

Connecticut College

Digital Commons @ Connecticut College

Annual Reports

Connecticut College Arboretum

1989

Arboretum Annual Report, 1989

Connecticut College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/arbreports>

This Annual Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Connecticut College Arboretum at Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. It has been accepted for inclusion in Annual Reports by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. For more information, please contact bpancier@conncoll.edu.

The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author.



Connecticut College Arboretum

New London, Connecticut

ANNUAL REPORT 1989

PLANT COLLECTIONS

One way the Connecticut College Arboretum is able to renovate and improve its 20-acre Woody Plant Collections is by creating memorial gardens. The Daniel Klagsbrun ('86) Memorial Garden was established during 1989 in the Legume Collection directly behind the Outdoor Theater, near Buck Lodge. The conceptual design by landscape architect Sara Bradford ('63) highlights a natural assemblage of large boulders, and includes a rustic stone bench between a patch of Hay-scented Fern and an existing stone wall. Planning, clearing, and initial planting and labeling were all accomplished this year. Next spring additional members of the Pea Family such as Redbud, False Indigo, and Honeylocust will be added.

Connecticut College President Claire Gaudiani and various friends from the campus and the community helped celebrate the public opening of the Lillian Dauby Gries Memorial Native Conifer Collection during Alumni Reunion Weekend, June 2, 1989. Participants' spirits were only slightly dampened by a fast-moving thunderstorm which abruptly ended the outdoor portion of the program.

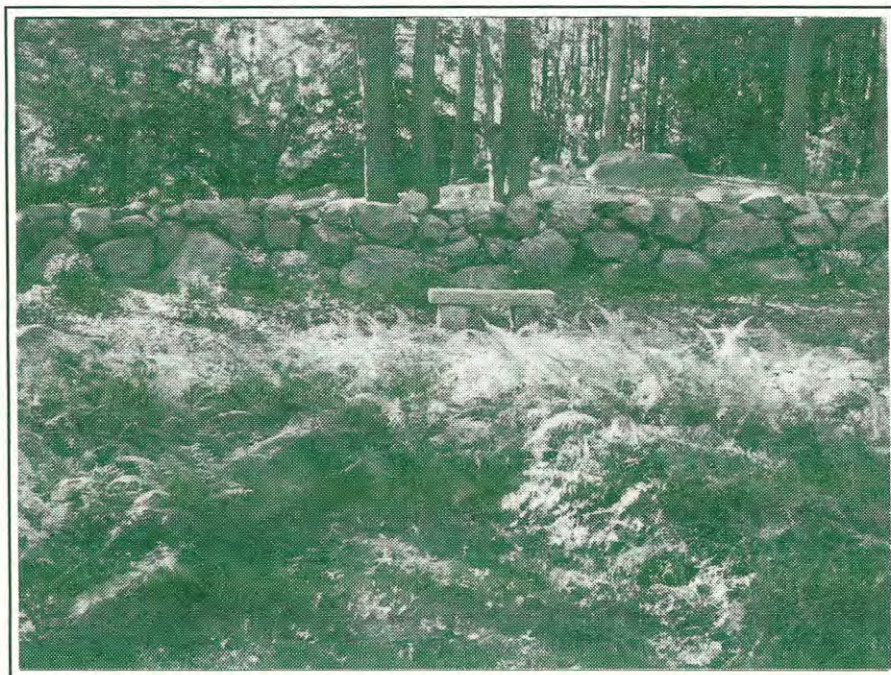
Refreshments and shelter were provided in rustic Buck Lodge following the ceremony. The Gries family is in the process of establishing a maintenance endowment for the three-acre site. The creation of this Collection by the Gries family and the renovation of the Legume Collection with the help of Suzanne Klagsbrun of New York City are excellent examples of how generous friends can help in the Arboretum's efforts to revitalize our 60-year old

Woody Plant Collections.

During 1989 the following new plants were introduced into the Woody Plant Collections: White Rhodora, *Rhododendron canadense* 'Albaflorum'; Windbeam Rhododendron, *Rhododendron* 'Windbeam'; Richard Jaynes Mountain Laurel, *Kalmia latifolia* 'Richard Jaynes'; Silver Dollar Mountain Laurel, *Kalmia latifolia* 'Silver Dollar'; White Sheep Laurel, *Kalmia angustifolia* 'Alba'; Dwarf Shadblow, *Amelanchier stolonifera*. In addition, many other trees and shrubs already represented in the Collections were used in various landscape projects. According to our records, by December 1989 the Native Woody Plant Collection contained 340 different taxa (taxonomically distinct types) of trees, shrubs and vines.

Virtually all Arboretum plant collection records previously stored on file cards and in notebooks have been transferred to BG-BASE, the computerized database created by Kerry Walter of the Center for Plant Conservation, Jamaica Plain, Mas-

Ferns and young rhododendrons surround a stone bench in the newly established Daniel Klagsbrun Memorial Garden between Buck Lodge and the rear of the Outdoor Theater. September 1989.



sachusetts. Our database now contains detailed information on 950 individual plant specimens located within the 20-acre Collection. Progress was also made on installing a local area network so that the plant and membership records in BG-BASE will be available at a number of computer terminals throughout New London Hall. During the next few years we will again inventory the entire collection, a project last undertaken ten years ago. Hundreds more individual specimens will be added to our growing computerized data set. Also planned is a complete inventory of the Caroline Black Garden and the trees of the Connecticut College campus.

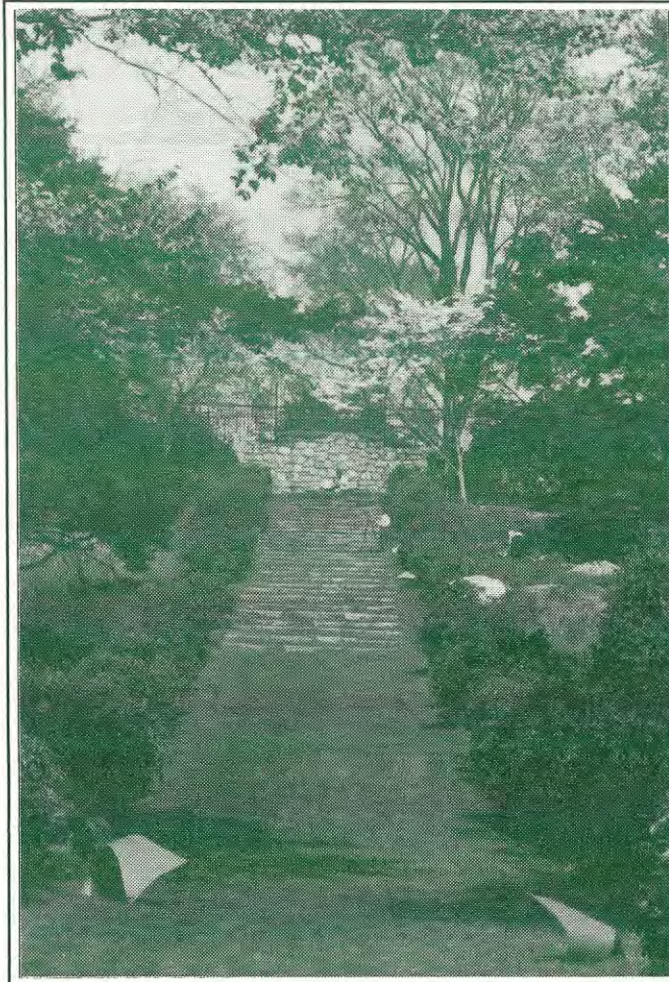
A new use for the Woody Plant Collection was found this year when students in Professor David Smalley's Three Dimensional Design course built temporary sculptures. The three works of art were assignments for the Environmental Design: Site Specific Sculpture section of the course, and were located on the Laurel Walk and in the

Daniel Klagsbrun Memorial Garden during May.

The campus plantings, while not officially a part of the Arboretum, contain an enormous number of in-

teresting and unusual trees and shrubs that can justifiably be called an arboretum quality collection. The Arboretum and Botany Department have a long history of coopera-

tion with the Grounds Department of Physical Plant, and have provided both plants and landscaping advice over the years. During 1989 the following trees, some grown to landscape size in the Arboretum nursery, were planted on campus: Alder-leaved Birch, *Betula alnoides*; Bristlecone Pine, *Pinus aristata*; Chinese or Lace-bark Elm, *Ulmus parviflora*; Chinese Striped-bark Maple, *Acer davidii*; Fragrant Snowbell, *Styrax obassia*; Japanese Hemlock, *Tsuga diversifolia*; Japanese Stewartia, *Stewartia pseudocamillia*; Korean Evodia, *Evodia danielii*; Hupeh Evodia, *Evodia hupehensis*; Persian Parrotia, *Parrotia persica*; Red Oak, *Quercus rubra*; Turkish Hazel, *Corylus colurna*; Weeping Blue Atlas Cedar, *Cedrus atlantica* 'Glauca'; Weeping Copper Beech, *Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea Pendula'.



Flowering Dogwood blooms along the Laurel Walk in May 1989. Three artists are painting along the Walk; the wave-like structures in the foreground are temporary environmental sculptures by Diane Stratton ('91), placed for an art class.

PROGRAMS

At the urging of Arboretum members and friends, we embarked on a more ambitious educational program during 1989 which included numerous guided walks and tours, lectures, workshops, and a horticultural symposium. The year's workshop subjects were "Evergreen

Identification," "Trees in Winter," "Pruning Shrubs and Small Trees," and "Tropical Houseplant Propagation." Our lecture series topics ranged from "The Face of Connecticut - Interpreting the Land" to "The American Elm and Dutch Elm Disease." Expert guides led tours of the Wildflower Gardens, Mamacoke Island, the Bolleswood, the Caroline

Black Garden, the Campus Tree Collection as well as a regional Seaside Gardens jaunt. Spring migratory birds and fall foliage were the subjects of two special walks.

The November symposium, "Perennial Pleasures," featuring noted horticulturists Nicolas Ekstrom, Pierre Benerup, Frederick McGourty and Mary Ann Mc-

Gourty, was certainly the most popular event of the year. Many of the 150 participants contacted the Arboretum with their thanks and the hope that we will continue this kind of programing in the future.

The Arboretum will present a strong community educational program for spring and summer 1990 with special emphasis on horticulture, gardening and natural history. Monthly Walks both on College property and at interesting natural

areas elsewhere, a series of lectures on garden history, workshops about tree warden duties, fern propagation and gardening from seed, and a family storytelling session for Earth Day are just some of the scheduled events. Tours to the famous gardens at Wave Hill and the Cloisters in New York City and to outstanding nurseries in Connecticut are also planned. We will once again co-sponsor a State-wide inland wetlands conference at the College in June.

lands research.

In conjunction with the forest prescribed burn research on the Matthies Tract, the role of fire on Oak seedling reproduction was evaluated this year. Preliminary data indicates that fire is favoring the successful germination and growth of Oak trees. One important factor appears to be that acorns in unburned places must struggle with heavy layers of leaves, while bare soil on burned sites provides improved conditions for establishment.

The new Lillian Dauby Gries Memorial Conifer Collection is already providing our staff with valuable data on the growth rates and

RESEARCH

Perhaps the most important change facing Connecticut's landscape is the introduction and spread of the Hemlock Wooly Adelgid. This small insect can multiply very quickly and has the potential of virtually eliminating Hemlock both as a planted specimen and as a major component of our forests. This summer John A. Fischer ('91), under the direction of Arboretum Research Director William Niering and Arboretum Director Emeritus Richard Goodwin, sampled trees in permanent plots both in the Bolleswood Natural Area and at The Nature Conservancy's Burnham Brook Preserve in East Haddam. The purpose of this work is to accurately characterize the forest composition before, during and after the possible elimination of Hemlock from these sites. Adelgid infestations were worst on the driest, rocky ledge habitats; however, no mortality was recorded during 1989. Students will regularly resurvey these plots to determine trends of Hemlock decline and the concomitant increase of other species.

Permanent microrelief transects, established on the Mamacoke and Cottrell (Mystic, Connecticut) tidal

marshes in 1973, were resurveyed this year as part of a long term study of vegetation change. Preliminary indications are that while most of



Connecticut College President Claire Gaudiani addresses guests at the public dedication of the Lillian Dauby Gries Memorial Native Conifer Collection on June 2, 1989.

Mamacoke Marsh has maintained its elevation relative to the slowly rising sea level, much of Cottrell has not. Arboretum funding allowed Richard Munson ('89) to work as a research assistant with Drs. Warren and Niering on this important wet-

landscaping value of a wide variety of native woody plants. Arboretum Horticulturist Jackie Haines and Summer Fellow Kathy Doak inventoried, measured, mapped and checked labeling on hundreds of plants in this new collection and

added this information to our computerized plant collection database.

Zoology Professor Robert Askins, with the help of Wendy Dreyer and Margaret Philbrick, has continued the annual breeding bird survey in the Arboretum's Bolleswood Natural Area begun in the 1950s. This summer Dr. Askins also supervised Daniel A. Kluza ('91) in a pilot study of Red-eyed Vireo reproductive success in the Arboretum. Arboretum wintering bird population information from the Bolleswood and the Thames River was once again contributed to the Audubon Christmas Census by Robert Askins and Wendy Dreyer.

The Arboretum and The Nature Conservancy, Connecticut Chapter, are involved in discussions concerning a research role for Connecticut College biologists with the Conservancy's Burnham Brook Preserve. Still in the draft stage at year's end, the agreement calls for Connecticut College to have the use of the 530-acre East Haddam preserve as a faculty and student "satellite" research site. In return, the College would provide the Conservancy with management and research advice and coordination of ongoing research projects at Burnham Brook.

VOLUNTEERS

In June, Director Dreyer called together an ad-hoc committee to assist with programming and planning for the Arboretum. Among other results, the discussions led to increased horticultural programming by the Arboretum to better serve the needs of southeastern Connecticut. Thanks go to Emily Wharton, Nancy Olmstead, Judy Nickerson, Brae Rafferty, David Burnett, Margaret Philbrick, Sally Taylor and

Bill Niering for their time and ideas.

November's "Perennial Pleasures" Symposium was a great success in no small part due to the volunteer efforts of Sally Taylor, Jackie Haines, Judy Nickerson, Wendy Dreyer, Emily Wharton, Susan Olmstead, and Sara Jennings ('91). Jackie Haines, Glenn Dreyer, Sally Taylor, Craig Vine, Sheila Wertheimer, Bill Niering, David Blockstein, Robert Askins, and Richard Goodwin all volunteered as instructors and/or guides for this year's programs. Many thanks to Betty Pinson, Joyce Paire and Judy Nickerson, who volunteered on very short notice to decorate President Gaudiani's house for the New London Library's benefit Christmas Decoration Tour of Historic Houses. Thanks also go to Don McElreath of New London, who volunteered twice weekly during the fall and winter to help with Arboretum maintenance.

VISITORS

In May, the Arboretum hosted a delegation of eight scientists working for Hydro-Quebec, the provincial electric power utility based in Montreal. These individuals were working on recommendations for more environmentally sound right-of-way vegetation management in Quebec, and made a special visit to tour the Arboretum Right-of-Way Demonstration Area and consult with Dr. Niering and Mr. Dreyer. The Demonstration Area, now entering its fourth decade, is a section of Northeast Utilities electric transmission right-of-way where vegetation is managed using sound ecological principles involving the selective use of herbicides.

Sixty botanists gathered at Connecticut College in mid-June for the

annual Northeast Section, Botanical Society of America Field Meeting. Sponsored by the Arboretum, participants spent four days on field trips and four evenings attending lectures about our State's flora and geology.

In October 1990 The Arboretum will host the Northeast Regional Meeting of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta. Participants will include staff members of public gardens from New Jersey, New York, New England and eastern Canada. The two days of meetings will also be open to Arboretum members.

GIFTS/MEMBERSHIP

This year we received the largest grant in Arboretum history, \$49,000, from the Norcross Wildlife Foundation for the purpose of building a garage and storage building in the Plant Collection area. Located off Gallows Lane near the driveway to Buck Lodge, it will be a two story, log cabin style structure of white pine. All Arboretum equipment and vehicles will be housed on ground level; the second floor will be used as much needed storage space. Having our equipment located within the area where it is most used will greatly increase the efficiency of our maintenance operation. The rustic cabin style is most suited to the naturalistic landscape of the Arboretum and the simplicity of Buck Lodge, a two story fieldstone structure built in 1938.

The Arboretum also received a \$10,000 gift from an anonymous foundation which will be used to (1) increase Arboretum membership, (2) enhance the quality and number of educational programs, and (3) develop greater public awareness of the Arboretum, its programs and its

value to the College and greater community.

Neil and Sylvia Van Sloun, owners of Sylvan Nursery in South Westport, Massachusetts, have made a substantial donation to establish an endowment fund for the Arboretum in honor of Ann (Andy) Crocker Wheeler ('34). Andy is a member of the Connecticut College Alumni Association Board, a great supporter of the Arboretum and a valued employee at Sylvan. Many thanks to the Van Slouns and to Andy.

Gifts totaling \$3,000 were made to the Arboretum in memory of the late Dr. Roy Taylor. At the request of Sally Taylor, the gifts will be used exclusively for the upkeep and improvement of the Caroline Black Garden. Gifts were also received in memory of Marcella Putnam of Waterford, Connecticut. The Arboretum was one of five environmental organizations to receive \$1,000 from New London Federal

Savings and Loan this year.

In 1988, Judy Steadman established the Ronald Francis Steadman Arboretum Award in memory of her late husband. Recipients are Connecticut College students, chosen by the Arboretum Director, who have made significant contributions to the Arboretum and its program. In 1989 the award was presented to Julie Burt ('89), a Human Ecology major.

By the end of 1989 Arboretum membership totalled 340 individuals and 40 organizations, primarily Garden Clubs. This represents a 19 percent increase in individual members over last year. Financial support from Arboretum members through dues and additional gifts provides for many of the special projects described in this report.

The following individuals donated at the level of Supporting Member (\$100) or above during 1989: Oakes and Louise Ames, Richard Ames, Harold Arkava,

Holly Bannister, Sarah Becker, Anne Bell, Mrs. Russell Brown, James Catterton, Wendy Coleman, Kincaid Connell, Didi Coyle, Scott Dawley, Elizabeth Dodge, Ellen Ebersole, Laura Eisener, Marshall Fine, Katherine Finney, Linda Fosseen, Claire Gaudiani and David Burnett, Richard and Esther Goodwin, Jonathan Graham, David Gries, Lincoln Gries, Margaret Hazlewood, Mrs. C.B. Jackson, Barbara Kashanski, Chip Meehan, Sally Meyers, Mr. and Mrs. Terry Paine, Mrs. George Parsons, Priscilla Pasco, Betty Pinson, Lynn Homeier Rauch, Henry Resnikoff and Daphne Nielsen, Lois and Saul Ricklin, Lynn and David Silfen, Eunice and John Sutphen, Sally Taylor, John Winter, Mrs. R.W. Woolworth, and Lucinda Young.

To those listed above and to all Arboretum members and donors, we extend our sincere gratitude for your continuing support.

STAFF

Every summer the Arboretum hires three students to assist our full-time staff with the increased maintenance warm weather demands. This year Katherine H. Doak ('90) of Durham, Connecticut was our Arboretum Fellow, helping with a variety of maintenance and administrative tasks. Kathy learned to accession plant records using BG-BASE and assisted with a number of research projects. The students helping with maintenance this summer were Gary F. Cutler ('90) of West Chester, Pennsylvania, and Andrew W. Donaldson ('90) of New Orleans. Each did an outstanding job and hopefully gained valuable experience during their short stay with us.



Arboretum Research Director and Katharine Blunt Professor of Botany William A. Niering introduces students to the azaleas in the Nancy Moss Fine Native Azalea Garden. October 1989.

Botany Professor Sally L. Taylor, long an important contributor to the Arboretum program, will retire

from teaching at the end of the Spring 1990 semester. In addition to her duties in teaching Introductory

Biology and Botany, Sally also teaches Plants and Civilization and Ornamental Plants and is Director of the Human Ecology Program, an interdisciplinary major at Connecticut College. Sally promises that, leaving time out for world travel and to help the Connecticut Forest and Park Association, she will devote much of her time to the Arboretum. We thank her for her past generosity and look forward to her efforts with us in the future.

Continuing a well deserved trend begun last year, Arboretum Research Director William Niering received kudos from three major Connecticut environmental organizations. The Connecticut Fund for the Environment presented Bill with The Connecticut Environmental Award in recognition of his diligent work to improve environmental quality. The Connecticut Sea Grant College Program recognized him for outstanding contributions to public awareness of the coastal and marine environment. At the same ceremony the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection awarded him a certificate in recognition of his achievements in marine environmental education.

Arboretum Director Glenn Dreyer's book, *Connecticut's Notable Trees*, was published in July by the Connecticut Botanical Society. Glenn was interviewed about the book on Connecticut Public Radio and articles about the book have appeared in a number of state and regional publications. The initial printing of 2,500 copies was nearly gone by the end of the year. Susan Olmstead was responsible for the graphic design and desktop publishing for the book.

Jacklyn Haines, Arboretum Assistant Horticulturist, received a supervisory level Custom Grounds

and Turf Pesticide Applicator's License. In addition to ensuring that license holders are well versed in pesticide safety and emergency procedures, it also allows supervision of others in applying pesticides and the purchase of restricted use chemicals. Although the Arboretum uses very few pesticides in its maintenance of the grounds and greenhouses, we strongly support such training for anyone, including homeowners, who use agricultural chemicals.

Susan Olmstead of Old Lyme, Connecticut, has joined the Arboretum on a part-time basis as Information Coordinator. Sue is an expert with desktop publishing and is in charge of the graphic style of annual reports, Arboretum bulletins, program brochures, and other printed matter. She also writes the text for educational program brochures and press releases.

PUBLICATIONS

Four Arboretum Bulletins, all on wetlands topics, were reprinted this year: No. 12, *Connecticut's Coastal Marshes, A Vanishing Resource* (1961); No. 20, *Tidal Marsh Invertebrates of Connecticut* (1974); No. 22, *Our Dynamic Tidal Marshes, Vegetation Changes as Revealed by Peat Analysis* (1977); No. 23, *Plants and Animals of the Estuary* (1978). The continued demand for these publications indicates their information is still timely.

Proposed Bulletin No. 31, *Birds of the Connecticut College Arboretum*, by Dr. Robert Askins, has been completed. Copies will be sent to Arboretum members in early spring 1990. Discussions are underway with authors for bulletins on the coastal geology of southern New

England and on the identification and natural history of dragonflies. The Arboretum is also sponsoring the reprinting of Warren Kenfield's classic book on naturalistic landscaping, *The Wild Gardener in the Wild Landscape*.

The following Arboretum-related publications appeared in 1989; copies may be obtained through the Arboretum Office:

- Courreges, V.C. and P.E. Fell. Sexual and Asexual Reproduction by the Freshwater Sponge *Anheteromeyenia ryderi*, with Emphasis on Spermatogenic Activity. *Transactions of the American Microscopical Society*, 108(2):127-138

- Dreyer, Glenn D. *Connecticut's Notable Trees*. Connecticut Botanical Society. 100 pps. \$6.25

- Niering, W.A., G.D. Dreyer. Effects of Prescribed Burning on *Andropogon scoparius* in Postagricultural Grasslands in Connecticut. *American Midland Naturalist*. 122(1): 88-102.

- Niering, W.A. Wetland Vegetation Development. Chapter 9 in: S.K. Majumdar et al., eds. *Wetlands Ecology and Conservation: Emphasis in Pennsylvania*. The Pennsylvania Academy of Science.

- Taylor, Sally. The Connecticut College Arboretum. in: C.E. Sawyers, ed. *Gardening with Wildflowers and Native Plants*. Plants and Garden, Brooklyn Botanic Garden Record 45(1). Handbook #119.

