

ALL THINGS SECREST

Newsletter of the Secrest Arboretum

Summer 2023

From the Curator—State of the Arboretum

This past spring has brought a plethora of new plants to Secrest's collection. And what kind of doting Curator would I be if I didn't sing the praises of just a few?

Most alphabetical plant lists start with the genus *Acer*, so in this case we'll begin with a rather quotidian native maple known as boxelder, *Acer negundo*. In no way related to the true elders (genus *Sambucus*), this plant's misleading moniker reminds us to avoid putting too much stock in common names. Perhaps our northern neighbors are closer to the bullseye in using the name Manitoba maple. Boxelder is an inconspicuous denizen of low swampy environs and roadsides, where it rarely begs notice. One caveat would be that the curiously dangling flowers (like the legs of wasps in flight) of early spring occasionally catch the eye at 45 miles per hour. We currently grow a striking variegated clone known as 'Flamingo', which sports young leaves having a light pink margin, soon fading to creamy white alongside a green center. Thanks to our rich, moisture retentive soil, its foliage tends to resist sun damage, even into the heat of summer. Said specimen is located just west of Skip and Letty's Water Garden.



Our newest boxelder acquisition is a larger cultivar that I have observed in multiple places in the Rocky Mountain states, but never in the Midwest or East. *A. negundo* 'Sensation' is a clonal aberration that behaves quite unlike any wild boxelder growing cattywampus along a creek (see also *crick*) or at the edge of a vacant lot. Rather than underwhelming yellowish-green fall color, 'Sensation' is lauded for an autumnal display of blazing orange over a period of several weeks. At this point I will underscore that I have only observed this impressive trait out west, possibly due to

consistently dry summer weather. Time, and our pesky humidity, will decide if 'Sensation' is also sensational in northeast Ohio. The first of a pair of new specimens is planted in the Shade Tree Collection immediately south of the Crabapple Plot. The other can be found about 100 feet southwest of the small brick structure south of the Landscape Plant Evaluation Garden (formerly the Garden of Roses of Legend and Romance).

That brings us to letter B for the genus *Betula*, the name bestowed by Linnaeus upon the world's birches. I was recently delighted to receive several plants of *Betula lenta* forma *uber*, the Virginian round-leaf birch (NOT the Virginian ride-share birch) from the USDA's North Central Regional Plant Introduction Station in Ames, Iowa. This is a rare form of our native sweet birch found only along one stream in Smythe County, Virginia. Having distinctly rounded leaves and a smaller stature than *B. lenta*, it was initially described as a distinct species but later reclassified when a small group of only seventeen trees was "rediscovered" in 1974. Since then, it has been propagated and shared with botanical institutions worldwide to aid in its conservation. Our plants are quite tiny but will someday graduate from the greenhouse to our outdoor arboreal menagerie.

Finally, a plant from the genus *Cercis* caps off my initially unintended alphabetical progression. The latest offering in the recent onslaught of new eastern redbud cultivars, *Cercis canadensis* Rise 'N Shine™ ('JN15') was found and introduced by the modern Redbud Baron, Ray Jackson of Tennessee. It was first noticed as a bright gold branch mutation on the popular The Rising Sun™ ('JN2'), also ushered into commerce by Mr. Jackson. Early indications suggest that it may be a bit more cold hardy than its ortet (mother plant). It features the familiar pink spring flowers followed by a caffeinated flash of color throughout the growing season. Our specimen is planted just to the southwest of Miller Pavilion.



Also of note are two new selections of redbud, marketed collectively as the Garden Gems® series, namely Emerald and Amethyst. Reciting their names gently to the tune of a certain Stevie Wonder and Paul McCartney duet is helpful but completely optional. Products of Dr. Denny Werner's breeding program at NC State, these leguminous BFF's will hopefully live in perfect harmony as the first green and purple-foliaged semi-dwarf redbuds for smaller garden spaces. For my fellow nomenclature nerds, their nonsensical cultivar names are 'NC2014-5' (Emerald) and 'NC2017-6' (Amethyst). So far, we only know that rabbits relish their supple young shoots. Next, we'll eagerly observe whether they live up to their horticultural billing.

In even more exciting news, this spring brought three new faces to the Secrest team. First, Alex Lavrisha joined us in April as Secrest's Seasonal Horticulturist. He resides in Wakefield, OH and previously worked at Petitti Garden Center in Avon. He has quickly become a vital part of our staff and will stay with us until the horticultural season wraps up in early December. Second, we are fortunate to have hired two ATI students as summer interns. Julianne Littin is a native of the Toledo area and brings an intense interest in all things horticulture, though she is still undecided as to which branch of

the field she plans to pursue. Joel Ford hails from Columbus and has a particular interest in vegetable crops. Regardless of where their careers take them, their summer at Secrest will provide a solid, practical foundation and hopefully foster a lifelong love of plants.

--Jason Veil

veil.112osu.edu

Meet Matt Shultzman—Secrest Arboretum Program Coordinator

Music lover, guitar player, nature lover, long distance hiker and, of course, Program Coordinator for the Secrest Arboretum. So where do we begin? Matt has always loved the outdoors and took his interests in plants to the ATI and enrolled in the Landscape Horticulture program. While there he started working part time with the OARDC campus grounds crew. Later he applied for his current position in the Arboretum working with Joe Cochran and has become a permanent fixture ever since much to the delight of those who know and work with him.



At any given time, he can be pretty much anywhere. He is like Waldo in the *Where's Waldo* book because he is all over and hard to find. Is he working in the nursery or organizing and hauling plants for the spring and fall Plant Discovery Days? Perhaps you'll find him giving tours or working with interns in the gardens or fixing a water garden. Maybe he's behind the Visitor's Center planting trees or over in the Winterberry section cutting stems for the sale or just about anywhere driving the utility vehicle over the 85-acre Arboretum. As Matt says, "I basically do whatever is needed at the time." Now, that's a great employee.



Matt loves that his job provides learning opportunities which feed his desire as a lifelong learner. He enjoys teaching about Secrest to the public and having people explore to make connections in nature beyond just plants and trees. Some of his favorite times are spent in the specialty gardens such as the prairie, pollinator, and edible plant gardens. More recent endeavors have been with the trial and fragrance gardens. Make sure you come by for a "sniff" located by the Visitor's Center. Matt says it best, "This place can be a catalyst for people to become more curious about plants and nature and care more about the natural world."

When Matt's not trekking around Secrest, he's off trekking through the wilderness across the country. His love of long-distance hiking has taken him on several multi-week journeys through California's Sierra Nevada mountains, including the John Muir Trail. It's not unusual

for him to carry up to an 11-day food supply. Other treks have included the Presidential Range in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, and countless shorter treks throughout the mainland and Hawaii. He's also visited over 100 of the 424 National Park Service sites. He loves the mental, physical, and spiritual challenges of being in the wilderness. His journaling, painting, and reading keep him company along the way, hiking sometimes with a friend but often alone.

The sights and sounds of nature are music to Matt's ears along with concerts and music festivals. "I like music from all over the world, all genres, anything different." He played lead guitar in bands for eight years but not as much now. Let's hope that Matt's friendly personality, positive attitude, and work ethic remain at Secrest Arboretum for many years to come.

--Sue Cook

Ginger—2023 Herb of the Year

Were you ever given ginger ale to calm your stomach? Did you find comfort at the holidays from gingerbread, ginger cookies, or making a gingerbread house? Ginger tastes peppery spicy, with a warm tinge of sweetness and citrus overtones.

Ginger has been designated as the Herb of the Year for 2023 by the International Herb Association. This is the true ginger, *Zingiber officinale* Roscoe. It is in the family *Zingiberaceae*, which includes turmeric and cardamon. True Ginger is a tropical flowering plant whose rhizome (a modified stem, but commonly called a root) is used as a culinary spice and in herbal medicine.

Ginger originated from Maritime Southeast Asia and was domesticated and then transported all over the Pacific. From India, it was transported to the Mediterranean and eventually reached Europe on the Spice Trade Routes. European colonists brought ginger with them to North America, and the Spanish brought it to the Caribbean.

Knowing its tropical origins is useful to growing the plant. Ginger requires shade and warm, humid conditions. Choose a thick gnarly rhizome from an organic source. You can use a rhizome from the grocery store, just look for sprouting buds. Soak the rhizome overnight before planting, let dry and then plant in a flat wide pot since the rhizomes grow horizontally. Fill the pot with well-draining light fertile soil, leaving 2" to the rim. Place soil on the rhizome just to cover the top. Water well and let pot drain, preferably over a pan of pebbles to increase humidity. Since it grows in zones 9-12, here in Ohio you can put it outside in the summer under a tree and bring it indoors under lights for the winter. Allow the plant to develop from 8-12 months if you intend to eat the new growth. The leaves may brown before harvesting. In tropical cultivation, ginger develops a showy, fragrant flower of about a foot tall, with leaves up to five feet.



Ginger is available fresh, frozen as cubes, dried, powdered, pickled, candied, and preserved. The ginger rhizome can be used fresh, peeled, scraped, or grated. To prevent the rhizome from drying out, store in foil in a plastic bag in the freezer. The main chemical responsible for its characteristic smell and taste is gingerol. Heating or drying can change this chemical to the sweeter zingerone, which is less pungent.

Enjoy eating and drinking 2023's Herb of the Year—Ginger.

--Susan Heady



Secrest Select

The main goal of the new Secrest Select program is to create a coordinated means for promoting landscape plants that have been sustainably cultivated at Secrest Arboretum over a minimum time period and consistently exhibit outstanding ornamental, ecological, and functional traits. The program will help educate students, industry professionals, and homeowners about trees, shrubs, and other horticulturally relevant plants proven to thrive in northeast Ohio.

Drawing upon the expertise of Secrest staff and the arboretum's horticultural resources, the program will also provide guidance on how Secrest Select plants can be utilized, cared for, and where they can be obtained. This benefit aligns strongly with the Education and Outreach missions of Secrest Arboretum and the promotional objectives of Friends of Secrest Arboretum (FSA). It will also reinforce the value of the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) and Secrest Arboretum as a trusted resource for plant-related information, as well as the role of FSA as a key supporter of the arboretum. FSA will be the sole funder of the modest annual costs associated with Secrest Select promotional efforts and materials.

Plants eligible for Secrest Select designation must exhibit noteworthy performance within Secrest Arboretum's plant collection for a minimum of 20 years (trees), 10 years (shrubs and vines), or 5 years (herbaceous perennials and groundcovers). The primary criteria determining noteworthy performance are:

- ❖ Relative ease of cultivation, management, and care
- ❖ Tolerance of drought, heat, cold (minimum USDA Zone 6A), and other adverse environmental factors
- ❖ Ornamental characteristics in multiple seasons
- ❖ Useful, functional, or ecological benefits in at least one season
- ❖ Non-invasive and showing no potential for invasiveness
- ❖ Reasonably available in local horticultural commerce, at Secrest plant sales, or via reputable mail order nurseries

The Selection Committee consists of the following individuals:

- ❖ Jason Veil – Secrest Arboretum Curator
- ❖ Paul Snyder – Secrest staff member designated by the Curator
- ❖ Shane Berner – Secrest Arboretum Support Council (SASC) Horticulture and Plant Collections Committee
- ❖ Matt Shultzman – SASC Promotion and Outreach Committee
- ❖ Lori Everett – Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) designated by the MGV Coordinator
- ❖ Robert Everett – FSA President

We are very excited to share a logo for the program that was designed by Stella Howard, a senior at the Wayne County Schools Career Center. Stella is a student in Kayla James' Graphic Design and Photography class. This summer we will be publicizing this program on a new website - SecrestSelect.com. We are actively looking for a web master - let me know if you are interested.



To get started in a meaningful way, the inaugural class consisted of 5 trees, 5 shrubs, and 3 perennials, vines, or groundcovers.

Trees

- ❖ *Acer triflorum* – Three-flowered maple
- ❖ *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* f. *pendulum* (= *C. japonicum* 'Pendulum') – Weeping katsura tree
- ❖ *Maackia amurensis* – Amur maackia
- ❖ *Malus* 'Strawberry Parfait' – Strawberry Parfait crabapple
- ❖ *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* – Dawn redwood

Shrubs

- ❖ *Amorpha canescens* – Leadplant
- ❖ *Hamamelis virginiana* – Common witchhazel
- ❖ *Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Red' – Winter Red winterberry
- ❖ *Lindera angustifolia* (= *Lindera glauca* var. *salicifolia*) – Oriental spicebush
- ❖ *Prunus incisa* 'Kojo-no-mai' (= *P. incisa* 'CarltonLT' & Little Twist®) – Fuji cherry

Perennials/groundcovers

- ❖ *Chelone lyonii* 'Hot Lips' – Hot Lips turtlehead
- ❖ *Heuchera* 'Caramel' – Caramel coralbells
- ❖ *Pachysandra procumbens* – Allegheny spurge

--Bob Everett



Chelone lyonii



Acer triflorum



Lindera angustifolia

Featured Plant—*Amorpha canescens*

Amorpha canescens, Leadplant, is a small native shrub that is underused in our landscapes. In fact, the reason it goes unused is because it remains unknown to most gardeners in our region of the country. *Amorpha canescens* is native to North Dakota south to Texas and Indiana west to Wyoming. Another reason gardeners don't know this plant is because it doesn't look good in a container and would not sell in most garden centers. Yet, once in the ground it begins to grow quite well and becomes a beautiful shrub. *Amorpha* has been thriving in Secrest since 2014.

Amorpha canescens matures anywhere from one to three to six feet tall, though our plants are three feet tall and wide. In its native range, *Amorpha* can be found on dry sandy soils in open woodlands, grasslands, and prairies in full and part sun. It is an adaptable plant and can be used in the landscape in many ways, including rain gardens. As a member of the Fabaceae, it can fix nitrogen through its roots and can be grown in poor rocky soils. It also tolerates our silty loam soil and has been reported to even thrive in clay soils.

The summer foliage is a soft, blue green which is followed by pale yellow fall color. The real ornamental characteristic is the flower. In July through September, 8-10" long spikes of dark purple/blue flowers with cheddar-cheese orange anthers are borne on the plant. The color contrast is incredible! These flowers attract a host of pollinators including bumble bees and numerous other species of native bees.

The common name, leadplant, comes from the belief that the plant indicated the presence of lead in the soil. This turned out to be false, but the name stuck. No serious pests or diseases have been observed on this plant. Due to the outstanding performance of *Amorpha canescens*, it has been named a 2023 Secret Select shrub. *Amorpha* can be found at the entrance to Skip and Letty's Water Garden at Secret Arboretum.



--Paul Snyder
snyder1062@osu.edu



Secret Arboretum Master Gardeners

Who are Secret Arboretum Master Gardener Volunteers?

Giving Back Through Gardening



Visit Secret Arboretum on a Tuesday or Wednesday morning from March through October, and you will likely observe a friendly group with gardening tools in hand. They will be busy weeding, planting, mulching, pruning, and answering visitors' questions. Look closely and you will see their distinctive Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) shirts. These gardeners will be happy to discuss what they are doing and why they willingly volunteer their time to Secret Arboretum.

MGVs are part of a national movement and are dedicated to giving back through gardening and to making a difference throughout the community. In addition to volunteering at Secret, you will find local MGVs tending the gardens at the Wayne County Fair Grounds, providing children's programming, working with A Whole Community, researching Get Garden Answers, giving time to area community gardens, leading arboretum tours, and providing adult education among other activities. Their outreach to the community is research based and encourages best practices.

The nationwide Master Gardener Volunteer Program originated in 1972 in the state of Washington. At that time county extension agents, David Gibby and Bill Scheer, were overwhelmed by many home gardening questions and decided to recruit and to train volunteers in horticultural science to help cover the demand. The successful program has grown from a single county effort to its current outreach in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Canada, and South Korea. Today Ohio alone has over 3,500 MGVs in 66 counties.



The current MGV Program at Secrest Arboretum was reignited in 2016 after a ten-year hiatus. The program, led by Secrest Operations Manager Paul Snyder, is unique in Ohio. Because it is located on the CFAES Wooster Campus, the Secrest MGV Program provides access to the latest agricultural research and allows specialists to serve as teachers. Students are trained in the areas of botany, entomology, soil, pest and disease management, woody and herbaceous plants, fruit and vegetable gardening, pesticide use, lawn care, and wildlife. Since 2016 over 150 individuals have completed the Secrest MGV training.

MGV certification requires 60 hours of horticultural education and 50 volunteer hours. Maintaining MGV certification requires 20 volunteer hours and 10 education hours each year. Secrest MGVs come from varied backgrounds, but they share a common passion for learning about gardening and sharing this knowledge with others. They are a valuable resource for the surrounding communities and are an essential component of Secrest Arboretum operations. For more information on the Secrest Arboretum Master Gardener Program visit <https://u.osu.edu/secrestmg/>

--Pat Warner

--Photos by Linda Palombi

Seasonal Tasks in the Garden

June

- **Prune/Pinch** Remove faded flowers on shrubs and herbaceous perennials to encourage new growth. Remove tops of basil to prevent flowering and encourage bushiness.
- **Daffodil Care** After daffodil foliage has browned, remove, or better yet, plant hostas or other perennials that will grow and cover the dead foliage. Mark the daffodils with a stick so you can dig and move crowded and non-flowering daffodils come this fall.
- **Conserve Water** Put out soaker hoses, mulch beds ideally with composted leaves and grass clippings. If you must water, water the roots deeply 1" per week, preferably in the morning.

July

- **Pluck and Soap** Scout for Japanese Beetles, and other pests, knocking them into a jar of soapy water, preferably in morning since they may be a bit slower moving. A soapy water spray is also effective against aphids and other true bugs.
- **Container Care** As plants grow in limited soil, fertilize to feed new flowering. Continue to pinch off spent flowers and shorten stems for bushiness. Watch for pot drought. Given the small amount of soil or the soil-less mixes that drain quickly, you could add some water-absorbing crystals.
- **Tomatoes for Tomorrows** Watch for flowering and upcoming fruit (or is that a vegetable?!). Continue to support/stake tomato plants, remove suckers, feed, water and remove tobacco hornworms.

August

- **Harvest** Enjoy all those tomatoes, peppers, and zucchini, giving extras to neighbors and food banks. Time to think about seeding cold crops (e.g., lettuce and spinach) for fall harvest.
- **Support** Did you stake those tall plants like dahlias and hollyhocks earlier, to keep them from falling over? Check to see if you need taller supports.
- **Water Watch** Check your rain gauge to see if you are getting about 1" per 7-10 days, if not supplement.
- **Soil Test** Send in soil samples, so you know what amendments are needed, whether in gardens or lawns. Don't fertilize woody plants now, because the new green growth won't have time to harden off before winter.

--Susan Heady

CFAES OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

Master Gardener Volunteers
Secrest Arboretum (Wayne County)

Get Garden Answers
May through October
Call: 330-263-3888 (leave a message)
Online: <https://u.osu.edu/secrestmq/>
Click on the 'Get Garden Answers' tab

Call or visit the website with your questions about plants, gardening, pests and more!



 THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Get Garden Answers

The Secrest Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) Program is ready to provide answers to your home gardening questions from now through October. **Get Garden Answers** provides gardening information, plant identification, garden insect identification, and plant disease diagnostics. This free research line is operated by trained MGVs who research the answer to your question and provide potential solutions.

Contact Get Garden Answers by phone or on the Web. By phone, call 330-263-3888 and leave a message. Online, go to <https://u.osu.edu/secrestmg/> and click on the "Get Garden Answers" tab in the menu. Samples may be dropped off by appointment only. Call 330-263-3888 to set up an appointment.

--Pat Warner



Coming Events

June 1 - Floral Botany, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm (pre-registration and fee)

June 8 - Whiz Bang Science Show, 7:00 to 8:30 pm (Streeter Amphitheater)

June 10 - Secrest Garden Fair, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

June 14 - Guided Tree Walk, 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm (Welcome Center)

June 15 - Shrubaretum, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm (pre-registration and fee)

June 23 - Russian Duo Concert, 6:30 to 8:30 pm (Streeter Amphitheater – pre-registration recommended)

July 6 - Plant Families VI, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm (pre-registration and fee)

July 12 - Guided Tree Walk, 1:00 to 2:30 pm (Welcome Center)

July 13 - Whiz Bang Science Show, 7:00 to 8:30 pm (Streeter Amphitheater)

July 19 - Hydrangea School, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm (pre-registration and fee)

July 21- Steel Drum Concert, 6:30 to 8:30 pm (Streeter Amphitheater – pre-registration recommended)

August 9 - Guided Tree Walk, 1:00 to 2:30 pm (Welcome Center)

August 12 - Guided Bird Walk, 9:00 to 11:00 am (Seaman Orientation Plaza)

August 18 - Jerry Popiel Concert, 6:30 – 8:30 pm (Streeter Amphitheater – pre-registration recommended)

Artists, Crafters, Growers & Fun Showcased in Secrest Garden Fair

Over 50 juried artists and crafters will be featured in the second annual Secrest Garden Fair. The free event will be held Saturday, June 10, 2023 from 9 am—4 pm at Secrest Arboretum, 2122 Williams Rd., Wooster, Ohio.

Along with awesome garden-themed arts and crafts, the event will include activities for kids, a plant sale, and local food trucks. Three free workshops - on herbs, wildflower photography and flower arranging—plus guided tours through the arboretum — make this an event everyone can enjoy. Be sure to get some tickets for the raffle—a new addition to the garden fair fun!

The highlight of the event is of course the craft show. Artists and crafters will line the paved pathway through the arboretum showcasing their handmade wreaths, jewelry, pottery, signs, garden art, and much more. Bird baths, wooden flags, chimes, natural soup, vintage garden décor . . . There will be so much to see!



Local food trucks—Sassy Shay’s Mac ‘n Cheese and FreeWheeling Pizzeria — will be on hand along with Schloneger’s Old Fashioned Ice Cream and new food vendors with baked goods, smoothies, homemade candy, and products made with raw honey.

Free workshops, held inside the Secrest Welcome Center include:

10 AM—Flowers! Composition and Atypical Perspectives Using Almost Any Camera. Tips and tricks will be shared by accomplished photographer Mark Archibald. Mark sees photography as a journey of learning and growth, but also as an avenue to get out to enjoy nature. Mark has won numerous local photography awards as well as a semi-final finish for an Autumn Waterfall photo in an international contest.

12 NOON—Basic Flower Arranging. Master Gardener Volunteer Bridget Painter will demonstrate techniques for creating simple floral arrangements with instructions on flower preparation, preservation, hydration, and container selection. You’ll also learn about types of flowers and different styles of arrangements.

2 PM—Beginning Herbs. Most traditional culinary herbs are easy to grow, according to herb enthusiast Susan Sivey. They add flavor as well as nutrition to foods and often have medicinal uses as well. Learn about growing and using eight common and two not so common herbs in this free workshop.

Guided Tours begin at 11 AM and 1 PM at the Welcome Center. Master Gardener Volunteers will lead tours of the Arboretum and give insider information about the expansive 110-acre outdoor laboratory. Included are the landscape gardens and over 2,500 varieties of perennials, shrubs and trees.

For more information, visit www.friendsofsecrest.com/garden-fair.

--Karen Brenner

Helpful Links

<https://secrest.osu.edu>

Links to events, plant collections at the Arboretum, and Master Gardeners, where present and past editions of All Things Secrest newsletters can be accessed

<https://www.friendsofsecrest.com>

Links to Friends of Secrest Arboretum membership, donations, and events sponsored by the group

<https://bygl.osu.edu>

Buckeye Yard and Garden onLine contains articles written by Extension, Nursery, Landscape and Turf team members that benefit both home and professional gardeners

<https://u.osu.edu/secrestmq/> or phone 330-263-3888

Get Garden Answers from Master Gardener Volunteers during May through October

<https://weather.cfaes.osu.edu/gdd/>

After entering an Ohio zip code, the calendar will show the phenological events affected by the number of growing degree days in 2023

Newsletter Contributors: Janet Broda, Karen Brenner, Sue Cook, Karen Edgington, Bob Everett, Susan Heady, Linda Palombi, Paul Snyder, Jason Veil, and Pat Warner