

Matthaei Botanical gardens  
and Nichols arboretum



**friends • spring-summer 2011 • newsletter**

*Inside:* Celebrate Spring • New Life for an Old Tree • Let the Sales Begin • and more

**M** UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Matthaei Botanical gardens  
and Nichols arboretum

*Caring for nature, enriching life*

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**Matthaei Botanical Gardens  
& Nichols Arboretum**

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**friends newsletter**

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**PICTURED, TOP TO BOTTOM:**

A few months of sun and water and Cultivating Community's peppers will fill your garden with color and flavor.

Shakespeare in the Arb transforms Nichols Arboretum into a living stage each June.

The Gateway Garden at Matthaei attracts both compliments and critters, many of them beautiful, like this stunning fritillary.

Don't forget the birds! Matthaei and the Arb are havens for thousands of feathered friends each spring.

## Spring Fever Garden Party

Share spring with us May 7 during our special members-only garden party. We'll have seasonal refreshments, children's activities, live music, door prizes, and terrace pots and hanging baskets for sale. See the member page in this issue for details.

## The Greatest Season

For a look at how our world comes alive each spring at Matthaei Botanical Gardens & Nichols Arboretum, turn the page. You'll see lots of reasons to visit, revisit, and, most of all, rediscover our gardens, displays, trails, and natural areas.

## Congratulations, Bob!

The University recently reappointed Director Bob Grese for a new five-year term. Since 2004 Bob's leadership has provided us with a solid vision and a clear way forward. From all of us at MBGNA: congratulations, Bob. We look forward to another five years!

## Music in the Arb

Last summer's concerts in the Arboretum amphitheater proved so popular we're bringing them back for 2011. New this year: amplification, thanks to a generous gift of power connection from **DTE Energy**. Look for details about the concerts on our website, e-newsletters, and in member alerts later this spring.

## Recommended Reading

We provide a hands-on University and community laboratory for conserving, restoring, and celebrating the environment. We're also engaged in scholarship, as evidenced by the chapter on collections management that our curator, Dr. David C. Michener, contributed to the recently published book *Public Garden Management* (Wiley, 2011).

## New Life for an Old Tree

The U-M Forestry Crew removed an ancient but decaying and potentially hazardous bur oak at the Gardens last March. The good news: portions of the tree are being salvaged for use in the Gaffield Children's Garden. Lengths of the secondary trunks will be used to demonstrate natural decomposition, a dozen smaller stump pieces will serve as seating, and we hope to move the lower portion into the Children's Garden to serve as a large fairy house.

Picture on the newsletter cover: a clearwing hummingbird moth darting through the Gateway Garden. Photograph © Oscar Brubaker.

## Save the Dates

Our spring plant sales and fundraisers feature varieties that grow here at Matthaei-Nichols. Every dollar you spend helps support us. Special thanks to our sponsor, **Plymouth Nursery**.

### May 7–8: Mother's Day Weekend Sale

Catch the new trend: containers and terrace pots with perennials for sun and shade that you can plant in your garden come fall. Also, beautiful hanging baskets and terrace pots—perfect for mom—grown and designed on-site by our volunteers.

### May 14–15: Gateway Annuals Sale

Now's your chance to purchase the New World annuals that grow in the Gateway Garden at Matthaei. Create waves of color at home and attract not only kudos from friends but butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds.

### May 21–22: Kitchen Favorites Sale & Herbfest

Help support student volunteers and stock up on some great heirloom vegetables and herbs grown by Cultivating Community, the U-M student volunteer group. On May 21, the Herb Study Group will be hosting its Herbfest, with herbal information, free herbal samples and recipes, items for sale such as used books about herbs, and more.

### June 4–5: Peonies Galore Sale & Peony Festival, June 4-12

We've partnered with Northfield Farms in South Lyon to offer something you've long requested: an opportunity to purchase the same varieties of heirloom peonies that grow in the Peony Garden at Nichols Arboretum. On June 4, enjoy live music in the garden, and tours—guided or on your own—June 4-10 during the 2011 Nichols Arboretum Peony Festival. If you can't make the sale, check out the peonies in late May through the third week in June, weather depending. Call ahead for festival and bloom updates.

### June 9–26: Shakespeare in the Arb *The Winter's Tale*

Directed by Kate Mendeloff and presented by the U-M Residential College and Matthaei Botanical Gardens & Nichols Arboretum. The beloved Shakespeare in the Arb is now in its eleventh season and going strong. Members may purchase tickets at a discount and before the general public sale.

# CELEBRATE

# SPRING!



Spring is an especially busy and rewarding time for all gardeners, and the same is true for us at Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum. We hope that smaller, more focused plant sales this spring will help our staff in balancing all their activities, and we also hope you'll take the time to enjoy some of our many spring displays that have often taken a back seat to the plant sale. At Nichols Arboretum, lilacs, spiraea, crabapple trees, and other old-fashioned garden shrubs are at their peak in the Centennial Shrub Collection near Geddes in early May through June. These are followed by the early azaleas in Heathdale and along Laurel Ridge, our fringetrees and magnolias, and the wildflowers scattered throughout the Arboretum; this is also the time to watch for the warblers migrating through.

In the Peony Garden, the young weeping cherry trees, yellowwood, dogwood, redbud, roses, and the peonies provide a series of spectacular displays. At Matthaei Botanical Gardens, wildflowers provide a show in the Helen V. Smith Wildflower Garden and along many of our trails. Our work yard and display gardens begin to buzz as we get ready for a new growing season. Do check out the Marie Azary Rock Garden, which is especially nice in the early spring, but often overlooked. We invite you to visit us often both for our plant sales this spring as well as for these special flowering displays!

—Bob Grese, Director,  
U-M Matthaei Botanical Gardens  
& Nichols Arboretum



Photos, clockwise from upper left:



Lilacs, Centennial Shrub Collection in the Arb;



Close up, Marie Azary Rock Garden at Matthaei;



Azaleas in Heathdale;

Magnolia 'Butterflies', Magnolia Glen in the Arb;

Peonies in the Arb;

Turtles sunning on a log at Matthaei;



A dogwood tree in flower in the Helen V. Smith Woodland Wildflower Garden.



# Youth & Kids' Classes and Programs—Spring-Summer 2011

## Members Spring Fever Garden Party Sat., May 7, 5-8 pm, Matthaei Botanical Gardens

Calling all kids: You're invited to our Spring Fever Members Garden party, too! We'll have lots of fun activities during the evening such as decorating flower pots, planting annual flowers, paper crafts like creating your own Mother's Day cards, plant labels, and more. Not a member of the Arb & Gardens? Join Saturday and enjoy the festivities and everything we have to offer throughout the year.

## Sensational Nature Youth & Kids' Activities & Workshops— Spring-Summer 2011

Discover, learn, and play all summer at Matthaei and in the Gaffield Children's Garden, where you'll invent, create, design, show off your artistic talents, or see what's new and growing in your favorite vegetable patch. We'll have free self-guided scavenger hunts, discovery cards, and adventure backpacks available at the Matthaei front desk during regular business hours beginning in May.



### Garden Whimsies

Sat., May 14

Kids and their parents invited to a special tea party in the garden. Listen to a nature-themed story while enjoying tea and cookies.

After the party, make a wind chime and decorative clay pot to take home. #11-YE-11

### Behind the Scenes at Matthaei

Sat., May 21

Go behind the scenes at Matthaei and learn what makes a botanical gardens tick. Who takes care of the plants? What does a greenhouse look like? When and where do we grow our plants? How do we use earth-friendly practices in our gardens? . . . and much more. #11-YE-12

### Drop In Wednesdays at the Gaffield Children's Garden: June 22 through August 13

Drop in for self-guided activities Wednesdays in the Gaffield Children's Garden. Check out an Adventure Backpack at the front desk for self-guided discoveries of the plants and animals all around Matthaei. Go on a scavenger hunt for butterflies, try to find all the special herbs planted in the Gaffield Children's

### Sign Up!—

For our special Sensational Nature workshops listed below.

The \$5.00 fee per child includes activities, materials, and one admission to the conservatory. For more information call 734.647.7600 or visit our website, [mbgna.umich.edu](http://mbgna.umich.edu), where you can sign up for our free monthly e-newsletter to stay on top of what's happening here. All activities held 10 am-noon at Matthaei.

### Early American Herbs and Veggies

Sat., June 18

Travel back in time and learn how settlers supplied themselves year-round with food hundreds of years ago. You'll also discover how they used home-grown herbs in cooking, to make tea, and even to create soothing skin balms for cuts and bruises. Explore the herbs in our Herb Garden and make herbal sachets, salves, and more to take home. #11-YE-13



### Butterflies and Dragons

Sat., July 16



Go on a treasure hunt to search for the dragonflies, butterflies, moths, and other creatures that are the hidden jewels of the Botanical Gardens.

Kids will also create a butterfly stamp book to record their discoveries all summer long. #11-YE-14

Garden and Herb Knot Garden, explore the rustic trail, and more. Volunteers and staff will be on hand to answer questions, offer suggestions, and maybe even offer tastes of the delicious fruits and veggies found in the Grower's Garden.

# Spring-Summer 2011 Community/Adult Education Programs and Classes

## Wednesday A.M. Hiker, Spring

Five Wednesdays: April 20 & 27;  
May 4, 11, & 18

9 am–noon, various locations

Weekly hikes take the inquisitive plant seeker to the more remote habitats of woods and wetlands. Edible plants and mushrooms, as well as the interesting plants and intriguing habitats of little-known and out-of-the-way places, are emphasized in our usual academic, but playful, atmosphere. There will be a pot-luck lunch on the last day. This class fills early. All sessions are led by Ellen Elliott Weatherbee. **#11-AE-10 Members and U-M students: \$144; nonmembers: \$180**

## Orchid Judging offered by Great Lakes Judging

Sat., May 21, 11 am

Dennis Seffernick – awards discussion  
Greg Filter - Albanistic Orchids

Sat. & Sun., June 18-19 (this will be at Washtenaw Community College in the Morris Lawrence Building)

Training Seminar

### Saturday

Marian Morton - Cymbidium Awards in the New Millennium

Ed Cott - Pleurothallis: The Lost Gems

Joe Parker - Draculas: A Bite for Everyone

George Hatfield - Judging Cymbidiums and How the Species Contribute

### Sunday

Mario Ferrusi - Judging Masdevallias

George Hatfield - Pendulous, Miniature and Asian Cymbidiums

Lynn O'Shaughnessy - ...and now we have the Rest of the Pleurothallids

Sat., July 16, 11 am

Bill Cadman - Awards Discussion  
Katie Payeur - The Label Gallery

Sat., Aug. 20, 11 am

Ed Cott - Awards Discussion

Lynn O'Shaughnessy - How Well Do You Know Your Species?

## Herb Study Group

Mon., May 2, room 125, 7 pm

Topic: Wild edibles, including mushrooms and poisonous look-a-like plants. Presented by Ellen Weatherbee. Free & open to the public.

Sat., May 21, 10 am–4 pm:

Herbfest, sponsored by The Herb Study group

The Herb Study group will offer information on growing and using herbs, educational displays, books and herbal crafts for sale, and herbal refreshment samples and recipes. Room 139 next to greenhouse #3. Takes place during MBGNA's Kitchen Favorites sale. Free.

Mon., June 6, 7 pm

Richard Mendel discusses bees in the garden and how to attract them.

Mon., July 11, 7 pm

A walking tour of Matthaei Botanical Gardens with Madolyn Kaminski.

Evening Herb study Group meets on the first Monday of the month from March through November (except Dec., Jan., & Feb.) from 7–8:30 pm. For more information, call 734.647.7600, or visit [mbgna.umich.edu](http://mbgna.umich.edu). Or email [m.kaminski@comcast.net](mailto:m.kaminski@comcast.net). All Herb Study meetings are free & open to the public except where noted.

## Basic Beekeeping with Ann Arbor Backyard Beekeepers (A2B2)

Second Tuesday of each month, 7–9 pm, Room 125, Matthaei Botanical Gardens

This monthly workshop is designed for anyone interested in learning about the life of honeybees, their survivability, their habitat, how they fit into the community, and how to keep them. Please contact Richard ([rimendel@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rimendel@sbcglobal.net)) or Marin ([mperusek@gmail.com](mailto:mperusek@gmail.com)) if you have any questions. Free; drop-in.



Check our website, [mbgna.umich.edu](http://mbgna.umich.edu), for upcoming beekeeper topics.

Pictured above: bee in pollen. Photograph by Oscar Brubaker



Pictured left to right:  
Cutleaf toothwort;  
Mayapple;  
Jack-in-the-pulpit;  
Trillium.

## Walking to Wildflowers: Learn on Your Own!

Late April into May—you pick the trail

This spring and summer take to the trails and challenge yourself to seek blooming native plants at the Botanical Gardens, Horner-McLaughlin Woods, and Nichols Arboretum. Then post what you find on our Facebook page.

**A few spring leads to start you off:**

Look for multiple **trillium** varieties (*Trillium sp.*), **spring beauty** (*Claytonia virginica*), mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*), and others at Nichols Arboretum.

At Horner-McLaughlin Woods look for **cutleaf toothwort** (*Dentaria laciniata*) and **Jack-in-the-pulpit** (*Arisaema triphyllum*).

Garden spaces at Matthaei Botanical Gardens can give you a jump start in learning what to look for. Check the Helen V. Smith Woodland Wildflower Garden as well as the Prairie Wildflower Garden to see what's blooming before hitting the trails.

# Spring-Summer 2011 Community/Adult Education Programs and Classes, continued

## Botanical Illustration III: Watercolor

**Instructor:** Deborah Kopka

**Saturdays, 6 Weeks**

**May 7, 14, & 21 (no class May 28);**

**June 4, 11, & 18**

**9:30 am–12:30 pm**

Explore time-honored natural science illustration techniques in watercolor to create photoreal botanical portraits. Class will include instructor demonstration and student application of skills in such techniques as glazing, blending, dry brush, and combining watercolor with other media. A botanical specimen is provided for the first class. A supply list will be sent before the first class. Some experience in drawing botanicals and painting in watercolors is helpful, but beginning artists are welcome and encouraged to attend! **#11-AE-11 Members and U-M students: \$172; nonmembers: \$216**

Deborah Kopka is a writer/illustrator with a 30-year background in education and publishing. Her lifelong passion for drawing and painting, along with her love of natural science, led her to study botanical illustration in England and editorial illustration at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles.



A botanical artist for more than 17 years, she teaches botanical illustration in Ohio and Michigan. Deborah is a member of the American Society of Botanical Artists, the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators, the Society of Children's Book Writers and illustrators, the Colored Pencil Society of America, and the Ohio Arts Council.

## Here's How to Register for Classes (see registration form below):

**Phone:** 734.647.7600. (Business hours: Mon., Tues., & Thurs.–Sun., 10 am–4:30 pm; Wed., 10 am–8 pm.)

**Fax:** 734.998.6205. Send completed registration form with credit card information.

**Mail:** MBGNA - University of Michigan  
1800 N. Dixboro Road  
Ann Arbor MI 48105

**Online:** [mbgna.umich.edu](http://mbgna.umich.edu)

**In Person:** Stop by the front desk at Matthaei during Conservatory hours: Mon., Tues., & Thurs.–Sun., 10 am–4:30 pm; Wed., 10 am–8 pm.

**Make checks payable to "MBGNA."**

**Note:** Many of our adult education classes are presented by partner groups or nonprofits. Adult education classes are open to those at least 16 years of age. Classes meet as designated

at Matthaei Botanical Gardens or Nichols Arboretum. Classes may meet off-site (call for location and directions if you miss a class). Field trips may be physically challenging—call if you have questions about the difficulty of any class or trip. Classes are popular and fill quickly; early registration is suggested.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Parent's name (if student is under 18):** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Member of Friends of MBGNA (Member Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_)**  
 **Non-member**  
 **U-M student: (Student ID Number \_\_\_\_\_) Is this your first class?**  **Y**  **N**

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Student's Name	Class Code	Also attending (if family class)	Member Fee	Nonmember Fee
			<b>Total</b>	

List additional classes on a separate sheet and include with original form.

- Payment:**  **Check made payable to: MBGNA**  
 **Visa**  **MasterCard**  **Discover**  
 **American Express**

**Card #** \_\_\_\_\_ **Exp. Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Cardholder Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

## Get Involved—

### Volunteer at the Arb and Gardens

Dig into some great volunteer opportunities at the Arb & Gardens this growing season!

Contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 734.647.8528 for more information.

Preregistration required for all ongoing assignments and special events.



## Display Garden Assistants

Learn new gardening tips and enjoy lovely blooms while you help maintain our many display gardens. Activities include planting, weeding, mulching, pruning, and deadheading. **Weekday morning shifts 9 am–noon.**

If you work weekdays you're welcome to join our crew of "Weekend Weeders" who tend the display gardens at Matthaei on Saturdays from 9 am–noon.

## 2011 Shakespeare in the Arb— *The Winter's Tale*

June 9–26, 3 weeks, Thurs.–Sun; shows start at 6:30 pm

Join us in celebrating the 11th season of this magical Ann Arbor theater tradition. It takes many volunteers to support this beloved LSA Residential College production, whose performances literally move through different areas of the Arb throughout each play. Volunteers assist with ushering the audience from scene to scene—while enjoying the play (for free) and the scenic beauty of the Arb. Volunteers also receive a cool Shakespeare t-shirt!

## Music in the Arb

July, August & September

Another great way to experience art and nature together in the Arb is at our series of summer concerts held in the Amphitheater and featuring eclectic music from local bands and performers. Volunteers direct audience members to the amphitheater and also help with set up and tear-down.

Pictured, clockwise from top left:

Volunteer and Master Gardener Susan Hamady in the Edible Estates Garden;

Volunteer Deanna Beyer waiting for the crowds at Music in the Arb;

Volunteer coordinator Tara Griffith and usher Brent Beam at Shakespeare in the Arb.

## Welcome 2011 Docent Class!

The Docent Class of 2011 recently graduated after eight weeks of training. Congratulations and welcome from all of us at Matthaei Botanical Gardens & Nichols Arboretum!

Pictured:

Back row, left to right: Bernie Ethridge, Mary Bruening, Cynthia Edwards, Julie Pommerville-Steiner, Randy Zeilinger, Leslie Larkins

Front row, left to right: Mary Lu Stone, Susan Kouhia, Michelle Sanford, Liz Glynn (Children's Program Coordinator)

Not Pictured – Lynn Fouchey and Barbara Osher



# Spring Fever Garden Party!

**Members-Only Event at Matthaei**  
**Saturday, May 7, 2011**  
**Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 5–8 PM**

Sponsored  
by  
Grizzly Peak  
Brewing Company  
of Ann Arbor

- **Mother's Day Sale of hanging baskets, terrace pots, and planters**
- **Gardening Q&A table**
- **Live music**
- **Youth & family activities**
- **Seasonal refreshments**
- **And much more!**

**Have a friend who's not a member?**  
**Invite them to join so they can**  
**enjoy the party, too!**



The Post family. Clockwise from top middle: Jeffrey; Nancy Post Carstens; Norris; Garrod; Helen.



Azaleas in Heathdale, Nichols Arboretum.

## Grow a Baker's Dozen!

You've got your seeds started; now get a head start on your membership! Members who renew their support between March 1 and May 1, regardless of when the membership is set to expire, will receive an extra month of membership absolutely FREE. That's 13 months for the price of 12—an extra month to receive members-only benefits such as our reciprocal program with over 250 other national gardens and arboreta. Be the early bird and renew your support today! Phone Membership Coordinator Andy Sell at 734.615.9475, visit [mbgna.umich.edu/give](http://mbgna.umich.edu/give), or visit Matthaei in person to catch this deal.

## Your Member Dollars at Work

Your member dollars help in so many ways, including funding our summer interns who do everything from leading Saturday morning children's programs to controlling prescribed burns. They're building their resumes while building the Gardens. Who helps pay for this? You do!



Summer 2010 interns hard at work in the Gaffield Children's Garden.

## Family Gifts Transform Julie Norris Post Heathdale Collection

In 1986, Helen (BA '48) and Norris Post (LSA '43) joined the Friends of Matthaei Botanical Gardens with a simple gift of \$12.50, reflecting their desire to enjoy and support the future growth of the Gardens. Adding passion to that interest, Norris soon became a founding member of the Friends of Nichols Arboretum. Their children quietly embraced a deepening family connection to Nichols Arboretum and to Matthaei Botanical Gardens.

Years after their initial gift, Helen and Norris gave \$30,000 to restore and improve the Arboretum's Appalachian Collection of rhododendrons, azaleas, and mountain laurel in the Heathdale. Then, in 2001, the Posts endowed the collection in memory of their daughter Julie Norris Post (BA '73). They began adding to the endowment year after year, aiming for a fund of \$150,000. Work continued in the Heathdale, giving life to this unique place and great satisfaction to both Norris and Helen as they were able to experience firsthand the enjoyment the Heathdale gave to the public. In 2008, Norris died, followed by Helen in 2010. The fund had reached \$92,000.

Though Norris and Helen did not live to see it, a gift from their children—Garrod Post (BGS '76), Nancy Post Carstens (BS WMU '80), and Jeffrey Post (BGS '82)—will now bring the fund to the full \$150,000 that their parents worked toward for nearly a decade. Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum Director Bob Grese told the trio, "Your folks were able to envision what a wonderful place the weed-infested thicket could be. Today, Heathdale and Laurel Ridge are among many peoples' favorite spaces in the entire Arboretum. Working with your parents was one of the most rewarding parts of my serving as Director, first at the Arb and then at both the Arb and at Matthaei Botanical Gardens."

"My sister and brother and I are very happy to reach the goal our parents held close for so many years. As they hoped, this endowment will permanently maintain Heathdale in memory of our sister Julie," Jeff Post said.

This May, tours and a special celebration of the Julie Norris Post Heathdale Collection with the Post family will showcase what has become a stunning and culturally significant collection of ericaceous plants. Invasive species have been removed and specific ecosystems found in Appalachia are represented by grouped plants, with inviting trails and benches bringing the visitor closer to the collection.

Visit our website for spring activities  
taking place in Heathdale: [mbgna.umich.edu](http://mbgna.umich.edu)