

175th



Anniversary

NARBORETUM ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

H A V E R F O R D C O L L E G E

VOLUME 34, NO. 2

SUMMER 2009

A SUMMER SHOW STOPPER *CATALPA SPECIOSA*, NORTHERN CATALPA

by William Astifan, Arboretum Director

Catalpa speciosa, commonly called Northern catalpa, Catawba tree or Indian-bean tree, is a member of the trumpet-creeper family, *Bignoniaceae*. In the south the tree is referred to as Catawba tree after the name of an Indian tribe. The Cherokee name catalpa was adopted by early settlers in the mid-section of the United States and that name is still used today. The native range of this tree is the small area along the Mississippi River from southern Illinois to about Memphis, including the confluences of the Wabash and Ohio rivers. The Southern catalpa *C. bignonioides* is a smaller tree; it blooms later and is more widespread throughout the south. The Northern catalpa, a larger tree adorned with larger remarkably-sized leaves, has rapid growth and is best known for the beauty of the numerous bunches of flowers. This flower show provides the catalpa a distinguished place among ornamental trees.

The best attribute of the Northern catalpa is the showy trumpet-shaped white flowers which are borne on 5- to 6-inch panicles forming large upright flower clusters in early summer. This flower display is what rivals the other trees from a distance, especially since it occurs at a time when most other trees have finished blooming. The individual 2-inch white flowers that cover the panicles have two yellow stripes and purple spots within the tubular base. The overall trumpet shape of the flower with the ruffled edges is very attractive in itself. Place it on the panicle with all the other flowers, and the display is eye-catching. A real summer show stopper! Here's an unusual fact, the tree is a dual pollinator. By day, bees pollinate the flowers guided by the yellow and purple markings (nectar guides) and at night, increases in nectar and fragrance attract moths to continue the pollination process.

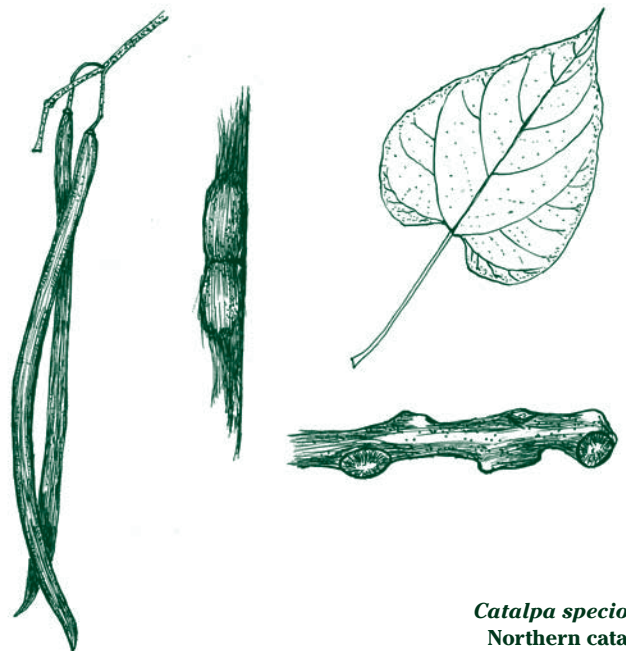
The tropical-looking leaves are borne on stout 4- to 6-inch stems supporting the 7- to 12-inch-long heart-shaped leaves. They appear in whorls of three but sometimes are arranged opposite and have broadly rounded bases, tapering tips, entire margins and visible pinnate veins. They are pale green and hairy underneath with hairless smooth green upper surfaces adding to the soft and flexible tropical feel and look. Fall color does not exist; the leaves just turn brown and fall off after the first frost. The twigs that support these leaves are very stout and smooth with noticeable lenticels and large leaf scars. Terminal buds are absent, and the leaf scars are large raised circles with concave centers.

The seed pods are slender, two-celled bean-like capsules 10 to 20 inches long and are attached to the tree with stout stems. In summer the pod starts out green, turns to brown as it matures,

and usually remains on the tree through the winter. The pods that do persist through the winter become a distinctive key to winter identification. Toward spring they split, releasing papery, flat seeds that have fringed wings.

The bark on the lower trunk is gray-brown, about 1-inch thick and broken into scaly, flat ridges. Under the bark is the coarse grained soft but not strong wood that is very durable when in contact with the soil. Because of this durability, the wood is most often used for posts.

Catalpas will grow on a variety of sites and are commonly planted as street trees, and ornamentals in large landscapes such as parks. Sometimes hard to find in the nursery trade today, the tree is worth seeking. Planted in groups or as a single specimen, catalpa is an impressive tree. When the tree is grown in the open the trunk is usually short and crooked with a broad irregularly spreading crown and thick, scraggly branches. In the woodland it is taller with a narrow rounded crown and a straight tapering trunk clear of limbs for the first 50 feet. At Haverford you can view it as a single specimen by the North Dorms or in a group by the Facilities Management Complex. But look for it in late June or early July when it is in flower and see why it is a show stopper!



Catalpa speciosa,
Northern catalpa

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In the current economic climate we seek help from all sources. Increasing volunteer opportunities will help us maintain the quality of the landscape that we all enjoy. The staff and I are eager to find a few more people who can work in specific plant beds. If you or someone you know does not mind getting their hands dirty and would like to learn about plants and their care, then we are looking for you. Contact the Arboretum Office for more information.

The Arboretum membership is growing once again. It is showing about a 14% increase over last year. This has much to do with getting in contact with the people who use the campus and making them aware of Arboretum membership and telling them that it is a good way to give something back to the College. The Executive Committee is working hard to continue this information outreach. Maintaining quality programs is our other main source of outreach. Again, if this would interest you, please contact us.

So what has the staff been doing?

Our programs this year have had excellent attendance. In addition to the usual offering, we had record monthly attendance at the gallery show "Gardens and Grounds: A Celebration of Haverford's Landscape." On March 22, 2009, Marty Kromer came to speak about the Quaker legacy of trees, a fitting topic to coincide with the show. A member and friends reception was held afterward at the gallery to highlight the talk and the show. The spring walk featured a Gallery to Grounds topic just before the show closed. Horticulturist Mike Startup took attendees around the campus to the areas they saw in the exhibit's historical photos. This certainly put the finishing touch on a great month of activity. For nearly a year, all the staff took part in the research and lent a hand in putting the show together.

No time for a breather. The Arbor Day tree was a flowering dogwood planted by Leeds Dormitory. The staff collected plants and gave a plant dividend to all attendees. Then the spring trip to Wilmington was wonderful, because the weather was perfect and the three gardens were all unique. All of this happens while preparations are ongoing for Commencement and Alumni Weekend. There is little time for grass or anything else to grow under our feet. I am considering adding more walks or tours because I see a growing interest in the campus and the programs that we offer. The Arboretum has always offered quality programs, and that word continues to spread.

I especially want to thank the Executive Committee and the Programs Committee for their support that helps make this all possible. Keep an eye on the last page for upcoming programs, and I hope to see you soon! Enjoy the summer.

*Bill Astifan,
Arboretum Director*

THE FUTURE — YOU CAN HELP!

by Lathrop Nelson, President, Arboretum Association

Arboretum Director Bill Astifan periodically refers to additions to the College landscape made possible by the generosity of Arboretum Association members and other friends. Bill's membership renewal letters list the projects over the preceding year funded, in part, by membership fees and gifts.

In response, we are often asked, "What would you like to accomplish this year?" Or, "Do you have a 'wish list'?" Absolutely! Here are three projects that because of the current economic conditions facing the College, we will need to spread out over the next several years unless we receive gifts permitting us to do them sooner:

- Plant 15 native dogwood and 20 Okame cherry trees along the Nature Trail by the edge of the new artificial turf field;
- Plant additional flowering native trees along the Haverford Road side of the Nature Trail; and
- Plant various water-tolerant shrubs and small trees around the Duck Pond.

Bill recalls that when he started working at Haverford ten years ago, the cherries and dogwoods along the old athletic field were breath-taking. But those trees have since succumbed not to diseases, but to earthmovers and other equipment used for various renovations and improvements to the playing field. Last



Photo by Martha Van Artsdalen

The banks of the Duck Pond need new plantings to discourage overgrazing by geese.

a number of new native flowering trees and shrubs including dogwoods, redbuds and magnolias that were planted there last year. Those trees were made possible by a generous gift by an Arboretum Association member and we would like to expand that flowering tree collection.

fall, the Ardmore Rotary Club, through a donation from the Rotary Club of Tokyo, Japan, gave us four Okame cherry trees now planted along the Nature Trail by the new artificial turf field. These cherries, with their beautiful pink flowers, are one of the first trees to bloom in the spring. We would like to add more cherries in this area and also pink and white flowering dogwoods that bloom after the cherries have finished, prolonging the display of spring color.

If you walk the Nature Trail, perhaps you saw the added color along Haverford Road this spring from

(continued on page 3)

ANNIVERSARY YEAR

by Martha Van Artsdalen, Plant Curator

It was just 35 years ago, on May 4, 1974, that the present Haverford College Arboretum Association held its first meeting. Members gathered in Stokes Hall for refreshments and a review by the group's first president, John A. Silver '25, of the origins of the Arboretum concept on campus and its past supporters. Following a slide show and update on recent plantings, they took a campus tour led by association Director Stevenson W. Fletcher, Jr.

But concern and care for the College's landscape dates back 175 years to the very beginnings of Haverford. Just after Founders Hall opened to the school's first 21 students, a committee hired English gardener William Carvill to turn 60 acres of the nearly 200 acres of farmland into an academic "lawn."

Last March, the exhibition "Gardens and Grounds: A Celebration of Haverford's Landscape," produced by the Arboretum staff, drew near-record attendance for a College show. Comments left by alumni, faculty, current students and campus neighbors reinforced the importance of the Haverford College Arboretum Association as an important link between 175 years of history and the future. Our mission will continue to be preservation of the historic landscape, improvement of the diverse tree collection and assistance in the study of this collection.

Typical of comments written by visitors to the exhibition were the following:

"When I arrived at Haverford College as a first year student in the fall of 1959 I noted that the mature trees growing along College Lane had small trees planted between them. I was struck by the powerful statement this made about the College's stewardship of its environment."

— Class of '63

"This arboretum is an oasis of beauty and open space and you are very generous keeping it open for all of us to enjoy."

— A neighbor

"If I remember anything from my years at Haverford I am positive that every memory will involve the trees that witnessed the moments."

— Class of '10

"The beauty of Haverford's Arboretum is unmatched!"

— Class of '77

THE FUTURE — YOU CAN HELP!

(continued from page 2)

The Arboretum staff began adding trees and shrubs around the Duck Pond several years ago. Those plants not only enhance the beauty of the Duck Pond, one of the favorite spots on campus for many visitors, they also discourage the Canada geese from crowding out the ducks and other waterfowl that live at or visit the Duck Pond. We would like to add more trees and shrubs around the Duck Pond.

If you would like to make contributions toward any of these projects, please contact the Arboretum office. We sincerely appreciate your support and no gift is too small. Your generosity is invaluable to the success of the Arboretum and beauty of Haverford College.

WATCHING NEW GRADUATES GROW

by Mike Startup, Staff Horticulturist

There are always a few students out of each graduating class who leave their handprint on the landscape of Haverford College. Friendships are forged during four years; we share with the students many stories of families, home towns, interests outside of the classroom and their studies. These are the student workers in the Arboretum and members of the Class of 2009. Now, we celebrate five individuals and laud their future ambitions.

In a galaxy far, far away will be the inspiration for Anna Pancoast '09. She is a Ph.D. candidate in the physics department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, studying the galaxy NGC 2442, with the help of a National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowship.

Winn Johnson '09 was awarded the prestigious Watson Fellowship 2009–2010. This will allow her the opportunity for independent travel and study outside the United States. She will embark on an exploration of some of the world's most famous gardens. She will visit England's Kew Gardens; The Netherlands' Leiden Botanical Garden; El Generalife in Granada, Spain; China's Beijing Botanical Garden; Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden in Cape Town, South Africa; Bogor Botanic Garden in Jakarta, Indonesia; and Oaxaca Ethnobotanical Garden in Oaxaca, Mexico. I have graciously offered to carry her bags!

The United States Food and Drug Administration's Research Participation Program at the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition will be the landing point for Sarah Allard '09. Her work focuses on *Salmonella* in the environment. She has worked with the Arboretum for all four years and one summer.

A quote from Karl Menninger, "What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches." Thank you, Jacob Blanton '09 for teaching 7th – 8th grade math and science at Grover Cleveland School in North Philadelphia.

Mary Welsh '09 will be a fellow in the Haverford House program. She will work four days per week with a non-profit organization in the Philadelphia area. Haverford House Fellows dedicate their fifth workday to projects that engage the College with Greater Philadelphians devoted to a more socially just, healthy and vibrant community. Mary will serve with the Philadelphia GROW Project at the Drexel University School of Public Health and involve Haverford students with urban farming initiatives in Philadelphia.

It has been my personal pleasure to share many hours of work as well as my love of horticulture with this fine group of people. The staff's best wishes are extended to the entire Class of 2009 and especially to Anna, Winn, Sarah, Jacob and Mary.



Photo by Carol Wagner

Shipleigh School students Nathaniel Kuntz (left) and Anders Engman spent three weeks volunteering with the Arboretum's staff horticulturists in May. They weeded beds, pruned shrubs, spread mulch, and planted trees, ferns and bulbs for their service project required of all graduating seniors.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, September 17 • 9 to 4 p.m.

Fall Gardens Trip

Local Roots: Botanical history in nearby Philadelphia

Philadelphia is not only the cradle of liberty, but arguably the birthplace of botanical history in the New World. Join us behind the scenes at the Academy of Natural Sciences where curator emeritus Dr. Ernie Schuyler will show us its botanical treasures. We'll see centuries of hand-illustrated plant texts and explore the herbarium collection, home to a wealth of Lewis and Clark plant samples from their 1803–1806 journey across the continent. We will then tour the landscape of William Hamilton's Woodlands on the banks of the Schuylkill, said to have inspired Jefferson as he worked on Monticello.

Sunday, October 4 • 1:30 p.m.

Fall Campus Walk

Meet in front of the Whitehead Campus Center

Wednesday, October 21

Annual Dinner Meeting

Reception 6 p.m., business meeting 6:30 p.m.

Dinner 7 p.m., lecture 8 p.m.

Founders Great Hall

Sunday, November 8 • 1:30 p.m.

Fall Lecture

“Winter Gardening” by Paul Epsom

Sharpless Auditorium

When he's not dispensing gardening advice on *The Victory Garden*, Paul Epsom can be found on the Pennsylvania set of *Home and Backyard* or running Greystone Gardens, a specialist garden center in Clarks Summit. For this Haverford lecture, sponsored jointly with the Hardy Plant Society, Mid-Atlantic Chapter, and the Henry Foundation for Botanical Research, Paul will show his creative energy as he tackles how to make the dormant garden just as pleasing in winter as in other months of the year. Born and educated in England, Paul was bitten by the gardening bug as a child and has never recovered.

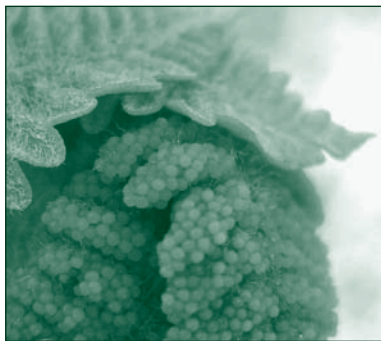


Photo by Mike Startup

A CLOSER LOOK:

A wood fern,
Dryopteris celsa,
unfurls in April.

DIG DEEPER

by Mike Startup, Staff Horticulturist

Gardeners like to share. Whether it's a division of a favorite daylily, how did your roses come through the winter, or where did you find that new cultivar of *Nandina*? No matter what time of year there will always be a topic to spawn a conversation. We welcome the opportunity to talk about our passion for gardening.

Dig Deeper — In the Arboretum is a monthly event held during the lunch hour when the campus community is invited to join in varied demonstrations and visit gardens on campus. On the heels of the Arboretum's gallery exhibit closing in March, I led the first in the series of monthly walkabouts. These events will continue through the year to celebrate the Arboretum's 175th anniversary.



Photo by Martha Van Artsdalen

Horticulturist Mike Startup demonstrates how to divide perennials.

A sunny day in late March kicked off the series with a discussion and close look at the early spring bulbs in the garden outside the bookstore. April is the perfect time to divide perennials. Hostas, black-eyed Susans, and daylilies were given an invigorating separation and all in attendance took home a division. The native plant garden at #1 College Circle, home of President Steve Emerson '74, was at spring anthesis the second week in May. This richly diverse garden boasts more than 80 different species. Quaker-ladies and two types of trilliums highlighted the outing.

While the year rolls on, the campus is now quiet. The students have departed and heat will soon settle in. The Dig Deeper series will continue to engage the community and help remind us all how 175 years ago a vision began and was nurtured through the hands of many gardeners. When gardeners shared generations ago, we can thank them today for our descendants of the Penn Treaty Elm.



Executive Committee

Officers

President: Lathrop B. Nelson, Jr.

Vice President: Jacki Delaney

Arboretum Director: Bill Astifan

Secretary: Anne Donnell

Past President: Pat Turner

Members at Large

Fritzi Franks

Agnes Moncy

Nancy Pasquier

Laura Patterson

Tom Pleatman

Committee Chairmen

Membership: Ann Ashmead

Programs: Martha Van Artsdalen

arbor@haverford.edu
www.haverford.edu/Arboretum/

