



The Bloomin' News

Sandhills Community College

Vol. 07, No. 4

Winter 2012

*The Sandhills Horticultural Society - dedicated to the support of the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens since 1987.
Please help the Gardens grow by becoming a Society member.*

Japanese Garden

Skip Ragland

I have toured so many wonderful gardens over the years that I find it hard to pick favorites. Formal gardens are most impressive with their symmetry. Italian gardens amaze me with how beautifully they incorporate walls and stone and water. Cottage gardens appear so simple yet so complex in how virtually every inch of the flower beds is covered with lush and seemingly endless varieties of plants.

However, my favorite garden of all is the Japanese garden. Perhaps it is the fact that it normally doesn't joggle the senses with large collections of different kinds of plants, but contains fewer well-placed plants instead. Also, one is not overwhelmed by masses of color. The Japanese garden tends to be a serene place where you are allowed to concentrate on one simple scene after another as you move along its path.

The purpose of a Japanese garden is to be a place of peace and serenity for the visitor. Ideally, as one enters the garden through a garden gate, one is comforted by the simple beauty to the extent that for a brief moment the stress of everyday life is shed and you can become one with your tranquil surroundings.

The path through a Japanese garden is laid out in curves and sometimes sharp corners so that bad spirits become confused and can't follow you on your journey. The path is wide so that two can walk together in comfort and grows even wider in certain parts of the garden where you are encouraged to stop for a moment and enjoy a particular view.

Japanese gardens often include the concept of "hide and reveal" which allows a view to be hidden for a few steps by a shrub or a bamboo wall. Once past the obstacle, the scene comes into full view.



In many Japanese gardens stone or wooden steps are periodically set on the path in difference sizes so that you must watch your step for a moment and then, when the path smoothes out and one looks away from the path, a new and beautiful view is revealed.

Only splashes of color are incorporated into Japanese gardens so that one's senses are never startled. Different shades of green are used to sooth one's mind throughout the garden journey.

The Ambrose Japanese Garden at SCC includes a dry or "Zen" garden. These are usually composed of gravel with an unequal number of larger stones scattered about. The gravel represents oceans or lakes and the larger stones represent islands. The gravel in a dry garden is raked. The lines left by the rake represent waves surrounding the islands. Often one of the large stones is tall and thin and another is smaller and squat. These represent the heron and

turtle which are good luck symbols in Asian culture.

Entrances to a Japanese garden are key to setting the mood. Most often garden gates or bridges are used for entry and exit from the Japanese garden. We are blessed to have both at the Ambrose Japanese Garden. An elaborate garden gate marks our entrance and a lovely moon bridge is used to exit the garden. The design of garden gate that was installed in 2011 was developed through a process Dee Johnson did working with Mr. Ambrose's desires and the builder of the gate Danny Bruton. The builder is a master carpenter and his skill shows in the quality of the finished gate. He owns Bruton

Continued on next page





Custom Cabinets in Mt. Gilead, NC. It is a perfect addition to the garden and adds just the right touch to help the visitor there shed their stress and concerns as they enter a place of quiet beauty.

Our Japanese garden was designed by Mac Hulslander who came to Sandhills Community College in 1999 out of a long-time interest in Japanese gardens. This interest came from his teaching years in Japan from 1961-64. He wanted to ground himself in a comprehensive program of horticulture and then pursue and build a career specializing in Japanese and natural landscaping styles. Hulslander graduated from the program in 2001 and began an internship with Natural Stone Sculptures which led to him developing his own business named Woodlander Landscapes. He is now retired, but still enjoys consulting on the gardens here in the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens.

Don't miss the Japanese garden when you visit the SCC Horticultural Gardens. It is a special place and if you let it, you will leave the garden in a more gentle state of mind than when you entered. 

Winter Pruning

 *Jim Westmen*

Many people may not think winter time is for pruning, but I believe it is one of the easiest times of the year to prune. The reason for this is the fact that the structure of the trees and shrubbery, particularly deciduous ones, are most evident. This makes it very easy to distinguish corrective pruning needs such as double leaders, thinning, removal of crossing branches, and spacing of branches on trees. For example, when thin pruning a deciduous shrub such as a flowering quince or forsythia, it is very easy to determine which of the branches are older and less productive. These branches are the ones that are typically removed. This type of thin pruning allows you to leave the younger, more vigorous branches in tact on these particular types of shrubbery.

The branch structure of trees can easily be seen during this time of year and this a great time to space branches on a tree, both radially and vertically. If this procedure is done early on younger trees as they develop it will help you to avoid these types of pruning procedures on larger, more mature trees. This should be done during the first 3-5 years of a newly planted tree. Winter pruning on evergreen plants is beneficial because the plants tend to stay in the same form throughout the winter, remaining in



the pruned state for a much longer time. Another advantage to winter pruning would be the fact that insect and disease pressure remains low during this time of year. This is a definite advantage when we have insects such as borers and beetles which can attack a plant which has been stressed by heavy pruning.

The pruning of fruiting trees also happens during the winter time. We prune such plants as apples, pears, peaches and grapes in February. Not only is disease and insect pressure low during this time of year, but it allows us to see the structure of the plants for the special training of fruit bearing crops such as these.

As with all pruning, regardless of the time of year, you need to have identified the reason and the result desired for your pruning efforts. This will allow you to achieve what you are have set out to accomplish.

For additional information on pruning, be sure to sign up for our January Horticultural Society event. Moore County Agricultural Extension Agent Taylor Williams will conduct a Pruning Workshop at the Ball Visitors Center on Saturday, January 9. Bring your questions and enjoy a hands-on demonstration with Taylor. 

Winter Gardening Tips

-  Take soil tests and prepare your beds for spring planting
-  Plant cool season vegetable crops such as peas and broccoli outdoors starting in February
-  Seed your summer vegetables indoors in March for early planting outdoors
-  Make your first application of pre-emergent herbicide for summer annual weed control in March
-  Prune grapes in January or February
-  Don't forget to feed the birds

The Moore County Arts Council

is planning a trip. They have a few spots left and have extended an invitation to members of the Sandhills Horticultural Society to join them. SHS members would be given the Arts Council member's price. The trip is June 13-25, 2013. A Tauck Danube River Cruise Budapest to the Black Sea. Reservations need to be made soon. Call the Arts Council for further information 910-692-2787 and be sure to mention you are a member of the Sandhills Horticultural Society to receive the member price.

Interior Plants Insect & Weed Control

Johanna Westmen

By the time you are reading this article, hopefully you will have brought in from outside any interior plants that you have been growing through the spring and summer. The benefit of placing your interior plants outside in the spring and summer is the abundant amount of growth they can attain during that period. The downside of this wonderful growth spurt is the creatures that can accompany your plants when they reenter your home.

There are a couple of ways you can handle this problem before you bring them back inside. The first thing you should do is to inspect your plants. Look on top and underneath the leaves for any insects that may be hiding in the foliage. You should also look in the axils of the plants, this a very common place for insects to hide in interior plants. Insects you could possibly encounter would be mealybugs, spider mites, scale or aphids. One simple solution to this problem is to wash your plants with a solution of a mild dish soap mixed with water. This simple mix when applied to leaves and foliage will wash away any insects and kill them at the same time. Another option is to use some type of horticultural oil. This is a very effective way to eliminate harder to control insects such as scale and mealybugs. The oil actually suffocates the insects by closing up its breathing holes when it is applied to them. This product can actually serve as a plant shine for your plants as well, which is a trick that interiorscapers use to

rid their plants of insects while at the same time showcasing them with shiny green foliage. Either one of these applications will work again if at first you are not successful in eradicating these pests and they rear their ugly heads once more. Be sure to check along the rim of any pots and underneath the pots for insects as well as they have a habit of hiding in cracks and crevices.

Weed control in your interior plants do not seem to be as much of a problem as long as you have removed any existing weeds from your plants before you bring them inside. Most of the weeds that grow in your interior plants probably do not care for the low light situation of most interior settings. If you do continue to have a problem, simply pull them as they germinate. Another option is to place gravel or small stones in the pot as you bring them in and this should also help in reducing the amount of weeds that may appear there.

Always inspect your plants well before bringing them in, as you can also receive surprises such as anoles (small green lizards) and tree frogs which are famous for hiding out in your interior plants. I know this all too well as we obviously brought in a rather loud tree frog this year when my husband brought all the plants inside. And if you have every tried to find a tree frog in your house, you know of what I speak. Hopefully by the time you are reading this article, he has been found by my husband or me, not by the cat! 🐾

Sandhills Horticultural Society Events

Dolores Muller

The past few months have offered a wide variety of activities for members. We've had something for everyone – a children's event in August, a September picnic, a lecture, plant sale, container workshop and flower arranging demonstration in October & November.

Close to a hundred children, plus parents and grandparents, participated in the Children's Treasure Trail Adventure on August 25. It was perfect weather to visit six educational stations exhibiting plants and animals.

The evening of September 20th was perfect with a stunning sunset to cap off a delicious picnic supper and evening of dancing on Rosalie's Terrace at the Annual Picnic in the Gardens.



Picnic in the Gardens

COMING NEXT...

Holiday Flower Arranging

Thursday, December 6 • 10 AM to 1 PM

Ball Visitors Center

\$25 Horticultural Society Members; \$30 Non-members

Maggie Smith of Maggie's Farm Floral & Garden Designs will conduct a workshop in which participants will make a holiday floral arrangement to take home for the Christmas holiday.

Space is limited to 24.

Pruning Workshop

Saturday, January 19 • 10 AM to Noon

Ball Visitors Center

Learn the basics of pruning from Moore County Agricultural Extension Agent Taylor Williams, then go outside to see a hands-on demonstration of how it is done. The workshop is FREE but a reservation is necessary. *Space is limited.*

Create a Dish Garden

Saturday, February 9 • 10 AM

Steed Hall/ Stephens Laboratory

Cost to be determined

Linda Hamwi "The Plant Diva" will be the instructor in making a dish garden for your home complete with miniatures. This is a make-it and take-it workshop. *Space is limited to 24.*

Contact Tricia Mabe at 910-695-3882 to register. Pre-payment required in order to secure your registration. Send payments to: Sandhills Horticultural Society, Attention: Tricia Mabe, 3395 Airport Road, Pinehurst, NC 28374.



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 Pinehurst, NC 28374
 www.sandhills.edu

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A Gift That Keeps On Giving



Don't be frustrated this Holiday season trying to decide on a gift for that "hard-to-buy-for" friend or relative. Your gift of a Sandhills Horticultural Society membership is something that they will enjoy all year long. *What does a Member receive?*

- Free Garden Seminars
- A discount at the student's spring and fall plant sales
- Access to Horticultural Trips
- Bloomin' News quarterly newsletter
- Use of the Ball Garden Visitors Center for garden related events
- Reciprocal admission to over 200 gardens throughout North America
- A member discount on Horticultural Society workshops and programs

The most important benefit of membership is support of the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens. Membership dues and Society sponsored programs provide the funds required in the planned development of the Gardens. The Society also acts as a volunteer organization, contributing time and energy to specific needs of the Garden, as well as continuing educational opportunities.

Gift Membership Information 2012-2013

Name of Membership Recipient _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Please make checks payable to: SCC – Sandhills Horticultural Society.

Individual \$25.00 Family \$45.00 Individual Life \$350.00

Buyer's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$ _____

We will send a card to acknowledge your special gift. Message you want included:

Mail to: Sandhills Community College, Attn: Dee Johnson, 3395 Airport Road, Pinehurst NC 28374