



Hort Notes[®]

An educational newsletter with research-based information for businesses and individuals involved in selling, planning, designing, servicing, and enjoying landscapes and gardens.

2011 Plant Award Winners

Deborah C. Swanson, Extension Educator, retired - UMass/Plymouth County Extension

There are numerous plant societies, plant associations, and organizations that promote new plants through award programs based on specific criteria. Two such programs are the **Cary Award Program** and the **Theodore Klein Plant Award Program**.

The **Cary Award Program** is a program to promote outstanding plants for New England gardens. The program was named in honor of the late Ed Cary, a great plantsman and nurseryman from Shrewsbury, MA. The Cary Award is given annually to those landscape plants that have proven their performance in New England and is administered by the Tower Hill Botanical Garden in Boylston, MA. The gardens at Tower Hill showcase all of the Cary Award selections, as well as other great plants.

The 2011 Cary Award Plants are *Picea orientalis* and *Rhododendron* 'Weston's Sparkler'.

Picea orientalis

Picea orientalis, or **Oriental Spruce**, is an underused evergreen tree that has lustrous, dark green, short (1/4 to 1/2 inch long) needles and horizontal, often pendulous, branches. In appearance, it looks, to some, like a refined and more graceful Norway spruce. Oriental spruce is a slow grower and may reach 50 to 60 feet in 60 years. It has a dense, narrow pyramidal habit and is valued as a specimen plant. There is variation in the species ranging from narrow to broad forms. A number of cultivars do exist and a popular cultivar is 'Skylands'. Like the species, 'Skylands' has a pyramidal growth habit, but, unlike the species, it has bright golden needles. Another excellent cultivar is 'Gowdy'. 'Gowdy' supposedly has a narrower form than the species, is slow growing and has small green needles. There are two beautiful examples of *Picea orientalis*

'Gowdy' in Tower Hill's Secret Garden. *Picea orientalis* has no significant insect or disease problems, grows best in full sun with a well-drained soil and is more tolerant of dry soil than other spruce species. Hardy to zone 4, Oriental spruce is a great addition to the Cary Award list of excellent plants and is deserving of greater use in the landscape.

Rhododendron (Azalea) 'Weston's Sparkler'

The late Ed Mezitt, of Weston Nurseries, Hopkinton, MA, bred many *Rhododendrons*, including the Weston Hybrid Summer Azaleas. These summer flowering azaleas are hybrids of native species that are usually found along streams or wetland areas in their native habitat. Included in this mixed parentage is the native, fragrant, cold-hardy *Rhododendron viscosum* or Swamp Azalea. There are a number of cultivars in the Weston Hybrid Summer Azalea series and they are all excellent and underused. 'Weston's Sparkler' was the cultivar chosen to receive a 2011 Cary Award and it is a sure winner. This Summer Azalea blooms in early July with large, fragrant, deep pink, ruffled flowers which contrast nicely with the bluish-green leaves with their silver undersides. In the autumn, the deciduous foliage turns a rich plum-purple, adding color to the fall landscape. 'Weston's Sparkler' may grow to six feet in 10 years with a mature height of twelve feet. To keep the plants compact, it is recommended that the new growth be cut back by half in June, before the plant flowers on last year's buds. Cutting the new growth by half at that time will expose the new flowers to better advantage and still allow time to set flower buds on the regrowth for next year. This Summer Azalea may be used in a mixed shrub border, in a woodland setting, or as a foundation plant. 'Weston's Sparkler' performs best in full sun in a moisture-retentive, well-drained organic soil

Monitoring Checklist for early-May

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PLANT PHENOLOGY for April: **BETWEEN 100 - 149 GROWING DEGREE DAYS**

BEGIN BLOOM		FULL BLOOM		END BLOOM	
PLANT	PEST OR PROBLEM	GDD OR ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS	WHAT TO LOOK FOR	WHAT TO DO	
<i>Cornus florida</i> (Flowering Dogwood) <i>Cytisus scoparius</i> (Scotch Broom) <i>Malus</i> sp. (Crabapple) <i>Rhododendron carolinianum</i> (Carolina Rhododendron) <i>Spiraea prunifolia</i> (Bridalwreath Spirea)			<i>Amelanchier</i> sp. (Shadbush) <i>Cercis canadensis</i> (Redbud) <i>Halesia</i> sp. (Silverbell) <i>Malus</i> sp. (Crabapple) <i>Prunus serrulata</i>	<i>Acer platanoides</i> (Norway Maple) <i>Magnolia soulangiana</i> (Saucer Magnolia) <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i> (Grape Holly) <i>Taxus</i> sp. (Yew)	
Firs, especially balsam and Fraser	Balsam Twig Aphid <i>Mindarus abietinus</i> p. 80	GDD: 30 - 120	Becomes active very early in the spring before host plant bud-break. The adult females, known as 'stem mothers', will feed some but then produce many offspring around the time of budbreak. It is this generation that causes most of the damage by feeding with their piercing-sucking mouths on the newly emerging needles and causing them to become twisted and distorted. In addition, they produce much honeydew, causing the new needles to stick together.	Inspect now for the small pale green aphids on the new terminal ends of the shoots and treat if necessary. When weather conditions are correct, a summer rate of a horticultural oil spray can be effective as are many of the registered pyrethroid insecticides. The damage is aesthetic but can render plants unsightly. The level of damage to specimen trees may be unacceptable and Christmas trees can become un-saleable.	
Many species of viburnum	Viburnum Leaf Beetle <i>Pyrrhalta viburni</i> (Paykull) p. 224	GDD: 80 - 130 (approximately) for the new larvae to emerge from the eggs (early to mid-May)	Inspect terminal twigs of potential host plants NOW for signs of the over-wintering eggs, which appear as small gray bumps along the stems. The adult female beetle chews small pits along the stems, lays eggs in them, and then covers the pits with excrement that dries rather cement-like to form the bumps. These will appear along 6-8" of stems. When found before hatching, prune out these stems (which have already been killed from the egg-laying) and destroy. Do not just drop them to the ground; eggs may still hatch. Soon after bud-break, inspect for the presence of tiny yellow larvae feeding openly on the leaf surfaces, creating small but numerous blotches. Within weeks, these larvae are capable of consuming all of the foliage on the host plant.	When eggs are found, remove and destroy. Once foliage is mostly expanded, treat with a Spinosad product. Larvae will feed until mid-late June and then go to the soil to pupate. Starting around the third week in July, adult beetles will become active on the same plants. Adults will continue to emerge and feed until the first frost in autumn and are capable of defoliating the plant for a second time within the same growing season. Adult beetles need to be treated with a chemical insecticide, such as a pyrethroid, in order to achieve desired levels of control. Lastly, inspect new plants carefully arriving at planting sites; all too often these days, this pest is getting shipped to new areas along with the plants from nurseries where this pest has been present for a number of years.	
Part of its life on apples & crabapples; part on junipers, esp. Eastern red cedar & Rocky Mountain juniper	Cedar-apple Rust <i>Gymnosporangium juniperi-virginiana</i> (fungus) pp. 260-262	In spring orange jelly-like fruiting structures erupt from round galls on infected junipers. During wet periods, wind borne spores infect apple leaves. Reddish yellow pustules develop on infected leaves during summer. From mid-summer to autumn, spores wind-carried from apple leaves infect green shoots and needles of junipers.	Bulging red-orange-yellow spots arise on apple leaves by late spring. By mid-summer, tiny yellow-white tubes extend from the underside of infected leaves. Pea-sized to 2" diameter round, brown galls appear on susceptible juniper needles and twigs during the fall, winter and spring circa 12-20 months after infection. Orange jelly-like horns grow out of the galls in mid-spring.	During early spring (before orange structures appear) as well as in the summer, fall, and winter, remove dormant galls from juniper branches. Grow rust-resistant apple and juniper varieties. If possible, avoid growing susceptible junipers close to apples. Apply fungicides to protect susceptible high-value apples during wet springs. If desired, protect high value junipers from late summer until apple leaves drop off in autumn.	

The page numbers in the second column, after the pest, refer to the texts *Insects That Feed on Trees and Shrubs*, 2nd ed., Johnson and Lyon, and *Diseases of Trees and Shrubs*, Sinclair, Lyon and Johnson, Cornell University Press. These references provide color photos and more detailed information on the specific problems.

Bob Childs, Extension Entomologist
Dan Gillman, Extension Plant Pathologist

and benefits from a light mulch. Winter hardy to zone 4, this award winning summer flowering azalea is sure to add fragrance and color to the midsummer landscape.

The **Theodore Klein Plant Award** program is a plant award program that selects and promotes outstanding ornamental woody and perennial plants for Kentucky Landscapes. The program was named in honor of the late Theodore Klein, educator, nurseryman and renowned plantsman, of Yew Dell Nursery, Crestwood, Kentucky. The Kentucky Theodore Plant Award Committee is an independent committee that is sponsored by the University of Kentucky Nursery/Landscape Program, Yew Dell Gardens, the Kentucky Nursery and Landscape Association, and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture “Kentucky Proud” program. While some of the plants in this award program are not cold hardy for New England landscapes, there are many that are, including the 2011 Theodore Klein Plant Award winners, *Acer griseum* x *maximowiczianum* (*A. nikoense*) ‘Girard’s’ – Girard’s Maple and *Fargesia rufa* Green Panda™ - Green Panda Bamboo.

***Acer griseum* x *maximowiczianum* (*A. nikoense*)
‘Girard’s’ – Girard’s Maple**

Girard’s Maple is a hybrid of *A. griseum* and *A. maximowiczianum* and displays some of the best characteristics of both, such as increased heat tolerance, excellent fall color, winter hardiness and increased hybrid vigor. Like

its parents, Girard’s Maple has trifoliate leaves that are described by Michael Dirr as a “rich blue-green” with “spectacular orange-red fall color”. This tree has interesting copper-cinnamon flaking bark, more refined than the Paperbark Maple, and described by some as appearing “cat scratched”. Averaging 20 to 30 feet in height and 13 to 20 feet in width, Girard’s Maple is a welcome addition to landscapes looking for a beautiful specimen tree that prefers full sun, a well-drained moisture retentive soil, has no significant insect or disease problems and is hardy to zone 5.

***Fargesia rufa* Green Panda™ - Green Panda Bamboo**
Bamboos add texture and contrast to landscapes and are gaining in interest and popularity, especially the clumping or non-running bamboos. *Fargesia rufa* is native to China and is the favorite food of the Giant Panda! *Fargesia rufa* Green Panda™, or Green Panda bamboo, is a beautiful new bamboo introduction. Green Panda is an evergreen, vigorous, hardy, bamboo with a clumping root system and develops many new culms each season. Growing 6 to 8 feet tall and 8 feet in diameter when mature, it may be used as a specimen plant or several plants may be used to make an evergreen screen or hedge. It can be used as an understory plant beneath white pines and other trees. Green Panda Bamboo is site tolerant and will grow in full sun as well as shade. It prefers an organic, well-drained soil and is hardy to zone 5.

Lawn Renovation and Overseeding

UMass Extension Turf Program fact sheet

This is a synopsis of the UMass Extension fact sheet [Lawn Renovation and Overseeding](http://www.umass.edu/turf/publications/fact_sheets/agronomy.html). To access the entire fact sheet, including charts with guidelines for specific activities and recommended turfgrass mixtures, go to www.umass.edu/turf/publications/fact_sheets/agronomy.html.

A healthy established lawn is able to out-compete many weeds and withstand a certain amount of pressure from disease and insect attack as well as drought. You can help maintain a healthy lawn by proper overseeding and timing of maintenance practices such as fertilizing, liming, watering, and mowing.

Lawns sometimes deteriorate over a period of years to the point where they cannot be nurtured back to an acceptable level of quality by using standard cultural practices such as fertilizing, proper watering, etc. Perhaps the lawn is in poor condition because of unadapted grasses, extensive thatch accumulation, excessive disease and/or insect

damage, or a heavy infestation of difficult-to-control weeds. Under circumstances such as these, renovation of the lawn may be necessary. Renovation consists of eliminating whatever factors cause poor quality, followed by reseeding without completely tilling under the lawn. The process of renovating may be as basic as simply reseeding bare spots, or as involved as killing all vegetation using a non-selective herbicide such as glyphosate (Roundup™ or Kleenup™) followed by reseeding the entire lawn. Complete renovations of existing turf should be carried out if a lawn is composed of at least 50% weedy and undesirable grass species.

While it is tempting to attempt renovation in the spring to repair the lawn, renovation during late summer (August 15 - September 15) generally yields the best results. Minimal weed competition as well as cooler temperatures and ample rainfall usually follow late summer renovation, thus providing a favorable environment for new

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seedlings. **Generally, the better the conditions for seeding (soil type, seedbed, time of year) the less seed will be required!** The late summer and early fall period is the preferred period for turfgrass establishment because of the warm soils that promote rapid germination and turfgrass development, the long favorable period for growth (2 to 3 months) that is expected before the onset of stress (winter), and is a period of reduced weed competition.

The following procedure is designed for renovation of large areas of turf and/or entire lawns. If only a few small spots require reseeding, steps 2 and 3 may be omitted.

1. Correct whatever factors caused the lawn to deteriorate to the point of needing renovation. Recontour the lawn if necessary, improve drainage, eliminate excessive shade, etc. Renovation will only yield temporary improvement unless the original cause of poor quality is remedied.
2. Control all weeds present. Most broadleaf weeds can be selectively eliminated by using commonly available herbicides.
3. Mow the entire area as low as possible (1/2" - 3/4"), and remove all debris. If there is an appreciable accumulation of thatch (more than 1/3"), remove it at this time using a de-thatcher (sometimes called a power rake or vertical mower).
4. Cultivate the soil in order to assure good seed-to-soil contact. This is an important step since seed broadcast onto a lawn without proper cultivation will not survive.
5. Fertilize and lime (if necessary). Incorporate the materials into the soil at this time. Proper soil fertility and pH are essential for successful renovation.
6. Seed. Following cultivation and fertilizer application, the lawn is ready to be seeded. Seed of a species similar to that existing in the lawn should be used unless improper species selection was the original cause of poor quality.
7. Rake lightly following seeding. Use a leaf rake, a steel mat or door mat to work the seed into the soil to a depth of about 1/4". The area should then be rolled to insure good seed-to-soil contact. If the area being renovated is on a slope, application of a weed-free mulch may be necessary to prevent erosion.

POST PLANTING CARE

8. Water lightly and frequently. Watering two to three times per day may be necessary to keep the seed bed damp during the period of germination and establishment. The duration of germination and establishment will vary among grass species but will probably range from three to four weeks, with perennial ryegrass being the fastest species to establish and Kentucky bluegrass the slowest. Continue to mow the lawn on a regular basis during renovation if a partial lawn renovation is used.
9. Apply a balanced fertilizer. Apply 1/2 to 1 lb. of nitrogen per 1000 sq. feet when seedlings are about 2" high. This will enhance growth and hasten the recovery of the lawn to the quality you desire.

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