of Biochar? I've heard of it for some time now, more in an occasional talk or mention, but it now appears to be becoming more mainstream. In case you haven't heard, biochar is defined by experts in this field as "solid material obtained from the thermochemical conversion of biomass in

an oxygen-limited environment"—basically charcoal made at high temperatures. For years, this has been a standard component of terrarium garden media.

From Jennifer and Ball's Green Talks newsletter: "While it's great for aeration, it's also supposed to help with water retention, nutrient management and microorganisms, among other things. Sun Gro has a new Black Bear line of growing mixes (both for the professional grower and for retail) that contain biochar for aeration and drainage instead of perlite." If you've tried this, or other similar, I'd be interested to know how it works for you.



"Thunderdome is a recent aster introduction from Intrinsic Perennial Gardens (Hebron, IL). It combines the vibrant purple flowers of New England aster with the fragrant foliage and bushy habit of aromatic aster. This creative matchup results in a large, colorful show-stopping perennial. Thunderdome grows up to 30-in. tall and 3-ft. wide and is cold hardy all the way to Zone 3. Give this eye-catching new aster a try." (Paul Pilon, Ball's Perennial Pulse)

Another Intrinsic introduction, from 2016 but timely for fall, is **Rudbeckia** 'American Gold Rush'. It is an All-America Selections winner, and was Perennial Plant Association Plant of the Year for 2023. "Naturally compact plants reach 22 inches tall and 40 inches wide at the most, with a rounded habit and heavy bloom starting in late July through September. The golden yellow three-inch flowers have arched petals. Foliage is thinner and hairy giving this plant excellent resistance to septoria, the fungus that affects 'Goldsturm'.

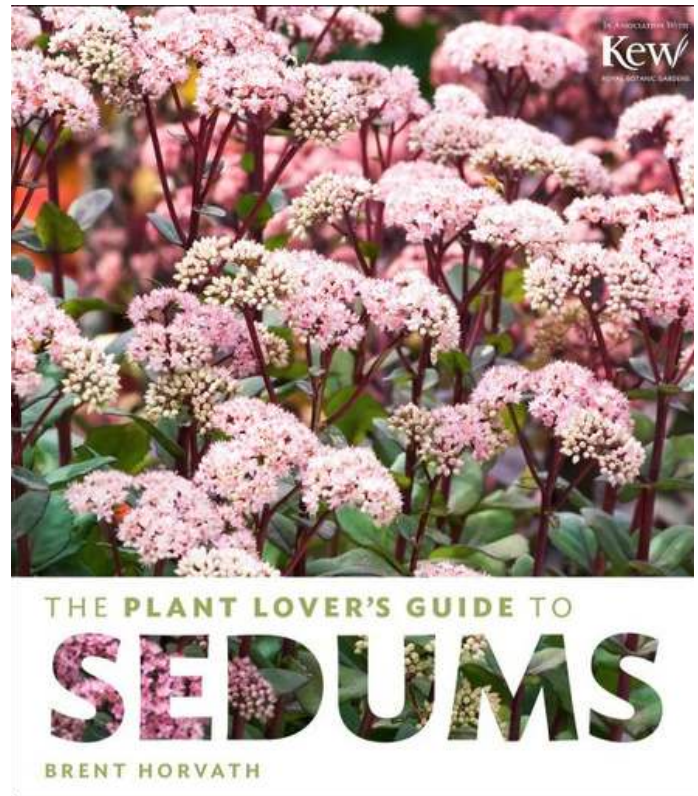


Another Intrinsic introduction, timely for the season, is the sedum 'Lajos' named for breeder's father who emigrated from Hungary and began the business. It was introduced in 2006, and was his first patented perennial. It bears the trade name of Autumn Charm, and arose from a variegated sport of Sedum 'Autumn Joy'. "Autumn Charm™ has creamy yellow edges with green centers. In mid-September white buds turn to pink, then russet red."

In case you haven't heard of Intrinsic Perennial Gardens, they're a wholesale container perennial grower in northern IL near the Wisconsin line. The owner, Brent Horvath, has bred and introduced many perennials, grasses, and sedum. Check out his introductions (<https://intrinsicintroductions.com>), you might recognize a few or get some ideas for additions to your own palette. He was chosen 2016 Grower of the Year by the Perennial Plant Association. Another part of his website that I find useful, and you may too, is the 30 or so lists of perennials by traits or uses.



If you like or use sedum, check out his book if you haven't: "***The Plant Lover's Guide to Sedum***," published in 2014, and winner of the Garden Writers Association Gold Award. From the publisher: "Plant profiles highlight 150 of the best varieties to grow, with information on zones, plant size, soil and light needs, origin, and how they are used in the landscape. Additional information includes designing with sedums, understanding sedums, growing and propagating, where to buy them, and where to see them in public gardens."





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# Why You Should Shine in the VNLA Industry Awards!

Get ready to showcase your exceptional landscape projects and celebrate the artistry of Vermont's nursery and landscape professionals! The Vermont Nursery & Landscape Association (VNLA) is thrilled to announce the 2024 Industry Awards Program. This initiative is all about recognizing outstanding landscape design, installation, and maintenance while promoting our valued members and raising public awareness of the numerous aesthetic and environmental benefits that landscaping offers.



## Purpose of the Awards

The VNLA Industry Awards Program serves a vital purpose: to shine a spotlight on the remarkable work of our members. By honoring excellence in landscape projects, we aim to elevate the industry's standards and inspire creativity. This program not only acknowledges the talent and dedication of landscape professionals but also educates the public about the transformative power of landscaping in our communities.

## Eligibility Criteria

Are you a current VNLA member offering professional landscape services? Then this is your chance! Members can submit up to three projects each year, regardless of size or complexity. Whether you've installed a magnificent garden or maintained a charming residential property, all projects are eligible. Specialty horticultural projects are also welcome. The beauty of this program lies in its inclusivity—there are no rigid categories, and each project will be judged on its own merits.

## Important Dates and Fees

Mark your calendars! The deadline for submissions is Friday, January 10, 2025. Each entry requires a processing fee of \$120. You can submit your projects electronically through Dropbox (just reach out to the VNLA office for assistance) or mail them to: VNLA, PO Box 92, N. Ferrisburgh, VT 05473

Remember, any projects that don't meet the entry guidelines will be disqualified, so make sure to follow the instructions carefully.

### **Submit a Project for the Industry Awards**

*Showcase your work and inspire others in the field by entering a project for the Industry Awards!*

Scan for submission guidelines!







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# Calendar of Events

Events for VNLA and the industry provide networking, insights, and learning opportunities for green industry professionals.

## OCTOBER 2024

OCTOBER 25, 2024 – 8AM – 4:30 PM  
ECOLOGICAL PLANT ALLIANCE CONFERENCE WAVE HILL  
BRONX, NY [LEARN MORE HERE](#).

OCTOBER 29, 2024 – DECEMBER 19, 2024  
UMASS EXTENSION LANDSCAPE, NURSERY & URBAN FORESTRY  
PROGRAM - GREEN SCHOOL COURSE - ONLINE  
REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS 10/16/24  
[LEARN MORE HERE](#).

## NOVEMBER 2024

NOVEMBER 7, 2024 – 9AM – 4:30 PM  
MANAGING MEADOWS: BEST PRACTICES FOR BIODIVERSITY &  
BEAUTY  
STONE BARNES CENTER FOR FOOD & AGRICULTURE - TARRYTOWN,  
NY  
[LEARN MORE HERE](#).

NOVEMBER 14, 2024 – 8AM – 4PM  
2024 ELA CONFERENCE: REGENERATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR RESILIENT  
LANDSCAPES - HYBRID EVENT W/ VIRTUAL OPTION  
DELAWARE CENTER FOR HORTICULTURE- WILMINGTON, DE  
[LEARN MORE HERE](#).

## DECEMBER 2024

DECEMBER 5, 2024 – 8AM – 5PM  
ELA'S CONFERENCE: SEASON'S END SUMMIT  
BRIGHAM HILL COMMUNITY FARM  
GRAFTON, MA  
[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

## JANUARY 2025

JANUARY 8 – 10, 2025  
MID-ATLANTIC NURSERY TRADE SHOW (MANTS)  
BALTIMORE CONVENTION CENTER  
BALTIMORE, MD  
[LEARN MORE HERE](#).

## FEBRUARY 2025

FEBRUARY 13, 2025  
VNLA WINTER MEETING & TRADE SHOW  
ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE  
COLCHESTER, VT  
DETAILS COMING SOON.

FEBRUARY 15-16, 2025  
NOFA-VT WINTER CONFERENCE  
UVM DAVIS CENTER  
BURLINGTON, VT  
[LEARN MORE HERE](#).

## MARCH 2025

MARCH 3 – 6, 2025  
11 TH INTERNATIONAL IPM SYMPOSIUM  
“PEST MANAGEMENT IN CHANGING ENVIRONMENTS”  
PARADISE POINT  
SAN DIEGO, CA  
[LEARN MORE HERE](#).

MARCH 7-9, 2025  
THE VERMONT FLOWER SHOW  
CHAMPLAIN VALLEY EXPO  
ESSEX JUNCTION, VT  
[LEARN MORE HERE](#).

We hope to see you there!

For more information, visit our website at  
[www.vnlavt.org](http://www.vnlavt.org).



# VNLA Events Recap: A Season of Growth and Inspiration



The VNLA's summer schedule kicked off with a spectacular private garden tour of Terra Logic in Colchester, VT, on July 24th. After a warm introduction, Ken Mills welcomed the VNLA twilight meeting group to explore his personal gardens through a self-guided tour. The property featured multiple screened-in structures, one housing an outdoor living area and another containing a large koi pond. Attendees wandered through winding garden paths, discovering hidden "rooms" filled with sculptures and lighting that drew their gaze upward into the canopy. The predominantly shaded landscape created a secluded, magical atmosphere, with plants setting the stage for moments of play and wonder.

A week later, on July 31st, VNLA members convened at St. Michael's College for another twilight meeting, this time centered on the unique horticultural demands of maintaining a college campus. The tour covered seasonal care, conservation efforts for older growth, and exciting new planting projects. Attendees also learned about the college's sustainable initiatives and its commitment to education, all while appreciating the scenic beauty of the grounds.



On August 15th, the VNLA's highly anticipated annual summer meeting took place at Cobble Creek Nursery. Under a large tent, keynote speaker Rodney Eason, Director of Horticulture and Landscape at Harvard's Arnold Arboretum, captivated the audience with a talk on the legacy of the arboretum and its deep connection to the community. His insights were followed by a lecture from Declan McCabe of St. Michael's College, who brought humor and science together to explain food webs and biodiversity. Both talks resonated with the nursery professionals in attendance, who could relate the information to their own horticultural challenges. The day wrapped up with Cobble Creek's staff giving guided tours of the grounds, touching on climate challenges, production resilience, and the nursery's plans for transitioning to the next generation.





On September 4th, VNLA members were treated to a twilight tour at Marijke's Perennial Gardens Plus in Starksboro, VT. Nestled in the mountains, this unique nursery has been a constant work-in-progress, as Marijke experiments with native plants to support and enhance the surrounding wild habitat. Visitors marveled at the transformation of the once wind-damaged property into a thriving songbird paradise. Her dedication to creating a balanced ecosystem offers valuable insights for customers and the broader gardening community.

Later in September, on the 9th and 23rd, the VNLA Plastic Pot Recycling Program celebrated its fourth successful year, thanks in large part to Pride's Corners Farms. This year, organizers streamlined the process by reusing metal plant carts to pack and transport recyclable pots. With support from Gardener's Supply and other member businesses, a tractor-trailer full of used pots was delivered to a specialized recycling facility, diverting plastic waste from landfills.



Finally, on September 25th, VNLA members gathered at Lakeview Cemetery in Burlington for a twilight tour focusing on the "Grow Wild" initiative. This project, in partnership with Burlington Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront, seeks to trial lawn alternatives that address challenges like invasive species control, reduced mowing, and enhanced pollinator habitats. Launched in 2022, the project is already showing great promise, with native species making a comeback and new ones being introduced to benefit the landscape. The findings from this trial are poised to influence the broader horticultural community.

With this memorable season of events behind us, the VNLA looks forward to what's next: our Winter Meeting and the much-anticipated 2025 Flower Show! Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to foster growth and knowledge-sharing in Vermont's vibrant landscape industry.

Article written by Linzy Vos



# Community Collaboration Shines at VPOC's First Event of 2024 in Shoreham



On Saturday, October 5th, the VNLA's first Volunteer Planting of Communities (VPOC) event of 2024 took place in Shoreham, VT, on a stunning autumn morning. Shoreham was one of the original three towns we partnered with in 2020 when we first launched the program, so returning to this site felt like coming full circle. This time, our goal was to build on the initial work and transform the space into a true public gathering spot and community destination.

The project was a collaborative effort from start to finish. Our committee worked closely with Shoreham's selectboard members and residents to prioritize areas of improvement, establish a detailed planting plan, and gather donations for the installation. This effort was part of a larger Master Plan originally designed by former VNLA member Eric Kloeti, whose vision for the space provided the foundation for our work.

Once the plan was set, it was time to roll up our sleeves and get to work! With the help of 9 dedicated volunteers and 4 generous donors, we completed the planting in record time. In just







two hours, the entire site was planted, watered, and mulched—an amazing feat for such a large project. The event was a huge success, and it wouldn't have been possible without the incredible support of everyone involved.

A heartfelt THANK YOU to all the volunteers, donors, and community members who made this day possible. Your generosity and hard work are a testament to the power of community. It's truly inspiring to see the camaraderie and dedication within our group—we're proving that, together, we can make a real difference!

Do you know of a place in your community that could benefit from our VPOC program? We're always looking to expand and reach more corners of the state. Get in touch with us, and let's work together to keep Vermont beautiful and thriving!

Let's continue to make a lasting impact, one community at a time!

Article written by Ashley Robinson

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# THINK GREEN BE GREEN



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# THE PLANT LOUNGE

wiry stems, hairy leaves and bodacious blooms.

## ***Pycnanthemum muticum***

I recall my first encounter with a patch of blunt mountain mint in a private garden in North Carolina many years ago. Seared into my memory was the amazing silver patina of this plant, as seen from the distance (“What the heck is that!?”) and then upon closer inspection, the sheer number and diversity of enthusiastic pollinators was staggering. This patch was literally “abuzz” with activity! Native to a large portion of eastern North America, the blunt mountain mint (***Pycnanthemum muticum***) is hardy in zones 4-8 and is a mint family (***Lamiaceae***) member that while vigorous, isn’t a plant you regret planting particularly if you commit to a bit of vigilance and gentle guidance.

Easily grown in full sun or part shade in a wide range of moist, but well drained, fertile soils, this robust grower reaches 36” in height and spreads by shallow rhizomes. Clay soils are acceptable and ***Pycnanthemum muticum*** is drought tolerant once established. Root/rhizome pruning with a sharp spade in spring can keep clumps from spreading beyond the desired, dedicated “real estate”. The foliage (oval, toothed leaves) has the fresh scent of peppermint and leaves are arranged on strong, square, branched stems. Blooming from July through September, the clustered, tiny white to lavender, tubular, two-lipped flowers are pollinator magnets. Closest to each inflorescence, the silvery-white bracts offer an interesting white patina to the upper portion of the plant. To top it off, this plant is also deer and rabbit resistant with few other pest or disease issues.

I recently ran across results from a Pollinator Trial done by Penn State Extension in 2013 in which 88 herbaceous, pollinator-friendly perennials were evaluated for pollinator value. The results are very noteworthy. Clustered mountain mint was #1 for flowering duration (10 weeks), #1 for most pollinator visitor diversity, #1 for sheer number of insect visitors and #1 for sheer number of bee and syrphid (hoverfly) visitors. This perennial is on most Top 10 lists for pollinator value and has the hardiness, durability and ornamentality to appeal to a wide range of the gardening public.





### Why Grow *Pycnanthemum muticum*?

- Amazing nectar plant for diverse pollinators
- Long-blooming in the summer garden
- Showy, silvery bracts offer visual interest
- Deer and rabbit resistant

Specifics Name: *Pycnanthemum muticum*

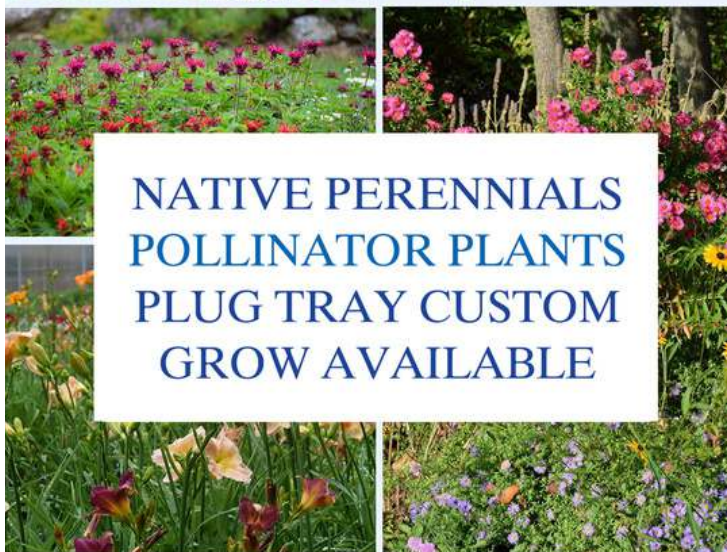
Common Name: clustered mountain mint, blunt mountain mint, short-toothed mountain mint

Description: This branching, colonizing perennial, reaching 36" tall, features fragrant foliage and clusters of nectar-rich, small tubular flowers hovering above showy, silvery bracts.

Hardiness: USDA z 4-8

### In the Landscape

This perennial is best used in situations where it is allowed to create an expanding, naturalized cluster or drift with other stalwart perennials surrounding it. Blunt mountain mint is a prime candidate for a pollinator garden, native plant garden and/or rain garden. Control and dictate the desired expansion/spread!



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Mark Dwyer is currently the Garden Manager for the Edgerton (WI) Hospital Healing Garden after 21 years as Director of Horticulture at Rotary Botanical Gardens (Janesville, WI). He also operates Landscape Prescriptions by MD, a landscape design and consultation business. [mcdwyer@zoho.com](mailto:mcdwyer@zoho.com)

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## Nursery and Landscape Association

### Green Works



The Vermont Nursery & Landscape Association 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.

Visit us at  
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