

The

Clod-Hopper



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Gardeners of Wake County, Inc. — Raleigh, NC

November 2018

Five that Last

by Paul Hoffman, President

As you can tell from previous columns, I like to share information about plants that work for me. Being a lazy gardener, I'm always on the lookout for plants that are modest in their behavior and look consistently good



through the heat of summer into the cool days of the fall while requiring minimal attention from me once planted in good soil with a few inches of mulch. I would like to introduce you to five plants that have done very well in my garden the last few years.

Sunny spots tend to be the most difficult for me. Two annuals that stood up to hot and dry situations are *angelonia* and the *zahara* variety of zinnia. *Angelonia*, or summer snapdragon, continuously produces 12 to 18 inch stalks of small white, pink, or lavender flowers. The *zahara* zinnias seem to have a little trouble getting established, but if they do get going by July,



the 12 to 16 inch plants are covered with long lasting 2 inch yellow blossoms all summer right up to frost.



I first saw *Celosia spicata* "flamingo purple" at JC Raulston last year and found a six pack at Big Bloomers in June. This *celosia* was an outstanding performer for me in part shade. The small plants grew into four-foot (both high and wide) shrubs with lovely purple foliage and long and upright white with purple-tipped blossoms that never looked tired in the heat or humidity and continue on through the fall.

Club Meetings

Monthly meetings are at 7:30 PM at the JC Raulston Arboretum every 3rd Tuesday. Refreshments and socializing begin at 7:00.

Most cold weather gardeners look to attractive winter bark; colorful or distinctive stems and twigs; winter fruits and berries; ornamental grasses; and cheerful winter flowers for cold season inspiration. At our November 20th meeting, Steve Brown of Homewood Nurseries will address those areas and more. When talking about winter plants Brown cautions, "Be warned ... you will get hooked!" "Overall," says Brown, "my goal is to show local gardeners that a winter garden doesn't have to be a dull and barren landscape.

If you're ready to have more than a dull and barren winter garden, and who isn't, don't miss this month's meeting. It's sure to be an eye-opener!

Iresine herbstii (bloodleaf) is a Brazilian native that, like *coleus*, is grown more for its ornamental foliage than its flowers. Also like *coleus*, bloodleaf roots easily, so even though I rarely see it for sale, I can overwinter a few

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Club Officers and Committees

Board members

President: Paul Hoffman

Vice President: Don Strickland

Secretary: Jim Moore

Treasurer: Mac Williamson

Immediate Past President: Sherrill Johnson

At-large board members: Barbara Brown, Ginny Parker, Ed Ponek, Gail Posey

Committee members

Activities Chairs: Will Farmer (seed swap), Renee Engates (refreshments), Mark Boone (picnic), Ginny Parker (awards banquet)

Audit: Rose Cotton, Charles Gilliam, Kathy Moore

Azalea Sale: Charlie Leverett

Beautification Awards: Josephine Tayao

Club Awards: Jim Moore

Endowment Investment: Charles Gilliam

Friendship: Reed and Chris Elliott

Historical: Donna Farmer,

Membership: Barbara Brown

Newsletter Editors: Laine Thomas, Reed Elliott

Nominating: TBA

Programs: Don Strickland

Projects: Sharon LaRusch

Publicity: Charles Gilliam

Refreshments: Renee Engates

Scholarship: Joanne Boone

Telephone: Johnny Johnson

Webmaster: Reed Elliott

Contact Us

For additional information email our Club at gardener@gardenersofwakecounty.org

Contact Paul Hoffman, President, by phone at home: 919-781-0785 or by cell: 919-559-5495

Our Club webpage is available at <https://gardenersofwakecounty.weebly.com/>

Five that Last

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specimens as house plants and use them for further propagation in the spring. The red and dark purple foliage contrasts well with other plants in a partly sunny flower bed.



This past May I noticed six packs of *Torenia fournieri* (wishbone flower) for the first time

among the annuals for sale at the farmer's market. The prolific flowers came in shades of dark blue, violet, white, and raspberry. The plants looked so delicate that I thought they wouldn't last two weeks. I



bought a few packs anyway and they proved me very wrong. In a partly sunny spot with afternoon shade they took root and spread slowly, but steadily, with continuous flowering for the last six months. They certainly deserve a place in the garden next year.

Let me know if you also have a favorite plant that blooms for you all summer. Send me a picture and short note about why you like it. Maybe we can share another column in the future.

November's Guest Speaker Promotes Winter Garden Interests

by Don Strickland, Vice President

North Carolina winters may be long and cold but, for gardeners, they never have to be boring. That's the message November 20th guest speaker Steve Brown brings to the final 2018 Gardeners of Wake County monthly meeting.



The Nursery Manager at Raleigh's Homewood Nursery and Garden Center, Brown has been sharing his love of wintertime plants with area gardeners for 18 years. Originally from Baltimore, he's been gardening since childhood and credits much of his early knowledge and experience to his father--but someone else played a big role in his horticultural education. "My true passion for plants," he says, "evolved while visiting my Pennsylvania Grandmother who magically grew plants from simple leaf cuttings. Her two large kitchen windows were always packed with unique and colorful Rex begonias and African violets some of which she would give to me to take home and nurture."

Unique and unusual plants became serious objects of Steve's affection when he moved to Portland Oregon in the early 90's. There he was introduced to a host of plants that shine in the off-season. He recalls, "That first sight of an understated greenish-pinkish hellebore in full winter glory is what started the affair."

Most cold weather gardeners look to five areas for inspiration: attractive winter bark; colorful or distinctive stems and twigs; winter fruits and berries; ornamental grasses; and cheerful winter flowers. Brown will address those areas but also plans to bring about 25 plants to augment his presentation. When talking about these plants he often cautions, "Be warned ... you will get hooked!" He also plans to provide handouts for relevant issues such as deep resistant plants.

"Overall," says Brown, "my goal is to show local gardeners that a winter garden doesn't have to be a dull and barren landscape. You can enjoy the beauty of nature all year long."



Our First Fall Day at Longview

by Sharon LaRusch

Well I don't think there could have been better weather for us at the last workday! We were hopeful that the rain would hold off and IT DID! As a Raleigh native, I feel totally comfortable saying thanks to "all y'all" that came out in October!



Between the trees that Florence helped with and the cedar trees removed for us by WakeMed (more on that in a minute), there was a lot of sky showing! Mark W. and Olivia trekked thru the garden tagging trees in red for removal and Mark B and Norm powered up some tools to tackle unruly brush.

The word must be getting out about our Project because our esteemed Clod-Hopper Editor's brother and his wife came all the way from New



Mexico to join in! New friends... yet another side benefit from the Longview Project! The rest of the gang worked to remove the soil from the bricks that the rains transported there and the new piles of trimmed brush.

Not all the progress took place onsite this month either! At our last Club meeting, over 50% of our first group of plants



found foster homes!

We had four cedar trees from the site cut and transported by WakeMed to the NC State Fairgrounds the day that Michael blew through town. There, a steam powered sawmill, 40 years older than the 85-year-old trees themselves (according to our friends at the NC

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Our First Fall Day at Longview

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Forestry tent) cut them into beautiful lumber ready for building. And never fear - they will return home to the Longview Walk as benches, chairs and birdhouses when the time is right!



Hopefully, as you have worked in your own yards, you may have thought of plants that were on the list from last month's article. Are there plants that you might consider donating in the future? For the full list of the plants on our proposed design as well as Dr. Poe's original design, see last month's Longview Project article in the Clod-Hopper. If you're not able to come out for a workday but would like to help with the Project, ask yourself, "Do I have room to foster some plants that would eventually be a

permanent addition at The Garden Walk at Longview?" or "Do I have any of the plants on the list that I could donate and host until it is time to plant them in the future?" If you answer yes to either of those questions, let us know by emailing TheGarden-WalkAtLongview@gmail.com.

As we celebrate our month's progress at Longview, let's enjoy looking to the future and the coming months!

By the way, **our next workday is Saturday, Nov 17th** – that's BEFORE this month's GWC meeting unlike previous workdays which always have been on the weekend after the monthly meeting. We've made the alteration to work around the Thanksgiving holiday. Bottom line, **this is a departure from the usual routine - be sure to mark your calendars!**



My Corner of the Garden

by Reed Elliott, Editor



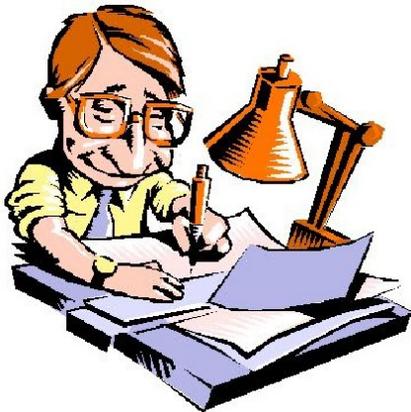
For one reason or another, it's been a couple of months since my wife and I got a chance to enjoy a Longview Project Workday. Sharon LaRusch has written elsewhere of the great work the GWC accomplished this month but I wanted to share a few personal pictures I snapped between hacking, sawing, pulling, sweating and "using language" as my mom might have said (just before she soaped my mouth out).



If you haven't had the pleasure of attending a Longview Workday, let me add a word of encouragement—you don't have to be either Luther Burbank or Tarzan of the Apes to enjoy a day at Longview. There are plenty of tough jobs for those looking for a challenge, but there's also a lot of planning and measuring and tying of ribbons to tell the Wake Med loggers which trees and shrubs won't be needed in the final plan.



If you've been thinking about coming out for a workday—do! It's fun, satisfying, for a really good cause, and you'll get a chance to meet and work with some great folks—your fellow members of the GWC. Next time, I'll hope to take a picture of you at Longview!



NOTE: the November workday is a departure from our usual procedure. Unlike previous months, it's BEFORE this month's GWC monthly meeting. Sharon already mentioned this, but I'm giving a second heads up. Be sure to mark your calendars for a workday on Saturday, November 17th!



New Members

The Gardeners of Wake County welcomes anyone and everyone who loves gardens and gardening. This month we're happy to have added new members Ralph Wisnant and Olivia Gregerson both of Raleigh. In addition, we're pleased to welcome back Juliette LaBonte who has returned to the GWC after an out-of-state stay. Be sure to say, "Hi and welcome" if you see them at this month's meeting.