

A Miscellany of Hardy Plant Society Facts

President's Message by Janice Thomas

MY ARTICLE HAS SOMETHING IN COMMON WITH THE TELEVISION SHOW *SEINFELD*. Just like the *Seinfeld* episode about nothing, my article is about nothing. I admit I had writer's block when it was time to write this letter. I wondered what I should write about and nothing came to mind. So, here is a President's letter about nothing in particular; just about stuff.

We don't have any Kramers or Georges, but we do have some great SIG leaders. They are always coming up with tours, lectures, and workshops. Keep checking your newsletter and the HPS group emails that come out for more information. There is a SIG for everyone—from Native Plants to Shade Gardening to Tender Perennials, even a Winter Interest Group. We have a new SIG Focus group for New Castle County and one of our SIG Focus groups has changed its name to SIG Focus Tri-County. Watch for upcoming events in future newsletters.

Did you know that we have had 231 donors donate seeds for our Seed Exchange program? Did you know that on our website, the Seed Exchange has its own

page? Check it out! During the active Seed Exchange period, information will be added to keep you up to date on what's happening. By the way, have you collected your seeds? It's also time to start thinking about what seeds you would like to order. The Seed Catalog will be available for the year-end holidays. The

Seed Exchange team is looking for volunteers to help sort and fill the orders during the Seed Exchange workshops in January and February. If you are interested, send an email to SeedVolunteer@hardyplant.org or call Polly Garnett at 610-695-9135.

We have had many trips over the years and we have traveled to seven countries (soon to be eight with Belgium in June 2013). Our domestic bus trips to gardens and nurseries have spanned twelve states.

Did you know we have 819 active members and we have members in 28 states? Have you ever checked out the businesses that are listed in the back of the directory? We have 125 businesses as members. Next time you go to one of those

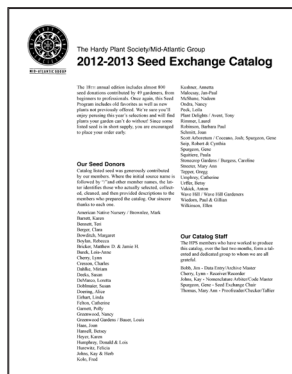
businesses, tell them you too are a Hardy Plant Member. We also have quite a few garden writers, and many of our members have had their garden featured in gardening magazines—national, as well as international.

Are you one of the millions of people on Facebook? Did

you know that the Hardy Plant Society/Mid-Atlantic Group has a Facebook page? Upcoming events are posted there. We have 27 "likes" so far. Check us out and click "Like".

We offer lectures with other garden organizations. In October each year, we cosponsor the Perennial Plant Conference with The Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College, Chanticleer, Longwood Gardens, and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Also, we have lectures during the year with Scott Arboretum and Haverford College. And, at our all-day March Into Spring conference, with well known speakers, we welcome a new gardening season.

Our organization isn't just nothing! We are a varied and strong group of people who make up the Hardy Plant Society/Mid-Atlantic Group.



Cotoneaster salicifolius 'Henryi'

A Mysterious Plant You Should Know

by Charles Cresson

VISUALIZE A LARGE GRACEFUL SHRUB, almost a small tree, with pendulous branches, exceeding 10' in height. Its narrow bright green, evergreen foliage is more than 3" long. In spring it is covered with clusters of small white flowers, followed in autumn with abundant bunches of bright red fruit. This is the plant known locally as *Cotoneaster salicifolius* 'Henryi'.

Similar cotoneasters are common in English gardens, where I first fell in love with them as a student some thirty years ago—but they are unknown here. Perhaps this is because in our climate, many cotoneasters are plagued by spider mites and fire blight, problems to which this plant seems immune.

Dr. Styer, owner of J. Franklin Styer Nurseries, one of the area's premier twentieth century nurseries, considered this one of

his favorite plants. He had obtained it from England many years ago, perhaps in the 1930s. It is tremendously adaptable, thriving in dry shade or sun, either as a free-standing shrub or an espalier, with the capability to grow 4' a year, responding well to pruning. Even when Styer's Nursery ownership passed to Russ Jones, it remained one of the last shrubs that they produced themselves due to its unique qualities. Alas, with the demise of that famed nursery, it is no longer commercially available. But all hope is not lost since it is easily propagated from cuttings and seed.

Despite considerable research, I have been unable to verify this name since no such cultivar seems to exist. Furthermore, I have been unable to determine whether this plant is truly *C. salicifolius* or the similar hybrid *C. x watereri*, which is popular in Britain. But

I have no doubt that it is an excellent plant for our gardens.

I have collected seed for the HPS seed exchange. Since cotoneasters frequently produce apomictic seed (sexual reproduction is bypassed), the seedlings are very likely to be clones of the parent. If not apomictic, you may get some interesting variation. Three months cold stratification at 35–40°F is probably required. I hope you will be tempted to give them a try. Be sure to keep me informed of the results!

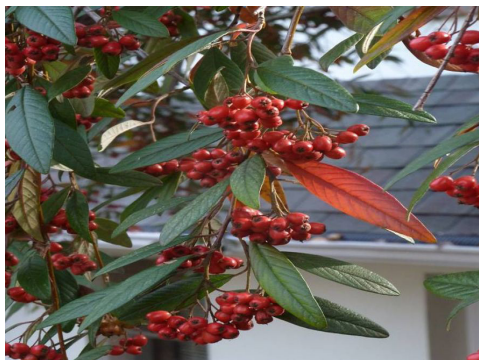


Ed Note: The author is watching the plant closely as the fruit ripens and will send us a photo as soon as it reaches its peak. Watch for it on our website, www.hardyplant.org, and also in the HPS Upcoming Events email.

Pictures of *Cotoneaster salicifolius* 'Henryi'

In the November, 2012, HPS/MAG newsletter, Charles Cresson promised pictures of this mysterious plant when it reached its peak. Below are those pictures.

For full color versions of these photos, visit www.hardyplant.org.



A Living Bee Sculpture

ALTHOUGH HONEY BEES TYPICALLY DRAW COMB ON VERTICAL FLAT PLANES, Hillary Berseth and Jim Bobb have been coaxing bees to create wax sculptures. Starting with thin pieces of wax, called foundation, the bees have been offered many starting constructs, such as cylinders, squares, cones, and rotor shapes, as the initial point for their nest building. At the end of the season, the bees are removed from the structure and placed in a normal hive for the winter. The finished pieces of wax artwork have been featured at a gallery opening in the New York City East Village for the past five years.

This year, the Tyler School of Art, Temple University, commissioned a living sculpture—requesting a uniquely shaped honey bee observation hive. Hillary and Jim have created what might be the first circular observation hive. The exhibit is free to the public, open now through February 15, 2013.

Tyler School of Art, Temple University
2001 North 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA
(215) 777-9144

www.temple.edu/tyler/exhibitions

Wednesday–Saturday, 11:00 A.M.–6:00 P.M.



The cone-shaped hive rests on a circular mirror, for viewing up into the area between the combs. A hole in the center of the mirror connects to a clear tube, extending through the wall, allowing the bees access to the outside.



A unique view from the horizontal flat area at the top of the observation hive—a view not seen in vertical observation hives. From this vantage, bees can be seen dancing, feeding, grooming, and resting.