



# HAH Happenings April 2020



The Horticultural Alliance of the Hamptons  
P.O. Box 202, Bridgehampton, NY 11932-0202

631.537.2223 [hahgarden.org](http://hahgarden.org)  
at the Bridgehampton Community House



## HAPPY SPRING, EVERYONE

*No events, lectures or meetings will be happening at HAH for the time being while we all stay home and tend to ourselves and our gardens for the spring months. The Library will also be closed and there will be no Plant Fair this spring. We all hope that the virus crisis will pass quickly so we can meet safely again, but for now the only HAH Happenings will be in this Newsletter and online. Please see inside pages for more details and watch your email for more news.*



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Fellow Gardeners,

What an unprecedented time in our world! We are of course tracking what happens with the Coronavirus as it affects our communities and keeping an eye on how we may need to reschedule programs if needed.

**We are taking the necessity to support social distancing very seriously.** We have closed the library and cancelled all programs for March through the end of May. In any event, what we can't do now, we will do later. Keep your eye out for emails from HAHMember, who will keep you up to date. We are developing a Plan B for all of our normal activities.

The cancellation of our Preview Party and Garden Fair is the prudent decision to make at the same time it's a major one for us. We count on the income to fund ongoing operations, but the good news is that we have a reserve fund for just these kinds of emergencies. We are crossing our fingers that we might have this crisis behind us next fall and that we'll be able to resume our lectures, roundtables, tours, library access and perhaps do a party and fund raiser.

## HAH 2020

### OFFICERS: (an officer serves for a 1 year term)

President	Alicia Whitaker
First Vice President	Erika Shank
Second Vice President	Rick Bogusch
Recording Secretary	Janet Ollinger
Corresponding Secretary	Joan DiMonda
Treasurer	Bettina Benson

### DIRECTORS: (a director serves for a 3 year term)

Jeffrey Glick	'20
Marie DiMonte	'20
Elaine Peterson	'21
Erik Brockmeyer	'21
Sarah Alford	'22
Pamela Harwood	'22

The Library Chairperson (who serves on the Board with a vote) is currently: Susan Kennedy Zeller

On occasion the board may appoint someone to fill an unexpired term if necessary.

### NEWSLETTER/WEBSITE EDITOR

Elaine Peterson

[hahmember@optonline.net](mailto:hahmember@optonline.net)

Submissions must be received by the 10th of the month prior to publication. Please include NL in the subject line.

### MAILING

John Benson

### PHOTOS

Elaine Peterson, Bridget DeCandido

We will stay in touch with our community partners and member garden centers and nurseries, and will let you know more about how they will operate during this time. We want to find ways to support the wholesalers as well as retailers who provide us with wonderful plants.

In the meantime, the unusually warm spring is bringing a combination of joy and worry about plants that are blooming earlier than usual. Luckily our plants are as resilient as we are, so enjoy them! Speaking of resilience, we have a strategic plan priority that you can read about in this newsletter that reflects our commitment to helping build what Doug Tallamy calls a "homegrown national park" by taking environmental action into our own hands, one garden at a time. There are many things that we can do, but we've decided to focus on trees, particularly native trees.

I just read a lovely thought that applies in this situation: "keep planting cherry trees." As gardeners, our optimism and belief in the future drives us to invest in growth. Let's keep doing it. May being in your garden bring you joy and solace.

Stay safe and happy gardening,

Alicia



We will be postponing/cancelling the following activities for the near future:

- **HAH Library – closed until further notice.**
- **Roundtable – Saturday, April 4 at 10am - cancelled**
- **Succulents Workshop – Saturday, April 4 at 1pm –Broadview Gardens - postponed**
- **Monthly Lecture with Tony Avent – Sunday, April 5 at 2pm – postponed**
- **Friends of the Garden – Tuesday, April 7 at 10am – postponed**
- **Camellia Group – Saturday, April 18 at 10am - postponed**
- **Monthly Lecture with Lois Sheinfeld – Sunday, May 3 at 2pm – postponed**
- **Preview Party & Garden Fair – Friday, May 15 & Saturday, May 16 – Postponed until further notice. We hope to hold this event later in the summer or early fall.**

In the meantime, we are exploring how we can support our vendors, retail nurseries, and garden centers. Our plan is to provide our members with a list of our community partners so that you will be able to check their hours of operation during this crisis.

We are also exploring ways we can use on-line resources to connect us.

## HAH's Strategic Plan

Alicia Whitaker

Every year the HAH board and committee heads meet to discuss longer term priorities for HAH. We ask ourselves what's working, and what's not working, with a view toward pinpointing what we need to improve. We also want to be sure that we are considering longer term initiatives that will drive the relevance and effectiveness of our organization. We have the good fortune of having received a significant gift from a member that we want to use for the benefit of HAH. Our annual operating budget is based on membership dues, plant fair sales and a few other things, and we are typically "in the black". We also have healthy reserves that we've invested in CDs so that we have a cushion – a wonderful resource for a not-for-profit that lets us sleep at night. But this gift gave us the opportunity to think more expansively about we would and could do, given deeper pockets.

This year's discussion led us to identify the following four priorities as initiatives we'll begin work on in 2020 but may very well drive our work over the next several years:

1. **A Tree Initiative** that can benefit the community beyond our membership. We believe Doug Tallamy, our recent Karish Program speaker, who makes a powerful case for the use of native plants and the restoration of habitats to support wildlife. Trees are "keystone" plants in that effort. Stay tuned, we have a team working on this, and will soon have a multi-year plan to drive awareness and education, and to provide trees to people who can plant and nurture them.
2. **Invest in "blockbuster" speakers** who can support our mission of educating our members and the gardening community.
3. **Fix the acoustics in the Community House** meeting room. The town of Southampton may do its part, but we can and should invest in acoustical remedies and equipment that will make our lectures more understandable for all. Bad acoustics are the number one complaint we hear from members. We've been working on it for a year, but need more progress.
4. **Invest in upgrading HAH's website** and related tools so that our members and the public have an easier time finding information and tapping into our resources.

We are excited about these initiatives. If any of them are of special interest to you, let me know. There is always a need for people on the team who are passionate and committed.



**Thank you so much to Vicki Bustamante for a leading us on a delightful "Winter Walk on the Tree Trail" at Montauk Country Park on February 22. We learned so much, saw the emerging signs of spring and, joy of joys, the weather was perfect!**



**Acer rubrum, Swamp maple**



**Hamamelis virginiana, Witch Hazel**



**Hickory      Carya glabra and Carya tomentosa**



**Sassafras albidum**



## **Camellia Friends**

While we will be unable to meet and share the beautiful flowers blooming on our camellia shrubs, I would love for you to share with me photos of your flowers. I will share them with the group and the HAH family. Please email the photos to me at my email, [bdia@optonline.net](mailto:bdia@optonline.net) To get us started, I enclose a photo of my Lemon Glow in full bloom now. This seems to be a good year for camellias so get out your phone or iPad and send me those photos.

Stay well, enjoy your garden, and we will meet in the future.

Bridget DeCandido



## FAVORITE TREES: NOTES FROM THE ROUNDTABLE by Pamela Harwood

This was the first topic on March 7, which also included tips for late-winter and early spring pruning. We had a great turnout for this talk. Many tree varieties were discussed, including natives, shade tolerance, fragrance, and seasonal interest.

**Acer griseum (Paperbark Maple)** is prized for its exfoliating bark.

**Acer rubrum (Red Maple)** is native to Eastern North America. It grows quickly to 40-60 feet, has an oval-shaped crown. The 'Red Sunset' cultivar has outstanding orange to red fall color. The shallow, spreading roots might interfere with driveways or sidewalks.

**Acer palmatum (Japanese Maple)** comes in many cultivars, sizes, shapes, and colors. It can tolerate part shade. The cultivar 'Sango-Kaku' is prized for its bright red branches during the winter, 'Waterfall' is an attractive weeping cultivar, and 'Caperci' is a lovely dwarf selection. Many varieties have leaves that start out one color in spring and then turn green during the summer. Most have attractive fall foliage color if they get enough sun; others are red from spring through fall.

**Betula nigra (River Birch)** is native to Long Island and as the name implies, likes medium to wet soil, making it an ideal rain garden tree in full sun to part shade. Avoid pruning in spring when the sap is running. It can be trained as a single or multi-trunked tree, and the salmon-pink to reddish brown bark exfoliates to reveal lighter inner bark, resulting in attractive winter interest.

**Cercis canadensis (Eastern Redbud)** is a native to Long Island, and is one of the earliest spring-flowering trees, with pink/purple blooms before the foliage emerges. At 20-30 feet it is small, likes moderate moisture and full sun to part shade. Situate it carefully as it does not transplant well. Both the flower nectar and the fall seed pods feed wildlife.

**Cornus florida (Flowering Dogwood)** is the native species and blooms earlier in the spring than the also favorite but exotic **Cornus kousa**. Both can take part shade. The reddish/brown/burgundy fall foliage color is beautiful, as are the large, red drupes in late summer, beloved by birds.

**Franklinia** is native to the Southeast. It was not mentioned, but I am including it here because I grow and love it for its large, fragrant white flowers that arrive in late summer, when nearly everything else has finished, and persist until frost. The red fall foliage is a bonus.

**Ilex opaca (American Holly)** is a favorite. You'll recall that Rick Bogusch wrote a feature article for us in a recent issue of our newsletter. It is a tall, broadleaf evergreen, sports red berries in winter, and is deer resistant.

**Lagerstroemia (Crape Myrtle)** can be pruned to remain a shrub or grow to tree-size. It is prized for late-summer flowers (which pollinators love) of varying colors and it's exfoliating bark, making it an important tree for winter interest.

**Magnolia grandiflora** is native to the Southeast U.S. and is a tall, broadleaf evergreen also valued for its large, fragrant white flowers beginning late spring and continuing through summer. Certain cultivars like "Edith Bogue" and "Brackens Brown Beauty" are hardier in our zone 7. The backs of the leaves have a velvet feel.

**Nyssa sylvatica (Black or Sour Gum or Tupelo)** is native to the Eastern U.S. It is dioecious (needs male and female varieties in order to produce fruit), but if fruit is produced the blue berries are a food source for birds. The fall foliage is colorful. It likes moist soil, so it can be a good choice for a rain garden. The long taproot makes it difficult to transplant. For more info, revisit Rick Bogusch's article in the HAH March newsletter.

**Quercus (oak)** is a favorite for many and there are several native varieties. They grow tall, like sun and our acid soil, and have colorful fall foliage and acorns that feed wildlife. Native to Long Island: *Quercus alba* (White Oak) can be difficult to transplant, *Quercus palustris* (Pin Oak) is a favorite because it is easy to transplant and grows rapidly; *Quercus rubra* (Northern Red Oak) can tolerate dry conditions and partial shade and is relatively easy to transplant. (see Rick's article on oaks in this issue.)

**Sassafras albidum** is a native tree. It's fragrant, likes sun, has good fall color, as they are dioecious, females produce red fruit in fall if they have a male companion. Small yellow flowers appear in spring prior to the leaves, it is fast growing, and suckers.

**Stewartia pseudocamellia or Japanese Stewartia** is a small to medium size tree, usually multi-stemmed, that features white flowers with a yellow/orange center in early summer. The fall foliage is red/orange or burgundy and winter interest is provided by the reddish/brown exfoliating bark. **Stewartia ovata** is a native to the Southeastern U.S. with similar attributes as well as to *Franklinia*. As it likes a moist soil, it can be a good choice for the rain garden.

**Styrax japonica (Japanese Snowbell)** is an understory tree with fragrant, white flowers in late spring. It prefers rich, acidic, medium moist soil and can be pruned in late winter to maintain shape. Gray bark fissures on older branches reveal orange inner bark, creating attractive winter interest.

Other varieties mentioned were Shad, Hickory, Himalayan Pine, Korean Spruce, Chestnut, Katsura, Pawlownia, *Clerodendrum trichotoma*, (a wildlife heaven). Several attendees wondered how to protect trees from the damage that deer do in October/November when they shed their antler velvet by rubbing them on the trunks of young, smooth-barked trees. You can put up a temporary barrier by wrapping the trunk with plastic netting or a corrugated tube, or wrap the trunk with rope in a crisscrossed pattern to form a rough surface, which the deer dislike. You may remove these protections before winter. But remember, plant the right tree in the right location!



# Quercus spp.

## The Oaks



When I helped coordinate a memorial tree planting program for Cornell University's arboretum expansion area, oaks were everyone's first choice, perhaps because they have been symbols of strength, honor, immortality, fertility and life itself for millennia and by many cultures.

Along with beeches and chestnuts, oaks (the genus *Quercus*) are members of the beech family. Found throughout the northern hemisphere, most species are deciduous trees, but some are shrubby and some evergreen. All have visually insignificant, wind-pollinated flowers that appear before the leaves in mid-spring. Male flowers are contained in long, dangling structures called catkins. Female flowers are inconspicuous and develop into acorns, one-seeded nuts partially or completely covered by woody, warty, scaly caps.

Botanists divide oaks into two groups, the red oaks and the white oaks. White oaks have ashy gray bark. Their fruits mature in one year and their leaf lobes are rounded and not tipped by bristles. The fruits of red oaks take two years to mature, leaf lobes are generally pointed and bristle-tipped and bark is dark, charcoal gray. Identifying individual species of oaks is complicated, because hybridization is common among the more than twenty species native to eastern United States.

Locally, white oaks are represented by *Quercus alba*, commonly called the white oak because of its light-colored bark. Though it prefers deep, fertile, moist, well-drained soil, white oak also tolerates drier, less fertile sites, like the sandy, often barren soils of Long Island. The leaves of many oaks emerge pinkish and those of white oak are no exception. As they mature, they become dark blue-green above and lighter green beneath. Acorns have caps with bumpy scales, unlike the smooth scales of red oak.

When open-grown, white oak are impressive trees. While young trees are pyramidal in shape, mature specimens become broadly rounded with wide-spreading branches and grow 50-80 feet tall and over 100 feet wide, truly handsome and majestic.

Another member of the white oak group found on Long Island is black-jack oak (*Q. marilandica*), distinguished by its shiny, broadly triangular, 3-lobed leaves. A small, shrub-like tree, it typically grows in dry, infertile and sandy soils.

Three species from the red oak group are common locally and they are red, black and scarlet oaks. The leaves of red oak (*Q. rubra*) are dark green and lustrous above and pale beneath. Acorns are oval, about 3/4 inch long and have saucer-like caps with smooth scales. In a landscape situation, trees will grow 60-75 feet tall, about the same in width and have a rounded outline. Moist, fertile soils produce the best growth, but red oak also grows well on dry, sandy sites.

So-named because of its very dark bark, black oak (*Q. velutina*) is smaller than red oak and variable in width and outline. Trees can be narrow or broad and are also variable as to site preference, growing where it is dry and sandy as well as in moist, fertile soils and heavy clay. Acorns are smaller than those of red oak and have a deep, bowl-like cap.

Scarlet oak (*Q. coccinea*) has glossy, dark green leaves like red oak, but more finely cut, and can grow as tall, but not as wide. In youth, it is pyramidal in shape with pendulous branches, but becomes rounded as it ages, with an open branching habit. Scarlet oak is often found growing on sandy sites, but is tolerant of a wide range of soil types, as long as they are well-drained.

Oaks are not commonly used as trees for landscaping for several reasons. Their mature size makes them more suitable for large spaces like parks and golf courses than most residential properties, and they can be difficult to transplant because of vigorous taproots. They are generally slow-growing, making nursery

production difficult, and even though durable and long-lived, oaks are susceptible to numerous pests and diseases, especially the white oaks. Chlorosis or yellowing of the leaves is a common problem when trees are grown in alkaline soil.

Homeowners find oaks less desirable than other trees because of their slow growth and because they lack showy flowers and or bright fall color. Scarlet oak can be an exception in this regard, but even individuals of this species can disappoint and exhibit the lackluster russet browns typical of oaks in October and November.

Red oak (*Q. rubra*) is an exception to some of the above. The most widely distributed oak in North America, it is also the most common in the nursery trade, because it has no taproot, is easily transplanted and its growth rate is an impressive 1-2 feet per year. It is generally pest-free and sometimes fall color is more red than brown.

Commercially, oaks are the most important hardwood tree in North America. In colonial times, their bark was an important source of tannin for the tanning industry centered in Massachusetts and later in Pennsylvania. The Bay Psalm Book of 1640 was covered in oak-tanned leather. Oak wood is durable and has an attractive grain, making it suitable for furniture and flooring, as well as for boats, pilings, posts, general construction and barrels for wine and whiskey.

Though its wood is lighter and weaker than white oak, red oak is the more important tree for lumber. White oaks are not as abundant as they once were. Large trees suitable for harvest have all but disappeared in the East and are becoming scarcer in Midwestern forests. Yet, even today, laws require that whiskey must be aged in white oak barrels, because its wood imparts no odor or taste and is impervious to liquids.

Besides being important commercially, oaks are an important component of the ecology wherever they grow. Acorns provide food and cavities in old trees provide houses for numerous mammals and birds. In addition, oaks support countless plant-eating insects, which in turn provide even more food for our feathered friends. According to Doug Tallamy, a recent HAH speaker, "The value of oaks for supporting both vertebrate and invertebrate life cannot be overstated." If you want to support our local wildlife and environment, an oak is the best tree you can plant.

Rick Bogusch



## HAH 2020 SUNDAY MONTHLY LECTURES - 2 PM - BH Community House

*All lectures are free to members, \$10 for not-yet-members.  
Memberships start at \$45. Please join us!*

**April 5 – Tony Avent POSTPONED**

*My Favorite 100... Perennials I Wouldn't Garden Without*

**May 3 - Lois Sheinfeld POSTPONED**

*Outstanding Trees for the Home Garden*

**June 14 – Bill Cullina**

*What do you Mean I'm Not a Perennial?! Native Shrubs &  
Small Trees for Perennial Companionship*

*There are no lectures in July or August*

**September 13 – Lori Chips**

*Troughs: Gardening in the Smallest Landscape*

**October 18 – Judith Tankard**

*Gardens of the Arts & Crafts Movement*

**November 8 – Margery Daughtery**

*Battling Diseases in the Garden*

**December 13 – David Culp**

*A Bountiful Year: Six Seasons of Beauty from Brandywine  
Cottage*



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100% Recycled 

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