



UDBG FRIENDS

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE BOTANIC GARDENS

WINTER / SPRING 2021

Creating a Fruitful Winter Garden

Alexis Bacon, former UDBG annual intern

With December comes gray, bleak days, but color in the winter landscape can help raise the spirits. Looking out the window at the bright red of holly berries against gently falling snow makes planning for a colorful, fruiting winter garden worthwhile. Fortunately, the choices of winter-fruited plants are abundant. Winter fruits come in a rainbow of colors and many provide food for wildlife, especially birds. The following are several plants that will add a touch of vibrancy to a monochromatic winter garden.

When it comes to colorful winter fruit, no other plant can rival the hollies. A unique holly for its vibrant red fruit gracefully held on long peduncles and leaves that lack spines, *Ilex pedunculosa* does not seem like a holly at first glance. The evergreen leaves are smooth, shiny, and sometimes have a slightly wavy margin, bearing a resemblance to *Ficus* leaves. *I. pedunculosa* generally grows to a maximum of 20-30 feet, which makes it a wonderful plant to use in the small home garden. *I. pedunculosa* is also an excellent food source for birds.

Another incredibly beautiful holly for stunning winter interest and superb food source for birds is *Ilex verticillata*,

commonly known as winterberry. Because winterberry shrubs are deciduous, their berries are striking, especially against an evergreen background. As the iconic holly for holiday decorations, winterberry fruits generally come in shades of red. However, the berries of *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Gold' are a glorious apricot color. A dense, rounded shrub which reaches around 6-10' tall, *I. verticillata* 'Winter Gold' is a perfect fixture in any garden for its outstanding ornamental berries.

Daphniphyllum macropodum is one of the only winter-fruited trees that has blue



PHOTO: JOHN FRETT

IN THIS ISSUE

Fruitful Winter Garden	1-4
Director's Corner	2-3
Green Matters	5
Where Are They Now?	6
Plant Sale Highlights	7
Around the Garden	8

TOP: *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Gold' berries provide food for hermit thrush in winter.

Photo: Rick Darke

Cont'd on pg. 4

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Valann Budischak
Acting Director

Winter is often a time of hibernation. You may pass the winter months trying new recipes, reading an additional book or two, conquering a few 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzles, putting a dent in your pile of firewood, and joining in UDBG's expanded array of lectures offered via Zoom. Nothing prevents plant enthusiasts from gathering. However, COVID has put our winter hibernation into overdrive. Let's be honest, we're chomping at the bit to get back out there in the garden. I hope you've received your plant sale catalog and have been armchair plotting, planning, and preparing your shopping list. We've got great plants!

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO OVER THE WINTER?

Thanks to the generosity of so many of you, Andrew Adams (UDBG Horticulture Manager), has been busy marketing and collecting resumes of students interested in interning at the UDBG this summer. Unless COVID's trending takes a wrong turn, we've been approved to host 5 students. To say we're excited is an understatement. Like many gardens, we've extended the right of first refusal to those students that had been selected last year, prior to shut down. The 2021 summer experience will include the installation of a Featured Plant Garden designed by former UDBG intern, Connor Armstrong. The students will bring a design to reality. They will measure, draw, and establish the beds, acquire plant material, and plant both B&B and container plants. Lastly, they'll get some hands-on curatorial experience as they learn to accession plants new to UDBG. We can't wait to introduce them to you.

As artist, Andrew Wyeth, once remarked "I prefer winter and fall, when you feel the bone structure in the landscape." I couldn't agree more. With the absence of foliage, you really appreciate the intricate branching of trees and shrubs. Therefore, winter is ideal for pruning. We've

2021 SPRING PLANT SALE CALENDAR

Thursday, April 1, 12:00 p.m.
Wednesday, April 7, 4 p.m.

Patron Online Store opens
Patron Online Store closes

Thursday, April 8, 12:00 p.m.
Tuesday, April 13, 4:00 p.m.

UDBG Members Online Store Opens
UDBG Members Online Store Closes

Friday, April 30, 4:30 p.m.
Thursday, May 6, 4:00 p.m.

General Public Online Store Opens
General Public Online Store Closes



allocated one day/week to pruning and have been working our way around the garden. Based on the amount of time Andrew spends feeding our chipper, we know we're making an impact.

Planning and preparation for the 2021 trial garden is well-underway. After last year's consolidation, the 2021 garden will return to full capacity featuring rows of glorious colors and textures. Dr. Bob Lyons is busy planning the layout. Bob has generously donated added seeds to augment the All-American Selections and Proven Winners. Please be sure to visit this summer.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to hold our sale in the traditional manner again this year. COVID still holds our world captive. Thank heavens, there's a light at the end of the tunnel. However, for everyone's safety we need to adhere to state, university, and

City of Newark protocols and guidelines which limit the number of people at both indoor and outdoor gatherings. The number of shoppers at our sale at any given time far exceeds those limits. We've been anticipating that this may happen, so we've been planning for both scenarios since last summer. We

will pivot and hold the sale online. While we can't shop together in-person, we're determined to offer you the next best thing. You'll love our enhanced and expanded online store with great images and descriptions of all our plants to ensure a pleasurable shopping experience,

a great complement to our hardcopy catalog. We look forward to seeing you and loading your plant purchases in pick-up.

In the meantime, we wish you continued good health. Thanks for your support!

IN WINTER I PLOT AND PLAN. IN SPRING, I MOVE.

~ HENRY ROLLINS

Ilex verticillata 'Winter Red' near the pond in the Lepidoptera Trail this winter. Photo: Rick Darke



fruit ripening in the fall and persisting through the winter months. Introduced to the United States in 1879, *D. macropodum* is still extremely rare and difficult to obtain; generally, it is only seen at botanic gardens and in the yards of plant collectors. Besides its blue winter fruit, it has long, shiny, evergreen leaves with strikingly red petioles and buds. Although the flowers are easy to miss, they are quite interesting. Female plants exhibit light green flowers in racemes, and male flowers are a bit showier, occurring in raspberry-colored clusters. The light gray, smooth bark contrasts with the deep green leaves beautifully.

Also known for their all-season appeal, viburnums are excellent shrubs especially for their fall and winter fruits. Native to the Northeast United States, *Viburnum trilobum* has coarsely toothed, three-lobed leaves similar to red maples. The leaves turn shades of yellow, orange, red, and purple during the fall. September yields clusters of bright red berries that provide interest until they drop in late winter. In May, the dark green leaves contrast white lacecap flowers. The common name American cranberrybush viburnum refers to the tart berries which taste similar to cranberries.

The shiny purple berries that decorate the branches in clusters on this small, native shrub give it the common name, American beautyberry. To be fair, the berries of *Callicarpa americana* are most stunning in the fall, but often persist into early winter. The flowers of *C. americana* are a light lavender shade, lining the stems in summer before slowly maturing in to the fruit. *C. americana* grows to around 3-8 feet tall, and has sprawling, arching branches.

If you have ever visited the ocean in the northeast United States, you have likely walked past many northern bayberry plants growing along the sand dunes. *Morella pensylvanica* (synonym *Myrica pensylvanica*) is a quite adaptable shrub with the ability to thrive in poor, sandy soil and salt spray, and is very commonly found on the coast. It can be easily identified by the spicy-sweet fragrance of its leathery, bay-like leaves which derives its common name, northern

bayberry. Female plants bear interesting small gray fruits that persist throughout the winter and are commonly used to make bayberry candles. *M. pensylvanica* reaches around 5-12 feet tall and is a wonderful plant to grow in tough sites subject to winter road salting.



Robin on *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Gold'.
Photo: Rick Darke



Myrica pensylvanica berries that are used in bayberry candles. Photo: John Frett



Ilex verticillata 'Winter Gold'.
Photo: Rick Darke

Inspiration abounds in the winter garden, you just have to look closely. Although winter may not be the most vibrant, exhilarating season in the garden, it offers a peaceful subtlety that other seasons do not. Ornamental

fruiting shrubs and trees are an excellent way to bring more interest and color back into your garden during the coldest part of the year. Plan for a beautiful winter garden, and, if you are lucky, you will be able to reap the fruits of your labor.



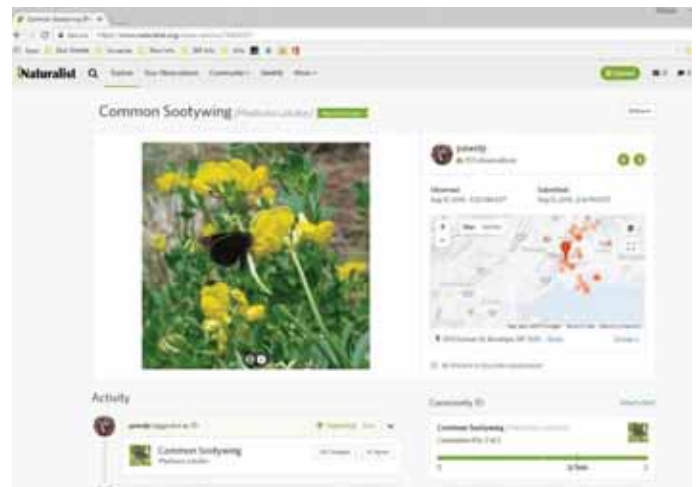
GLEANINGS FROM GREEN MATTERS SYMPOSIUM: PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS FOR ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES

Rebecca McMakin, Director of Horticulture at Brooklyn Bridge Park, an 85-acre organic park in the middle of New York City (if you haven't been, it's worth a visit), spoke at last year's Green Matters Symposium. She manages the diverse park with sustainable ecology in mind, and an eye towards habitat creation for birds, butterflies and soil microorganisms. She suggested management techniques that support wildlife, such as pruning for native bees and birds, attracting beneficial insects and ways to minimize disturbance in the landscape. Her wealth of information is too much to cover in a newsletter, however, below are a few morsels worth sharing:

1. **INaturalist App:** This app is for anyone who hikes in the woods and nature and wants to know what plants and wildlife they encounter but doesn't want to lug around guidebooks. It's a free download for iPhones, iPad and Androids. Take a picture, upload the image, and the app tries to identify the species through image recognition by location or species. <https://www.inaturalist.org>

2. **Minimize disturbance in the garden/landscape:** Leave stems up for winter; cut back late (after a few 50 degree days; let the leaves (remove only for disease) decompose, as it returns to the soil as food and suppresses weeds. Consider leaving dead or dying trees (within reason) to provide habitat and shelter for over 1,000 different species of wildlife and sustenance for birds and other pollinators.

3. **Praying Mantis:** Not all praying mantises are created equal. Many of us are familiar with the nests of overwintering praying mantis nests, mostly the Chinese mantids. Interestingly, according to North Carolina State University's factsheet, "Chinese mantids have no demonstrated value in pest management." These insects present in most gardens are indiscriminate in their prey choices and eat a host of beneficial insects, as well as pests. They can even eat hummingbirds, other mantises, and bees. Here's a chart comparing mantises.



Top image: iNaturalist app

Bottom: Chart comparing of native and non-native Praying Mantis.



Where are They Now? Andrew Adams, Horticulture Manager, UDBG

By Alexis Bacon, former UDBG Annual Intern

Andrew Adams began his horticulture career at 13 years old when he started working for the family's landscaping company. With his father's and brother's help, he maintained the yards of more than 60 customers each week, becoming familiar with a wide variety of plants and gardening styles. He learned to use and service motorized lawn maintenance tools from mowers and weed trimmers to leaf blowers.

Andrew has an inherent talent for operating and repairing machines. At his vo-tech high school, he pursued machining, spending half the day in classes, and half the day working for Dupont as a machinist. His job at Dupont required the focus and precision to use dangerous equipment to carefully shape custom metal parts. In addition to his high school courses, and work as machinist and a landscaper, Andrew became a volunteer fire fighter at the Odessa Fire Company. He went to "fire school" in Dover to learn about firefighting equipment and procedures.

After high school, Andrew enrolled in the University of Delaware as a chemical engineering student. He initially took Dr. John Frett's Woody Landscape Plants course to gain the knowledge to expand and enrich his father's business services. During this course, Andrew discovered a true passion for plants. He applied to become a summer intern at UDBG, which inspired him to double major in Plant Science with a minor in Landscape Horticulture.

As the first Horticulture Manager at UDBG Andrew can be found maintaining the botanic gardens. He is challenged every day by the diversity of plants and gardens he cares for, including the nursery stock for the botanic garden's plant sale. Andrew has just completed his Delaware Certified Nursery Professional exams, with specialties in Landscape, Nursery Production and Greenhouse Production.

Most of all, he enjoys meeting different people in the industry and chatting with the botanic gardens many volunteers.



Andrew Adams. Photo:Valann Budischak



Andrew Adams. Photo:Melinda Zoehrer



2021 SPRING PLANT SALE *HIGHLIGHTS*



Astilbe 'Delft Lace'
Photo: Melinda Zoehrer



Brugmansia 'Pat's Pink'
Photo: Bob Lyons



Geranium 'Azure Rush'
Photo: Melinda Zoehrer



Epimedium grandiflorum 'Spring Wedding'
Photo: Andrew Adam



Callicarpa americana
Photo: Melinda Zoehrer



Calycanthus 'Edith Wilder'
Photo: Rick Darke



Hamamelis xintermedia 'Diane'
Photo: Melinda Zoehrer



Hemerocallis 'Bright Sunset'
Photo: Walters Gardens



Heuchera 'Carnival Watermelon'
Photo: Melinda Zoehrer

► 2021 SPRING PLANT SALE SCHEDULE ON PG. 2



AROUND THE GARDEN: NEW LANDSCAPES EMERGING

If you've been by UDBG within the last few months, you have probably noticed the beautiful metal fencing and the lovely sounds of construction workers yelling to their partner across the building in and around the renovation of Worrilow Hall. Well, they have finally packed up their bags and headed out, and we now have lots of real estate for new plant material. One plant we are excited about that was recently planted in the garden on the north side of Worrilow Hall is *Ilex opaca* 'Dan Fenton'. Some may say, what's so special about a male American Holly? I can just go into the woods to find a look-alike. While the name may suggest a male, this is a female cultivar. *I. opaca* 'Dan Fenton' was selected as the Holly Society of America's Holly of the year for 2020. Rutgers University professor Elwin Orton officially registered this plant in 1987, and after 26 years of observation and trials, it is working its way into the botanic world. This beauty has particularly dark-red fruit and exceptionally dark and glossy foliage. It keeps a pyramidal habit without much pruning. When mature, it reaches a height of 20-25 feet and width of 15 feet. Newark's bird population will relish its berry-laden branches. Like other American hollies, 'Dan Fenton' grows best in full sun to part shade and well-drained soil.

Keep an eye out for this plant in future sales as we work to propagate other rare, unusual, and niche plants. Look for me around the gardens and I will give you the inside scoop. – *Andrew Adams*



Ilex opaca 'Dan Fenton' planted on the north side of Worrilow Hall. Photo: Andrew Adams



Ilex opaca features dark-red fruit and exceptionally dark and glossy foliage. Photo: Andrew Adams

SUPPORT UD BOTANIC GARDENS

Your support helps the advancement, improvement, and success of the UD Botanic Gardens. Your gift enables the gardens to expand as an outdoor classroom, an experiential laboratory, and a research center.



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**AGRICULTURE &
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