

**It takes a while to grasp that not all failures are self-imposed, the result of ignorance, carelessness or inexperience. It takes a while to grasp that a garden isn't a testing ground for character and to stop asking, what did I do wrong? Maybe nothing.**

Eleanor Perenyi  
Green Thoughts  
1981

## 25TH ANNIVERSARY

THAT'S RIGHT, FOLKS. WE'VE BEEN AT THIS FOR 25 YEARS NOW. Seems like yesterday that we (John and Pat) got the



notion to grow plants for a living. That notion gave birth to our first nursery on our farm in Loganville where we began with a plot the size of a carport for holding container plants.

That baby just wouldn't stop growing and ended up with acres of container stock, acres of field stock, huge cold frame houses, and, our favorite, 250 blueberry bushes for the pickin'.

One child wasn't enough, however, so in 1988 we acquired another farm in Madison County near Ila, where we immediately planted the pasture with trees and shrubs. Not completely satisfied, two years later we doubled the

*continued on page 2*

## ENJOYING THE SHADE HOSTAS, FERNS & HELLEBORES

IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY, and you've just endured the unbearable passage into your car, otherwise known as an oven, and the seemingly interminable, sweltering drive home. What's waiting for you there? A cool retreat in the shade, I hope. A view of shade-tolerant, refreshing plants that bestow tranquility to you.

Three perennial shade plants we find most enjoyable are the hostas, ferns, and hellebores, all of which combine nicely in the landscape.

**HOSTAS:** These long-lived, lushly foliated plants come in a range of colors: green, blue-green, yellow, and variegated. They grow from three inches to four feet in height and sport slender spires of small white or lavender, lily-like flowers.

Hostas prefer light shade. They perform best when receiving morning sun or light dappled by trees. Well-drained soil with organic matter and medium to high amounts of water are required for healthy plants.

Plant hostas in small masses, as a ground cover, in borders, or as specimen accents. Mix them with other shade lovers such as ferns, impatiens, astilbe, coleus, and caladiums.

When choosing hostas, first consider the leaf color. Then pay attention to the variety's mature size. Blue hostas (which may appear more green by midsummer) may provide a striking contrast with a dark green surrounding. Variegated and yellow hostas such as the *Hosta undulata* 'Albomarginata' (green with white margins), brighten a shady area. And green hostas are excellent choices for ground cover and background plantings. Their flowers tend to be the most fragrant.

You can let your hostas grow and grow into ever-enlarging clumps, or you can divide them. Either way, you can count

on your hostas to sooth your fried soul on a hot summer day.

**OUR FAVORITE HOSTAS:** Any of the blues, particularly *Hosta sieboldiana* 'Elegans.' It grows up to 3.5 feet tall and 4-6 feet wide and makes a great specimen planting. As for the greens: 'Guacamole' is avocado in color with big, round leaves. 'Minuteman' and 'Patriot' are both variegated varieties with nicely defined margins.

**FERNS:** A wonderful complement to hostas, ferns prefer full or partial shade. They love loose, rich, constantly moist (but well-drained) soil. Most like somewhat acidic soil.

Some ferns are evergreen, some deciduous. Some grow several feet in height, some several inches. Most are various shades of green, but some are golden or silvery.

Ferns soften your garden. They provide a texture unavailable with any other plant.

*continued on page 2*

### Spring/Summer

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Nature Notes.....	2
John Thinks .....	2
Kid's Kolumn .....	3
Word Search .....	3
Meditations .....	3
Helpful Hint.....	3
Beat the Heat.....	4
Did You Know? .....	4
Map to Nursery.....	4
Paperbush .....	4
Discount Policy.....	4

**25 Years**

*continued from page 1*  
size of the farm by acquiring the next-door fields and irrigation lake.

The expansion allowed us to better serve our wholesale customers with more plant variety and quantity. But we got restless when we watched the endless parade of cars going down the highway. So we decided to open our nursery to the public. In 1993 we obtained adequate road frontage on Hwy. 106, dug up an entire field of plant stock, graded a pad for container stock, installed overhead irrigation for the pad, erected an office building and retail building, and opened our retail outlet. Pat started producing *The Leaflet™* in 1994, and we continued to expand our growing through the fields. Wanting to concentrate all of our efforts at the Ila farm, we sold the Loganville farm in 2003 and consolidated all of our stock and equipment.

Today the retail outlet includes 45,000 square feet of drip-irrigated, containerized and balled and burlapped trees and shrubs; 60,000 square feet of overhead irrigated containers; and 17,640 square feet of containers in 11 shade houses with overhead irrigation. Container sizes range from 4-inch to 40 gallon. The nursery also has approximately 75 irrigated acres with 60,000 in-ground plants ranging in age from one month to 12 years, giving a full complement of harvestable plant material each year. Sizes range from 1

to 5-inch caliper (diameter of trunk six inches above the ground) for deciduous trees and 4- to 16-foot tall evergreens. The nursery boasts well over 1,000 varieties of trees, shrubs, and perennials. And, because we had to have our love close at hand, there is a blueberry pickin' area for a tasty treat in the summer.

Thanks for your patronage and support through the years. Come visit us often as things are always changing.

**Shade Perennials**

*continued from page 1*

And most varieties lend a primordial, woodland appeal to your landscape.

I adore the fern fiddleheads as they unfurl in early spring. Memories (from a Southerner) of walks around New England ponds swell, and I can almost hear the symphony of peepers that likewise heralded the long-awaited spring in the Northeast.

**OUR FAVORITE FERNS:**

**Japanese Painted Fern (*Athyrium goerigianum* 'Pictum')**: Has silvery-blue, red-stemmed fronds that add a striking cascade of light in shaded areas. It's color helps accent the color of blue hostas. This fern is deciduous, going dormant in winter.

**Autumn Fern (*Dryopteris erythrosora*)**: The striking red capsules on the underside of the fronds give this fern its unique attraction. The capsules house the reproductive spores. The new fronds are bronze-red in the spring, changing after several weeks to green. This fern makes a particularly nice specimen planting.

**HELLEBORES** (Lenten or Christmas rose): These winter/early spring-flowering perennials are most attractive between the time of the colorful fall supplied by the ferns and the emergence of the spring fern fiddleheads. They flower for a long period in north Georgia, sometimes as early as December and continuing into May, but primarily from January to April. Nodding flowers range in color from white to green and pink to deep purple.

We currently grow seedling *Hellebores orientalis*. It's difficult to assure consistency of their flower color, but we enjoy the randomness of colors in a bed of seedlings. Some new vegetatively-propagated cultivars that will provide uniformity of color are being produced. We will be selling them as they become available. This fall we will have 'Pink Lady' and 'Ivory Prince.'

**Nature Notes**

*I THINK IT'S CICERO WHO SAYS THAT WHEN you go into a great tall grove, the presence of a deity becomes known to you. . . . It's a different kind of world to grow up in when you're out in the forest with the little chipmunks and the great owls. All these things are around you as presences, representing forces and powers and magical possibilities of life that are not yours and yet are all part of life, and that opens it out to you. Then you find it echoing in yourself, because you are nature.*

JOSEPH CAMPBELL  
FROM *THE POWER OF MYTH*

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**Don't wait until July or August to prune spring-flowering evergreens like azaleas. Flower buds are already setting for next spring's bloom.**

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**John Thinks**

...sometimes

☛ **Lawn mowers are a hazard to the health of your trees and shrubs**, if you don't mow properly. Be sure that you do not nick the bark since this will provide an entry place for harmful insects and will stress the plant, making it more susceptible to diseases.

☛ **To prevent injuries to your plants**, design your landscape with a small lawn and large, mulched beds. Incorporate all of your trees and shrubs into the mulched beds, using islands or peninsulas to catch outlying plants. Your mower won't have a chance to hit your plants.

☛ **Round all of the edges of your beds** (serpentine-like) so your mowing can be continuous and will not require sharp turns or hand trimming.

☛ **Be sure that you keep your mower blades sharp throughout the season and do not mow too low.** The health of your grass will depend upon clean cutting and grass left tall enough for shading of the roots during our hot, dry summer days.

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# Kid's <sup>of all ages</sup> Kolumn

I'M CONCENTRATING MORE ON SUMMER than spring this go-round. In deference to it, I query: What are Dog Days anyway? The hottest day of the year—listed as July 3–15 on the traditional holiday/feast/celebration calendars. The term comes from ancient times when the hottest period of the year was at the same time that Sirius, the Dog Star, rose just before the sun. Now we all know that August boasts the hottest spells for us. What's wrong here? Well, the earth's rotational axis has changed over the years since ancient times (called precession), altering the time of our equinoxes (when the sun is directly over the equator) and the time of year that it is hot and cold in the northern hemisphere (where we live).

So when the sun hangs in the hazy, motionless afternoon sky, day after day, after day, and only a cold, icy drink; wet towels; air conditioner; breezy fans; or whatever, are your only relief, celebrate Sirius—and don't take life too seriously.

This Word Search is about summer. The words may be backwards, forwards, diagonal, vertical, or horizontal. Double words are run together. Answers are revealed upside down under the word search box. I rate this search easy on the Kid's Kolumn sKale (simple, easy, moderate, hard, superhard).

Kid's Kolumn Kicks

- 1) You fish in me and maybe dip in me. I'm a small body of water.
- 2) I come from a plant. You probably drink me over ice, maybe with sugar, lemon, and mint.
- 3) I'll help your plants stay cool during the hot months if you use me around them.
- 4) I make the best homemade ice cream. Georgia is my state, although Alabama wants to be.
- 5) I chirp and chirp and hop high through the grass.
- 6) I wink at you in the warm night air and light up the jar you may catch me in. I have two names. Find both.
- 7) I am the pestiest of imported vines, growing rapidly and covering poles, trees, and buildings. Occasionally I grab a person or two.
- 8) We serenade you in the summer with our deep-throated croakings from early evening until very early morning.
- 9) We grow on vines. Some of our insides are red, some orange, some green. Your chin drips with our juices, and you spit our seeds.
- 10) I'm the month of our country's birthday.
- 11) I'm a sweet-smelling vine with the sweetest tasting flowers for you to suck on. The first part of my name is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 12) I make delicious pies, pancakes, and muffins. My bushes are loaded with me from June through August.
- 13) If you're lucky and go outside late at night, you'll hear me calling from the woodland's edge. I'm a nocturnal bird with a name like my song.
- 14) Orange and yellow are my old-fashioned colors, but there are hundreds of colors of me now. My flowers last for one day and bloom in the summer (although I have some uppity cousins who now bloom well into the fall).
- 15) I am the only bird in the world that can fly backwards. You see me furiously flitting around colored flowers.



## Meditations

... the pine seems to me the best interpreter of winds.

John Muir (1838–1914)  
naturalist, writer, conservationist



1) pond 2) tea 3) mulch 4) peach  
5) cricket 6) firefly, lightningbug 7) kudzu 8) frogs  
(9) melons 10) July 11) honey 12) blueberry 13) whip-poor-will  
(14) daylily 15) hummingbird

### Helpful Hint

You can use the nasty black stuff you find when you clean your gutters as mulch, just as you would leaf mold or aged grass clippings. Whatever type of mulch you use, don't hug it up to the trunk of the plant. Leave some space to prevent insect and disease problems.

### Open to the Public for Retail Sales

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In the relatively near future, we will no longer snail mail *The Leaflet*™. Rather, it will be available online at our Web site, at the nursery, and at certain eateries (as in the past). If you are on our mailing list, please stop at the nursery and share your e-mail address with us so we can notify you of new issues appearing online. If you just can't get to the nursery, drop us a card or e-mail us at [info@pinebushnursery.com](mailto:info@pinebushnursery.com). We will not share your e-mail address with anyone else.

Notice



## Beat the Heat

OUR SUMMER DAYS ARE LONG AND HOT. We know it, and our plants know it. By August, many of them look strained—drained of vitality by the parching heat, as well as by weeds, insects, and lack of grooming. **Fight**

**back!** There are many ways to help your plants to renewed vigor through the withering weather. They'll be happier and prettier for you.

**WATERING:** There is something of an art here, but anyone can learn it. The basic premise when watering your trees and shrubs is to be sure that the deep roots are receiving enough water. Do not water lightly often. Rather, water every 4–5 days thoroughly. About one inch of water per week should be sufficient if there has been no significant rainfall. New plantings usually require more frequent watering than established plants, but avoid over-watering!

**WEEDING:** Weeds in your plant beds take their food and water from the same soil that your valued trees, shrubs, and perennials do. If you keep your beds weed free, your other plants will get more nutrients and have a better chance for survival as well as faster growth.

**MULCHING:** We never tire of reminding folks of the importance of mulching. Mulch helps the soil retain moisture. It also helps in weed control. So if you mulch your beds and around any singularly planted specimens, you will reduce the amount of watering you will have to do. You also will reduce your number of backbreaking weed pulls.

## Did You Know?

You can pick your own blueberries at Pinebush. There are several varieties of Rabbiteye, so berries are available from about mid-June through mid-August.

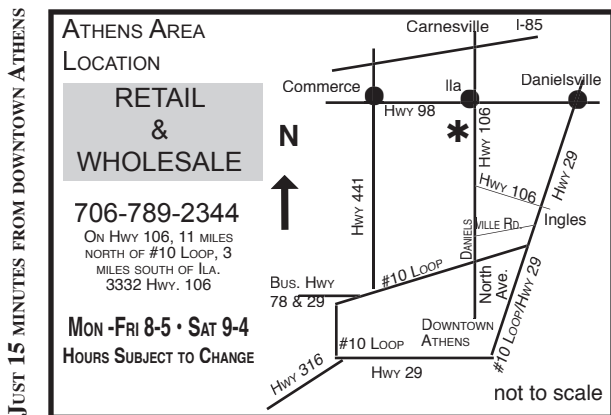
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Detailed directions are on our Web site.

## Edgeworthia papyrifera

There's a plant making a hit these days. *Edgeworthia papyrifera* is being touted and sought. It's commonly named Paperbush, presumably due to its use for paper (and medicine) in China, its native habitat. In my estimation, it's greatest attribute is its flowers. The silky-haired, cream and yellow inflorescences (groups of bell-shaped flowers) appear in this area generally from February into April before the leaves emerge. They have a nice fragrance, somewhat akin to a toned-down winter daphne or toned-down gardenia—it's that same type of sweetness, just not as strong. The leaves of the bush are somewhat long, at 3 to 5.5 inches, and they are dull dark green to blue-green on the top. The deciduous (loses its leaves in winter) shrub grows 3–4 feet tall and requires moist, highly organic soil and shade (think forest and streamside). It will best survive an unusually cold winter if in a protected place. We have Paperbush at Pinebush.

The trees indeed have hearts...  
Henry David Thoreau

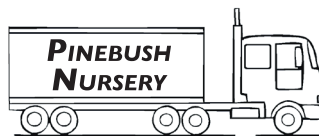
## Weekly Specials

Visit the nursery throughout the spring for our trees and shrubs of the week, which will be 20% off retail. Visit our Web site for the weekly listing.



**Pinebush  
Online**

Specials not appearing anywhere else, tips, plant pictures and descriptions, services available, some inspiration, and more... changes regularly.



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