New Plantings in the Arboretum

The Year in Review

As a gardener and lifelong Seattle resident, for the past several years I have been hoping for a return to something more “normal” in terms of seasonal weather and what I’ve long experienced as more typical rhythms of rain and temperature. However, this seems to be wishful thinking, and 2022 certainly was another year of extremes—with extended cold and heat, and periods of long rain and record dryness. Fortunately, the Washington Park Arboretum is a large and varied place, cared for by a small but dedicated staff, and this allows it to remain a green retreat even in stressful times. It is also a fine place to experiment with plants that might withstand such climate pressures and better weather changing times.

The deep, extended cold snap at the end of 2021 caused more freeze damage than we’ve seen in at least a decade. While the week of cold included an early blanket of snow that helped insulate some roots and lower branches, we suffered significant dieback of some species that had previously made it through colder, though less-extended extreme temperatures. This was followed by a cool, wet spring, which was a needed “recharge” after the extreme heat of the previous summer. The rhododendrons loved it, and we saw the best and longest season of bloom for that expansive collection in recent memory.

However, when summer weather finally came in July, it brought on an unrelenting period of dryness that didn’t break until nearly the end of October. The damage to plants that didn’t receive some relief with supplemental water was evident throughout the region. The weeks of smoke cast a further pall to early fall. Fortunately, the rains and some comfort returned again at last. And while fall planting was delayed over a month, we have been busy making up for lost time.

**Willcox Bridge and Loop Trail Intersection**

It has been an ongoing goal to add interest and bloom to various entrances and prominent intersections in the Arboretum. To that end, several new plantings were added at the very busy intersection of the Willcox Footbridge and the Arboretum Loop Trail. On the northwest
side of the trail crossing, we created a large bed under two mature, widely spaced Douglas firs and planted flowering, evergreen shrubs such as *Camellia* ‘Howard Asper’, *Mahonia × media* ‘Marvel’ and *Viburnum propinquum*. All were selected for their ability to perform well in the drier soil conditions under these tall conifers.

*Camellia* ‘Howard Asper’ is a hybrid of *Camellia reticulata* and *C. japonica* that features large, peony-type, salmon-pink flowers and blooms in mid-spring in our climate. *Mahonia × media* ‘Marvel’ is thought to be of similar parentage to other *Mahonia × media* cultivars, such as ‘Charity’ and ‘Arthur Menzies’. It flowers a bit later than other hybrids, but still in the late winter in Seattle. *Viburnum propinquum* is a very garden-worthy but vastly underused evergreen species native to central and western China. Elegant in habit, it features attractive, shiny, deep-green leaves that look good all year. New leaves emerge in bronzy-red hues before darkening to green, and white spring flowers are followed by blue fruits in the fall. This specimen was grown from seed collected in the wild and will reach five to eight feet tall in time.

Here, we also are trialing a species that’s new to our collection and rare in cultivation: *Dendropanax dentiger*. This broadleaf evergreen shrub from China was collected many years ago by Dan Hinkley but rarely has been offered for sale, perhaps due to uncertainty about its hardiness in our region and the lack of obvious floral punch. However, the species has performed well for us in a container outside the Graham Visitors Center for several years, and it should also do well in the partial shade and drier soil here. Growing relatively quickly to 15 feet, with a tree-like habit and one- to three-parted evergreen leaves that attractively cover the stems, it will provide a good complement in form and texture to the other plants in this light woodland setting.

For companion plants in the understory, we added several divisions of *Ruscus hypoglossum*, a low-growing evergreen shrub from southeastern Europe and Turkey that has performed admirably in drier, shadier areas of the Woodland Garden and Witt Winter Garden. In the northern
part of Bed H in the Winter Garden, one planting group was in a bit too much sun to look its best, so we took divisions and replanted them in several locations in the Arboretum. The leaves are actually modified, flattened stems called cladodes. Small flowers appear very curiously in the mid-vein of these cladodes, but both male and female plants are needed to produce the plant’s bright-red, holly-like fruits. Unfortunately, ours all seem to be male, but the species is worth growing for foliage effects alone. Some day we hope to procure at least one female example, but these are apparently hard to find! This species holds great promise for Northwest landscapes, and we are trialing it in different light and soil conditions.

On the southwest side of the path intersection, we planted another *Viburnum propinquum* and four other flowering shrubs, including two camellias to brighten up the spring. *Camellia ‘Spring Festival’* is a relatively compact hybrid with some *C. cuspidata* parentage and features abundant, small, semi-double flowers in hues of pale pink to pink. Farther to the east, *Camellia japonica ‘Black Magic’* features unusual dark-red petals that are ruffled and somewhat shiny. Both cultivars bloom in mid-spring.

Completing the planting is an example of *Mahonia × media ‘Lionel Fortescue’*, long a favorite of mine for its upright habit, abundant blooms, and dense, frond-like leaves. In the Arboretum, it and ‘Arthur Menzies’ are the earliest of the *M. × media* hybrids to flower, generally starting by early December. The copious yellow flowers extend the season for hummingbirds and are followed by dusky, blue-black berries. This is another species that performs very well in drier shade.

**Loop Trail North**

Farther south of the Willcox Bridge, along the Loop Trail, we continued to plant in more open sections alongside the pathway, including specimens of the rare *Chamaecyparis taiwanensis* (syn. *C. obtusa var. formosana*), a conifer endemic to the mountains of Taiwan. In 1958, we received seed of this species from the Taiwan Forest Administration. The resulting tree was planted in this general area and grew to 18 feet by 2016, when it was moved about 30 feet northwest in advance of construction of the Loop Trail. We also took cuttings from the tree at that time and planted two of these farther south along the west side of the trail. It is a slow-growing
species for us, but in time forms an attractive, lightly branched, pyramidal tree.

Here we also added *Quercus gambelii*, the Gambel oak, a deciduous species native to the Rocky Mountains and Intermountain West. Bearing glossy, deeply lobed leaves, it can handle more shade and wetter soils than many oaks and is also drought tolerant. While the tree can reach up to 100 feet tall in the wild, it more often stays between 10 and 30 feet, which explains another of its common names, the scrub oak.

A bit farther south, in a sunnier opening, we added an evergreen oak species, *Quercus tomentella*. Commonly called the island oak, it is native to the Channel Islands of Southern California and Guadalupe Island, west of Baja California, Mexico. Despite hailing from warmer climes, it is reportedly hardy to 10 degrees Fahrenheit. An attractive, upright tree with evergreen, elliptical leaves, it is also drought tolerant. We have planted it in on a slope above Lake Washington Boulevard and hope it receives enough sun and heat there to make it happy.

**Magnolia, Hemlock and Asian Maples**

On the northeast corner of the Magnolia Collection, along Arboretum Drive, we have been watching the slow decline of our mature *Magnolia wilsonii* over the last decade, partly caused by over-shading from surrounding trees and competition from a large western red cedar to the north. Though we limbed-up the conifer several years ago to provide more light and room for the nearly 70-year-old magnolia, recently its main stem has shown signs of increasing decay. This spring, we planted a new specimen nearby, with the hope that it will eventually take the other’s place. Native to China, *M. wilsonii* has long been a favorite. In May and early June—after the riotous bloom of the main magnolia collection has passed—its nodding, white, lightly fragrant flowers, with their showy rose-purple stamens, are always a delight.

The Arboretum has a nice collection of hemlock species from around the globe, with the
main collection wedged in between the magnolias and the Woodland Garden. This year, we added a good-sized example of *Tsuga sieboldii*, the south Japanese hemlock. Reaching up to 100 feet in its native Japan, the species is much smaller in cultivation. Our specimen was donated by Far Reaches Farm and was grown from cuttings taken from a seed collection made by the Welsh plant explorers Bleddyn and Sue Wynn-Jones. Graceful in habit, like all hemlocks, this specimen will make a fine companion to a much older specimen from 1941 growing nearby. A good candidate for smaller gardens, *T. sieboldii* deserves wider use.

Not too far from the hemlock, in the northwest section of the Dan Hinkley Asian Maple Collection, we planted specimens of two lesser-known maple species, along with several *Clethra kaipoensis*. In recent years, we’ve received donations of *Acer henryi* grown from Dan Hinkley seed collections in China. Rarely seen outside botanic gardens, the species is admired for its outstanding orange-to-red fall color and attractive habit. The leaves are trifoliate (divided into three leaflets) and emerge bronze in mid-spring, after the whitish-yellow flowers. Young bark is smooth and olive green in color, becoming silver-grey to grey-brown with age. The species can reach up to 40 feet tall and tolerate a wide range of soil conditions. In 2019, we planted one specimen in the main collection area. This past spring, we planted another in an open area overlooking Azalea Way, and it will provide some needed shade to a small *Acer crataegifolium* ‘Veitchii’ to the north.

Farther east, we added a specimen of *Acer barbinerve* in a shadier position at the northern edge of a grouping of mature rhododendrons in the Loderi Valley. This small species—often a multi-stemmed tree growing to 20 feet tall—has downy shoots that age to a bright gray in time. Sometimes called the bearded maple, it bears shallowly five-lobed leaves with slender tips and uneven teeth. The foliage is softly downy underneath, with noticeable tufts along the veins. Fall color is a creamy yellow to orange, and the leaves tend to change and drop earlier than those of most trees. The bearded maple is a promising species for shadier areas and smaller gardens.

*Clethra kaipoensis* is another uncommon species that we have been trialing the last few years in different environments. Like other sweet pepperbush species, this one bears abundant, very fragrant, white summer flowers that are magnets for pollinators. We planted three specimens, all about four feet tall, between Loderi Valley and the mostly native stand of trees on the south side of the Woodland Garden. All three were grown from seed collected in the wild in China and were donated by Far Reaches Farm. They should bloom around late July, extending the season of flowering interest in this part of the Arboretum.

**Mediterranean and Sorbus Beds**

In a recently thinned area across from the Mediterranean beds on Arboretum Drive, we planted an example of the only maple endemic to Italy, *Acer cappadocium* ssp. *lobelii* (more recently treated as *Acer lobelii*). Found in scattered, small populations in the southern Apennine Mountains, it can reach up to 60 feet in the wild. Durable and naturally narrow in form, it is valued as a street tree in Britain. It produces shallowly five-lobed leaves that turn yellow in autumn. The new bark is striped and varies in color from greenish-grey to red, but then turns gray in age and stays smooth. Our new specimen was grown from a cutting of a slowly declining tree located along Interlaken Boulevard north of the Japanese Garden.

Close by, in the Brian Mulligan Sorbus Collection, newly hired staff members, funded by a generous donor, made improvements to the beds bordering the Broadmoor Golf Club. They pruned back the *Philadelphus* (mock-orange) collection and controlled the weeds in this area. Here, we added a specimen of *Sorbus megalo-carpa*, an unusual, entire-leaf species from southwest and central China. As the species name suggests, it has sizable fruit, among the largest in the genus. It blooms earlier than most species, producing large corymb of pungent, creamy-white flowers in late winter before the
leaves appear. While the russet-brown fruits are not especially showy, the new foliage is a very pretty reddish-gold, and fall color is often a nice red or yellow-red. Our new specimen was grown from seed collected in the wild in Hunan Province, China by Dan Hinkley.

Also in this area, we added other members of the Rosaceae, or rose family, specifically *Cotoneaster* species. Many of these plants require room to grow, and we are using them here not only for their ornamental fruits but also to help screen the chain link fence separating the collection from the golf club. This past fall, we planted examples of the evergreen and large-growing *Cotoneaster henryanus*. Native to central China, it offers handsome foliage and large crops of red fruit. We also added *Cotoneaster qungbixiensis*, a deciduous species from China with orange-red fruit; *Cotoneaster coriaceus* (syn. *C. lacteus*), a large, red-fruiting evergreen species also from China; and *Cotoneaster × watereri*, an evergreen hybrid bearing coral-red fruit. These were propagated from existing Arboretum accessions located north of Foster Island Road.

**Rhododendron Hybrid Garden**

In the Puget Sound Rhododendron Hybrid Garden, the past year has seen continued renovations and new plantings. We added three *Rhododendron* ‘Fire Rim’ along the north side of the east-west path dividing the Middle Era (1970s and 1980s hybrids) and Contemporary Era (1990s and beyond) sections of the garden. A compact cultivar, it reaches two feet high and wide and features yellow and creamy-orange flowers with reddish rims. It blooms in April and does well in filtered to full sun in our climate.

Another outstanding compact cultivar is *Rhododendron* ‘Nancy Evans’, named for the longtime first lady of Washington state, who is also an Arboretum Foundation Unit member. A Ned Brockenbrough hybrid, registered in 1981, it grows up to three feet tall and wide and has beautiful silver indumentum (surface hairs). Dark buds open to flowers with magenta-pink rims and creamy throats. This is a good choice for brighter conditions.

Midway along the path, we planted three *Rhododendron* ‘Silver Skies’. This is from another prolific local hybridizer, Frank Fujioka of Whidbey Island, and represents an earlier cross from his long career. A hybrid of *R. degronianum* ssp. *yakushimanum*, it grows up to three feet tall and wide and has beautiful silver indumentum (surface hairs). Dark buds open to flowers with magenta-pink rims and creamy throats. This is a good choice for brighter conditions.

In the Early Era beds (1940s to 1960s) closer to Azalea Way, we removed a western red cedar in the middle of a row of three to let more light into the area, which had become densely shaded in recent decades—resulting in the decline and
death of many rhodies. We left the trunk as a 35-foot snag for wildlife value, and to support a new Japanese hydrangea vine, *Schizophragma hydrangeoides* ‘Roseum’.

In the newly brightened area below, we added three specimens of *Rhododendron* ‘Crimson Pippin’, a dwarf evergreen plant boasting bright-red flowers and silver indumentum. It was developed by H.L. Larson of Tacoma in the 1960s and is considered one of the best of the early red *R. yakushimanum* hybrids. Closer to the snag, we added three examples of *R. ‘Grace Seabrook’,* a hybrid of *Rhododendron strigillosum* dating to 1965 and bearing large, bold-red flowers in early-mid spring. The foliage is thick, dark green and pointed at the tips. ‘Grace Seabrook’ doesn’t grow as large as other similar red hybrids, reaching only four feet in 10 years.

We also planted specimens of *Rhododendron dichroanthum*, to replace ones that had died due to over-shading. This variable species is one of the plants featured in the garden’s large “Plant Parenthood” sign, which explains how rhododendron cultivars are bred. A parent of many hybrids, it produces bell-shaped flowers in May and June in shades of orange, pink, and creamy or yellowish rose.

**Quinces on Amelanchier Hillside**

Farther south along Azalea Way, on the hillside above the Azalea Way pond, is a well-established planting of serviceberries (*Amelanchier* species). While overshadowed by the cherry blossoms on Azalea Way, this hillside glows with abundant white flowers in late March and early April when the serviceberries are in bloom. However, there have been losses in recent decades to these older plantings, as snow loads and wetter soils have combined to damage and topple some of these densely branched, small- and medium-sized trees. Our hardworking gardening staff has engaged in much-needed bed cleanup and redefinition in recent years, with an eye to adding new species and additional ornamental plantings in this prominent area.

Quinces (*Chaenomeles* species) are generally considered “old fashioned” plants, and they have largely fallen out of favor over the years—due to their thorny, somewhat unwieldy growth. However, the Arboretum has a good quince collection dating back to the 1940s, when these plants were more popular. Several years ago, in anticipation of possible impacts to some specimens near the Stone Cottage from Loop Trail construction, we selected colorful named forms for propagation. After a few years, these were finally big enough to plant, and the sunny, open Amelanchier Hillside presented a good location. The quinces should be able to handle the poorer soils on the slope, while offering a variety of flower colors to brighten up the late-winter days.

In spring we planted several examples of five varieties, each with a different flower color. These included two cultivars with deep-rose flowers, *Chaenomeles × superba* ‘Knapp Hill Scarlet’ and *Chaenomeles × superba* ‘Hollandia’ (acquired separately from the propagated quinces). In a lavender-rose color we added two *Chaenomeles × superba* ‘Rowellane’, and for lighter pink we added two specimens of *Chaenomeles × californica* ‘California’ and one each of *C. californica* ‘Clarke 331’ and ‘Clarke 349’. These will all grow between five and eight feet tall with time.

In the middle of the hillside, we added a new serviceberry species for us, the Northwest native *Amelanchier cusickii*, donated by Daniel Mount and grown from seed he collected from the wild in central Washington. Featuring distinctively long, white petals, it blooms earlier than *Amelanchier alnifolia*, the more common Northwest native.
Pacific Connections Garden
Farther up the hill, in the New Zealand Forest, we planted a large example of the unusual conifer *Dacrycarpus dacrydioides* (kahikatea, white pine). We like to point out this tree species on tours as, superficially, it always looks like it might have recently died due to its sparse, light-brown to pale-green foliage and light, drooping branching habit. We have several specimens in the lower portions of the forest, and I like to joke that we are sure they are still alive because they get bigger each year!

Closer inspection reveals soft, curved, somewhat feathery foliage, which is typical in juvenile trees. With age, the leaves change dramatically, becoming waxy, stout and shorter. Trunks on older trees are free of branches for the first three quarters of their length. While slow-growing so far in our climate, it is the tallest tree in its native New Zealand, with some reaching over 200 feet tall in old age.

Elsewhere in the Pacific Connections Garden, we added several species to increase diversity and interest. Of particular note, in the upper part of the Cascadia Forest, we added many examples of the striking *Aralia californica* (elk clover), a large perennial that takes on the appearance of a woody shrub before dying back each winter. It bears large, green, compound leaves on thick stems. In late spring, distinctive, white umbels are held atop the foliage in large flower spikes, up to two feet long. The flowers develop into dark-purple fruits as the stalks age to dark pink. A bold perennial for wetter spots in the garden, it is deserving of much wider use. Our specimens were grown from seed we collected during the 2019 joint UWBG-Heronswood-Kruckeberg Garden expedition to the Siskiyou Mountains.

Crabapples in the Pinetum
We are planning some exciting new conifer plantings in the Pinetum in the coming year. This past fall, we began preparing the planting sites and beds and will continue the work through the winter. In 2022, we also installed some new crabapple varieties on the sunny north end of the Conifer Meadow section. After the bronze birch borer decimated a 1980s planting of *Betula maximowiczii* hybrids north of the main *Abies* (true fir) area a few years ago, I decided to plant something there that would provide a textural contrast to the conifers along with some spring flower color.

Crabapples have fallen out of favor in recent decades—due to disease issues, which are exacerbated by our typically cool, wet springs in the Pacific Northwest. During the Loop Trail construction project, we selected three of the best-performing of the older crabapple varieties in the Arboretum for propagation and planting in this prime, sunny spot. We added one specimen each of *Malus sieboldii* ‘Fuji’, *Malus* ‘Henry F. du Pont’, and *Malus* ‘Prince Georges’.

*Malus sieboldii* ‘Fuji’ grows up to 20 feet tall and has purplish-red buds that open to white, double flowers. *Malus* ‘Henry F. du Pont’ grows to 25 feet tall and bears fragrant, single, deep-pink flower spikes. The leaves emerge with burgundy coloration in spring before fading to dark green. *Malus* ‘Prince Georges’ grows up to 15 feet and...
offers fragrant, pale-pink double flowers opening from deep-rose buds.

Azalea Way South

Several years ago, we lost a large Acer platanoides ‘Olmsted’ at the south end of Azalea Way. The Norway maple succumbed after enduring several years of trunk decay in an occasionally wet site. I’d been thinking for some time of suitable trees to replace it—keeping in mind the site’s sunny aspect and less than optimal soils—and finally selected the hybrid oak, Quercus macrocarpa × gambelii. Both of the hybrid’s parents, Quercus macrocarpa (the bur oak) and Quercus gambelii, tolerate a variety of soil types, and their hybrid has a reputation for being tough as nails.

Our specimen was donated in 2018 by local oak expert Dirk Giseburt, who, along with Allan Taylor, collected the seed in Colorado from a naturally occurring stand of these hybrids. The resulting sapling grew well in our nursery and was ready to plant out. Sometimes called the bur-gambel oak, it combines foliage characteristics of both parents: large, lustrous, dark-green leaves with variable, deep, rounded lobes and a blunt apical tip. The tree can reach up to 50 feet high and 25 feet wide.

Close by, we planted two specimens of Aesculus parviflora, the bottlebrush buckeye. Examples of the species were growing here prior to the Loop Trail construction, and there are other Aesculus species nearby, so it made sense to replant it here. Native to the Southeast, it typically grows six to 12 feet tall in a suckering habit and features characteristic buckeye leaves (with five to seven leaflets). The chief asset is its showy, long, upright panicles of tubular white flowers with red anthers and light-pink filaments. These appear from June into July at a time when few other shrubs are in bloom. The leaves have excellent yellow fall color.

Holly Collection Companions

In the Holly (Ilex) Collection area along Lake Washington Boulevard, we added additional ornamental plantings to extend the season of interest along this busy corridor through the Arboretum. Due to poorly draining soils in the area, we created a large planting berm and two smaller ones just south of the Boyer Avenue intersection to house the new specimens.

In the large berm, we planted several trees and shrubs, with an eye toward spring and late-summer flowering. The tree I’m most excited about is Magnolia ashei, a small species that only grows up to 20 feet tall but boasts enormous, glossy leaves—up to two feet long—with silvery undersides. In early summer, it produces large, sweet-scented white flowers with purple centers. Though endemic to northwest Florida, the tree is amazingly hardy. The Arboretum already has one specimen—labeled Magnolia macrophylla var. ashei—that has done really well in a somewhat shaded area in Loderi Valley since 1975. The species is reputed to handle more sun in our climate, and a recent planting at the Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH) has done well in very bright conditions. We will be planting several more specimens in the lower, more open part of Rhododendron Glen this winter.

Also in this bed, we planted three specimens of a new crape myrtle for us, the burgundy-black-leaved Lagerstroemia indica Center Stage® Red (cultivar name ‘SMNLCIPF’). A small tree or large shrub, it grows between six and 12 feet tall with a narrow habit. The electric, cherry-red flowers make for a stunning contrast with the foliage. These plants were part of the Climate Ready Landscape Plants research trial at the CUH (reported on in the Fall 2021 issue of the “Bulletin”) and were admired by many who saw them in bloom in late summer. In winter, the cultivar’s smooth bark reveals shades of cinnamon and cream as it exfoliates with age.
Elsewhere in this bed, we planted examples of the Japanese tree lilac, *Syringa reticulata*, which features abundant, creamy-white, fragrant flowers in late spring. Though not as sweet-smelling as traditional lilacs of early spring, it flowers later than most woody plants in the Arboretum. Completing the bed are new cultivars of *Ilex*, received as part of the Test Holly Program of the Holly Society of America (hollysocam.org).

A bit farther north, in a smaller bed, we planted another large example of the excellent dogwood hybrid, *Cornus × elwinortonii* ‘KN4-43’ Starlight®. In recent years, we have planted four examples of this disease-resistant hybrid of *Cornus kousa* and our native *Cornus nuttallii*, including one at the intersection of the Loop Trail and Azalea Way. We have been pleased with its trouble-free performance and are excited to place one in such a prominent, sunny position, where it should bloom especially well. Growing up to 25 feet tall, it produces a profusion of small, dense, green flower heads surrounded by showy, large, creamy-white bracts in late April. Attractive fall color in shades of red and orange is an added bonus.

Close to the dogwood, we planted a ‘Choctaw’ crape myrtle, one of the *Lagerstroemia indica*–*L. fauriei* hybrids developed by the U.S. National Arboretum for greater disease resistance and cold hardiness. Considered one of the finest tree-type hybrids produced by that breeding program, it remains scarce in commerce, and this is a first for our collection. *Lagerstroemia* ‘Choctaw’ offers peeling, light-cinnamon-colored bark and large trusses of late-season, clear-pink flowers on a vase-shaped plant growing to 25 feet tall. Fall color comes in shades of orange, yellow and red.

These are just some of the many plantings that have been added to the Arboretum in the past year. We hope that you enjoy seeing them on future visits. We are always planting for the present and future, and your support of the Arboretum helps keeps this a vibrant, delightful and inspiring oasis for all who come here.

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feet tall and wide. It’s one of the best foliage plants in the genus, and we are using little barriers to protect our small specimens from rabbits and stray footsteps.

Farther to the west, we are trying an example of *Rhododendron excel-lens*, native to China and Vietnam. We received this from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, where it is grown in their conservatory. As Seattle is typically many degrees warmer in the winter than Federal Way, we were encouraged to try the plant out-of-doors. Featuring large, fragrant, yellow-centered white flowers in early summer, it made it through the January 2022 cold snap and put on new growth this past year. We’re excited to see how it performs in this relatively warm and protected site.

The other larger plant we added to this bed was an example of *Schefflera* (now *Heptapleurum*) *fengii*, a broadleaf evergreen from China and Vietnam with bold, dark-green, palmately divided leaves. The leaflets have brownish indumentum underneath, and new leaflets contrast nicely with mature foliage as they unfurl. Panicles of small, whitish flowers in late summer and fall are followed by spherical, dark fruits. This species is reputed to be the hardiest of the genus.

In several spots on the slope, we included more examples of *Ruscus hypoglossum*, taken from divisions in the Winter Garden. We also added perennials and ferns to the understory. A favorite is the leather-leaf fern, *Polypodium scouleri*, a charming Washington Coast native with rounded, evergreen fronds. There are also examples of *Epimedium wushansense*, with its large, shiny, jagged-edged leaves and white-and-yellow spring flowers, and many clumps of *Disporopsis peryi*, an evergreen Solomon’s seal that appreciates shade and only reaches about 16 inches tall.

In the main Oak Collection, at the north end of the Arboretum, we installed several new species from the larger oak/beech family (Fagaceae). Around the remains of the “Lightning Tree,” a once-towering grand fir (*Abies grandis*) that exploded during a storm in the spring of 2015, we added two examples of *Nothofagus* and one of *Quercus marilandica*.

*Nothofagus*, the southern beech, is a diverse genus of supremely useful, medium-sized trees from the Southern Hemisphere. We have extensive plantings of both the South American and New Zealand species in the Arboretum. The New Zealand species have been recently reclassified by some botanists into *Fuscospora* and *Lophozonia*, but we have retained the broader *Nothofagus* designation on labels for now.

At the north side of the remnant tree, we added an example of *Nothofagus antarctica* ‘Puget Pillar’, a Washington Park Arboretum introduction. A fastigate (narrow) cultivar of the deciduous Chilean species, it was originally selected from a group of seed-grown plants that we received in 1951. The specimen we planted this year was from a cutting-grown tree at CUH that was propagated in 1992 from the
original selection. An attractive tree growing up to 30 feet tall, ‘Puget Pillar’ bears small green leaves that turn attractive shades of yellow and orange before they drop in fall. We have planted additional examples in the Chile section along the Arboretum Loop Trail, and at the Center for Urban Horticulture.

To the east of the Lightning Tree shard, we planted an example of *Nothofagus solandri* var. *cliffortioides* (syn. *Fuscospora cliffortioides*), the evergreen mountain beech of New Zealand. This was grown from the seeds collected in New Zealand in 2019 by former UW Botanic Gardens graduate student Kyra Matin. A columnar tree growing up to 30 feet tall, with an attractive habit and small, glossy, evergreen leaves, it holds great promise for Northwest landscapes. Specimens have done very well in the Arboretum for the last 35 years.

On the west side of the bed, we installed a young blackjack oak, *Quercus marilandica*. This was another donation from Dirk Giseburt, grown by him from seed acquired through the International Oak Society acorn exchange. It is a parent, along with *Quercus velutina*, of the Arboretum introduction *Quercus × bushii* ‘Seattle Trident’, of which we have three examples growing just to the southwest. *Quercus marilandica* is a small- to medium-sized tree (growing up to 40 feet tall) with distinct, glossy, green leaves that flare from a tapered base into a broad, three-lobed bell shape. The foliage turns from green to red to brown in the fall, often remaining on the twigs through the winter. Specimens of *Quercus velutina* also grow nearby, so this area will make a nice hybridization teaching display and allow us to tell the story of how botanic gardens can introduce new plants to horticulture.

To the north of the shard, we renovated two circular beds and installed two oaks, both surrounded with tough, larger-growing rhododendron cultivars. When the Oak Collection was created in the late 1930s, many of the oaks were planted with rhododendron cultivars as companions to enhance seasonal interest. Some of these original combinations still persist today. I have resumed the practice here, using rhododendron cultivars propagated during the Loop Trail construction project.

Closer to Foster Island Road, in a spot with wetter soils, we planted an example of *Quercus shumardii*, the Shumard oak. Two specimens of this oak grow on the west edge of Crabapple Meadow, and they have attained a good size over the last 60 years, but we had none in the main oak collection area. This is another tree we received from Mr. Giseburt, grown from acorns collected in the wild in Missouri. It is our first wild-collected example of the species. Native to a wide area from southern Ontario, Canada, through the central and southeastern United States, Shumard oak grows up to 90 feet tall and is more tolerant of wetter soils than other members of the Lobatae (Red Oak) Section of the genus. Around our new specimen, we planted three *Rhododendron ‘Pink Perfection’*, an old British cultivar developed before 1900.

Farther south, on higher ground, we planted a new species for us, with the amusing name of *Quercus acerifolia*, the maple-leaf oak. This species is known in the wild only from a small area of west-central Arkansas, and we received acorns in 2017 from an American Public Gardens Association Plant Collection Network field trip led by the Dawes Arboretum and Morton Arboretum. Formerly classified as a variety of *Quercus shumardii*, it was recently elevated to its own species. Growing up to 50 feet tall with a nicely rounded crown, the tree produces broad foliage that resembles the five-lobed leaves of the sugar maple, *Acer saccharum*. These turn good shades of red in autumn. We plan on planting additional examples of this attractive species in other locations in the Arboretum. Around the new tree, we have planted three *Rhododendron ‘Leona’*, another pink-flowered variety, this one developed in the 1950s by Rudolph Henny, a prolific plant breeder from Brooks, Oregon.

—Ray Larson