

Connecticut Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

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Serving Horticulturists Since 1887

March 2018

What's Next?

By Sarah Bailey, State Master Gardener Coordinator, CHS Member

I think it's fair to say that Mother Nature's own hand is once again welcome in our gardens. CHS's symposium was a resounding call for how important - and beautiful - working with nature and native elements can be. Rick Darke and Claudia West presented complex and cohesive gardens filled with plant communities that coexist and thrive with one another in beautiful and natural ways.

These visual gems also are the basis for robust and vibrant animal communities, particularly birds and insects, renewing and regenerating the biodiversity that is critical for healthy ecosystems. Throughout the symposium, the foundational work of Doug Tallamy and Piet Oudolf was woven into the tapestry; both now are familiar names to much of the gardening community.

Sustainability, native plants and biodiversity are currently on gardening's center stage. At symposia, in almost every issue of recent garden publications, in academic curricula and at local garden clubs one or more of these concepts is always in discussion. We now understand and welcome the reintegration of nature's own evolutionary expertise into our little parcels of the larger world.

Now, for me at least, the questions are in the "how." In many recent discussions, in many of my own actions, new questions

pop up like seedlings scattered from the basic concepts.

I am neck-deep in my latest garden misadventure, building gardens from scratch for the first time. I moved to this new location five years ago; chosen as much for the outdoor canvas as any



Native plant border at New York Botanical Garden, photo by Lea Anne Moran, CHS member

other reason. It was a truly blank canvas; other than a hillside of forsythia and vetch, and your standard cookie-cutter foundation plantings, there was simply a house surrounded by lawn with wooded hedgerows and old stone walls demarcating the boundaries; old farmland that had

gradually and thoughtfully been turned over to residential use piece by piece.

I knew I wanted to use predominantly native plants and build a biodiverse landscape. I wanted - no, needed really - something that would require far less maintenance than other gardens I had created. I wanted it to support birds, insects and other fauna, while recognizing I would be happy if the deer and bear didn't feel too welcome.

At the same time, I wanted it to be my garden; recognizable as a managed space addressing the purposes outlined by the gardener. Recognizing that my enjoyment of unruly spaces might not be equally shared by my neighbors, one challenge I have set is to make the more outwardly visible spaces a bit more restrained while still following the principles of native and nurturing.

The challenge for me is in the execution. Renovations to the house have left more unplanted area needing immediate attention than I was able to readily manage all at once. I can research, select and source plant material. Some is local, others are available through the mail, but small, making it harder to restrain steep slope that simply wants to erode or succumb to weeds. As one who works full-time, the hours in a season are fewer than I need. As one who is

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Membership Dues:

Individual.....	\$49
Family.....	\$69
Senior Individual (65+).....	\$44
Senior Family (65+).....	\$64
\$30 under 30 years.....	\$30
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Horticultural Business Member.....	\$100 or \$250
Organizations.....	\$80

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“Striking a Balance” Symposium Recap

By Joan Stubenrauch, Symposium Co-Chair

This successful day was a culmination of the efforts of so many. Speakers Rick Darke, Claudia West, and Christina Salwitz were exceptional. Sean Orcutt from the Mark Twain House and Museum was a joy to work with. Delicacy Caterers did a great job accommodating food allergies; lunch was varied and tasty with leftover food donated to a Hartford shelter.

Heartfelt thanks to my husband, Ken who is my moral support as well as a hands-on volunteer. Special thanks to my Co-Chair, Nancy DuBrule-Clemente, Leslie Shields, Jody Morgan, Bonnie Hoskins and family, Lea Anne Morin, Cheryl Marino, Diane Erling, Mary Anna Martell and Barb Skomorowski.

This is my last stint as chair of the Symposium Committee. Nancy DuBrule-Clemente will take the helm in 2020. I have truly enjoyed my role and the hard-working group of volunteers I’ve worked alongside. I know Nancy will bring new ideas to future Symposiums and I will stand ready to serve as a volunteer in the future.

HELP!!! A collective plea from Committee heads

Please, please consider lending a hand with some aspect of our wonderful organization. We truly can use help and CHS is made more lively, interesting and stronger with fresh ideas supplied by more members. You can get involved as little or as much as you like. Some activities happen once a year... others need a hand on a regular basis.

Not sure what you can do to help?

CHS has dozens of ways your talents can be used:

- Spend a ½-day at a public event encouraging the greater gardening community to give CHS a try
- Volunteer to pick up plant donations from a couple donors near you for the Spring and Fall auctions that raise money for our scholarship fund
- Introduce speakers at next year’s CT Flower & Garden Show (and get in for free!)
- Help put out snacks before one of our Speaker Meetings
- Help to plan workshops

With your talent and ideas, you can surely make an impact on some aspect of our organization. Just let us know you’re willing to participate and we’ll match your strengths with a task. As you get more involved, you will make new friends, enrich your experience with CHS and help shape its future.

Thank you for giving this some consideration. If you’d like to find out more or have questions, please email membership@cthorth.org.



Thank you to our generous business members and supporters!

Visit cthorth.org for the latest listings and links.



FRIENDSHIP TOURS
 THE SHIP SHOP



Al’s Landscaping & Nursery
 Ballek’s Garden Center
 Cricket Hill Garden
 Hellner Lawn Works



PLANTSMEN SINCE 1950

MH Landscape Design
 The Garden Barn
 Torrison Stone & Garden

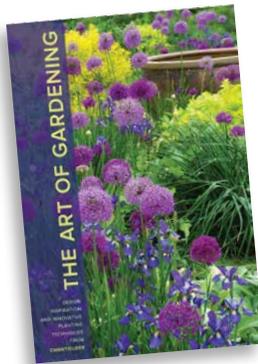
Lessons from Chanticleer: Plants and Planting Styles for Your Garden's Micro-Climates

Thursday, March 15

with Eric Hsu, Plant Information Coordinator, Chanticleer, Wayne, Penn.

Before becoming Plant Information Coordinator at Chanticleer in 2011, Eric Hsu spent time at some of the most prestigious woody-plant collections in the Eastern United States: Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College; the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, and the Polly Hill Arboretum on Martha's Vineyard. Eric earned his bachelor's from Cornell, and master's degrees from both the University of Reading in England, and the University of Tasmania in Australia. He has botanized in Australia, Greece, and Turkey, and maintains a blog *Plinth et al.*

On Thursday, March 15 at 7:30 p.m., Eric will share the knowledge he's gathered from his wide and varied experiences to discuss *Plants & Planting Styles for Your Garden's Micro-Climates*. At [Chanticleer, in Wayne, Penn.](http://Chanticleer.inWaynePenn.com), Eric is apparently referred to as the plant geek, and is a frequent contributor to "The Plantsman," the prestigious quarterly published by the Royal Horticultural Society in the United Kingdom. He's also a member of the Chanticleer team that contributed to the well-received



book, "The Art of Gardening: Design Inspiration and Innovative Planting Techniques from Chanticleer," published by Timber Press in 2015. Bill Thomas, Ex-

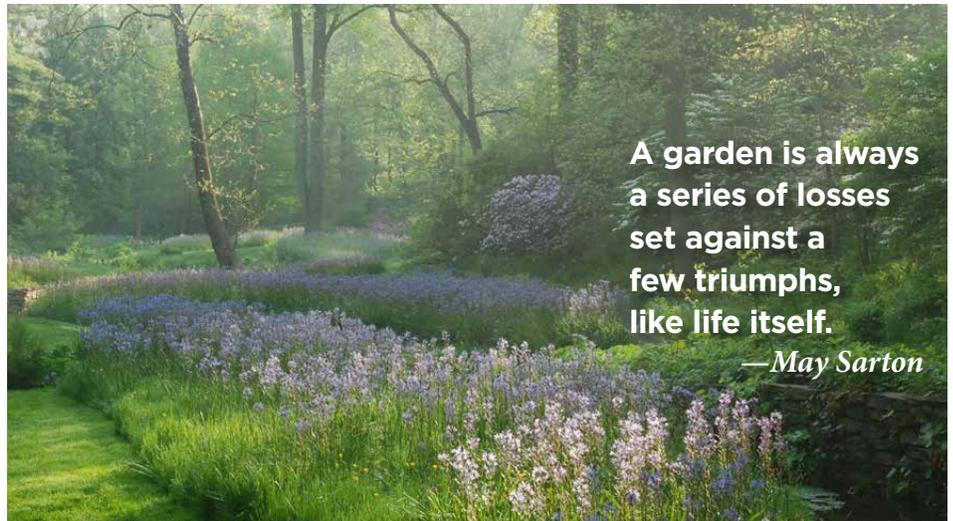


Eric Hsu

ecutive Director of the Chanticleer Foundation, (who spoke at the CHS June 2016 meeting) co-authored the book with the creative staff of Chanticleer.

For an additional dose of Eric, visit [A Way to Garden.com](http://AWaytoGarden.com) to hear Margaret Roach discuss hydrangeas with him in 2015 <https://awaytogarden.com/a-hydrangea-primer-with-chanticleers-eric-hsu/> 🗉

Chanticleer, photo by Eric Hsu



A garden is always
a series of losses
set against a
few triumphs,
like life itself.

—May Sarton

CHS Program Meeting

Meetings are open to everyone, with a drop-in fee of \$10 collected at the door from non-members. For more information, visit www.chhort.org.

Date: Thursday, March 15

Time: Program starts at 7:30 p.m. but come early – 7 p.m. – to socialize, browse CHS library books, participate in raffle items, look at travel fliers or get your plant questions answered by our resident horticulturalist, Kevin Wilcox.

Location: Emanuel Synagogue, 160 Mohegan Dr., West Hartford



Speaker Feedback

After you attend a speaker meeting, please take a moment to tell us what you thought of the presenter. Your candid feedback helps us to arrange for speakers that will hold your interest. Take the five-question survey on our website – chhort.org. Click on the survey icon found on any page then chose the speaker you want to rate. Thank you for your feedback.



STORM ALERT!

In the event of inclement weather on the night of a CHS Program Meeting, tune into WFSB TV Channel 3, or call the CHS office at 860-529-8713 for a recorded message.

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not getting younger, the ability to power through and still be able to move the next day is not guaranteed. With a limit to my budget, the project must progress in stages.

I have seen the before and after pictures of such garden projects. My question to Rick and Claudia at the symposium was about the in-between. Talk to me about years three through five, I asked.

The symposium was not the place for an extended, detailed answer to that question, and I will continue to parse the answer through research, trial and error. Claudia’s presentation certainly provided some steps and highlighted mistakes I have made. I know now that on the steep, open slopes I should have concentrated almost exclusively on the groundcover level of plants first and brought in the other layers over time. Obvious in hindsight, but my eagerness to create those layered communities interfered. There is still so much to learn!

Restoring the natural balance raises other interesting questions. A friend of mine is working with her local commissions to restore native habitat in specific wetlands areas. In this moment of climate change she asked, what are the correct natives to plant? Do you just plant what once was and see if they survive? Or do you also plant some plants that are native in slightly warmer contiguous zones to offset those that no longer thrive in the current zone?

For some questions there may be no simple answer; for others the answers will come with experience. But what a great time we’ll have figuring it out!

In search of native know-how

With sustainability and biodiversity the hot gardening topics these days, here are several resources to help you through the maze of how to plant and what to include in your native, nurturing garden:

Resource	Location	Description
A Way to Garden	www.awaytogarden.com	Website filled with ‘horticultural how-to and woo-woo.’ It’s the source of organic gardening inspiration from Margaret Roach, head gardener
National Wildlife Federation’s “Native Plant Finder”	www.nwf.org/NativePlant-Finder/	Enter your zip code, and a list of plant genera found in your county will appear, ranked from most to least productive for wild life.
UConn Plant Database	http://hort.uconn.edu/	Woody landscape plants can be searched by name or by attribute, including “CT Native” or “US Native”
“Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants” by Douglas W. Tallamy, Timber Press	Library or book store	A professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware, Doug Tallamy believes that everyone with access to a patch of earth can make a significant contribution toward sustaining biodiversity.
“Planting in a Post Wild World” by Thomas Rainier & Claudia West, Timber Press	Library or book store	Specifics on how to incorporate and layer plants into communities to create an environment that is reflective of natural systems.
“Garden Revolution: How Our Landscapes can be a Source of Environmental Change” by Larry Weaner & Tom Christopher, Timber Press	Library or book store	An invaluable resource for gardeners who want to collaborate with their local ecologies.

You are invited to:
The Connecticut Botanical Society’s 2018 Spring Meeting
Saturday, March 31, 2018
 Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area, Burlington



Common Native Bees: *Their Life Cycle, Foraging Behavior and Role in the Pollination of Native Plants* with Heather Holm, 11 a.m.



Members of Wild Ones and the Connecticut Horticultural Society will join The Connecticut Botanical Society in hosting author and pollinator researcher Heather Holm, who will speak about the nesting habitat, life cycle, pollen collection, and brood rearing of common genera of native bees in north-central and eastern United States and southern Canada. She will highlight the pollination of native plants and the mutualism between native plants and native bees. Ms. Holm will also discuss the presentation of floral resources and how the physical characteristics of bees can influence the bees’ effectiveness as pollinators.

This meeting begins at 9 a.m. with the lecture scheduled for 11 a.m. and a potluck lunch at noon. Visit www.ct-botanical-society.org/meetings for details.

Horticultural Happenings & Announcements

Note: Happenings are listed on a space-available basis. To submit an event, send details to news@cthort.org. Please format the announcement to resemble the entries below. Deadline for April issue is March 15.

Thurs., March 8, noon – West Hartford Garden Club welcomes **Sandra Lamo of A Special Place Floral Design Studio**. Sandra returns bringing creative floral arrangements with a spring theme. Location: St. John's Episcopal Church, 679 Farmington Ave., West Hartford. Fee: Guest donation: \$10 for light lunch and speaker. Reservations required. Call (860) 561-0724 or visit www.westhartfordgardenclub.org for more info.

Mon., March 12, noon – Garden Club of Avon presents **Chrissie and John D'Esopo's Wild and Woolly Conifer World**. Learn how and why John and Chrissie transformed their property into an amazing garden space. Ask questions after the presentation. Lunch included with \$5 guest fee. Reservations: Jody Morgan- 860-673-3887. Church of St. Ann, 289 Arch Rd., Avon.

Mon., March 12, 7 p.m. – Farmington Garden Club and Farmington Libraries jointly host bestselling author, **Kathryn Aalto**, at the Farmington Public Library in Farmington. Ms. Aalto is a writer, landscape designer, garden historian and lecturer who writes about "places where

nature and culture intersect." She will take you on an illustrated journey of the best known and loved natural settings, the Hundred Acre Wood of A.A. Milne's Winnie-the-Pooh and The House at Pooh Corner. Ms. Aalto's presentations are part travelogue, biography and natural history. Event is free and open to the public. Please call (860) 673-6791 or go to <http://bit.ly/2z5176V> to register.

Sat., March 17, 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. – Connecticut Master Gardener Association 25th Anniversary Annual Symposium takes place at Connecticut College in New London. This year's theme is **NATURE'S PUZZLE: Putting the Pieces Together**. Headliners include Rick Darke and Thomas Rainer along with six other experts speaking on topics from bees to vegetables. Full speaker biographies and additional details about all sessions can be found at www.ctmga.org.

Mon., March 19, 11:30 a.m. – Simsbury Garden Club welcomes Ron Pitz from the **Knox Park Foundation**. Guests are welcome (fee \$10). Location: Apple Barn, 60 Old Farms Road, West Simsbury. For more information, please visit simsburygardenclub.org.

Fri. & Sat., March 23 & 24, 10 am-5 pm – Garden Club of Avon presents a **Garden Fairy display at the Avon Historical Society's Tablescapes Fundraiser**, North House Ballroom, Rte 44 & 1 Nod Rd., Avon. Tickets at the door \$20. 25 display tables, many formal, but GCA is set to entice the little folks who labor unseen in our gardens to put in appearance. **Info:** Mary Harrop – 860-670-3225.

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March 30 through May 13, 2018 – enjoy an evolving display of 40,000 crocuses, daffodils, tulips and other spring blooms at **Colorblends House and Spring Garden**, 893 Clinton Avenue in Bridgeport. A collaboration between Colorblends Wholesale Flowerbulbs and famed Dutch designer Jacqueline van der Kloet, the garden is adjacent to Colorblends' restored 1903 Colonial Revival mansion in Bridgeport's Stratfield Historic District just off King's Highway East (North Ave/Route 1). Street parking is plentiful. For updates on what's in bloom, visit: <http://facebook.com/colorblendshouseandspringgarden>. Garden: free and open to the public daily in spring, dawn to dusk. House: open daily in spring, 10 am to 4 pm, with a pop-up gallery showcasing work of local artists and artisans: Suggested donation \$3 per person, \$25 for groups of 10 and up. 🗑️

Visit cthort.org for the latest listings and links.

LAST CALL: 2018 Service Award

By Justine Leeper, Awards Committee

Please take a moment to nominate an individual who has enhanced your experience with CHS for the 2018 Service Award. Anyone can submit a nomination. If you have benefited from any of the offerings CHS provides – lectures, workshops, garden visits, auctions, symposiums, raffles, etc. – remember it was possible because of volunteers.

Your nomination should include a brief explanation of why you feel the member should be considered with as much background about them as you can provide.

Send your nomination to Mary Anna Martell:

Email: office@cthort.org, Subject line: Service Award

OR CHS Office

2433 Main Street

Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Save the date!

CHS Spring Plant

Sale & Auction

Friday, May 4

6:30 pm

Bethany Covenant

Church, Berlin



Society Personality: Heidi Wheeler Isaacson, Board of Directors



Connecticut Horticultural Society (CHS) was lucky to get Heidi as part of a 'two-fer.' She is married to Brett Isaacson who is also on the board and is one of the owners of Friendship Tours who creates the interesting trips CHS and other organizations offer. As you might expect, Heidi has been involved with the Travel Committee. She also serves as Treasurer for CHS.



Heidi Wheeler Isaacson

Why and when did you join CHS? I joined after Brett (Isaacson) and I were married in 2017. I was attending every meeting anyway, why not join?!

Describe your gardening style. That would be container gardening. We live in a condo with very little space for a 'real' garden. But each year I grow my little 'deck garden.'

What do you like best about your own garden? Since I'm using containers, I can start fresh each year

with a different color theme or mood. I especially like oranges and yellows. Often, the Spring Nursery Crawl trip is my seasonal inspiration as is the guidance of other CHS gardeners.

Which plant(s) do you wish you could grow but can't? Due to space limitations, I can't grow squash, melons or poppies.

Did someone in your life inspire you to become interested in horticulture and floral design? I lived in England for 3 years

and loved the beautiful containers and window boxes around each home. I also loved being able to grow roses year round.

What gardens do you like to visit? Tropical gardens are my favorite. The Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden is one that comes to mind.

What is your biggest gardening success? Low maintenance plants and 'rescued' plants seem to do well in my care. The ones I rescue seem to appreciate me more than any new plant that I have purchased.

What is your biggest gardening mistake? Every year I buy lobelia. Every year it dies.

What are you working on now? Brett and I are planning a trip to the Mediterranean – Rome, Sicily, Tunisia, Algiers, Spain. I'm looking forward to seeing new and different plants along the way

And when you're not gardening...? You'll find me working, traveling, making jewelry and photographing.

Care to share a fact about yourself that others may find surprising? I'm a wiz at Excel – especially pivot tables! 🦋

2018 Mehlquist Award

Recognizes contributions to horticulture or the art of gardening

By Fairlee Latawic, Awards Committee

In 1987, on its 100th anniversary, the CT Horticultural Society established the Gustav Mehlquist award to honor our member Dr. Gustav Mehlquist for his extraordinary contribution to horticulture. Dr. Mehlquist, who had been long recognized as one of the leading horticulturists in the United States, was a member of CHS, the American Rhododendron Society, The Connecticut Nurseryman's Association and a professor of Plant Science at the University of Connecticut (UConn). Born in Sweden, Dr. Mehlquist, earned his bachelor's degree from UConn in 1936 and earned his doctorate from the University of California at Berkeley in 1939. He was also the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship for Biology and Plant Science in 1947 and subsequently studied orchid genetics in England. After many years of outstanding work in plant breeding, specializing in orchids, delphiniums and carnations, Dr. Mehlquist joined

the staff at the UConn in 1952 where he continued his work as a horticultural researcher, plant breeder, hybridizer, educator and writer. While at UConn his interest in rhododendrons led to the development of several vigorous cold-hardy rhododendrons.

Every year CHS seeks nominations for this prestigious award named in honor of Dr. Gustav Mehlquist.

If you know a Connecticut resident who deserves to be honored and recognized for their significant and extraordinary contributions in horticulture or the art of gardening, please submit a nomination letter describing the background and qualifications of your nominee to Mary Anna Martell, CHS Office, 2433 Main St, Rocky Hill, CT 06067 or via email to office@cthorg.org. Nominations must be received by April 30.

CHS Travel

The Cloisters & Metropolitan Museum of Art

Wednesday, May 9

Travel by deluxe motorcoach to two of the premier museums in the country.

The Cloisters Museum and Gardens is located in Fort Tryon Park overlooking the Hudson River. It is a branch of the Met devoted to the art, architecture and gardens of medieval Europe. The Cloisters provide an evocative setting for more than 2,000 exceptional artworks from the 12th through the 15th century.

The Cloisters is also known for its three unique gardens whose design and plantings are based on documents and works of art from the Middle Ages. Enjoy a **guided tour of the Cloisters museum with special focus on the gardens.**



The Metropolitan Museum of Art on Fifth Avenue in New York City is one of the world's largest and most important art museums. Housing an enormous permanent collection "The Met" with its tall columns and windows, immense stairways and fountains, looks like it could be an emperor's palace. Time at the museum will be on your own with time for lunch at the café.

Psssssst! Be sure to visit the Cantor Roof Garden for a drink and a view of Central Park.

Cost: \$99 per member or \$105 if not a CHS member.



This one-of-a-kind trip offering an intimate look at gardens in our nation's capital needs a few more travelers. Final payment date has been extended.
Call TODAY to reserve your spot!



Hillwood estate and gardens



Dumbarton Oaks

Glorious Gardens of Washington DC

Wednesday–Saturday, April 25-28

This spring trip, rich with history and beauty, features four full days of magnificent gardens in and around our nation's capital. Garden visits include:

- the recently reopened-to-the-public Dumbarton Oaks located in Georgetown
- Hillwood estate and gardens in Washington D.C., the final home of Marjorie Merriweather Post
- American Horticultural Society River Farm in Alexandria
- Tudor Place, an urban estate built by Martha Washington's granddaughter overlooking the Potomac

There will also be a riding tour of 'Washington by Night' after a delicious welcome dinner at Tony & Joe's on day one. Our farewell meal will be an elegant dinner served aboard the Odyssey while cruising the Potomac.

Cost: \$1,049 per member (double) or \$1,399 per member (single).

Add \$50 per person if not a CHS member.

**To reserve your spot or for more information, please call
Friendship Tours at (860) 243-1630 / toll-free (800) 243-1630
or visit www.friendshiptours.net and select CHS Tours.**

CHS Calendar at a Glance

- Thurs., Mar. 1** – CHS Board meeting, 7:00 p.m., Rocky Hill office
- Sat., Mar. 3, 10 & 17** – Veggie Workshop Series, Naugatuck Valley Community College (snow date – Mar. 24)
- Thurs, Mar. 15** – CHS Program meeting, 7:30 p.m.; Eric Hsu presents *Lessons from Chanticleer: Plants & Planting Style for your Garden's Micro-Climates*
- Sat., Mar. 31** – CHS co-hosts Native Bees lecture with CT Botanical Society (see pg 4)
- Fri., May 4** – CHS Spring Plant Sale & Auction, 6:30 p.m., Bethany Covenant Church

Dated Material 🌿 *Please Rush*

The CHS Newsletter is printed on recycled paper with soya ink.



Awards Chair Kathy Niver (on the right) presents the award to Lisa Turoczi of Earth Tones Native Plant Nursery



2018 CHS CT Flower & Garden Show Award Winner Earth Tones Native Plant Nursery, Woodbury

by Kathy Niver, Awards Committee Chair

This year's winning display by Earth Tones Native Plant Nursery greeted attendees as they entered and set the bar high. It had it all — the smell of soil, the sound of birds and peepers, a soft waterfall and pond, the site of buds and blooms, a hint of child's play, and many of nature's little creatures subtly making their presence known to a keen observer.

The nursery, located in Woodbury, is owned by Lisa and Kyle Turoczi. Lisa is a Landscape Designer and Kyle has a degree in Environmental Science, is a Wetlands Ecologist and a Certified Soil Scientist. Visit www.earthtonesnatives.com to learn more about their breadth of capabilities.

Congratulations Earth Tones, LLC and a very special thank you to our judges. Tom Christopher, Karen Bussolini and Justine Leeper brought tremendous experience and knowledge to the judging process.

Displays are judged for their educational value, horticultural inspiration, overall design, and use of interesting plant material. Earth Tones Native Plant Nursery certainly hit the mark.