

AMERICAN CONIFER SOCIETY

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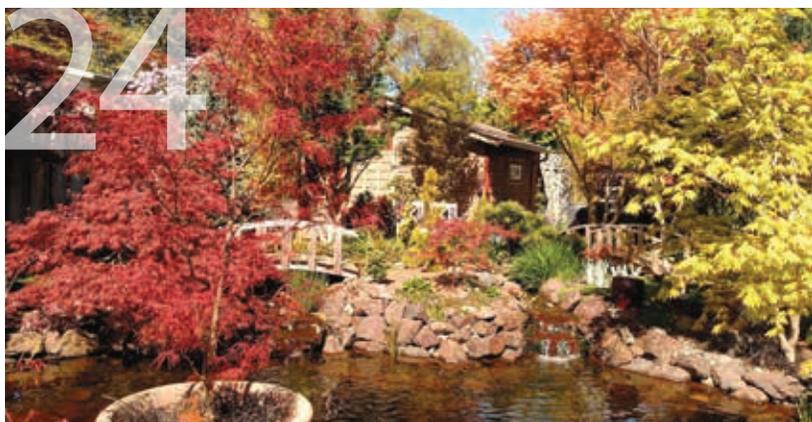
QUARTERLY

FEATURED ON PAGE 11

Southern California
CONIFER ROAD TRIP

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CONIFER Quarterly

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Sequoia sempervirens,
Armstrong Redwoods State
Natural Reserve, California.
Photo by Janice Le Cocq



DIBBLE BAR 101

BY LARRY NAU, ACS PAST PRESIDENT

Our journeys with our beloved conifers take us down many paths, many of which are totally unexpected. So it was on a hot, late October's day in Virginia. I would be part of a team of 7 people with conifers and a dibble bar.

We know and cherish conifers, but a dibble bar was a totally new experience for this conifer grower. Simply, a dibble bar is a tool used to plant trees on a large scale, primarily for reforestation projects. Dibbles consist of a steel blade formed with a 3 to 4 foot handle. It is used by thrusting it into the ground, pushing it back and forth to create a tapered hole, in which to drop a young seedling. Working with a dibble bar is a great aerobic workout and certainly rivals any gym time!

The team I was part of was planting *Pinus palustris*, longleaf pine (LLP), at Joseph Pines Preserve in Sussex County, Virginia. It was led by Phil Sheridan, Director of Meadowview Biological Research Station, joined by Mike Hammond,



A dibble bar with a bucket of Longleaf Pines



A seedling



Trees to be planted.



Larry Nau (left), ACS Past President and Phil Sherman, Director of the MeadowView Biological Research Station.



A young longleaf pine.

Board of Directors member of Meadowview, Richard Curzon, Horticulturalist, Marissa Merhout, Intern, and Mike and Donna Finnegan, Virginia Master Naturalists. With dibble bar in hand, together we planted over 2,500 *Pinus palustris* seedlings. The American Conifer Society assisted with a \$1,000 grant to Joseph Pines Preserve for seedling propagation in 2014. To learn about the history of the *Pinus palustris* refer to **CONIFER** Quarterly Vol. 32, No. 1, pg. 43.

Our team almost completed the longleaf pine planting of the initial 32 acres at Joseph Pines Preserve (JPP) during October 2015. Thanks in part to the help of the American Conifer Society, JPP has another 25,000 native Virginia longleaf pine to plant—making the JPP nursery the largest in Virginia for native LLP production. Work will begin in early 2016 to clear-cut an additional 50 acres on the preserve. This land will be restored to a native longleaf pine forest with the planting of the two-year-old seedlings. Planting 25,000 seedlings by hand is a daunting task. However, Phil Sheridan feels it is important to vest JPP and Meadowview staff, naturalists and citizens in this effort to restore the longleaf pine.

Participating in the longleaf pine planting is not just the use of a dibble bar. Seedlings need to be transported to the site and watered. The LLP seedlings are grown in IP 45 trays; many of which were bought with an ACS grant. Presently the seedlings are manually extracted by hand, with the use of a wooden dowel and mallet, labor intensive for sure. With all this energy expended, food preparation for the volunteers becomes another challenge and necessity. This is a group effort, where the help and talents of many people are required.

It was encouraging to learn that the American Conifer Society’s Southeast Region reached out to Phil Sheridan. He will speak at the SE Region Meeting and has offered to lead an exclusive tour of JPP for ACS SE Meeting attendees on Sunday, August 28, 2016. Phil and JPP are one part of an extensive effort in the Southern United States to restore *Pinus palustris* to its traditional range. I hope the ACS continues to find ways to expand its support of JPP and other conifer-related conservation projects. For myself, I like the dibble bar and the outcome of planting longleaf pines for future generations to enjoy. Odds are I will return to Virginia this October, to experience Dibble Bar 201 and help to plant those 25,000 seedlings which the ACS helped to create. Feel free to contact me if you would like more information about this project at Inau5050@gmail.com or 585-202-1815. 📍



Spring and Summer
2015 conifer plantings
at Ron Elardo's

FROM THE EDITOR

PLANT MORE CONIFERS!

BY RONALD J. ELARDO, Ph.D.

A review of [The Allergy-Fighting Garden: Stop Asthma and Allergies with Smart Landscaping](#) by Thomas Leo Ogren.

Allergies and asthma have been rising at an alarming rate among children and adults worldwide. In the United States alone, 50 million Americans have nasal allergies, in what CBS News (May 11, 2015) has called a “pollen tsunami”. And, according to a Rutgers University study, “[b]y 2040, the pollen count will more than double levels in 2000.” Further, “air pollution and allergies airways disorders through the induction of inflammation and oxidative stress in the lungs [will increase].” The National Center for Biotechnology Information (nrc.org) states that: “[e]mission reduction efforts and federal air quality standards have been insufficient to shield children from potentially serious health damage.” Pollen and pollution have become double whammies in the assault against our ability to breathe to sustain life properly.

So, what does all of this have to do with conifers?

Thomas Leo Ogren has, for the second time in his writing and research career, postulated that, through studying the pollen output of certain plants and trees, harmful pollen can be reduced by planting more female plants, among them many genera of conifer. Why female trees?

Ogren reports that, in the 1940's, the US Department of Agriculture sought to reduce the amount of seed pod and fruit “pollution” by promoting the production of male plants. The nursery industry responded to the call so that “clonal trees and shrubs became the rule”. The industry, with the government’s blessing and encouragement, manipulated the environment.

Since female trees are “messy”, and male trees are not, male plant production went into full swing. Male trees live longer and grow larger, and thus produce more pollen. Ogren writes

that: "4 out of every 5 top-selling trees in the US are male trees." In order to "reverse this unhealthy process", male trees can be top-grafted in winter, thus giving them a sex-change over to female trees. Indeed, the nursery industry has a large financial stake in their current inventory of "male trees and clones". But that can be remedied.

In addition to sex-change grafting, one other way has been that places like Albuquerque, New Mexico, Las Vegas, Nevada, Toronto, Ontario, Edmonton, Alberta, and the State of California have enacted ordinances to curtail the production and planting of allergenic pollen plants. Because your yard affects you, Ogren presents an Ogren Pollen Allergy List Scale (OPALS), which ranks trees, shrubs and plants according to their nefarious pollen effects, or lack thereof. An OPALS of 1 is the best kind of plant, 10 the worst in pollen production. In the case of conifers, however, pollen grains have qualifiers.

Tom points out that many monoecious plants will have one sex on one branch and another sex on another. In many cases, as propagators take cuttings, they take them from the lower, male branches, thus creating male trees. Tom cites Italian cypress as one prime example.

Tom, in his further research, is always looking to connect with growers in search of female selections (cultivars), like *Cephalotaxus*, for example. Had Ogren his way, *Ginkgo biloba* female trees would be preferable for planting. Male ginkgos would be reduced in number, even though the industry produces and promotes and sells the exact opposite.

Since conifer genera, for the most part, are monoecious, cross-pollination and pollen-production are far less of a problem.

For example, here are the conifer genera/species cited by Ogren and their OPALS rating:

- *Abies* **2**
- *Araucaria* **1** (for female trees); **7** for male trees Note: Grow them in containers, and far less pollen is produced.
- *Callitris* **9**
- *Cedrus atlantica* **2**
- *Cedrus brevifolia* **2**
- *Cedrus deodara* **4**
- *Cedrus deodara* 'Pendula' **5**
- *Cedrus libani* **2**
- *Cephalotaxis* **1** (female trees); **9** (male trees)
- *Chamaecyparis* **8**
- *Cryptomeria japonica* **10**
- *Ginkgo biloba* **7** (male trees); **2** (female trees)
- *Juniperus* (with berries) **1**

- *Keteleeria* **3**
- *Larix* **2**
- *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* **4**
- *Picea* **3**
- *Pinus* **4**; *Pinus contorta* **8** Note: "Although pines shed enormous quantities of pollen grains, the grains are waxy and not highly irritating to mucous membranes. Their potential for allergy is rather low and, when it occurs, not usually severe."
- *Platyclusus orientalis* **7**
- *Podocarpus* **1** (female trees); **10** (male trees) Pollen is also toxic.
- *Pseudolarix kaempferi* **3**
- *Pseudotsuga* **3**
- *Sciadopitys* **7**
- *Sequoia sempervirens* **5**
- *Sequoiadendron giganteum* **5**
- *Taxodium* **5**
- *Taxus* **1** (female trees); **10** (male trees) Note that pollen is also toxic.
- *Thuja* **8**
- *Thujopsis dolabrata* **9**
- *Tsuga* **3**
- *Wollemia nobilis* **4**

Many of us like to plant Japanese maples in our gardens and landscapes. On the whole, *Acer* species (with the exception of *Acer rubrum* 'Festival' OPALS **1**) have high OPALS ratings of **5** or more.

Thomas Ogren has a Master's degree in agricultural science with an emphasis on plant flowering systems and their relationship to allergies. His research has spanned 30 years. He has written in many publications and authored *Allergy-Free Gardening*. His books have a five-star Amazon rating. Their cost is relatively low. He is the creator of the Ogren Plant Allergy Scale (OPALS), the very first plant-allergy ranking system. He has been a consultant to the American Lung Association, the USDA, the city of Christchurch, New Zealand, the California Department of Public Health, Allegra, and Johnson & Johnson. His voice has been heard on the Canadian Discovery Channel and as radio-show host. His email is tlallergy@earthlink.net.

The Allergy-Fighting Garden: Stop Asthma and Allergies with Smart Landscaping is printed by Ten Speed Press, Berkeley. It offers 244 pages, jam-packed with information sections. In Part I, Tom begins the discussion of plant biology, fighting allergy-causing agents in your neighborhood and city, understanding plant sex and allergies, eliminating mold spores, and allergy-blocking hedges. Part II introduces the



OPALS concept and, most importantly, plant rankings according to their OPALS. Plants are listed according to genus and species. Common names are also provided with reference to botanical nomenclature. This is an extremely important listing. Ogren also provides a Glossary of Horticultural Terms such as bract, monoecious and dioecious and so much more.

Tom provides a listing of Recommended Readings to educate further his audience. The book also provides Useful Websites for readers to consult. There is a Pollen Calendar, which lists plants by genus with their pollen production months, and USDA Zone maps. The Index assists the reader in searching the text.

Thomas Ogren's work is a must-have reference book for all who are sensitive to allergy-causing pollens and who landscape either for themselves or for their clients. Tom's work is also a great reference work for communities which are trying to clean up the air their children and adults breathe in. 🌱

Editor's Note: For future issues of the **CONIFER** Quarterly, I am seeking articles on conifers as bonsai. Please submit them to me according to the following schedule: May 15 for Summer, August 15 for Fall, November 15 for Winter, February 2017 for Spring 2017.

Topics could be, but not restricted to: choosing the conifer, researching bonsai techniques, acquiring the bonsai pot, raising the future bonsai in a container, pruning and wiring. In addition, I am also seeking short or long pieces of advice from you regarding gardening challenges and your solutions to them: soil, fertilizer, pruning, siting, photographing. Thank you.

CAN'T GET ENOUGH CONIFERS— CONTAINERS

BY BARBARA BLOSSOM ASHMUN

My first adventure with conifers began when a friend took me to a nursery specializing in them. I was going only to look, not buy, but when a group of silvery *Abies koreana* 'Horstmann's Silberlocke' kept winking at me, I couldn't resist. I bought the smallest plant, barely a foot tall. But back home, reality came crashing in. It didn't belong in my garden at all, sigh.

My first adventure with conifers began when a friend took me to a nursery specializing in them. I was going only to look, not buy, but when a group of silvery *Abies koreana* 'Horstmann's Silberlocke' kept winking at me, I couldn't resist. I bought the smallest plant, barely a foot tall. But back home, reality came crashing in. It didn't belong in my garden at all, sigh.

After moving to Portland, Oregon, from New York City, I'd been smitten with flowering perennials and roses. By the time I'd discovered 'Silberlocke', my garden was an acre of island beds and borders overflowing with color, largely inspired by English cottage gardens. Where on earth could I put a conifer?

In a pot, of course, where I could enjoy it as a treasure, all on its own. I gave 'Silberlocke' a place of honor close to the house where I'd see it every day. As it developed, I repotted it into a larger, more attractive ceramic container. But surprisingly, instead of growing taller, it burgeoned sideways. Instead of staking it, I let it have its way, and enjoyed its interesting asymmetrically wide shape.

Eventually, when 'Silberlocke' tipped over its pot, I figured it was telling me to plant it in the ground. I placed it at the edge of a border, right along a path, where it framed the shrubs and perennials behind it beautifully with its calming silver tints. It was the perfect low hedge, better than any boxwood. By then, I craved another 'Silberlocke' which stood up straight, to plant against a cedar fence. It's especially gorgeous when it catches the winter sun, which makes the needles sparkle even brighter.



When a gorgeous purple smoke tree and a Florida dogwood both succumbed to fungal disease in a prominent bed, I grieved. But sadness turned to joy when I realized I could grow more conifers in containers there. Since they were difficult to place amid flowering perennials, I could group them together in this problem bed, as a collection. Of course I would also need some beautiful new containers.

Now I had a perfect reason to hunt for more conifers—and for more ceramic containers. I could hardly contain myself!

Fortunately we have quite a few conifer nurseries on the outskirts of Portland, and winter visits help liven up our rainy season. Even wholesale nurseries willingly welcomed me when I'd organize my gardening group of some twenty avid gardeners to descend as a pack. Some even gave us an informative tour, narrated by the owner.

Conifer growers around here tend to hold forth passionately about their plants, with so much detail and enthusiasm that I nearly exploded with impatience to grab some! After a typical tour and talk, our group would finally disperse into a buying frenzy, doing our best wrangle politely over the rarest specimens.

After 'Silberlocke' I fell for 'Kohouts Icebreaker', an even more radiant fir, with tinier needles which recurve so strongly the nearly-white undersides are fully displayed. 'Kohouts Icebreaker' simply glows. Slow growing, it's taken a couple of years to come into its own. Did I mention that conifers can be expensive?

I tend to buy the smallest sizes out of frugality. I've convinced myself that it's a greater pleasure to watch these infant plants grow up than to get instant gratification from a mature conifer.

Even though it's considered a dwarf, the *Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'Curly Tops' I saw in a friend's garden was over six feet tall. Each branchlet curled back so that the impression was of a silvery-blue mass of curls. The most dynamic conifer I'd ever met, it was so adorable I couldn't live without it. I found a one-gallon plant for sale and potted it up in a black container for contrast.

I began noticing more conifers whose branches wiggled every which way, like *Cryptomeria japonica* 'Spiraliter Falcata', with short needles in a lively shade of green. Its gracefully twisting nature makes it super appealing, and so interesting to contemplate that I placed it at the edge of a bed all by itself, instead of in a group.

Similarly eye-catching, *Pinus strobus* 'Vercurve' has longer twisted needles in bundles of five. The plant looks fluffy and friendly. When I saw it in a friend's garden, a stab of envy told me I needed one. Thus began my interest in many more dwarf white pines, twisted or not. I probably bought *P. s.* 'Shaggy Dog' and *P. s.* 'Sea Urchin' for their names, but so what! All are soothing shades of blue-green, and look charming in containers.

Pinus strobus 'Louie' was my first golden pine. I'd seen it repeatedly in at least four garden centers before I got over the sticker shock. Lusting after it was relentless, and there was no doubt that I'd succumb—it was just a matter of when. I'd run my fingers through the soft golden needles and sigh, then leave without the plant. Until finally, desire triumphed over economy, and I bought it, singing "Louie, Louie" all the way home.

Another favorite is *Abies pinsapo* 'Aurea' for its stiff, tightly woven needles, blue-green below and yellow at the tips. Especially in winter, this fir is eye-popping and as architectural as a piece of sculpture. Another conifer intriguing for its texture, *Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Tsatsumi Gold' has threadlike foliage, glittering with gold.

More varieties of *Chamaecyparis obtusa* followed, like 'Nana Lutea,' 'Sunny Swirl,' and 'Melody.' These three need at least partial shade, for their needles burned in full sun. 'Butterball' is especially sensitive and needs full shade to be happy.

'Butterball' led me down the path of globe-shaped dwarf conifers, and before long I had acquired *Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'Span's Cannon Ball,' 'Cream Ball' and 'Silver Lode.' These three ball-shaped conifers make a quirky group which tickles me every time I pass by it.

"Threadleaf", or Sawara cypress, is less costly than most dwarf conifers, so I'm more likely to spring for it impulsively. Since the first three were so affordable I splurged on a larger *Thuja*



Chamaecyparis pisifera 'Curly Tops'



Pinus strobus 'Louie'

occidentalis 'Linesville', aka 'Mr. Bowling Ball'. I admit that like 'Louie', it might have been its name which grabbed me.

Sometimes I must have a conifer to evoke a scene from the past. Years ago, on a freezing winter day, my father and I drove over to Wave Hill, as was our tradition when I visited him in New York, regardless of the weather. I stood in front of a mature *Pinus wallichiana* 'Zebrina' in a trance of delight, mesmerized by the shimmering tree with striped needles. I don't really have the right place for one in the ground, so I bought one for yet another container.

My father has passed on some years ago, but 'Zebrina' lives on in my garden. As it glimmers in the winter light, memories of our many visits to Wave Hill come flooding back, especially the pleasure of that one winter day. 🍷



The group gathers around Dan (in ball cap) who is showing us our route.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONIFER ROAD TRIP

BY SARA MALONE • PHOTOS BY SANDY SCOTT

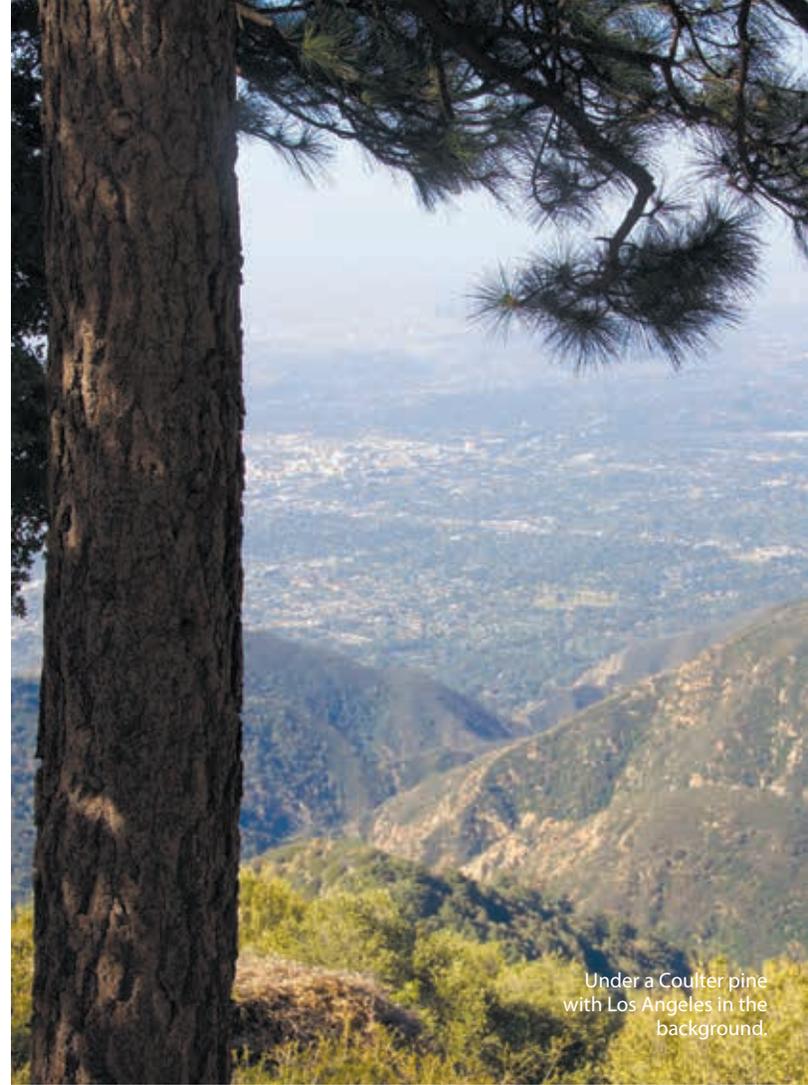
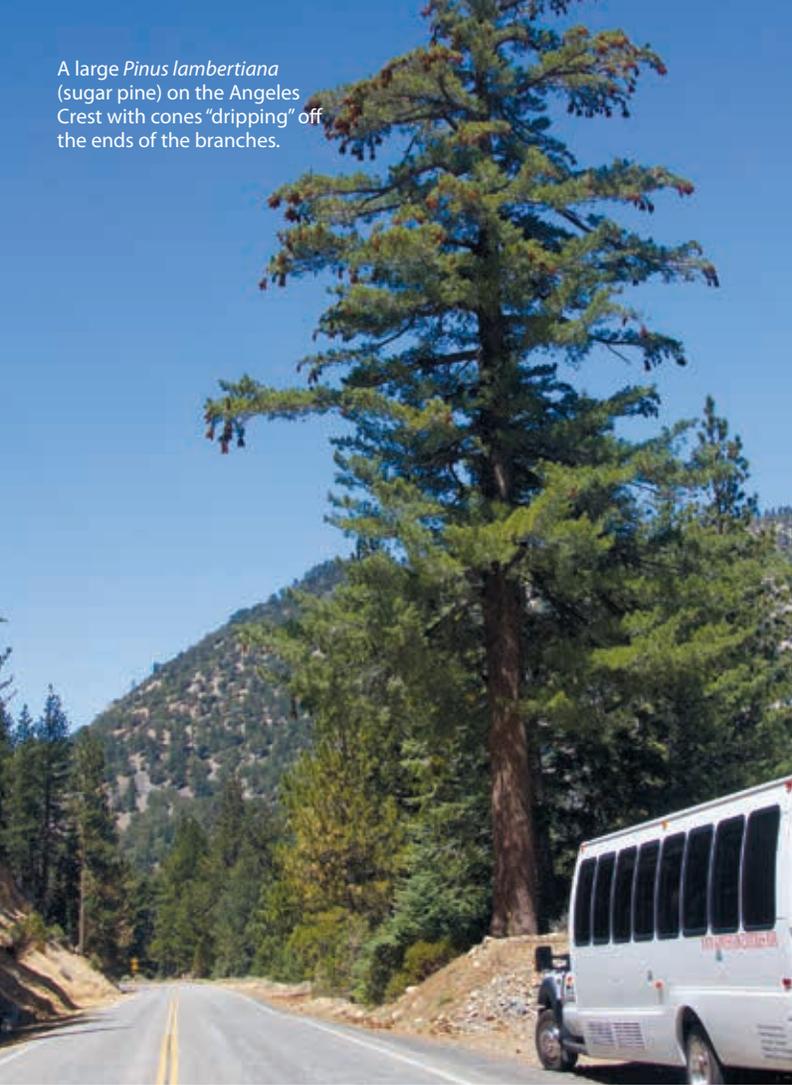
Who would imagine that Los Angeles is surrounded by mountains, some over 10,000 feet, which receive as little as 10-30 inches of rain per year and which are covered with giant conifers, a couple of which are native only to Southern California?

As a Northern Californian, I knew that this couldn't be true: we have the lock on outdoor beauty and spaciousness, right? So, when confirmed conehead Dan Spear, of Orange, CA, said he wanted to put together a road trip to see California native conifers near Los Angeles, I envisioned street trees along Sunset Boulevard, or the like! Dan is a well-liked and well-respected member of the Western Region, and so quite a few of us signed on for the trip, some simply to be supportive of what we could only assume was a delusional quest. Well, the 20 of us who went on the trip found out it was not a hoax, and that Dan is far from delusional. Sandy Scott, who used to live in nearby Pasadena, said afterwards, "For years I gazed daily at the San

Gabriel Mountains, and never suspected that there were conifer riches lurking just over the summit. But Dan Spear has opened my eyes to those special trees."

When we started our adventure, Dan explained that "most mountain ranges run north-south, but the mountains around Los Angeles, the Transverse Ranges, run east-west, thanks to a jog in the San Andreas Fault and the collision of the Pacific and North American Plates." Our adventure was in the middle range, the San Gabriel Mountains, on the Angeles Crest Highway, which runs the length of the mountains, topping out at 7,902 feet at Dawson Saddle. We spent most of the clear, sunny, April day at around 5,000–6,000 feet, with

A large *Pinus lambertiana* (sugar pine) on the Angeles Crest with cones “dripping” off the ends of the branches.



Under a Coulter pine with Los Angeles in the background.

temperatures in the mid 60's. The extreme geologic activity of these mountains has created unusual stratification in the rocks, with varied colors and textures, resulting in crazy patterns. Jack Christiansen put into words what we all felt: "I was truly shocked to see, once we passed through the crowded neighborhoods, the magnificent mountain slopes, with steep valleys and gorges, which supported many stands of pines, incense cedar and fir. When we reached the crest we could see the City of Angels far below, but for us, it was as if we were lost in some remote region."

Dan had originally planned for us to travel from one end of the Highway to the other, but a section of the road was still closed for winter, so we went out and back from the west end. Armed with guidebooks and a big bag for cones from the trees we were about to see, we stopped at Mount Wilson, whose north face is covered with bigcone Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga macrocarpa*). "Bigcone Douglas-fir thrives in these dry, warm mountains on the north faces and west and east facing canyons, and created a canopied forest on the north side of Mount Wilson," Dan told us on the drive up. The Doug-fir were interspersed with canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*), Coulter pine (*Pinus coulteri*), and incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*). From the south side of Mount Wilson, we had stunning views of the Los Angeles basin. By now, this skeptic was already astounded at the beauty, the

tranquility, the freshness of the air and the majestic trees—and their cones! The Coulter pine cones are 12–14 inches long and heavy, with sharply hooked scale tips often an inch or more in length. They are the largest cones of any pine.

Our next stop was Islip Saddle, 30 miles farther, where the Pacific Crest Trail crosses the Angeles Crest Highway. We zigzagged through areas ravaged by the 2009 Station Fire, and saw the aftermath of both the destruction and the rejuvenation of the forest. We climbed to higher altitudes where we saw Jeffrey pine (*Pinus jeffreyi*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), sugar pine (*Pinus lambertiana*), Low's fir (*Abies concolor* var. *lowiana*) and more incense cedars, along with wild flowers, manzanita, and the dreaded poodledog bush. Neil Hart, who was on his first ACS adventure, asked how to tell the difference between the Jeffrey and ponderosa pines, and we all learned with him, as Dan showed us, that the easiest and fastest way was to examine the cones. The ponderosa cones are prickly; the Jeffrey are not. "Prickly ponderosa and gentle Jeffrey" became our mantra as we walked beneath towering specimens. The sugar pine cones are long and graceful, decorated with crystalline encrustations of sap which sparkle in the sun. They hang in clusters from the tips of the branches, making an ID from a distance relatively easy.

Dan not only was a great guide for the native stands of trees, but also pointed out that one of the more surprising finds at nearly every rest stop and trailhead parking lot were cultivated non-natives—or at least were many miles out of their natural zones—such as giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), singleleaf pinyon pine (*Pinus monophylla*), Colorado pinyon pine (*Pinus edulis*), Arizona cypress (*Cupressus arizonica*), Cypriot cedar (*Cedrus brevifolia*), and gray pine (*Pinus sabiniana*). So much for the Forest Service going native!

We had lunch at the only restaurant on the Angeles Crest, Newcomb's Ranch, which provided loads of good food, cold beer and iced tea, and friendly smiles. We were all pleasantly surprised at how good—and how big—lunch was. Back on the bus for a couple more stops to see rare natives and the unexpected non-natives, and then back to our hotel for drinks and dinner. Over dinner we compared notes. I had not been the only skeptic, and I was now not the only convert!

Sunday we drove south to Torrey Pines State Nature Reserve, overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Torrey Pine (*Pinus torreyana*) is a narrow endemic, with only two small native populations in California; one at the Reserve and the other on Santa Rosa Island, off the coast of Santa Barbara. We had docent-led tours due to the size of our group. Our tour started off with a little humor and embarrassment when one of our guides

wanted to show us the difference in cone size and shape from the mainland pine and the island pine populations. As Dan explained to us later, his “mainland pine” was not a Torrey pine at all, but a Canary Island Pine (*Pinus canariensis*), the most common cultivated pine planted along streets throughout Southern California. It gave us all a good laugh.

We had about two and half hours to walk the trails, see Torrey pines, four witch's brooms, and fabulous wild flowers. The views and weather were just perfect. A gourmet food truck met us nearby to serve a hot lunch before we headed back to the hotel.

While the trees and cones were beautiful and interesting, and the mountains and beaches gorgeous, what really made this weekend spectacular were the people who attended. I am amazed at the knowledge this group has about plants, which was freely shared, and how much fun we had. Many of us were hoarse from laughing and from telling so many stories. Dan, now vindicated, encouraged talk about where our next Conifer Road Trip would take us. His first choice would be the Owens Valley between the Eastern Sierra and the White Mountains to see foxtail pine (*Pinus balfouriana*), limber pine (*Pinus flexilis*), sierra-cascade lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta* var. *murrayana*), singleleaf pinyon pine (*Pinus monophylla*), red fir (*Abies magnifica* var. *magnifica*), and Great Basin bristlecone pine (*Pinus longaeva*). So, who's in? 📍

RENDEZVOUS OUT WEST AUGUST 2016

BY DAN SPEAR

We have changed our event from a Road Trip to a Rendezvous, which simply means there is less structure and no payments to the ACS. I will still provide an itinerary, guidance, maps, and conifer information (and show some cool witch's brooms), but the schedule is open to however you want it. Transportation will be personal, no buses (or insane bus drivers!). If you are uncertain about driving paved mountain roads, we can group up to car pool. Please don't let that stop you from attending.

All areas and trees can be accessed by paved walking paths. There are also easy dirt trails to walk at each location if you want to get off the pavement for more adventure.

Please book your hotel now! Hotels in these small towns fill up quickly with European tourists booking many months ahead. We have group rates at these two hotels in Lone Pine, CA, both with one king bed or two queen beds. Please mention the rate for the American Conifer Society.

\$160 per night/Comfort Inn, 1920 S. Main St., Lone Pine, 760/876-8700 (I am staying here.)

\$115 per night/Best Western Plus Frontier Motel, 1008 S. Main St., Lone Pine, 760/876-5571

Here is our itinerary. As I said, you can join the group or do your own thing.

• **8/13:** Meet in Lone Pine, CA at Comfort Inn Saturday at 9:00 AM to head to the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest in the White Mountains. Plan on packing a lunch and spending the day in the cool(er) mountains above Owens Valley. We will pass through (and stop) in the Pinyon/Juniper forest at a lower elevation. Dinner in Lone Pine.

• **8/14:** Meet Sunday at 8:30 AM head west to Horseshoe Meadows to see *Pinus balfouriana* subsp. *austrina* Foxtail Pine, *Pinus contorta* var. *murrayana* Lodgepole Pine, *Abies magnifica* var. *magnifica* Red Fir, and more. Lunch in Lone Pine and then head west again to Onion Valley to see more of the same species. Dinner in Independence or Lone Pine.

Please send me an email when you have booked your hotel, and which hotel it is.

Please call or email with any questions. Rendezvous out West 📍



ROSSFORD, OHIO CONIFER GARDENS

BY PAUL PFEIFER, MANAGING
DIRECTOR, HIDDEN LAKE GARDENS

PHOTOS BY RONALD J. ELARDO

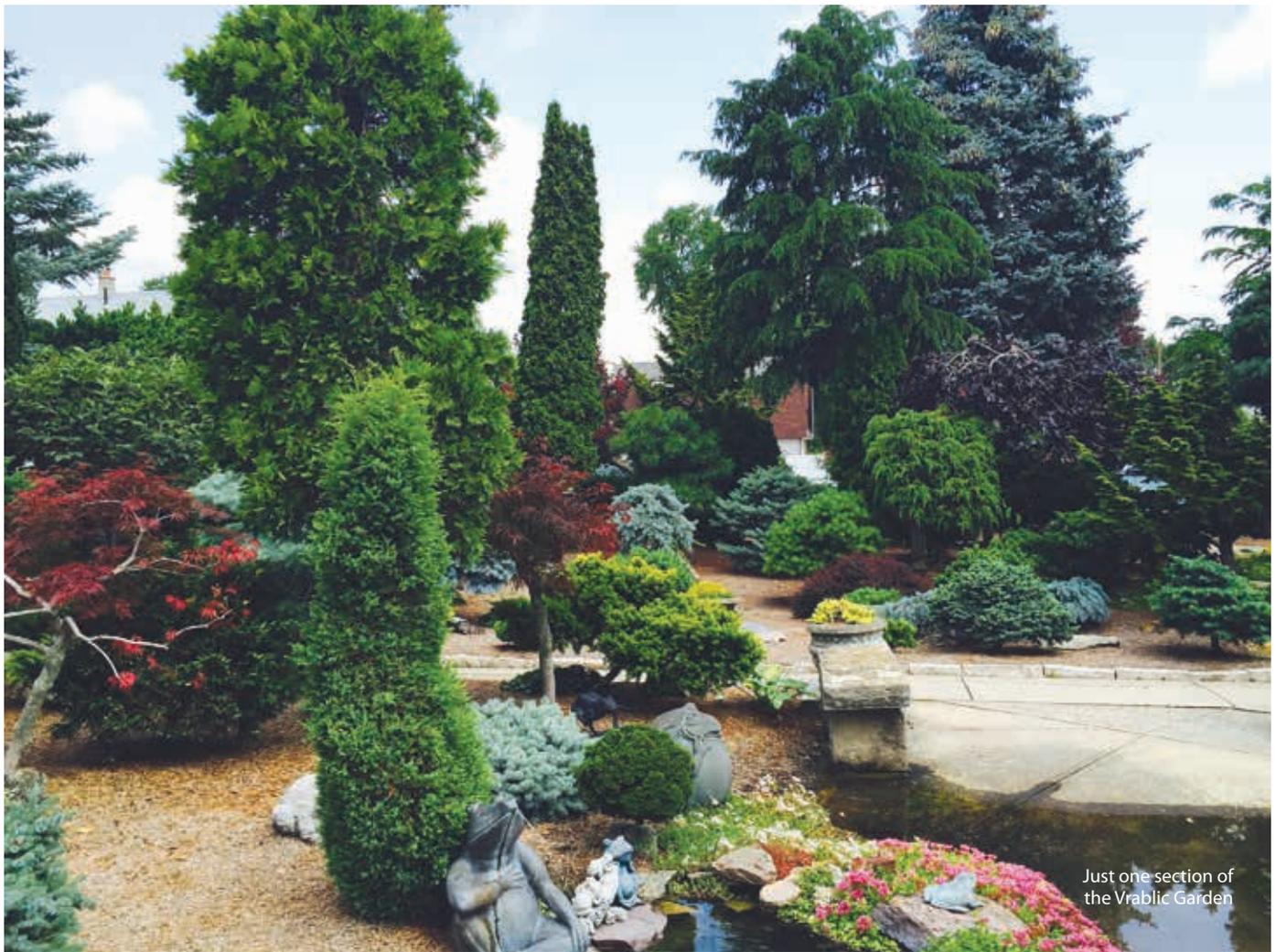
It is almost embarrassing to admit that, in spite of having worked in Ohio as a horticulturist for twenty-one years, it took a change of employment and a move to Michigan in order to discover a conifer oasis within the Buckeye State.

Tucked away on a short, side street in Rossford, Ohio, a small town just across the Maumee River from Toledo, is an incredible lot, chock full of plants – mostly conifers – which will leave most visitors delighted, elated, and wondering, “how did he do that?”

The “he” is John Jacob Vrablic, Jr., creator of the Rossford Conifer Garden. As most “coneheads” already know, do not look for the highway directional signs when trying to locate

some of the best conifer collections. In the case of John Vrablic’s garden, just look for the intersection of Eagle Point Road and Hannum Avenue. You will see an interesting conifer garden on the corner (more about that later in the article), but you have not quite arrived just yet. Go north on Hannum Avenue and on the east side of the street you will see it—modest house, modest neighborhood, world-class conifer collection.

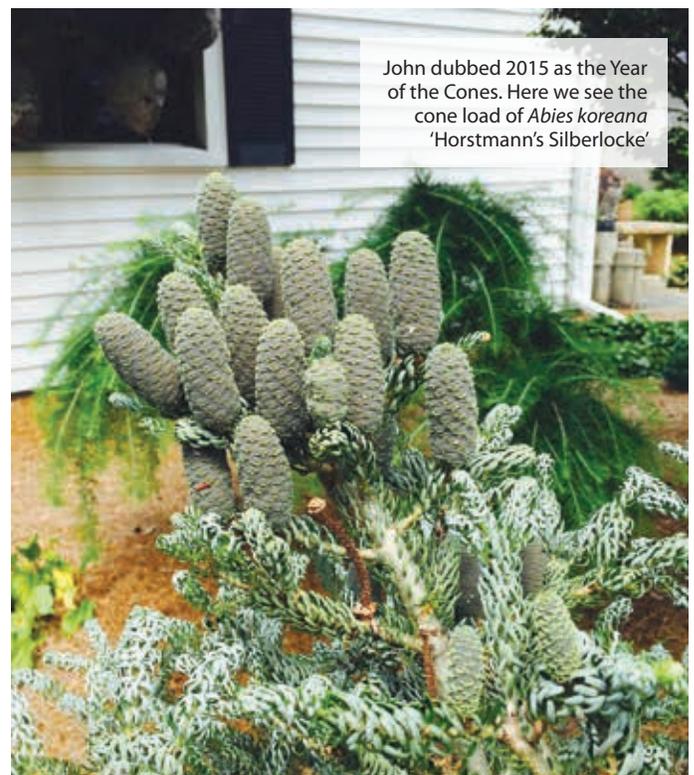
The development of John Vrablic’s garden actually started back in 1914, well before John was born, when his grandparents purchased a home on Hannum Avenue in Rossford, Ohio. John’s parents then lived in the same house and raised him there as well. During his youth, the back yard of the house contained a large vegetable and fruit tree garden, in which John learned to garden. As John entered adulthood, the railroad became his career. An over-the-road train engineer by trade, John requested that the railroad company convert him to a train yard engineer when both of his parents began experiencing health challenges.



Just one section of the Vrablic Garden

Working closer to home afforded John more time to care for his parents and to tend to the family garden. About 27 years ago, John began collecting and planting conifers in the garden, and today, the vegetables and fruit trees are gone, but more than 1,000 varieties of plants—mostly conifers—fill every horizontal and vertical space of the Hannum Avenue lot.

John's goal of designing the garden was to keep the maintenance workload reduced, yet one can see that he diligently tends to the garden as there is nary a weed, a leaf, a needle, a flower petal, or a cone out of place. Each garden bed is edged in rectangular limestone pieces and mulched with cut pine needles. Concrete walks with gentle curves meander through the half-acre garden reaching all four corners of the lot. John acknowledges that the paved paths were put in so that, as his parents grew older, they could still enter into and enjoy the garden in spite of their health limitations. There are also narrow patches of rich green turf which provide a pallet for complementing the many different species and cultivars of conifers which offer outstanding examples of their varying sizes, shapes, colors, and textures.



John dubbed 2015 as the Year of the Cones. Here we see the cone load of *Abies koreana* 'Horstmann's Silberlocke'



John's *Picea abies* 'Hillside Upright', planted October 4, 1991, revealed a hidden witch's broom when John was shaping it.

healthier, and better performing conifers. And, he is quick to point out aberrations to normal plant growth. In particular, John shared his amazement of the quantity of cones which have developed and grown on his specimen plants, especially the cultivars of *Abies*. Wondering if stress from the challengingly cold winters of 2014 and 2015 have prompted the unusual quantity of cones, John is quick to proclaim 2015 as “the year of the cone”, proclaiming to have never seen such an abundance of cones on so many plants in his 27 years of conifer gardening.

John's love of conifers and skill of gardening do not end at his property line. His garden gently flows along the border of both of his next-door neighbors. He has also provided landscape design assistance as well as plants for the grounds of Rossford Public Library, a mere two blocks from his Hannum Avenue home. But most surprisingly is the garden of a neighbor at the end of the street. Gary Mosiniak has drawn inspiration from John's garden so much so that one might think that, upon reaching the corner of Hannum Avenue and Eagle Point, the Vrablic conifer destination had been reached. However, the Mosiniak garden is just a prelude to what lies four lots to the north. Gary's garden is a creative work in progress as he continues to remove undesirable landscaping, develop new garden beds, and add

and transplant more plants including conifers—not quite as many as John, but Gary is well on his way.

As if the plants were not enough to make visitors feel welcome in the garden, also adding to the warmth of the garden are ornaments, sculptures, trellises, and benches for sitting. Several small ponds and water features add to the delight of the landscape and draw one deeper into the half-acre conifer lot.

Simply touring through John's garden and observing the conifers are quite amazing. However, the real treat comes from the descriptions and stories John shares about the plants. Although there is not a plant name label in sight, John rattles off the cultivar names of his many conifers like a kindergartner who has mastered reciting the alphabet—coolly, calmly, and accurately. He easily recalls how he pruned one plant to make room to plant another conifer. He reminisces about plants which once graced the garden beds, but have since been removed to give rise to newer,

As the end of the tour through John's garden drew near, a strange perception began to materialize. A professional horticulturist is granted theoretical knowledge and technical skill on how to propagate, produce, plant, grow, and maintain plants. But listening to John's explanations of how he transplanted conifers from one bed to another, and how he pruned the lower branches off a large conifer to make room to plant additional smaller conifers, the realization that he was bending—if not breaking—many of the “rules” which are taught about professionally planting and growing plants became apparent. Ironically, not only is John seemingly defying many accepted horticultural practices, but he is gaining great results and incredible success in doing so. One look at his garden will most certainly confirm this.



Gary Mosiniak's garden presents an interesting mix of perennials and conifers.

John's creativity and passion for growing conifers have led him to learn by doing and by taking risks. Perhaps without the formal horticultural training and knowledge he would have received as a horticulture degree-seeking student, he is free of inhibitions and traditional expectations which allow him to select, grow, and maintain plants in a way which would seem to be unconventional to the average professional plant person. Listening to John explain how he pruned one plant and cared for another, transplanted one plant and discarded another, it might seem that his renegade style was without care, skill, and concern. Actually, it is quite the opposite. Each plant in his collection has been carefully observed and evaluated in order to receive the utmost care. We are not talking about plants collected and displayed in a manner so that you have to lift the branches of one plant to see the plant behind it which is covering up the one next to it. No, this is a meticulously maintained plant collection full of specimen plants—one that has twice as many conifers planted within a half-acre lot than The Harper Collection of Dwarf and Rare Conifers at Hidden Lake Gardens!

The Vrablic conifer collection is a wonderful example of John Vrablic's passion for plants, craving for conifers, desire for gardening

excellence, and is a wonderful tribute to his parents and grandparents who worked and enjoyed the gardens of this three-generational family home. Should the opportunity arise to meet John and to see his garden, all other plans should be put on hold, and a trip to Rossford, Ohio, should become top priority. Rarely will one see a more beautiful, productive, effective, and efficient use of garden space. For a four season photographic glimpse into the Vrablic conifer garden, visit www.rossfordgarden.com. 📍

www.etsy.com/shop/DansDwarfConifers

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COX ARBORETUM

A DENDROLOGICAL JEWEL OF THE SOUTHEAST

BY DR. ZSOLT DEBRECZY

If considering an idyllic arboretum, one might imagine a site where undulating hills with gentle slopes form friendly valleys, some of which descend to crystal clear creeks bordered with lush riparian growth.

One might further imagine fresh green meadows bordered by the light blue of a still lake which fades into pale mist in the distance. Or, perhaps the body of water mirrors the dark shadows of an overhanging forest, and semi-submerged logs sport idle turtles sunning themselves and barely disturbed by the noisy fawns searching for a resting place. The hilltops are covered with mature forests; some specimens having trunks a meter across at the base and half that at breast height.

An idyllic arboretum is colorful year round, with the colors representative of the site's four distinct seasons. Winter is mild, yet cold enough to satisfy the plants' dormancy needs. Trees and ground are occasionally covered with a white quilt of snow, and on clear days, freezing mornings can be followed in the afternoon by summer-like temperatures. With spring starting in early March, winter is short, and the long summer starts in May. When the season changes to autumn, the trees

cling to their colors until late November. Rain, too, is part of an idyllic arboretum and should fall each month of the year, even when to the west and north, gardens are suffering from drought. These summer showers are, however, mostly short and quickly fade away – leaving sunshine enclosed in diamond drops on the trees' crowns.

Where is this idyll? In Canton, Georgia, at the Cox Arboretum...

Terrestrial “Garden of Eden”

An arboretum is a collection of woody plants: trees, shrubs and climbers. These plants can be both grand and beautiful. A thousand different kinds could offer six thousand opportunities for beauty: the beauty of the crown, the bark, the leaves, flowers, fruits and autumn coloration. And, if the base number were four thousand...? Cox Arboretum is

the home of over 4,000 trees and shrubs from throughout the temperate zone climates, in short, from all over the Temperate World.

At a latitude of 34°N, the winter is mild, and the climate in general supports an enormous number of dendrological examples of subtropical evergreens such as camellias, gordonias, spicebushes, *Michelia*- and *Manglietia*-type magnolias—and even some Southern Hemisphere trees, such as *Araucaria angustifolia*. This is a four-season arboretum, where botanical treasures from both cooler temperate zones and the subtropics happily co-exist.

Visitors in autumn are rewarded with a vista of a myriad of brilliant colors. In spring, a wealth of flowers awaken from winter dormancy under the bare crowns of dormant trees. In early April, Florida anise, camellias and hundreds of other flowering trees and shrubs bloom under the newly unfolding deciduous canopy. Imagine the winters when an occasional light dusting of snow sprinkles open-camellias or the early bloom of wintersweets, fragrant winterhazels, or yellow umbels of cornel cherries. These gems are soon followed by an array of other flowering surprises, from sweet-scented jasmines to Florida and Asian red anises with a background of shades of cultivars from Colorado blue spruce to a wide range of cypress relatives, or Japanese maples. Mid-March here is the late April of more northern climes, early April is mid-May, and, at any time in winter, one may enjoy the colors of autumn or early spring.

The Piedmont region of the southeastern U.S. is one of the best environments for an arboretum in the USA with a climate which is tolerated by many beauties of the Holarctic (floristical) Kingdom, basically the northern temperate zones south from the Canadian life-zone to the subtropics. The forests surrounding the Cox Arboretum are arboreta in themselves: the side roads which follow the undulating landscape reveal huge, dramatic oaks along with white bouquets of flowering dogwoods, American plums and pink-clad eastern redbuds, backed by the light green foliage of American hollies and evergreen magnolias. In autumn and spring, evergreens shine under forests formed by hickory, oak, hornbeam and American beech, showing myriad colors from red to purplish and yellow.

One arrives at Cox Arboretum via a paved public road which ends at a gate – inside is an earthly, yet heavenly Eden. From the gate to the house, less than half a mile, is laid out a botanical cross section from Asia through Europe to the West Coast of America. From the garage, a 100-foot covered walkway leads to the living room, all windows and glass doors opening onto a large terrace with a marvelous lake view. During my visit in mid-March 2015, our evening talk on the deck overlooking the wetlands and a lake was accompanied by piping frogs and scores of other secret night sounds; breakfast was accompanied by the noisy dances of departing geese and a chorus of bird song.

Botanical Value: A Level II Arboretum

"LISLE, IL (June 12, 2013) – The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and the Morton Arboretum are pleased to announce that Cox Arboretum of Canton, Georgia, has been awarded a Level II Accreditation. By achieving particular standards of professional practices deemed important for arboreta and botanic gardens, Cox Arboretum is now recognized as an accredited arboretum in The Morton Register of Arboreta."

What is behind these words? The Cox Arboretum is a true treasure: 13 acres with precisely labeled trees and shrubs from throughout the temperate world. It is the result of Tom Cox's dream, yet would have been impossible without the significant contributions of his wife, Evelyn Cox. Early retirement allowed Tom in 1990 to establish his arboretum in Canton, Georgia, 40 miles north of Atlanta, in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. After an easy drive on an interstate highway, the road becomes a scenic journey through undulating hillsides. A quarter century may be a lot of time in a human's life, but a tree that age is still a child. The largest trees planted by Tom are today not much higher than 15–18 meters, and many of them are smaller. They represent the promise of the future and an ever-changing landscape. Tom has experimented with various micro-climates in order successfully to cultivate trees of monsoon China and Japan and the Himalayas, as well as plants from Mediterranean regions. He is currently conducting a comprehensive evaluation of firs from around the world in order to determine their suitability for the southeastern U.S.

Range of species and cultivars

Tom Cox was president of the American Conifer Society and not without good reason: he is a revolutionary conifer person, author of *Landscaping with Conifers and Ginkgo for the Southeast* with John M. Ruter. Formerly, it was believed that the Southeast offered an unfriendly climate for most



temperate-zone conifers and was too cold for subtropical and tropical species. He didn't agree, and he tried them out with good results. Once, he shared with me his philosophy for trialing plants: "If you fall on your face, you're moving forward."

He learned that his climate was unfriendly to plants from the interior of the western U.S.—the result of too much summer moisture, high night-time temperatures and poorly drained clay soil. He, however, also learned to take advantage of the arboretum's naturally sloping terrain to hedge against drainage issues. To my surprise and delight, many subtropical monsoon Southeast Asian and many Mediterranean species are growing wonderfully there—as are numerous Pacific Northwest species such as western red-cedar (*Thuja plicata*) and Alaskan cypress (*Cupressus nootkatensis*).

Georgia was never considered a region for true cypresses, yet all Asian taxa are present, and even winter-dry climate *Cupressus lindleyi* is thriving well. The numbers of cultivars in the monotypic genera of *Ginkgo* and *Metasequoia* are surprisingly high (56 and 14). *Glyptostrobus* is of course at home here, alongside the creek, as is the Mexican Bald cypress (*Taxodium mucronatum*). The *Picea* collection is almost complete. Tender species such as *Araucaria luxurians*, *A. scopulorum*, *Nageia nagi*, *Podocarpus henkelii* are used as house plants during the winter.

Other surprises include *Keteleeria davidii*, *K. fortunei* var. *cyclolepis*, *K. evelyniana*, a great selection of *Podocarpus macrophyllus* cultivars and such species as *P. forrestii*, *P.*, and *P. parlatorei*. Rare taxa includes *Nothatsuga longibracteata*, *Pseudotsuga chienii*, *Amentotaxus yunnanensis*, *Torreya jackii*, *Pseudotsuga sinensis* var. *sinensis* and *P. s.* var. *wilsonii*. *Taiwania cryptomerioides*, which is more hardy than was formerly thought, has 3 trees here, one of them with a trunk 40 cm across at base and 9 m tall.

It may seem a contradiction, I was less surprised to find these trees of southern Asia here than I was to see *Abies sibirica*: this fir of northern Europe and Asia fails even in southern Britain, where it suffers from "late frosts" after too-mild winters—but here it has somehow made it, after being grafted onto *Abies firma*.

In a single day, close up or from a distance, we have seen 1,089 conifers from around the world—all within a tour less than a mile long. Given the mild climate, 1,200' elevation and about the same amount of rainfall in mm-s (1,263 mm = 49.3")—almost evenly distributed in each month, Cox Arboretum is able to cultivate an astounding array of conifers. In fact, it is widely considered to contain one of the most complete collections of species conifers in the entire U.S.

Even more noteworthy is that the arboretum houses approximately 40 percent of the world's temperate conifers which are threatened or endangered. It is a participating member of Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), which works with member gardens and conservation



organizations to raise awareness and scientific understanding of threatened plants.

These triumphs aside, it should be born in mind that the Cox Arboretum is far from being just about conifers.

Over 2,500 broad-leaved trees and shrubs from around the world are also thriving there, including an extensive collection of maples, magnolias and viburnums.

I hope that by writing this I might raise awareness of this important property. I have travelled the world and seen countless gardens, and I consider this a major collection worthy of preservation. I am convinced that the Cox Arboretum should become a "National Heritage Garden" of the National Trust in order to serve education, tourism and science. Anyone who has seen it will be convinced that there is good reason for this to happen. 🌱

Zsolt Debreczy is a renowned research botanist, explorer and traveler, and is Research Director of the International Dendrological Research Institute, Inc., Wellesley, Massachusetts, USA (www.interdendro.org), a position he has held since 1990. With a Ph.D. in botany, he started his career as a member of the phytogeographic group and curator of the higher plant collection at the Botanical Department of the Natural History Museum in Budapest, Hungary. Between 1988 and 1992 he worked as a Mercer Fellow and visiting scientist at the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard University. In 1994 he was a founding member of another not-for-profit organization, the International Dendrological Foundation (www.dendrologia.eu), established in Hungary. He organized and led many explorations worldwide which provided the material for the Dendrological Documentation Project, including the reference collections for the recently published book Conifers Around the World and The Book of Leaves. He was recently awarded an Honorary Doctor (Doctor Honoris Causa) by Corvinus University, Budapest.

CUPRESSUS LUSITANICA MILLER (CIPRÉS)

A FAMILIAR STRANGER IN THE CLOUD FOREST OF COSTA RICA

BY MARTIN STONE, PH.D

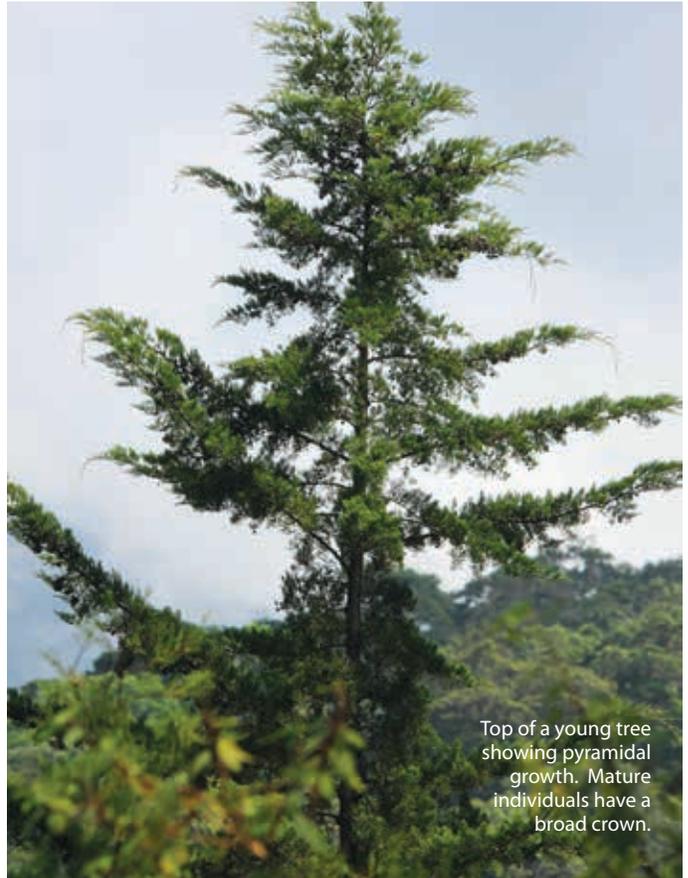
Central America is not known as an area rich in conifer diversity. Besides the exotic ornamental junipers and cypresses, there are a handful of others including species of *Pinus*, and the endangered *Prumnopitys standleyi*, among others.

Central America is not known as an area rich in conifer diversity. Besides the exotic ornamental junipers and cypresses, there are a handful of others including species of *Pinus*, and the endangered *Prumnopitys standleyi*, among others. In a swath from Mexico through Central America as far south as Costa Rica, *Cupressus lusitanica* Miller, is found growing singularly or in groves.

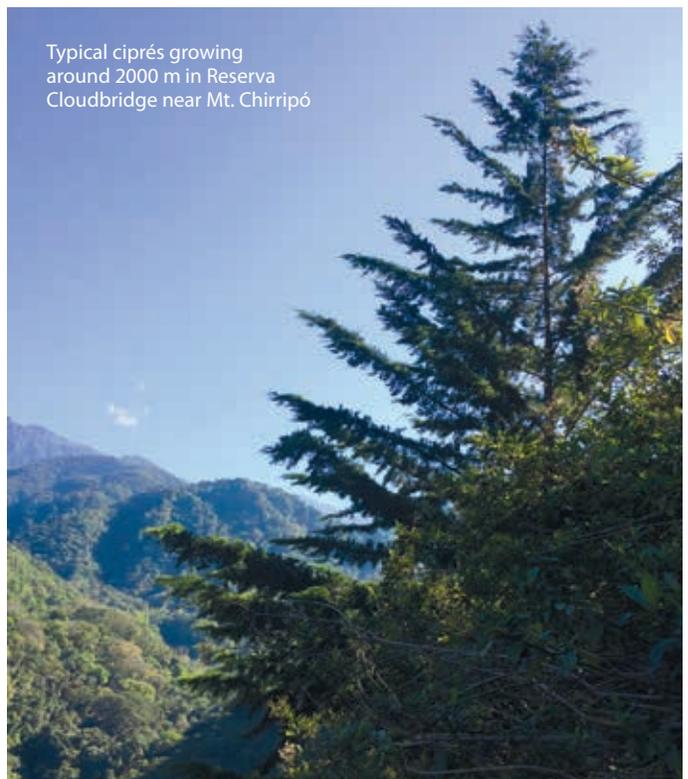
Commonly called, Ciprés (pronounced see-prés), it is also known as Cedar of Goa. Through accidental obfuscation and Old World bias, it has taken a while for botanists to agree on a proper name and origin. The specific epithet, *lusitanica*, was a source of confusion for botanists who were attempting to decipher its nativity and to place it in a biogeographical and taxonomic context. When it was officially named in 1768, it was described from a specimen collected in 1700 from Lusitania, Portugal.

Ciprés was first planted in Portugal in 1634 and a few decades later in England in 1682, but it was originally imported from Mexico where it is native. The European botanist who named it described trees growing in Portugal. He realized that they were not native, but compounded the confusion by claiming that they were native to Goa, India. These "facts" were repeated until they were ingrained in the collective minds of scientists and amateurs alike. Botanists of Mexico were too late to academia to affect a name change, and, thus, *Cupressus lusitanica* is perfectly correct botanically, but a geographical misnomer.

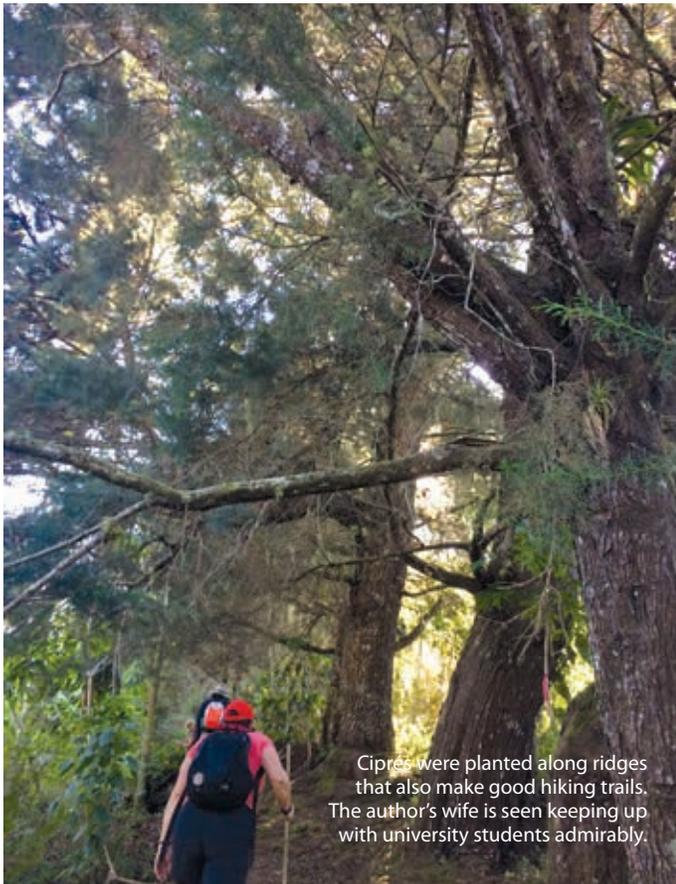
Geographical inaccuracies in scientific nomenclature are not uncommon, but not a valid reason to change a plant's name; names are based on precedent, and, thus, the first published



Top of a young tree showing pyramidal growth. Mature individuals have a broad crown.



Typical ciprés growing around 2000 m in Reserva Cloudbridge near Mt. Chirripó



Ciprés were planted along ridges that also make good hiking trails. The author's wife is seen keeping up with university students admirably.

The rainy season begins in May and lasts until late fall. The tourist season begins at its conclusion. No matter the season, the days begin the same; it is their endings which change with the season. Each day breaks sunny in the upper fifties to lower sixties year round. I sleep wearing a cashmere sweater and a stocking cap which is obsolete by 9 am. Despite rising temperatures, the clouds and fog roll in later in the morning and hang around for the rest of the day. If it is the dry season, it might rain a bit or it might not. During the wet season, it will surely rain for a few hours. It often clears up after the rains, no matter the season. High temperatures reach the seventies each day. Houses and cabins contain neither heat nor air for comfort.

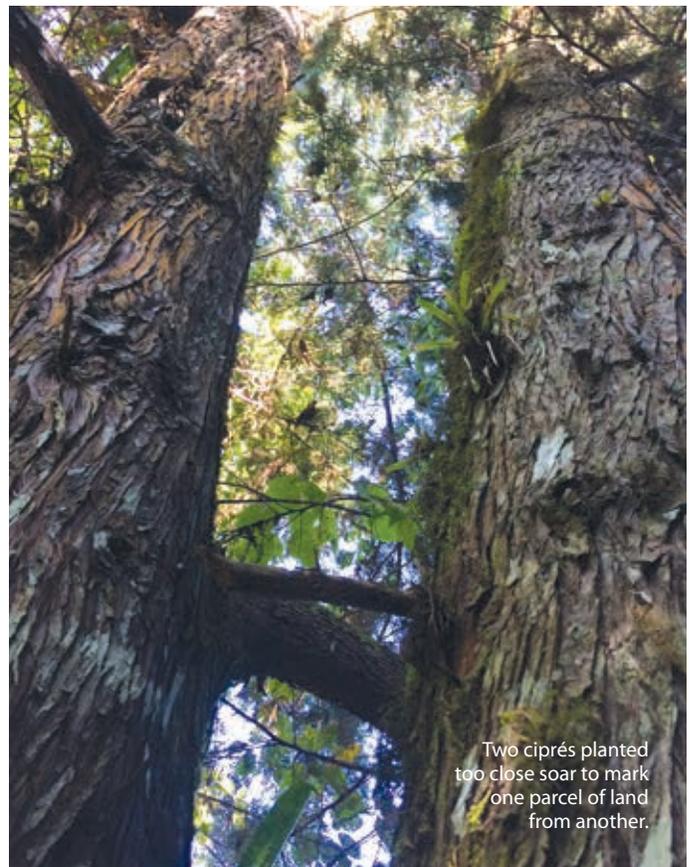
In these upper elevations, ciprés is used for two purposes. Initially, it was planted as a property marker as the land was settled. Due to its unusual, deep green appearance, it was easy to spot from a distance. Around a hundred years ago, the government encouraged its citizens living at lower elevations to move to higher ground. As part of their agreement, the land was cleared of trees by about half. This policy may have been good for promoting settlements, but it was devastating to the huge old growth trees. Costa Rica is known for its diversity, many ecologists claim it is has the greatest biological diversity on the planet.

Subsistence farms sprang up, and these had to be delineated from one another, thus the ciprés plantings. Most of these farms were on slopes so steep that hardy dairy cattle were

valid name trumps others which come later. A familiar example is the scientific name of crepe myrtle, *Lagerstroemia indica*, which incorrectly states its origin, as well.

I initially observed ciprés on a winding mountainous road in the Cerro de la Muerte, "mountain of the dead", between the capital, San Jose, and Panama. It was growing at mid-elevation, 1,000 – 2,000 m, on the Pacific slopes of the Talamanca Mountains in eastern Costa Rica. The bus was careening down a mist-covered highway which was rife with blind corners and no-passing lanes, the latter of which were completely ignored. Botany at highway speed was not optimal, but useful as a diversion. At first blush, it was easy to mistake it for the familiar North American native, *Juniperus virginiana*.

The populations observed in this article are growing at Cloudbridge Nature Preserve, adjacent to Parque Nacional Chirripó, which includes Mount Chirripó, the highest peak in Costa Rica at over 3,820 m (12,500 ft). On a clear day, it is possible to see both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans by turning one's head. Cloudbridge is at about a mile in elevation at its entrance, which is also its lowest elevation. It only goes up from there. Cloudbridge is a recovering forest in the cloud forest habitat on the Pacific slope. The mailing address is 2 km east of the village of San Gerardo de Rivas. It is a 45 minute drive down to San Isidro de General in Perez Zeledon towards the Pacific Ocean.



Two ciprés planted too close soar to mark one parcel of land from another.

the only long-term agriculture available, and that remains mostly true to this day. The ranchers lived in a village down the mountain several kilometers and visited these farms with regularity. This practice is common throughout Latin America even today. In addition to cattle, a few beans and tomatoes



Due to a lack of roads, ciprés is cut on site making construction or furniture hyperlocal.



Lichens, especially these unknown orange species, seem to especially enjoy the bark of ciprés.

could be grown for a few years during the six-month dry season. Today, some of the forests have been replanted, and coffee trees fill in the understory. Coffee is at its best when grown at high elevation and in the shade. I can attest that these beans make the best coffee I have ever sipped.

The second main use of ciprés is as a building material. The wood is good for construction and furniture-making. But in these remote, high elevations where there are only walking trails, its best quality is that it is hyperlocal. Almost all materials for living must be hauled up the mountains. Usually, this is human labor. It is expensive, a hardship, and makes one consider which materials are absolutely necessary. So, it is easier to haul a chainsaw up a mountain to cut and slab the trees than it is to haul a building's worth of wood.

Old specimens can be seen on ridges growing in dotted lines. They are frequently colonized by epiphytes, including bromeliads and orchids. It is curious that *Cupressus lusitanica*, having been planted so extensively, does not colonize these elevated areas. While hiking on numerous trips to this area, and despite looking, I have not seen a single juvenile growing near adults. Certainly the adult trees are mature, and it is easy to see that they bear cones. This is in contrast to other areas of the country and the globe where it has become naturalized and part of a region's flora. The reason is unclear and may be related to the elevation, rainfall or rainfall pattern, soils, or a combination of factors.

Ciprés is nothing less than a global success story and is the most cosmopolitan of the cypresses. It grows in the tropics of Central and South America, Asia, and Africa, as well as the aforementioned Europe. In Africa, it is grown as a timber species. It is hardy possibly into the mid to upper 20's degrees F, and so it would earn a zone 9 USDA hardiness zone designation. 🌱

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- By Martin Stone, Ph.D., Leichhardt Professor of Horticulture and Director, Baker Arboretum, Western Kentucky University. He is the ACS Southeast Region President and can be reached at [martin.stone@wku.edu](mailto:stone@wku.edu).



The stunning water feature
at Dan Everts' home garden.
Photo by David Olszyk.

WESTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

A CONIFEROUS TOUR OF SEATTLE, SEPTEMBER 8–10

ACS Western Region is excited to announce that we are returning to Seattle, the Emerald City, for this year's regional conference. If you've never been there, you are in for a treat. Seattle is a clean, vital city neatly tucked between the Cascade Mountains and Puget Sound with large greenbelts and a friendly, progressive population.

This year's conference will offer a full array of visits, including private gardens, Washington's premier bonsai display garden and two public gardens, where we will have docent tours and special attractions. Our host hotel is the Red Lion, located directly across the street from SeaTac Airport making it extremely convenient for those who are flying in from out of state. We all know that Coneheads travel on their stomachs, and this event is sure to please. Culinary highlights will include a sampling from one of Seattle's ubiquitous food trucks, a wine tasting courtesy of the NW Wine Academy at South Seattle College and the unique treat of a dinner cruise on Lake Union enjoying sunset over Seattle's iconic skyline.

Educational opportunities will feature a pair of coffee-time seminars, the first featuring Bob Fincham, one of the ACS's founders, detailing our history and legendary plantsmen and women who sowed the seeds which made our organization the success it is today. Saturday's presentation will highlight

the exploits of Mike and Cheryl Davison, modern day broom hunters and the lengths they go to bring new dwarf conifers into the trade.

Our event concludes Saturday night with the traditional banquet and ever-popular plant auctions, featuring rare conifers, first releases of new cultivars and many specimens which simply cannot be found in nurseries or garden centers. As promised at last year's national meeting by Jeff Herbst, Western Region's legendary plant acquisition specialist, we always hold the best stuff to offer at regional auctions. If you're a rare-plant addict, you can't pass on this.

In order to reserve your room at the hotel, call (206) 246-5535 using the reservation code, American Conifer Society. Our contracted nightly rate of \$189 per night will be honored from the day prior to the conference to the day after for those who want to arrive early or stay after.

Schedule of Events

Thursday, September 8th

Arrival in Seattle, check into the hotel. The fun begins at 4pm with a buffet of small plates, welcoming remarks, announcements and the opening of the silent plant auction.

Friday, September 9th

Seattle North. After Friday's coffee-time seminar with Bob Fincham, our day's road trip begins with a couple of private gardens. ACS members Jim Singer and Dan Everts have assembled stunning collections of dwarf conifers, tastefully set within the confines of city lots. Jim's plants are mature and spaced perfectly allowing the viewer to appreciate fully each specimen. His garden is truly a "jewelry box". While Dan's priority has been Japanese maples over conifers, recent years have shown that he's really caught Addicted Conifer Syndrome.

Later we move on to Washington Park Arboretum, a 230-acre preserve tastefully planted with many mature species conifers. We will have experts on hand to offer instruction on field identification of conifer species. A food truck will be on site for lunch.

After a short break back at the hotel, we're off to our dinner cruise courtesy of Argosy Cruises.

Saturday, September 10th

Seattle South. After Saturday's coffee-time seminar looking at the brooms which will become the must-have cultivars of the future, we hit the road for the Weyerhaeuser Corporate Headquarters in Federal Way, home to the Pacific Bonsai Museum where we'll interpret scores of ancient trees, sculpted into works of art.

Our mid-day stop will be the ACS Reference Garden at South Seattle College where we'll be wined and dined by the NW Wine Academy. While at the Arboretum, we'll be treated to pruning demonstrations of the mature dwarf conifers which comprise the Coenosium Rock Garden.

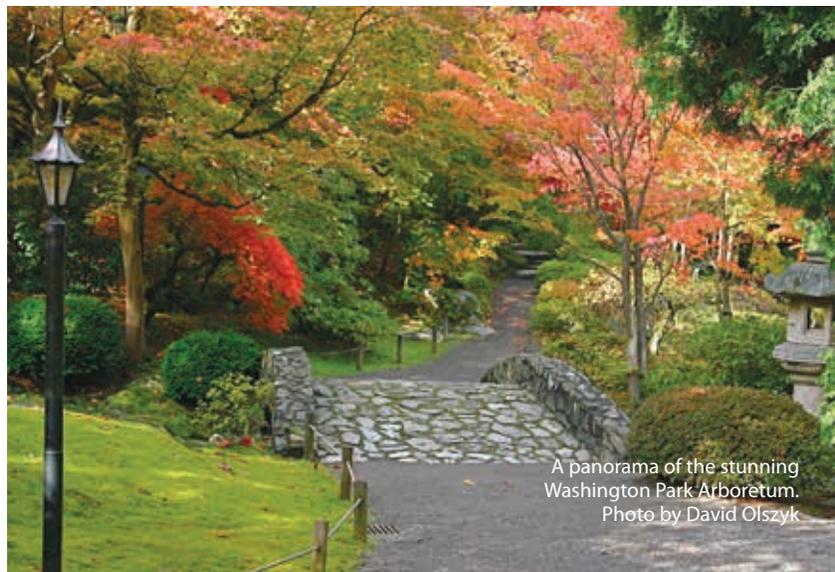
As we make our way back to the hotel, we'll stop at the home garden and nursery of Tom Knoblauch. Tom is a bonsai artist who will introduce us to his styling methods and will offer bonsai starts for sale.

Registration

Our conference fee is \$325 for those who register by June 30th. After that date, the rate increases to \$350. Due to transportation and cruise ship constraints we must limit participation to **55 guests**, so by all means, register



A teaser of one of the treasures at Jim Singer's home garden.
Photo by Jim Singer.



A panorama of the stunning Washington Park Arboretum.
Photo by David Olszyk

early so you don't miss out on the fun. Point of contact for this event is David Olszyk, ACS Western Region President. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to email him at david.olszyk@gmail.com. 📧

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ACS Contact: Dr. Gary Knox

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912-344-2845
ACS Contact: Philip Schretter

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1345 Piedmont Avenue NE
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ACS Contact: Shelly Prescott

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ACS Contact: Dr. Martin Stone

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ACS Contact: David Poston

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423-439-8635
ACS Contact: Dr. Tim McDowell

Memphis Botanic Garden

750 Cherry Road
Memphis, Tennessee
901-636-4100
ACS Contact: Laurie Williams

University of Tennessee Gardens

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Knoxville, Tennessee
865-974-7324
ACS Contact: Dr. Sue Hamilton

West TN Research and Education Center Gardens

University of Tennessee - Jackson
605 Airways Drive
Jackson, Tennessee
731-425-1643
ACS Contact: Jason Reeves

VIRGINIA

Al Gardner Conifer Garden

Reynolds Community College
1851 Dickinson Road
Goochland, Virginia
804-523-5950
ACS Contact: Karin Stretchko

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

1800 Lakeside Avenue
Richmond, Virginia
804-262-9887
ACS Contact: Elizabeth Fogel

Norfolk Botanical Garden

6700 Azalea Garden Road
Norfolk, Virginia
757-441-5830
ACS Contact: Renee Frith

State Arboretum of Virginia

400 Blandy Farm Lane
Boyce, Virginia
540-837-1758
ACS Contact: T'ai Roulston

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