



# HORTICULTURE HORIZONS

The Newsletter of the Oklahoma Horticultural Society

Fall 2005

SEPT/OCT/NOV

## GOURDS GALORE !

Gourds can break your heart. In the year it takes to go from seed to mature fruit, a gourd is subject to many tragedies. But gourds that make it can be glorious.

Jan Mohr Meng, gourd expert, has experienced the agony and ecstasy of gourd culture. She will be sharing her adventures and ups and downs of gourds as speaker for our Fall Meeting October 23rd in Stillwater. Her program include the horticultural and cultural, the sublime and mundane aspects of all things gourd. She provides hands-on specimens from raw gourds to fine gourd art, she relates tall gourd tales and sad gourd truths. She's willing and able to talk endlessly of all things gourd and answer life's questions if they are gourd related. Door prizes are awarded and complimentary gourd seed provided.



Meng has been featured in commercial and public television programs, newspapers and magazines. She is resident gourd artist, gardener, scullery maid and spousal co-owner of Hungry Holler Art Center in northeast Oklahoma.

OBGA MAP

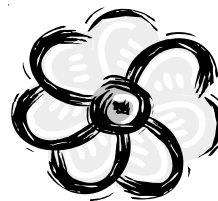
### Bi-annual Meeting Schedule:

- Sunday, October 23
- OBGA in Stillwater, OK
- 12 Noon OHS Board Meets
- 1:30 p.m. Short Business Mtg along with the Silent Auction
- 3:00 p.m. Jan Meng's Talk

## GET INVOLVED

### DONATE AND BID AT THE AUCTION

The OHS's auction is a great way to get involved with our society. We will again have a silent auction as part of our bi-annual meeting. This fundraiser is always a lot of fun. Everyone brings something horticulturally-related to donate



to the auction. Items can range from plants from your garden, books, pictures, tools, flower arrangements, bulbs, pots, etc.... Each item is numbered and is bid on silently on paper throughout the meeting. After last call, the papers

are collected and winners announced. It is great fun and you can really get some wonderful items for little money.

**So bring an item or two and join in the fun.**

## **2005 OFFICERS**

### **President**

*Sharon Beasley*

### **Vice President**

*Brenda Sanders*

### **Secretary**

*Wanda White*

### **Treasurer**

*Madeline Baldwin*

### **Board Members**

#### **Through January 2006**

*Marianne Anderson*

*Scott Brkert*

*Cathy Cornel*

*Jim Kirby*

*Louise Milbeck*

*Brian Pirtle*

*Beth Wagner*

### **Board Members**

#### **Through January 2007**

*Frank Arney*

*Patrick Dones*

*Steve Hill*

*Stirley Kennedy*

*Rodl Moesel*

*Johnny Satterlee*

*George Vaclavek*

### **Immediate**

#### **Past President**

*Hugh Stout, Jr.*

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#### **Education/Publications**

*Victoria Michalk*

#### **Publicity & Programs**

*Russell Studebaker*

*Dean & Wanda*

*Manderscheid*

*George Vaclavek*

### **Historian**

*George Vaclavek*

### **Membership**

*Jerry Sharpe*

### **Webmaster**

*Hugh Stout, Jr.*

### **Youth Activities**

*Marjorie Moesel*

### **OHS**

**P.O. BOX 75425**

**OKLA. CITY, OK**

**73147-5425**

**WEBSITE:**

**www.okhort.org**

## **LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT**

It is hard to believe that we are moving into fall now. When the heat takes over for weeks on end and it doesn't rain, I almost begin to dislike gardening. Now that we have received some moisture and the plants have perked up, I - like the plants - am getting my second wind and again look forward to working in the garden in cooler weather.

Now the **Garden Tour for Connoisseurs** is behind us. Although attendance was down this year, I still feel it was a success as always. I am not a person who thinks a bigger attendance number every year is our measure of success. I enjoyed all the gardens on the tour and found something interesting in all of them.

One campanula (*C. takisimana* 'Beautiful Trust') with odd, white flowers that I saw in one tour garden went on my want list. I didn't notice the plant for sale as I visited nurseries after the tour. Later, I realized I had already bought the plant in earlier forays into the nurseries. I had planted it and forgotten it until I checked the label one day to see it was the object of my desire. Yippee.

At the **Festival in the Park** at Will Rogers Park in June, many members generously donated a good supply of plants for sales at our booth. Customers eagerly chose plants from the wide selection we had, which resulted in a good money count at the end of the day.

Be sure to read in this newsletter about the several, upcoming events we will have in October. They all offer opportunities to enjoy the company of other plant lovers and learn about the plant world. Please help out where you are able.

For once, we are able to state early the **Christmas party** arrangements. Mark your calendars for December 10th. **Dixie Gordon** has again offered the use of her lovely home and her great hospitality. Particulars will be in the next newsletter.

Lastly, remember the regular monthly meetings will begin in September. For these meetings and other events, remember you can keep up by also checking out our website where **Hugh Stout** faithfully keeps the information very up to date.

*Sharon Beasley*

### **ADVERTISING INFORMATION**

	Members	Non-member
Bus card	\$15.00	\$20.00
1/4 page	25.00	35.00
1/2 page	45.00	55.00
full page	85.00	100.00

Issue	Deadline
Spring	March 1
Summer	May 1
Fall	August 15
Winter	November 15

### **OHS TREASURER'S**

#### **REPORT**

**July 9, 2005**

**CHECKING ACCT. BALANCE:**  
**\$1181.12**

**SAVINGS ACCT. BALANCE:**  
**\$19,615.50**

When paying your annual dues, please send your check to the OHS instead of the AHS. This allows us to update your records more quickly and keep your membership status current.

We are sending reminder notices of meetings and other OHS events to those who give us e-mail addresses. If you would like to be included in this group, please contact Jerri Sharpe at 894-6104 or by email at [jesharpe@earthlink.net](mailto:jesharpe@earthlink.net)

Thank you for your continued support!

*Jerri Sharpe*

## 2005 Garden Tour for Connoisseurs

This year's tour was our biggest yet with seven beautiful private gardens and two public gardens highlighted along the way. The close proximity of the gardens allowed a lot of people to walk much of the tour and save gas. It was great to see all the 'tourists' walking through the neighborhoods.

Kudos to the Co- Chairperson, Beth Wagner, and our tour committee, John Fluitt, Jackie Pogue and Jennifer Stout. They did a super job of putting this annual event on. Also, our generous sponsor Ken Hutmacher of Prudential Alliance Realty and most especially the many volunteers listed below who braved the warm weather to help make our tour a great success.

Thank you all, Hugh Stout

### GARDEN TOUR VOLUNTEERS

Betty Anderson  
Marianna Anderson  
Frank and Lila Arney  
Madeline Baldwin  
Juhree Basset  
Margaret Biggs  
Scott Brenkert  
Charles Callouette  
Kitty Champlin  
Scott and Cathy Connel  
Lois DeCamp  
Jacob Edingfield  
Wanda Faller  
John Fluitt  
Judith Hill  
Steve Hill  
Iris Holder  
Helen Jones  
Shirley Kennedy  
Jim and Barbara Kirby  
Patsy Lee  
Mary Ann Lees  
Julia Linger  
Shirley McFarland  
Dorothy and Bob McLemore  
Quentin and Vanessa Michalik  
Pat Miller  
Sharon Miller  
Mickey Morgan  
Rhoda Myers  
Michael Offutt

Keith Pierce  
Jackie Pogue  
Suzanne Rennix  
Kathleen Ryan  
Marthella Shuemaker  
Debbie Smith  
Al Southerland  
Chop Sparks  
Jeanie Spence  
Pat Steffens  
Hugh and Jennifer Stout  
Sheri Stuber  
Norma Taggart

## ZOO GARDEN GALA

The zoo will be having its annual **Garden Gala** on October 15th, from 9am - 2 pm. OHS will be setting up tables, much as we did at the Festival in the Park. We will again need plants donated to sell there and volunteers to man the tables.

**Scott Brenkert** was great to offer to be in charge of this plant sale also for us. To donate your plants and/or volunteer, please contact him at 381-0020 or e-mail at [tuttleok@aol.com](mailto:tuttleok@aol.com). It would be a good time to work in a visit around the zoo afterwards.

Barbara Thain  
Olen and Teresa Thomas  
Betty Thompson  
Mary Trevington  
June Tucker  
George Vaclavek  
Beth Wagner  
Sandy West  
Wanda White  
Betty Whiting



### Time is running out!

We hope you enjoy your *Oklahoma Horticultural Society* membership and the benefits it provides. Please check the membership expiration date on the mailing label of your newsletter and take a moment to renew if it is expired.

We will be updating the membership files soon. Don't miss out on the upcoming fall events!

## THANK-YOU'S

OHS has been so busy with various activities since the last newsletter that there are many thanks to give out. We have a good core of people we can depend on to pitch in for our activities. The chairmen of the various activities will separately have thank you lists, but I need to thank the chairmen.

The Garden Tour for Connoisseurs is the biggest project of the year and a lot of work for that committee. Beth Wagner, tour chairman, Hugh Stout and John Fluitt spent a lot of time arranging for the great line-up of gardens we had.

Scott Brenkert took on the Festival in the Park booth. Scott and his helpers were making like pigs in muck by mid day since the park lawns were sponges after generous rains in the wee morning hours. Scott and helpers kept in good spirits in spite of the muddy conditions. Scott is very experienced with plant sales since he also has to help with the ones at the OSU horticulture school.

Marianna Anderson has been in charge of getting the Legacy Garden planted and keeping the plants alive. A few people have been pitching in to help her, but we need more people to help with the ongoing maintenance of this garden. It would be especially helpful to Marianna if people who live near the park would offer to occasionally hand water a section of the plantings that are not within the spray of the sprinkler system. This is an ongoing project that OHS has committed to, so any amount of help will be greatly appreciated. Check out the unusual Agastache 'Ava' that Marianna ordered from High Country Gardens for the hand-watered section of the garden. This agastache has rose-purple spikes of flowers that have bloomed like crazy since she planted them.

Members had lots of opportunity to learn about plants from the monthly lectures that George Vaclavek organized earlier in the year. Our last meeting in June found us sharing cuttings between members. I have been surprised at the success I have had with the several

cuttings I took home. We can look forward to more informative sessions starting in September. George was the person who started the monthly meetings several years ago. It is no easy task to find a lineup of speakers for the meetings. Those of us with special knowledge about certain plants or other aspects of gardening and who are able to speak before groups should let George know we can do a session if he needs us.

Thank all of you so much for your dedication.

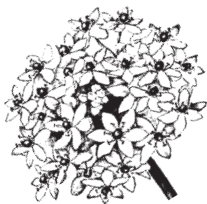
— Sharon B

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### 2006 ANNUAL WINTER MEETING ANNOUNCED

**Stephanie Cohen**, Director of the Landscape Arboretum at Temple University, teacher, author and contributing editor/writer for several horticultural magazines, will be our speaker during the 2006 Winter Meeting. Among others areas, she is considered to be an expert in the world of perennials. She will be speaking in Tulsa on Friday, Feb. 24 at the Hardesty Library then at the OKC Zoo on Sunday, February 26th. As before, we will be offering book sales/signing. More information in the next Horizons issue..

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## PERENNIALS THAT THRIVE

by Loretta Aaron

I think the summer of 2005 will go down in memory as the weirdest gardeners have ever experienced. Everything in my garden has grown taller than it has ever grown. Gardening friends have also mentioned this. Could it be from Nitrogen in the air? The miniature Crepe Myrtle shrubs have remained 36 to 45 inches for the past 25 years. One now reaches just over 7 feet tall, and the crabgrass - 3 feet tall !

Hybridizers have worked overtime in introducing new varieties in the Echinacea family. Echinaceas and Rudbeckias are native wild flower perennials in the west central sections of our nation. Oklahoma is included in this area. This plant with a common name, Coneflower, puts up bloom during the hottest part of the summer.

In 1998 the Perennial Plant Association chose the variety 'Magnus' as the best perennial. The large lavender pink blooms hold the petals horizontally, instead of drooping. It has adapted well in many local gardens. 'Magnus' plants prefer sunny areas.

All of the plants in the families of Echinacea and Rudbeckia have a common enemy - a small beetle that arrives in mid-July and lays eggs on the foliage. These hatch out into fuzzy black worms, which destroy the foliage. Be prepared - have a bottle of Malathion on hand. Spraying on a regular basis will help preserve the foliage.

This spring, Wayside Gardens introduced a new fully double, pink Echinacea - Razz-Ma-Tazz. I saw it growing in the garden of a friend. It was spectacular. Also, two good white ones are 'White Swan' and 'White Luster'. Another new Rudbeckia is 'Green Wizard'. This one is growing in my own garden. It has a large black cone, and is edged with small yellow blooms. It is a really strange plant.

### **\$500 DONATED !**

Recently the Oklahoma Horticultural Society donated \$500.00 to help in the remodeling of the Will Rogers Garden Exhibition Building's Rotunda. This wonderful facility is one that the OHS uses on a regular basis. This project to update the central area of the building is one we support and encourage others to donate to through the Oklahoma Community Foundation.

The variety 'Goldstrum' has been around for years. It is a rather small plant, and all summer is covered with single orange blooms. For years, all of these plants were called Coneflowers, due to their large black cone.

Each spring, new plants appear on the market. This is the third year for the new annual, Melampodium. It is a full sun plant. Because it will reseed rapidly, you will not need to purchase the plant next year. Plants will grow to 18 inches tall in a year, and be solidly covered with the half-inch yellow blooms. It thrives in hot weather.

The emphasis is now on just keeping plants happy and alive. The brutal heat of summer is a reality in our area. Little or no planting will occur now. We just hope to keep all of the plants in our collection alive.

For next year, keep in mind the family of Achillea. Most of these perennials have been developed from native species. These have been developed from plants that survived the grim days of the dust bowl in western and central Oklahoma. The two colors available were white and yellow.

Hybridizers have given us new colors. Most thrive in local gardens. These are full sun perennials. In my collection, I am growing six varieties. Only one, a dwarf, is temperamental. This is 'Tom King Edward', a border plant. The woolly, deep green foliage is only three inches tall. In summer it is covered with 4-inch yellow blooms. This one must have good drainage, and must never be allowed to stay dry for long. I learned this the hard way - I had to replace it twice.

The other five will take some neglect. They will tolerate some dry periods, and still bloom well. Foliage remains neat and pretty all summer. The variety 'Moonshine' was awarded the Perennial of the Year by the Perennial Plant Association. Foliage is a pretty gray. Blooms are lemon yellow. It is a very neat plant. The first one I grew, and continue to have after many years, is 'Gold Plate'. It has green foliage with deep yellow blooms. Two rather new ones are 'Paprika' and 'Coral Beauty'. Both have green foliage. 'Paprika' has rusty rose blooms and 'Coral Beauty' has coral blooms. 'Rosea' has deep green foliage and almost red blooms. 'Gold Plate' blooms last, and is at peak bloom now. The rest have finished blooming. All faded blooms need to be removed now. Only scattered blooms will appear the rest of the season.

## MEMBERS GARDEN TOUR - OCTOBER 1ST Garden Tour of member gardens for members



After I pushed for 2 years to do this, OHS finally approved having a garden tour of member's only gardens for members. Members can bring non-members with them, but this tour is meant to be on a smaller, more relaxed scale than our Tour for Connoisseurs. It is also FREE and not advertised to the public. Last year, Julia Linger and I tested this idea out on our own gardens and felt there was enough interest to push for it being a project of the Society. Five people have signed up to open their gardens on the same day. That day will be October 1, from 10 am to 4 pm.

My thought is that eventually we will have different gardens at a couple of different times of the year. Various gardens have their outstanding times so we could accommodate the ones that excel in spring with plants like azaleas and accordingly for other times of the year. I would like to hear from other potential participants about their preferred time for showing off their gardens for next year.

Keep in mind that I don't want this tour to be one that stresses garden owners out so some of the gardens may not have perfect order everywhere, but hopefully we won't have major messes everywhere. It is for people who just want to show off a special feature(s), a special plant(s) and so forth. Gardeners can discover something new even from the most modest of gardens.

The gardens from (north to south) that will be open this year are:

### **1) June and Kenneth Tucker at 11904 Camelot Place in Oklahoma City.**

Directions: From 122 & May, go east 1 block, turn south onto Camelot Place, go one block, go right and then follow irregular path that curves to the south until you cross over 119th street into a cul-de-sac. Tucker's home is 4th house on left in cul-de-sac. (They are just on east side off North Park Mall). Their garden has two ponds with a connecting spring. They are rose specialists, including many mini roses.

### **2) Sandra Casteel at 6124 NW 10th, OKC**

(west of MacArthur).

She suggests parking on Leroy St. Sandra lives on 3 acres and has her tropical plant leasing business on the property. Her house is 70 years old. She enjoys gardening with native plants in a natural style.

### **3) Patricia and John Steffens at 40 SW 101st, OKC**

(west of Santa Fe) in OKC

They have a cozy, enclosed back yard with deck, with a large water oak in the center of the deck. An espaliered tree is a special feature on a section of fence. They have two 4 ft. Lorapetalum shrubs and topiaried abelia. Another unusual plant is a Frosty Elm. A part rock, part perennial bed is in the front yard.

### **4) Julia Linger at 3109 Bradford Dr., Moore OK**

Exit off I-35 at NE 27th in Moore; proceed east on 27th (NE 27th is SW 104th on OKC side), across Eastern Ave. to Bradford Dr. which is 1/3 of a mile further. Turn north into Bradford Court and follow the road to the very end house. Julia's garden includes a large collection of perennial and unique alpine plants within her rock and desert gardens.

### **5) Sharon Beasley at 3833 NW 24th in Newcastle**

Go to junction of highways 37 and 76 in northwest Newcastle (from OKC, go north on I-44, pass SW 149th Street, pass the Canadian River bridge and about a mile farther take highway 37 exit west, toward Tuttle. Go 3 miles to stop light which is 37/76 junction) turn south onto Highway 76 and go 1 mile. Turn west and go 3/4 mi. House on north side where decorated dead tree is at driveway. Many large flower beds with a wide variety of perennials and potted tropical plants.

**NOTE: BE SURE TO SAVE THIS PAGE IF YOU INTEND TO VIEW THE GARDENS. THERE WILL BE NO OTHER NOTICES ABOUT THE TOUR. PLEASE NO SMOKING IN THE GARDENS AND DO NOT BRING ANY PETS AS THEY CAN CREATE PROBLEMS NOT ANTICIPATED.**

If you get lost call Sharon at 392-4727 (home)  
or 990-6069 (cell).

## The Legacy Gardens Summer Planting

In preparation for the third work session, Hugh and Jennifer Stout and I went to two of the local nurseries to get some annuals to plant with the perennials that were donated earlier by Juniper Hills. We needed more plants to keep all the volunteers busy! So Sandy Precure of Precure Nursery on NW 63rd St donated several flats, and gave wholesale prices to us for the rest of the annuals that we selected. Monica Arndt of Skyridge Farms in Jones donated various perennial herbs; several which are evergreen. And Sharon Beasley, OHS president, donated and planted a variety of sedums and perennial grasses. So we were able to gather a relatively large collection of plants for our scheduled planting day.

As luck would have it, it rained on the 2 days before our scheduled workday, May 14th. So the Legacy Garden planting was postponed until the 21st. Unfortunately, that week-end most of the volunteers were already committed elsewhere, so Hugh Stout and Fred and Marianna Anderson were the only ones available to plant all those flats! And did I mention the unseasonable 90 degree temperature?! We almost melted, determined to get them all in, but Hugh decided to return on Sunday to plant the final flat of impatiens.

In June, Sharon led a small evening work session with Cathy Connel and Larry Selcedo to weed and water the beds. She and I have gone up there several times on our own as well. We are having a little problem with Nutsedge! I have been digging and pulling small clumps of it whenever I go to Will Rogers Park for any kind of meeting, and would like to ask all of you to lend a helping

hand in our battle to eliminate this weed! Please, if everyone could just step in and pull a handful of it anytime you are up at the Garden Exhibition Center, eventually we will be able to kill it out.

In July we were given some irises from both the Sooner State Iris Society and from the Oklahoma Iris Society, with several of the varieties being from local hybridizers. Most have been planted, but there are still several rhizomes which will need to be planted during the next work session.

At this time I would like to call for volunteers to help with a fall workday on **Saturday, September 17th at 9:30 am**. It will mainly involve weeding and pruning, with some planting if we are able to get some shrubs and small trees. Since

there is no meeting before then, please call or e-mail me at 495-2430 or manderson8010@earthlink.net

*Lastly, I would once again like to thank everyone who has helped so far with labor or plants!*

**Marianna S. Anderson**

Chair, OHS Legacy Garden Committee

**NEXT WORK DAY:  
Will Roger Park  
Garden Exhibition Center  
Saturday, September 17th  
9:30 am**

**OHS WEBSITE:**

***www.okhort.org***

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### **A few items of note...**

Make Sure Your E-mail Address is Up-to-Date  
In recent years, e-mail communications have increased within the Oklahoma Horticultural Society membership. The listing of e-mail addresses is kept within the main membership database. On occasion, announcements are sent out by e-mail to the entire membership. It seems that each time this happens, some e-mails get bounced back to the sender. The main reason this occurs is that the database manager has not been contacted that an e-mail address has changed. If you have not received emails from the OHS in recent months, most likely we do not have your most recent address. If you change your e-mail address, please contact Jerri Sharpe at [jesharpe@earthlink.net](mailto:jesharpe@earthlink.net) and let her know of the change so it can be corrected in the membership database. This will ensure that you are receiving all electronic correspondences. Thank you!

Jerri Sharpe

## Nomination of Will Rogers Park to National Register of Historic Places

Those who know and love Will Rogers Park will want to know that the nomination finally got headed to the last leg of the journey for final approval at the national level. After being presented to the OKC Parks and Recreation Department Board, which disapproved the nomination, the nomination went on to the Oklahoma City Historic Preservation Commission, then to the State Historic Preservation Office. The later two bodies easily approved the nomination. I attended all these meetings and found it interesting to see how these different meetings were conducted.

**JoAnne Vervinck, Hugh Stout** and I were present at the meeting of the state level and almost were ready to buy plane tickets to see how the nomination goes through at the national level. It would be interesting, but I think we want to save our money for other purposes.

A group of 14 of us appeared for the meeting of the Oklahoma City Historic Preservation meeting.

Those who were able to show support at that rather lengthy meeting were: **Ron and JoAnne Vervinck, Hugh and Jennifer Stout, Dixie Gordon, Fran Whitton, Karen Martin, Norma Taggart, Brian Dougherty, Marianna Anderson, June and Kenneth Tucker and Ann Waddell.** Some members sent letters of support as well.

Thanks to all of those who took the time to show their support at this meeting. Those present gave a hearty round of applause after the vote.

Sharon Beasley

## FESTIVAL IN THE PARK

The annual 'Festival In The Park', held June 11 was a big success again this year. As you know, the one day horticultural extravaganza packs in a multitude of activities for all our Oklahoma gardeners. This National Garden Week celebration combined a plant and garden sale with free horticultural seminars, floral displays and entertaining kids activities.

The Oklahoma Horticultural Society had a very busy booth made possible by our generous volunteers. Donated plants, priced very, very competitively, were organized for sale. There many took advantage of the great prices, plant knowledge and friendly faces.

The sales from plants donated are used to further our goals for the society, which include:

- To acquaint yourself with the very best plants for our climate
- To gain knowledge of plant culture -flowers - trees - shrubs -fruits - vegetables
- To promote gardening and stimulate interest in horticulture across the state
- To tour public and private gardens in the US and around the world.

Scott Brenkert, this year's Chairman for the OHS booth, did a fabulous job, working with all the volunteers and organizing the gathering of plants for sale. Thank you to the following volunteers that donated plants and gave of their time working the booth. If we left anyone out, please forgive us ! It was a whirlwind day ; one that benefited all. **Cathey Bartodej, Juhree Bassett, Sharon Beasley, Scott Brenkert, Warren Filley, John Fluitt, Shirley Kennedy, Patsy Lee, Shirley McFarland, William Metcalf, Linda Shackelford, Jeanie Spence, Hugh & Jennifer Stout, JoAnne Vervinck and Beth Wagner**

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## CASSIA ALATA

by Sharon Beasley

What a relief to finally have measurable rain. By last Monday, my yard had received over two inches. It is amazing how quickly heat-stressed plants start to rebound once they get rain and cooler weather.

With the rain, my Cassia alata, that was doing quite well as things were, should really be lovely when it blooms later. These plants are often called candlestick trees or candle bushes. I have tried them several times but do not always have great results.

These heat-loving plants take quite a while before they bloom and often I have found they barely get it done before the weather becomes chilly. The best results come from buying a plant and getting it in the ground soon after the weather has warmed to day temps over 65.

Mine started out as a 8-inch tall plant in early June and now is over 3 ft. I expect it to reach over 5 ft. The width across is 4 feet. Presently, the leaves are mostly 6 inches long by 2 1/2 inches wide with a very rounded tip. The leaves are opposite each other along a 26 inch long branch. At night, the leaves fold up.

The basic growth pattern of candlestick trees reminds me of palm trees where branches grow straight out from a central trunk. The plant makes a strong architectural statement in the landscape, even without the flowers. I have tried to give it plenty of space so it stands out even more without the crush of other plants against it.

From one website <tropilab.com>, I learned the leaves have laxative properties. The leaves also can be used for skin infections and to heal ringworm.

When it blooms, it will have large spikes of waxy-looking, yellow flowers at branch ends. Because of the

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Norman, OK

placement and shape of the flower spikes, someone has said they look like candlesticks; hence the common name. The flower spikes are apparent even at quite a distance.

I found seed for sale at a website called <seedrack.com>. I believe I did try seeds several years ago. I don't remember how fast they germinated for me, but they are supposed to be easy. At this website, there is a good photo of the plant in bloom. The price for 50 seeds is \$3.18 which is a fair price for this tropical plant that is difficult to find in our area. They bloom so late here, that you aren't likely to have seeds mature for saving.

If you ever grow this plant, you will want to put it in full sun. The <tropilab.com> website states the plant also likes a lot of moisture and good drainage in rich soil. Mine is not in good soil and it has done well in an area that has been very dry half of the days of the recent heat spell. The area does drain well. I think full sun is the key ingredient in my experience.

I will have my garden open to everyone for viewing in early October, on the Member Tour, perhaps you might visit to see how the candlestick tree progressed.

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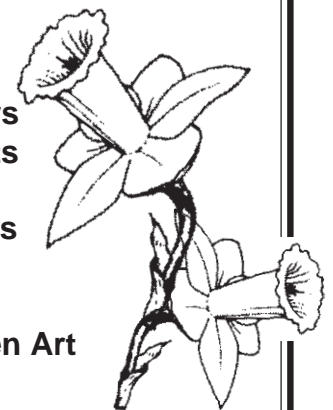
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# Helleborus xhybridus      Lenten Rose

## 2005 Perennial Plant of the Year©

The Perennial Plant Association has named *Helleborus xhybridus* 2005 Perennial Plant of the Year.

**Hardiness:** USDA Hardiness Zones 4 to 9

**Light:** Partial to full shade

**Soil:** Well-drained, humus-rich, fertile soil.

**Uses:** This early spring flowering and evergreen perennial

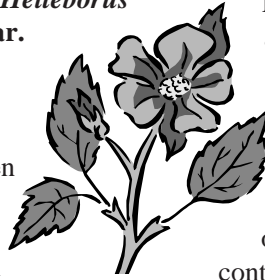
provides color and texture to the landscape.

**Unique Qualities:** *Helleborus xhybridus* is an excellent shade perennial that tolerates dry conditions. Long lasting flowers are available in many colors and appear as single or double forms.

The common name of this marvelous shade plant is Lenten rose. It is an evergreen, late-winter or early-spring flowering member of the buttercup family. Lenten rose is hardy from Zone 9 to Zone 4, and probably colder when plants have snow cover. Mature plants can form clumps that are 18" to 24" tall and 24" to 30" wide. Long lasting blooms are available in many colors and appear as single or double forms. Mature plants often have 50 or more flowers per plant. This evergreen perennial performs best in partial to full shade, but makes an outstanding combination plant for adding color and texture to the ornamental landscape.

**Cultivation** Lenten roses are easily grown in well-drained, humus-rich and fertile garden soil. In southern regions, Lenten rose grows best in the shade of deciduous trees. In cooler regions they will grow in a sunnier site. The major requirement for optimum growth is good drainage. Planting on a natural or created slope is ideal. Even in the driest of seasons, Lenten roses are tough plants that only require occasional watering after they become established plantings. The foliage remains evergreen in most areas of North America. If the leaves look a little tattered after the winter simply cut them off as the new foliage emerges in the spring. Long term exposure of the bare skin to Lenten rose leaves may cause mild dermatitis. It usually disappears in a few hours. Gardeners with skin sensitivities should wear gloves where prolonged exposure may occur. A good note about this is that alkaloids in the leaves that cause the dermatitis make the leaves undesirable to deer. Consequently, Lenten rose does not become part of the salad buffet for foraging deer.

**Propagation** Lenten rose is commercially propagated from seed. Seed germination is slow and it can take four or five years to produce a plant of flowering size. The diverse species lineage of the hybrids creates a wide range of available colors. However, Lenten rose does not come true from seed. Most color strains produce no more than 80 to 85% plants true to the color of the parent. Plants should be observed in flower before selling as a color. Many nurseries offer attractive selections of mixed colors.



Established clumps may be divided into single crowns at most times of the year; however, the recovery time is slow with division. Established clumps can be left alone for 20 or more years. Gardeners will find that established clumps will produce seedlings that can be planted in other areas.

**History** *Helleborus* (hellebore), a member of the family Ranunculaceae, is a small genus containing 15 species of herbaceous perennials native to Europe and Asia. The true wild hellebore species are rarely found in gardens as hellebores hybridize easily providing garden plants with superior flowering and flower colors. Lenten rose was formerly known as *Helleborus orientalis* hybrids. An article in *The New Plantsman* by Will McLewin and Brian Matthew in June 1998 reported that while *Helleborus orientalis* is a distinct species, the epithet (*orientalis* hybrids) frequently given to the cultivated hybrid plants is confusing and incorrect. McLewin and Mathew formally proposed that the garden hybrids be collectively called *Helleborus xhybridus*. The consensus of taxonomists is that present garden hybrids, Lenten roses, are hybrids of nine species.

**Ornamental Qualities** A rainbow of colors aptly describes the flowers of the present day hellebore garden hybrids. The flower colors range from pure white to a plum color bordering on black. Others are red, pink, yellow, and several with small to large spots on the inside of the flower. There are semi-doubles to doubles and some with picotee edges. There is a Lenten rose to delight any gardener in late winter, early spring to late spring. Most times the flowers last at least two months and in some climates even longer. Following flowering, the unusual seed pods provide an ornamental effect and can produce wonderful seedlings. The only thing that exceeds the ornamental value of these timeless beauties is the magnificent foliage. The leaves are divided into 7 to 9 segments and look like coarse leathery umbrellas. The foliage texture adds so much to the shade garden and is a perfect backdrop for bulbs and other perennials.

**Landscape Use** Lenten roses can be the stars of the early spring garden as specimen plants, massed to function as a foil for other spring beauties and may even be used as an elegant ground cover. *Epimedium* (barrenwort), *Anemone nemorosa* (wood anemone) and *Hepatica* (liverleaf), all spring flowering selections, are excellent companion plantings with Lenten rose. *Helleborus xhybridus* is one of the easiest plants to grow and anyone with a shade garden from neophytes to experienced gardeners will be delighted with their experience with Lenten rose.

source: [www.perennialplant.org](http://www.perennialplant.org)

# OKLAHOMA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY 2005-6 EVENTS

## Oklahoma Horticultural Society (OHS) Monthly Educational Meeting - 7 PM - OKC

Monthly educational meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of each month (except July, August and December) at 7 PM at the OKC Will Rogers Garden Center. Meetings are open to the public and all are welcome.

- Sept 17** Legacy Garden Workday; 9:30 am @ Will Rogers Garden Exhibition Building; contact Marianna for more info @ 495-2430 or manderson8010@earthlink.net
- Sept 27** OHS monthly program ... 7 PM at Will Rogers Garden Center
- Oct 15** Zoo Garden Gala; 9 am-2 pm - Volunteer @ the OHS booth and visit all the wonderful other plant-related booths. Contact Scott Brenkert at 381-0020 or tuttleok@aol.com
- Oct 23** OHS Bi-Annual Meeting; Jan Meng will be talking about "*GOURDS GALORE*"; OBGA in Stillwater; 12 Noon OHS Board Meets, 1:30 p.m. Short Business Mtg & Silent Auction, 3:00 p.m. Jan Meng's Talk
- Oct 25** OHS monthly program ... 7 PM at Will Rogers Garden Center
- Nov 22** OHS monthly program ... 7 PM at Will Rogers Garden Center
- Dec 10** OHS Christmas Party; Home of OHS Member, Dixie Gordon
- Feb 24, 2006** OHS Winter Meeting Speaker series, Stephanie Cohen- Speaker; Hardesty Library in Tulsa. More details in next issue
- Feb 26, 2006** OHS Annual Winter Meeting; Stephanie Cohen, Speaker; Oklahoma City Zoo; More details in next issue

A COMPLETE LISTING OF OKLAHOMA'S HORTICULTURAL  
EVENTS, CHECK THE OHS website at: [www.okhort.org](http://www.okhort.org)



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| <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal         | <input type="checkbox"/> Family - 3 or more persons in same family . . . . .           | 50.00  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Life OHS Member - Does Not Include \$20 yearly AHS Dues . . . | 300.00 |

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**OKLAHOMA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**



**GOURDS GALORE !  
Bi-annual Meeting  
Sunday, October 23rd  
OBGA in Stillwater**

- OBGA in Stillwater, OK
- 12 Noon OHS Board Meets
- 1:30 p.m. Short Business Mtg  
along with the Silent Auction
- 3:00 p.m. Jan Meng's Talk

**Bring an   
item or two  
for the silent auction!**

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Mailing address: OHS P.O. Box 75425 Oklahoma City, OK 73147-5425  
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