



# George Landis Arboretum NEWSLETTER

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Editors: Margaret Law and Betty Bloom

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## **RARE PLANT SALE** April 29, 1989

We will again offer some of the favorites of past years and will only give a brief reminder here of what they are.

*Amelanchier* – Robin Hill Pink. This is the unusual pink flowering species of "the native" shadblow, blooming in early spring.

*Berberis gladwynesis* – Wm. Penn. This is a hardy evergreen variety of barberry with broad leaves and a low spreading growth, a new hybrid we are selling for the first time.

*Cotoneaster divaricata* – The shiny leaves and bright red fruits make this spreading cotoneaster a fine addition to your plantings. It will eventually grow 5 to 6 feet in height.

*Fothergilla gardenii* – We couldn't begin to fill the demand for these last year. This small shrub has lovely white flower spikes in May and turns a bright yellow in Autumn.

*Halesia Carolina* – Each year so many visitors ask about this tree when it is in bloom and later when it produces its interesting seed pods. The flowers are little white bells borne along the branches and months later there are the corresponding straw colored pods.

*Hamamelis* – Arnold Promise – This is a large flowering (1 1/2 inch) variety of witchhazel with the added advantage of colorful fall foliage—an always popular plant that can attain 10–12 feet.

*Ilex opaca* – We will have both male and female (both are needed) plants of this hardy holly. It grows best in a moist, semi-shaded spot and will berry heavily.

*Leucothoe axillaris* – This is a small (2'–3') shrub with leathery dark glossy green leaves and fragrant flowers developing in axillary racemes.

*Magnolia virginiana* – Sweetbay magnolia. This smallish plant has creamy white lemon-scented flowers. It prefers damp acid soil and tolerates shade.

*Myrica pennsylvanica* – Northern Bayberry. As we promised we will have this interesting plant for sale this year. All of us who have admired them at the shore will be anxious to try one.

*Zanthorhiza apiiifolia* – yellowroot. This is a new introduction for us. It is essentially a ground cover that succeeds in dry sandy soil, shady banks, etc. It has interesting cut leaves which turn clear yellow in the fall.



We will also have many dwarf conifers and other interesting shrubs, some perennials, a few annual flowers, wild flowers and herbs. It will start at 11:00 for members—12:00 for the public. Not to be overlooked is the opportunity to buy lunch served by the Friends. They haven't disclosed their menu yet but there will be food children want as well as more sophisticated fare. Save room for one of their delicious desserts!

If any Arboretum member has plants they will share with us to sell at the Rare Plant Sale we will be most grateful. Call Margaret Law (463-5256) or Pam Rowling at the Arboretum if possible—or just bring them the day of the sale.

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Arboretum member and horticultural writer, Phyllis Rosenblum, has written the following article on several maple species and she has promised to send us more articles in the future.

My first garden was dominated by a huge Norway maple. Wider than it was tall, the tree cast a dense shade that overwhelmed the few blades of grass that managed a beginning amidst the competition of the maple's vigorous roots. The leaves, and there were millions of them, stayed on the tree late into the fall, often coming down with the first snowfall of the season. The far-ranging roots crept through the lawn into the rich confines of my vegetable garden, making a vigorous search-and-destroy mission the first event of the gardening year. Although I appreciated the tree's cool shade, I would have been content with a tree perhaps half the size and a little less robust!

Fortunately for Northeastern gardeners, many other species of maple thrive in our region and make graceful additions to even the smallest of gardens. The best known of these is the Japanese maple, *Acer palmatum* and its many cultivars. The species is a medium sized tree with five-lobed

mid-green leaves but selection by plantsmen over the years has produced an abundance of cultivars with varying sizes, habits, and leaf color.

Many older gardens contain the purple leaved form, 'Atropurpureum'. Although similar in form to the species, this tree's newly emerged leaves are a rich dark reddish-purple. The spring effect is enhanced by the multitudes of winged red seed pods. On many of these trees, the leaves turn dark green as the summer progresses, only to burst into glorious flame again in October. Silvery gray smooth bark and a lovely habit make this tree an asset to the winter garden as well.

Although selections of 'Atropurpureum' are still available, many growers prefer the cultivar 'Bloodgood'. The leaves of 'Bloodgood' maintain their red color through the season and this quality has made the tree very popular with gardeners. 'Bloodgood', like many of the Japanese Maples, grows as wide or wider than it is tall and this factor should be considered when choosing a site. Badly done pruning to control size can completely ruin the character of this graceful tree.

The Thread-leaf Japanese Maple is elegant, refined and unforgettable. Available in both red and green-leaved forms, *Acer palmatum* 'Dissectum' is smaller than the species and slightly pendulous in habit. Because of its delicate appeal, this tree deserves a carefully chosen location in the garden. The fine foliage colors brilliantly in the fall and when the leaves fall from the trees, they wither quickly away with no need for raking, a small but welcome blessing.

Most Japanese Maples are considered hardy throughout Zone 5. They prefer a rich, well drained soil, ample moisture, and protection from excessive wind. Because the leaves emerge quite early they are sometimes slightly damaged by a late spring frost.

Less common than Japanese maple, the Paperbark Maple, *Acer griseum*, is another splendidly decorative small tree and one that deserves a special place in the garden.



Although the foliage is attractive through the year, it is the color and nature of the bark that make this tree so unusual. The outer bark is thin and reddish brown. As the stems age, this bark peels away to reveal the satiny cinnamon colored layer below. The bark is particularly lovely in winter when viewed against the snow. This quality alone makes this tree very valuable for the small garden that is viewed year round.

Although the Paperbark Maple was introduced into this country from china in 1901, it has never been widely planted, chiefly due to difficulties in propagation. Recent rediscovery of this plant by gardenerers and nurserymen coupled with advances in propagation techniques have resulted in this plant being more widely available.

Paperbark Maple is hardy through Zone 4 and tolerates a fairly wide range of soil types and soil pH. The tree requires ample moisture and does not tolerate drought. Because the bark is so attractive, the tree is sometimes pruned to reveal the lower branch structure and accentuate the bark.

Ed. Note: We will offer Acer palmatum Bloodgood, Acer palmatum Dissectum and Acer griseum, the Paperbark Maple, at our Rare Plant Sale on April 29. Other plants are listed in the following article.

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My Favorite Tree contest will again take place with winners announced on Arbor Day. This year it will be open to children in grades five and six. We hope for as many wonderful entries as we had last year. All essays must be received by the Arboretum by April 20. First Prize will be \$25.00, Second Prize will be \$15.00, Third Prize \$10.00.

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The Friends of the GLA announce the following slate of officers:

- President — Chuck Weed
- Vice President — Peter Rumora
- Secretary — Cathy Johnson
- Treasurer — Don Rexford

If there are any other nominations, please send them to the Friends of the George Landis Arboretum at the Lape Road Esperance address. (This fine active volunteer arm of the membership are always seeking new willing workers. If you can spare any time, contact the Arboretum for details. They welcome weeders, pruners, carpenters, even cooks to help at the food sales, etc.)

Wish List: chipper shredder, sliding doors for the meeting house

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### Notes From Pam

This most unusual winter has allowed much more outdoor type work to be done than I had anticipated. With enormous help from Dick Law many of the dead and unwanted weed trees have been removed in the main grounds and along the woodland trail. You will notice evidences of this work if you visit this month and see large, but neat, piles of brush awaiting the arrival of a wood chipper (I am trying to find one that we can use).

The unusual winter although good for working has without doubt been very damaging to flower buds, especially of marginally hardy materials. The drastic temperature fluctuations we have been experiencing may cause a poor show of flowers this season and may have even endangered the survival of our more tender specimens.

During the harsh days we used our time to apply for grants. To date we have applied for ten. These grants vary from aiding in maintaining our general operating budget to funding expansion of programs and specific



projects. Our first reply has been positive. We have been awarded the MAP I (Museum Assessment Program I) from the Institute of Museum Services (this is a federal grant). This grant is committed to the consultative services of a museum (botanical) professional who will assess our organization and its operations and make suggestions for improved operating. One of the major benefits of receiving this grant is that it is 'required' for application to many other IMS grant support type programs to which we can then apply.

Seed exchange lists were mailed and we are receiving requests.

Our educational programs group have been very active and have developed offerings for our weekend series, a format for on site and in school use in grades 5-7, and a format for holding a 'children's day' one day during the week each week of the summer.

The Albany Master Gardeners are beginning their activities on April 19 to restore the Van Loveland Perennial Gardens. They anticipate the end of the bulk of this work to be done in time for their perennial program in June.

Siding to restore our old barn has been removed from the barn donated by Everly Waite and is stored at the Arboretum. It has been stripped and cleaned of nails and is ready to be put up as soon as labor (hint) is available.

The greenhouse, donated by Dr. and Mrs. Raymond has been moved to the arboretum. As soon as possible construction will begin. Here again we are awaiting more funding to allow us to proceed with this terribly important project.

On June 17-17th, 1986, I will be serving as a professional panel participant for the GAIPA (Greenhouse and Indoor Plant Association) Ivy Convention. This educational convention is open to the public

free of charge June 16 and 17 in the McChesney Room of the Schenectady Public Library in downtown Schenectady. Demonstrations, tours of historic areas, and clinics will highlight this event. July 18 tours will explore the Berkshire Hills and the Ivy Guild Nursery. For further info call Anne B. Spienberg 133 Saratoga Rd, Apt K2, Scotia NY 12302 (399-4367).

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#### 1990 LANDIS TRIP TO HOLLAND AND DENMARK

Our tour to Holland and Denmark (with a brief glimpse of Germany in between) is being organized for the benefit of the Landis Arboretum by Erastus Corning III. Well known for his tours to the Soviet Union, Erastus has also spent a great deal of time in Holland and Denmark — his contacts in those countries will ensure a unique experience for us.

Our trip is scheduled for May 4-20, 1990. Specific details and price will be available in May this year. To put your name on the mailing list for the brochure, please phone Margaret Law at 463-5256. Remember, a part of the price of the tour will come directly to the benefit of the Arboretum, so tell your friends to mark their calendars for May 1990! The flowers and gardens of Holland and Denmark are waiting!

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#### *Sciadopitys verticillata* Japanese Umbrella Pine

by Pam Rowling

This evergreen conifer, native of Japan, is a favorite of many garden enthusiasts. Although commonly called the "Japanese Umbrella Pine", it is a member of the Taxodiaceae family and so is more closely allied to the Bald Cypress (*Taxodium*) and Redwood (*Sequoia*) than to the true pines.

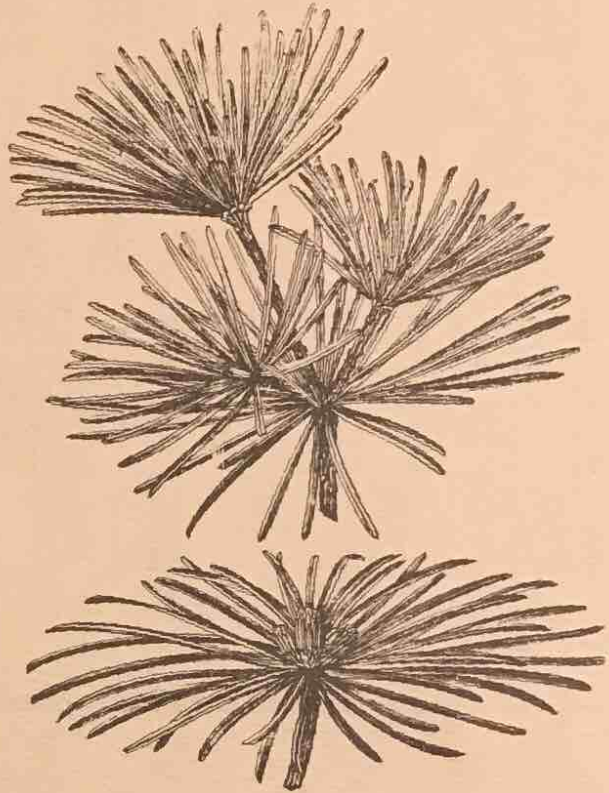
The cone and leaf arrangement are two features which easily distinguish Sciadopitys. Trees are monoecious so both female and male cones will be found on the same tree. Female cones are borne singly on the terminal and are 2-4" long and ovoid. Green the first year, they ripen to brown when mature. The second year five to nine seeds are contained in each cone scale. Male cones are approximately one inch long and clustered at the terminals.

The leaves are the umbrella pines most striking feature. Two kinds of leaves are present; one type is small, scalelike borne on twigs and crowded at tips, the other more obvious type is glossy dark green, linear and flat, 2-5" long by 1/8" wide and borne in whorls around the stem.

Sciadopitys is slow growing. In youth it is densely pyramidal by spreads and opens up in age exposing the interesting red-brown shredding bark of the trunk.

The Umbrella Pine has few insect and disease problems. It will grow in sun or

FLOWERING PLANTS



Branchlets of *Sciadopitys*, upper reduced, lower nat. size. From Vetch.

CUT

- Friend \$15-25
- Sponsor \$25-50
- Supporting \$50-100
- Patron \$100+

GEORGE LANDIS ARBORETUM

Membership Application

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Renewal       New Member

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THANK YOU

CUT

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Esperance, NY 12066

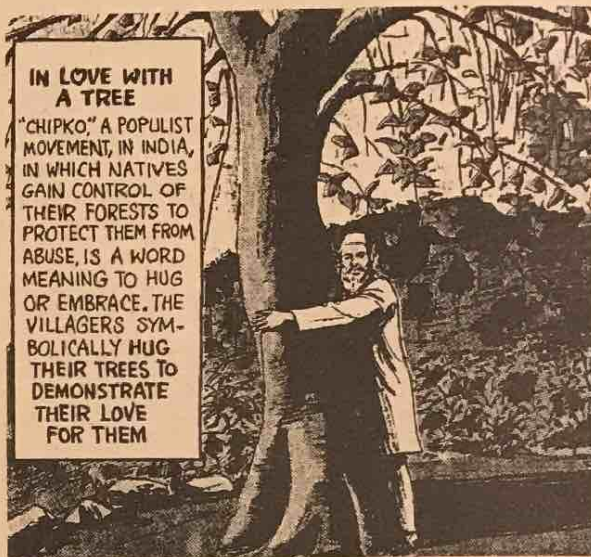


filtered shade. It requires well drained but moist soil and some protection from excessive winds. This tree is intolerant of "wet feet" as well as excessive drought and air pollution. There appears to be a certain amount of clonal variation in *Sciadopitys*' response to cold.

If you can satisfy its few cultural needs (such as an unusual affinity for Banjo music -ed), *Sciadopitys* is a striking accent tree either as a specimen or incorporated into a border planting.

Two *Sciadopitys* grow at the Landis Arboretum. Our oldest specimen suffered loss of half of its top (it is multi-stemmed) due to a severe drainage problem which caused the death of a portion of its roots. Our second tree was planted Arbor Day '88 in the pinetum on a more well-drained site and is doing well.

*Have you hugged your tree today?*



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