

Meristems

The Polly Hill Arboretum
West Tisbury, Massachusetts

Vol. 25, No. 1, Spring 2023



Fevertree's distinctive floral features always draw attention. See page 10 for more about this threatened native species. Photo: Floyd Griffith

Polly Hill Arboretum Celebrates 25 Years As A Public Garden

by Tim Boland, PHA Executive Director

“Who could imagine such a place?”
—Polly Hill, Arboretum founder, 1998

I think about those words often and feel a deep sense of gratitude for all of the amazing accomplishments at the PHA over the last quarter century. When you look at our foundation and our growth since that time, it is something to be immensely proud of.

So much of our growth in education, research, and plant conservation was enabled by the thoughtful planning of our board, staff, volunteers, and our incredible supporting membership.

Polly Hill's legacy has inspired us to continue growing plants from seed, displaying them in an historic landscape while documenting their growth and sharing the results. While this may seem like a simplistic process, it requires talented staff and adequate facilities to make it happen.

In this issue of *Meristems*, we highlight the infrastructure improvements throughout the years in a pictorial timeline. This illustrates the delicate balance of restoring and repurposing historic buildings, and building new structures to help us meet our mission now and into the years ahead. As you look at our past developments, a common thread is found: Maintaining the spirit of the place. It all started

with David Hamilton Smith who supported the landmark Homestead renovation in 1998, and has continued throughout subsequent years with support from our members and donors. The good work continues this year with the completion of two new houses as part of our staff housing initiative.

There are many reasons to fall in love with the PHA—the place, the plants, the mission, and our legacy of enduring quality growth over the past twenty-five years. Although our short history demonstrates a series of successful accomplishments, they are made possible by you, our supporters. We look forward to continued growth in the years ahead. This summer brings memories and a community celebration.

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The Polly Hill Arboretum

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The mission of the Polly Hill Arboretum is to perpetuate the experimental tradition in horticulture established by Polly Hill by sharing knowledge of plants and scientific procedure through educational programs, research, plant conservation, and exploration. The Arboretum seeks to preserve its meadows and woodlands, to promote an understanding of its collections, and to encourage their utilization for scholarship, observation, and the enjoyment of all.

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Polly Hill Arboretum

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Polly Hill (behind steering wheel) and VCS executive director Brendan O'Neill help celebrate the protection of the Polly Hill Arboretum, which would officially open to the public on June 28, 1998 (Photo from August 28, 1997).

Photo: Mae Deary, *Martha's Vineyard Times*

Message from the Director

There have been a lot of changes around here lately. Unfortunately, we've been short-staffed for most of the year, which has slowed down the release of this spring issue of *Meristems*. However, we're excited to introduce our new employees and student interns in this issue. Our organization relies on people power, and we're grateful to now have staff housing to help with the housing shortage on the island.

This year marks our 25th year as a public garden, and we're grateful to have you as a part of it. Many of you have been with us since the beginning, when David H. Smith started working with the Hill family to preserve Polly Hill's life work and continue the horticultural experimentation that began in 1958. As part of our reflections this year, we want to extend our thanks and gratitude to Brendan O'Neill, who played a vital role in the conservation of Polly Hill's work and many of the Vineyard's special places. Brendan retires this year from the Vineyard Conservation Society after 38 years as its executive director. Congratulations Brendan!

Expanded Mission

Over the past 25 years, we've expanded our mission of education, plant conservation, and the care and preservation of our historic buildings and grounds. However, the challenges facing the green world have only increased during this time.

Our local beech trees are suffering from Beech Leaf Disease. This disease is something homeowners should be aware of since it's devastating to beech trees. PHA is working with Bartlett Tree Experts in the hopes of finding controls.

Wildfires are devastating major forest systems across the globe. Rather than abandoning trees during their time of need, we go to meet them, collect their seeds, and grow them in our collections. We're proud to report that hundreds of conifer seedlings from Emily Ellingson's Northwest expedition last fall are thriving in our nursery, many of conservation concern.

Looking to the future, we're excited about our accomplishments in infrastructure and programs in 2023. This unique landscape started with the hopeful act of planting seeds, and we're proud to celebrate it with you. We can't wait for your visit.

Timothy M. Boland

Arboretum Milestones: 25 Years of Growth

The Arboretum has had a terrific expansion of its infrastructure since 1998, as well as thoughtful renovations of existing buildings. Here is a timeline of significant projects over the last quarter century of growth.



1998
Homestead Renovation



1998
Visitor Center



2006
Greenhouse Construction



2008
Cow Barn Renovation



2009
Littlefield Maintenance Building



2010
Far Barn Renovation



2012
Littlefield House Renovation



2016
Education and Botany Lab



2023
PHA Staff Housing

New Employees and Interns Start at PHA

Full-time employees and interns go a long way toward replenishing PHA's staff and getting our organization running at full strength.

Full-time Employees

Brittany Clark, Plant Propagator

Our new Plant Propagator, Brittany Clark, started at PHA the first week of April, in the middle of a busy sowing season. Brittany grew up in Oklahoma. She attended Oklahoma State University—Oklahoma City, where she earned an Associates Degree in Horticulture with a focus on Greenhouse Management and Ornamental Crop Production, and continued her education at Oklahoma State University—Stillwater, receiving a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources with a focus on Horticulture and Public Garden Management.



Brittany Clark, Plant Propagator

Brittany has experience at Heritage Museums and Gardens in Sandwich, Massachusetts, and as a Grower Specialist for Greenleaf Nursery in Oklahoma, where she helped manage the propagation and production of container-grown plants for wholesale. She has visited all 48 states in the continental US and brings an adventurous spirit, positive attitude, and great initiative and problem-solving skills to her role as plant propagator.

Brittany says, “the Polly Hill Arboretum is a unique and special place with an amazing team that continues the work Polly began years ago. I am so excited to be a part of the story in the role of propagator surrounded by rare and beloved plants that add a diverse array for guests to enjoy. The Island community has been so welcoming to me and I’m really happy to be here.” Welcome, Brittany!



Erin Hepfner, Visitor Experience, Outreach, and Membership Coordinator

Erin Hepfner, Visitor Experience, Outreach, and Membership Coordinator

We are thrilled to announce that Erin Hepfner has rejoined our team as the Visitor Services, Membership, and Outreach Coordinator. She takes over from Ann Quigley, who left PHA at the end of last year. Erin is well-equipped for the role, having worked at PHA in various capacities between 2013 and 2018. She started by managing the Flora of Dukes County project and later became our Visitor Services and Resource Specialist in 2014.

Tim Boland, the Executive Director, remarks, “Erin has spearheaded many institutional advancements at PHA and possesses extensive expertise in visitor services and public garden management.” Erin left the Island in 2018 to participate in the Longwood Gardens Fellows program. Prior to joining us she was the operations manager at the Great Pond Foundation in Edgartown.

Jenna Zier, Education Coordinator

We are excited to introduce Jenna Zier as our new Education Coordinator at the Arboretum. Jenna, a recent graduate from Cornell University with a Master’s in Plant Science



Jenna Zier

and a focus in Public Garden Leadership, brings a wealth of knowledge and experience as a horticulturist, arborist, and educator. Originally from Long Island, New York, Jenna has a strong passion for public gardens and connecting people with plants.

If you visit the Arboretum this season, don’t forget to extend your warm welcome to our new staff members. We are thrilled to have them on board.

Interns

We are excited to have a full roster of interns this year, with the return of the curatorial internship and the continuation of two summer horticulture internship positions.

Dylan Dubay, Curatorial Intern

Dylan joins us as a recent graduate with a B.A. in Biological Sciences from Goucher College in Baltimore, Maryland. His time working at the arboretum on his college campus cultivated his love for ecology and horticulture and led him to the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University as a research intern, exploring the effects of climate change on woody plant phenology.



Dylan Dubay, 2023 Curatorial Intern

A second internship at the Arnold Arboretum working in curation cemented his interest in living collections management. He arrived at PHA in the middle of May, excited to delve into our plant records, learn about the herbarium, and begin research on the genus *Enkianthus*. Dylan says, “I have been amazed by the diversity of the plant collections here at the PHA, and I feel honored to help steward this collection alongside wonderful staff members.”

Arboretum Welcomes New Editor

Maezy Beams, *Summer Horticultural Intern*

Maezy Beams arrived in the middle of May. Maezy hails from the Midwest and is approaching her senior year at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, majoring in Horticulture. She has worked in greenhouses and orchards, and previously interned at the Olbrich Botanical Gardens in both horticulture and visitor services. She is particularly interested in the intersection between sustainability, horticulture, and people.



Maezy Beams and Edie Banovic, *Summer Horticulture Interns*

Edie Banovic, *Summer Horticultural Intern*

Edie Banovic is a rising junior at Connecticut College, majoring in Botany and Environmental Studies and minoring in Art. She has experience working in garden centers and greenhouses and spent summers on the Appalachian Mountain Club Teen Trail Crew, volunteering more than 120 hours helping to rebuild trails across the East Coast. Edie is looking forward to sharing her passion for botany and horticulture with the public.

This past Fall, Ann Quigley departed her role as editor for our newsletter *Meristems*. Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp has now taken on this position. Jo Ellen comes with an extensive background in editing and publishing.

She's a 25-year, award-winning veteran of print journalism and owner of *Write for You! LLC*, a freelance writing and editing business. You can find her blog at hoosiergardener.com. Jo Ellen is past president of GardenComm: Garden Communicators International. She is a garden coach with a four-season commercial and residential container planting business.

We welcome Jo Ellen to our publication team!



Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp, *Meristems Editor*

In Memoriam

Since our last newsletter was published, the Arboretum has lost three people who made significant contributions to the PHA. The Arboretum extends our condolences to the families of these three remarkable people.

In November 2022, Polly Hill's son Joseph died at 87. Joe spent his youthful summers at the Arboretum and was a key negotiator when David H. Smith envisioned the continuation of Polly Hill's horticultural experimentation in what would lead to our founding in 1998. "Joe was a central figure in those negotiations and was a supportive and enthusiastic supporter as he watched us grow into what we are now as a public garden," says Tim Boland, Executive Director. Joe also helped transfer Polly's book collection, letters, and historical

photos to our remarkable archival collections now stored on the second floor of the Education and Botany Lab Building (EBL).

In December 2022, Judith (Judy) Bryant passed away at age 83. Judy resided in West Tisbury, where she spent her summers in its woods and waters. An avid gardener and accomplished fisherwoman, she brought many talents to the Island community as a healthcare worker and for the PHA, a talented, long-term volunteer greenhouse grower. "Judy loved plants, growing them. Her home garden was a remarkable collection of beautiful plants, despite the never-ending challenges of deer, drought, and soils that challenge us," Tim says. Judy's memory will stay with us as many of the plants she tended as a volunteer are now part of our permanent collections.

In February, we heard that Barbara Caseau died after a short illness. Barb, as she was known to the Arboretum community, was a long-time fixture in many volunteer roles at the PHA. She had a 50-year career as a science teacher and, in her retirement, joined our youth education program as an energetic and remarkable teacher. She also was a fixture in the Summer Family Book Series, reading nature-based books for the enjoyment of children and their parents. Barb greeted summer visitors as a volunteer at the Visitor Center and volunteered in the Herbarium. "She is an example of how you can live a long life of service by giving your time, expertise, and enthusiasm while doing the things you love most," Tim says. "With her bright eyes, vivid stories, and kindness, she will be missed."



Barbara Caseau regularly volunteered for the Summer Family Book Series.

Summer Program Review



This summer we were excited to welcome visitors to the Arboretum for our annual nature-themed lecture series, as well as a variety of in-person classes, tours, self-guided botanical experiences, and special events to celebrate our 25th Anniversary as an Arboretum and our Staff Housing Initiative. For dates, details, and our complete summer schedule, consult our summer program guide or visit our programs calendar at pollyhillarboretum.org.

We celebrated our 25th Anniversary August 5. The afternoon of music and celebration for the whole family was free and open to the public. Well over 200 attendees joined us for a wonderful summer event!

Tai Chi and Lectures

We are happy to continue to offer popular workshops like “Balance in Nature” on Tuesday mornings, a Tai Chi class led by Kanta Lipsky, as well as Greg Palermo and Margaret Curtin’s sandplain grassland walk and talk on August 17. Dan Benarcik returns this September for two highly requested Garden Chair Workshops. An assortment of gardening, art, and wellness classes are available for visitors of all interests at the Arboretum.

For our Annual Lisina and Frank W. Hoch Memorial Lecture this year, we invited plant explorer Michael Dosmann to share stories from his plant conservation collecting trips in his talk “Tales from the Plant Explorer.” Our annual David Smith Memorial Lecture con-



Arboretum Explorer backpacks are available free while the PHA Visitor Center is open.



Create your own garden chair on September 9th and 10th.



Join Executive Director Tim Boland on October 7th for an in-depth class on American Oaks.

tinued the plant conservation theme with NatureServ Director Wesley Knapp's, "The Race Against Plant Extinction." Visit our website for a full list of fascinating plant-related lectures remaining at PHA.

Weekly Nature Story Time

For children and families, we continued our weekly nature story time series in July and August, and Emily LaPierre is back all summer to lead Little Sprouts Yoga & Mindfulness on Monday mornings. We also have self-guided options for young botanists: Our Family Explorer Backpacks are available for free check-out in the Visitor Center, and the Woodland Gnome Hunt will be open all summer along the Native Tree Trail.

Native Tree Trail

Visitors of all ages enjoy the Native Tree Trail, open through October 2nd. The Native Tree Trail features ten native tree species marked along the path, and an accompanying brochure with info about each, available in both English and Portuguese. We hope you will venture

down the trails on your next visit.

We look forward to seeing you at the Arboretum this summer. Additional events and classes may be added throughout the season. To receive email updates, subscribe on our website, pollyhillarboretum.org.



Come find this Arboretum visitor on our Woodland Gnome Hunt.



Check out the Native Tree Trail (entrance by the Picnic Grove).

Heath in Miniature: Petite Ericaceous Plants of the Island

The heath family, Ericaceae, is one of the most species-rich flowering plant families in the world. In North America alone, it contains 212 species, most being shrubs and small trees. Plants in this family are ubiquitous on acidic soils in temperate areas, an apt description of Martha's Vineyard, and have associations with mycorrhizal fungi. Their showy funnel or bell-shaped flowers and sometimes edible fruits have led plants in this family to horticultural fame, such as those in the genus *Rhododendron* and *Vaccinium*, respectively.

Frequent low-growing shrubs in the heath family found on Island like highbush and lowbush blueberries and black huckleberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*, *V. angustifolium*; *Gaylussacia baccata*) dominate the understory in our dry oak forests and pine barrens. The fragrant swamp azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*) is a lovely sight along streams, swamps and seeps. There is, however, a rich layer of what botanists call ericaceous plants, some with characteristics that may surprise you.

Massachusetts' Mayflower Part of the Family

A welcome sign of a Vineyard spring is the small, delicately scented blooms of the state flower of Massachusetts, mayflower (*Epigaea repens*). Also known as trailing arbutus for its low, creeping habit, mayflowers are common in forests on the Island, and are often found along the edges of walking trails. Their white



Massachusetts' State Flower trailing arbutus (*Epigaea repens*) blooms in mid-April on the Island.



Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) creates a mat in the Manuel Correllus State Forest.

to pale-pink trumpet-shaped flowers form a clustered bouquet at the ends of stems. You can spot these plants by scent in spring, and all year due to their oval leathery evergreen leaves.

Mayflowers share an interesting medicinal compound—arbutin—in common with another low-growing heath, bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*). This compound inhibits melanin production, lightening skin color, and is also a diuretic. *Arctostaphylos* is the largest genus in the heath family, with many species endemic

to California, although bearberry has an extensive native range throughout the western and northern United States. It is mat-forming and found in dry, sandy open areas like the coastal heathlands of Wasque on Chappaquiddick Island and the imperiled sandplain grassland ecosystem. The red, rot-resistant berries persist, providing food for animals throughout the winter.

Rare Broom Crowberry

A decidedly less common ground-hugging



The rare broom crowberry (*Corema conradii*) is a Dukes County watch-listed species.



Striped pipsissewa (*Chimaphila maculata*) can be found in just a few places on the Island.

shrub existing in heathlands and open woodlands is the broom crowberry (*Corema conradii*). This rare plant grows in small, disjunct populations along the Atlantic Coastal Plain and in only a few places on the Island, the locations of which are protected due to its rarity. This evergreen shrub is dioecious—male and female flowers exist on different plants—and it has proven to be very difficult to propagate via seed. Fire appears to be critical in the successful reproduction of this species and the lack of frequent fire, along with significant deer browsing, coastal erosion and land development continues to threaten this species.

Diminutive Ericaceae Herbs

There are also perennial herbs now lumped into the Ericaceae under the subfamily Pyroloideae. Two evergreen species are quite common on the Island—striped pipsissewa (*Chimaphila maculata*), and American shinleaf (*Pyrola americana*). Both plants occur in dry coniferous and mixed deciduous forests, although American shinleaf is also prone to being found in wetter areas like bogs. The striped pipsissewa has coarsely serrated, linear leaves with striking white coloring along the midvein. Its nodding white to pink waxy flowers occur in groups of one to five maturing to globe-like seed pods. Conversely, American shinleaf's inflorescence is a raceme of six to twenty hanging flowers. Its glossy, rounded leaves have less noticeable striping along the



American shinleaf (*Pyrola americana*) grows in a bed at PHA.

leaf veins. Both species are diminutive, yet a delight to behold in the forest.

Among the strangest petite plants on Island is the ghost pipe (*Monotropa uniflora*). Commonly found in the leaf litter of dry oak forests on Island, ghost pipe is quite distinctive. The stems and flowers are an ethereal translucent white due to a lack of chlorophyll and are subsequently parasitic. Ghost pipes are mycotrophs; this herb cannot make its own food from sunlight and has a parasitic dependence on the mycorrhizal fungi that live in tandem with tree roots.

These are examples of just a few of the ericaceous charmers afoot on the Island. The next time you are walking in the woods, look up at the trees, but don't forget to look down, you never know what will catch your eye.



Ghost pipe (*Monotropa uniflora*) peeks out of leaf litter at PHA.

Fevertree: A Conservation Conundrum

by Elizabeth Thomas, PHA Research Associate



The inflorescences of fevertree (*Pinckneya bracteata*) is crowned by creamy, delicately fragrant flowers, surrounded by white to deep-pink calycophylls. Photo: Floyd Griffith

If a species must be of high conservation concern to be tracked in the first place, how do we know when one becomes rare enough to hit that threshold?

This question entered my mind last spring, inspired by one plant species in particular: *Pinckneya bracteata*, commonly referred to as fevertree. A striking plant, research botanist Dr. Piero Delprete wrote of the species: “*Pinckneya bracteata* is one of the most beautiful shrubs native of the United States, with its inflorescences crowned by creamy, delicately fragrant flowers, surrounded by white to deep-pink calycophylls, generally appearing like a scattered arrangement of elegant bouquets.”

Although its showy floral bracts superficially resemble those of poinsettia, fevertree is more closely related to buttonbush and bedstraws, fellow members of the Rubiaceae (madder) family. Native only to parts of Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, fevertree is endemic to a narrow range of the Atlantic coastal plain that stretches from extreme southeastern South Carolina to the panhandle of Florida.

This beautiful shrub or small tree can be found growing in part sun to light shade in the moist, acidic soils bordering swamps, bogs, streams, and moist woods. Ecologically, *Pinckneya* flowers are visited by ruby-throated hummingbirds and a diversity of insects; at

least one species of butterfly caterpillar has been found to feed on its foliage. During the Civil War, its inner bark was successfully used to treat malaria and other fevers, leading to its common name of fevertree.

When PHA Executive Director Tim Boland and I headed down to the Florida panhandle in April 2022, we wanted to see *Pinckneya*, and linked up with several local field botanists, the kind of guys who’ve spent decades poking around every swamp, forest, and roadside in the area. Although designated by the state as an S4 (Apparently Secure) species in Florida, they all remarked on fevertree’s increasing rarity in the region. Once common to find in the appropriate habitat, it has now become a treat to encounter. “You just don’t see it around like you used to,” our guide Floyd had muttered as we plucked some of the previous year’s remnant fruits from a small population at the side of a private dirt road. Others in the group nodded in agreement.

Although designated as *Critically Imperiled* (S1) in South Carolina (where its number of occurrences can be counted on one hand) and *Vulnerable* (S3) in Georgia, fevertree has been given an overall Global Ranking of *Apparently Secure* (G4), driven largely by Florida’s safe designation.

After sharing my concerns with Mike Jenkins, the Plant Conservation Biologist for the Florida Forest Service, he connected

me with the Florida Natural Areas Inventory, the group responsible for assigning conservation rankings to the state’s species. They agreed it should be tracked, and after a preliminary review by their staff in early 2023, they have revised fevertree’s Florida ranking from S4 to S2 (*Imperiled*).

Typically, states only track species that are S2 or below. This means that fevertree has never been tracked in Georgia, either, even though it’s been considered rare there for longer than it has been in Florida. If *Pinckneya* is declining in Florida, might it be declining throughout its range?

For such a charismatic plant—and a regional endemic to boot—there’s shockingly little research or general knowledge about fevertree, making it difficult to tell if and why it’s declining. Could it be related to climate change? Maybe, but all of its closest relatives are heat-lovers restricted to the tropics. The more likely culprit of fevertree’s decline is habitat loss due to fire suppression, development, and pine plantations.

Georgia holds the greatest expanse of fevertree’s range, and looking through the digital herbarium records of Georgia occurrences, the majority was collected from roadsides and are decades old. It’s become common practice in that state to apply herbicide to roadsides, which could be one reason the plant is so rarely seen. Maybe it’s thriving in state parks and remote natural areas? Perhaps, but many of its habitat-specific associates such as pitcher plants are commonly vouchered in non-roadside locations, so why would it be different for fevertree? I hope to shed light on some of these mysteries by executing targeted survey work in Georgia over the next two summers, supported by funds from the Georgia Botanical Society’s Marie Mellinger Field Botany Research Fund.

In his 1996 paper about *Pinckneya*, Dr. Delprete remarked “Because of its beauty and increasing scarcity in the natural environment, I strongly encourage local nurseries to implement its cultivation into private and public gardens.”

Sadly, *Pinckneya* is rarely found in the nursery trade or public gardens, but luckily, the remnant fruits Tim and I collected in Florida were viable, and we now have happy seedlings growing in the PHA greenhouse. If all goes well, they’ll make it into the Arboretum’s living collections, safeguarded and stunning, for all our visitors to enjoy.

PHA Celebrates Environment with Island Community

PHA participated in two community events this spring—the Earth Day Conservation Festival April 22, and the Climate Action Fair May 7. Earth Day brought together more than 15 Island-based conservation groups to Martha's Vineyard Museum. There they provided educational programs, talks, and resources after the Vineyard Conservation Society's annual beach clean-up. Director Tim Boland presented a talk on PHA's Dukes County Flora project and explained the scientific importance of herbarium specimens to attendees. The Climate Action Fair arose from the Island's new Climate Action Plan, *The Vineyard Way*.

The Climate Action Fair's theme Reduce, Reuse, Renew encouraged individuals and the Island community to participate in activities that promote the resiliency of the Island under the threats of climate change. Curator/Assistant Director Emily Ellingson attended the fair with more than one hundred plugs of eastern columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), grown through our MV Wildtype native plant program. These giveaway plants helped engage community members in discussing the importance of sustainable landscapes and locally adapted native plants.



Curator/Assistant Director Emily Ellingson presents at the Climate Action Fair, May 7, 2023

A Vote for Trees in West Tisbury

In April, the citizens of West Tisbury voted to approve a town warrant to plant a diverse selection of trees in the historic district. The West Tisbury Tree Advisory Committee was formed in 2021 to document the existing inventory and recommend new plantings to replace trees that have been lost or are in poor health.

The committee began a street tree inventory last summer and, at the same time, envisioned new areas for planting. A total of 16 plantings were proposed, and the planting of eight different types of trees went out to bid. If bids are accepted this summer, plants can be planted this Fall or next Spring. The committee includes PHA employees Tim Boland and Emily Ellingson, J. T. Hunt of Bartlett Tree Care, and David Fielder, Oliver Ossnoss, and Angela Luckey from West Tisbury.



Island native smooth serviceberry (*Amelanchier laevis*) is one of the trees to be planted in the historic district of West Tisbury.

THE POLLY HILL ARBORETUM

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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

The Homestead
809 State Road
West Tisbury, MA 02575

VISITOR CENTER/ VISITOR ENTRANCE

795 State Road
West Tisbury, MA 02575

ACCESSIBILITY

The Visitor Center is wheelchair accessible.

VISITOR CENTER HOURS

Open 9:30 am–4 pm daily, late May through mid-October

ARBORETUM GROUNDS HOURS

Sunrise–sunset, year-round
Please note: maintenance is often performed on Wednesdays. Check website before visiting for occasional grounds closures.

ADMISSION

\$5
Free to members & children 12 and under

FREE PARKING

mer.i.stem: *n. botany.* The growing point or area of rapidly dividing cells at the tip of a stem, root, or branch.



THE POLLY HILL ARBORETUM

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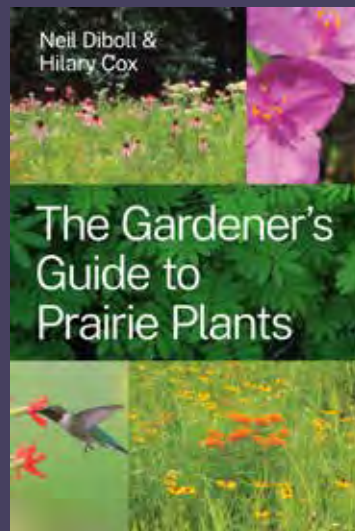
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FROM THE LIBRARY

Ecologically Informed Gardening

Three New Books
Focus on the
Art and Science
of Native Plant
Gardening

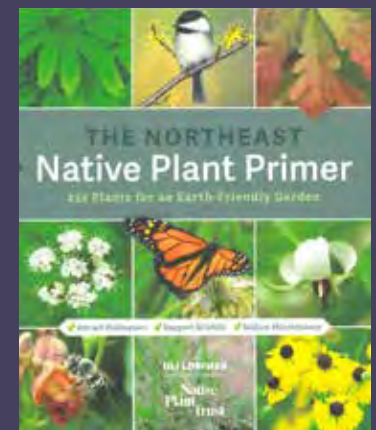
We want to share three recently published books that will help you plan and plant your native plant garden and do it with style! The first two books originate from the Midwest, where the prairie garden movement began and has become popular recently in nearly every area in the United States, where grasslands or relictual grasslands still exist.



The Gardener's Guide to Prairie Plants
by Neil Diboll and Hilary Cox
2023
This is an exhaustive and authoritative reference for those who want to dig deep into the ethos and practice of prairie plant establishment.



Prairie Up
An Introduction to Natural Garden Design
by Benjamin Vogt
2023
This book provides design strategies and thoughtful plant selection to help homeowners create diverse and beautiful plantings to support wilderness and wildlife on a home landscape scale.



The Northeast Native Plant Primer
by Uli Lorimer
2022
Native Plant Trust
Framingham, Massachusetts
Here, in this regionally-based book, you will find many plants native to the Island and learn more about their unique connections to wildlife and how to use them to draw pollinators and birds.