Sawara falsecypress is a tall tree native to Japan and is a member of the cypress family, Cupressaceae. *Chamaecyparis pisifera* and its cultivars are hardy in USDA Zones 4–7 and are widely distributed as landscape plants. In the wild the tree is capable of reaching heights of 150 feet with trunk diameters in excess of 5 feet. In cultivation the heights are considerably smaller while many cultivars are considered large shrubs. Common characteristics among the cypress family are flattened sprays of branchlets and thin, smooth reddish-brown bark forming vertical fissures that peel in long strips. I find these very attractive features of the cypresses.

‘Filifera’ is one of many cultivars of Sawara falsecypress and one of the more popular ones. The etymology as translated describes the main plant features. *Chamaecyparis* is from the Greek *chami* for low-growing and *kuparissos* for cypress; *pisifera* means pea-bearing and refers to the small cones; ‘Filifera’ describes the narrow thread-like leaves. *Chamaecyparis* is classified as a narrow pyramidal tree with horizontal branches. This is true of ‘Filifera’ except the elongated and slender branches form graceful pendulous whips.

Covering the branchlets, which appear on the flattened sprays, are scale-like leaves growing in pairs that appear as armor on the horizontal plane. Two common attributes of *Chamaecyparis pisifera* are the distinctively-flattened sprays and the conspicuously-pointed leaves. The leaves are lustrous green with noticeable white areas on the underside. At the ends of these lacy sprays are the small ¼-inch in diameter cones that are green at first and later ripen to dark brown in the fall. As they open they will release one or two tiny seeds.

This graceful, pendulous tree is a great landscape feature. The specimen in the Arboretum collection is located on the east side of Founders Hall next to the Great Hall. It is in a protected location because it does not tolerate the harsh winter winds well. This threadleaf Sawara falsecypress was recently adopted by the Class of 1986 as its class tree.
FROM THE DIRECTOR

We welcome Alan Wood as a new member of the Executive Committee. He fills a vacancy left by Toini Scherer who completed her term. I thank Toini for her service on the Executive Committee and continue to enjoy her support at events and through membership.

This fall we tried a new program to harvest the lumber from trees that needed to be removed. So far, six logs have been sliced into planks. The repurposed planks are destined for use in renovation projects on campus. When the architects working on the projects were informed, they were very excited and so are we.

The September 17th annual meeting was very well attended. The evening’s feature was the celebration of 100 years of history for our Penn Treaty Elm. (See Carol Wagner’s article on page 4.) Other programs this fall were tours that are always popular. Mike Startup did an excellent job leading a tour on Family and Friends Weekend which is always well attended. I led tours for a group of preschoolers from Haverford Friends School, teaching them about fall color in leaves, and for visiting delegates from the Tokyo Rotary Club with their sister club in Ardmore. The Tokyo club donated money to purchase the Okame cherry trees by Swan Field; it was fun for me to show them the four trees and the plaque recognizing their gift.

Our staff is preparing for the holidays by making decorations for Founder’s Great Hall and preparing to babysit student plants while their owners are on winter break. Other recent activities were the harvesting of the tropical plants from beds and planters, and getting bulbs planted for spring displays.

It is nice to think about spring, but we have much to do in winter, including the planning that goes into projects for next year. The staff is ready to enjoy winter until the snow flies, and then they break out the snow shovels to clear the campus.

Have a safe and happy holiday season.

Happy New Year from the staff at the Arboretum.
Bill Astifan
Arboretum Director

CAMPUS TOUR

Beautiful fall weather and brilliant foliage greeted family members enjoying Family and Friends Weekend in late October. Activities included an early morning tour of the campus landscape, led by Horticulturist Mike Startup.

READY FOR WINTER

by Martha Van Artsdalen, Plant Curator

As chilly mornings forecast the winter ahead, work in the Arboretum turns from gathering up leaves to changing the many outdoor containers that normally brighten corners of campus.

Out by the Lancaster Avenue entrance, colorful annuals are out and hundreds of tulip bulbs are buried in anticipation of spring. At the upper patio between the Gardner Athletic Center and the COOP, the large tropical plants are removed to the greenhouse to overwinter and daffodil bulbs planted in their place. Some woody shrubs, those that are hardy to one growing zone north of Haverford, can safely overwinter in their containers.

The large planters by Magill Library ramp and the entrance to Roberts Hall will soon sport seasonal cuttings of green yew in place of autumn mums. The winter season is upon us.

Student Arboretum workers Zoe McAlear ’16 (left) and Meghan Wingate ’17 tuck tulip bulbs in planting beds by the Strawbridge Gates.

Photo by Martha Van Artsdalen
A BITTERSWEET DECISION

The cycle of life in the Arboretum often means dead, deteriorating or hazardous trees must be removed from the landscape. This summer, the decision was made to cut down a black walnut, Juglans nigra, from the woods near the Duck Pond, and also the magnificent, but dead, giant sequoia, Sequoiadendron giganteum, in the Pinetum. But logs from both trees have been milled into lumber and will be recycled as part of building projects; their beauty will continued to be enjoyed.

SAVE THE DATE

Arbor Day
Friday, April 29 • Noon
Join in the over 100-year-old tradition at Haverford of planting a tree on campus. Location to be announced.

THEN AND NOW

by Martha Van Artsdalen, Plant Curator

Sometimes a look back in Haverford’s history illustrates how much the campus has changed and yet how much of the past remains. In the 1880s, students used wooden walkways between Founders Hall and Alumni Hall. Today the area is a major crosswalk radiating out to the Dining Center, Chase Hall, the entrance to what is now known as Magill Library, and all buildings to the south. Renovations this summer, made possible by an anonymous gift, enlarged the area. Granite curbing and a stone sitting wall were added, and the circle paved with recycled tires to allow for water penetration. The decorative lamp post, moved to this location from in front of Founders Hall in 1942, was a gift from the Class of 1904. The scarlet oak, to the right of both photographs, remains 130 years later and has been designated a Pennsylvania State Champion tree because of its size. In the 19th century view, note the upper story link between Founders Hall and the rear structure, built in 1855 to house a chemistry lab and gymnasium equipment. Today it is known as Gest Hall and houses classrooms.
CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF HISTORY by Carol Wagner, Horticulturist

At the 2015 Arboretum dinner September 17th we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the planting of our Penn Treaty Elm descendant on Barclay Beach. This tree is a great-grandchild of the revered elm that grew along the banks of the Delaware River under which Quaker William Penn and Chief Tamanend of the Lenape Nation made their unwritten treaty of peace and unity in 1682.

One of the original founders of Haverford College, Bartholomew Wistar, acquired a young grandchild sapling of the Treaty Elm and planted it on Founders Green in 1840. It was a stately icon on campus until it succumbed to Dutch elm disease and was removed in 1977.

Around 1900, the Thomas Meehan Nursery in Germantown specialized in growing rooted cuttings of many historic trees from here and Europe, including cuttings taken from Haverford’s 1840 Treaty Elm.

It was from Meehan Nursery that Caleb Cresson Wistar, class of 1865 and grandson of Bartholomew Wistar, purchased the seven Treaty Elms that he gave to the college for his 50th reunion. These trees were planted in the fall of 1915 on Barclay Beach, less than one year before C. Cresson Wistar’s death.

One of our most treasured photos is the one here showing the Treaty Elm cluster as it appeared in the winter of 1950. By 1975, five of the trees had died of Dutch elm disease and been removed. The sixth was removed in 1982. (Our remaining tree is 3rd from the right!)

The setting of this story is those mellow sun-soaked days of late September. Wandering home past the Ira D. Reid House, lost in convoluted thoughts of German grammar, I noticed a glint of mahogany in the grass — a chestnut fallen from the overhanging tree. I’ve never eaten a chestnut before, but based on Christmas carols, it seems one can roast them on open fires and presumably consume them? Thus encouraged, I picked up a handful. Soon the plump little guys bulged in my pockets, soon they jumbled musically in my backpack as I walked to class, soon yogurt containers full of them lined the ledges of my windows and teetered in dubious stacks on top of the fridge, soon, they started to spawn maggots. Apparently, you can’t dry-store chestnuts.

My dedication to foraging stops slightly short of maggots, so I decide it’s high time to start cooking. The result? A sweet, creamy, full-bodied Arboretum soup, courtesy of the generous Castanea dentata x mollissima.

(continued on page 5)

FROM PLANT TO PALATE by Charlotte Colantti ’18

When I started as a student worker in Haverford’s Arboretum, I was excited to open my eyes to a new world of plants and people. What I didn’t expect was that it would also open my palate to a whole new world. Whether it’s Carol Wagner’s famous pineapple upside-down cake delivered in an old pizza box for staff and student birthdays, or salt water taffy eaten as an impromptu breakfast on early morning shifts (kudos again to Carol), or rogue grass clippings thrown unceremoniously into my mouth by the weed-whacker, it seems I’ve tasted a lot new things since I’ve started working in the Arboretum.

This autumn was no exception when I discovered Castanea dentata x mollissima, the hybrid Chinese-American chestnut. Fellow foragers, don’t be intimidated by the brochure-worthy manicured lawns or the omniscient eyes of the horticulturists, because the Arboretum is, in fact, edible.

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(continued on page 5)
The recipe (credit to Martha Stewart and my roommate) is as follows:

**Castanea dentata x mollissima**

*Arboretum Soup*

**Ingredients:**
- 1 lb. fresh chestnuts
- 8 oz. mushrooms
  (Martha recommends 6 oz. cremini and 2 oz. shiitake, but I wouldn’t worry about it)
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, halved
- 8 sprigs fresh thyme, plus leaves for garnish
- 6 cups homemade or store-bought chicken stock
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 cup heavy cream

**Directions:**

1. Harvest chestnuts from Haverford Arboretum
   (*I recommend the tree near Ira D. Reid House*)
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Using a paring knife, make an incision in each chestnut about 1/8-inch deep through the shell and into the flesh, cutting almost all the way around nut. Transfer to a rimmed baking sheet. Roast until chestnuts are tender when pierced with the paring knife, about 35 minutes. Turn off oven. Leaving sheet in oven, remove several chestnuts at a time. Working quickly, place each chestnut in a kitchen towel, and remove and discard shell and inner skin. This is a painful process, so wear your gardening gloves!
3. Roughly chop all but 4 mushrooms. On medium-high heat, melt 1 tbsp. butter with olive oil in a small stockpot. Add chopped mushrooms, and season with salt and pepper. Cook mushrooms, stirring occasionally, until they start to brown, about 5 minutes. Add onion, garlic and thyme sprigs. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are translucent, about 8 minutes. Add all but 4 peeled chestnuts, and cook until golden, about 5 minutes. Add stock and the water, raise heat to high, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer until chestnuts are falling-apart tender, about 1 hour. Remove and discard thyme sprigs, and let soup cool slightly.
4. Pass soup through a fine sieve into a bowl; transfer solids in batches to a food processor or blender, and puree until completely smooth. Add strained liquid, and process 1 minute. Return soup to stockpot, and season with salt and pepper.
5. Cut the remaining 4 chestnuts and 4 mushrooms into 1/4-inch-thick slices. Melt remaining tablespoon butter in a small skillet over medium-high heat. Sauté sliced chestnuts and mushrooms until crisp and golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes.
6. Just before serving, heat soup over low. Stir in cream, and remove from heat. Ladle soup into shallow bowls; garnish with sautéed chestnuts and mushrooms and the thyme leaves.
7. Think pleasant thoughts about the Arboretum as you sip this mellow autumnal soup!

P.S. Subsequent foraging attempts on campus have been slightly less successful. Just know that the juicy-looking kumquat-like fruits of the *Poncirus trifoliata* are neither juicy nor kumquat-like. Caveat forager.

**Editor’s Note:**

The common, or English names of plants can cause confusion, and, in this case, lead to gastronomical trouble.

*Do not confuse the true American chestnut, Castanea dentata, its Chinese cousin Castanea mollissima, and the hybrid mentioned above, with members of the Aesculus family, trees commonly known as horsechestnuts.*

Although nuts from the common horsechestnut, the Ohio buckeye and the yellow buckeye might look more attractive to eat, they are toxic to humans.
KEEP WILDLIFE WILD
by Claudia Kent, Assistant Director of Facilities Management

Populations of resident Canada geese date back to the 1930s when the federal government banned the use of hunting with live decoys. Thousands of geese were let go in the wild and, with no knowledge of how to migrate, they took up year-round residence at our local ponds and parks. Pennsylvania has more than any other state. As of April 2014, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that Pennsylvania has 231,780 resident Canada geese.

These geese don’t migrate like their wild counterparts. An average lifespan of a goose is 20 years, and an adult female can produce over 50 offspring during her lifetime. That’s a lot of geese! With 50 goslings hatched this spring at Haverford’s pond, the population reached 200 geese. Add that each goose defecates 1 pound of fecal matter per day, every day, the college felt a need to take action.

After some research and lots of discussion, Haverford entered into a partnership with the USDA and developed an Integrated Wildlife Damage Management Program. Our goal is to manage resident geese through population stabilization, habitat modification and site aversion so that numbers of geese are in balance with other wildlife and no longer pose a significant problem.

First steps included a no-feeding policy. Supplemental feeding creates a host of problems: pollution, overcrowding, aggressive behavior and disease. The college also created a buffer zone around the pond. Geese like to fly to water and then walk out onto land. A double barrier was installed on the east side of the pond to eliminate exit points. The area will be periodically mowed to six inches. The college also employs the USDA and its Wildlife Services Division. Several times per week, crews harass the geese with a variety of deterrents: pyrotechnics, lasers and remote-controlled boats and cars. They will also search out and spray the eggs in spring with vegetable oil to prevent eggs from developing.

This is not a quick fix. Some estimates suggest that reducing the population may take several years. The remaining geese will be healthier and more in balance with the remaining pond life at Haverford.

““The Arboretum is great . . . the trees provided a much-needed sanctuary during my time at Haverford.”
— RACHEL HEATON, CLASS OF 2007

A Closer Look . . .

Warm temperatures into November meant extra days of colorful fall foliage and lingering flower blossoms on campus. Here, a bee is tempted by a late-blooming chrysanthemum.