In October, CCEDC Master Gardener volunteers had the opportunity to visit the Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Gardens at PepsiCo World Headquarters in Purchase, New York. Our tour was led by Head Gardener Larry Labriola, President of Carmine Labriola Contracting Corporation, who has maintained the gardens for years and shared his extensive knowledge of the grounds with us.

PepsiCo located its headquarters in Purchase, NY in 1970 and began extensive development of its gardens soon after. In 1965, Donald M. Kendall, former chairman and CEO of PepsiCo, had begun collecting sculptures designed for the outdoors. Kendall’s vision was to merge landscape and sculptures to create an atmosphere of harmony between nature and art. The result was the Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Gardens.

The landscape surrounding the buildings designed Edward Durrell Stone were designed by his son E.D. Stone Jr. then expanded in 1980 by Russell Page who carefully planted gardens to relate the sculptures to their immediate surroundings. Since 1985 development of the gardens has been continued by François Goffinet, an internationally acclaimed garden designer.
Gardens immediately surrounding the building are formal, with clipped hedges, trained trees and fountains. Plantings reflect and highlight some building features and hide others. Yews along one side of the building are carefully trimmed at a slight angle to ensure enough light keeps them full on both sides of the hedge so they are attractive from inside and outside.

A planting of boxwood around the roof of a utility building cleverly disguises its purpose as a power plant by hiding the exhaust pipes.

Sculptures placed near the main building are smaller to be viewed up-close and within more intimate settings such as the Japanese Iris Garden and Lily Pond Garden.

The remainder of the landscape is on a grand scale with amazing sculptures set among gardens including birch and oak groves, woodland walks, streams, a lily pond, Japanese iris garden, and collections of grasses, yews, and ornamental trees.

Our tour guide tailored our MGV’s visit by focusing on the gardens, pointing out unusual species such as *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* (dawn redwood), the unusual deciduous conifer and *Malus hupehensis* (tea crabapple) Mr. Kendall’s favorite tree.

(The crabapple was lovely in October. This photo from the Arnold Arboretum shows its flowers.)

We viewed a collection of evergreen conifers including *Cryptomeria japonica* (Japanese cedar), admired single huge specimens such as *Quercus coccinea* (scarlet oak), and a huge planting of *Hydrangea macrophylla* (bigleaf hydrangea) pruned to appear as a living sculpture.

Since this location is at the site of PepsiCo’s world headquarters, visits to the sculpture garden are available to the public during non-business hours such as Saturday and Sunday, or during the week by special reservation. To learn more, visit PepsiCo Sculpture Gardens.
THE DONALD M. KENDALL SCULPTURE GARDENS
By Anthula Natsoulas, Master Gardener Volunteer

The Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Gardens are rich in both nature and art. These images and descriptions give only a taste of a truly impressive setting.

*Nature does its part with a quiet garden path along a flowing stream*

*And an aisle of trees among which to meander –*

*While elsewhere a tree creates its own art.*
What a perfect setting for an early morning horseback ride –

While nearby Totem Poles keep watch.

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A steel sculpture reaches up to be one with trees –

and the Double L gently rotates against the sky.
But our wonderful woodland is not complete without –
A set of marble passages into another time and place –

From whence these Caryatids may have come

And perhaps a friendly bear against the trees

And a flock of birds

And maybe an owl.
Some sit far away among the trees to listen to the songs of the birds and feel the gently blowing breezes –

And perhaps listen to the soothing sound of a harp –

Near a place of quiet reflection.
THE FAIRLY MYSTERIOUS BLOOM HABITS
OF THE SO-CALLED CHRISTMAS CACTUS

By Chris Ferrero, Master Gardener Volunteer

Even before Thanksgiving I was commiserating with neighbors and friends about the vagaries of the Zygocactus, (*Schlumbergera truncata* syn. *Zygocactus truncata*) commonly known as Christmas or Thanksgiving Cactus.

That's because my seven-year old cactus actually bloomed for *Halloween* this year, and in comparing notes, I found others wondering about the early bloom of their plants too.

After all, in our northern latitude, Thanksgiving is a common bloom target for these plants, because their bud formation is triggered by light deprivation -- specifically when the 12-hour daylight threshold is tripped around the Autumnal Equinox at the end of September.

Could it be that this year in the key transition season, the relentlessly rainy weather produced an unusually low number of sun-days, and our cacti had their trigger thrown early?

I've always let Mother Nature have her way with my Zygocactus. I take her out for the summer and let filtered light and random rain supply her meager needs. When nighttime temps drop below 50 degrees, I bring her in and clean her up, and put her in a sunshiny room with no night-time light to interrupt her 12-plus-hour sleep. That advice, along with admonishment to leave them pot-bound and let them dry out between watering, pretty reliably produces great bloom without any artificial help.

But this year, it just may be that all those Efficient Elsies who learned from their moms to put their Christmas Cactus in a closet for the month of October are the ones most likely to see bloom on the usual schedule. The rest of us, tricked by an increasingly capricious Mother Nature, may just have to buy poinsettias early for holiday color.

This is my common red Zygocactus that began its bloom on Halloween this year. By the time Thanksgiving guests arrived, it had just closed up shop.

[Click here](#) for “traditional advice” on growing Zygocactus.
LICHEN
Joyce Tomaselli, Community Horticulture Resource Educator

This year we received a lot of community inquiries about unusual light green growths on the bark of trees and occasionally on decks and patio furniture. Most folks know that it is some sort of fungus, are worried about it and ask how to control and remove it. They are seeing lichens.

Lichens are very interesting. They are really two life forms living in a symbiotic relationship - both need each other to survive. One is fungal and the other is algal. The fungi get water and minerals from the air and the algae manufacture carbohydrates and vitamins. The fungus provides the shape and the algae feeds them both.

Lichens are not harmful to trees or whatever surface they are growing on. They don't have roots and take no nutrition from whatever they’re growing on. The lichen is merely using the tree as a surface upon which to live.

Lichens have been around for millions of years. Scientists have found traces of lichen from 400 to over 600 million years ago. They existed before any green plant material we're familiar with and have been used for many things by both animals and humans. They provide forage, shelter, and building materials for elk, deer, birds, and insects. A few lichen types are edible but others are poisonous. This USDA Lichens page contains extensive information. They've been used for thousands of years for dye too. Read more about Dyeing with Lichens & Mushrooms.

When we see more lichens in neighborhoods it is often an indication that conditions have changed. They need slow growing surfaces so when forests get older there are more. Also, they need light, so when evergreens loose needles, there are more lichens. They also need moisture, which we’ve received in abundance this fall. If lichens are growing on young trees that might be an indication the tree is not healthy (it should be growing too quickly for them).

When lichens are on rocks or slow growing trees e.g. a mature Maple, and the tree looks healthy otherwise, the lichens are usually just enjoying the slow growth.

You don't need to remove lichen from bark - you may cause damage to the bark, which will invite other problems. Instead, focus on keeping the plants healthy and growing vigorously.

To remove lichen from a hard surface such as a deck use a soft bristle scrub brush or a high pressure nozzle on a garden hose. Some sources advocate killing the lichen first by covering it with black plastic for a few weeks. A weak solution of bleach can be used to prevent regrowth. You can also check at a garden store to see if there are products to remove lichen from stone or decks.

Other fungal forms which grow on trees can be the cause of decay or an indication of additional, often internal decay. More on that topic in next month’s Dutchess Dirt.
HORTICULTURAL CALENDAR - December

We’ve finally received a taste of winter with a few hard frosts, but some sunshine would be nice.

- If you have planted them, this month you can harvest Jerusalem artichokes, horseradish, carrots (should be mulched), Brussels sprouts, beets and parsnips.
- Looking for a Christmas tree? Go to our website for the 2018 Christmas Tree Directory to find local growers and opportunities for a day of fun.
- Do not overwater houseplants in the winter. Rotate them every so often to ensure they receive an even amount of light.
- If you see plants in a nursery that are marked down and you can’t resist the bargain, you can still plant deciduous plants as long as the ground is not too frozen to dig. For evergreens, you can buy the plant and store it in an unheated garage until spring. Plant them in early spring when the ground thaws.
- Mulch perennials and roses after the ground freezes. If you do it too soon, you’re just making nice nesting places for mice. A favorite trick is to use the branches from your Christmas tree. They shade the soil from the winter sun thus minimizing cycles of freezing and thawing which can cause plants to heave from the ground.

MONTHLY ID QUIZ

This tree was spotted at Locust Grove late October last week. It is Heptacodium miconioides, seven-son tree. First collected from China in 1907, it was reintroduced to the U.S. in 1980. A member of the Caprifoliaceae (honeysuckle) family, the plant is related to viburnum and forsythia.

This common weed and wildflower was growing five feet above the ground on a black locust tree this past weekend. Do you know what it is?
WEBSITES TO VISIT

- Rutgers Cooperative Extension Tree-Dwelling Lichens
- Cornell Climate Smart Farming Tools
- New Posters Available from Don’t Get Ticked New York
- Cornell Woody Plants Database *Heptacodium miconioides*
- USDA *Impatiens capensis* fact sheet

SUBMIT UPCOMING EVENTS

Would you like to submit information on an upcoming gardening event to be shared in this newsletter? Please send an email to Nancy Halas at nh26@cornell.edu or Joyce Tomaselli jdt225@cornell.edu by the 25th of each month to be included in the next month’s newsletter. Please include the date, time, location, a short description, cost and contact information for more details.

*Need Soil pH Testing? Need Lawn or Plant Diagnosis? Have any gardening questions?*

The Horticulture Hotline, is closed for the season. Questions can be submitted through our website at www.CCEDutchess.org/gardening. Click on Contact Us and select the topic of Gardening.

Samples for identification or diagnosis can be submitted Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:00 pm all year long. There is a $15 fee for samples. Visit our Horticulture Diagnostic Lab website for reliable resources and information on our services.

HELP SPREAD THE DIRT! Please forward a copy to anyone you think might be interested. To be added or removed from our e-mail list, or submit upcoming gardening events, contact Nancy Halas at nh26@cornell.edu, www.ccedutchess.org.