

# SECREST NEWSLETTER

All Things Secrest

February 2023

## From the Curator—State of the Arboretum

First, I'd like to take a quick look back. 2022 was a prolific year in terms of the number and types of new plant species and varieties (collectively "taxa") added to Secrest's collection. Our outstanding staff and volunteers planted a total of 551 new perennials, shrubs, and trees representing 437 unique taxa. The

new plants represent 162 genera from 64 different plant families. These statistics include 19 new crabapple taxa to bolster Secrest's status as one of the world's largest repositories of crabapple varieties, with a total of 179 distinct varieties. We will soon learn how many of our newest acquisitions weathered December's frigid, absurdly windy conditions. But, as most of us know, you can learn as much by killing plants as by cultivating them successfully. Hats off to the Secrest Team for their ongoing work to diversify and beautify the arboretum. The State of the Arboretum is strong!

We are already hard at work determining which plants will be added in 2023. These will be a wide-ranging combination of new cultivar introductions for evaluation, plants relevant to ATI courses, plants being researched by OSU faculty, and plants for new or updated theme gardens, such as the renovated Phenology Garden encircling the Herms/Nielsen Discovery Pavilion. Some might be interested to hear that we will soon be adding roses back into a certain area once known as the Garden of Roses of Legend and Romance. Dr. Francesca Peduto Hand, in the Department of Plant Pathology, is part of a multi-state, multi-year project assessing Rose Rosette Disease (RRD) resistance in several rose varieties. When asked by Dr. Hand about our willingness to host the study, I jumped at the chance to participate. I can't think of a more appropriate use for a rose garden that has evolved into a plant evaluation garden. Does this make it a rose garden again? Not quite. It makes it an evaluation garden that just happens to include roses. Only time will tell if the data gleaned from this study will aid in the breeding of new RRD-resistant rose varieties.

In the fall issue, I reported that we had applied for a grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust to install welcome signage. I am very pleased to share that our request was successful, and we have been awarded just over \$10,000 to fund their design and fabrication. We are presently enduring a lengthy design and editing process with the manufacturer, but I am still hopeful that the final products will be in place by spring. Be on the lookout for these colorful, conspicuous new tools for orienting and informing our visitors.

—Curator Jason Veil



## What do you know? Vegetable (and some Fruit)



## Trivia

Luke Tegtmeier was a member of the 2022 Master Gardener Volunteer class. These questions are from his Final Presentation project, which combined his love of history and vegetables.

1. What vegetable was believed to be poisonous in Great Britain and New England until the 1820s?
2. When were Blueberries domesticated?
3. What color were Carrots in the wild, before they were domesticated?
4. Sweet potatoes are related to what flower?
5. Where were Potatoes first domesticated?
6. What vegetable was cited as an aphrodisiac by Pliny the Elder (1<sup>st</sup> CE Roman writer), the *Kama Sutra* (2<sup>nd</sup> century India), and in 19<sup>th</sup> century France, where grooms were given three courses of it on their wedding night, and it was banned from girls' schools?
7. What vegetable has a form of latex in its leaves?
8. Which culture has cultivated Spinach since at least the 4<sup>th</sup> century?
9. Who introduced Bell Peppers to Europe?
10. What vegetable is 96% water, and has been grown in India since at least 1000 BCE?
11. Three of these vegetables are among the oldest crops that humanity has cultivated. One is not. Lentils, Beets, Peas, and Chickpeas
12. Where are Green beans originally from?
13. This was a breakfast food in colonial New England
14. This fruit was hybridized with species from North America and South America in France around 1700.
15. The Silk Road was the way that this fruit moved from Kazakhstan into both China (to the East) and Europe (to the West).

**Answers can be found on page 21.**

## Meet Secrest Outreach Coordinator Cathy Herms

Secrest Arboretum's latest acquisition is not a new cultivar; instead, it is Outreach Coordinator Cathy Herms. Cathy brings wide expertise to this newly created position. She is an experienced plant researcher and grant writer with an extensive science background, including a master's degree in forest entomology.



Concerning Cathy's hiring, Secrest Curator Jason Veil states, "We are extremely fortunate to have Cathy on board. Her experience and skill set make her a perfect fit for this new Outreach Coordinator position. She is already having an impact on how Secrest connects with those who use and enjoy the arboretum. Her awesome work with Wooster Memorial Park speaks for itself. Plus, when it comes to proofreading articles and signage, she is even pickier than I am. Attention to detail seems to be a dying art, but not here!"

Excited about her new position with Secrest, Cathy Herms envisions her outreach role through two lenses: one involves working with the internal departmental stakeholders of the Wooster OSU Wooster Campus; the other concerns reaching out to and engaging with external entities including universities, schools, the horticulture industry, and the public. Cathy wants people to view Secrest as "more than just a nice place to take a walk." She plans to promote "the education and research resources of Secrest Arboretum" for all groups. In addition, her science background can enhance the work that is already underway at the arboretum. She currently works in a 50:50 split between Secrest Arboretum and The Ohio State University (OSU) Department of Horticulture and Crop Science (HCS) where she is a research associate in the Weed Ecology Lab.

Cathy has always been a self-described "nature geek." Her earliest nature encounters involved visiting her grandmother's backyard in downtown Detroit. Cathy recalls it as a "postage stamp-size wonderland," packed with roses, peonies, irises, lilies, and other wonderful flowers. Her grandmother was a "fastidious garden tender" with an "incredible green thumb." Cathy warmly remembers her family helping pick sour cherries from her grandmother's tree. Cathy grew up in the Detroit suburbs where her mother gardened and strove to find flowers that would prosper in the disturbed soil of a new housing site. Coneflowers, black-eyed Susans, and daylilies successfully bloomed there.

Family vacations west of the Mississippi to the mountains and all national parks firmly planted a passion for nature in Cathy at an early age. Her parents exploring the mountains and the flora and fauna found there. Cathy recalls examining the intricacies of nature on her hands and knees with her parents and her three older brothers as they used field guides to decipher what they saw. They gloried in the striping on tiny alpine flower petals or the delicate veining patterns of leaves. Cathy's parents took thousands of slides and kept detailed travel logs.

It was a logical choice for Herms to pursue a degree in biology at Michigan State University (MSU). After graduation Cathy worked as a naturalist at Fernwood Nature Center in Niles, Michigan, and soon realized she needed to attain a graduate degree to further her career. Intending to become an outdoor educator, Cathy returned to MSU to pursue graduate work, but a part-time job in the university's entomology lab sparked her interest in forest entomology. As a graduate student, she had the opportunity to study Michigan's endangered Karner blue butterfly. She partnered with the United States Forest

Service (USFS) in her graduate research. Her study determined that to protect Karner blue butterflies during their larval stage it was necessary to adjust the timing of gypsy moth insecticide applications and to establish buffer zones. Her graduate research led to the USFS altering their spraying practices, thus, helping to preserve the butterfly.

Cathy has been associated with the OSU HCS since 1997. She began working there when her husband, Dan Herms, was hired in the Entomology Department at OSU. Cathy is not new to Secrest as she and Dan are long-time members of Friends of Secrest Arboretum, and both have served on the Secrest Arboretum Support Council for many years. She has also presented lectures on invasive plants and weed management to the Secrest Master Gardener classes.



Cathy Herms standing by a fallen red oak following the June 13, 2022, storm in Wooster Memorial Park. She was helping map trees fallen over the trails. This oak was estimated to be over 180 years.

A tireless worker and volunteer, Cathy joined Friends of Wooster Memorial Park (FWMP) when she moved to Wooster. Herms was on the first FWMP Board of Directors and is still a member. Her expertise in grant writing has been essential to the increasing property acquisition and trail development in the park. She was an important force behind the creation of the prairie in the Kenwood Acres section. Kenwood Acres is a special place with handicap accessible trails and rich native plantings. Recently, her grant writing has enabled Wooster Memorial Park to acquire 40 more acres for conservation and trail development.

pollinator gardens. Her front gardens contain three hummingbird feeders and plants that also attract these birds. In summer, 12 or more hummingbirds buzz the feeders like a swarm of bees as they compete for nectar. Four years ago, Cathy and Dan converted a 1/3-acre area of lawn to prairie. It has created a beautiful natural open patch on their mostly wooded property.

Cathy encourages other gardeners to consider selecting plants to provide nectar, pollen, and larval resources. She advises gardeners to learn about weed and invasive plant lifecycles to successfully manage these garden intruders. Seeking out unbiased sources such as .edu, .org., and .gov sites will aid in finding management strategies.

In her personal life, Cathy enjoys hiking, gardening, birding, and watching butterflies. When time allows, she and Dan head to the Florida Keys to scuba dive. She has found another natural world to explore under the sea. For Cathy Herms nature's wonders continue to amaze her. She states, "The grace of the natural world inspires me daily."



When you encounter Outreach Coordinator Cathy Herms at Secrest Arboretum, expect to be greeted by a friendly, knowledgeable problem solver. We welcome Cathy to Secrest Arboretum and look forward to interacting with her.



## Featured Plant of the Season – *Abies nordmanniana*

Commonly known as the Nordmann Fir, *abies nordmanniana* is a pyramidal evergreen coniferous species native to the Caucasus Mountains and northeastern Turkey. It was named in honor of Alexander von Nordmann, a Finnish zoologist of the nineteenth century. Recommended for hardiness zones 4 – 9, it prefers a northern climate, disliking hot, dry summers and clay soils.

The Nordmann Fir is becoming an important species grown for Christmas trees. It has attractive foliage and smooth gray-brown bark. The flattened, black-green needles with white stripes go three fourths of the way around the stem. They are not pointy and do not readily drop when the tree dries out. It produces 4 to 8-inch-long cones which release the seeds when mature by disintegrating. Its soft, white wood can be used for paper pulp and construction. Although it is not susceptible to serious plant problems, it is affected by urban pollution and deer damage.



*Abies nordmanniana* is among the tallest trees of Europe, reaching 200 feet at maturity with a 6.5-foot diameter trunk. With a growth rate greater than twelve inches a year, it is used as an ornamental in large gardens and parks. There are several big specimens along Green Drive at Secrest.

—Janet Broda

## December Master Gardener Volunteer Meeting

The final Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) gathering of 2022 was held December 9 at the Barnhart Rice House. The meeting recognized the members of the 2020 and 2021 training classes who met their volunteer hour requirements. These new MGVs include Connie Barnes, Lea Ewing, Sandy Gordon, Connie Jo Lehman, Pat Matthews, Brenda Meese, Rick Novak, Kim Pukalski, Sheli Snyder, and Kathy Varner

A tradition of MGV meetings is always the wonderful carry-in food. The Barnhart Rice House provided a festive setting for MGV fellowship and a delicious lunch.

At that time MGV hours were still being totaled. The final update from Paul Snyder is in: Secrest Arboretum Master Gardener Volunteer hours for 2022 totaled 3,200.15, and Continuing Education hours totaled 1, 244.63.



**2021 and 2022 MGVs from left:** Kim Pukalski, Connie Barnes, Pat Matthews, Rick Novak, Lea Ewing, Brenda Meese, Kathy Varner, Sheli Snyder. Not pictured: Connie Jo Lehman, Sandy



## Barnhart Rice House

At the last Master Gardener meeting in December, we were treated to a gathering at the historic and beautifully decorated Barnhart Rice House, also known as the Stone House, located on Williams Road on the campus of the CFAES.



Frederick Rice moved to Wooster from Pennsylvania in 1812 and purchased two sections of land on Madison Hill. He built two homes for his sons, Barnhart and Simon. The Barnhart Rice House was built in 1822 from hand cut sandstone ashlar blocks quarried only a few hundred yards from the house. It is one of the best surviving examples of German architecture that exists in Wayne County. There are two historical markers on the property describing the house and telling the history of Frederick Rice. The building sustained damage during a 2017 storm that

necessitated replacing the roof and other structural repairs.

The other house Frederick Rice built was made of bricks from clay quarried from the surrounding land and baked in a kiln on the site. Sturdy wood beams in the basement and attics were hand hewn from timber once located on the farmland. Later the house was painted white and is now used as the OSU Wooster Campus Police station and is also located on Williams Road not too far from the Barnhart Rice house.



The quarry was revealed when the tornado took all the trees making it easy to see. The quarry is located to the west of Mill Road, across from the new parking lot.

It is interesting to note that descendants of Frederick Rice later formed the Lodi Lumber Company. The family goes back eight generations and continues to operate today.

The house is available to rent for special events. For more information, contact Wooster Campus Venues at 330-263-5500 or [woostervenues.osu.edu/contact-us](http://woostervenues.osu.edu/contact-us).

— Sue Cook





## Notes from Friends of Secrest Arboretum

Friends of Secrest Arboretum (FSA) is excited about the many activities at Secrest that they are supporting this year:

- **Plant Discovery Day** and spring plant sale is scheduled for Saturday May 13th with the members only presale scheduled for the 12th.
- Our second Annual **Secrest Garden Fair** will be Saturday June 10th. Many vendors will be returning, and some new ones have already signed up.

FSA is again partnering with ORMACO (Ohio Regional Music Arts and Cultural Outreach) for the third four concert season of Music at the Arboretum. All concerts are scheduled for 6:30 pm at the John Streeter Garden Amphitheater with a backup location of Fisher Auditorium in case of bad weather. The concerts and dates follow:

- **NEO5 Brass Quintet: Lights, Camera, MUSIC! - Friday, May 26, 2023**

Without music, even the greatest films and shows ever written would be missing a large part of the story that the creators are trying to tell. Movies and musicals comprise a huge part of our history. Come out and hear popular themes and songs from a wide range of Broadway and movie musicals as well as iconic films performed by one of the finest musical groups in the area!

The NEO5 Brass Quintet consists of members from the Cleveland Orchestra, Cleveland Pops and the Akron and Canton Symphonies! Make your plans to gather with us at the Secrest Arboretum in Wooster on May 26, 2023, for some incredible music that will bring back memories and make you want to stand up and cheer!

- **Russian Duo: An Evening of Piano and Balalaika - Friday, June 23**

Siberian balalaika virtuoso **Oleg Kruglyakov** and American concert pianist **Terry Boyarsky**, celebrate cross-cultural creativity, exploring the range of possibilities for balalaika, voice, and piano. Journey across the span of Russian culture-from humorous pieces, virtuoso variations, pulsating dance music, rhythmic folk songs, and lyrical romances. In addition to classical music, this high-energy duo will also showcase many genres including music of Ukrainian composers, tango, bluegrass, Soviet film music and their own arrangements of ragtime.

- **Joe Leaman and Friends: An Evening of Steel Drum - Friday, July 21, 2023**

They will bring you the high-energy sounds of the Caribbean with their steel drums. Joe is an in-demand percussionist, pianist, composer, arranger, and educator throughout the greater Ohio region. As a steel pannist, Joe's enjoys showcasing the range and versatility of the instrument by playing jazz, classical, and pop music, as well as music of the traditional Caribbean canon.

- **Jerry Popiel Songs from the 1960s and 1970s - Friday, August 18, 2023**

Avon Lake-based musician Jerry Popiel (Acoustic Guitarist-Singer) closes the season in a program that will feature popular tunes from singer-songwriters from the 1960s and 1970s, including Simon & Garfunkel, James Taylor, Jim Croce, Dan Fogelberg, Cat Stevens, and others.

The FSA Board and I hope that you are able to come to many of these events and enjoy the beauty of Secrest Arboretum at different times of the year. You can keep track of coming events through our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Friends.of.Secrest>, our website <https://www.friendsofsecrest.com/>, or Secrest's website <https://secrest.osu.edu/>.

Robert Everett, President  
Friends of Secrest Arboretum



## 2023 Secrest Garden Fair

Friends of Secrest Arboretum is pleased to announce the date of the second annual Secrest Garden Fair. The event will take place on June 10, 2023. Last year, with the help of picture-perfect weather, over 1,000 people attended the Fair.

This year promises to be even more exciting with the addition of many new vendors as well as returning favorites. We will again have activities for children and morning and afternoon tours of the arboretum led by Master Gardener Garden Guides. We also plan on having an expanded plant sale as well as morning and afternoon garden-themed workshops.

The Garden Fair is a large undertaking and requires many helping hands. If you would like to be involved in planning and/or working at the event, please contact Merry Gentry ([merryroyd@yahoo.com](mailto:merryroyd@yahoo.com) or 330-461-4160). All hours count towards Master Gardener volunteer hours.

—Merry Gentry

## The Oaks—Keystone Species

Secrest Arboretum has a number of different oak, *Quercus*, taxa represented in the collection, 55 different taxa to be exact (this includes species, hybrids, and cultivars). We can thank former curator, Ken Cochran, for many of the oaks. Ken was fond of saying, “Ohio is an oak state. It is the dominant forest tree.” Thus, after the tornado many oak species were planted, and though we’ve been carefully removing some of these trees; we’re keeping the best to allow them to develop into noble specimens. I would take Ken’s statement a little further and say not only is Ohio an oak state, but North America is an oak continent.

There are about 250 different species of *Quercus* native to North America, about 90 species are native to the United States and Canada, and 160 species are native to Mexico. Contrast that with the genus *Acer*, of which only 13 species are native to North America. Oaks can be deciduous and evergreen, temperate and tropical. The fruit is an acorn which ranges from the size of a pea to golf ball size. The largest acorn belongs to *Quercus insignis*, a native of Central America, with an acorn that would fill the palm of your hand. While there are about 250 species of *Quercus* native to North America, only one species can be found in the southern hemisphere, *Quercus humboldtii*, the Humboldt Oak, named after none other than Alexander von Humboldt, the famous Prussian natural philosopher.

Oaks are adaptable, able to grow in the extremes of the climate, from hot to cold, wet to dry, acid to alkaline; there is an oak that can grow in your setting. Moreover, oaks are one of the most noble of all trees. There is nothing like stumbling upon a massive oak in a forest or looking up the trunk of a massive specimen growing in an open field. Indeed, if we want to plant a tree, we should plant an oak. for no other reason than to enjoy its majestic presence.

While it is popular to say you should plant an oak today for your grandkids, that saying isn’t quite true. Yes, plant an oak for the generations to come because they are long-lived trees, but you yourself can enjoy its shade. Many species of oak if sited properly can grow quite fast, growing 1-2-3’ per year. I can attest to this having planted many trees after the tornado and having watched them grow. I have been able to sit in their shade just 12 years later. The key is planting the tree in a location that mimics its natural habitat.



*Quercus alba*, White Oak flowers

In addition to oaks being noble, long-lived trees, they are also a keystone species—a species that is an essential component of the forest ecosystem. Oaks are impressive in the number of species they support. Oaks in North America host over 897 species of lepidoptera whose caterpillars feed on leaves (and in turn are a staple food for birds). In addition to lepidoptera, oaks support the following, over 100 species of vertebrates that feed on acorns, 46 fungal associations, 61 beetle associations, 16 species of leaf hoppers, and hundreds of other species. These numbers far surpass any other native species. If oaks were to suddenly disappear, the consequences to the ecosystem would be devastating; and remember, we are

part of the ecosystem too. While many of the common oaks we can grow in Ohio are not under threat of extinction, many species around the world are.

Globally, one-third of all oak species are endangered. This is due to habitat destruction, climate change, modification of natural systems, pests, and diseases. There is an effort underway by the Global Conservation Consortium of Oaks, led by the Morton Arboretum, to work with botanical institutions around the globe to identify and conserve oak species. Oaks are unique compared to other species. The seeds are short-lived, meaning that they can't be stored for long periods of time like other species, such as those found in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway. To conserve an oak species, the acorns must be planted and stored as a live plant in a network of collections. A network of collections is key; you don't want to be the only botanical institution in the world with a plant because a tornado could come through and destroy that plant. Most recently,

*Q. tardifolia*, lateleaf oak, which was thought to be extinct, was discovered in 2022 in Big Bend National Park. Efforts are underway to propagate and conserve this species.



*Quercus marocarpa*, Bur Oak acorn

This discussion of oaks could go on for many pages, but this newsletter will not allow enough space to



*Quercus coccinea*, Scarlet Oak leaves

One final thing you may be wondering. What about those leaves that remain on the plant late into the fall and winter is called marcescence. This occurs when a plant holds onto dead leaves beyond when they would normally fall. This is different from evergreens in which the leaves or needles are still alive but are dormant. Some plants such as a cousin of the oak, the beech, usually have marcescent leaves when young. But this isn't true of oaks. Juvenile and mature trees all have marcescent leaves. There are different hypotheses as to why oaks retain their leaves. The four main hypotheses are:

- The dead leaves deter herbivory of the buds and stems throughout the winter, with dry crunchy leaves being unpalatable to species like deer. However, some plants, such as honey locust (*Gledistia triacanthos*), which have thorns on trunks and stems to reduce herbivory, stop producing thorns after about 20 feet in height. It would seem that if oaks retained their leaves for the purpose of herbivory reduction, they would also lose their leaves above the height of herbivory like other woody plant species, but they don't.
- Some leaves fall in the autumn to add nutrients to the soil while others fall in the spring to add nutrients to the soil at the time when the plants need the most nutrients for growth. This theory also has problems. If this were the case, it would seem that all the leaves would fall in the autumn allowing them to begin decomposition thus releasing some nutrients into the soil for spring. Oak leaves are high in tannins which take a long time to break down. Therefore, holding onto the leaves in the spring would provide no benefit because by the time the leaves broke down to release nutrients the key moment of growth would have passed for that season.

- The dead leaves hold onto snow and funnel moisture down the stems and trunk to the roots. Again, a great idea but one that ignores the plant's growth habits and structure. Large amounts of moisture are not needed during dormancy. Moreover, moisture that is funneled down the trunk goes to a region of the plant with the least amount of feeder roots, those fine roots that absorb moisture and mineral nutrients.
- Perhaps oaks retain their leaves due to oaks evolving around the equator. This is evidenced by the large species diversity found nearest the equator and from the fossil record. Many of these equatorial oaks are evergreen in nature. As the species migrated further north, some species retained the somewhat evergreen characteristic though the leaves lost their true evergreen nature and instead became marcescent.

In my opinion the last theory is the most convincing explanation as to why oaks are marcescent. Whatever the reason, we ultimately do not know why oaks have marcescent leaves. Yet, we can enjoy the beauty they add to the winter landscape and the nobility of these trees. We can still wonder at how a tree can support so many species. We can sit in the cool of their shade on a hot summer day. We can enjoy and experience oaks without knowing the why behind everything an oak does.

To see the oaks in our collection visit [secrest.osu.edu](http://secrest.osu.edu) and click on the search plant collections tab at the top. From there, type oak in the common name search field. You will be able to see all the oaks on the CFAES Wooster Campus including their location.

—Paul Snyder, Secrest Arboretum Operations Manager



## **Plant a Berry Garden for Winter Birds**

My neighbor across the street, excitedly called me the other snowy day to say she had bluebirds visiting her planter outside her kitchen window. A few months earlier, I had decorated her planters for Christmas with evergreens, pinecones, white snowy branches and of course winterberry holly that I had purchased at the Friends of Secrest Arboretum winterberry holly sale. Bluebirds, along with many others, are berry eaters in the winter. Berries are full of sugars, fats, and antioxidants with lots of calories that birds need to survive winter nights.

So, I got to thinking, what native shrubs and trees can gardeners buy this spring that will attract and provide food for these kinds of feeders when food is scarce next winter.

Below are a few picks for our area that your backyard feathered friends can't resist. Look for these at the Plant Discovery Day and your local garden shops, and you'll be rewarded with joy on a cold winter day.

**Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)**

Several species of birds adore the blue-gray fruits that resemble berries but are actually cones made of fused scales. Be aware of the cedar apple rust fungus if you have apple and crabapple trees nearby as eastern red cedar serves as an alternate host for the fungus. This fungus, while it can look bad, rarely causes significant damage to either host.

**Firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*)**

Birds flock to the clusters of orange to red fruits called pomes, not berries. Choose a selection that is fireblight resistant. Over the winter months the fruit can ferment. When birds indulge in the fermented fruit, they can become intoxicated. Such a phenomenon is not unique to firethorn and can occur with many other plants that retain fruit throughout the winter including hawthorn and crabapple. One early spring, I watched in amazement as a flock of robins were feeding under a Washington hawthorne and were staggering on the ground and trying to fly without too much success. Very entertaining but dangerous for the birds.

**Winterberry holly (*Ilex verticillata*)**

Many birds love the fruit of this common native holly. It holds its berries well into winter and is an important late winter food after other more desirable food is gone. This is a deciduous holly whose brilliant red berries remain on the stems after the leaves have fallen. Some selections also have yellow or orange berries.

**American cranberrybush (*Viburnum trilobum*)**

This plant has beautiful lacecap white flowers in spring, followed by glossy red fruit. The fruit, though edible and pungent, lasts well into the winter. Like many of our native viburnums, this species is also highly susceptible to the invasive insect, viburnum leaf beetle. In addition to serving as a food source for birds, American cranberrybush has an attractive rusty red fall color.

### **Red or Black Chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia* or *A. melanocarpa*)**

These closely related species are multi-stemmed shrubs with glossy green foliage. The white flowers, favored by pollinators, produce either red or black fruit. The fruit may last late into the winter depending on the year, making the fruit less astringent and more palatable to birds.



### **Crabapple (*Malus*)**

Crabapples come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Most selections produce small apples (pomes) that remain hard until going through a freeze thaw cycle which later makes them more appealing to birds. Look for American robins and cedar waxwings feeding on these pomes.

Plant now and be rewarded next winter when you see these beautiful birds in your winter landscape: American robin, eastern bluebird, cedar waxwing, northern flicker, northern mockingbird, and tufted titmouse to name a few.



**Left:** This picture was taken through the glass door of the planter on the deck. Look closely to see both the male and female Eastern Bluebird.

**Right:** This Northern Mockingbird was recently spotted in my window box also containing winterberry.





Want to know more about bluebirds? Check out the Ohio Bluebird Society Annual Conference March 4, 2023, at Ashland University. The link to their site is [ohiobluebirdsociety.org](http://ohiobluebirdsociety.org).

—Sue Cook

\*All berry photos except for the Firethorn photo were provided by Secret Arboretum.  
The Firethorn photo comes from Michael Dirr's *Hardy Trees and Shrubs*.

**Winter Pride and Joy: Secret Master Garden Volunteers continue to garden throughout the winter. Their landscapes, winter gardens, house plants and overwintering plants prove that winter is a time to garden. View these personal spaces and witness winter at its best.**

## From Kathy Batchelder



My neighbor Kathy and I started the Two Kathys' Neighborhood Herb Garden in 2020. I wanted to learn about growing and cooking herbs, and my neighbor who has years of experience growing and preserving herbs suggested that we plant a garden. While I have learned about growing and cooking with herbs, I wasn't expecting the other benefits by starting the garden.

My neighbor's husband, Rick, spent many hours creating a raised bed that is approx. 6' x 15' that sits near the street on our cul-de-sac. We planted basil, oregano, parsley, parsel, chives, dill, thyme, tarragon, lavender, sage, sunflowers, and zinnias. I have begun using fresh herbs in my cooking and love digging under the snow to harvest thyme for cooking.

I was not expecting so many butterflies and insects to be drawn to the garden. When harvesting the parsley, we must be careful not to grab one of the butterfly caterpillars.

Another benefit was meeting people from our community. We first planted the garden at the start of the pandemic. Many people were walking through our neighborhood and would stop and visit with us. Our conversations were of sharing recipes, suggestions, and tips for growing herbs, but more importantly, getting to know our community. A sign in the garden welcomes everyone to help themselves to the herbs. To the delight of the two Kathys, many people do stop to pick herbs.

## From Lisa Bird



Maintaining houseplants is always an indoor challenge. Lisa Bird has certainly mastered the necessary skills. It is a joy to see her success! She reports, “I’ve had this Staghorn about forty-four years. It’s close to 5’ across and is about 3’ 4” tall.”

## From Pat Dutton



In the picture taken in July, you can see Wild Bergamot, *Monarda fistulosa*; Yellow Prairie Coneflower, *Ratibita pinnata*; False Sunflower, *Heliopsis helianthoides*, and some native grasses and pasture grasses that survived the original restoration treatment.



There are different flowers in the spring and fall but mid-summer has the most abundant flower display. The field is full of yellow, and the birds and pollinators are abundant.

I can add that the summers offer an abundant insect smorgasbord and the winter plenty of seeds. The winter adds a stark beauty to the landscape.

## From Linda Irwin



Linda Irwin's greenhouse is full of overwintering plants. Basking in the warmth and waiting for spring to arrive are her succulents, geraniums and a *Dracena*.

## From Dennis Mohn



I planted 6 witch hazel this fall and am waiting to see if they will do anything this spring or if it will be next fall before I get some of those fragrant blooms. I planted 3 varieties for blooming from late November/ December thru March/April. I'm hoping next year will have a little more color and aroma.

This is my newest addition. A *Camelia Japonica* 'April Tryst.' I haven't decided where it is going to spend eternity. It is getting ready to bloom. It is listed for our growing zone even though it says zone 7.

And, here is some of my French Lavender, *Lavandula stoechas*, from last summer wintering over and making my breezeway smell nice. Although English Lavender may be more fragrant, I find this variety easier to grow in our area.

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## From Sue Sivey

**(Top left)** I harvested ginger and turmeric last week from plants growing under lights. **(Bottom right)** I just started a kale mix and Swiss chard mix to use for micro greens and then let grow out for spring seedlings. **(Top right)** Rosemary, Lemongrass, Thyme, and Culantro (not cilantro) growing indoors under grow lights.



**From Lori Everett**



Last vase of fresh flowers



November Garden



Beautiful toad lily seedheads



Front greenery with Secret winterberry in window box

## From Sue Cook



Garden structures in winter can say even a bad hair day can be beautiful!



Nothing like cheerful Winterberry, bought at the Secret Winterberry Sale in November, to brighten the holidays. After the holidays, just remove the ribbon and you have a beautiful winter arrangement that you and the birds will love.



Even in winter, garden signs remind us of the spring renewal that soon awaits us.

## Vegetable Garden Answers

1. Tomatoes
2. This fruit is native to North America and was domesticated in 1920 in New Jersey.
3. Wild carrots were any color but orange in the wild. Purple was most common. Dutch botanists developed the orange carrot by breeding North African yellow carrots with more common purple and red carrots.
4. The *Ipomoea* family, which consists of Morning Glory flowers.
5. They were domesticated in the Andes Mountains of South America about 10,000 years ago by the Incas.
6. Asparagus
7. Lettuce! In theory, one could (eventually) make a rubber band from lettuce!
8. Persia (modern-day Iran). Arabs introduced spinach to the Spaniards, and Spaniards introduced spinach to the Americas.
9. Christopher Columbus brought them back to Europe, and Spaniards and Portuguese took them to India and SE Asia right after Columbus introduced them.
10. Cucumbers, which are among the oldest cultivated vegetables, and may have come from a wild species in the foothills of the Himalayas.
11. Peas have been traced back as far as 3000 BCE in Switzerland. Lentils and Beets were domesticated around 8000 BCE in the Fertile Crescent. But the Beets that we eat today were not developed until the second or third century AD.
12. South America
13. Popcorn
14. Strawberries
15. Apples

### Sources:

*The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Fruits, Vegetables, and Herbs: History, Botany, Cuisine.* 2017, Chartwell Books. Bacon, Josephnie, et. Al.

*How Carrots won the Trojan War: Curious (but True) Stories of Common Vegetables.* Rebecca Rupp. ©2011 Rebecca Rupp.

*The \$64 Tomato: How one man nearly lost his sanity, spent a fortune, and endured an existential crisis in the quest of the perfect garden.* Alexander, William ©2007 Algonquin Books.

*Apples* Browning, Frank. ©1998 by Frank Browning. North Point Press.

## Upcoming Events

Pruning Workshop	March 8	9:00AM-2:00 PM
Guided Tree Walk	March 9	1:00PM-2:30 PM
Guided Bird Walk	April 8	9:00AM-11:00AM
Guided Tree Walk	April 12	1:00PM-2:30PM
Guided Tree Walk	May 10	1:00PM-2:30PM
Members Only Plant Discovery Day Pre-Sale	May 12	3:00PM-4:00PM
Plant Discovery Day	May 13	9:00AM-1:00PM
Annual & Perennial Herbaceous Plant Workshop	May 24	9:00AM-4:00PM
Floral Botany	June 1	9:00AM-3:00PM
Whiz Bang Science Show	June 8	7:00PM-8:30PM
Secret Garden Fair	June 10	9:00AM-4:00PM

—Edited by Pat Warner