



# conifer

AMERICAN CONIFER SOCIETY | CONIFERQUARTERLY | Volume 37, Number 4/FALL 2020

# Fall 2020

## Volume 37, Number 4

**CONIFERQUARTERLY** (ISSN 8755-0490) is published quarterly by the American Conifer Society. The Society is a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is tax exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

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## CONIFER QUARTERLY

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*Picea abies* 'Gold Drift',

St. Michael, MN.

Photo by Russell Peterson.

### Inside Cover Photo

*Pinus sylvestris* 'Green Penguin',

Rare Tree Nursery, Silverton, OR.

Photo by Sam Pratt.

### Back Cover Photo

*Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Nana Gracilis',

Bayard Cutting Arboretum,

Great River, NY.

Photo by Heather Coste.

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# President's Message - Fall 2020

David Olszyk

Hello members, and welcome to fall! Like many of you, I'm more than ready for the cooler temperatures and added rainfall that come with my favorite season. I hope your garden casualties this year were held to a minimum. My heart goes out to all my fellow Western Region members, who were forced to deal with the horrors of yet another extended fire season.

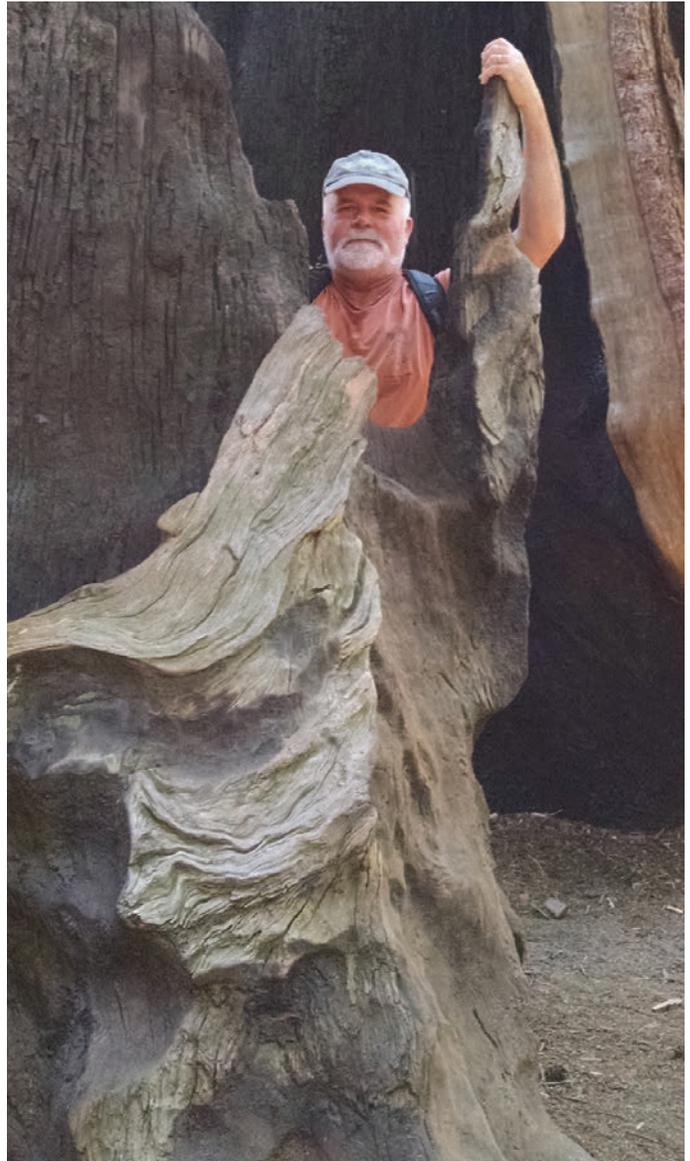
Unfortunately, we're still not in a place where we can seriously plan for large, in-person gatherings of conifer enthusiasts, which only emphasizes our need to seek out virtual alternatives. Do you, or anybody you know, have skills in filming and editing webinars or instructional videos? If so, let me know. Throughout the winter, we look to produce and make such "virtual events" available on our website. The only thing currently holding us back is that, even though our leadership strongly wants to offer these things, none of us has the specific set of skills to bring it to fruition by ourselves.

During the month of July, your Board of Directors conducted its first ever, online Summer Board Meeting over the Zoom video meeting platform. Not only did we save the Society a lot of money in Board travel costs, we also safely conducted a lot of important business, resulting in scholarships and grants being considered and approved. Congratulations to all of the worthy recipients. I look forward to reading the after-action reports detailing your significant research and study. The result will certainly be enhanced knowledge and appreciation of conifers, worldwide.

It's also time to welcome two new leaders to our ranks. Our new Western Region President, Don Brooks, the recently retired Grounds Manager of Seattle's Kubota Gardens, brings a career's worth of experience in matters of landscape design and conifer maintenance. Michael Weber, our new Central Region Director, brings a strong background in financial and business management to the table and will certainly help steer the Board of Directors toward responsible, common-sense leadership. Welcome to you both. I wish you luck as we navigate these uniquely curious times.

We can't welcome the new without acknowledging the efforts of the old. Joe Carli, the outgoing Western Region President, is leaving the Board for now. We always appreciate the levelheaded candor that he brings to our effort. What more can I say about outgoing Central Region Director, David Speth, that hasn't already been said in the summer issue of the CQ? I always enjoyed the time we spent together, working with the Board of Directors. I appreciate the strength in your resolve, David, to make everything better and more efficient for the Society.

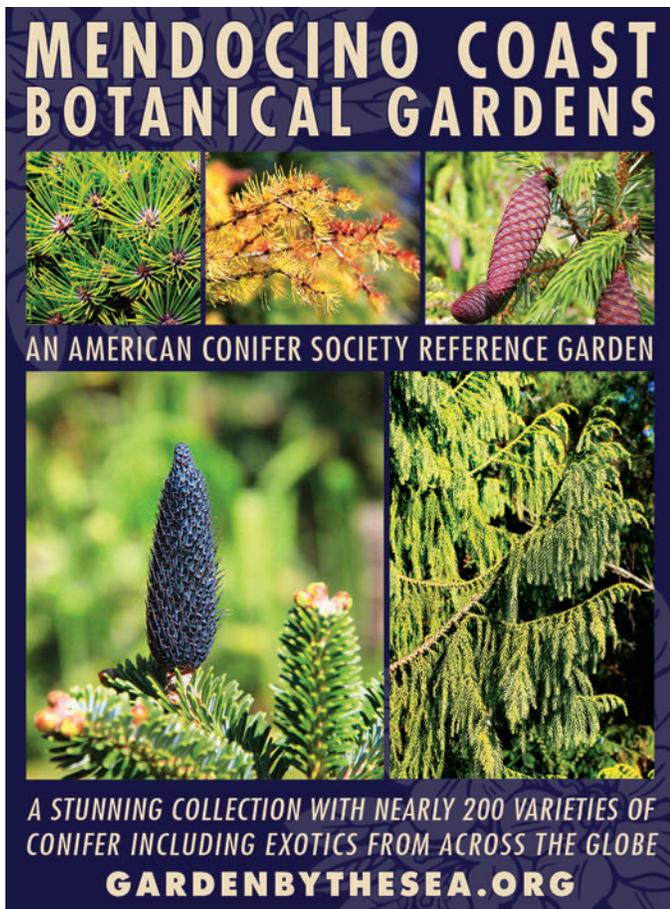
As you read this issue, you will find an article that is of particular interest to me. I've always had a



fascination with Southern pines and broom hunting, in general. My good friends, Scott Antrim and Bruce Appeldoorn, are pioneering an effort to introduce new dwarf cultivars of conifer species that are virtually unknown outside of the Southeastern Region. Well done, gentlemen! I have a *Pinus pungens* 'Doughton Park' in my conifer collection and I'm happy to report that it does well in the Pacific Northwest, despite our huge climate differences.

This article illustrates a critical need. Do you live somewhere, where the local conifers aren't represented by dwarf examples and, yet, are suitable for a small, neighborhood garden? Look around! Witch's brooms, color variations, and other sports exist for all species. All you need is a good eye to spot the unusual and a good grafter to create a new cultivar that you can name and help to introduce. Do you lack the latter? Drop us a line; there are more "hobby-grafters" out there than you may realize.

I hope all of you enjoy fall's issue of *CONIFERQUARTERLY*. If you would like more conifer information, stories, and discussion, [ConiferSociety.org](http://ConiferSociety.org) is always available and current with new content.



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## A note from Steven Courtney, National Office Manager, to all ACS Members

As the ACS continues to adopt modern practices and is now conducting online elections, in some regions, it is necessary to have valid email addresses for every authorized voter in the Society. In the Summer CQ 2020, David Olszyk, ACS President, asked that the National Office ensures that it has a valid email address for each member of the Society. Every voting member (up to two per household membership) must have their own unique email address. Please go to our website, login in, and review your individual profile. If your email address is missing, you can add it yourself. You can also let President Olszyk or me know, and either of us can easily add it for you. If you don't have a computer, someone you know can help you. Reach out to us if you need assistance.

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# Report from the Treasurer

Text Robin Tower

Our fiscal year ended on October 31, 2019, and, from a financial perspective, it was a very successful one. This fiscal year that will end on October 31, 2020 will look quite different financially. However, thanks to the hard work of your Board of Directors and its committees, it will have its own successes!

Be aware that income from membership dues only covers the costs incurred in creating **CONIFERQUARTERLY** and a portion of our general operating costs. If you wish to see the ACS take a greater role in funding scholarships and grants, please consider making recurring donations to the Society. They are tax-deductible and go to fund pressing causes.

The Age of COVID-19 has created its own set of special challenges. Going forward, your leadership committees are working hard to establish new streams of revenue and ways to cut costs. On the horizon are virtual workshops, online exchange / auction; and new, expanded levels of membership. Following are some financial highlights:

	Year ended 10/31/19	Six Months ended 4/30/20
<b><u>Major sources of revenue:</u></b>		
Membership Dues	\$69,853	\$43,125
CCOY Sales (net)	\$7,433	\$12,813
Donations	\$32,702*	\$ 2,402
Net Income from meetings	\$27,837	
Plant auctions	\$31,569	
Dividends and interest	\$25,925	\$ 8,452
<i>*Includes \$20,000 results of direct mail campaign.</i>		
<b><u>Major Expenditures</u></b>		
CONIFERQUARTERLY	\$44,936	\$21,390
Office Expenses	\$44,859	\$30,032
Web service (Database, Articles, etc.)	\$6,741	\$4,050
<b><u>Expenditures from Board Designated Reserve Fund:</u></b>		
Reference Garden Grants	\$4,200	\$7,488
Upgrade to website	\$1,250	\$3,500
Scholarships	\$9,000	\$2,000
Research grant		\$4,985

Our operating cash remains robust at \$137,000. Our invested funds as of April 30, 2020 amounted to \$430,766. A major Board accomplishment was to find and bring on board a professional fund manager. An Investment Policy Statement was designed and put into place with the help of the fund manager. Our investment strategy is now on a more professional footing and will be monitored going forward on a regular basis.

# Upcoming Conifers for Southeast Gardens

## Some Like It Hot

Text and Photography Scott Antrim

Saying that southern conifers “get no respect” is an understatement. When was the last time you ventured into a nursery, botanical garden, or even your own garden and admired a cultivar of *Pinus taeda* (loblolly pine), *Pinus virginiana* (Virginia pine), or *Pinus clausa* (sand pine)? Likely never, as there is little financial incentive for large, wholesale producers to offer cultivars of species that are generally not hardy over wide areas of our country, especially in places where conifers are mainstays in the landscape like the Northeast, Upper Midwest, Upper Mountain West, and Northwest.

For those of us yearning for conifers adapted to the jungle-like south, however, hope springs eternal. Thanks to the keen eyes of many devoted witch’s broom hunters and talented grafters in the ACS’s Southeastern Region, many of our native species are being brought out of the wild and into cultivation.

Bruce Appeldoorn, who owns one of the local southern nurseries and who is a celebrated grafter, is central to this effort. Owner of Appeldoorn Landscape Nursery in rural Bostic, NC, Bruce has become the recipient, producer, and now the nearly-exclusive source for finding many of these rare cultivars that will thrive—not just survive—in our southern climate.

During a recent visit to Bruce’s nursery, I spent time perusing many of these newer cultivars that he is growing, in an effort to pick out some that show signs of being a cut above the rest.

Before presenting you with some of my favorites, be reminded that growing conifers sourced from witch’s brooms is not a sport (no pun intended) for the impatient. Generally, several years of growth and observation must elapse before one will have any idea which characteristics of the original broom will manifest themselves in the new plant.

With that said, many of Bruce’s more recent grafts are still a little young to make decisions regarding future garden worthiness. We’ve selected our favorites to share from collections that Bruce and I have made in the last several years for our area based on growth habit, color, and rarity.

The next time you are choosing that must-have conifer for your southern garden, think native. Not only will they be less fussy than that pine or spruce from outside the south, but you will have a rarity, of which many, especially those from *conifer heaven*, can be envious.



*Pinus pungens* ‘Doughton Park’ — a cultivated specimen.

A first in several ways, ‘Doughton Park’ was originally collected in 2014 in Northwest North Carolina. Apparently, this was the first *Pinus pungens* (Table Mountain pine) broom brought into cultivation and was also the very first broom I found. Exquisite specimens of this tree are currently growing in Sandy Horn’s garden in Cary, NC, and in Missy and Wayne Galloway’s garden above Asheville, NC.

Both are nice, rounded balls with a dense branch structure. When happy, this tree produces several inches of new growth annually, so it may not stay a cute bundle of joy forever. As an added bonus, *Pinus pungens* will often induce a period of confusion and inquisition for those who automatically associate *pungens* with *Picea*.



*Pinus taeda* 'Polkville Bank' — original broom.

Considering how widespread *Pinus taeda* is in the Southeast, it's surprising that there aren't more cultivars of this species. Aside from the rarely encountered 'NCSU Dwarf Group', often wrongly referred to as 'Nana', only a relatively few others are known. Discovered among a line of trees behind an old bank building in Polkville, NC, it's a wonder that this broom was found at all. Growing on top of a branch and nestled among surrounding foliage, only this dense broom's shorter needles and cumulus cloud appearance divulged its existence. From the few specimens at Bruce's nursery, the desired, much shorter needles, and congested growth continue to



*Pinus taeda* 'Polkville Bank' — a cultivated specimen.

be evident. Hopefully, this desirable growth habit will continue, and it will evolve into a manageable-sized loblolly that will make a welcome addition to the garden.

I love the thrill of the hunt, but, honestly, I am over *Pinus virginiana* brooms. By far, these seem to be the most common brooms in my area of the Carolina Piedmont. To date, I've probably found two dozen or more of these. As a straight species, *Pinus virginiana* is pretty homely and not worthy of being planted, but many cultivars like 'Driscoll' are widely available and make a nice addition to the landscape. Brooms I've found on this species tend to be similar in appearance and are always far better looking than the parent plant.

One in particular has stood out among the others that Bruce has propagated. I named it 'Bo Broom' in reference to the parent tree growing in a vacant lot next to a Bojangles restaurant in Clover, SC. Unlike other *P. virginiana* brooms that typically grow as dense orbs, this one was a wide, flat spreader, only a few inches tall and rather open in appearance. While typical



*Pinus virginiana* 'Bo Broom' — original broom.

*P. virginiana* needles are round and two inches long, 'Bo Broom' needles are much smaller, only about one quarter to one half inch long, giving it a really delicate appearance. Growth so far has been slower than that of all the other *Pinus virginiana* brooms that Bruce has propagated.



*Pinus clausa* 'Sand Dollar' — original broom.



*Pinus virginiana* 'Bo Broom' — a cultivated specimen.

In furthering my broom search field a few years ago, I went to Central Florida to have a look around. Rather than hitting it big on finding brooms on *Pinus elliotii* (slash pine) or *Pinus palustris* (longleaf pine), I hit the jackpot with *Pinus clausa* (sand pine), which is basically Florida's equivalent to *P. virginiana*. Every bit as homely as *Pinus virginiana*, *Pinus clausa* is nearly endemic to Florida with the same short needles, open crown, and flaky bark. Documented cultivars of it are virtually nonexistent. Like its northern cousin, it appears to be a prolific broomer, and, over two days, I saw nearly a dozen brooms and collected about half of them. I named one selection 'Sand Dollar'; it is like no other broom I've seen. It reminded me of an old Union 76™ gas station sign, as it was just one big sphere sitting atop a narrow, unbranched trunk. Currently, only one very young example of this broom exists, and we are hoping the plant lives up to its potential. Due to



*Pinus clausa* 'Sand Dollar' — a cultivated specimen.



*Pinus virginiana* 'Scout Camp' — a cultivated specimen.

its very southerly native range, cold-hardiness north of USDA Zone 8 is likely to be borderline.

As mentioned previously, there are no shortages of *Pinus virginiana* brooms, at least in the central part of the Carolinas. Originally brought to Bruce Appeldoorn's attention by a neighbor, *Pinus virginiana* 'Scout Camp' was found just down the road from a Boy Scout camp near Dysartsville, NC. Unlike 'Bo Broom' that has

relatively tiny needles and a more compact growth habit, 'Scout Camp' appears to be a more vigorous upright grower with a dense, branching structure. Needles are a deep, lustrous green, and about an inch long.

This article has been graciously shared by the *Summer 2020 Southeastern Region Conifer Quarterly*, Sandra Horn, Editor.

# 2020 ACS Undergraduate Scholarship Recipients

Text Lois Girton, Scholarship Chair



Brooke Dietsch. Photo by Brian Knapp, Brooke's friend.

## **Brooke Dietsch** **Iowa State University, Ames, IA**

Brooke Dietsch, a senior in Public Horticulture at Iowa State University, is the recipient of this year's \$1,000 undergraduate scholarship from the American Conifer Society. In her application, Brooke described her interest in trees as beginning with walks in the woods near her home in Northeast Iowa. That interest expanded into a love of conifers, after she visited the sequoias of California and the pines of New Jersey.

Brooke previously worked in a nursery, selling both woody and herbaceous plants. During this past summer, she began an internship at the Iowa Arboretum, which has an extensive collection

of conifers, many dating to its founding in 1968. She worked on the maintenance of several areas in the arboretum, while sharpening her skills in tree identification.

Currently, Brooke, all the staff, and volunteers are cleaning up from the devastating derecho that blew through the Midwest this past August. The Iowa Arboretum lost more than 130 trees, and just as many need extensive pruning.

Brooke's dream job is to become involved in conservation work in a national park. She is very grateful for the award that will help, in these challenging times, with the expenses of her final year of college.

**Alexander Martin**  
**University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada**

Alexander (Alex) Martin, a sophomore from Manitoba in the Urban Forestry program at the University of British Columbia, also received a \$1,000 ACS undergraduate scholarship this year. He has an impressive list of accomplishments.

Starting at age 14, he began to learn arboriculture from his neighbor, a municipal arborist. He worked for a tree service throughout high school and spent six months in Germany, where he observed different arboricultural practices. Alex became certified as an International Society of Arboriculture Arborist in 2019 and as a Master Arborist in 2020.

He recently published an article entitled: "Recommended Best Management Practices for the Arboriculture Industry during the COVID-19 Pandemic". That article is available online.

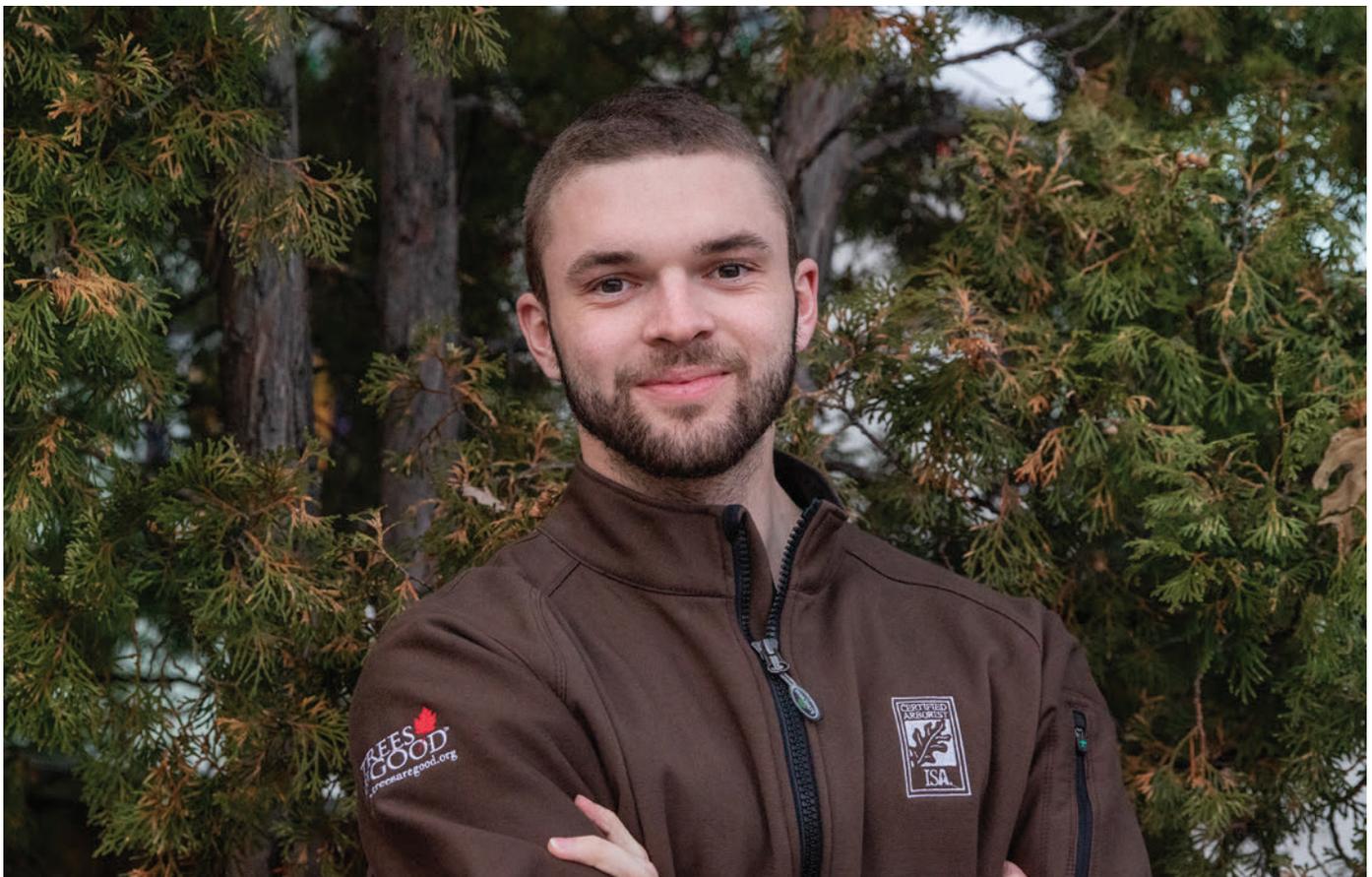
Also available online, *Lawn and Landscape* featured him in an article this summer that enumerates his many accomplishments.

In his application, Alex stated that he will be working with Dr. Andrew Almas at UBC to research existing Canadian provincial and territorial arboriculture legislation to determine if the Red Seal trade designation for arboriculture would be beneficial to Canadian arborists. The Red Seal is a Canadian national endorsement and licensure that allows journeypersons to practice their trade both in and out of country.

Alex is interested, too, in the potential spread of fungi through the sale or distribution of wood chips to landscapers, horticulturists, and homeowners. He plans to pursue his studies beyond his Bachelor of Urban Forestry degree. In his acceptance letter, Alex expressed appreciation for the support from ACS.

As Scholarship Chair, I believe that these scholarship recipients will be invested in conifers for a long time. ACS members will look forward to hearing from them.

Alexander Martin. Photo by Bruce Martin, Alex's father.



# ACS Research Grant Recipient 2020

Clayton Hale, in his own words.

Text Clayton Hale



Clayton Hale. Photo by Connor Owens, Graduate Research Assistant at Mississippi State University. Connor is Clayton's friend, colleague, and collaborator.

I grew up hiking and botanizing in the cedar glades of Middle Tennessee. I received my Bachelor of Science degree in forestry, with a concentration in restoration and conservation, from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

During my time in Knoxville, I worked on various research projects, such as plant invasion in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, how to increase biodiversity during reforestation, and safeguarding the genetic diversity of eastern hemlocks in Tennessee. Currently, I am a graduate research assistant in the Department of Forestry at Mississippi State University, studying under Dr. Joshua J. Granger.

The central theme of my current research is the ecology and conservation of imperiled plant species and communities. I use both field-based sampling techniques and computer-based modeling to understand better the ecology, life history, and habitat requirements of species and communities, in order to inform their conservation. One such focus of my work is the Atlantic white false-cypress (*Chamaecyparis thoides*) along the Gulf Coast.

Prior to receiving this grant from the ACS, I worked to explain the regeneration of the Atlantic white false-cypress after a devastating hurricane event. With the generous grant the ACS has provided, I



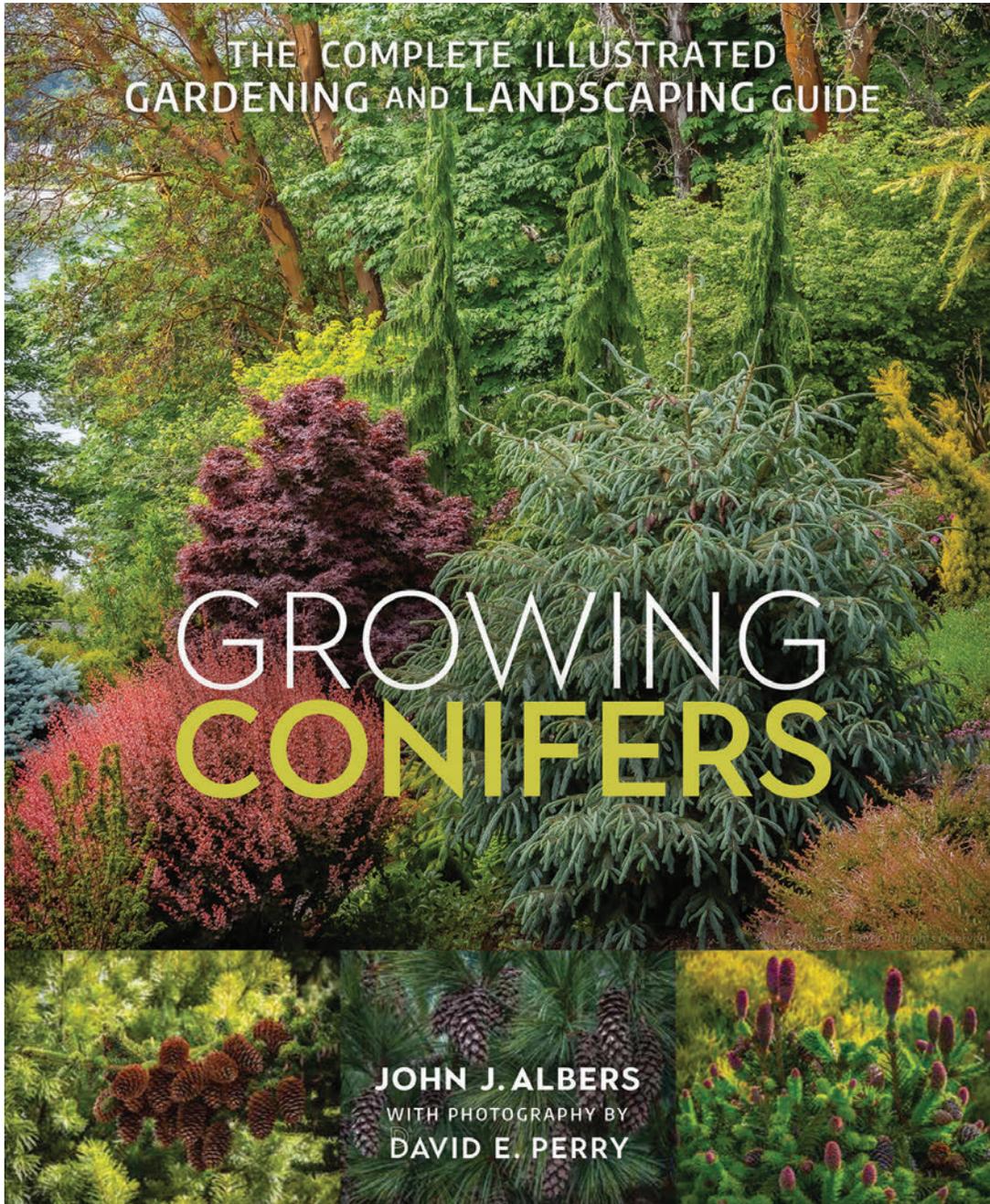
hope to understand better the genetic diversity and gene-flow between populations of Atlantic white false-cypress, in order to further better conservation of the species. Upon graduation in May 2021, I hope to pursue a doctorate in plant community ecology and plant conservation.

Clayton Hale in the field, measuring trees. Photo by Will Kruckeberg, Graduate Research Assistant at Mississippi State University. Will is also Clayton's friend, colleague and collaborator.

# Growing Conifers: The Complete Illustrated Gardening and Landscaping Guide

Dr. John J. Albers, Photography David E. Perry

Review Dr. Ronald J. Elardo



It's all about science! That pretty much sums up the essence of Dr. John J. Albers's *Growing Conifers*, which is far more than just a run-of-the-mill conifer book. It is a complete guide to designing a conifer garden that starts with basic knowledge of conifers and ends with creating a sustainable conifer landscape. In between is the accumulated

knowledge of a conifer lover, who knows how to explain everything in language that guides the beginning gardener toward becoming a master conifer gardener. Each chapter is a book in itself, full of indispensable information. *Growing Conifers* is published by New Society Publishers and will appear in May 2021.

To know the author is to meet a renaissance man, who worked in microbiology and immunology and taught those subjects to students in medical school; wrote approximately 400 scholarly publications; trained doctors, dentists and nurses; and was, all the while, taking nearly every horticulture course that the University of Washington offered, on his way to becoming a Master Gardener. In 1999, the author created Albers Vista Gardens in Washington State, a four-acre, botanical garden *and* laboratory, that now includes 130 conifer species and over 400 conifer cultivars.

The buyer of this book will be the happy recipient of a professional lifetime of scientific and gardening knowledge, all rolled into one.

*Growing Conifers* is jam-packed with knowledge and educational information. The chapter headings give insight into the author's method. Dr. Albers begins with conifer basics: what are conifers, and where do they fit in the evolution of Earth's flora? How do they grow? He covers all the things you need to know about conifers, whether you are a taxonomist or a novice.

He describes the shapes and colors of conifer families, their botanical nomenclature, and even the kinds and shapes of their needles. Dr. Albers shows you how to evaluate your garden and how to choose conifers appropriate for your garden and your USDA zone. He answers the question, what are the benefits of growing conifers? In cities, for example, they mitigate the effects of "urban heat islands" and remove harmful pollutants, year-round.

Albers advises that your garden should mimic nature, as you lay it out. Do you want to shade a certain area or to use low-growing conifers as ground covers? Choosing the right conifers with the right sizes for the right spaces will allow you to create a multi-layered garden palette, attractive to the eye and functional in the environment. Soil types and planting recommendations, use of

certain conifers to perform a desired function such as wind blocks – it's all there. As a quick reference, there are tables helping you choose conifer species and cultivars that will work in your zone.

*Growing Conifers* is a wonderful compilation of education, research, and scholarly resources. Dr. Albers even gets down to the nitty-gritty of how and when to plant, depending on the origin of your conifer. Was it grown in the ground, in a pot, or in a container? He even teaches you how to propagate conifers.

The message of *Growing Conifers* culminates with sustainably caring for conifers. The reader learns how important it is to create a conifer garden that saves and replenishes the Earth and its resources. It may seem like a lofty goal, but this book gives you a step-by-step process on how to achieve just that.

*Growing Conifers* may affirm what you know about conifers, but it will definitely open new avenues of understanding on how best to make these gymnosperms work.



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# Bayard Cutting Arboretum

## Recipient of the 2020 Jean Iseli Memorial Grant

*Text Kevin Wiecks, Joy Arden, Jessica O'Callahan*

*Photography Heather Coste, Kevin Wiecks, Bill Wykoff*



The Conifer Garden at the Manor House at Bayard Cutting Arboretum. Photo by Heather Coste.

Bayard Cutting Arboretum (BCA) is a 691-acre facility in Great River, NY. It is located along the Connetquot River on the south shore of Long Island. The property was originally owned by Mr. William Bayard Cutting and his family and was constructed as an estate overlooking the river in 1886. Mr. Cutting saw potential in the natural beauty of the landscape surrounding his home. Utilizing plans designed by the noted landscape architectural firm of Frederick Law Olmsted, development of the arboretum began in 1887.

BCA is home to many unique and extensive collections such as oaks, hollies, rhododendrons, and native woodlands. However, our most notable collections revolve around conifers. Mr. Cutting began to plant his conifer collection in the late 1800s with the support of Dr. Charles Sprague Sargent, then Director of

Harvard's Arnold Arboretum in Massachusetts. Mr. Cutting had an affinity for firs and spruces because of their kempt and conical habit, in contrast to the unruly appearance of pines. He appreciated rare specimens that could grow both in his backyard and across the world. Some of the original trees can be seen today in the heart of the Bayard Cutting Arboretum, in the Old Pinetum.

After Mr. Cutting passed away in 1912, his wife, Mrs. Olivia Cutting, continued his legacy by advancing the development of the arboretum and sourcing trees from nurseries all over the world. Rare and unusual specimens came from notable sources such as the Arnold Arboretum, New York Botanical Garden, Princeton University in New Jersey, the US National Arboretum in Washington, DC, and local sources such as Hick's Nursery in Westbury, NY.

Bayard Cutting Arboretum was gifted to the Long Island State Park Region in 1936 by Mrs. Olivia Cutting and her daughter, Mrs. Olivia James, in memory of William Bayard Cutting, "to provide an oasis of beauty and quiet for the pleasure, rest, and refreshment of those who delight in outdoor beauty; and to bring about a greater appreciation and understanding of the value and importance of informal planting" (BCA Mission Statement). Her generosity and foresight have allowed Bayard Cutting to remain a peaceful escape that is dedicated to horticulture since its grand opening in 1954. This would not be possible without the incredible support and dedication of the arboretum's Board of Trustees and the Olivia Cutting Trust.

Bayard Cutting Arboretum currently stands among the most significant conifer collections in the region. It is not only a place to view mature specimens of diverse taxa, but also a place to experience these trees in a variety of settings, celebrating the natural and informal landscape that was described in the arboretum's mission. Under the horticultural direction of Nelson Sterner, Executive Director, and Kevin Wiecks, Landscape Curator, the conifer collection has been taken to new heights. Currently, there are over 1,600 specimen conifers, representing 352 taxa, throughout the landscape.

Our many acres of natural areas are filled with native conifers. These include, most significantly, *Pinus rigida* (pitch pine), *Pinus strobus* (eastern white pine), *Juniperus virginiana* (eastern red-cedar), and members of the tree population in The Long Island Central Pine Barrens in Suffolk County, a forest preserve, containing many threatened and endangered fauna.

The River Walk, which follows along the Connetquot River, is lined with mature *Taxodium distichum* (bald cypress). The understory is punctuated by cypress knees, which not only provide a sense of wonder to passersby, but also help to prevent erosion of our coastline. *Taxodium* species have proven to be the perfect conifers in these areas, tolerant of high wind and flooding. We are experimenting with improved cultivars of both bald cypress and pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*).

*Taxodium ascendens* 'Morris' (Debonair™ pond cypress) was recently planted in an allée along a footbridge near our Woodland Garden. The slender habit of this cultivar lends itself to use along paths, and the delicate foliage contrasts beautifully with that of the straight *Taxodium ascendens* species. Walking through the rolling landscape of Oak Park, you will eventually find a grove of dawn redwoods (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*). This hidden forest was planted from saplings donated by the New York Botanical Garden in 1958. Although there are significant conifers throughout our 691 acres, the most significant specimens can be found in the Old Pinetum, New Pinetum



*Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Nana Gracilis'. Photo by Heather Coste.



*Pseudolarix amabilis*. Photo by Bill Wykoff.

Extension, and our newest addition, the Conifer Garden. These collections differ in many aspects such as plant selection, design, and maintenance.

The Old Pinetum contains multiple Sargent's weeping Canadian hemlocks (*Tsuga canadensis* 'Sargentii'), sourced by Dr. Sargent himself over 100 years ago. It also boasts one of the largest Algerian firs (*Abies numidica*) in the United States. In addition, this area contains unique groupings of *Chamaecyparis pisifera* (sawara false-cypress) and *Chamaecyparis thyoides* (Atlantic white false-cypress), which have self-propagated to form groves from the individual trees. The New Pinetum was planted in 1946 with small groupings of individual species. The most notable are golden larch (*Pseudolarix amabilis*), Nikko fir (*Abies homolepis*), and Wilson's spruce (*Picea wilsonii*). It is also home to a beautifully aged graceful dwarf Hinoki cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Nana Gracilis'), gifted to us in 1974 by Joe Cesarini, Long Island nurseryman and conifer developer.

The Pinetum Extension, established in 1971, is home to a mature, blue China fir (*Cunninghamia lanceolata* 'Glaucá'), which sets the scale and tone for everything around it. We have recently planted mature specimens of *Abies pinsapo* 'Glaucá' (blue Spanish fir) and the straight species of *Cunninghamia lanceolata* (China fir), in order to continue the theme. This area is also defined by the multiple Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*) that play off the conifers.

The Conifer Garden was created in 2016, replacing the existing Shrub Glade, which was overgrown and occupying an important area adjacent to the Manor House. Notable public garden designers, Lynden Miller and Ronda Brands, designed this garden by using a unique selection of conifers sourced from specialty nurseries throughout the country. Strolling through the winding paths of the Conifer Garden ultimately leads visitors to a very special collection, The Ed Rezek Dwarf Conifer Garden. This garden showcases the dwarf conifers bred by the Long Island native and co-founder of the American Conifer Society. It consists

mostly of *Chamaecyparis obtusa* (Hinoki cypress), for which he was famous. The collection was gifted to us by Ed's widow, Maureen Rezek. Thirty-eight plants were transplanted from the Rezek's home in Malvern, NY. Maureen entrusted us with creating a garden that would memorialize Ed's legacy. This garden displays a one-of-a-kind horticultural collection and tells the story of an important man, who had a tremendous influence on the world of conifers, both locally and globally.

As a historic arboretum, the most significant difference between our conifer collections is age. Letters from our archives show a well-thought-out plan with consultation from the greatest minds in our industry, in order to shape the future of Bayard Cutting. In 1929, Mrs. Olivia James wrote to Dr. Sargent asking about "what size the trees are apt to be when fully grown?" She was referring to small trees that were gifted to us from the Arnold Arboretum and that had originated from specimens brought back from China by E.H. Wilson. Sargent replied: "As the Chinese conifers have only been in cultivation for a few years, it is impossible

even to form an idea of the size they will grow in this country." (BCA Archive). We are still learning and experimenting in the footsteps of our predecessors. The age of our collections is not only noted in the maturity of trees, but also in design, our changing environment, and plant selection of newer cultivars.

As a recipient of the 2020 Jean Iseli Memorial Grant, Bayard Cutting Arboretum is entering the next phase of its horticultural development. Our new conifer collection is projected to debut in Fall 2020. It is intended to showcase very slow-growing conifers in contrast to more mature specimens nearby. We are doing this with new selections from Iseli Nursery's extensive catalog, focusing on a diverse palette of interesting conifers. The proposed garden will be placed in two adjoining beds in the Old Pinetum, breathing new life into an area that has aged over the years. The selected site had a small grove of both large and small *Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'Plumosa' (plumose sawara false-cypress), which crowded out the existing specimens.

The Ed Rezek Dwarf Conifer Garden. Photo by Kevin Wiecks.





*Tsuga canadensis* 'Sargentii'. Photo by Kevin Wiecks.

The entire staff has been involved in this project, but the real architects of this garden are the *Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'Plumosa'. Our every decision took these tall, elder conifers into consideration. After much deliberation, we removed the smaller *Chamaecyparis* from the bed to create space for new cultivars. The removal also allows additional sunlight to reach the interior of the garden and to create a more ideal growing condition for sun-loving conifers. We then decided to raise the canopy of the remaining trees to reveal the large, lovely, reddish-barked trunks.

This exposed an area with potential for a shaded woodland, as well as additional space for new conifers. A shady woodland and sun-loving conifers? We consulted with Ronda Brands for this unique problem. How do we thematically connect this aesthetic incongruity? The *Chamaecyparis* of course! They are the unifying characters of this entire space.

In addition to keeping most of these tall *Chamaecyparis* trees, we kept a large *Abies grandis* (grand fir), and a mature *Pinus strobus* 'Pendula'

*Abies pinsapo*. Photo by Kevin Wiecks.





The future Iseli Award garden site. Photo by Kevin Wiecks.

(weeping eastern white pine), in order to indicate a sense of scale. We chose to widen the existing beds on either side of the grass pathway, which directs people straight toward a *Tilia x europaea* (common linden) and encourages them to walk beyond the *Tilia* and further explore the Old Pinetum. We will plant the slow-growing conifers on either side of the grass pathway, in the original bed that borders what Ronda has deemed the “*Chamaecyparis Cathedral*”. We let our imagination (but mostly those *Chamaecyparis* trees) take us from creating a small conifer collection to creating a true garden experience.

The next step in the garden installation will be mapping the new specimens and adding them to our database. Our Geographic Information System specialist, Joy Arden, updates the vast collection database by using cloud-based, geographic, mapping software. Details and location of the new, slow-growing conifers will be accessible on our interactive Tree Explorer. This technology provides visitors and staff a deeper look into the arboretum’s evolving collections. Experience our collection digitally by visiting “tree explorer” on our website.

We are extremely grateful to the American Conifer Society, the Iseli Memorial Grant, and Iseli Nursery

for giving us this opportunity. In addition, we would like to recognize the hard work and passion of Jessica O’Callahan, Bayard Cutting Arboretum’s horticultural intern. We take great pride in our internship program. Each intern has the option of working on an independent project. Jessica, who is studying at the School of Professional Horticulture at New York Botanical Garden, jumped at the opportunity to work on this garden. She is the driving force behind this project. We are honored to be the recipient of this year’s award and hope everyone has the opportunity to visit.

<b>Highlighted Specimens for the Proposed Garden</b>
<i>Cedrus deodara</i> ‘Gold Cascade’ (Gold Cascade Himalayan cedar)
<i>Larix laricina</i> ‘Deborah Waxman’ (Deborah Waxman tamarack)
<i>Picea abies</i> ‘Formánek’ (Formánek Norway spruce)
<i>Pinus parviflora</i> ‘Kin po’ (Kin po Japanese white pine)
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i> ‘IslPrim’ (Primo™ eastern arborvitae)

# 2021 Collectors' Conifer of the Year

Text Dennis Lee



*Cedrus libani* 'Hedgehog'. Photo by Sam Pratt, Silverton, OR.

Wow, we are entering the 16<sup>th</sup> year of the Collectors' Conifer of the Year (CCOY) program! It is so satisfying to continue providing opportunities for members to add enjoyment and excitement to their landscapes. Besides enriching the gardening experience of participants, revenue from the sales helps support the Society's efforts in promoting conifer utilization and appreciation. Thank you for your participation.

For CCOY 2021, we have six offerings. Three of them belong to the genus *Pinus*, which includes many coveted selections, several of which have been previously offered in the CCOY program. You may recall *Pinus koraiensis* 'Morris Blue', *Pinus mugo* 'Paul's Dwarf' and 'Carstens', *Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia* 'Taylor's Sunburst', *Pinus thunbergii* 'Shirome Janome', *Pinus parviflora* 'Catherine Elizabeth', 'Tanima no yuki', and 'Bergman', *Pinus heldreichii* 'Smidtii', and, finally, *Pinus strobus* 'Niagara Falls'. This year we are including two new species into the CCOY program, *Pinus sylvestris* and *Pinus banksiana*.

Two other selections, also covered in the past by genera, are classified as *Cedrus* and *Chamaecyparis*. You may remember *Cedrus atlantica* 'Sapphire Nymph',

*Cedrus brevifolia* 'Kenwith', and *Cedrus libani* 'Katere'. As for *Chamaecyparis*, there were *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Blue Surprise' and 'Filip's Golden Tears', along with *Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Chirimen'.

This year, another coveted *obtusa* is added to the roster. The final selection debuts as a genus, *Taxus*, not offered before, and, pun intended, receives rave reviews on the silver screen.

Note that two selections, 'Hedgehog' and 'Silver Spire', are in shorter supply than the other four. However, we did not want to pass up the opportunity to offer them. The American Conifer Society happily presents this year a varied choice of colors, textures, hardiness, genera, and diversity of form. So, let your conifer passion be satisfied, and do not forget its healthy and therapeutic side effects. Indulge!

***Cedrus libani* 'Hedgehog':** The very name *hedgehog* implies a dwarf, compact, and horizontal selection. This cultivar of Lebanon cedar has a spiny texture, too. The densely-packed, rich, bluish-green, long needles are on layered, gently-mounding, horizontally-spreading branches.



*Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Bess'. Photo by Bob Fincham, Puyallup, WA.

'Hedgehog' originated at the Cedar Lodge Nursery in New Plymouth, NZ, as a seedling selection, in 2009. In 10 years, this striking beauty can be two feet tall by three feet wide. It typically grows only three to four inches a year and performs best in a sunny, well-drained site. Once established, it is very drought tolerant. Our offering is grafted onto *Cedrus deodara* rootstock, which is adaptable to many soils. 'Hedgehog' is rated for USDA Zones 6 through 8. **'Hedgehog' has limited availability, so order soon.**

***Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Bess':** This diminutive, upright Hinoki cypress is outstanding for its form, texture, and slow growth. The green, whorled, and congested foliage is appealing and is attractively arranged in varying planes. It typically grows one to two inches per year, but can grow more under amended conditions. In 1983, Joe Reis of Malvern, Long Island, NY, selected it as a seedling and named it for his wife. In 10 years, 'Bess' most likely will be around 12 to 18 inches tall and half as wide. Our offering is on its own rootstock from a propagated cutting. It is well suited for a sunny site, but performs satisfactorily in light shade. It is rated for USDA Zones 5 through 8.

***Pinus banksiana* 'Schoodic':** This gnarled, sprawling, ground-covering Jack pine has ties to the scenic Schoodic Peninsula of Maine. Al Fordham, head propagator at the Arnold Arboretum, Boston, MA, at the time, collected seed from a disjunctive population near the community of Gouldsboro, ME. The result of his efforts was a worthy cultivar that he named in 1979.



*Pinus banksiana* 'Schoodic'. Photo by Sam Pratt, Silverton, OR.

The medium-green, slightly-curved needles are held on twisted branches that have a textural appeal. As an added interest, it is a prolific cone producer. Furthermore, this pine is fascinating, as it scrambles over walls and terrains. It responds to staking or training and takes on wondrous forms. 'Schoodic' is exceedingly hardy and tough and is best suited for USDA Zones 2 through 6. Our offering is grafted onto *Pinus sylvestris* rootstock, which makes it adaptable to a variety of soils. 'Schoodic' performs best in a sunny site with good drainage.

***Pinus mugo* 'Jakobsen':** This mugo pine's appearance is distinct from others. First, its dark-green, short, stiff needles are tightly arranged in clustered tufts. Additionally, some openness in its structure reveals glimpses of the silver-gray, inner branches. Together, these interesting attributes give 'Jakobsen' the look of a much older plant that has endured the many trials of nature. While this selection imparts vigor and durability to a preferred, sunny site, it only grows two to four inches per year. Over 10 years, it will take on an irregular, mounding form that may be three to four feet tall and up to five or six feet wide. The late 1980's origin of this cultivar is credited to Arne Vagn Jakobsen

of Denmark. Our offering is grafted onto *Pinus sylvestris* rootstock, which is adaptive to a multitude of well-drained soils. This unique *mugo* is rated for USDA Zones 3 through 7.

***Pinus sylvestris* 'Green Penguin':** Here's a remarkable selection of Scots pine. This slow-growing, compact conifer has dense, rich-green, shaggy foliage that is adorned with short, tufted growth at the ends of branchlets. The overall appearance might be a little ruffled and awkward, but it is quite an attention-grabber. Add a beak and some side flippers, and you would create a whimsical creature that would invite a lot of discussion from visitors. This unusual find was discovered in the late 1990s by Jim Lewis, who is now with J Farms in Amityville, OR. In 10 years, 'Green Penguin' could be four feet tall and about 18 to 24 inches wide. Yearly growth is three to five inches. It is best suited for a sunny, well-drained site. Our offering is grafted onto *Pinus sylvestris* rootstock, which is adaptive to a diversity of soils. 'Green Penguin' is noted for its hardiness and for holding its color through adverse winter conditions. Its USDA rating is Zones 3 through 7, with reports that it has also been successful in cooler parts of USDA Zone 8.



*Pinus mugo* 'Jakobsen'. Photo by Sam Pratt, Silverton, OR.



*Pinus sylvestris* 'Green Penguin'. Photo by Sam Pratt, Silverton, OR.



*Taxus baccata* 'Silver Spire'. Photo by Sam Pratt, Silverton, OR.

***Taxus baccata* 'Silver Spire':** We have never offered the genus *Taxus*, before now. 'Silver Spire' sets a new milestone. This incredible selection of a narrow, fastigate, English yew has a striking form, along with an unusual color performance. Its three- to six-inches of tight growth per year is very upright, producing little, lateral expansion. New growth pushes out a cheerful yellow. As it matures, the color retreats to the margins of tiny, spirally-arranged leaves that fade to a paler yellow and then on to a creamy-white. Later, when seasonal, cooler weather arrives, the variegation becomes a surprising silver that shines through the winter. In 10 years, it could be five feet tall by two feet wide. The late 1980's introduction of such a prominent specimen comes from Treseders Nursery in the hamlet of Lockengate, Cornwall, UK. Our offering is propagated from a cutting on its own rootstock. It is rated for USDA Zones 5 through 7 and performs well in a sunny to a partially-shaded, well-drained site. **Make sure to get your order in soon, as this selection is limited in number.**

**Ordering:** The Collectors' Conifer of the Year program is restricted to active members of the American Conifer Society. Purchases are limited to one of each selection per member. The cost for each offering can be found on the accompanying order form. Each offering comes with a one year/one time replacement guarantee should it fail to grow during the first year in its appropriate USDA zone. Accompanying each plant is an anodized aluminum tag with its holder, which identifies the plant as a winner of the American Conifer Society's annual award of Collectors' Conifer of the Year. Shipping is included in the costs. For ordering, please complete the form in this publication. Orders will be filled by date of receipt, until the inventory sells out. All orders must be received by February 1, 2021. We cannot ship outside the United States.

Happy *conifering* to all of you!  
Dennis Lee

# A Short but Magical Trip to the Olympic Mountains.

Text and Photography Jack Christiansen

My wife, Linda, and I had just disembarked from the ferry at Port Angeles, WA, which had taken us from Victoria Island, British Columbia, where we had visited the ancient forest. We were on the final leg of our September 2019 vacation in the Pacific Northwest. I had wanted, for a long time, to visit the Olympic Mountains, with their high, year-round, snowy peaks and rain forest. The excitement was almost overwhelming. Here we were, at the gateway to a fantastical place.

The road sign stated that the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center was just 17 miles ahead, rising from sea level to an elevation of 5,200 feet. The ridge gets its name from its intense winds. The scenery along the way was simply spectacular. We stopped at various pull-offs to take photos and to enjoy the higher-elevation views and the cool breezes. The weather was very comfortable, and the sky was sapphire-blue, with traces of white, puffy clouds. All was perfect for taking pictures.

The time we had to spend there that afternoon was very limited. We had to be back to Seattle the next day to fly home. Still, we knew that this was going to be a majestic conifer adventure and we wanted to take in as much as we could in the time we had. We inquired inside the Visitor Center to ascertain where the highlights were. The place was very busy, with people going everywhere, all dressed in the latest hiking gear, all ready to start their outdoor adventure. We grabbed a quick lunch and then headed out for the trail to Hurricane Ridge that started just across the road.

Of all the species in the genus *Abies*, my most favorite one has always been *Abies lasiocarpa* (subalpine fir). At this elevation, it is the predominant conifer inhabiting the area. As we looked down to the lower elevations, we could see Sitka spruces (*Picea sitchensis*) and western hemlocks (*Tsuga heterophylla*), too. Needless to say, my curiosity was piquing.



The snow-capped Olympic Mountains in the distance.

Subalpine firs sculpted by the forces of Nature.



Stripped of their branches, the subalpines keep only their lower branches.



As we hiked up the rocky, barren formation, we came across a small cluster of older, highly weathered subalpine firs, which had lost their tops. They showed the marks of their struggle to stay alive and still maintain their lower foliage. The dead tops had all turned a frosty-white color that starkly contrasted with the dark-blue skies overhead. As we reached the ridge, the trees and distant mountains suddenly all popped into view. I could have stayed there for hours. After taking a few photos, we moved farther on along Hurricane Ridge, viewing a forest of subalpine firs. These trees appeared to be younger and smaller in stature with their slender shapes. It was a forest like I had never seen before, with vibrant-green foliage clustered tightly to the trunks of the trees that reached skyward like narrow buildings that just kept going on forever.

We had first taken the Cirque Ridge Trail that allowed us to see scenic views on all sides of the ridge. To the north, the mountains in the distance were mostly devoid of trees, a sign that a forest fire had cleared the area, years before. Turning west, we saw the tallest snow-capped peaks of the Olympic Mountain Range, visible miles away in the distance. We couldn't help but imagine what a captivating exploration that area would provide us on a future trip.

As we continued along Hurricane Ridge to its farthest point, we had to drop down to the High Ridge Trail, on the south side of Mount Olympus. This was a steeper descent, with fewer trees than on the north side. However, the trees showed even more signs of age and weather from high winds that had



Clusters of conifers contrast with the golden grasslands.



sculpted off their tops, leaving some with stripped branches on one side. I took a lot of pictures that day, mesmerized by the beauty of the area. Eventually, we found our way down to Big Meadow Trail. Here we could see golden grasslands, broken up by tight clusters of conifers, a beautiful scene that I'll always remember.

As we slowly found our way back down the trail to the visitor area, we had completed a three-mile hike in about three hours. We stopped many times along the way to take photos, enjoy the trees, and view the diverse mountain scenes. When we left that afternoon, I came away with a catalog of photographs that we could enjoy later.

This was the last leg of our vacation in 2019, and I can't imagine a better way to end it. Our visit may have been a short one, but it was a treasure we'll remember.

*Editor's Note. Jack and Linda Christiansen visited Vancouver's Ancient Forest prior to coming to the Olympic Mountains. I refer you to that account in the Winter CQ 2020, Volume 37, Number 1, pp. 10-12.*

Off in the distance, evidence of the aftermath of forest fires.

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