

THE NEWSLETTER  
**LANDIS  
ARBORETUM**

Esperance, New York

SUMMER 2003

VOLUME 22, NO. 3

# An Event To Experience, Support and Enjoy

## FALL PLANT SALE

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 AND SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 10AM TO 4PM**

by Nick Zabawsky, Chair

Many gardeners think of spring as the time to plant, but for many varieties of plants and shrubs, fall is a better time to purchase and plant many perennials and woody plants. This is because they are not actively growing in the fall and they get six months to establish their root systems before facing the active growing season.

Many of the plants offered are unusual and not commonly offered in the trade. As usual, the sale will include a wide variety of perennials, deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, and dwarf conifers.

Come on out, see the beautiful Schoharie Valley, and get some great plants!



• **Hydrangeas and Other Shade Plants** We have an excellent selection of hydrangeas left from the Spring Plant Sale. The Fall Plant Sale will be a terrific opportunity to get rare and very select hydrangeas for

your garden. In response to the increasing popularity over the last several sales, we will have a good selection of other shade plants, including hostas, hellebores, ferns, and pulmonaria. Gardeners with experience in shade gardening know that you can get a wider range of forms, textures, and foliage colors in shade gardens than in sun gardens.

—more on page 6.

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## AABGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

by Sonja Javarone

Attending American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta annual conference in Boston, June 28–July 1, 2003, was an enlightening experience. My first conversation was with a very enthusiastic fellow from New Zealand. He wanted to know all about Landis. He said we seem to have a similar history although miles apart and would like to visit someday.

A theme ran through most of the sessions I attended. Landis compared favorably with many of the new directions being developed elsewhere. Other participants were trying to recover natural areas, develop birding sites, conserve germ plasm, promote the arts, educate, and develop relationships with others in related fields (science, landscape design, commercial plant providers, conservation). Landis has the physical resources to promote all of the above and has a setting with a vista second to none. We really are a jewel in the bigger scheme of things.

For the travelers among you, here are some suggestions of places to visit.

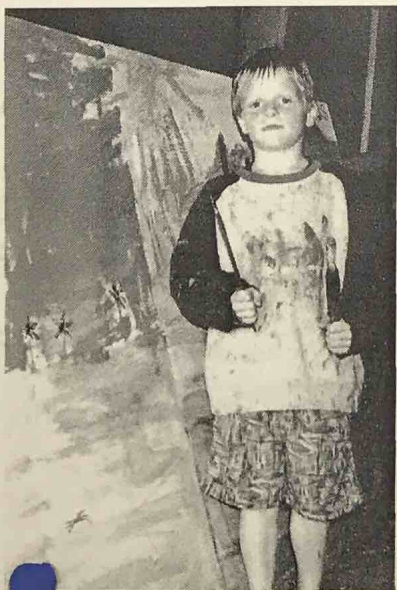
- Atlanta Botanical Garden, Atlanta, GA
- Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, IL
- Eden Project, Cornwall, UK
- Forest Hills Cemetery, Boston, MA
- Ganna Walska Lotusland, Santa Barbara, CA
- Garfield Park Conservatory, Chicago, IL
- Oldfields, Indianapolis, IN
- Ravine Garden, Penobscot, ME
- Winterthur Museum and Children's Garden, Winterthur, DE

An internet search will provide more information on what is unique about these gardens.

Quotes to remember:

"Most great gardens were the vision of one individual."—Colgan

"Historic landscape doesn't mean you are frozen in time."—Clendaniel



Artist Teddy Bruner takes a break from working on his section of the outdoor mural at Landis.

Read more about the mural on page 8.

Photo by Gloria Van Duyne



THE LANDIS ARBORETUM NEWSLETTER is published quarterly for its members. The Arboretum's mission is to provide natural history and horticultural education through its programs and through its plant collection.

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# FROM THE GARDEN

Gloria Van Duyne, *Executive Director*

**V**olunteers are always a hot topic among not-for-profit organizations. Volunteerism is becoming part of grade school and higher education course requirements to help teach civic responsibility. Certainly most not-for-profit organizations—museums, libraries, social service organizations, community centers, animal shelters, and of course botanic gardens—could not survive, let alone provide a fraction of the programs and services they do, without the help of volunteers.

Some of these organizations have a limited staff and some run completely on volunteer ener-

gy. The governing boards are all volunteers giving their time, expertise, and financial support.

I'd like to mention two important points:

The first is that we are grateful for the many volunteers who support Landis with their precious time.

The second is "no deposit—no return." Our communities are only as good as what we put into them. If no one volunteered, what would our communities look like? No animal shelters. No literacy programs. No scouting programs. No libraries. No museums. No Landis Arboretum. Would we want to live in a community without any of these organizations? Do we want to live in a community in which everyone takes a little responsibility to help make it a better place to live?

The quality of our Arboretum is directly related to the energy all of us put into it. Our plant sale is a true volunteer success story. This fundraiser started with a few volunteers and first raised a few hundred dollars. Today most of our 100 volunteers give their time to our Spring and Fall Plant Sales. The result is a regional attraction with over 6,000 plants and it is our most successful fundraiser.

I continually let people know that we could not accomplish a fraction of what we do without volunteers. This is more than mere words—it translates directly into education programs, publications, the look of the grounds, and community involvement. Fred Lape started planting this garden of trees and shrubs over 50 years ago with the little bit of money he had in his pocket. We've come a long way, possibly farther than he could have imagined. Like Lape, we still have resource challenges, both financial and human. Some day I'd like to be able to say, "We have too many volunteers."


Wouldn't that be a new challenge?



Above left: Al D'Alauro, a garden volunteer, transplants perennials.

Left: Volunteer Lisa Smith works in the Van Loveland perennial garden.

Photos by Gloria Van Duyne



(518) 439-8105

**Sandra S. Walck**  
Garden Design

*Installation & Maintenance with Ecological Emphasis*

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- Pamela Baxter Tichy
- Jamie Vaughn & Benjamin Larsen
- Maryann Wolter

Summer's here and the time is right. The wonderful sounds and sights of the season are always a welcome treat. Summer is a great time to just sit back and sip lemonade under the old shade tree—right? Wrong. The lazy summer afternoons associated with summer don't exist here at Landis Arboretum. Instead we have been going full throttle trying to keep the weeds at bay and the grounds looking good. Many things have been going on at Landis.

Pruning of our specimen trees has been a priority this summer. With the help of the Pruning Swat Team, a dedicated group of volunteers that meet once a week, a noticeable dent in the maintenance chores of our specimen trees and shrubs has occurred. If you are interested in joining the team, call the office, 875-6935.

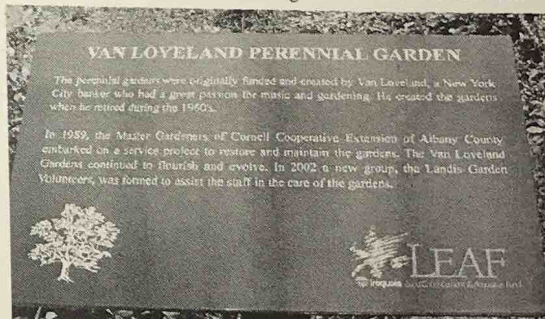
The Private Industry Council (PIC), a youth employment program, has provided Landis with seven high school students for the summer. The PIC crew has been busy installing the many new interpretive signs received from the LEAF (Iroquois Pipeline) grant. These new signs are replacing and adding to all the old interpretive signs in the collections and natural areas. Mulching our specimens and getting the gardens in better shape is also a major focus. Many thanks are given to PIC members Brian and Chris Baakman for also working after school throughout the winter and spring at Landis.

The Arboretum was hit with another major ice storm in the early part of the spring. Damage occurred to many of the collections and natural areas. The paper birch next to the farmhouse lost a large limb and the paper birch next to the barn was completely destroyed. Entire trees were pushed over with the weight of the ice. A new pear ('Autumn Blaze') replaces the birch by the barn. Other new trees have also been added.

Another branch of the Great Oak has been lost, further jeopardizing its structural integrity. Wayne Cahilly, arborist from the New York Botanical

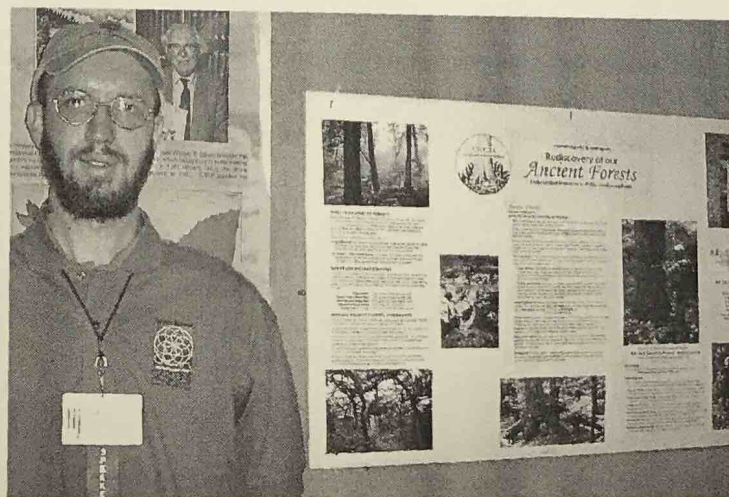
Gardens, visited Landis to inspect the Great Oak. He conducted several tests including using a resistograph to measure the amount of solid wood remaining in the damaged trunk. He concluded that 80% strength loss in the damaged section has occurred. According to Wayne, even if work were performed on this giant, it would not buy the tree much time. On a positive note the Great Oak may be standing proud for a while longer. It has leafed out and is looking good.

Arboretum volunteer Terry Staley and I have been transferring all of our collections maps to computerized maps. The new maps have made it easier to update and improve the documentation of our collections. I presented a workshop on our collections mapping techniques at the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta annual conference in Boston this year. I also gave a poster presentation, "Old Growth Forests: An Underutilized Resource for Botanic Gardens and Arboreta." Both presentations were enthusiastically received by the attendees. Half the conference costs were covered by the Champion Tree Project International (CTPI), an organization dedicated to the propagation of the biggest trees in our nation. Landis has also partnered with CTPI to help us obtain one accession for each species needed to fulfill our North American Plant Collections Consortium registered oak collection.



**Right:**  
Fred Breglia at his poster presentation at the AABA conference in Boston.  
Photo by Sonja Javarone

**Far right:**  
One of the photo-metal informational signs recently installed on the Arboretum grounds.  
Photo by Fred Breglia



The trees from CTPI will be clones from national and state champion trees. As part of our agreement we will be testing the superiority of these clones for CTPI and establishing a living library of champion tree genetics. To find out more, check out their website at <http://www.championtreeproject.org>.

The Native Plant Committee has been busy planting more natives along the Willow Pond Trail. More trail work is planned for the fall. The Garden Volunteer Committee has been busy working in the perennial gardens. Specimens have been divided and relocated. A new sitting area was added under the

—more on page 6.



## WISH LIST

We are looking for the following items (or estimated dollar amount to purchase items).

### Books

*Lilacs: The Genus Syringa*, Fr. John L. Fiala

### Equipment

- Bird feeders and seed
- Projector for PowerPoint presentations
- Laptop computer
- Picnic tables and benches (\$250)
- Professional climbing saw (\$150)
- DR brush mower (\$2500)
- Hardback rakes, shovels, loppers, and mulch fork (\$200)
- Trowels and other small gardening tools
- Troy Built hand cart

And always, the large tractor—

- A John Deere 790 (or machine of equal quality) 4wd, 30hp, with backhoe and loader (\$20,000)
- 4wd pick-up truck

### Acorn Shop

- Clear plastic containers for storage:  
Three 6" deep x 11" high x 26" long  
Ten 9" deep x 11" high x 15-18" long

## Project Wish List

We are looking for volunteers familiar with the following tasks (or equivalent dollar amount to complete these projects).

- Stone walkways to and from the farmhouse need rebuilding. (\$1000)
- Stone walls around the greenhouse and walls around perennial garden need rebuilding. (\$800)
- Machinery maintenance volunteer to do oil changes, tune-ups, etc. on our equipment. (\$500)
- Scraping and painting the Arboretum's identification signs

## HORTICULTURIST'S Corner

by Fred Breglia, Head of Horticulture and Operations

# Right Tree/Right Site

Selecting the right tree for the right site is one of the most important decisions to ensure long-term survival of newly planted trees.

Every tree species has specific cultural requirements, including light, water, soil, and growing space. Each planting site is unique and has its own environmental characteristics that can limit which plants will thrive. In addition to the environmental conditions, each tree should be selected to fulfill a certain role in the landscape. For example, trees may be planted under overhead wires or to create a shade area around a backyard patio, so it's important to choose a tree that will grow to fill a particular role and be able to thrive in the cultural and environmental conditions at the site.

The most important factors to consider when selecting a tree for a particular site are available water, drainage, soil pH, and light. Although it is possible for some trees to acclimate to certain site conditions such as partial shade and low moisture, a tree will always do much better if it is planted in an appropriate site. There are many great books available to help you learn the cultural conditions that certain species prefer. One book is *Urban Trees: Site Assessment Selection for Stress Tolerance Planting* (published by the Urban Horticulture Institute at Cornell) available for sale in the Acorn Gift Shop, for \$10. Another great book is Michael Dirr's *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants*.

A total site analysis should be done prior to designing and planting a new landscape. A quick checklist for site assessment includes:

- Climate zone

- Microclimate factors such as wind or reflected heat that can change the overall hardiness zone for a particular part of your yard
- The actual pH level (A soil sample can be taken to Cornell Cooperative Extension and tested for a few dollars).
- Soil texture, e.g. sand or clay
- Compaction levels
- Limitations of above ground and below ground space, e.g., overhead wires, septic systems
- Sunlight levels
- Irrigation levels
- Drainage characteristics
- Other site considerations such as excessive salt from roads or presence of recent construction.

Selection of a particular tree from the nursery can be as important as selection of an appropriate tree species. All trees are not created equal. Select trees that have good twig extension and good branch structure. Foliage should be evenly distributed throughout the canopy and not concentrated at the top of the tree. Trees that are balled and burlapped should have a solid root ball that has been kept moist and protected from drying. Avoid trees that have noticeable damage on the trunk from poor handling or pruning and have spiraled or kinked roots.

Remember we all want our plants to be long-lived investments. Putting the right tree in the right spot will be the first step in making sure your tree is an investment that grows.

## Burbine Memorial Tree Donated by Friends and Colleagues



*Malus 'Professor Sprenger'* was recently contributed to the Arboretum as a memorial to Thomas H. Burbine by his friends and colleagues. The tree is an important addition to the Arboretum's Crabapple Collection and Tough Trees Collection.

With a memorial tree, you can remember a loved one or celebrate a birth, anniversary or other significant event or person in your life. Choose from the Arboretum's list of trees we want to acquire. Your message will be printed in black letters on a gold background on a 5x7 inch photo-metal sign. A portion of the cost (\$1500) covers ongoing care for the tree.

For more information, call 875-6935.



# Young's Weeping European White Birch

## *Betula pendula* 'Youngii'

by Sonja Javarone

The European white birch (*Betula pendula*), sometimes called the "lady of the woods," was parent of a sport—a mutation—"Youngii" in England in about 1873, an even more feminine and lovely cultivar of the species. Grown for its weeping habit, diminutive size (12–20 feet), and wonderful yellow fall color, Young's birch is an outstanding specimen tree for the home landscape. In addition to its feminine appeal, it invites children to enjoy the outdoor room beneath its branches—a great place for "hide and seek."

Young's birch, however, tends to be high maintenance. The tree needs to be kept healthy by controlling insects, fertilizing, mulching, proper pruning, and watching for its most dangerous enemy, the bronze birch borer. The reward, however, is enjoyment of a very special tree.

The doubly serrate, simple, and alternate leaves are similar to those of other birches. Hardiness ranges from USDA Zones 2–6. Flowers appear in spring; fruit is a nutlet within catkins that are shed in the fall.

Propagation involves grafting cultivars on seedling under stock.

Young's birch will tolerate a wide range of conditions but favors moist, well drained, and sunny to partial shade habitats. The most outstanding characteristic is the slender and perfectly pendulous branches.

The genus name (*Betula*) comes from *betu*, the Celtic name for tree. The species name (*pendula*) originates from the Latin name for drooping appearance.

During the Victorian era, the birch (*Betula pendula*), the parent of Young's birch, became a symbol of femininity and grace.

The young leaves produced a diuretic tea and supposedly dissolved kidney stones. The sap yielded wine, and the bark was used in tanning leather. The wood had a multitude of uses in Europe including broom making with its associated witchery. Birch resin contains xylitol, a disinfectant used in tooth cleaners and hair lotions. Young's birch has all the same characteristics, but is protected by its size and ornamental appeal.

The Landis specimen, near the meeting house, is a must-see when you visit the Arboretum.

Enjoy.

Drawings by  
Anne Jaster 2003

## MANY THANKS

TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE AND BUSINESSES FOR THEIR GENEROUS GIFTS AND CONTINUING SUPPORT—

Everyone who helped make our Spring Plant Sale a very successful one.

Everyone who donated baked goods, books, and plants for the plant, book, and bake sales.

Durward Degroff for constructing bug boxes for a children's program.

Five Star Frame & Art for their donation of framing for our spring plant sale raffle.

Pruning Swat Team.

Terry Staley and Sonja Javarone for their continued help with plant records.

The Private Industry Council for their continued support and hard work for maintaining our grounds.

Provost Brothers Well Drilling for their continued support.

Deb and Alden Banks for the donation of the pick-up truck.

Barbara Hunt for her work at the Acorn Shop.

Chris Keefer, Lawson Harris, and Jack Fritz for acting as hosts at the summer garden tours.

Don Orr for his woodworking and creative skills.

AND TO OUR CORPORATE MEMBERS FOR THEIR GENEROSITY.

Patrick Clear, ECOS

Glenbrook Farm, Viktoria Serafin

Dana Todd Realty

Gardener's Workshop

Jean Sweet Interiors, Inc.

Temper Corp—John Rode





## SPRING PLANT SALE

Good weather, a fantastic turnout, and quality plants made the sale a great success. Less obvious was the good planning, smarts and the muscle power of volunteers staff. The plant procurement committee started researching last fall. In January planning began for the budget, Pick of the Pots Party, raffle, parking, food, and many other details.

Volunteer recruitment began in March and over 100 worked the week of the sale.

Many thanks to all who volunteered, and the dedication of our multi-talented staff.

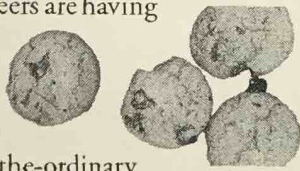
*Photo by Fred Breglia (taken from the barn loft)*

Fall Plant Sale—*continued from page 1.*

• **Plant Donations.** The success of the Fall Plant Sale will be due in part to the generous donation of plants and books by members. Many of our members have great plants to share with others, which financially supports the Arboretum. As you divide perennials in those overcrowded beds, please consider the plant sale as a destination for those divisions. We do need to have donated plants potted up and ready for the sale table. There isn't time to pot and groom plants at sale time. We can supply pots for your use.

• **Book Sale.** Our book sale is increasing in popularity. You can help the Arboretum by donating those books that are just taking up space in your house. Eliminate clutter in your home, and help the Arboretum at the same time.

• **Bake Sale (Saturday only).** The Garden Volunteers are having another bake sale that will include some savorys such as quiche, out-of-the-ordinary home-baked cookies, cakes, pies, and breads. All proceeds from the bake sale go toward upgrading the perennial gardens.



• **Quilt Raffle.** Crafted by long-time Arboretum volunteer Carol Wock, the quilt is a queen-size double Irish chain in blue and yellow. The raffle is a fundraiser for the Arboretum. The winner will be drawn in December

As always, admission and parking is free. Volunteers for the sale are welcome. Contact Roberta at [landis@midtel.net](mailto:landis@midtel.net), or call 875-6935.

## Breglia Memorial Tree Fund Donors

Paul Blair  
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 Fred Breglia  
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 Carolyn Edwards  
 Rose Elliot  
 Jack Fritz  
 Bob & Florence Grimm  
 Lawson & Priscilla Harris  
 Christine Heller  
 Anne Jaster  
 Sonja Javarone  
 John Keeffe & Gloria VanDuyne  
 Angelika Koops  
 Marian Latham  
 Marie Loder  
 Carol Loucks  
 Dee & Neil Pederson  
 Physical Plant Activities, (Kathleen Kulesza)  
 Pat Rush  
 John & Susan Sagendorf  
 Joan Sondergaard  
 Terry & Sharon Staley  
 Howard Stoner  
 Ken & Carol Wock

Contributions are being accepted in memory of Fred Breglia's father, Ferdinand (Fred) Breglia, who passed away last winter. The family has asked that contributions be sent to the Landis Arboretum for a memorial tree to be planted at the Arboretum.

Collections News—*continued from page 3.*

shadblow serviceberry in the middle of the Van Loveland Gardens. More volunteers are needed to help with weeding, mulching, and planting. Bring some friends to spend quality time helping Landis improve the display gardens.

A grant has been received from Delmar Learning to plant more trees. The trees will help reach the goal of completing the Tough Trees for Tough Sites Collection. When complete, Landis will be the only garden that has all the trees recommended by Cornell University for street tree planting and other tough site conditions. I will also give a presentation on managing soils for better plant health at the New York State RELEAF conference coming up shortly. RELEAF is a coalition of groups promoting urban and community forestry. A virtual tour of our Tough Trees for Tough Sites Collection will be given to participants at the conference. The Landis collection will serve as a resource to educate people about appropriate species selection for tough conditions and show how these trees look at maturity.

As always I leave you with a quote.

"A visit to the haunts of Nature finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in the stones, and good in everything."—Shakespeare

The Arboretum would like to say a special "thank you" to Miller Printing and Litho of Amsterdam. Scott Miller, Tom Gardner and the rest of the staff have responded to all our requests with good humor, fixed our mistakes, respected our limited funds, and delivered on short deadlines.

In addition to litho and digital printing, Miller Printing offers integrated printing and mailing services.

Miller Printing is located at 97 Guy Park Avenue in Amsterdam. They can be reached at 518-842-0001.

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#### TOURS AND MORE

## SPECIAL MEMBERS' DAY

September 27, 1-4pm (Saturday) Free. Reservations required.

This is a day just for Arboretum members—to meet staff, other members and volunteers, tour new land acquisitions, initiatives and special collections. Explore the new trails. See the tree collections that have brought the Arboretum so much recognition and praise from other professional associations. There is so much that is new and exceptionally beautiful. The staff and volunteers have worked hard to improve the grounds and begin new projects, and they want to share them with you. Exhibits, tours, and games. Hors d'oeuvres. Reservation deadline is Wed., Sept. 24 (We have to know how much food to order). Free.



the New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization Regrant Program.

An outdoor mural with the theme "Open Your Eyes To Nature" is finished. The mural is made up of individual 4 x 8-foot painted plywood panels, created independently of one another. Individuals and groups of all ages participated. Materials and staff for this project were funded in part by

Above: Christin Henry & Ruth Henry

Photo by Gloria Van Duyne

### General Classes and Programs

#### AUGUST 16

9am-12pm (Saturday)

#### PERENNIAL GARDEN DESIGN AND PLANT PROPAGATION

This is a hands-on workshop in the Van Loveland perennial garden at the Arboretum. Participants will dig and divide with the professional guidance of Fred Breglia, staff horticulturist at the Landis Arboretum, and Ken Carnes, horticultural consultant. Learn techniques of propagation and how to design perennial gardens with year-round interest. Bring digging tools and gloves and dress appropriately. Class size is limited. Registration and payment deadline is Wednesday, August 13. \$20 members/\$25 non-members.

#### SEPTEMBER 6

12pm (Saturday)

#### CRAZY 'BOUT CATERPILLARS

Kids and adults always bring home caterpillars! Learn how to identify and care for caterpillars properly before they pupate, hibernate or go free. Caterpillar enthusiast Chris Keefer will display some live species, explain their life cycles and help you make their stay with you more rewarding. First six registrants receive a free caterpillar house. Registration is recommended. \$10 per family.

#### OCTOBER 1

6-8pm (Wednesday)

#### HOW TO IMPROVE TOPSOIL/HOW TO REVIVE TIRED TOPSOIL

David Yarrow will discuss the process by which root symbiosis with microorganisms & plants transform soil minerals into biological molecules essential to the whole ecosystem. Deforestation, acid rain and other disturbances have accelerated the aging of soils, depleting them of minerals, especially trace elements needed for enzymes, hormones and immunity. Consequently, growth is retarded, growth potential is limited, and plants are susceptible to stress, parasites and disease. Learn how to revive exhausted soils to restore optimum growth and health. Registration and payment deadline is Monday, September 29. \$20 members/\$25 non-members.