

NORTHWEST HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

GARDENnotes
FALL 2023



Hydrangea serrata 'Blue Billow'
Image by Richie Steffen



FADED GLORY

*Text and Images by Richie Steffen
(unless otherwise noted)*

Hydrangea macrophylla 'Glowing Embers'



Hydrangea serrata 'Blue Billow' – courtesy Nancy Heckler

I have long admired the faded flowers of hydrangeas in the autumn garden. As I was learning my horticultural craft in high school and later at the University of Maryland in the 1980s, the East Coast was experiencing the popularity of the German-born New Perennial Movement that embraced prairie perennials and drifts of ornamental grasses. I always thought the softened greens and pinks and rich smoky tones of faded hydrangea blooms would look great against the waning flowers and developing seedheads in these wild, naturalistic garden compositions. The increased use of the oakleaf hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*, in these plantings only solidified my thoughts.

I did not think much about the autumnal differences of hydrangea cultivars until I moved to Seattle. As I visited gardens and learned more about plants in the Pacific Northwest, *Hydrangea 'Preziosa'* soon captured my attention, and I longed to have a garden with enough space to grow it. This classic cultivar puts on a specular show from early summer until frost. The small, rounded mopheads are produced in abundance. Starting out cream-colored, the flowers deepen to lavender pink then purple and finally



Hydrangea serrata 'MAKD' TINY TUFF STUFF™



Hydrangea macrophylla
'Merritt's Beauty'



Hydrangea macrophylla 'Brunette' – courtesy Nancy Heckler



Hydrangea macrophylla 'Hortmagicri' EVERLASTING®
or MAGICAL® CRIMSON

mature to a vibrant deep burgundy red with grape purple highlights. These colors are complimented by the red-blushed foliage. The flowers do not all develop at the same time so there is often a mix of colors on a single plant for much of the season.

Now that I have a large garden space, the procurement of hydrangeas has been nonstop and broad in focus. The burgeoning collection currently stands at about 125 species and cultivars; however, if I wish to grow other plants as well (which I do!), I cannot purchase and grow every hydrangea available of which there are an overabundance. Anyone who has been to a nursery in the last decade or more has witnessed the flood of new hydrangea cultivars into the

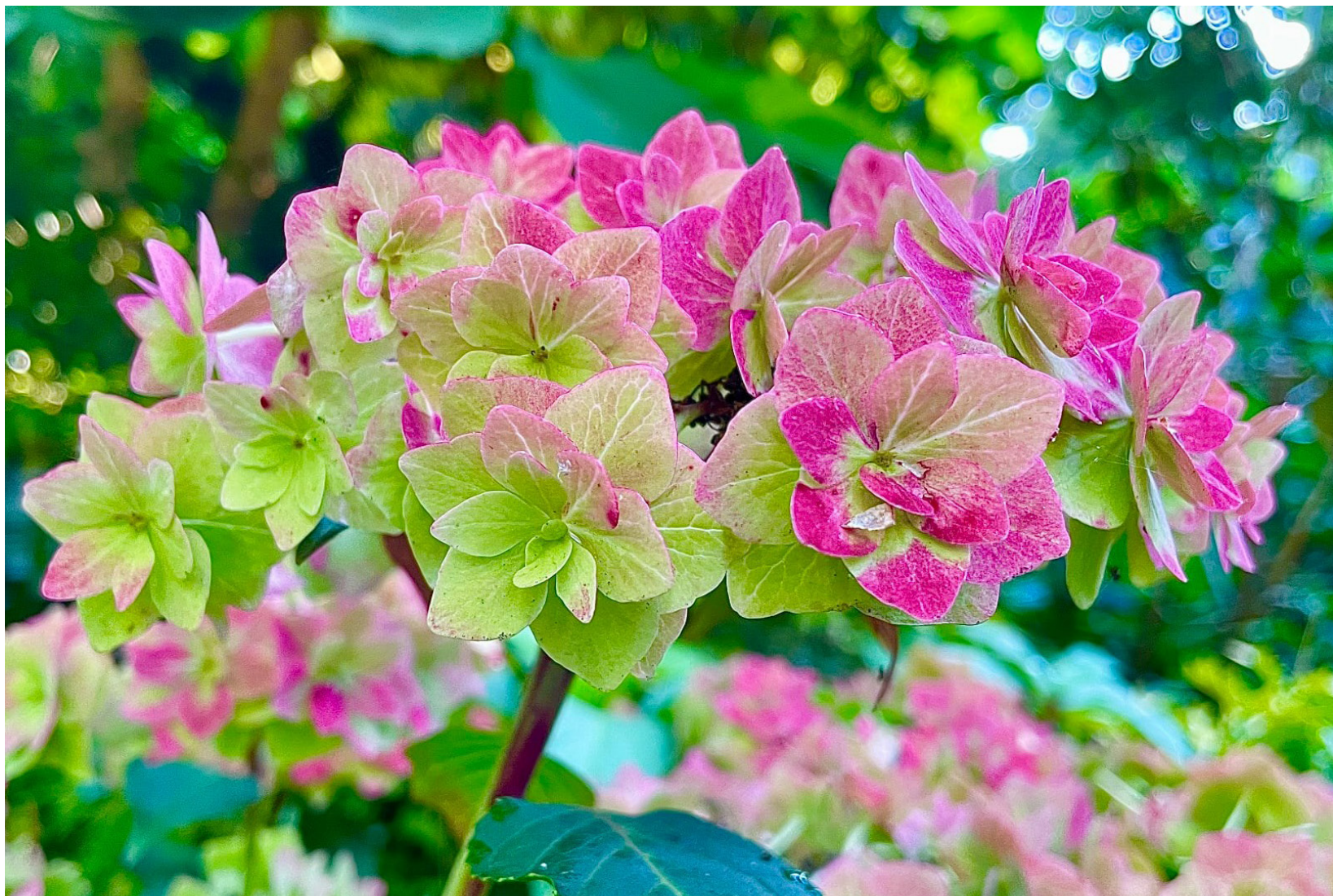


Hydrangea macrophylla 'SK2DAMA' AKADAMA™

market and can see how the temptation to add to excess is real. This deluge of new plants combined with cultivars coming and going in the blink of an eye makes a meaningful assessment of new cultivars challenging. Nevertheless, I am excited about what I see becoming available in our region.

The goal for my personal hydrangea collection is to have long-lasting floral interest, especially forms with attractive faded flowers providing color well into autumn. So many cultivars have colorful and interesting leaves, it would be unfortunate to not consider this when acquiring new plants. I also appreciate a compact habit, although this is not essential; tight compact growers make beautiful container plant subjects before becoming large enough to get added to the garden.

I first started by acquiring the classic cultivars that have a long-proven record of performance. Few cultivars have a longer history than *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Otaksa'. This cultivar is one of the very first to be introduced to Western horticulture and represents the classic "mophead" or hortensia flower in a beautiful clear sky blue during the summer. Introduced from Japan in 1862 by Philip Franz von Siebold, this cultivar has stood the test of time and is still available in nurseries. As the sky blue color fades in late summer, it is replaced by mint green with turquoise highlights with the sterile floret sepals tipped in purple and pink. The shades and colors of the flower from start to finish are soft and easy to incorporate into garden plantings.



Hydrangea macrophylla 'Dancing Snow' WEDDING GOWN™

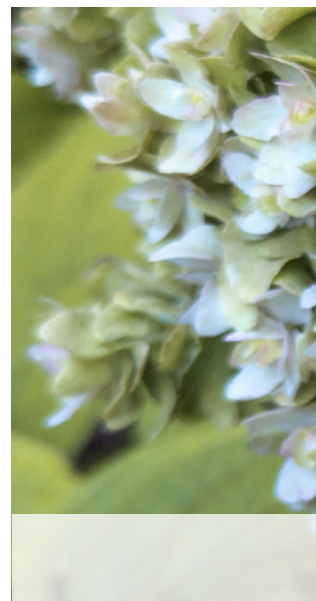
The colors of hydrangeas in my garden tend toward the blues and purples due to the acidic nature of the soil. Hydrangeas I added to containers often lean towards pink, rose or occasionally lavender since many of the potting soils I use have lime added to make the pH closer to neutral. *Hydrangea macrophylla* and *Hydrangea serrata* react to soil acidity while most other species do not. *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Glowing Embers', a favorite hortensia type in my garden that was also selected as a Great Plant Pick, is an excellent example of this changeable flower color. Typically seen in nurseries with intense dark pink blooms, these change to fabulous reddish-purple tones washed in deep blue after a few years in the ground. 'Glowing Embers' is a compact grower and very floriferous. As the flowers age, the clustered sepals turn teal brushed with raspberry purple with hints of blue scattered on the rounded flowerhead. Near my shrub of 'Glowing Embers' is a similar intensely colored mophead called

'Merritt's Beauty'. *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Merritt's Beauty' is currently my favorite blue mophead. In peak flower the domed flowerheads are breathtaking sapphire blue with shades of indigo. The faded flowers are a pale sage green painted with denim blue and mauve pink.

Some of my favorite classic cultivars of lace cap hydrangeas come from the Teller Series. These are plants developed by the Federal Research Institute for Horticulture in Wädenswil, Switzerland. This series represents strong growing selections with flat lace cap flower heads and large sterile florets made up of typically diamond-shaped sepals. Sometimes several cultivars can be sold under the same common name of Teller Blue, Teller Pink, Teller White or Teller Red. The most widely available cultivar is *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Blaumeise', which translates to blue tit hydrangea, named after a charming small Eurasian songbird. 'Blaumeise' is a



Hydrangea arborescens 'Hayes Starburst'



prolific flowering plant with cobalt blue coloring. The faded flowers turn a gray-tinted Carolina blue with mint green. As with most lace cap types, the sterile florets along the outer edge flip upside down as they age, a curious feature of this graceful flower form. The tallest and most robust Teller series I grow is 'Taube', translating to pigeon. A ten-year-old plant can reach 6 feet tall and mature specimens can be closer to 8 feet tall. This giant has spectacular large flowers with extra large sterile florets in a glowing cobalt blue. The faded flowers are similar to 'Blaumeise', but on a much grander scale. The Teller series shrub I enjoy the most is *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Rotdrossel', red wing hydrangea, and one of the cultivars sold under the Teller Red name. Known for its deep cherry red flowers in neutral soils, our more typical acidic soils bring out hues of midnight blue with royal purple. The aged flowers fade to pale purple with tints of turquoise and slate. This marvelous floral display is on a slower-growing, compact shrub. I would expect a ten-year-old plant to be about 4 feet tall and wide. It is not the easiest cultivar to find, but well worth seeking out.

Another group of classic lace cap cultivars are selections of *Hydrangea serrata*, the mountain hydrangea. Mountain hydrangeas are very similar to *Hydrangea macrophylla*, the bigleaf hydrangea, but often with smaller, narrower leaves, smaller flowerheads and more compact growth habit. Mountain hydrangea is often described as a smaller shrub, but this is not always so. In truth, the larger forms

of this species may actually be hybrids between the two species. Two larger growing forms that have been cultivated for decades are *Hydrangea serrata* 'Blue Deckle' and 'Blue Billow'. Both of these exceptional shrubs are quite floriferous with long lasting blooms. My two 'Blue Billow' plants are in a large wooden planter box with slightly acidic soils so the floral display is a pale lavender pink with deeper lavender blue fertile flowers in the center. The aged flowers deepen to rose pink and hold their color until late autumn. 'Blue Deckle' has smaller flowerheads than 'Blue Billow' with pointed sterile florets that are a lovely shade of powdery sky blue. In the acidic soils of the Miller Garden, the aging blooms turn mint green with an overlay of turquoise. 'Blue Deckle' will also always produce more blue flowers in late summer and early autumn that contrast nicely with the turquoise-tinted faded flowers.

Two older cultivars of smaller selections of mountain hydrangeas that I find very beautiful are *Hydrangea serrata* 'Caerulea Lace' and 'Beni'. Both of these I would expect to grow to about 3 feet tall and about the same in width. Both are young plants in my home garden, but I love the teardrop shape of the sterile florets that are steeped in the palest



Hydrangea paniculata 'Bulk' QUICK FIRE®



Hydrangea involucrata 'Yokudanka'

of blue. The aged blooms lighten to the color of porcelain viewed through a cup of mild green tea. 'Beni', on the other hand, is much more of a show pony in the garden. The summer flowers are quite small and open white and pink but as they begin to fade the white coloring yields to pink and the pink deepens to crimson red. I am looking forward to 'Beni' becoming more established in the years to come. It does seem to be a weaker grower and will likely benefit from regular fertilizing and additional summer watering.

One last *Hydrangea serrata* that is worth mentioning is from the TUFF STUFF™ series. *Hydrangea serrata* 'MAKD' TINY TUFF STUFF™ has been an excellent and very compact

performer in my garden with the adorable small flower heads born prolifically and are azure blue. The sterile florets are double and provide a fluffy delicateness to the bloom. The foliage also has a purple blush to the new growth that is very complimentary with the azure flowers. I would think that this would stay under 3 feet and could also make an interesting addition to container gardens.

The soft mint greens, blues and turquoise hues of the faded autumn flowers are very nice, but what I am really excited by is darker and smokier tones. There are several recent cultivars that I think are well worth watching, but one that started me down this path of smoldering, sultry coloring is *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Brunette'. When I first saw the autumnal colors of this hydrangea's flowers, I knew I must have it. In neutral soil the summer blooms are intense pink and cerise, and in our acid soils they are no less impressive becoming vibrant red purple. The faded flowers become deep rose with a dark purple blush, I think it is more beautiful at this stage than when in full flower.

These deeper colored faded flowers are the highlight of two newer cultivars I added to the home garden: *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Hortmagicri' EVERLASTING® or MAGICAL® CRIMSON and *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'SK2DAMA' AKADAMA™. MAGICAL® CRIMSON is the newest addition, and neutral soils turn the mophead flowers cherry red. Amazingly, as the flowers fade, they deepen to burgundy and in the early autumn continue to darken to mahogany. It will be interesting to see the color changes as this remarkable cultivar adjusts to the acidic soils of my garden bed.



AKADAMA™ is in its second year in the garden and flowers with a rich intense plum purple coloring. As the flowers fade, the foliage also takes on purple shades. The fading blooms shift from plum to deeper, richer tones of raisin and eggplant. In their final stages, the flowers are blushed with slate gray. An unusual combination, but it seems perfect for Halloween!

Double flowered cultivars are not to be outdone. *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Dancing Snow' WEDDING GOWN™ is a lace cap with a shallow broad, slightly domed bloom with fully double sterile florets. In the peak of summer, they are crisp white and pristine in their beauty, but as the flowers fade it becomes pea green with fuchsia edges. I recently purchased a fine specimen of *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Tinkerbell' ROSY SPLENDOR. This is a large, open-flowered lace cap and has huge sterile florets that are pink in neutral soil and blue in acidic soil with a paler banded edge on each petal. The faded florets have a green backing with a pink interior that fades to pale green along the edges.

Double flowers rarely occur in most hydrangea species, so it is quite an oddity to have a double form of *Hydrangea arborescens*, a North American native species, as well as a double form of the uncommon Japanese and Taiwanese species, *Hydrangea involucrata*. *Hydrangea arborescens* is the parent species of the very popular mop top cultivars 'Annabelle' and INCREDIBALL®. The double flowered form 'Hayes Starburst' is technically a mop top, but the flower heads are very irregular and stuffed tightly with small, fully double florets. In early summer the flowers are bright lime green, then mature white followed by a slow fade to a pale green. The blooms are very unusual and occur on a smaller compact shrub. *Hydrangea involucrata* 'Yokudanka' is the other unusual double hydrangea. It also bears a slightly irregular mop top flower head stuffed with full double florets,

but as the creamy white flowers fade, they take on hues of green and pink.

The last group of hydrangeas that are great for fall flower color is the panicle hydrangea, *Hydrangea paniculata*. The old classic cultivar was *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Grandiflora', the peegee hydrangea. It is a huge shrub with large full cone-shaped creamy white flowers, but not much to offer in the autumn except occasionally it would fade to a rose pink. Newer cultivars have much better fall coloring with some cultivars turning nearly cherry red. One that has been around for a while is *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Bulk' QUICK FIRE®, but I like the brighter pinks of a selection named 'RENBA' BERRY WHITE®. Both QUICK FIRE® and BERRY WHITE® are larger growing cultivars at 6 to 8 feet tall and nearly as wide with time. There are several excellent compact cultivars, but the only one I grow is a cultivar called 'Bombshell'. Its habit is tight, and the flowers are plentiful, and it always fades nicely to pink in the fall.

Hydrangea paniculata is the best hydrangea to grow in full sun. The shrub thrives in bright light and the white blooms sparkle in the summer sunshine. I do find that I tire of all the flowers being some variation of white and pink on this species and find I prefer the much more variable colors of *Hydrangea macrophylla* and *H. serrata*. Nonetheless, I would find my autumn garden a much drabber place without these beautiful shrubs. As much as it seems like there is an endless supply of cultivars, I do enjoy selecting out what I perceive as the best of what I desire for my home garden. I hope this will give you some ideas for adding some new selections to your garden and that you will enjoy the long and shifting color changes these shrubs have to offer our summer and fall gardens. 🍷

Richie Steffen is Executive Director of the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden and past president of NHS.



"Beginning sheet mulch garden" by Ryan Ferdinand, used under CC by 2.0, via www.flickr.com; & courtesy Oregon State University Extension Service

No-Till Gardening Keeps Soil – and Plants – Healthy

Kym Pokorny

While the practice of no-till gardening is not new, information has traditionally centered on agricultural field crops. Now, home gardeners are catching on.

"The concept of no-till has been around for a couple of decades, but research has been very focused on field crops like wheat and corn, things largely grown in the Midwest," said Erica Chernoh, Oregon State University Extension Service horticulturist. "There's not much on vegetable production or fruit. There's a lot to learn, and research is ongoing."

No-till gardening minimizes soil disruption, which compacts the soil and destroys the pathways that channel air and water through the soil, Chernoh said. Every time a tiller cuts through soil the structure is weakened, which can cause compaction and increase runoff. There's also erosion and surface crusting that results from over-tilling, Chernoh said.

In addition to disturbing soil structure, tilling disrupts the microorganisms and other soil dwellers that live in the top couple of inches and are essential for soil and plant health, she said. Soil microbes, some of which have a symbiotic relationship with plants, cluster around roots and, as they feed on organic matter and each other, secrete nutrients that feed plants and substances that act as glue to bind soil particles into larger aggregates that keep soil pores open. Long strands of fungal hyphae can hold the aggregates together and earthworms and other large organisms also work to create pore space.

Weed seeds, some of which can remain dormant in the soil for several years, come to the surface under the blades of a tiller, then germinate and become a problem. A big part of no-till gardening is keeping the soil protected with a mulch layer, leaving the seeds in place and suppressing any weeds that pop up. No-till has its disadvantages, too, Chernoh said. Covering the soil makes it more difficult to direct seed into



the bed, especially for home gardeners who don't have large seed drills. Mulch also keeps the soil from warming up as quickly in spring as un-mulched beds. However, the benefits far outweigh those drawbacks, she said.

"Mechanical tillage does have its place, especially in the formation of new garden beds with high compaction and low organic matter," she said. "In most cases, however, non-mechanical approaches to working with soil can help you accomplish your goals without the negative effects of tilling on your soil.

Soil coverage is also an important concept in a no-till system. For home gardeners, this can be achieved by using cover crops or mulch. Mulching materials may include straw, compost, aged livestock manure, dried leaves or grass clippings. Mulch will protect the soil from rain and wind, which can cause erosion. In early spring, the mulch layer can be pulled back from the bed to allow sunlight to warm the soil.

One method of no-till gardening is often referred to as sheet mulching or lasagna gardening and features layers of organic materials to create a healthy growing medium. It's a system in which organic materials, many of which would normally be sent to a landfill, are used to create a garden bed.

Cover crops are a big part of no-till farming but can be a challenge for home gardeners because many need to be tilled in or sprayed with an herbicide to terminate the crop, Chernoh said. If using a winter cover crop, gardeners should plant in early fall and mow in spring after flowering but before the plants set seeds and become weeds. You can transplant or direct seed into the fine cover crop mulch layer.

If using cover crops, be sure to select one that can be killed by cold temperatures or mowing rather than tilling or herbicides. Cover crops like Austrian winter peas, crimson clover or fava beans are good options for home gardeners using no-till methods.

When cleaning up the garden at the end of summer, gardeners can cut off the tops of cover crops plants and leave the roots in the soil. There's less disruption and the roots will decompose and provide food for the microorganisms. The clippings can be used as a mulch.

"A lot of people create beds with the lasagna style," Chernoh said. "You can even build one on top of the lawn. It's a no-till way of making a nice garden bed rather than turning the soil to make a new seed bed every year.

Creating a lasagna bed

Here's how to create a lasagna bed, also called sheet mulching:

- Start in fall so the bed has all winter to start decomposing.
- Cut grass as low as possible. Or start a lasagna garden on top of an old planting bed.
- Loosen soil with a digging fork to increase aeration. Even punching holes in the ground will work.
- Remove weeds.
- Build a raised bed frame or just mound up the layers of organic material into an unframed bed.
- Put a layer of cardboard overlapped an inch or two and water it.
- Cover with 2-inch layers of green organic material like grass clippings, fresh plant debris, fresh animal manure and food scraps that provide nitrogen and brown materials like dry leaves, wood chips, straw and shredded newspaper that are carbon sources. Repeat layers until the bed is about 18 inches.
- Top off with a 2- to 6-inch brown layer; thicker if you want to plant right away.
- Create beds only wide enough to reach into the middle and create paths lined with straw to walk on so soil doesn't get compacted.
- Lasagna beds will shrink as materials decompose and may need refreshed layers each year.
- Using transplants is easier in no-till gardening systems; the mulch layer is easier to transplant directly into rather than direct seeding, especially for small-seeded crops like lettuce and broccoli. To transplant, use a trowel or other tool to make holes large enough to plant into. If directly seeding into the bed, pull back the mulch layer and smooth over the surface layer with a rake before seeding. 🌱

Kym Pokorny is the Public Service Communications Specialist at the Oregon State University Extension Service in Corvallis, Oregon

LITERARY NOTES from the Miller Library

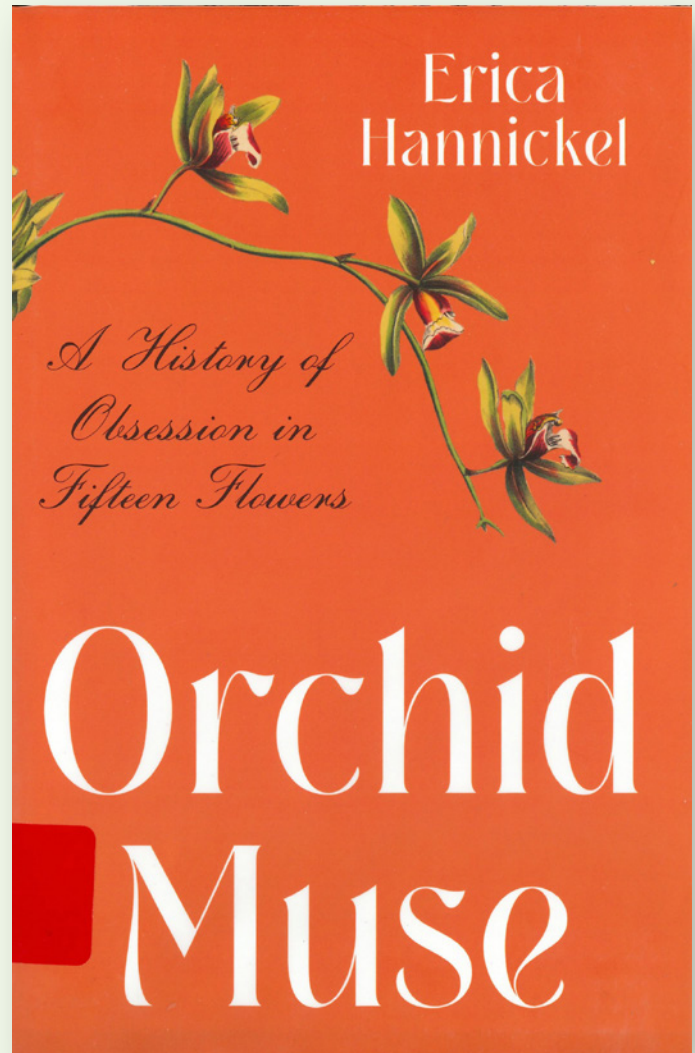
Brian Thompson

About a year ago, I watched a webinar by James Golden. As curator of the Miller Library, I often have to make difficult decisions about adding new books. This is especially true for books on subjects already well-represented in the collection, such as roses, herbs, or (especially!) orchids.

Therefore, I was skeptical when learning about a new book titled *Orchid Muse*. Did we really need an addition to the already bulging shelves on this plant family? My mind changed only after reading praise for the book by Doug Holland, Director of the Peter Raven Library at the Missouri Botanical Garden, who described it as “a happy reminder of why I fell in love with plants and the history of botany.”

More a collection of biographies than plant profiles, author Erica Hannickel recounts the zealous passion orchids have instilled in historical figures. Some, like Charles Darwin, are already celebrated for their love of plants, but most are better known for other pursuits. This includes heads of state, heads of industry, artists, and scholars, but also enslaved peoples, and women who strived to have their voices heard in a male-dominated world.

Several stories stood out for me. It may surprise you that the first public orchid show in the United States took place in a dime museum located in the “Tenderloin District” of New York City in 1887. The actor Raymond Burr is best known for his role as the criminal defense lawyer Perry Mason in a television series from 1957-1966. Less well known was the escape he found from bigotry in his orchid collection that he shared with his male partner of 33 years.



“Vanilla is an orchid that has benefited from, and been decimated by, global trade.” This succinctly describes the history of the only genus of this family that has become an important food crop. This saga includes Edmond, a twelve-year-old, enslaved boy with no last name on the island of Bourbon (now Réunion), who discovered how to hand-pollinate this orchid, making it a profitable crop.

This book has proved its worth by winning the 2023 Annual Literature Award by the Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries — and a place on the shelves of the Miller Library! 🌸

Brian Thompson is the manager and curator of horticultural literature for the Elisabeth C. Miller Library.



THANK YOU TO OUR PATRONS!

The Lecture Program would not be possible without the tremendous support of our Patrons. Their generosity helps NHS provide an outstanding educational program for Northwest gardeners. With the great success of the webinar lecture program over the past three years, we have been able to reach an even wider audience and look forward to continuing this program and to providing in-person events in the near future.

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A New Beginning

Richie Steffen

One of the constants for the Northwest Horticultural Society will soon change. Karin Kravitz, our first employee and current NHS administrator, will soon bid her job farewell and she will enter into retirement again. I met Karin when I started at the Miller Garden in 2000, and even then she was an essential part of NHS operations. At that time Richard Hartlage was director of the Miller Garden as well as serving as president of NHS. Karin and Richard connected immediately and began to build on the foundation that former NHS boards had put in place before them. In particular, an expanded and robust education program was instituted as well as a reassessment of the financial structure and stability of the organization.

Through the close connection between the Miller Garden and NHS, my interactions with Karin increased every year and culminated in my terms as president when we would speak on the phone nearly daily. During this time, you could see Karin's responsibilities had expanded tremendously over the years, and she has spent voluminous hours as the point-person for our membership. She was and still is

the woman with the answers, the sender of announcements and the record keeper of the continuously updated membership records and this is only a portion of her accomplishments and tasks that she has performed on behalf of NHS.

For well over the nearly 25 years I have known Karin, she diligently has been the institutional knowledge source for the board and its members. I know that we are all grateful for her service, enthusiasm and dedication to the success of our organization. Her involvement has meant so much to so many and the friendships that have resulted over the years will be a lasting reminder of her contributions to NHS. I know for sure that my regular phone calls and friendship with Karin will continue well beyond her retirement and is one of the great gifts I have received from being a part of this gardening group. Karin, we all wish you the best into the future and hope to see you at some of our future events for years to come.

(Karin has been working with our new programs and events manager, Dennis Beatty. Read more about Dennis and this new role on page 14.) 🍷



A New Beginning continued

Richie Steffen

The Northwest Horticultural Society's board of directors is pleased to announce that Dennis Beatty will be filling the new position of Membership and Program Administrator. This new position will focus on membership services and working with various committees to promote our upcoming events, especially our extensive education programing.

Dennis will be a new face to many of you, but he is a familiar friend of the Miller Garden serving first as an intern, then joining the staff as one of our part-time gardeners. Dennis's horticultural passions were ignited when he worked for Artemis Gardens, a local garden design firm owned by NHS member Deborah Horn. Wanting to further explore horticulture and gardening, he enrolled in the horticulture program at Edmonds College. In addition to a wide range of coursework at Edmonds, he became active in the greenhouse, which piqued his interest in propagation methods and techniques. After graduation, Dennis applied to the Miller Garden internship program where he was able to assist with several new hardscape features in the Garden as well as help in the nursery with propagation. While working at the Miller Garden, he also served as the program

manager for the Hardy Fern Foundation, originally an offshoot of NHS. Enjoying the community building skills of that position, this new one at NHS became an exciting opportunity for Dennis, and I share this excitement of having him on board.

Dennis has been working with Karin Kravitz, our retiring NHS administrator, on the transition, and I hope you will welcome Dennis to this new position if you have a chance to email or talk with him. He brings exceptional skills to our organization, and I know I am looking forward to working with him into the future!

Please note that the contact information for NHS has changed and now all questions and inquiries will be sent to Dennis. This information will also be emailed to all members. The previous phone number for NHS will no longer work and old email addresses will be directed to Dennis's new email.

Dennis Beatty, NHS Program Administrator:
206-504-3329 (phone); info@northwesthort.org
(email) 🍷



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear NHS Members,

As I look back on this year of gardening, I am once again amazed at how swiftly the seasons change. It seems like just a short while ago that I was waiting eagerly for my spring bulbs to make an appearance. Now, once again, I am preparing to put the garden to bed for winter. This, of course, is the cyclical nature of our gardening passion; there is always something to anticipate and always a list of tasks to complete. Gardening is in many ways a symbol of the ephemerality of life. It reminds us to find delight in the fleeting moments. The bloom of a beloved flower, the song of a migrating bird, an unusual ray of sunlight. These are all passing gifts for the gardener. Enjoy the present.

As with the changes of the seasons, NHS is experiencing some significant changes as well. As many of you know, Karin Kravitz, our long-time administrator, has decided to retire from her position with NHS. There are no adequate words to fully describe the exemplary service that Karin has shown to NHS. I feel quite fortunate to have worked closely with her this past year. She is one of the most dedicated, talented, and lovely people I have ever known. She has given much to this organization and has left an indelible mark on our horticultural community. She will most certainly be missed.

Alongside Karin, we have several board members who are completing their terms. These board members include Ray Larson, Barbara Lycett, Ciscoe Morris, Richie Steffen, Walter Thompson, Eileen Van Schaik, and Lia Ward. Each of these individuals have volunteered tremendous amounts towards horticulture education. Much of their impact has been behind the scenes through emails, phone calls, and committees. They have freely given their skill sets and knowledge to this organization. To say that NHS has been well served by them is an understatement. We owe a debt of gratitude for their service.

On an exciting note, I am thrilled to announce that NHS recently hired Dennis Beatty as our Membership and Program Administrator. He brings a new set of skills to the table, and we are ecstatic to have him on our team. You will be receiving plenty of emails from him, so please send him a warm welcoming note. We will also be introducing a wonderful group of new board members in 2024. Sashi Raghupathy has agreed to take on the role of president. She is simply outstanding and has incredible vision for this organization.

Lastly, I would like to thank you for the chance to serve you this year as president of NHS. Being on this team has been one of the greatest honors of my life. Thank you for all the encouraging words and support you have shown. I really believe the future of NHS is bright. Onward we go. All the best,

Justin Henderson
NHS President



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*"There are all sorts of daily rituals that must be done
to keep home and garden running smoothly;
the trick is to find them satisfying."*

– Lee C. Neff, in her essay "Deadheading" (from *Open Spaces*, UW Press, 2011)

Chrysanthemum 'Matchsticks'
Image by Richie Steffen