

# TRANQUIL TIMES

## The Newsletter of Tranquil Lake Nursery

No. 34

Fall, 2010

### Fall Events & Lectures at Tranquil Lake Nursery

Free and open to the public. For more information, call 508-252-4002 or visit [www.tranquil-lake.com](http://www.tranquil-lake.com).

### Fall Garden Festival Saturday, October 2, 2010 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Join us for this fun day filled with garden workshops and hands-on demonstrations that will help you to hone your gardening skills and improve the look of your landscape. (See details on Page 3.)

### Fall Garden Talks on Saturdays in September

11 a.m. Bring a Lawn Chair

Will be held indoors in case of rain.

Sept. 11 Daylilies for the Late Season Garden & Their Companions  
Philip Boucher

Sept. 18 Flowers, Foliage and Texture for the Late Season Garden  
Warren Leach

Sept. 25 Plants for Late Fall & Winter Interest  
Warren Leach

(Descriptions of all garden talks are on our website at [www.tranquil-lake.com](http://www.tranquil-lake.com))

### Hypertufa Workshop Saturday, October 9, 2010 9 a.m. to 12 noon \$75

Visit the Tranquil Lake Nursery website at [www.tranquil-lake.com](http://www.tranquil-lake.com) for a full listing of our daylilies, Siberian and Japanese iris, events, newsletter articles and a printable PDF file of our 2010 catalog.

### Daylilies, Gardens, Container Plants and So Much More

When we overhear people talking about **Tranquil Lake Nursery**, we often hear them refer to it as that daylily nursery - and then stop there. With **3,600 varieties of daylilies** filling eight acres of our fields, it is in every sense of the word a "**Daylily Nursery**." But we like to think of Tranquil Lake Nursery as so much more.

In addition to the daylilies, Tranquil Lake offers 300 varieties of field grown and hardy Siberian and Japanese Iris. You can visit the nursery to view and purchase the daylilies and iris or see them on-line at [www.tranquil-lake.com](http://www.tranquil-lake.com).

When we purchased the nursery twenty-four years ago, it was simply a catalog business. We began building gardens that very first year and within five years we had added a **retail operation** for the daylilies and iris as well as the **distinctive and unusual perennials, grasses, shrubs and trees** that we grow in our gardens. All of them have been tested and proven hardy here in southern New England.

**The gardens at Tranquil Lake are true gems.** With one or more added each year over the past twenty-four years, they showcase a distinctive selection of perennials, vines, grasses, shrubs and trees. They also offer a long season of beauty and interest from early spring through to frost and beyond.

Some of the oldest gardens make the most of the cultural conditions available at the nursery, with our dry sandy soils, lack of shade and Zone 5 winters. They are cheerful sunny borders filled with easy care, drought tolerant plants. And, of course, these gardens offer a place to spotlight the daylilies and iris.

Later gardens were designed around a special design element or cultural condition. There is a **thyme bench** surrounded by fragrant plants and a **purple garden** that offers a site for the purple columns from a flower show exhibit. A dry scree bed **collects water and channels it to a raised bog**. Two **bog gardens** were also added, so we would have a place to grow water loving plants.

Many of the gardens were designed around water features or sitting places. There is a **pond-side curved bench** made of *Carex pensylvanica* and another seating area hidden under the bows of a weeping hemlock. A **circular bench** around a dragon-fly mosaic floor is surrounded by a silver garden. A small fish **pond with a bog edge** offers a place to grow cranberries. A **stone wall was amended with a drip fountain**, providing a terrific location for frogs and dragonflies.

The **wildlife is one of the most important features** of Tranquil Lake Nursery. Although we are just eight miles from Providence, we offer a place where people can watch bluebirds perch in the fields, orioles swoop into the oak trees and cedar waxwings nest in the pines. There are always several varieties of frogs and dragonflies visible in the ponds and the butterflies, hummingbirds and many other pollinators abound.

We are always happy to share this special treasure and invite you to visit often. This autumn, bring your friends and enjoy the gardens, fields and more.

*Warren Leach and Philip Boucher*

## Copses, Bosques and Groves

### Trees and Shrubs for Planting in Groves

#### Shade Tolerant Trees and Shrubs

*Acer negundo* 'Flamingo'  
*Acer palmatum*  
*Acer pensylvanicum*  
*Aronia arbutifolia*  
*Carpinus caroliniana*  
*Clethra acuminata*

#### Trees and Shrubs with Colorful Bark

*Acer griseum*  
*Acer palmatum* 'Winter Flame'  
*Acer pensylvanicum*  
*Betula papyrifera*  
*Betula nigra* 'Heritage'  
*Betula nigra* 'Summer Cascade'  
*Carpinus caroliniana*  
*Clethra acuminata*  
*Clethra barbinervis*  
*Pinus bungeana*  
*Stewartia koreana*

#### Trees and Shrubs with Distinctive Fruit

*Amelanchier canadensis*  
*Aronia arbutifolia*  
*Chionanthus retusus*  
*Lindera glauca salicifolia*  
*Malus x* 'Sugar Tyme'

#### Trees and Shrubs with Fragrant Flowers

*Chionanthus retusus*  
*Magnolia virginiana*  
*Malus x* 'Sugar Tyme'

#### Conifers

*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*  
'Green Arrow'  
*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*  
*Picea glauca* 'Pendula'  
*Pinus banksiana*  
*Pinus bungeana*  
*Pinus strobus* 'John's Find'

The architectural makeup of a grove of trees can evoke various emotional responses, from inspiring to romantic or even sacred. A grove of silhouetted trunks with outstretched limbs and branches intertwined, offers a delightful space beneath, dappled with cool shadows. Compositions of closely planted trees, call them thickets, copses, groves or bosques; are a universal archetype for gardens found in ancient China, Persia and Rome. This venerable and inspirational pattern of an oasis grove still speaks genuinely to us in the present. A distinct memory from exploring desert botanic gardens in Arizona in August is the sheltering shade and pleasantly unique aroma of a mesquite grove. Thank goodness for the shade!

Groves and close clusters of trees are also a familiar poetic image. The opening line of *A Forest Hymn* by William Cullen Bryant portrays 'groves as God's first temples'. Perhaps the most common vision in New England associated with the word grove, is the peeling white bark of birch trees. Images of birches are memorialized by Robert Frost; swinging birches, cavorting in a lyric dance. Fletcher Steele employed a grove of paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*) with artful mastery in the 'Blue Stairs' at **Naumkeag** in Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

I have many indelible, childhood images of magical groves while growing up in Maine. Today, I apply them as a model to garden making. The woods by the upper hayfield was markedly different from the dominate spruce and fir forest. It was densely populated with the tall, smooth trunks of American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*). Their silver-grey bark was clearly visible from a distance. The forest floor was bare, but for the litter of beech leaves which turned beige and held onto their twigs through winter snow. At the end of the house was a place called 'the cedars' where we played in a grove of contorted arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*). We climbed and played among the cedar trunks with their fragrant shredding bark. Some trunks grew almost horizontally, making a long seat; others bent at a ninety degree angles forming 'cedar knees' which were used historically for boat keels.

Not far from home, on the rocky coast of the **Schoodic peninsula**, bosques of Jack Pine (*Pinus banksiana*) growing out of mossed granite ledges were, and still are a favorite picnic spot. The pines, dwarfed and contorted by severe weather and the rugged site, rival any pruned and manicured in a classic Japanese Garden.

The entry road to the **Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Garden** in Seal Harbor penetrates a dark spruce woods, impeccably pruned and luxuriant in moss. The dark and dappled light flickering through the primeaval forest is a wonderful contrast to the bright exuberance and colorful blooms of the summer borders within Chinese tiled walls. This powerful imagery is evidence of Beatrix Farrand's genius.

A diversity of ideas for garden groves can be gleaned from nature or classic gardens. Many small trees and large shrubs are well suited to a configuration of close planting and artful pruning, exposing sculptural trunks and branches. Aside from abstract garden contrivance; groves, copses and bosques offer the comfort of shade, a buffer from wind and afford a biodiversity of habitat of food and shelter for birds, butterflies and insects necessary for a healthy environment.

Here are just some of the garden groves I have designed and planted. They represent a diversity of cultural settings and multiples of different trees and shrubs used to compose a complexity of layered canopies.

I had always wanted to make a pleached bosque, like those in English gardens. Opportunity struck in a garden project at **Brigham Hill Farm** in North Grafton, Massachusetts. I am most flattered that images of this circular bosque of crabapples are included in the Archives of American Gardens at the Smithsonian Institution.

The bosque defines a garden entry and establishes a design theme of bed lines edged in granite. Two concentric rings of stone scribe a circular lawn sixteen feet in diameter. The circular band is planted with six *Malus x* 'Sugar Tyme'. The branches are trained to form a canopy, shading the round threshold of lawn that leads to a garden of colorful perennials and shrubs. The crabapple bosque is

beautiful year-round. The red buds open with fragrant white flowers; they are followed by bright red fruits that persist throughout the winter.

On the same property, a grove of three amur maackia (*Maackia amurensis*) adds a respite of refreshing shade to a bluestone terrace against the house. Maackia is a tough and drought tolerant member of the legume family, tolerant of being planted in pits surrounded by pavement. The pinnately compound leaves unfurl in spring cloaked in a silvery fleece. The leaves mature to green and set off clusters of white, pea-like flowers in June. Maackia's greenish bark merits winter distinction as well.

Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*) is a native tree, adapted to dry-rocky sites and woodland understories. A copse of hornbeam is easily at home on a stone terrace providing shade and adding enchanting winter structure. Musclewood, another common name is very descriptive of the sinewy, muscular profile of the grey trunks.

Moosewood, or striped maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*) is another tree adapted to the woodland understory as well as sunnier sites. Striped maple is a small tree growing up to thirty feet in height, sometimes growing in multi-stem clumps. The greenish bark is distinct with vertical white stripes. Also unmistakable are the very large lobed leaves that turn a translucent yellow in the fall. These enormous leaves gives rise to a colloquial common name of woodsman's toilet paper. I have planted a long linear grove of *Acer pensylvanicum* integrating interior views of the garden planted with evergreen Christmas fern (*Polystichum arcostichoides*), *Bergenia*, *Fothergilla gardenii* 'Harold Epstein', Royal Azalea (*Rhododendron schlippenbachii*) and hundreds of daffodils.

Many cultivars of Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*) prefer partial shade under the canopy of a larger shade tree. We have several Japanese maples as well as a striped maple planted next to our bluestone terrace under the high spreading canopy of Yellowwood (*Cladrastis kentukea*). The cultivar 'Butterfly' with pink and white variegation especially benefits from some shade. A bosque of 'Butterfly' Japanese maples provides a gauzy screen to a bedroom terrace in Dartmouth.

Where as groves of birch may be common, planting them on their sides in an innovation we executed with dwarf River Birch (*Betula nigra* 'Little King'). The grove is densely planted on a 45 degree steep incline to a sunken garden. We also planted a grove of Jack Pine (*Pinus banksiana*) purposely listing on a slant, mimicking the wind.

At Becker College in Worcester we planted crescent shaped copse of Shad Trees (*Amelanchier*) and colonies of September blooming *Heptacodium miconioides* providing colorful flowers and fruit to the academic year.

There are countless, other grove planting possibilities; consider fastigate conifers *Picea glauca* 'Pendula' or *Chamaecyparis nootkatensis* 'Green Arrow' or pollarded sycamores to flesh out your garden grove fantasy. Henry David Thoreau told of tramping eight-or-ten miles through the deep woods to keep an appointment with a beech-tree, or a yellow birch or an old acquaintance among the pines. Conduct your dendrology dialogue with a grove of your own.

Warren Leach

## Hypertufa Workshop

Saturday, October 9th from 9 a.m. to noon

Make your own hypertufa trough in this fun hands-on workshop. The \$75 fee includes all materials to make a mold and cast a large hypertufa trough roughly 18" wide and high and 24" long. The trough must cure for a week before being able to be transported home and finish curing. The workshop will also cover growing media, hardy plants and a planting demonstration. Register early; limited to 12.

## Fall Garden Festival

Saturday, October 2

10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### Workshop & Demonstrations

- 10:00 Plants for Groves filled with Shrubs, Perennials and More  
Warren Leach
- 11:00 Planting a Circular Bosque  
Andy Balon
- 11:30 Getting Started with Composting  
Karen Kullas
- 12:00 Propagating and Overwintering Tender Perennials and Annuals  
Gilbert Moore
- 12:30 Gifts from the Fall Garden  
Debi Hogan
- 1:00 Planting the Shade Garden  
Andy Balon
- 1:30 Combining Perennials, Shrubs, Vines and Groundcovers in the Mixed Border  
Warren Leach
- 2:00 Propagating and Overwintering Tender Perennials and Annuals  
Gilbert Moore
- 2:30 Constructing A Bench Planted with Thyme  
Andy Balon and Warren Leach
- 3:00 Dividing Perennials, Garden Chores and Other Garden Tasks to Prepare for Winter  
Philip Boucher

The Fall Garden Festival is free and open to the public. Bring a picnic lunch and lawn chair. Plan to spend the whole day learning new techniques that will help you to hone your gardening skills, while you improve the look of your garden this autumn and also get ready for the winter ahead and the spring to follow. You will also have the opportunity to wander among the gardens at Tranquil Lake Nursery, where you will see a diverse variety of perennials, grasses, shrubs and vines with late season interest. For descriptions of each garden talk visit us on the web at [www.tranquil-lake.com](http://www.tranquil-lake.com).

## Garden Design

Now is an excellent time to plan for a distinctive display garden that will offer beauty and interest from early spring through to late fall and even winter. Tranquil Lake Nursery offers creative design advice and quality installation. Let us plan a perennial border, walkway garden or entrance landscape for you. Call Warren Leach for an appointment at (508) 252-4002 or send an e-mail request to [tranquil-lake@earthlink.net](mailto:tranquil-lake@earthlink.net). Garden design consultations are also available, for those who want to do the work themselves but need advice to get started.

## “The Combustibles” Daylily Collection

Now is a great time to put new “pop” into your perennial border that will set it ablaze next summer. This collection consists of some of our favorite daylilies that will ignite your future borders with bright hot color and sizzling heat.

One each of **August Flame, Burning Daylight, Chicago Sunrise, Cinnamon Roll, Pittsburgh Golden Triangle and Sparkling Orange**. (A \$66 value) **6 fabulous plants for \$60.**

(Please add a shipping charge of \$15 if you won't be picking up at nursery)

## Visiting the Nursery

Tranquil Lake Nursery is open 7 days a week from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., from mid-April through mid-October. The nursery is closed on Memorial Day, the Fourth of July and Labor Day.

**Directions:** Tranquil Lake Nursery is located just north of Route 44 in Rehoboth, Massachusetts, about 8 miles east of Providence, Rhode Island. If you are traveling **east on Route 44**, take a left turn onto River Street immediately after you pass Winthrop Commons and the Route 44 Recreation Center. Continue on River Street across Broad Street. The nursery is the fourth driveway on the right. If you are traveling **west on Route 44**, travel 1.4 miles past the intersection of Route 118 and Route 44. You will pass the Rehoboth Schools on the right. Make the next right turn onto Danforth Street. Then take the first onto River Street. Tranquil Lake Nursery is the fourth driveway on the left.

## \*\*\*\*\* Join Our On-Line Newsletter List \*\*\*\*\*

Tranquil Lake Nursery has gone green with our newsletter. To conserve natural resources, we have made the transition to all on-line communications. We will post all future newsletters on-line in both HTML and PDF format and then send you a summary and link. To continue receiving our informative newsletter, send your e-mail address to [tranquil-lake@earthlink.net](mailto:tranquil-lake@earthlink.net). We won't share your information and will send a 10% off coupon as a thank you.

Rehoboth, MA 02769  
45 River Street  
Tranquil Lake Nursery

