



HAVERFORD COLLEGE ARBORETUM ASSOCIATION

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LARIX KAEMPFERI, JAPANESE LARCH

by William Astifan, Arboretum Director

This deciduous conifer is a member of the Pine Family, *Pinaceae*. *Larix* is the ancient Latin name for larch tree and is one of five genera of deciduous conifers. This larch is named for Engelbert Kaempfer (1651 to 1716). Kaempfer was a German naturalist who was a medical officer for the Dutch East India Company and spent two years in Japan (1690 to 1692) collecting information at a time when Japan was isolated from the outside world (the Edo Period). His book *Amoenitatum exoticarum*, published in 1712, is important for its medical observations, and was the first extensive description of Japanese plants. Twenty-three plants were introduced by him.

Larix kaempferi has an open conical habit and short horizontal branches that rarely droop. It is considered a medium to fast-grower, reaching 80 to 90 feet tall in cultivation with a 30 to 40-foot spread on a 3 to 4-foot diameter trunk. Seeds from dwarf specimens discovered on the high slopes of Mount Fuji were later found to become normal full-sized trees when grown under more favorable conditions.

As the tree's gray bark matures, it peels off in narrow strips and exposes a red bark underneath. The shoots and young branches appear shiny, yellowish or reddish-brown, which is an identifying characteristic.

The leaves are needle-like and grow on short stalks in clusters of 20 or more. These noticeably wider and rounded 1½-inch long needles are easily distinguished from other larches by their shiny texture, softness, two clearly defined longitudinal bands on the underside and light or bluish green color. The fall color of the needle is yellow-gold. The needles fall individually, leaving the tree with a gray lifeless appearance in winter.



The soft new growth on young Larix kaempferi helps distinguish the tree from the European larch, Larix decidua, which also is represented on campus.

Photos by Martha Van Artsdalen

The cones are ovoid to oblong and 1½ inches long on a very short stalk that is usually covered by the cone scales. The cones ripen in about six months, open to disburse the seed, and then remain on the tree for another year or more, eventually turning black and falling off.

This is one of the handsomest and fastest-growing larches with good to excellent fall color. It has a more open habit than the European larch, *Larix decidua*, which is so popular in replacing our Tamarack, *Larix laricina*. *Larix kaempferi* seems to be less hardy and more susceptible to drought. It does tolerate wet conditions and likes sun. This could be the nature of the tree, stemming from its origins in the higher mountain regions of central Japan. This tree is a good choice for large landscapes. Six young trees will be planted this summer in the Pinetum to replace several that have been removed along the trail parallel to Haverford Road.



Six young Japanese larches will replace mature trees lost last fall in the Pinetum collection along Haverford Road.

Five genera of deciduous conifers

Larix *Glyptostrobus* *Metasequoia*
Pseudolarix *Taxodium* (some species)

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I like reporting exciting news in the Arboretum. Normally it would be about a special tree but this time it is about communications! Since January I have been working closely with Institutional Advancement on new approaches to send information to our members. We have recently sent out information via emails, experimenting with electronic media. Eventually, if chosen, this newsletter will be available electronically and delivered right to your email account. Until the conversions are firmed up, a printed copy will be sent. Mike Startup mentions in his article how we are using Instagram to communicate and connect with the outside world. You can find us on Instagram at [haverfordcollegearboretum](https://www.instagram.com/haverfordcollegearboretum). This addition joins the Arboretum's Facebook page and website blog. This is part of our outreach program.

*Now the trees! New trees were added to our inventory in the last few months. Donations were given for: a Swamp white oak, *Quercus bicolor*, planted on Lloyd Green; this year's Arbor Day tree, the American sycamore, *Platanus occidentalis*, planted at the corner of College Lane and Coursey Road; and a Fall Fiesta Sugar maple, *Acer saccharum* 'Fall Fiesta' planted on the Barclay Beach lawn. Sadly, four trees were cut down due to root rot. We continue to plan replacements for these and other specimens in decline. Your donations and support allow us to do more and plant trees for the future.*

As we move into the summer months and beyond, if you visit the campus you will see construction. Temporary walks have been installed to get everyone around the renovations in Ryan Gym (now known as VCAM, the Visual Center for Arts and Media) and Sharpless Hall (laboratory upgrades.) Both projects impact center campus, however, the college staff working with contractors has these areas looking good when a typical construction site often does not. There were a few scheduled tree removals and relocations on each site. New plantings and site restoration will occur at each project completion. The Arboretum sends our kudos to the college staff who made this work possible.

Tom Sholtzberger '77 has resigned from the Arboretum Executive Committee because of a career move. We wish him well on his new job. I thank Tom for his invaluable help on the committee. Good luck Tom, we know that Haverford will always be in your heart.

In closing, summer is here and we recognize our summer student staff with a photo on page 3. We have a great crew and look forward to a great summer.

Bill Astifan
Arboretum Director

TRAVEL THE WORLD — INSTANTLY

by Mike Startup, Horticulturist

There once was a time before cable TV, which meant there was no ESPN or any myriad of cable sports-related stations. I was a boy who looked forward once a week to being transported around the world to watch televised sporting events on a show called ABC Wide World of Sports.

Cue the music. . . .

Spanning the globe (Great Wall of China) to bring you the constant variety of sports (bucking bronco rider, Pele being carried off the field on his teammates' shoulders and Franz Klammer's Gold Medal ski run from the 1976 Innsbruck Olympics). That introductory spoken word, grainy video and accompanying music immediately take me back to my '70s childhood.

The Arboretum has slowly begun to dabble in the digital world. The office students are managing a Facebook page, Martha is continuing the Arboretum blog and anyone can read the newsletter now simply by navigating to the Arboretum's website. The curator's office has undertaken the next step in mapping the more than 3,500 inventoried trees by installing a program called BG-Map.

Our most recent foray in sharing images of campus activities and the plant collection is through Instagram. This online social media service shares more than 60 million photos and videos every day. What I have enjoyed most with this platform is the ability to view images from botanical gardens, college and universities, plant societies, government agencies, the Tri-co community, current students and alumni.

This is how Instagram works. There are three components:

1. POSTS — a single photo or video entry with text
2. FOLLOWERS — individuals, institutions, or agencies that receive your post
3. FOLLOWING — individuals, institutions, or agencies where you see their posts. The Arboretum is currently following 204 societies, gardens, agencies and individuals. Each time a post is sent, it makes its way to each of our followers, which, as of this printing, is 149.

I have watched spring and summer march their way across the country by viewing posts from the Alaska Botanical Garden, Coastal Maine Botanical Garden, the National Tropical Botanical Garden in Hawaii and scores more. On a global scale, we are not only able to witness spring morph to summer, but the gardens in the Southern Hemisphere currently offer us a glimpse of fall. We are following gardens in such countries as Canada, Finland, Israel, Australia, Brazil and Honduras.

The gardens of the world are truly a few clicks away with Instagram. Just as the sports show was "*spanning the globe to bring you the constant variety of sports*," so, too, this ever-shrinking world will put the gardens of the planet in the palm of your hand.

HAVERFARM: A GROWING COMMUNITY by Martha Van Artsdalen, Plant Curator

This summer there's more than vegetables growing by the community garden plots on campus. The third season of Haverfarm is well on its way. In its infancy, several students turned an area of grass by a dormitory into a vegetable garden. Now part of Haverford's Environmental Studies Program, the effort has expanded into seven plots, a small orchard and a nearly-completed greenhouse and classroom space that serve a wide audience.

"Haverfarm is an educational, experiential, outdoor classroom for students and neighbors," explains Aubrey DeLone, the college's first farm fellow, who works with the program's three professors and Claudia Kent, assistant director of facilities, grounds and sustainability. Students from Chemistry Professor Helen White's classes have worked in the garden, Biology Professor Jonathan Wilson's classes have sown seeds in the Arboretum's greenhouse and Anthropology Professor Joshua Moses has arranged field trips to urban gardens.

All ages enjoy the Haverfarm gardens. In addition to Haverford students who worked there to fulfill physical education course credits, kindergartners from the Phebe Thorne Center on campus stopped by each week this spring to plant and water. Aubrey also has worked with third-graders from the Taggart Elementary School in Philadelphia whose teacher is alum Angela Chan '98. Serendipity Camp kids include time in the garden this summer, and, of course, there are the neighboring community gardeners who have rented plots at Haverford for years, sometimes decades.

Spring rains followed by sunny June days meant a bountiful harvest of garlic, kale, five varieties of lettuce and baby greens, followed by herbs, mint, spinach and rhubarb. Produce is sold every Friday at a farm stand

on campus, with a portion donated to the Ardmore Food Pantry. This season Haverfarm also serves 20 CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) members who receive a box of vegetables each week in exchange for working in the garden or financial support. A sample box this spring included broccoli, two heads of lettuce, a half-pound of arugula, one head of spring garlic and bunches of radishes and mint. Harvest totals from the plots reached 800 pounds as of early June, Aubrey reports.

The first student farmer summed it up best, Aubrey says, quoting Alanna Matteson '15: "Haverfarm brings together so many people."



Photo by Martha Van Artsdalen

Alison Love '18, summer intern with the Center for Peace and Global Citizenship, left, joins Aubrey DeLone at the Haverfarm vegetable garden.

ALUMNI WEEKEND TOUR



Photo by Martha Van Artsdalen

Early risers enjoyed a walking tour of the campus led by Horticulturist Carol Wagner, far right, as part of alumni reunion 2016 over the Memorial Day weekend.

SUMMER CREW



Photo by Mike Startup

Summer is an especially busy time for the Arboretum staff. This year, we welcome the assistance of students (from left): Noah Jacobson-Carroll '18, Antonio Gil '19, Adam Bassie, Michael DeWolf '17 and (foreground) Zach Oji '19.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall Lecture

Sunday, October 2 • 2 p.m. • *Sharpless Auditorium*

Annual Dinner

Thursday, October 20 • 6 to 9 p.m.

Founders Great Hall

Featuring speaker **William Woys Weaver**

This author, preservationist and food historian has seen the gardening world come to embrace the heirloom food plants that he grew up with as a child. His Quaker grandfather taught him how to save seeds from year to year, and today he maintains the Roughwood Seed Collection.

The evening's buffet dinner will include vegetables grown by students at the Haverfarm, and locally-sourced fish and meat.

HOT WEATHER AHEAD



Photo by Noah Jacobson-Carroll '18

In anticipation of hot weather, the Arboretum is experimenting with several self-watering containers, pots with built-in water reservoirs, around campus. Horticulturist Mike Startup has planted annuals and a large Plumeria to match the scale of the tall walls of the Whitehead Campus Center, always a hot and dry spot in summer.

A Closer Look . . .



Photo by Mike Startup

Taxodium ascendens is an aptly named species of bald cypress because the needles grow straight up on its layered branches. You can find a specimen of this tree, commonly called pond cypress, growing along the edge of the Duck Pond near the Skate House.

"The trees are just in their prime, and any one will confess their beauty who sees them just now, clothed in all the delicate grace of leafy June. The slopes and avenues, and woodland, and buildings, all conspire to make the old spot delightful."

— *The Haverfordian*, June 1880



HAVERFORD COLLEGE
ARBORETUM
ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members at Large

Ann Ashmead	Laura Patterson
Agnes Moncy	Matt Simon '77
Nancy Pasquier	Alan Wood

Staff Representatives:

Bill Astifan, *Arboretum Director*
Don Campbell, *Director, Facilities Management*
Claudia Kent, *Assistant Director, Facilities and Grounds*
Jesse Lytle, *Chief of Staff, President's Office*

Student Representatives:

Austin Huber '19, Annika Ulrich '18

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