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Save the date:

Spring Plant Sale
sponsored by the
Horticulture Club & Hahn Horticulture Garden
April 29, 30, & May 1

6th Annual Garden Gala
"Tropical Paradise"

Food, drinks, music, and fun, all inspired by the islands!
June 12

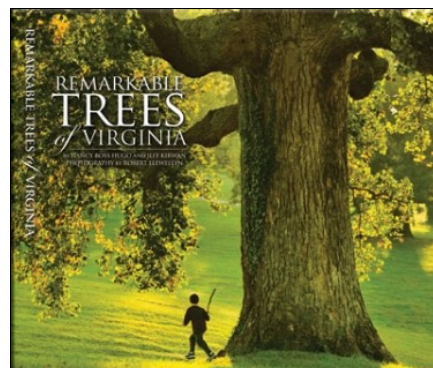
Winter & Spring Workshop and Seminar Series

Don't go "dormant" this winter! Another great line-up of speakers and topics is on tap for 2010! Read on, then register by calling 540-231-5970, or fill out the enclosed registration form and mail it in. Visit our website for more extensive information and speaker biographies. Join the Friends of the Garden to receive substantial discounts on admission. Seminars are \$15 for Friends of the Garden; \$20 for general public unless otherwise noted.

Remarkable Trees of Virginia with Jeff Kirwan Friends of the Garden Seminar

Thursday, February 4, 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Fralin Auditorium

Virginia Tech forestry professor and 4-H extension specialist Jeff Kirwan will speak about his four-year search for Virginia's most remarkable trees. His new book "Remarkable Trees of Virginia", with co-author Nancy Ross Hugo, features 100 of the oldest, largest, most beautiful and historic trees. Kirwan will focus on Blacksburg-area trees that are featured in the book. These trees were selected from over 1,000 trees that were nominated to the project by citizens over the past three years. **Free for current Friends of the Garden;** general public \$20.



The Sustainable Garden: Magic or Myth? with C. Colston Burrell

February 18, 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Fralin Auditorium

Everyone is talking about sustainability, but what does it really mean to landscape professionals and gardeners? Do our gardening practices have a negative impact on the environment? Can we make a difference by changing the way we approach design, planting and maintenance? Join Cole Burrell, acclaimed lecturer, garden designer, award winning author and photographer, in exploring these questions in terms of the hallmarks of sustainability like water harvesting, composting, fertilizing and creating habitat. This talk highlights sustainable practices within the framework of both formal and informal gardens and their relationship to larger regional systems.



Cole writes regularly for *Horticulture*, *Landscape Architecture*, *American Gardener* and the *Brooklyn Botanic Garden*, and has authored books too numerous to list here (see our website). He is a lecturer in the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the University of Virginia, where he teaches about plants and their ecological connections to natural systems and cultural landscapes.

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Seminar Series

(Continued from page 1)

Seed Starting Workshop with Dr. Holly Scoggins
Saturday, March 20, 10:00 a.m.—noon, Peggy Lee Hahn Garden Pavilion. Workshop has limited space - must pre-register. \$25 Friends of the Garden/\$30 general public.

Celebrate the first day of Spring (hurrah!) by learning tips and tricks to get the most out of your vegetable and flower seeds. Holly will cover seed saving and storage, strategies to enhance germination, and care of seedlings - excellent topics for the novice or intermediate gardener. You'll take home commercial-quality tools of the trade: re-useable starter trays, professional germination mix, a humidity dome, and other goodies to get you growing!

Holly is an Associate Professor in the Department of Horticulture, and the Director of the Hahn Horticulture Garden. She teaches several horticulture courses and is the author of textbook chapters on seed and vegetative propagation of annuals and perennials. She is a frequent speaker at both green industry and gardener conferences and writes for the science-meets-the-garden blog "Garden Professors".



Ecological Approaches to Home Gardening with Brinkley Benson Thursday, March 25, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Peggy Lee Hahn Garden Pavilion.

How can you build some of the strengths of natural ecosystems into your home garden? Brinkley will discuss this question and others in this interactive presentation that will help you better understand basic ecological principles and how they apply to your home landscape and garden. Learn how you can apply principles gleaned from various methods of sustainable land management to build the productive capacity of your home landscape. Topics will include cover



cropping, biological pest control, farmscaping, and reduced tillage/no tillage gardening.

Brinkley is a Research Specialist in the Department of Horticulture. His area

of expertise is organic vegetable production - the research program has extensive plots maintained under

organic production by Brinkley since 2002. He is working towards his Ph. D and also teaches two new undergraduate courses in sustainability and agriculture.

Cool Plants from a Crazy Woman Preparing for a Magazine Shoot with Elissa Steeves

Thursday, April 15, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Virginia Bioinformatics Institute Auditorium

So, *Horticulture* magazine wants to come to town to do a story on your garden – let the freak-out begin! But with this honor came an opportunity to take an already-wonderful garden and rethink, rework, and add many, many, MANY more fabulous plants. Elissa talks about some of her favorites, along with some hilarious anecdotes of the stress and excitement surrounding the shoot.



Elissa is the original *Hort Diva* - it even says so on her license plate! Her energy and enthusiasm for gardening is unmatched, as is her amazing plant collection. Her Blacksburg garden encompasses two large lots, has tons of art and color, appeared in *Southern Living* magazine (twice!) and will be featured in an upcoming issue of *Horticulture* magazine. (photo: Paul Westervelt)

Wildflower Walk with Dr. Holly Scoggins Saturday, April 24, 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. Hike location to be determined (Montgomery County)

Last year's hike was so much fun, we're doing it again! Trillium, jacks, bloodroot, columbine, bluebells, ferns...



you'll be amazed at the diversity of species right here in Montgomery County. Holly channels her inner nature-show-host; you bring your curiosity and camera! Register soon, as class size is very limited. Location will be revealed to registrants only (woo!). (photo: Meg Whelton)

- Holly Scoggins

Free! Wednesday Walks and Talks!

Join us at noon on selected Wednesdays at the Pavilion. Upcoming : Robert McDuffie's "Gardens of New Zealand", Holly Scoggins' "Plants of the Tropics", and Judy Clark's fantastic travelogue "Bucket List: Check!" Check our website for the schedule: www.hort.vt.edu/hhg

Winter & Spring Garden Seminars and Workshops 2010

at the Hahn Horticulture Garden

Registration Form

Pre-registration is required for hands-on workshops and recommended for seminars! Go to our web site to find more details on these events – www.hort.vt.edu/hhg or call 540.231.5970.

STEP 1: FILL IN YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION		
name		
address		
address line 2		
city	state	zip
home telephone*	work or cell telephone*	e-mail*

*phone/e-mail needed so we can contact you in the event of a weather-related cancellation.

STEP 2: SELECT COURSES			
Seminar or Workshop	Number attending	Cost (Join our Friends of the Garden program for discounted rates!)	\$ Totals
Friends of the Garden Seminar – Remarkable Trees of Virginia with Jeff Kirwan. Thursday, February 4, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Fralin Auditorium		\$20 General Public	
		FREE for Friends of the Garden	
The Sustainable Garden - Magic or Myth with C. Colston Burrell Thursday, February 18, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Fralin Auditorium		\$20 General Public	
		\$15 Friends of the Garden	
Seed Starting Workshop with Holly Scoggins Saturday, March 20, 10:00 a.m. – noon, Peggy Lee Hahn Pavilion Pre-registration required.		\$30 General Public	
		\$25 Friends of the Garden	
Ecological Approaches to Home Gardening with Brinkley Benson Thursday, March 25, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Peggy Lee Hahn Pavilion		\$20 General Public	
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Cool Plants From A Crazy Woman Preparing for a Magazine Shoot with Elissa Steeves, Thursday, April 15, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Virginia Bioinformatics Institute Auditorium		\$20 General Public	
		\$15 Friends of the Garden	
Wildflower Hike with Holly Scoggins Saturday, April 24, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., Location TBD (Montgomery Co.)		\$20 General Public	
		\$15 Friends of the Garden	
		TOTAL AMOUNT OF CHECK:	

STEP 3: MAIL THIS FORM WITH CHECK TO:	<p>Make checks payable to Treasurer, Virginia Tech. If you've followed all three steps, consider yourself registered! We will only contact you if an event is filled or cancelled. For more information on these seminars or other Garden events, call (540) 231-5970 or e-mail vtgarden@vt.edu. Hands-on workshops fill quickly, please call if registering close to the event date.</p>
<p>Hahn Horticulture Garden at Virginia Tech Peggy Lee Hahn Pavilion (0915) 200 Garden Lane Blacksburg, VA 24061</p>	

Become a 2009-2010 Friend of the Garden! Get the Friends of the Garden member's discount rate along with other benefits! Go to our website at www.hort.vt.edu/hhg to print off a membership form. Mail it to us with this registration form but please make a separate check out for the membership to the *Virginia Tech Foundation*.

Cut here and mail it in!

Postage
required

Hahn Horticulture Garden
Peggy Lee Hahn Garden Pavilion (0915)
200 Garden Lane
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Educatin' and Reachin' Out

2009...it did happen! I am just amazed at how fast this past year went! As I looked back at 2009, I realized it was another great year for the Garden! It was a year of celebrating the Garden's 25th anniversary. The big celebration took place at the 5th annual Garden Gala. The "Red Carpet" theme was quite the glamorous event and a successful fundraiser for the Garden!

Our very first "Down & Dirty Garden Symposium" in August turned out even better than we had hoped! With the day chock full of fabulous speakers, our attendees (120!) were pleased with the amount of knowledge they gained. Garden seminars and workshops throughout the year brought a variety of fun topics and speakers. Janet Draper, horticulturist for the Smithsonian, got us all psyched for spring in her February seminar "Forgotten Annuals"; Dennis Dove and Tenley Weaver, of Full Circle Farm, shared the inside dirt in "A-Z Organic Gardening for the Homeowner." In summer, we made beautiful "Living Wreaths" in a workshop led by Sheri Dorn of Virginia Cooperative Extension. The Wednesday Garden Walks and other programs throughout the year provided fun learning opportunities for all who participated. Thank you for supporting our programs and thank you to our talented speakers for sharing your expertise!

As always, we had A LOT of school students and other groups tour the garden throughout the year! I love to see young and old alike enjoying the wonders of nature. To encourage educators to teach outdoors, 4-H agents Michelle Dickerson and Chris Lichy and I offered several Project Learning Tree and Junior Master Gardener workshops. These hands-on workshops give educators great resources for incorporating the natural world into their curriculum.

I look forward to an equally exciting 2010! I hope you can join us for some of the wonderful programs and events we have to offer. Be sure to check out our website at www.hort.vt.edu/hhg. If you would like to be added to my Garden Event email distribution list, please send me an email at vtgarden@vt.edu.

- Stephanie Huckestein,
Education and Outreach Coordinator



Ann Hess shows her handiwork from the Dec. 6 Wreath Workshop with David Pippin (photo H. Scoggins)

Pin-up Plant: *Baptisia*

The Perennial Plant Association (PPA) recently released the identity of the PPA Plant of the Year - for 2010 it is *Baptisia australis* or False Blue Indigo. As with each PPA release, garden magazines and blogs will carry lots of information and garden centers will post promotional posters (it really is a pin-up plant!).

Me? I think it is a truly wonderful native perennial. I've had great success with it in both Zone 7b and 6a and teach it as a "bread and butter" component plant for the mixed border. As a PPA member, it certainly got my vote on the last ballot (beats the hell out of last year's *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola' - hard to say and even harder to grow in the Southeast. The only decent patch I've seen around here is in Elissa Steeves' garden—go figure).

The great thing about the PPA "Plant of the Year" program is not just in the promotion of that particular species, but that it opens the door for other cultivars and hybrids. Two of my favorites: *Baptisia* Twilite Prairieblues™ [yes, that's how they spell it] and *Baptisia* Solar Flare™. Both were bred and selected by perennial breeder extraordinaire, Dr. Jim Ault of the Chicago Botanic Garden, and introduced through the *Chicagoland Grows* program. One of the few knocks on the "straight species" is its slow start, often taking several years to reach full size of three to four feet tall and as wide. But the hybrid vigor is evident...pictured are plants with only one and a half years of growth after planting.



Baptisia Twilite Prairieblues™ (photo H. Scoggins)

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Out in the Garden with Dabney

The year 2009 held much change for the Hahn Horticulture Garden, and it literally began on New Year's Day. On New Year's Eve night, a powerful windstorm swept through Blacksburg downing two large trees in the garden (blog photos are at <http://tinyurl.com/HHGtreesdown>). With the help of a Bobcat and chainsaw, the wreckage was cleared. Let the change begin!

The continuation of the asphalt path system through the older part of the garden, completed in the fall of 2008, caused much bed re-shaping and expansion to be necessary. Both interior edges of the Trident Maple Allée were moved to meet the pathway, leaving lots of new planting space for toad lilies, astilbes, hostas, and other new perennials. Following the path to the Washington Street garden entrance by the Matthew Petras Gazebo, the former America's Anniversary Garden was disassembled and merged with the back border of the woodland area directly behind it. This created a large empty space, and being that we did not have immediate plans for the area, we filled it with many beautiful Dahlias donated to the garden by Curt Laub of Virginia Tech's Entomology Department. My favorite one was a pom-pon type, called Ginger Willow (photo p. 7). Cute as a button! As for future plans for the site, we plan to create a natural extension of the existing woodland border with the addition of exciting woody and perennial species. Now, the path is

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Pin up plant—Baptisia (cont.)

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Baptisia Twilite Prairieblues™ (botanical name is *Baptisia ×variicolor* 'Twilite' PPAF) is a cross between *B. australis* (our PPA winner) and *B. sphaerocarpa* - a shrubby, tough little guy with yellow flowers. This fortuitous romance yielded quite a jaw-dropping color combination of dusky violet with a yellow keel petal. Look for them in the Hahn Horticulture Garden along the paved path near the xeriphytic border. Last year's bloom time was mid-May through the beginning of June.



Above and right: *Baptisia* 'Solar Flare' in the author's garden (photo: H. Scoggins)



Baptisia Twilite Prairieblues™ in the Hahn Horticulture Garden

Baptisia 'Solar Flare' (also marketed as Solar Flare Prairieblues™ False Indigo - yeesh) is an open-pollinated hybrid complex of *B. alba* (white-flowered), *B. tinctoria* (yellow-flowered), and *B. australis*. This is what can happen when a whole bunch of species and hybrids are planted close together (cocktails and/or bees are usually involved). A June bloomer, buttercup-yellow fades to warm apricot, then to plum - the flower spike absolutely glows in the late afternoon sunshine. Both of these hybrids are drought tolerant once established, tough as nails, hardy to USDA Zone 5, and deer resistant. Part of the drought-tolerant mechanism is a long tap root; *Baptisia* generally resents transplanting (or is at least slightly indignant).

Look for the PPA winner and these excellent hybrids at our Spring Plant Sale (April 29, 30, and May 1), along with many, many more pin-up-worthy plants!

- Holly Scoggins



Out in the Garden with Dabney *(cont.)*

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Dahlia 'Ginger Willow'
(photo: D. Blanton)

some turf at the front of the garden, as human traffic seems to want to walk there, bed or not. We liked the turf paths in the conifer garden so much that we decided to use them in this space as well. The space is fairly wide in spots so we felt having a path system would help with accessibility of interior specimens and reduce bed trampling. We've begun to fill this space but will continue to flesh it out in the coming year.

The Xeriphytic area is one of the original features of the garden (more than 20 years old), and recently suffered a cave-in of the wall. So, with the help of the dedicated students in the Public Gardens Maintenance & Management class and a trusty student worker, the wall was disassembled and rebuilt again. Next up, the disassembly and rebuilding of the other half of the wall.

As you can see, 2009 held much positive change for the garden. I know 2010 will be just as action-packed. Keep your eyes peeled for the addition of a new container patio and other garden surprises! Do check out our blog as it will be updated regularly with fun plant-y tidbits and all the new garden improvements.

The "We" referred to throughout this article includes many: our dedicated volunteer squad, students in the Public Gardens Maintenance & Management class, our regular student workers and interns, Holly Scoggins, Stephanie Huckestein, Alex Niemeira, and last but not least, Paul Chumbley. Keep up with the changes on our website (www.hort.vt.edu/hhg) and blog at <http://hahnhorticulturegarden.blogspot.com>

just over a year old and beginning to look like it has always been here! Probably the most notable area of renovation is the new addition to the conifer display. What is now the new section used to be a bed filled with a hodgepodge of bulbs, perennials, and a few woody species. We decided it made the most sense to simplify the space by enlarging the existing conifer bed instead of having two entirely distinct garden areas so close to each other. So, we ripped everything out of the hodgepodge bed, brought in A LOT of new topsoil, graded the bed to create some areas of elevation, and then filled it with some new, exciting conifers. Finally, we incorporated some turf paths through both the old and new conifer beds to make the interior plant specimens more accessible to our visitors.

Another area of revitalization was the front corner of the garden on Washington Street. Giant sunflowers and hibiscus had taken over, so we decided it was time for a little facelift. Again, destruction ensued and the front corner was left naked while a plan for the area was devised. We ultimately decided to pare down this space and replace



Expansion of the conifer display. *(photo: D.S. Blanton)*

- Dabney Blanton, Garden Horticulturist



Peggy Lee Hahn Garden Pavilion (0915)
200 Garden Lane
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061
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Blacksburg, VA 24060
Permit No. 28

Located on Washington Street on the campus of Virginia Tech

Phone: 540-231-5970 Email: vtgarden@vt.edu Web: www.hort.vt.edu/hhg

Garden Director, Garden Leaflet, and Website: Dr. Holly Scoggins; Education & Outreach Coordinator: Stephanie Huckestein; Horticulturists: Paul Chumbley, Dabney Blanton; Woody Plant Curator: Dr. Alex Niemiera.

If you'd rather not receive this publication, please contact us by phone or email - it won't hurt our feelings (well, maybe a little bit).

Notes from the Director

This was a year for both celebration and sorrow here at the Garden. Our patron and namesake Peggy Lee Hahn passed away on November 19. Peggy and her husband Marshall have had a tremendous impact on the garden, in both physical expansion from their donation and capacity for fund raising. Peggy graciously served as our garden gala Honorary Chair each year. As the pavilion was constructed and then later the meadow garden, Peggy expressed her joy and support with every visit—encouragement that I greatly appreciated. No garden could ask for better patrons than the Hahns, and I feel very fortunate in having known Peggy, if only for a few years. Stephanie Huckestein knew Peggy before I—she worked for several years as their gardener and has hand-selected her successors to make sure their home garden was always in good hands. We will miss Peggy so very much.

You've already read about the brighter side of 2009 from Stephanie and Dabney. The joke around small public gardens is you're not a "real" garden until you have tote bags. Or a symposium. Now we have both! Our next feat shall be tote bags at the symposium! Attendance was phenomenal and we look forward to another one in 2011 (this will be an every-other-year affair, for sanity's sake). The gala was indeed fantastic—so many alumni attended that have been part of the garden in one capacity or another over the past 25 years. Guest Hosts Bob Lyons and Robert McDuffie looked smashing in their tuxes. Memberships are up, Stephanie helped fill the summer weekends with wedding parties, and the gala and plant sale did well for us—all of which helped with garden improvement projects, the acquisition of a color copier (hence this newsletter's living color), and we treated our crew of hard-working volunteers to a fabulous season-end dinner. Much thanks to all of you out there for your support, both fiscal and moral. And I can never say "thank you" enough to our marvelous, hard-working, fun-loving garden staff. These are not the easiest of times. I lost my own mom in October, budget cuts continue to hammer our department and college, and it's been a cold and icy winter. But the two bluebirds perched on the street lamps in front of the Pavilion last Friday promised me that spring would come. I'm holding them to it.

- Holly Scoggins