Prepare to be amazed at this year’s spring plant sale. We will be selling several plants exceptional enough to astonish even the most seasoned gardener. Four plants not to be missed are detailed below.

*Clivia miniata* ‘Sir John Thouron’ will likely be the show-stopper of the spring plant sale. A rare and beautiful plant with rich green, glossy leaves and large, eye-catching yellow umbellate flowers, it is an excellent houseplant for low light. Due to its unique yellow flowers and scarcity in the trade, this is a highly desirable clivia. Thouron brought this famous clivia from England, the first of its kind in the United States. Born in England in 1907, Thouron eventually settled in the United States, marrying Esther du Pont. Thouron gifted a few close friends with divisions of his clivia, causing the slow spread of this still-rare plant across the United States. In 1981, he donated an offshoot of his clivia to the Delaware Center for Horticulture. It was sold in their Rare Plant Auction for $1,700. Although a single ‘Sir John Thouron’ clivia is still regularly sold for hundreds of dollars, UDBG will be selling it for a fraction of the typical price at the spring plant sale.

A modest, low-growing perennial for shady, deciduous woodlands or border edges, *Cardamine diphylla* (syn. *Dentaria diphylla*) is native from Quebec to Georgia, and west to Minnesota. It blooms in early spring with clusters of delicate white or pink four-petalled flowers which attract bees and butterflies. Flowers are held on a stalk above dark green leaves which are nearly divided with three lobes, reminiscent of strawberry foliage. *C. diphylla* prefers moist, humus-rich soils and shade to part shade conditions. In the summer, the leaves will fade and the...
Most winters in Delaware are unpredictable and this one is no different. Two weeks of below-freezing temperatures, was followed by temperate highs, then repeated lows in the single digits; the lowest registered was 1° F. It will be a true test for several of the plants in the collections. So far, the most damage seems to be on the barrel cactus and agave. The Japanese blue oak, mahonias, distylliums, camellias, and evergreen magnolias and viburnums all look unscathed but time will tell the full story. After all, one of the objectives of the collections is for plants to go where no plant has gone before. I will update you in the next newsletter about the effects of the cold temperatures on the plants.

I am excited to tell you that the UDBG has hired its first full-time staff member, whose focus will be garden maintenance. Please welcome Andrew Adams as the Horticulture Manager. Andrew is no stranger to the UDBG; he was an intern for two consecutive summers during which time he demonstrated his tremendous enthusiasm and potential. Andrew out-competed a strong list of applicants from gardens across the eastern US. The search committee (Dr. Robert Lyons, chair of the advisory board; Valann Budischak, Volunteer/Education coordinator; Jackie Perry, UDBG seasonal gardener; and me) agreed unanimously on Andrew’s selection. Andrew will be responsible for garden maintenance, the internship program, nursery production and plant sale, among other tasks. This is a huge move forward for the garden, an action recommended by both the master plan and collections review. Please congratulate Andrew and welcome him aboard if you see him out and about in the garden.

Another exciting development for the UDBG is the implementation of a new, redesigned website. Thanks to the generosity of Blue Blaze Associates we should have the new website active this spring. The annual graduate student interns, Alexis Bacon and Rachel Hutchins, and Cat Meholic, curatorial graduate student, have updated content and added information. The new site will have a clean, efficient look that will enhance your experience and facilitate navigation so you can get the information you are seeking quickly and easily.

It may be winter but garden projects do not stop. Phil Scalzi, a gardener and arborist at Nemours Mansion and Gardens and volunteer extraordinaire, is working with Andrew to thin the declining wild cherry trees in the successional woods section of the Lepidoptera Trail in the Native Garden. The tree removal will reduce the hazard of breakage, thin the canopy to improve plant growth beneath, and offer the remaining trees a much improved environment to continue to grow. You may not notice the difference, but if you sneak up from around the corner, you could catch the shrubs and herbaceous plants beneath the canopy celebrating wildly.

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Brian Kuntzmann was introduced to the field of horticulture by his first job at a retail nursery. He was hired at age 15, and continued to work there for five years, developing an appreciation for and knowledge of ornamental plants. Inspired by his job at the nursery, Brian applied to the University of Delaware and began an undergraduate education in Landscape Horticulture. During his undergraduate years at UD, he was hired to work part-time in the University of Delaware Botanic Gardens. Brian’s plant knowledge expanded during his time at UDBG with the help of his boss Dr. Frett, and he particularly enjoyed learning about the woody plants in the gardens. Eventually, he took on more responsibilities and became the supervisor of the summer interns at UDBG. Towards the end of his senior year, Brian attended a lecture at UD by an Environmental Health Peace Corps volunteer which prompted him to join the Peace Corps after graduation.

As a Sustainable Agricultural Systems Volunteer in Panama, Brian provided his community with the connections to obtain resources that could improve their food production. Because he was the first Peace Corps volunteer to serve in this community, Brian found that establishing himself as a knowledgeable resource was challenging, yet rewarding. Along with his agricultural teaching and advocacy, Brian worked in the fields with the Panamanians, learning about their unique methods to growing food. He experienced a completely different climate in the dry tropics of southern Panama with six months of rain alternating with six months of drought, which provided unique agricultural challenges. The cultural exchange, international connections, and fluency in Spanish were some of the most valuable aspects of his volunteer experience in Panama.

After returning to the United States, Brian was hired by Ar Joy Farms LLC, a dairy farm in Cochranville, PA. At the dairy, he works as a farm and feed manager, assisting with the care of about 700 cows. One of his current projects is producing biogas from cow manure to provide energy to run the farm. Brian is passionate about food production and sustainability, and looks forward to a lifetime of work in the agricultural field.
From humble beginnings to a garden that would serve the entire campus, The Emily B. Clark Garden was created in 1966. It was a gift made from Mrs. Emily C. Diffenback of Wilmington, Delaware, an alumna and former president of the Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs, and the design vision of plant science professor Charles W. Dunham, that made it possible. The garden was established in front of Townsend Hall. Also instrumental in the development and implementation of the project was Dr. Richard W. Lighty, professor of plant science and director of the Longwood Graduate Program.

Not only a place of natural beauty, the garden served as a teaching tool to educate undergraduate students in the College of Agricultural Sciences, as well as graduate students in the newly established Longwood Program in Ornamental Horticulture. Richard Vogel, Landscape Design Consultant, wrote the garden’s design committee with several suggestions on how learning opportunities could be incorporated into its student demonstration areas. Drs. Dunham and Lighty selected the most ornamental examples of plants within each plant group to show diversity. Plant donations, such as the large paper bark maple (Acer griseum) from Millcreek Nursery (the former nursery of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Frederick, Jr.), laid the foundation for an extensive woody plant collection. Drs. Dunham and Lighty also planted a collection of hollies with the intention of establishing the University of Delaware as an officially recognized Holly Arboretum.

Recycled soil from Wolf Hall (previously referred to as “the knoll”) became the garden’s foundation in the form of one large mound and several smaller mounds. Nurseryman Hugh Peeling built the low retaining stone wall that still runs most of the garden’s length. This wall was planted with a large variety of rock garden plants from Golden Hours Nursery in Exton, PA. In May 1973, The Emily B. Clark Garden was formally dedicated and a few years later Mrs. Diffenback donated to the garden an original sculpture by Wilmington artist Ruby Fischer. She was officially recognized for her many contributions at an outdoor ceremony in June 1977.

Some of the plants in this garden are the most mature specimens in the UDBG, such as the dwarf conifer collection. Other notable specimens include California incense cedar (Calocedrus decurrens), Loebner magnolia (Magnolia × loebneri ‘Leonard Messel’), and golden larch (Pseudolarix amabilis).
Cornus nuttallii: The Parent of Healthy Hybrids
Cat Meholic, 2017-19 Curatorial Graduate Student

Cornus nuttallii, the Pacific or Mountain Dogwood, can be described as the west coast version of flowering dogwood (Cornus florida). Pacific Dogwood is native from the mountains of California to British Columbia with a disjunct population in Idaho. Like flowering dogwood, the Pacific Dogwood has showy white bracts in spring, typically in groups of six. The bracts can be spotted with a pink or yellow blush, and surround a small globe of “true flowers” which are purple and green. Fall color is reliable, and can vary from yellow to red. The Pacific Dogwood is an understory icon in British Columbia and was made the official emblem of British Columbia in 1956.

Although Pacific Dogwood has many ornamental merits, as a straight species, hardiness and numerous disease issues, including anthracnose, make it difficult to grow in the Eastern US. Cornus nuttallii is, however, used as a parent in many hybrid crosses to increase the size and number of the bracts, which increase the floral display.

One of the most successful crosses is Kousa dogwood (Cornus kousa) with Cornus nuttallii. This cross is formally called Cornus ×elwinortonii and has produced a pallet of cultivars suitable for gardens in the Delaware Valley. Two cultivars of this hybrid are available in the coming Spring Plant Sale; Cornus ×elwinortonii ‘KN144-2’ Stellar Pink® Dogwood and Cornus ×elwinortonii ‘KN4-43’ Starlight® Dogwood.

Both hybrids are of suitable size for a residential landscape, reaching only to 30 feet, and require siting in full sun or part shade. Stellar Pink® Dogwood is distinguished by its upturned light pink bracts, and lack of consistent fruit, whereas the Starlight® Dogwood has larger white bracts in groups of 4-6, and an abundant red fruit in the fall.

The fall color on both is reliably ornamental, often appearing mottled with scarlet and terracotta. Most cultivars are hardy from zones 7 to 9, and all prefer soils with excellent drainage. Suitable for residential sites, any of the Pacific Dogwood hybrids can be used as a specimen or in a small grouping, and are especially ornamental when sited against an evergreen or dark background for multi-season interest.
Rare and Show-stopping Plants Take Center Stage in Spring Plant Sale

plant will enter dormancy; however, it may re-sprout in autumn. American Indians used this plant both in culinary dishes and as medicine to treat a number of conditions, including respiratory and gastrointestinal problems, sore throats, and fevers.

Ball O’ Fire™ is a wonderful selection from our native *Carpinus caroliniana*. Chosen for its consistent and vibrant red fall color and small size, *Carpinus caroliniana* Ball O’ Fire™ is distinct from the straight species because it exhibits unpredictable autumn color. This selection is perfect for a small residential property with height and width reaching only fifteen feet. Ball O’ Fire™ has beautiful deep green leaves which resemble beech foliage. Its spectacularly sinewy, smooth bark attracts attention because it is distinctive from any other tree. It looks remarkably similar to muscles, giving the tree its common name, musclewood. *Carpinus caroliniana* commonly grows in our woodlands as an understory tree, easily identifiable by its unique bark.

Truly an unusual little plant, *Poncirus trifoliata* ‘Tiny Dragon’ is the 3-foot version of the better-known cultivar ‘Flying Dragon’. A miniature shrub with thorned, twisted stems, it is sure to capture the attention of any gardener with a love of whimsy. ‘Tiny Dragon’ has small, trifoliate, deep green leaves that turn yellow in autumn and small yellow oranges which ripen in fall. Although edible, these oranges are full of seeds and are quite sour, so are best used for jams or marmalade. In winter, the green stems with sharp spines are striking against a backdrop of snow. It produces sweetly fragrant, white, five-petalled flowers in May. This curious little shrub with its year-round interest will bring a punch of character and playfulness to any adventurous gardener’s yard.
The emerald ash borer is a destructive insect pest that harms ash, and has been reported to feed on fringe tree (Chionanthus virginicus). The pest has worked its way east from Michigan over the past few years, and has been found in Maryland and recently in Delaware. State Departments of Agriculture and the University of Delaware have been actively scouting and putting out traps with lure smells for the insects. There was one adult insect found in a trap in Hockessin, Delaware in the last year, but that tree did not show the typical damage we would expect to see. There are a number of other insect pests on ash and some disease issues that ash trees face. The lilac ash borer is often confused with the emerald ash borer. Due to the find of that one insect, some municipalities are treating trees with an insecticide as a prophylactic measure, just in case there are more of these insects in the area.

If you see a metallic green, half-inch long insect that looks like Emerald Ash Borer, please call UD Extension or Delaware Department of Agriculture. Insects are attracted to stressed and dying trees. If you want to treat, call a certified arborist. Please advise your neighbors not to move firewood across state lines.

Here is a link to the State Department of Ag web page on Emerald Ash Borer.
https://dda.delaware.gov/plantind/eab.shtml
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.

SPRING PLANT SALE

Wed., Apr. 4, 7-9 pm Preview Lecture
Wed., Apr. 11, 4:30-6 pm Guided Walk
Wed., Apr. 25, 4:30-6 pm Patrons Only
Thu., Apr. 26, 3-6 pm UDBG Members only; 10% discount
Fri., Apr. 27, 3-6 pm General Public
Sat., Apr. 28, 9:30 am-4 pm General Public

Acer griseum bark (Paperbark Maple). Photo: Anna Bower
Rhododendron calendulaceum (Flame Azalea). Photo: Rick Darke
Hamamelis mollis ‘Sweet Sunshine’ (Witch Hazel). Photo: Melinda Zoehler
Chimonanthus praecox ‘Luteus’ (Wintersweet). Photo: Rick Darke

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Visit the UD Botanic Garden
UDBG is open to visitors everyday from sunrise to sunset; admission is free
Please obtain a visitor parking pass ($3.00) online at
https://udel2hosted.com/cmn/index.aspx
or use the metered parking near the UDairy Creamery

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