



The Mid-South Hydrangea Society In Bloom!

Volume 19, Issue 1

June 2023

From the President:

Dear Hydrangea Enthusiast,

As I write this, it's a beautiful day in Memphis with the birds singing, the sun shining and the humidity at 50 percent! Mother Nature is smiling down on us today but back in mid-December 2022 she got a bit out of sorts. We came rolling merrily into the first week of December with a high of 72 and right then we should have known something bad was coming our way. Temperatures continued as normal and fluctuated between 60+ degree day highs and 45 degree lows. However, on December 22, Mother Nature decided to take a U-turn bringing in what some call an arctic blast and I call a polar plunge where temperatures dropped 45 degrees in 24 hours. Other areas near us experienced even more severe drops in temperature. It was so sudden and cruel it sent our trees and shrubs into complete shock and survival mode. Many trees and shrubs that were reliably evergreen here dropped almost every single leaf in silent protest. Whether mature or newly installed during last fall most were flash frozen.

As of now gardeners that were patient are being rewarded with sprigs of green flushing out here and there on the sparse skeletons. The road to recovery will be long and not a pretty one. However, I recently saw a product that may be of great help to our damaged landscapes. I laughed when I first saw it advertised but then thought this could be a temporary answer to the problem of winter damaged plant material. Maybe you aren't prepared to rip every half dead and struggling shrub out of your garden this year or you have a row of evergreen shrubs and only a couple dead patches. If so, look for **Grass and Shrub Renew by Seymour**. It professes to be a spray on brown spot concealer that will restore a lush green look to our lawns, hedges and shrubs allowing the existing live foliage to grow. Their on-line video shows a complete row of dead shrubs being painted! I searched around and there are other similar products. I've seen people spray paint dead trees bright blue or hot pink to make a temporary sculptural accent in their garden but I had no idea there was a product made specifically to camouflage discolored and dead foliage.

As with the other woody plants, our hydrangeas were stung by the rapid temperature drop too. However, the hydrangeas we grow in our Mid-South area are root hardy and the vast majority have put out lush new green growth. The *Hydrangea quercifolia* (oak leaf) are going gang busters right now.



Hydrangea quercifolia blooms

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The *Hydrangea arborescens* ('Annabelle') and the *Hydrangea paniculatas*, which both bloom on wood produced in the current year, will most definitely be providing wonderful blooms. *Hydrangea serratas* always known to be more bud hardy to the cold than the macrophyllas are blooming now. The most beloved of the hydrangeas, the macrophyllas are going to be hit or miss in the bud and bloom category this season. If you have a hydrangea that was a pass along plant from over 20 years ago you will most likely have no bloom this year. My heirloom 'Ayesha' survived but all growth above the soil line was killed and it will not have one bloom this year. If you are growing *Hydrangea macrophyllas* bred and brought in to the market within the last 10 years as remontant (reblooming), I think you have a chance of experiencing bloom. I have blooms on 'Azure Skies' and 'Froggy'. I'm still waiting to see if 'Bloomstruck' will display buds. I will fertilize it again but with a bloom booster hoping it may help. I grow the majority of my hydrangea macrophyllas in pots and many were moved into an unheated enclosed garage on the night of the polar plunge. Protected or not almost all macrophylla stems were killed back to soil level.



Hydrangea arborescens 'Annabelle'

Many of the hydrangeas I grow come from the Mid-South Hydrangea Society's annual hydrangea sale. If you would like to add to your hydrangea collection or need answers to your hydrangea questions, please join us at the Dixon Gallery and Gardens for our 16th Hydrangea Sale along with a FREE presentation on hydrangeas by Andrew Bunting of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Details are on the following pages.

Keep on Growing!

Linda Orton

President, Mid-South Hydrangea Society



Mid-South Hydrangea Society
16th Plant Sale & Speaker

Bloomin' in June

Saturday, June 10, 2023

This year, you will have an opportunity to shop from our selection of some of the newest hydrangea varieties then enjoy our special guest speaker.

Hydrangea Plant Sale

**8:30 – 10:00am (or until sellout!)
Dixon Gallery & Gardens – West parking lot**

We have selections new to the market in 3 gallon sizes that are in full bloom — perfect to grow in containers or in your landscape!



***Hydrangea macrophylla Pop Star™*
2023 Introduction!**

The newest entry in the Endless Summer series, Pop Star™ is indeed a star. Introduced by Bailey Innovations after 5 years of trials, it is the most compact and strongest rebloomer in the series. The blooms are an intense iridescent blue and will make a dramatic impact in your garden! 2-3' tall

***Hydrangea macrophylla x serrata*
Let's Dance Sky View™
2023 Introduction!**

New from Spring Meadow, Sky View™ is compact and a prolific bloomer (and re-bloomer)! The blooms emerge in a range of soft pastel colors and mature to blue. Good in a container or in your garden. 2-3' tall



Hydrangea paniculata Limelight Prime®

The next generation of 'Limelight' is here! 'Limelight Prime' has an earlier bloom time, is a smaller size (4-6' tall, and has stronger stems. Plus, as the green blooms age, they take on pink and red tones. A must for your sun garden!

Smaller quantities of the following hydrangeas will also be available:

Hydrangea arborescens 'Annabelle'

Hydrangea arborescens 'Invincibelle Lace'

Hydrangea quercifolia 'Snowcicle'

Hydrangea macrophylla 'Penny Mac'

“The Best of the Best Hydrangeas”

Andrew Bunting

Saturday, June 10, 2023

10 – 11 AM Free Event

Dixon Gallery and Gardens - Winegardner Auditorium



Our speaker, Andrew Bunting, is Vice President of Horticulture at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) and leads the utilization of planting and design to promote environmentally sound gardening practices at PHS. Andrew has elevated each of the departments he oversees and has increased the brand and visibility of PHS through their respective work. Andrew received his B.S. in Plant and Soil Science from Southern Illinois University. Prior to arriving at PHS, Andrew worked at the Chicago Botanic Garden, Chanticleer Garden, and the Scott Arboretum for a tenure of 27 years. He has received the American Public Gardens Association’s Professional Citation, Chanticleer Scholarship in Professional Development, and the Certificate of Merit from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. He also serves on the Board of Magnolia Society Interna-

tional. Andrew published his first book in 2015, “The Plant Lover’s Guide to Magnolias.” Andrew enjoys bird watching, travel and, of course, gardening.

Please join us for Andrew’s presentation, “The Best of the Best Hydrangeas”, as he delves into the expansive world of hydrangeas. This lecture will explore the wide breadth of this gardening favorite and its various cultivars and species. Discover how to prune hydrangeas for maximum health, growth, and blooms and learn simple tips to ensure blue or pink hydrangeas.

Browse our selection of hydrangeas for sale in the Dixon’s west parking area and then stroll through the beautiful cutting gardens to join other hydrangea lovers for this FREE program for all attendees. There’s always something new to learn about hydrangeas.



For more on PHS events and activities,
check out their website at
<https://phsonline.org/>

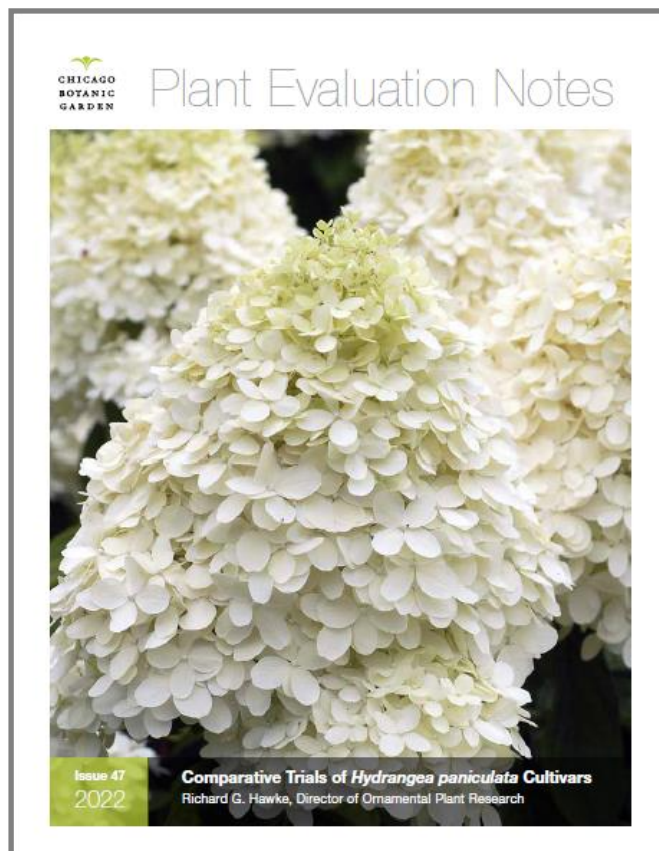
GOT SUN? PERFECT FOR A HYDRANGEA PANICULATA!

There's a persistent misunderstanding about hydrangeas—that they need part shade. In fact, the many selections of *Hydrangea paniculata* thrive in a sunny location. If you've visited the West TN AgResearch & Education Center (which many of us still call the Experiment Station) in Jackson, you'll see Jason Reeves has field trials of *Hydrangea paniculata*. This gives you an excellent opportunity to see the mature size of these hydrangeas and how they perform in full sun.

If you haven't visited the Experiment Station, plan to attend this year's Summer Celebration July 13 (details at <https://westtn.tennessee.edu/summer-celebration/>) for a day of tours, lectures, plant vendors and more!



Jackson Experiment Station
Hydrangea paniculata Field Trials July 2021



Another excellent resource is the recently published results from the *Hydrangea paniculata* trial conducted by the Chicago Botanic Garden. Over the course of the 20-year staggered trial, hydrangeas were evaluated for a minimum of six years and regularly assessed for their adaptability to the soil and environmental conditions; disease and pest issues; winter hardiness and survivability; and ornamental qualities.

To download a copy of the *Hydrangea paniculata* report see:

https://www.chicagobotanic.org/sites/default/files/pdf/plantevaluation/no47_hydrangea.pdf

For more information about the Chicago Botanic Garden's Plant Evaluation Program and the many of trials they are conducting, see:

https://www.chicagobotanic.org/collections/ornamental_plant_research/plant_evaluation

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR...

- ✓ **SAT - JUN 3** **Through Our Garden Gates—Memphis Area Master Gardeners' Tour**
For details: <https://memphisareamastergardeners.org/community-events/through-garden-gates/>
- ✓ **TUES- JUN 6** **Ben Vaughn, Local Chef & Author—"Championing the Modern Green Business Model of Local Supply"**
6:00 pm
Memphis Horticultural Society, Memphis Botanic Garden
- ✓ **WEDS - JUN 13** **Claudia West—"Rebuilding Abundance with Innovative & Rich Planting"**
6:30 pm
Memphis Botanic Garden Speaker Series
<https://www.simpletix.com/e/urban-home-garden-speaker-series-tickets-133122?promocode=HOMEGARDEN>
- ✓ **WEDS - JUN 21** **Jim Crowder—"New and Unusual Perennials and Their Culture"**
Noon
Dixon Munch & Learn, Winegardner Auditorium
- ✓ **THURS - JUL 13** **Summer Celebration—West TN AgResearch & Education Center, Jackson, TN**
<https://westtn.tennessee.edu/summer-celebration/>