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FRIENDS OF ANDERSEN HORTICULTURAL LIBRARY

  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
**LIBRARIES**

SPRING 2015

# News



Minnesota Landscape  
**ARBORETUM**

Vol. 20, no. 1



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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**FRIENDS OF ANDERSEN  
HORTICULTURAL LIBRARY NEWS**

Andersen Horticultural Library  
Minnesota Landscape Arboretum  
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Chaska MN 55318  
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HortLib@umn.edu

Friends of AHL membership  
(includes Newsletter): \$15.00 /year  
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The University of Minnesota is an  
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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS:  
FRIENDS EVENTS**

**Monday, April 27**

Regular Meeting, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

**Speaker: Naturalist Matt Schuth, "Winter Birds of the Arboretum"**

Snyder Auditorium

**Monday, July 27**

Annual Meeting, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

**Speaker: Plant breeder Dr. David Zlesak, "Rose Breeding"**

Snyder Auditorium

**Early August weekday--date & time TBD (an invitation will be sent)**

**Friends Special Luncheon**

**Speaker: Stan Tekiela, naturalist, author, and wildlife photographer**

Snyder Auditorium

**Sunday, September 20**

11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**Friends Picnic**

Margot Picnic Shelter B (on the road to the Learning Center)

**Friday, October 2 through Sunday, October 4**

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

**Friends Annual Book Sale**

Snyder Auditorium (Friends Preview & Sale, Thursday afternoon, Oct. 1)

**Monday, October 26**

Regular Meeting, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

**Speaker: Dr. Jean Larson, "The Healing Power of Nature - an introduction to Nature-based Therapeutics"**

**LIBRARY EXHIBITS & EVENTS**

Now through Sunday, May 17, 2015

Reedy Gallery, Oswald Visitor Center

**Exhibit: *Weird, Wild & Wonderful: the Second New York Botanical Garden Triennial*, curated by the American Society of Botanical Artists.**

Sunday, May 17, 2015

**Event: *Weird, Wild & Wonderful Poetry Reading* Story, page 6.**

Saturday, May 23 - Sunday, August 30, 2015

Reedy Gallery, Oswald Visitor Center

**Exhibit: *K is for Kiss-Me-Over-the-Garden-Gate* Story, page 4.**

**COVER IMAGE**

Corinth grapes, by Alexandre Poiteau. In: *Traite des arbres fruitiers*, by H.-L. Duhamel du Monceau, 1807. Look for it in the *K is for Kiss-Me-Over-the-Garden-Gate* exhibit.

# PONDERINGS FROM PAUL

BY PAUL SCHLICK, PRESIDENT

*Ponder: to quietly probe the depths of knowledge in hope that wisdom might rise to the surface.*

I'm at the Arboretum, quietly pondering and watching for signs that spring is winning its skirmish with winter. A few minutes ago, I walked down to look at the tall, square obelisk that sits on the knoll near the gatehouse. It is a chimney swift tower, designed to provide nesting habitat for those stubby little birds with the fluttering wings that look like flying cigars. They use saliva to glue their nests to the vertical insides of chimneys. But the number of open chimneys is declining, so nesting sites are dwindling and so are the swifts.

Normally I don't pay much attention to the tower but this is a special time. April 2015 marks the 100th anniversary of the first chimney swift tower, designed by Miss Althea Sherman and erected on her farm near the tiny northeast Iowa hamlet of National. Sherman (1853-1943) was trained in art at Oberlin College and at art schools in Chicago and New York City. An accomplished painter, she taught art for several years (five at Carleton College) before returning home to care for her ailing parents. After they passed, she stayed there. With no demand for artists in small-town Iowa, at age 50 she created a new career in ornithology. She already had a keen eye for detail and had been documenting the natural phenomena around her for years, especially in the 1-acre "dooryard" surrounding the house. Over the next three decades she observed 168 species there, 40 of

them nesting. This was her laboratory. She often painted her subjects; her portrait of an American goldfinch spurred the legislature to name that species Iowa's State Bird. She belonged to 15 scientific organizations and subscribed to 26 journals. Self-taught in birds and science, Althea nevertheless published over 70 articles in prestigious journals and became a "member" of the American Ornithologists' Union, only the fourth woman named to that elite 100-person group. She gave many talks and



Arboretum's chimney swift tower, photo by Paul Schlick

communicated often with other researchers, including an 11-year correspondence with another self-taught bird observer 30 years her junior—Margaret Morse Nice—whom you may recall from last fall's *Ponderings*.

In the early 1900s little was known about chimney swift nesting behavior. In 1899 Sherman read a paper by a researcher who had observed swift nests by thrusting a hand-held mirror through a stove-pipe hole. That technique was not very effective and it started Althea thinking about a better method.

In 1915 she commissioned a 28-foot tall, 9-foot square wooden tower, at its center a 2-foot square artificial wooden chimney descending 14 feet from the roof. An indoor stairway wound around the chimney, and uniquely designed windows recessed into it gave her literally a bird's-eye view of nesting activity. When swifts started using it three years later she became the first person to observe their entire nesting cycle. Her ground-breaking reports garnered high interest and from 1918 to 1932 over 1,700 visitors climbed her tower, from school kids to world-renowned ornithologists. A full-size replica of Sherman's chimney swift tower was built in 2009 and sits near her grave along U.S. 52 at what remains of her hometown. Her original tower was rediscovered in another town in 1991 and restored in 2013. It sits in a preserve in Buchanan, a few miles northeast of Iowa City. In 2014, after a decades-long absence, baby chimney swifts again chirped in Althea Sherman's tower.

The 60 volumes of dense notes she left behind were edited and published as *Birds of an Iowa Dooryard* in 1952, reprinted in 1996 (available at AHL). You can learn more of her impressive story at [www.altheasherman.org](http://www.altheasherman.org). And I'll be watching for *Birds of an Iowa Dooryard* at our book sales!

Keep in touch,

*Paul*

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## *K is for Kiss-Me-Over-the-Garden-Gate!*

May 23 - August 30, 2015

*K is for Kiss-Me-Over-the-Garden-Gate: A Horticultural Alphabet*

Exhibition: Reedy Gallery, Oswald Visitor Center

Showcasing stunning and rare printed images, from apples to zinnias, this horticultural alphabet highlights Andersen Horticultural Library's special collections of vintage seed catalogs, treasured rare books, and 19th century garden magazines.



Poster designed by Darren Terpstra, University Libraries' Exhibit and Multimedia Designer. Based on an early 20th-century German postcard in AHL's collection.

Kiss-Me-Over-the-Garden-Gate is a common name for *Polygonum orientale*. Also known as Lady's Fingers, Prince's Feather, and Princess Feather, this Victorian favorite has

arching 6-9' stems with dangling hot-pink flower chains.

The project team (Lucie Taylor, project leader; Susan Moe; and Kathy Allen) had a grand time pulling this exhibit together. It was a tall order to agree on which plant would represent each letter of the alphabet. Some letters were difficult (X!), while others con-



Tuberous begonias. 1898. James Vick's Sons Garden & Floral Guide. Rochester, NY. p. 1.

jured up so many possibilities we nearly came to blows over which one to select—think D is for dafodil, dahlia, daylily...

The library's collections span nearly 500 years and include thousands of richly illustrated works. Finding beautiful images for each of the twenty-six plants involved some research and many visits to the rare book room to

browse. It was a daunting task to narrow our multitude of options to the top three images for each plant. Each of us had favorites we fought for. We hope you enjoy the images we finally agreed on!

The library's collections continue to grow. Every time a rare illustrated book was purchased during our exhibit planning, we would check to see whether any of the illustrations were of our twenty-six plants and whether any were better than the three we'd already chosen. It was maddening – it seemed we were never quite finished! We could continue to offer alphabet exhibitions for the next century and not run out of material!

Many of the original rare books, periodicals, and seed catalogs will be on display in the library.

Between the gleaming Nakashima furniture -- freshly cleaned, oiled, and polished ("Thank you!" to Miserable Day volunteers) -- and the new copper pipes "adorning" the Library, we are ready for spring!

Visit the Library by May 17 to see seven botanical watercolor paintings by two of the Minnesota artists with work in the *Weird, Wild & Wonderful* exhibition: Linda Powers and Denise Walser-Kolar.

# FLORA (& FAUNA) ILLUSTRATA

## FLORA ILLUSTRATA



*Flora Illustrata: Great Works from the LuEsther T. Mertz Library of The New York Botanical Garden*, edited by Susan M. Fraser and Vanessa Bezemer Sellers. Yale University Press, 2014.

*Flora Illustrata* is an exceptional tribute to the rich collections of NYBG's Mertz Library. Essays by experts on such topics as "European Medieval and Renaissance Herbals," "Plants in Their Perfection: The Botanical Garden and the Illustrated Book," "Linnaeus and the Foundation of Modern Botany," "Early American Horticultural Traditions: Gardening with Plants from the New World," and "Toward an American Landscape Theory," are all pertinent to the collections and scope of AHL. None more so, perhaps, than "The Horticultural Enterprise: Markets, Mail, and Media in Nineteenth Century America," which tells the tale of seed and nursery companies and their products.

The lavish illustrations pull one in and illuminate the fascinating essays. *Flora Illustrata* has received many accolades and is likely bound for several prestigious awards.

## FLORA AND FAUNA ILLUSTRATA (FFI)

Along with the community of natural history artists, the arboretum and the Andersen Horticultural Library are embarking on an exciting new project – the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum-Andersen Horticultural Library *Flora and Fauna Illustrata*. (If you like acronyms, this one is a mouthful: UMLA-AHL FFI!)

The mission of the *Illustrata* is to document the arboretum's plants and animals with fine art. AHL will permanently document and archive the art and facilitate periodic exhibitions. The collection will provide a visual resource to aid research and will serve to inspire learning, discovery, and enjoyment.

Local botanical artists Suzanne Galloway and Judy Spiegel (Friend and AHL volunteer) launched us on this path with a letter to Arboretum Director Dr. Ed Schneider suggesting that an arboretum florilegium be created. As many of you know, a florilegium is a body of fine art accurately depicting the plants of a particular area or garden. Often prints are made of the

artworks and published in book form, as with *The Highgrove Florilegium*, which documents plants in Prince Charles's garden. Another example is *Jardin de la Malmaison*, in which botanical artist extraordinaire, Pierre-Joseph Redouté, depicted the plants of Empress Josephine's garden.



Ventenat, E.P., *Jardin de la Malmaison*, vol. 2: t. 99 (1804), P.-J. Redouté, artist.

Dr. Schneider requested the library take the lead on this project. Discussions with several people led to the project encompassing not just the concept of a florilegium (plants), but arboretum animals as well. Suzanne, Judy, and I recently met with the newly formed FFI Advisory Board and worked out a number of details. By early summer we plan to announce the project to the community of artists and invite submissions.

Governor Andersen stated in his autobiography that he likes to think in terms of 100 years. With thousands of possible arboretum species to capture in fine art, I imagine Governor Andersen would be well pleased with this ambitious long-term project.

## UPDATE

### Weird, Wild & Wonderful is just that!



Above, Minnesota botanical artist Linda Powers leads a gallery tour of the **Weird, Wild & Wonderful** exhibition at the opening reception February 12. The show remains open in the Reedy Gallery through Sunday, May 17. Enjoy a poetry reading and literary performance by The Cracked Walnut, a group of Twin Cities writers and performers, the final day of the show, in the MacMillan Auditorium. The theme for the performance -- **Weird, Wild & Wonderful!**



WW&W opening reception: (l to r) Robin Jess (President, American Society of Botanical Artists); Wendy Lougee (University Librarian); Edward Schneider (Director, Minnesota Landscape Arboretum); featured speaker Carol Woodin (Director, ASBA Exhibitions); Kathy Allen (Librarian, AHL); Marilyn Garber (Director, Minnesota School of Botanical Art). Top image courtesy of the Arboretum, bottom image courtesy of Marilyn Garber.

## Historic Seed & Nursery Catalog Collection

In 1743, Parisian Pierre Andrieux, chief seed supplier and botanist to King Louis XV, and his wife, seed expert Claude Geoffroy, founded what would become one of the largest and longest-running nurseries. Their son-in-law, Philippe de Vilmorin, joined the family and the nursery in 1774, creating **Vilmorin-Andrieux & Co.** He revitalized the business by offering new items such as the tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), as well as beets and rutabaga.

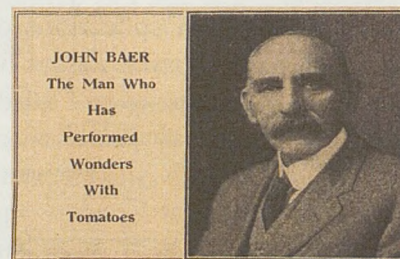
Although family-controlled for more than 200 years, Vilmorin-Andrieux has changed hands a few times since 1972 and is now owned by Groupe Limagrain. AHL has 32 catalogs from this firm dating from 1844 to 1980 – not a complete run by any means! Generous funding from the Friends of AHL and the Andersen Book Trust allowed us to make a recent purchase of ten Vilmorin-Andrieux catalogs. The earliest (so far) is a November 1844 seed list (purchased for \$17.51!). One of the latest additions is a 1909 catalog which is currently on display in AHL.

From 1850 to 1895, Vilmorin-Andrieux commissioned a series of 46 lithographs advertising their vegetables and fruit. AHL has a copy of *Album Vilmorin: les Plantes potagères* (The Vegetable Garden, 1850–1895), featuring reproductions of the colorful lithographs. The set was a gift to the library in

September 2011 from the arboretum friends of Helen King, in honor of her 90th birthday. AHL also has a few of Vilmorin's charming 19th-century books of flowers and vegetables, each containing more than 1,000 small illustrations. --Renee Jensen

### Bolgiano's Victory Tomato

Through an exchange of duplicate seed catalogs with Cornell, we received the 1920 Bolgiano's catalog pictured on p. 8, which highlights the "Victory" tomato. Inside, a full page is devoted to this "wonderful new creation" by John Baer, "The Man Who Has Performed Wonders With Tomatoes."

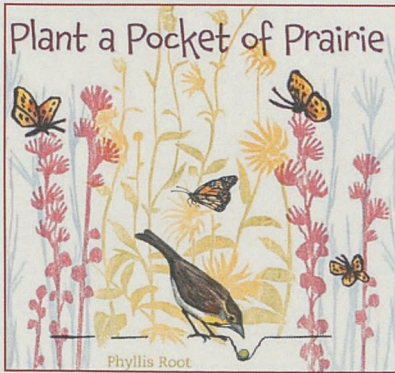


"With his only son a soldier in France and with his own heart heavy and sad, this great friend of the trucker and market gardener not only did 'his bit' but 'his all' by laboring incessantly during the four long years of the great world war" to create the Victory tomato. Bolgiano's declares it to be the most beautiful shaped tomato the world has ever seen.

Indeed, note the beautiful shape of the tomato on our back cover!

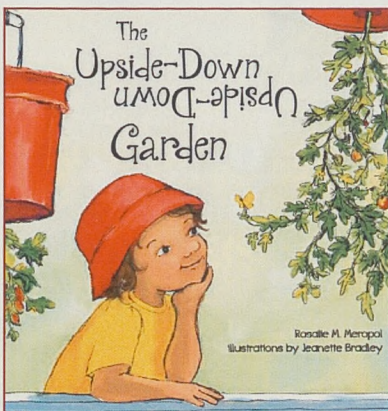
# STORYTIME FAVORITES...

(THURSDAYS AT 10:30 AM)



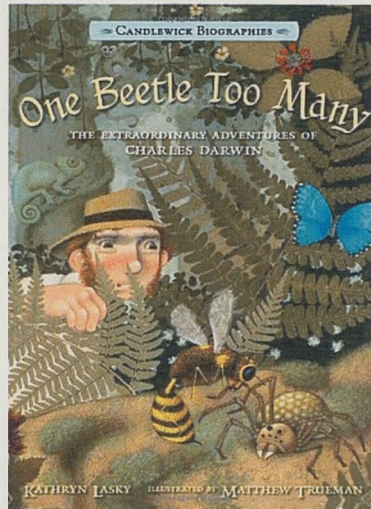
*Plant a Pocket of Prairie*, by Phyllis Root, illustrated by Betsy Bowen. University of Minnesota Press, 2014. Grade 1-4.

You may remember the *Big Belching Bog* that Root and Bowen collaborated on five years ago. Here, these two Minnesotans put their efforts to another Minnesota habitat, the prairie. Beautifully illustrated and informative for young and old alike, *Plant a Pocket of Prairie* suggests good species to plant to attract particular prairie critters.



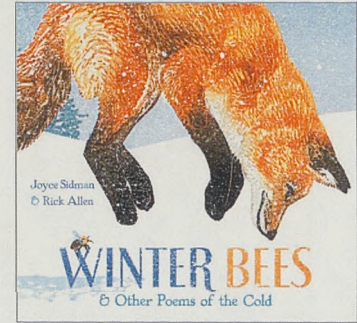
*The Upside-Down Garden*, by Rosalie M. Meropol; illustrated by Jeanette Bradley. Upside Down Press, 2014. Grade Pre-K - 3.

A delightful story of a boy who wants to grow tomatoes but has no space, yet creatively solves his problem. Charming and detailed illustrations make this book riveting for youngsters and helpful for novices who'd like a quick project!



*One Beetle Too Many: The Extraordinary Adventures of Charles Darwin*, by Kathryn Lasky; illustrated by Matthew Trueman. Candlewick Press, 2014, c2009. Grade 2-6.

Humorous illustrations using mixed media complement this simply told story of Darwin as a failing student who would much rather be collecting beetles and blowing up garden sheds than studying. The story follows Darwin's five-year journey as naturalist on board the *Beagle* as it sails around South America, touches on his family life (ten children!), and his struggle with the idea of evolution.



*Winter Bees & Other Poems of the Cold*, by Joyce Sidman & Rick Allen. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014. Grade K-4.

Another Minnesota author-artist duo brings us this captivating book. A dozen poems capture the busy winter lives of moose, beavers, birds, even bees and skunk cabbage! Each poem is set against a stunning two-page linoleum print and complemented by a sidebar of fascinating facts about the featured plant or animal.

## Arboretum Quilts

In October we were saddened to learn of the death of arboretum member and expert quilter Josephine "Dodie" Chalupsky. Her nephew, Frank Homan, graciously donated three large albums of Dodie's to the library. The albums document in photographs and captions the huge amount of effort that went into Arboretum Auxiliary quilt-making projects from 1993 through 2009 - the quilts were exquisite!

FOUNDED 1818 1920 TESTED AND TRUSTED  
OVER A CENTURY

# Bolgiano's

## SEEDS

**VICTORY TOMATO**

EARLY, FULL OF VIM, NEW LIFE AND HEALTH. FREE FROM WILT, BLIGHT, DISEASE, PERFECT SHAPE, HIGH CROWN FRUIT, ENTIRELY FREE FROM CORE, FIRM, SOLID AND MEATY, BEAUTIFUL, BRILLIANT RED COLOR, PERFECTLY SMOOTH AND EVEN, MILD, REFRESHING, DELICIOUS FLAVOR, FREE FROM ACIDITY, A MARVELOUS YIELDER OF HEAVY CROPS, SURPASSES ANY TOMATO EVER KNOWN FOR SHIPPING, CANNING OR TABLE USE.

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PRICES - PKT. \$1.00, 1/2 OZ. \$2.50, OZ. \$4.00, 1/4 LB. \$15.00  
1/2 LB. \$25.00, LB. \$50.00 POSTPAID.

**"VICTORY" TOMATO**  
CREATED DURING WAR TIMES

John Baer, the World Renowned Hybridizer and Tomato Seed Specialist, with his only boy a soldier in France, labored unceasingly during the four long years of the Great World War to create this wonderful New Tomato, which he has appropriately named Victory. John Baer blended into "Victory" Tomato the best qualities of "John Baer" Tomato and the Strongest points of the "Greater Baltimore" Tomato. The result produced is the **MARVEL OF THE SEED WORLD.**

**J. BOLGIANO & SON**  
PRATT, LIGHT & ELLICOTT STS.  
MONTGOMERY ST. KEY HIGHWAY & HARBOR  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, U.S.A.

J. Bolgiano & Son's 1920 catalog cover. Note the "Victory" rainbow -- story, page 6.