

# Boxerwood Garden Notes

October 2015

## Upcoming Events

November 7,  
Saturday, 7:30am  
Birding at  
Boxerwood

November 10,  
Tuesday, 11:30,  
Boxerwood  
"Talking Native  
Plants"  
Upper James River  
chapter of the  
Virginia Native Plant  
Society  
Free and open to the  
public

**"Autumn is a second spring when every leaf  
is a flower."**

**Albert Camus**

Right now the Japanese maples here at Boxerwood are just past their peak. I'd say we have about one more week of good color, so plan on making a visit sometime soon. I gave a talk on October 22nd to our local Master Gardener group on the maples and a follow-up walk on the 26th, so many of you have learned a bit about this beautiful tree already. For those of you who haven't, read on.

Some interesting facts about Japanese maples:

- Japanese maples were Dr. Munger's favorite trees.
- Japanese maples have been cultivated since the 17th century.
- The Japanese people have a special Japanese maple viewing ceremony in the fall, Momiji matsuri.
- Momiji is the Japanese word for Japanese maples. Loosely translated, it means "reaching out with little baby hands."
- Boxerwood has over 100 Japanese maple cultivars as opposed to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond that has only 25.
- Japanese maples are beautiful in all four seasons.



To stay current with the happenings at Boxerwood, check out our website, [www.boxerwood.org](http://www.boxerwood.org), our facebook page, Boxerwood Nature Center and Woodland Garden, or our blog, [Boxerwoodblogspot.com](http://Boxerwoodblogspot.com)



Spring Japanese maple flowers

- The small Japanese maples (to 8') are almost all *Acer palmatum dissectum*, named for their long, thin, dissected fern-like leaves.
- The first Japanese maple to arrive in the U.S. went to Long Island in 1862.



### Boxerwood Eco Book Club

One of my favorite books this year has been Helen Macdonald's *H is for Hawk*, so much so that I am even willing to read it again. In a moving memoir, the author attempts to deal with her father's death by training a

goshawk, using T.H. White's (the author of *The Once and Future King* about King Arthur) book, *The Goshawk*, as a guide.

We are meeting at 3:30 on Wednesday, November 18 at my office in the Founders' Wing here at Boxerwood. I hope you can join us.

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### **What's Blooming Now?**

This particular shrub is not blooming at Boxerwood, but you may be wondering what the wonderful fragrance is when you are standing in the parking lot at Kroger.

Several people have asked me about it. I'll give you a hint: it is not the Kroger bakery.

Instead it is a large, rangy shrub (to 10-12') on top of the large retaining wall there called Silverberry (*Eleagnus pungens*). If that genus is familiar, it is because I am sure you are all familiar with *Eleagnus umbellata*, the notorious Autumn Olive, the silvery shrub you see growing in pastures and woodlands everywhere.

Silverberry, on the other hand, is not invasive. It is a wild and woolly type of plant, not meant for the small property. It is great on a bank where nothing else will grow as it is practically indestructible. Silverberry leaves are very similar to Autumn Olive with the silver color on the underside of the leaf, but the leaves are a bit wider. The fragrance of this *Eleagnus* can't be beat in the fall. In October and November, its tiny bell-like white flowers emit a scent reminiscent of gardenias



### **New Master Gardener Class Forming**

The Rockbridge Area Master Gardeners (RAMGA) are a very active bunch and have over twenty local projects that they devote time and energy to, including schoolyard gardens at Waddell, Central, Fairfield, Natural Bridge Elementary, the therapy garden at the Senior Center, and historic gardens at the Jackson and Campbell Houses, among others.

This coming year, RAMGA will be offering a new class. 2016 will be the first year an online course is offered. Students will have six months to finish the class and will have to participate in five hands-on labs. At the end of successfully finishing the class, participants will be Master Gardener interns and will need to complete fifty hours of service to become certified Master Gardeners.

To maintain certification, Master Gardeners need to complete twenty volunteer hours and eight hours of continuing education. This is a great organization that I have been involved in for years. For more information, contact me at [faith@boxerwood.org](mailto:faith@boxerwood.org).