Volunteer
Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania

Volunteer is a newsletter published monthly for Arboretum volunteers.

The Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania is an historic public garden and educational institution. It promotes an understanding of the relationship between plants, people, and place through programs that integrate science, art, and the humanities. The Arboretum conducts four major activities: education, research, outreach, and horticultural display. As the official Arboretum of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania provides research and outreach services to state agencies, community institutions and to citizens of Pennsylvania and beyond.

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Volunteer
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Photos: Emily Clark, unless otherwise stated

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Cover Photo: Common withhazel, Hamamelis virginiana, in Swan Pond.

Acer palmatum var. heptalobum
sevenlobe Japanese maple

Ilex verticillata ‘Winter Gold’
Winter Gold common winterberry
Letter from the Editor

Every morning I start my day with a walk through the Arboretum. It’s a time of reflection and recharge, a little exercise in meditation before the work day.

On a muddy, slippery day, a day when tiny sheaths of frost cover every blade of grass, a day when every step necessitates decisiveness, it takes a good ten-minutes to walk through the Arboretum. In the past few weeks, I’ve been struck by how naked the branches are. Places like the Crabapple Slope, which are usually private thanks to leafy cover, are open for all to see. This reminds me of a passage in Annie Dillard’s Pilgrim at Tinker Creek (which you can read with the Arboretum Book Club in March!). In this section, Dillard describes the Inuit conception of winter. For the Inuit people, winter is a time of discovery, a time when trees shed their layers and their bones are put on display. Winter is the most honest season.

For the photos in this issue of Volunteer, I focused on little examples of life throughout the Arboretum. They’re sights you may need to squint your eyes to see, or squat down low to catch a glimpse of. To me that makes them all the more impressive.

Warm wishes,

Emily Clark
The McLean Contributionship
Endowed Education Intern
Notes from the Guides Chair

PawPaws are Intriguing

In early September I joined my Master Gardener’s group on a tour of two Penn State Demonstration Gardens in Fairmount Park. While there, a few of us wandered through the Fairmount Park Horticultural Center Food Forest. Of special interest to me because of the Arboretum connection were three pawpaw trees (*Asimina triloba*) from which anyone could harvest fruit any day of the week. Although I have passed the pawpaws at Morris more times than I can remember*, I have never given any thought to the fruit so my interest was piqued.

According to a recent article in the Philadelphia Inquirer, the pawpaw is North America's largest edible native fruit and, in fact, it was a favorite dessert of President George Washington. The 3-6 inch long greenish-yellow fruit features sweet, pale yellow flesh, easily removable black seeds and a creamy texture. The flavor itself is a delightful blend of tropical favorites – mango, banana, pineapple and, papaya.

Pawpaw trees grow in most of the eastern half of the United States and as far west as Nebraska. They are mentioned in a 1544 report from Hernando Desoto's expedition in North America and, they were a favorite of the earliest Americans. They became less popular as they bruise easily, don't travel well and have a short shelf life.

Perhaps another reason that the delicious pawpaw has not become a big commercial seller is that it is difficult to get fruit from the tree's purple flowers. Although pawpaw flowers have both male and female reproductive components, a pollinator is needed. However, attracting pollinators is difficult and is usually the reason why there is often little or no fruit on a pawpaw. For reasons largely unknown, bees do not pollinate pawpaw. The pawpaw depends on flies and certain types of beetles for pollination, but compared to bees, they are not particularly efficient pollinators.

According to the Inquirer article, the pawpaw season got off to a late start this year due to cool spring temperatures and a wet summer. Therefore, the fruit should have been available until late October. However, when I contacted the Weaver's Way farm stand at Saul School on Henry Avenue in Philadelphia in mid-October, I found that the fruit was no longer available. They suggested that I try again next September and I will certainly do just that. I look forward to treating myself to a native original – the creamy, delicious pawpaw.

Enjoy a relaxing and joyous holiday season – see you all at our Education Holiday Potluck on Thursday, December 13th. Joan Kober

*There are actually two pawpaws at the Arboretum: an *Asimina triloba* (common pawpaw) and an *Asimina triloba* ‘Shenandoah’ (Shenandoah common pawpaw)

Sources: Pawpaws: “Autumn's Secret Treat” by Grace Dickenson, Philadelphia Inquirer, September 20, 2018 and “PawPaw Not Producing Fruit: how to Make a PawPaw Tree Fruit” by Mary Ellen Ellis, Gardening Know How.
Book Club Announcements

Arboretum Book Club

The Book Club is open to all Arboretum volunteers and staff, and meets the first Friday of each month. You are invited to attend any session and do not have to attend every month.

A Sand County Almanac by Aldo Leopold | December 7 | 1:00 PM | Gates Hall Conference Room
Aldo Leopold, a conservationist, naturalist, and philosopher, combined his career in forestry and wildlife management and his keen observations of the natural world to write A Sand County Almanac, so he could share his thoughts about nature, humanity, and the connections between them. First published in 1949, A Sand County Almanac combines some of the finest nature writing since Thoreau with an outspoken and highly ethical regard for America’s relationship to the land. Written with an unparalleled understanding of the ways of nature, this classic work remains as relevant today as it was sixty-five years ago.

The Humane Gardener by Nancy Lawson | January 4 | 1:00 PM | Gates Hall Conference Room
In this eloquent plea for compassion and respect for all species, journalist and gardener Nancy Lawson describes why and how to welcome wildlife to our backyards. Through engaging anecdotes and inspired advice, profiles of home gardeners throughout the country, and interviews with scientists and horticulturists, Lawson applies the broader lessons of ecology to our own outdoor spaces. The Humane Gardener fills a unique niche in describing simple principles for both attracting wildlife and peacefully resolving conflicts with all the creatures that share our world.

2019 Book Club

Jan 4: The Humane Gardener by Nancy Lawson
Feb 1: The Food Explorer by Daniel Stone
Mar 1: Pilgrim at Tinker Creek by Annie Dillard
Apr 5: A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson
May 3: Ginkgo: The Tree That Time Forgot by Peter Crane
Jun 7: The Pine Island Paradox by Kathleen Dean Moore
Sep 6: The Botany of Desire by Michael Pollan
Oct 4: Gathering Moss by Robin Wall Kimmerer
Nov 1: The Beak of the Finch by Jonathan Weiner
Dec 6: Silent Spring by Rachel Carson
Volunteer Workshops and Opportunities

Horticulture Volunteer Holiday Potluck

Wednesday, December 12th | 12:30 pm
Upper Gallery
Treat your fellow horticulture volunteers to your favorite dish or dessert and enjoy the celebration!

Education Volunteer Winter Potluck

Thursday, December 13th | Noon - 2:00 pm
Upper Gallery
Bring your favorite dish to share and enjoy a winter celebration with fellow education volunteers and staff! RSVP to Emily at emiclark@upenn.edu or via Team Up. Please write the name of your dish in the RSVP.

Volunteer Writers Wanted!

Are you an avid gardener, nature enthusiast, or traveler looking to share your expertise and adventures? We are currently seeking guest writers for future editions of Volunteer. Please email Emily Clark at emiclark@upenn.edu if you are interested in contributing!
**Volunteer Workshops and Opportunities**

**Specialty Tours**

**Saturday, December 1st | 2:00 p.m. | Widener Terrace**

*Conifer Tour*

Explore a selection of impressive conifers that provide multi-seasonal interest with an array of forms, foliage, bark, and of course, cones!

**Saturday, December 8th & 22nd | 2:00 p.m. | Widener Terrace**

*Holly Highlights and Winter Greenery Tour*

Join knowledgeable guides for an all new tour highlighting the Arboretum’s collection of hollies and other broadleaf evergreens that enliven the winter landscape with their lush greenery and provide year-round appeal and an everlasting framework for seasonal plantings.

**Tu B’Shevat - The New Year of Trees**

Help children celebrate Tu B’Shevat! It’s the Jewish New Year of Trees. In Israel, Tu B’Shevat is a national holiday and children don’t go to school. Instead, they go with their families or classmates to plant young trees in the countryside and learn about the importance of trees. We are in need of volunteers for a variety of activities throughout the week at the following times. Feel free to volunteer for multiple slots! Sign up via Team Up or email Lisa at BaileyL@upenn.edu.

- **Sunday, January 13:** 10-11:15 am, 11:30 am-12:45 pm
- **Monday, January 14:** 10-11:15 am
- **Tuesday, January 15:** 10-11:15 am
- **Wednesday, January 16:** 10-11:15 am
- **Thursday, January 17:** 10-11:15 am
- **Sunday, January 20:** 10-11:15 am, 11:30 am-12:45 pm
In 1985, the U.N. General Assembly designated December 5 as International Volunteer Day.

Here at the Arboretum, we celebrate volunteers every day: Board Committee members before we open, Event and Mill volunteers on weekends, Greenhouse volunteers on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Horticulture volunteers on Wednesdays (and other days as needed!), Guides every day.

Coincidentally, December 5 is also World Soil Day. I guess we have great soil at the Arboretum – you can tell by the great people and plants that grow here. Thank you all so very much for volunteering!

-Liza Hawley

A few photos from a recent volunteer trip to the Woodlands Cemetery
Continuing Education

Holiday Tabletop Tree with Lights
Cheryl Wilks, Floral Educator, Florist, and Owner of Flowers on Location
Monday, December 10 | 10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

In this workshop you will create a special centerpiece that is sure to put you into the holiday spirit. Create your own tree from long-lasting greens and choose your colors for bows and glass balls. This spectacular holiday centerpiece will be 22 to 24 inches tall and decorated with fresh flowers and lights.

Create a Beautiful Holiday Arrangement for your Table or Mantle
Cheryl Wilks, Floral Educator, Florist, and Owner of Flowers on Location
Sunday, December 22 | 10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Design a beautiful, long-lasting arrangement for your table centerpiece or fireplace mantle. You will have a wonderful assortment of greens, flowers, branches, candles, accessories and more to choose from to make your one-of-a-kind arrangement.

Upcoming Classes

Be on the lookout for new and exciting class offerings coming to the Morris Arboretum spring 2019. Expect to see your course brochure arrive mid-January!

Volunteers who have worked over 30 hours during the past year may take Arboretum classes at a discounted price. Please refer to the Volunteer Price Spreadsheet in the Education Office for a list of volunteer class pricing and Volunteer Discount code to use when registering online at http://www.morrisarboretum.org/ed_classes.shtml
Lily Pond

Beneath the spreading katsura tree, there was once a Sokonashi-ike, a “bottomless” pond, fed by a stream cascading over a water-course made of stones. All around the pond, azaleas, cedars and, pines clung to stones as though for dear life. We learn more about how the pond looked in 1910 from the lead article in the magazine, American Suburbs:

This pool in the gardens at Compton, encircled by Japanese rockwork, is an eminently successful piece of Japanese gardening. The mound at the back, on the sides and on the top of which small pines and maples and dwarf cedars, along with various Japanese plants, are grouped, makes an appropriate setting for a miniature waterfall down which tumbles a stream brought underground from a fountain at a higher level. The overflow is piped away to be used in still another fountain, lower down the hill. The pool itself is enlivened by goldfish, and patches of lilies dot the surface.

John Morris called it the “Japanese rock pond” in his recollections and noted that Furukawa [S. Furukawa] made it in 1902.

Prior to creating the rock pond for the Morrises, Furukawa and fellow landscaper A. Kimura constructed a four-acre Japanese tea garden and village on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City. They were employed by the firm of Kushibiki and Arai, whose Oriental gardens and miniature villages were popular at international expositions in the 1890s and early 1900s.

Kushibiki and Arai’s tea garden was a huge attraction to Philadelphians—but not for long. While Furukawa was busy setting stones in place for the Sokonashi-ike at Compton, the Atlantic City tea garden was being torn down. Thankfully, all was not lost. Matthias Homer, an auditor with the Pennsylvania Railroad, salvaged some of the remnants and hired Furukawa and Kimura to create a smaller version of the Boardwalk garden on his estate in Lansdowne.

See additional photos of the Japanese rock pond at Compton here.
Garden Highlights

Acer sieboldianum ‘Shoryu-no-tsume’
Shoryu-no-tsume Siebold maple
Near Out on a Limb

Hamamelis mollis
Chinese witchhazel
Outside Widener

Zanthoxylum simulans
flatspine prickly-ash
English Park

Euonymus hamiltonianus
Hamilton euonymus
English Park

Clerodendrum trichotomum
harlequin glorybower
near Spring House

Ilex x koehneana
Koehne holly
by Swan Pond
## Upcoming Events

### December 2018

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### Weekly Volunteer Events

**Wednesdays:** Horticulture Volunteers 8:30 am - 12 noon  
**Saturdays and Sundays:** Regular Tour 2:00 - 3:00 pm  
**Saturdays:** Winter Wellness Walks 10:30 - 11:30 am  
**Sundays:** Winter Wellness Walks 1:00 pm
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### January 2019

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