

# VOLUNTEER

January 2022



Morris Arboretum  
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA



# Volunteer

## Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania

*Volunteer* is a newsletter published monthly for  
Arboretum volunteers.

### Mission

The Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania inspires an understanding of the relationship between plants, people and place through education, research and horticultural display.

### Vision for the Future

As an irreplaceable public garden, the Morris Arboretum provides a place of respite, beauty and learning where the joy and wonder of the natural world inspire all who visit to be enthusiastic ambassadors for plants and our fundamental dependence on them.

A vital part of one of the great research universities in the world, the Morris Arboretum is renowned for its science aimed at understanding and conserving plants and ecosystems.

Education: Liza Hawley, [efhawley@upenn.edu](mailto:efhawley@upenn.edu)  
or (215) 247-5777 ext 128

Garden Railway: Pam Morris Olshefski, [pamela@upenn.edu](mailto:pamela@upenn.edu)  
or (215) 247-5777 ext 107

Grist Mill: Tom Wilson, [wilsonth@upenn.edu](mailto:wilsonth@upenn.edu) or (215)  
247-5777 ext 108

Horticulture: Pam Morris Olshefski, [pamela@upenn.edu](mailto:pamela@upenn.edu)  
or (215) 247-5777 ext 107

Archives & History: Bryan Thompson-Nowak, [bryan-tho@upenn.edu](mailto:bryan-tho@upenn.edu) or (215) 247-5777 ext 281

Physical Facilities: Tom Wilson, [wilsonth@upenn.edu](mailto:wilsonth@upenn.edu)  
or (215) 247-5777 ext 108

Information:  
(215) 247-5777  
[www.morrisarboretum.org](http://www.morrisarboretum.org)  
100 E. Northwestern Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19118

### Volunteer

Ilana Grubin, Editor

Contributors: Deitra Arena, Jim Kohler, and Joyce Munro

Questions, comments, and submissions can be  
directed to the editor at [igrubin@upenn.edu](mailto:igrubin@upenn.edu).

Photos: Ilana Grubin, unless otherwise stated

**Cover:** *Edgeworthia chrysantha* - Pennock Garden  
(photo by Lynn Weaver)



Holiday Garden Rail

## Contents

Letter from the Editor	1
Notes from the Guides Chair	2
Volunteer Opportunities	3
From the Archives	5
Garden Highlights	6
Calendar	7



*Hamamelis × intermedia* 'Feuerzauber' - Feuerzauber witchhazel  
English Park (Photo by Lynn Weaver)



## *Letter from the Editor*

Another year has gone by, with all the life events and ups-and-downs that come with it. As I reflect on 2021, I can't help but think of the ways that Covid-19 has affected our lives. When the first whispers of Covid-19 emerged two years ago, did anyone think the pandemic would still be going on? I certainly did not. We experienced some major changes in 2020, however throughout 2021 things seemed to be creeping slowly back to normal. Currently at the Arboretum visitors are not required to wear masks outdoors, and staff who were working remotely for most of 2020 returned to the office this summer. In my role as Summer Camp director, it was great to see campers (all of whom were masked) at the Arboretum this summer since camp had been cancelled in 2020. Students have been back in school this year, which means that the Arboretum has been able to welcome students both during school trips and during our Out-of-School

days this fall. Considering that the ongoing worries and inconveniences of the pandemic still exist, I hope that things continue to move in a positive direction throughout 2022.

The holiday season tends to be so busy for so many of us, but I hope that this time of year can bring you joy as well. At least for my family, our holidays and celebrations throughout 2020 involved awkward Zoom calls and we didn't do anything in-person unless it was outdoors. This year my family and I have gone mostly back to normal for our celebrations, which can bring joy in and of itself. I hope that everyone reading this also gets to safely spend some quality time with friends or family in the coming weeks, and that we can enter 2022 feeling joyous and recharged. With that said, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year to you all!

Ilana Grubin



Sculpture: After B.K.S Iyengar



Hornet Nest - Holly Slope

## Notes from the Guides Chair

### We Should Care: Climate Change Impacts on Local Habitats

As 2022 unfolds, many of us who are passionate about gardening and enjoying time at the Arboretum are thinking ahead to spring. However, as I'm sure you have noticed, climate change is having significant impact in our area and should be a cause for concern.

Higher average temperatures and shifting precipitation patterns are causing plants and trees to bloom earlier, creating unpredictable growing seasons. Even warm weather plants like tomatoes can be harmed by increased temperatures.

Invasive, non-native plants and animals' ranges are expanding and making them more apt to take advantage of weakened ecosystems and outcompete native species. Some of the most problematic species, including kudzu, garlic mustard and purple loosestrife may thrive under new conditions and move into new areas. This is increasingly apparent in the Wissahickon watershed.

Climatic shifts also mean that many native and iconic plants may no longer be able to survive in portions of their historic range. In fact, many states across the country may lose their official

State Trees and Flowers. Imagine Pennsylvania without Mountain Laurel and Eastern Hemlock in our forests.

Important connections between pollinators, breeding birds, insects, and other wildlife and the plants they depend on are being disrupted. Pollinators such as hummingbirds and bees may arrive either too early or too late to feed on the flowers on which they normally rely.

These are major warning signs indicating that each of us need to take meaningful steps now to curb our carbon emissions. Given the strong relationship between gardens and natural variables such as temperature and rainfall, a changing climate is creating some enormous new challenges. Numerous studies show any potential benefits from a longer growing season will be outmatched by a host of problems—from damaging storms to expansion of unruly weeds and plant pests.

Hope to see you at the Arboretum,  
Jim Kohler  
*Chair of the Guides*

#### Resources:

Report: Gardener's Guide to Global Warming: Challenges and Solutions  
(<https://www.nwf.org/pdf/Reports/Gardeners-Guide.pdf>)

Report: Wildlife in a Warming World  
([https://www.nwf.org/-/media/PDFs/Global-Warming/Reports/NWF\\_Wildlife-Warming-World\\_Report\\_web.ashx](https://www.nwf.org/-/media/PDFs/Global-Warming/Reports/NWF_Wildlife-Warming-World_Report_web.ashx))



*Melanerpes carolinus*  
Red bellied woodpecker  
(photo by Alex Correia-Sareyka)

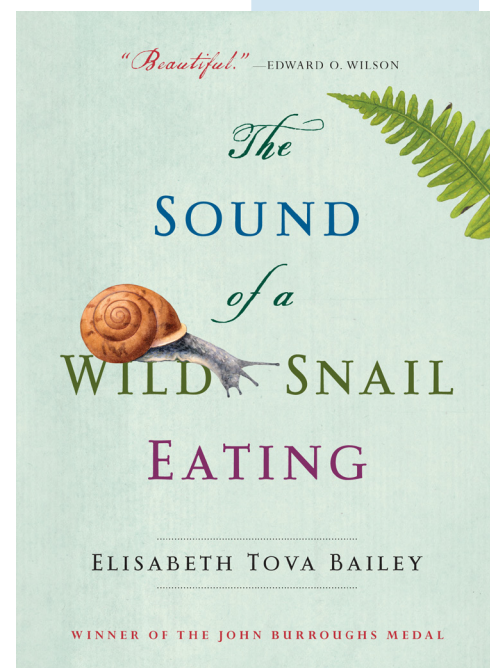


# Volunteer Workshops and Opportunities

## February Book Club

*The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating* by Elisabeth Tova Bailey  
Feb 4 | 1:00 pm | Zoom meeting

In a work that beautifully demonstrates the rewards of closely observing nature, Elisabeth Bailey shares an inspiring and intimate story of her uncommon encounter with a *Neohelix albolabris* —a common woodland snail. While an illness keeps her bedridden, Bailey watches a wild snail that has taken up residence on her nightstand. As a result, she discovers the solace and sense of wonder that this mysterious creature brings and comes to a greater understanding of her own confined place in the world. Intrigued by the snail's molluscan anatomy, cryptic defenses, clear decision making, hydraulic locomotion, and mysterious courtship activities, Bailey becomes an astute and amused observer, providing a candid and engaging look into the curious life of this underappreciated small animal. Told with wit and grace, *The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating* is a remarkable journey of survival and resilience, showing us how a small part of the natural world illuminates our own human existence and provides an appreciation of what it means to be fully alive.



The Book Club is open to all Arboretum volunteers and staff. All are welcome to attend any session and you do not have to attend every month.



*Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Gold'  
(photo by Stephanie Kuniholm)

## Did you know...

*Edgeworthia chrysantha* (pictured on the cover) is widely cultivated in Japan for paper making? Aptly called paperbush, *Edgeworthia* has densely fibrous inner bark that can be turned into high-quality paper for banknotes and other official documents!



## Volunteer Workshops and Opportunities

A Horticulturist raising another type of Green



**January 6 | 10:30am | Upper Gallery**

Join Alison Thornton, Senior Associate Director of Development for a look into the work she performs for the Morris Arboretum as well as the path that led her to a career in public gardens. Alison received a Bachelor's of Science in horticulture from Temple University in 2003, but has spent her entire professional career cultivating "green" in a different sense – she is a fundraiser. She is passionate about the Morris Arboretum – both the plants and the people.



Orange Balustrade



*Acer griseum*



# From the Archives

by Joyce H. Munro

## A Map Worth Studying

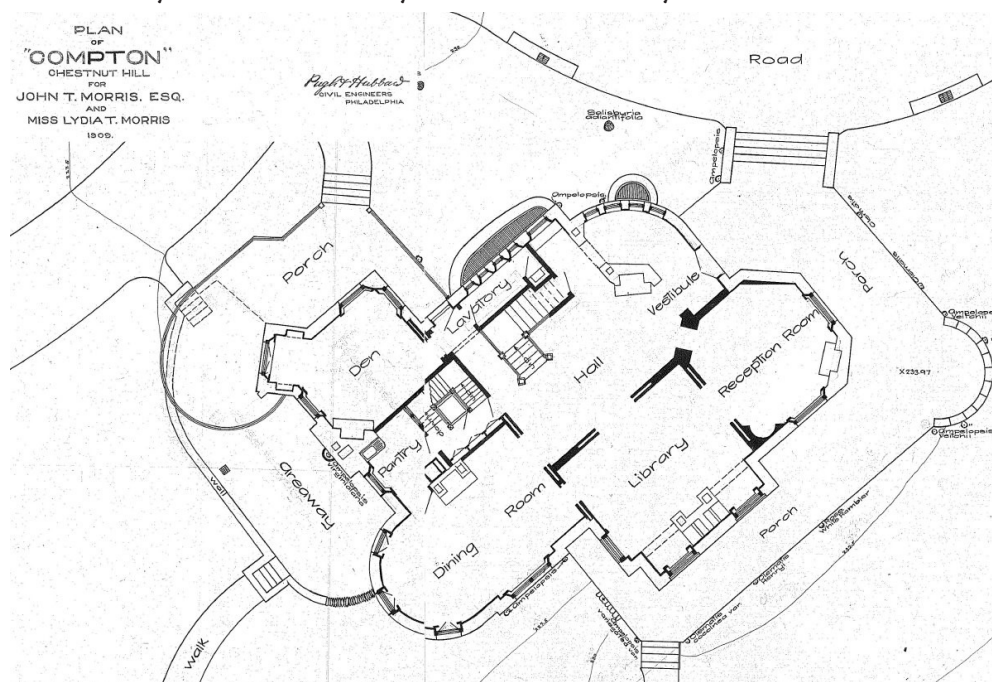
Compton, the castle-esque home built for the Morrises by T. P. Chandler, was famously asymmetrical. It didn't have a singular focal point or precise balance side-to-side. Instead, the structural elements and interior spaces of the mansion were intentionally irregular, for instance, the off-center entrance, round dining room and oblique fireplaces. Chandler's placement of a turret on one corner, a tower on the other and unmatched windows in between certainly made the house interesting to look at. About the only thing that gave the mansion a sense of symmetry were the wrap-around porches.

Given the property's steep slopes, the best place to site Compton was on a high plateau near Meadowbrook Lane, which only exaggerated its wonky appearance. Not much about the mansion was designed to blend with the land, especially its immense verticality. It definitely wasn't a cozy retreat like Cedar Grove, their childhood summer home in Harrogate. Yet, for over twenty-five years, Compton was an endearing place to John and Lydia Morris. They furnished its generous rooms with one-of-a-kind treasures bought from all over the world and hosted lavish parties for friends and neighbors on the grounds.

The Compton mansion was a bold notion. And so were the grounds. The Morrises had big plans for the unbuilt land, which was as irregular and wonky as the mansion itself. They had a keen sense that the gardens and ponds and follies they constructed would transform the hilly, rough terrain. Through the years they gathered plants from many nations to turn Compton into a one-of-a-kind showpiece. Subtlety was not the Morrises intention when they built their country estate—it was always meant to be shown off, like a trophy.



Compton mansion in late 1930s, 2004.1.7



Detail of Compton Atlas, Pugh & Hubbard, 1909



Keeping you connected from home

## *Garden Highlights*



*Picea maximowiczii*  
Maximowicz spruce



*Ilex opaca* 'Canary'



*Cornus kousa*  
Kousa dogwood



*Magnolia sprengeri* var. *elongata*  
(photo by Stephanie Kuniholm)



*Chimonanthus*  
*praecox*  
Wintersweet



## Upcoming Events

### January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 Last day for Holiday Garden Rail	3	4	5	6 Raising another type of Green 10:30am	7 January Book Club 1:00pm	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

#### Weekly Volunteer Events

Saturdays and Sundays - Regular Tour, 1:00pm-2:00pm

#### Upcoming