THE HORT REPORT

NEWSLETTER OF THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF MARYLAND, INC | FALL 2023

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Fall is my favorite season! I love the crispness of the air, the changing colors of leaves, and the festivals that seem to be held every weekend.

It also makes me think of winter, which will be upon us before you know it. If you've ever thought about sowing seeds in the winter, be sure to read Suzy Fuquea's fabulous article about it, which features Mount Washington gardener Elena Blasco-Colmenares. You will even learn how to do this yourself!

If you've read my notes in past issues, you know that I'm a novice gardener—at least compared with most of you. But I love to learn.

This fall, my husband and I will be making plans for our garden in 2024. During the past year, we had a dead tree removed, an above-ground pool installed (which made us some of the most popular people in our friends' circle), and consulted with an engineer friend about replacing part of our deck and removing an old shed. That's some of what we'll be doing this season.

But I find myself also thinking about planting bulbs for the first time in my life. That's due to Nancy Blois' story "What's Your Favorite Bulb?" Hort members have some beautiful ones, and it has made me want to look into them.

Of course, this will mean doing research, talking with Pete Bieneman, and thinking about what we want to welcome into our yard next.

Our engineer friend, who likes to garden, also talked with us about how we can make the area around our pool look more inviting—with plants and mulch or gravel. That's another thing to think about.

This is one of the reasons I love fall—because I feel like I can take time to think: about gardening, about life, and about what's next.

I hope you take some time to decide what you want to add to your world as well.

Do you have a favorite flower? I have always loved roses and daisies. I'll be thinking about how we can add more roses to our garden next year, as our daisies have been taking off like crazy for the past couple of years. I've also always loved lavender. The key is to figure out the best place for it to go on our property.

What's your favorite plant? For Claire Jones, it's the Salvia, which she writes about in this issue's "Plant This!" column. If you've got one—and come on, we know you do!—we'd love to hear about it for a future column. Think about it.

We have so many more fun stories in this issue. Hope you enjoy them!

Have a fabulous fall! And, as always, if you have any ideas for stories or suggestions for future issues of *The Hort Report*, feel free to email me at TheMicheleWojo@gmail.com. And if you'd like to write about something, please get in touch! You don't have to be a professional writer to share a piece for Plant This! After all, that's what I'm here for—to help you out.

Corrections

In the Spring/Summer issue, two photos used on page five (of Hydrangeas and a house with a driveway) which ran with Peter Bieneman's article "Your Garden Needs an Edit" were taken by Craig Zissel.

Also, regarding the story "Native Plants in the Spotlight" by Nancy Blois, Louise Teubner-Rhodes contacted us with a quote from Kirsten Hoffman, who was very involved in working on the Native Plant legislation. Hoffman said, "The part about the Native Plant Program bill is not accurate. The garden clubs worked on the Native Plant Month Resolution. The Green Towson Alliance proposed and wrote the framework for the Native Plant Program Bill. We (the Green Towson Alliance) partnered with the Sierra Club and Maryland Native Plant Society to refine and promote the bill. The garden clubs supported it with written testimony."

The Hort Report regrets the errors.

Cover Photo: Maya Clark

STURDY ROOTS, HIGH PURSUITS

By Maya Clark

"Everything in the universe has a rhythm, everything dances."
—Maya Angelou

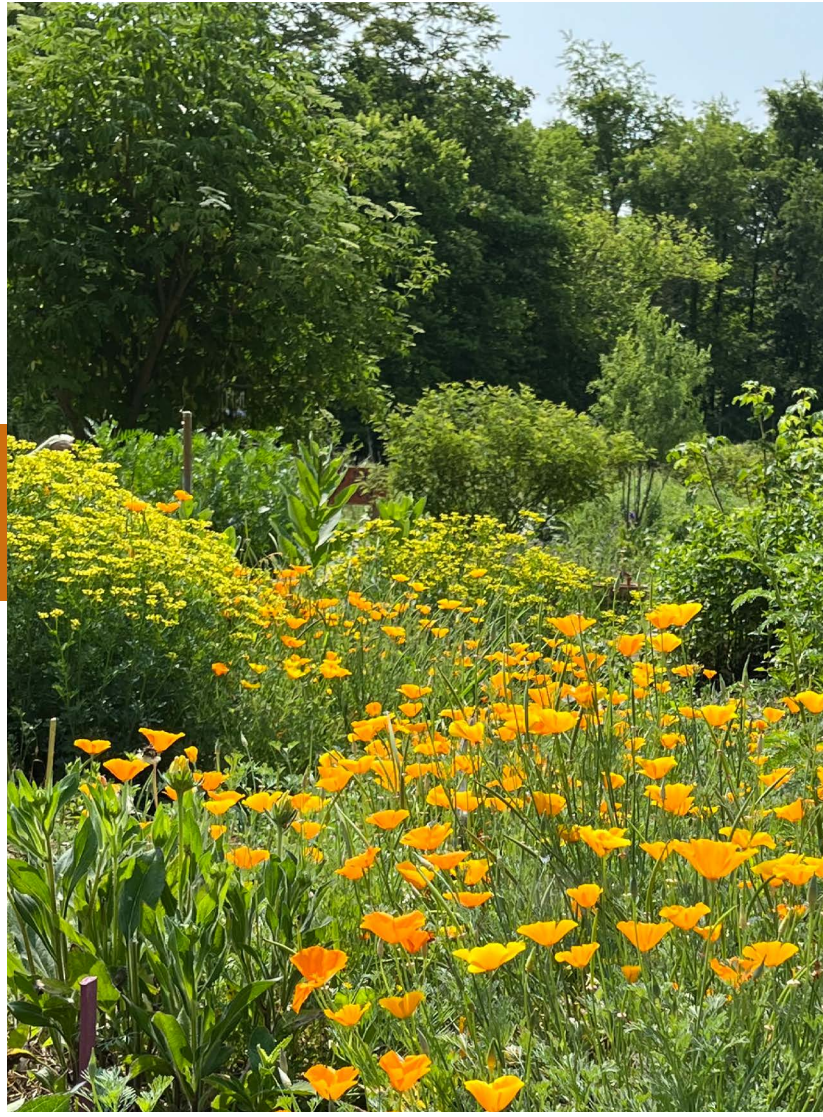
This exact sentiment was instilled in me from a young age by my fearless and visionary mother Hillary Banachowski. She not only told me this, but also demonstrated it unwaveringly throughout my life. Her fascination and love for the natural world led her down the path of becoming an herbalist, an herb grower, and an earth steward.

Throughout my childhood, I was subject to the effects of my mother making her entrance into the world of gardening and herbal remedies. Every sickness was an opportunity to try out her new "slippery elm mint balls," and I ate more kale than I care to remember.

However much I complained about these witchy practices back then, I am a firm believer to this day that nothing cures a cold faster than a raw clove of garlic.

This holistic approach to wellness not only heals the body, but also reconnects the practitioner back to earthly origins. I am grateful for my upbringing and am inspired by the herbal sanctuary my mother has created.

A Maryland native, my eccentric mother started her business Sacred Roots in 2012 in Frederick, Maryland. It began as a one-woman operation, with her installing edible food and herb gardens, giving plant talks, and selling dried herbs. Shortly after, she began working in the gardens of renowned ethnobotanist Dr. James Duke of the Green Farmacy in Fulton, Maryland. My mother absorbed his wealth of herbal knowledge, and the plans of starting her own medicinal herb farm began to brew.



California Poppy *(Eschscholzia californica)* growing at Sacred Roots.

Photo: Maya Clark

STARTING THE SANCTUARY

In 2016, my mother and I moved onto 34 acres of land in Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

Previously, the land had been farmed as a corn monoculture for years. This left the soil in dire condition. It had almost no organic matter present; it was compacted, and there were uncontrollable fields full of thistle and johnsongrass.

When I wasn't busy being an obstinate teenager, I would help her attempt to tame some of the wildness so she could start growing. After taking a bushhog to the fields, we would cover large areas of land with a tarp. The weeds below would get cooked in the hot summer sun and could be easily removed a month later when we removed the plastic. After the addition of aged horse manure from next door, the soil was rototilled to aerate and incorporate the new organic material.

We didn't know this at the time, but what we were practicing was the beginning stages of regenerative agriculture. After much sweaty work, the first growing season at Sacred Roots Herbal Sanctuary could begin.

By this time, my mother had acquired extensive knowledge about herbal remedies. All the perennials that were already familiar to her—like Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), and Beebalm (*Monarda didyma*)—demonstrated spectacular health benefits to humans.

The newly prepared fields were planted with all kinds of perennials—each with a specific remedy in mind. An Elderberry tree was incorporated into the planting bed to provide shade for some of the more sun-sensitive plants.

YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITY

Now in its seventh growing season, the garden is overflowing with strong, healthy, beautiful plants. Bees bustle from flower to flower, grateful for the sweet nectar. Our cat, Suki, stalks around under the cover of the tall Borage, while Tulsi, our wiry, little dog, rests in the shade of the Elderberry tree. Herbs are harvested into large, woven baskets by me, my mother, and usually an intern or two (who rotate every season). We chat while working, allowing silence now and then to listen to the sounds of the birds singing. It is a prosperous time.

The farm is now home to a bustle of year-round activity. There is an herbal CSA, plant sales from spring to fall, public garden tours and classes, a year-long herb grower's school, and a yearly festival known as the Shenandoah Valley Herbal Gathering.

A community has risen out of Sacred Roots, as a place where people can come to reconnect with the earth, each other, and themselves. Although the farm has gained momentum in the past years, in production and public recognition, it remains a calming oasis where people and plants can coexist in a totally symbiotic relationship.

INNOVATION GOES MAINSTREAM

While I have moved on from the farm and find myself as a Baltimore resident now, I still visit it now and then to bask in the glory of the gardens that my mother has worked so tirelessly to create. She maintains the farm with help from a rotating community of earth-loving people, who volunteer or intern with her during the growing season.

Sacred Roots owner Hillary Banachowski harvests elderberries. Photo: Ashley Bullock

In Baltimore City in 2023, I am excited to see coffee shops and boutiques beginning to integrate herbs into their products. Using herbal remedies for minor ailments is becoming more mainstream and to everyone's benefit. However, sourcing herbs from ethical sources is extremely important, as it will affect the lives of the workers who harvest them, the overall potency of the dried herb, and the environment in which it is grown.

Sacred Roots Herbal Sanctuary provides a model for a completely environmentally sustainable operation. The entire farm is powered by solar energy and is a part of the United Plant Savers Botanical Sanctuary Network, which is dedicated to the conservation of native medicinal plants

throughout the United States. Sourcing herbs from responsible growers is a way to support the up-and-coming wave of farming that provides an environmental and social benefit to the people and land involved.

I hold dear my memories of living in West Virginia, working in the gardens with my mother. But I find comfort knowing that she is still carrying the torch, which only grows in brightness by the year.

I carry her passion in my own pursuits, here in the city. I am pursuing studies in the environmental field, in hopes of creating positive changes on a large scale. I feel optimistic that systemic changes can be made to lead our world into a more sustainable future.

I have seen what that looks like on a small scale, and it is truly a goal to strive for.

Maya Clark is a sophomore at Towson University pursuing studies in Geography and Environmental Planning.

The Hort Report cover photo:
An assortment of various flowers from Nigella, Salvia, Mullein, Yarrow, and Daisies grown at the farm.

Prickly Pear Cactus *(Opuntia humifusa)* is another plant on the farm. Photo: Maya Clark

Salvia 'April Night' and 'Rose Marvel' paired with *Nepeta* 'Cat's Pajamas' and *Phlox* 'Triple Play'

Plant This!

This column features a favorite seasonal plant of an HSM member.

Salvia 'Nekan'

By Claire Jones

Favorite Salvias of a Garden Designer

With just over 1,000 varieties, Salvia is a huge genus in the mint family and comes in a dizzying variety of colors, sizes, and hardiness. Whether they're annual, perennial, biennial, or shrubs, most of the varieties have stunning and colorful flowers as well as fragrant foliage.

Tolerating a wide variety of soils and conditions, Salvias need minimal water to thrive. As a garden designer for 25 years, I rely on this family again and again for my perennial border designs.

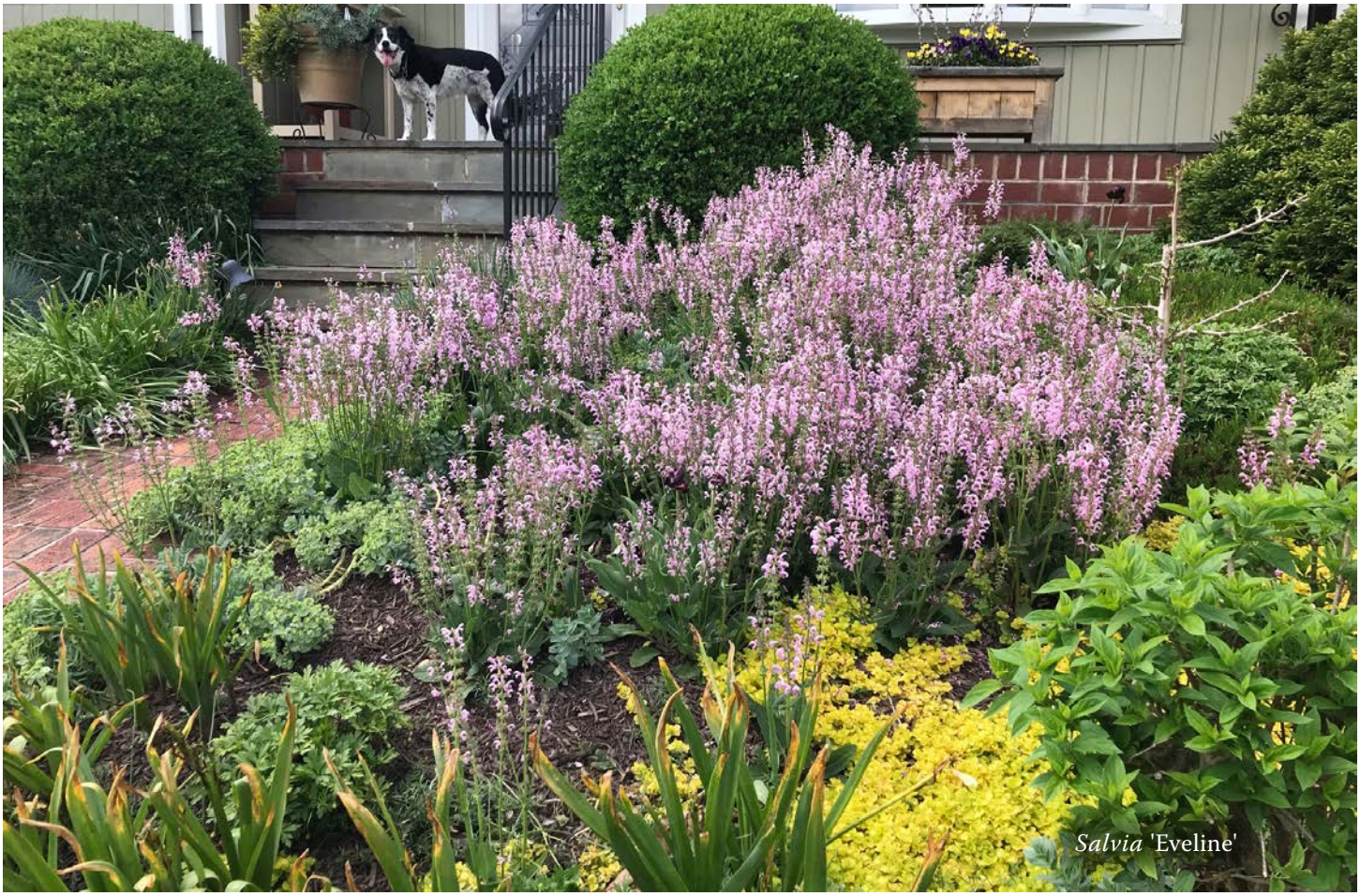
Salvias as Problem Solvers

For big impact or as problem solvers for tricky situations—including a heavy deer presence—I nearly always select a member of the perennial Salvia family, commonly known as Meadow Sage. When other plants start to fade, count on versatile Salvias to give you vibrant long-lasting color in a rich palette of pinks, purples, whites, and blues. Reliable rebloomers, you can count on extending your Salvia bloom from spring until the end of summer with careful selections.

There is a plethora of tender Salvias that will further extend your color show until the first frost hits as well. But as a garden designer who specializes in creating colorful herbaceous borders, I use the reliably hardy Salvias extensively in my designs and have found some that are more useful than others.

Photos: Claire Jones

Salvia 'Eveline'



Salvia 'Eveline'

Salvia sylvestris 'May Night,' a 1997 Perennial Plant of the Year, is an intense indigo-purple blooming performer that does well in the clay soil that we are "blessed" with in the mid-Atlantic. But I nearly always pick another variety for their more compact size and wider range of colors.

Pollinator and Bird Favorites

Salvia nemorosa 'Rose Marvel' and 'Blue Marvel' are truly little marvels in the landscape. Just 12-inches high, these floriferous plants have repeat blooms all summer long if you keep them deadheaded with a quick slash of your trimmers. If you prefer to leave it alone, though, the stalky seed heads add interest and food for a wide range of birds, including finches.

The large-flowered magenta pink spikes of 'Rose Marvel' can be seen from far away, and, like all Salvias, is a pollinator favorite, attracting bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. I have watched hummers zip in and out of Salvia flowers very methodically in search of nectar. They're workhorses of the front of the border, and grouping them together in drifts of three to six gives you a bigger impact. Readily available in nurseries, this is a no-brainer for deer-browsed sunny areas.

Salvia 'Eveline' is a showy pastel pink Salvia that you rarely see in gardens, but is one of my favorites and selected by Dutch garden designer Piet Oudolf for its superior color and extra-long spikes of flowers.

When it blooms, you just see flowers, no foliage, and it brings a soft pink to the border that blends well with most any other color. Very tough, it tends to wander around, but is easy to remove. A front-of-the-border plant, the foliage, like most other Salvias, is a basal rosette of fragrance and the flowers are perfect for bouquets.

Salvia verticillata 'Purple Rain', another pollinator magnet, entices with its densely packed velvety purple blooms that can get 24" tall on upright reddish stems. The foliage is especially attractive with wavy, heart-shaped leaves. I saw this cultivar in Scotland for the first time and have used it in many gardens since for an eye-catching selection.

For the earliest blooming Salvia, I pull *Salvia nemorosa* Sallyrosa™ 'April Night' out of my quiver to extend the blooming season from mid-spring into summer. Electric violet-blue flowers appear a month earlier than the award-winning May Night, and its petite size gets it a prime spot at the front of the border.

Native Choices

If you prefer a native Salvia, there are several semi-native Salvias that fit the bill and extend the color palette. *Salvia greggii* 'Arctic Blaze Red', or Autumn Sage is hardy to our zone and will bloom from May until frost. This is a totally different animal from the other Salvias mentioned and is native to Texas, so it enjoys hot and dry conditions. More shrub-like than the other Salvias, it can grow up to two feet tall and is a blaze of color in the mid-part of a border.

There is a new Mirage series of Autumn Sages—Mirage Cherry Red, Cream, Salmon, Deep Purple, and Soft Pink —that I want to try out. I cut my Arctic Blaze back by ⅓ in August to get another fiery flush of blooms to last the rest of the season.

My final last pick for a favorite sage is *Salvia azurea* 'Nekan', or Pitcher Sage, native to the southern United States. While visiting the Delaware Botanic Gardens, I was struck by this Piet Oudolf meadow selection with spectacular sky-blue flowers and linear foliage. Extremely drought tolerant (the roots can extend 6–8 feet underground), this is one tough plant. Hardy to our area and with an open stature, this plant is one I sought out and now have several of them spotted through my garden. It needs some space, so I planted them towards the back of my borders, as it can grow four feet high. Because it's not aggressive, I plan on adding some more specimens and find that it does well in partial shade. I think it should be more widely used.

Excellent sources of food for all kinds of wildlife, especially for our Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Salvia is a plant that keeps on giving throughout the growing season. Leaving the final spent stems for the birds, the stalks are easy to clean up in the spring for another round of blooming. Easy to pair with other blooming plants, especially Nepetas, make them a pleasure to design with.

Would you like to write about your favorite plant? If so, email editor Michele "Wojo" Wojciechowski at TheMicheleWojo@gmail.com.

Salvia 'Purple Rain'

What's Your Favorite Bulb?

By Nancy Blois

The catalogs for spring-blooming bulbs have arrived. As always, it's hard to choose which of these beguiling beauties should find their way into our gardens. We asked a few of our members which they look forward to when the garden is just stirring back to life.

Photo: Suzy Fuquea

Fritillaria meleagris

- **Margaret Wright** looks forward to the early bloom of the Galanthus that have flourished in her garden over the years. As the garden has matured, she especially values some of the smaller *Narcissus*, like 'Thalia' and *Cyclamen coum* that can be tucked into small spaces.

- **Suzy Fuquea** loves *Fritillaria meleagris* "at all stages of growth. It's exciting when the wispy leaves appear above ground, as well as when the snake's head flower opens to reveal the unusual checkered flower. But I really like when the seed head turns brown and upright and moves in the breeze."

  Narcissus 'Rapture' are "the first of my narcissus bulbs to come up in the spring. With their reflexed petals, they appear to be leaning into a strong wind. It makes me smile every time I walk by them."

- Avid Plantsman **Jim Dronenburg** writes:

  "I've had a few bulbs over the years, and I really don't like to play favorites, but of course I have them. All take neglect—as they must, in our garden. None of these are the big, showy things.

  To start off the year (and start before the year) are the snowdrops, in particular *Galanthus elwesii var. monostictus*. This is large in all its parts, grows for me in sunny spots—but also where it may be shaded in the summer—but gets winter sun—before the shrubs and trees leaf out. There are forms that bloom in November, Christmas, and January. They run about five inches high in bloom, do not (at least for me) take special soil, and can be planted, as I do, in the edges of the lawn. (This means, though, that you have to leave the edges unmowed until the snowdrops die down.) *Galanthus nivalis* is a smaller snowdrop and is generally the one sold in the box stores; it is smaller than *G. elwesii* but extends the snowdrop season into February. Both are very vigorous and one bulb will become a clump in two to three years. They also spread from seed. A large patch of snowdrops is quite showy. Don't bother with the expensive varieties—if they did well, they wouldn't be expensive."

He continues, "Among the many daffodils I have—and I lose track, because I get two or three new ones each year—three stand out. The first is 'Rijnveld's Early Sensation.' It is a King Alfred type, perhaps eight inches tall. If December is consistently warm, it will come up and bloom as early as the New Year. If December is cold, though, it may bloom as late as March. A good doer, doesn't need attention—but waiting for it is fun."

"The second daffodil we call 'the old farmhouse daffodils' and were here in drifts before we arrived. One of them is a King Alfred type but smaller,

Photos: Daniel Weil

blooming in late March. This may be the species *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*. Or it may not. I don't care. It has literally survived a bulldozer spreading the earth it was in all over the lawn."

"The third daffodil is 'Thalia,' a beautiful pure white with several blooms to a stem, narrow petals, small cup. Pure elegance. Very fragrant. This one is mainstream, easily and cheaply gotten. If you have room, plant a large group of them."

"*Eranthis* is not a bulb but a tuber, but it's still one of my favorites. It comes up with a ruff of green leaves maybe two inches high, with a shiny deep yellow flower in February or March. Don't try to buy it; the tubers do not take kindly to drying-for-commercial sale. Instead, simply ask someone for a clump of theirs. Moved 'in the green,' they never look back. They spread from seed, too, and in two or three years you can divide the clump and spread it about."

"In the 'sweet little thing' category I have to put *Chionodoxa*. Back when I planted them, in a single row along a bed edge in the lawn, it was a sunny spot. Now the trees have grown, and there's as much moss as grass in that spot—but there is this wonderful spotting of tiny blue flowers. They are spreading out in the lawn too. Well worth having, if you like the little, humble things."

"And finally, I have to mention *Ipheon*. This clumping bulb sends up its leaves in the fall, and come April, bears flowers on perhaps three-inch stalks. It tolerates neglect. I only have it in sunny spots; I should experiment. South of here it will invade lawns. Southerners call it a weed. I love it.

I have all sorts of bulbs. But I would never, never be without these."

Discussing Winter Sowing with gardener, Elena Blasco-Colmenares

By Suzy Fuquea

In early May, I visited with Elena Blasco-Colmenares, a passionate gardener and seed sower, who lives in the Mount Washington area of Baltimore City. When she moved into her home about 20 years ago, the area surrounding the house consisted of a bit of grass, a few shrubs, and some trees.

You wouldn't know that when walking though the garden today. She has replaced a grassy slope in the front with a border of perennials and shrubs that provide color and texture throughout the growing season, a small seating area, and two small water features made from large pots which have been sunk into the ground.

In the back garden, there is a woodland garden, a vegetable garden, an aquatic garden, and even an alpine garden. What is most impressive about her garden is not the variety of plants she has managed to pack into her modestly sized area nor is it the sheer number of plants that she has—it is the fact that Elena has started nearly every plant in her garden from seed, including the water and alpine plants and trees.

Elena told me that she became interested in propagating plants from seed at the age of 5 or 6 in her native Spain. She found that she enjoyed the challenge of growing something from seed and the reward of seeing the plant thrive. An example of a unique plant that she has sown successfully is this beautiful *Nelumbo nucifera*, also known as the sacred lotus.

Nelumbo nucifera

***Nelumbo nucifera* seeds being propagated in water**

When we toured her garden, I noticed that she was already collecting seeds from this year's flowers. She had organized bags tied around the seed heads of her tree peonies that had just finished flowering. Once collected, she will store the seeds in her refrigerator until she is ready to sow them.

Before and After

Photos: Elena Blasco-Colmenares
*Suzy Fuquea

***Capturing tree peony seeds**

Not all of Elena's seeds come from her garden. She does purchase seeds online. She provided this list of online seed companies that she has used:

- ***Botanical Interests***
- ***Everwilde Farms***
- ***Hayefield***
- ***Jelitto***
- ***Outsidepride***
- ***Prairie Moon Nursery***
- ***Select Seeds***
- ***Sheffield's Seeds***
- ***Swallowtail Garden Seeds***

Meticulous records are one of the keys to Elena's seed-sowing process. She has notebooks containing photos and details about each of the plants in her garden. In addition, she also showed me two spreadsheets that she has created. The first contains facts about the seeds she sows—such as where they were acquired, germination temperature, days to germination, etc. The second "Capturing tree peony seeds" spreadsheet contains data about the plants such as when it blooms, growing conditions, and color of the bloom.

Here is a small sample of plants that Elena has successfully grown from seed.

For 2024, Elena has a long list of interesting plants to try sowing from seed, including *Crocosmia masoniorum*, *Vernonia lettermannii*, and *Centranthus ruber*.

As an active member of the Mount Washington Garden Group, she regularly shares her knowledge of seed sowing and plants with the group. She maintains a little seed library that is stocked with seeds she has collected from her garden, and she provides detailed sowing instructions with each packet she offers.

For many years, Elena, like many gardeners, started her seeds indoors with heat mats and grow lights on shelves in her basement. But she found that she did not have enough space to start everything she wanted to grow. As a solution to the space issue, Elena began sowing hardy perennials outside about five years ago using a technique called "winter sowing". Finding the process of winter sowing both successful and less work than indoor seed sowing, two years ago she began sowing annuals and vegetables outside as well.

What is Winter Sowing?

Winter sowing is a method of starting seeds outdoors in recycled plastic containers in winter. It mimics the way seeds germinate in nature, while protecting them from harsh weather and animals. By exposing the seeds to the freezing and thawing cycle over winter, they are able to break dormancy and germinate. The containers then provide protection for the seedlings as they emerge in the spring.

There are many advantages to using this method of propagation. First of all, it is much cheaper than setting up an indoor growing system. The only costs are soil and seeds. Also, for those with little indoor space, it gives them the opportunity to sow a wider variety of seeds. There is no need to not grow things because there isn't enough shelf space. Damping off is

not a problem, and there is no need to harden off the seedlings. The seedlings are hardier and not as leggy than those started indoors. The only attention they need is the occasional check to make sure the soil doesn't dry out.

There are disadvantages as well. The weather can't be controlled, and there is a risk of having a warm spell that causes the seeds to germinate too early and die off if followed by a freeze. Another disadvantage is that it will take time to prick out and transplant the seedlings.

What Supplies Are Needed to Winter Sow?

You'll need recycled plastic containers such as one-gallon milk jugs, two-liter soda bottles, or, in Elena's case, 2.5-gallon water containers. It doesn't really matter what containers are used as long as they let light in and can accommodate 3–4 inches of soil.

While many websites recommend potting soil, Elena has been successful using a mix of 50% potting soil and 50% peat moss for most seeds and a mix of 50% garden soil and 50% sand for the alpines. She is looking at substituting coir for peat moss next season.

Also needed are scissors or an Exacto knife to cut the containers, duct tape, labels, a permanent marking or paint pen, seeds, and an outdoor location protected from strong winds.

What Can be Winter Sown?

Any perennial that is naturally hardy in your growing zone, hardy annuals, cool-season vegetable crops, and some herbs can be winter sown. When looking for plants to winter sow, look for these terms:

- cold stratification
- scarification
- self-sowing
- cold-hardy
- direct sowing outside in the late fall or early spring

Another helpful tip is to look for varieties containing polar, alpine, or Siberian in the name.

When to Winter Sow?

The recommended time to winter sow perennials, hardy annuals, and vegetables is between the December and March depending upon the weather in your area. Seeds that don't require a cold period can be sown in March or April. Don't be tempted to start before the Winter Solstice.

How to Winter Sow?

Whatever container you choose for winter sowing, it will need drainage holes in the bottom and ventilation holes on top. The heated tip of a Phillips-head screw driver works well for creating these small holes in plastic.

If using a milk jug, slice around the circumference of the container about 5" above the bottom, but don't completely separate the two halves. Leave approximately an inch under the handle to act as a hinge.

Add 4 inches of potting or container soil or Elena's mix to the bottom of the container. Some recommend placing a coffee filter in the bottom of the container before adding the soil to keep it from seeping out of the bottom.

Sprinkle seeds over the surface and tamp down to ensure contact with the soil. Add a thin layer of additional soil, depending upon the requirements of the seeds you are sowing, and water gently.

Close the lid of the container, and secure the top and the bottom using duct tape.

It is important to label the containers—and in more than one place—so that you can identify the seedlings in the spring. Use the permanent marker or paint pen to write the name of the plant on the top of the container. Harsh weather could cause this label to fade,

so a label inside the container and duct tape label on the bottom as backup is not a bad idea.

Once all of them are ready, place the containers outside in an area that receives winter sun and is protected from wind, but where they will get exposure to rain and snow. It is important to check on them occasionally to make sure they don't dry out.

When temperatures warm in the spring, you will need to start checking them and open the containers or cut larger holes in them to provide air circulation and make sure they don't overheat.

For more information about winter sowing: The University of Maryland Extension created a video explaining the process in more detail. You can watch it on YouTube: All the Dirt on Winter Sowing.

For those who use Facebook, the Winter Sowers group has several winter sowing guides available to members.

Suzy Fuquea is an HSM member as well as a Baltimore City Master Gardener, whose garden was included in the Mount Washington garden tour in May.

Here is Elena's winter sowing area on her south facing back patio in three stages of the process.

Before and After **8–12 Weeks Later**

On the left, the containers soon after being sown. In the middle, the containers are exposed to the elements over the winter. And on the right, the tops of some of the containers have been removed to provide air circulation.

When the seedlings are large enough, transplant them into the garden and enjoy!

FALL LECTURES 2023

Our Fall 2023 Lecture Series will return to the auditorium at the Vollmer Center located at Cylburn Arboretum. The lectures are scheduled to commence promptly at 7:30 p.m. We are delighted to inform you that the Livestream option will be available once more, allowing remote attendees to participate. Additionally, subject to the speaker's approval, we will offer a recording of the lectures, exclusively accessible to registered attendees for a limited duration.

SEPTEMBER 12

Nancy Lawson, the Humane Gardener, "A World of Discovery: Gardening for Wildlife Senses." Join Nancy, author of *The Humane Gardener* and the new *Wildscape: Trilling Chipmunks, Beckoning Blooms, Salty Butterflies, and Other Sensory Wonders of Nature*, for an insightful and personal exploration into the sensory lives of animals and plants.

OCTOBER 10

On Beyond Carex, a look at native grasses especially well-suited to our Maryland gardens.

NOVEMBER 14

Jan Johnsen, Johnsen Landscapes, "Serenity by Design." Jan's philosophy of landscape design "begins with the idea that the green world replenishes us. If we can bring that nourishing into our backyards and city spaces by making them beautiful and inviting to use, then we have succeeded in making our lives a little richer."

DECEMBER 12

Robert Shaut, Casey Trees, "Planting for the Future, Maintaining for Today." Climate change makes selecting species for the future more and more imperative, and enhanced maintenance will help ensure success.

TOOL DRIVE FOR THE FARM ALLIANCE OF BALTIMORE

By Lenel Srochi-Meyerhoff

Despite uncertainty of the Lecture's location and unpredictability of the weather, things worked out well for the 2023 Tool Drive held on May 9.

First, the sun came out!

And at least eight Farm Alliance of Baltimore (FAB) farmers and staff members attended.

It was interesting learning about each of their farms and what they were growing, including mushrooms! The farmers were enthusiastic and grateful.

Objects of the common sort (shovels, gloves, weeders, etc.) and of the uncommon sort (a leaf blower, 16 raspberry plants, etc.) were donated. The farmers were excited with the variety of donations, and some immediately eyeballed what tools they would like to put to use at their farms.

A big shout out to Hort member Skip Pearre, who took FAB's Wish List in hand to Home Depot and purchased numerous requested items to donate!

And, many thanks to Board members Bill Yonkers and Nancy Raskin for being curbside volunteers in loading FAB's van (wonderfully decorated with veggies), which was parked curbside at the Vollmer Center at Cylburn Arboretum.

Members of the Horticultural Society were happy to partner with FAB on the Tool Drive again this year. We're delighted that some of the donated items will be deployed for providing fresh produce for food deserts in Baltimore. We're proud to be a community partner of this FABulous organization. We're looking forward to cooler weather and the opportunity to visit some of the FAB farms in the fall.

The Relationship Between HSM and FAB

Co-Executive Director of FAB Mariya Strauss says that they have been the recipients of the Hort's tool drive for about four years now.

"We are a collective of urban farmers and community gardeners from across the city," Strauss says. "The spirit of generosity that the members of the Hort brought to this tool drive was inspiring to us. Because we are a membership organization just like the Hort, this has always felt like a perfect fit of two grassroots membership groups with one another. The members of the Hort give their tools, and the farmers in the farmlands of Baltimore give back to their communities in a way of paying it forward by feeding people in their communities fresh, healthy produce that they grow right here in Baltimore."

Presently, FAB has 38 farms and gardens making up their membership. Strauss says that they estimate these farmers provide fresh produce for anywhere from 3,000 to 5,000 people in Baltimore.

Salomey Mettle */ Harlem Park Community Farm*
Myeasha Taylor */ The Farm Alliance Black Butterfly Teaching Farm*
Liz Lamb */ 6th Branch*
Shanice Morris-Sharpe */ Feel Good Florals*
Aria Eghbal */ Black Butterfly Program Graduate*
Bill Yonkers */ HSM Member*

She also shares some exciting news: "As of last year, the Farm Alliance has our own farm for the first time. They've leased land from the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks in Curtis Bay in South Baltimore. Anyone who wishes to come and visit that farm can reach out to me or to my Co-Executive Director Denzel Mitchell."

Strauss says Hort members who would like to visit should email Denzel@FarmAllianceBaltimore.org.

"We very much appreciate the donations. These tools are helping to bring in the harvest as we speak," says Strauss. "We hope that it continues to be a really fruitful relationship."

Welcome to New Members!

The HSM and the Hort Report would like to introduce and give a hearty welcome to our newest members:

The Anuzis Family
Carly Babcock
Nick Chilson
Ruth Cromwell
Marsha Douma
The Doyle Family
Christopher Early
Susan Englehart's Flowers
The Hicks Family
Fran Huber
Deanna Karras
Adam Kutcher
Terry McMann
Joseph O'Connor
The Phibbs Family
Mark Sander & Michael Zephir
Jackie Schwab
Carly Sexton

Thanks for joining us. We're glad to have you here!

We also want to give a shout-out to all of our renewing members as well.
We appreciate that you continue to be part of our gardening family!