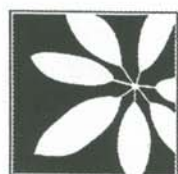
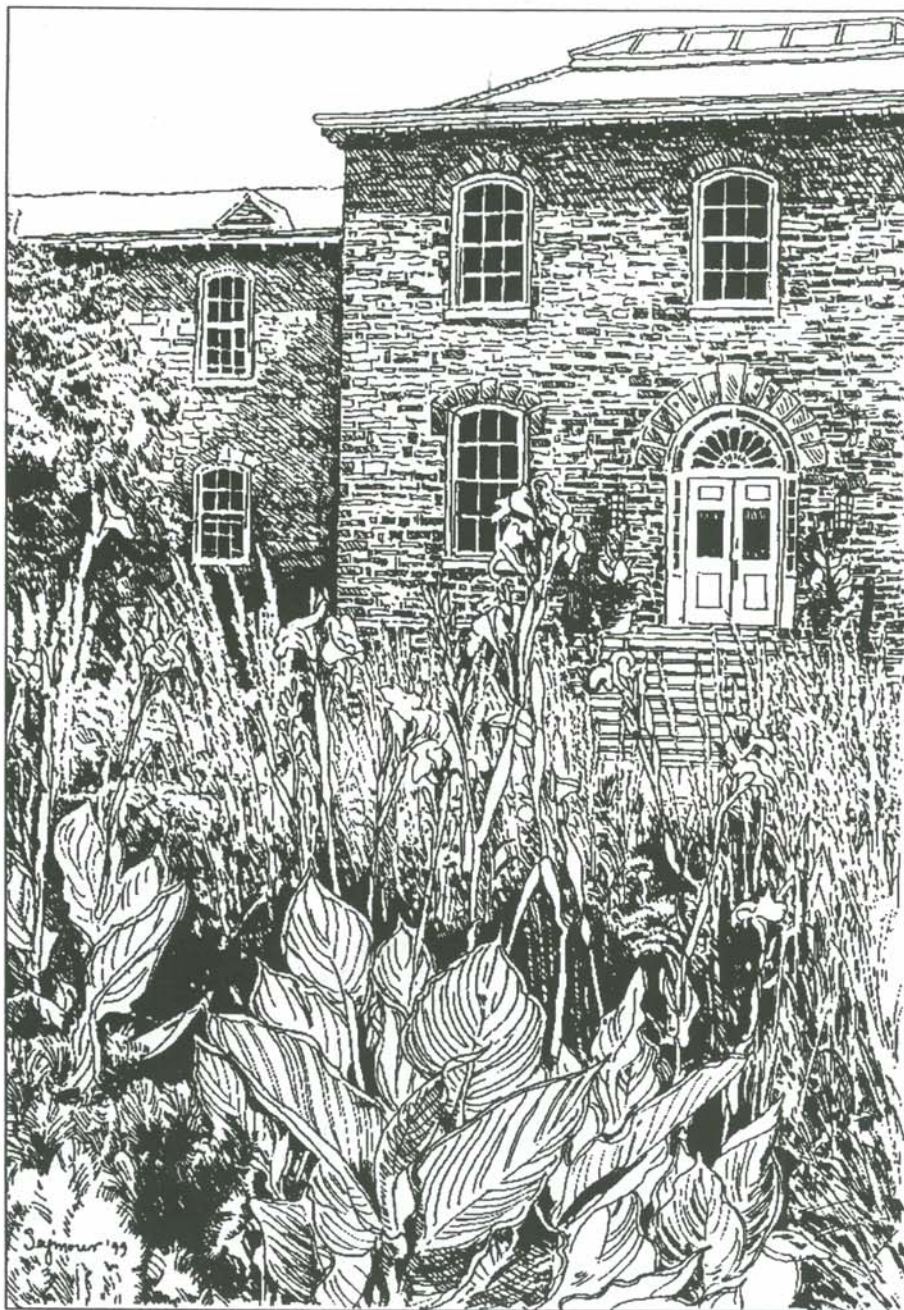


# The John W. Nason Garden and Outdoor Classroom



**THE SCOTT ARBORETUM  
OF SWARTHMORE COLLEGE**

---

The John W. Nason Garden and Outdoor Classroom was a gift from the Class of 1948, dedicated on the occasion of their 50<sup>th</sup> reunion. It was named in honor of John W. Nason, Swarthmore College President from 1940 to 1953. It is a garden featuring plant textures providing year-round interest.

### **Texture in the Garden**

A garden of textures is created using the appearance of a plant's foliage and form, rather than the flowers, as the basis for design. Texture is defined in horticulture as the overall effect of the structure of a plant, which includes the leaves, the form and even the bark. In this garden, we have divided the level of textures into two categories: Bold and fine. Bold textures include large, outstanding foliage and dramatic form. Fine-textured plants have dainty or feathery-like foliage or often open, loose forms. The contrast between bold and fine textures is emphasized by the juxtaposition of foliage and form. Keep in mind individual opinions of style and texture often varies.

### **Cutback plants**

Some of the trees and shrubs in this garden are considered cutback plants. This method of seemingly harsh pruning is used to stimulate a particular aspect of a plant to appear. In some instances such as with *Salix alba* 'Chermisina' the plant is cut to stimulate new shoots which turn orange-red in the winter months. In other cases, forcing large, new foliage is the key behind this method. Keep in mind that not all plants can be treated in such a manner.

### **Brochure Organization**

This brochure highlights selected plants found within the Nason Garden and provides descriptions and suggestions of how to use them in a home garden. The plants are listed alphabetically by their scientific name, which corresponds with the labels found in the garden.

#### ***Abelia* × *grandiflora* Sunrise™ - glossy abelia**

Texture: Fine

The glossy abelia will grow to just above 3 feet tall at maturity. Sunrise™ boasts leaf margins which are a distinct golden-yellow and surround the bright green center. The handsome white flowers are flushed with pink, slightly fragrant, and borne in clusters of 2 to 5 flowers. This is an excellent plant for use as a bank cover or mass planting and contrasts well with broadleaf evergreens. Removal of deadwood should be done with annual pruning.

***Acer japonicum* 'Aconitifolium' - Japanese maple**

Texture: Bold

A native of Japanese mountain forests, this maple reaches just over 15 feet at maturity. 'Aconitifolium' has deeply dissected, bright green leaves, which turn to a deep red in the fall. The clusters of large, purple flowers dangle from the ends of branches before the leaves in April and May.

***Amsonia hubrechtii* - thread-leaf bluestar**

Texture: Fine

The thread-leaf bluestar will grow in clumps which reach 3 feet tall. The linear, medium-green leaves adds a soft texture to any garden area and at the same time make a definitive statement. As fall progresses, the foliage changes to brilliant yellow. Steel blue flowers are found at the top of the plant in late spring. When the plant is first added to the garden, do not be impatient. The first year's growth may be spindly and drooping. The second year in the garden, the plant shows its notable upright, dense habit.

***Buddleia alternifolia* - alternate-leaf butterfly bush**

Texture: Fine

The long, pendulous branches of the alternate-leaf butterfly bush will arch 10 to 20 feet forming a rounded, open shrub. The leaves, which have a grayish cast, begin to appear in late spring. A profusion of bright lilac-purple flowers form in dense clusters at the branch tips throughout June, prior to those of *Buddleia davidii*. Unlike the more common butterfly bush, the flowers form on the previous season's growth, therefore pruning should occur after flowering. *Buddleia alternifolia*, the hardiest of the butterfly bushes, will grow best in a sunny location.

***Calycanthus floridus* - Carolina allspice**

Texture: Bold

Carolina allspice is a dense, deciduous shrub, which will grow 9 feet tall and wide. The tops of the leaves are dark green and rough to touch. The underside of the leaves are gray-green with dense hairs. The fragrant, maroon flowers remain throughout June and July. Carolina allspice, a native understory shrub, can grow in either sun or shade. The stems and leaves emit a spicy fragrance when crushed.

***Carex plantaginea* - plantain-leaf sedge**

Texture: Fine

The plantain-leaf sedge, a native of eastern North America, will grow 10 inches tall. This clump-forming sedge has glossy green leaves which last throughout the winter. The small insignificant flowers appear in May. This sedge will grow best in partial shade and is best when used as a groundcover.

***Caryopteris* × *clandonensis* 'Worcester Gold' - blue spirea**

Texture: Fine

This deciduous shrub will grow to 3 feet tall. The finely textured, brilliant yellow-green foliage of 'Worcester Gold' makes a strong statement in a border. In late summer, flat clusters of blue flowers appear throughout the shrub. This plant is wonderful when planted in mass.

***Cassia marilandica* - wild senna**

Texture: Fine

Native to the moist open woodlands and streamsides of central United States, wild senna will grow 5 feet tall. The clusters of flowers emerge at the base of the leaves. Each flower is up to one inch long and forms long seed pods.

***Catalpa bignonioides* 'Aurea' - southern catalpa**

Texture: Bold

The southern catalpa, a native to the southeastern United States, will become a 40-foot tree if allowed to grow. In this situation, the tree is treated as a cutback shrub. Each year's vigorous new growth will reach up to 15 feet tall. The new leaves, which are bright yellow-green, will grow up to 12 inches long and wide. The tree will not flower when continually cut back in this manner.

***Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Gracilis' - Hinoki false-cypress**

Texture: Bold

'Gracilis', a compact, dense form of this native of Japan and Taiwan, will reach 15 feet or higher. The tiny, layered leaves emerge bright yellow-green and change to lustrous dark green as they age.

***Chrysogonum virginianum* 'Allen Bush' - green-and-gold**

Texture: Fine

This dainty perennial will grow to 4 inches tall. The small, medium green leaves are evergreen in southern regions. Numerous, star-shaped, yellow flowers last from spring through fall. Green-and-gold is a wonderful groundcover.

***Clethra alnifolia* - summersweet**

Texture: Fine

Summersweet is a dense, leafy shrub which will grow 4 to 8 feet high. The leaves are lustrous and deep green in summer and change to golden-yellow in the fall. The typically white, lightly fragrant flowers are formed on new growth from July to August.

'Anne Bidwell' is a compact selection which is 4 to 5 feet tall. The dense spikes of white flowers are 4 to 5 inches long.

'**Ruby Spice**' has 4-inch long flower spikes which are a deep rose color.

***Coreopsis verticillata* 'Crème Brulee'- Thread-leaf Coreopsis**

Texture: Fine

Thread-leaf coreopsis is an erect, dense perennial with linear, dark green foliage. 'Crème Brulee' is 2 feet tall with loose clusters of bright yellow flowers which appear in mid-summer. Cut the flowers after the first bloom and the plant will produce a second flush of flowers. This is a highly drought resistant perennial.

***Coreopsis verticillata* 'Moonbeam' - thread-leaf coreopsis**

Texture: Fine

Thread-leaf coreopsis is an erect, dense perennial with linear, dark green foliage. 'Moonbeam' is 2 feet tall with loose clusters of pale yellow flowers which appear in early summer. Cut the flowers after the first bloom and the plant will produce a second flush of flowers. This is a highly drought resistant perennial.

***Cornus kousa* var. *chinensis* - Kousa dogwood**

Texture: Bold

This 20-foot tall small tree has light green leaves which turn scarlet red in the fall. In June, small dense clusters of flowers, which are surrounded by large, pointed, showy white bracts, appear. This dogwood, a great patio or accent tree, grows best when placed in full sun.

***Cornus sericea* 'Silver and Gold'**

Texture: Fine

The multiple, slender, upright yellow-green stems of 'Silver and Gold' will grow to 5 feet in one season. The bright green leaves have cream-colored margins. Small white flowers appear in flat clusters in early June. This shrub should be cut back to within 1 foot of the ground each year in late winter.

***Corylopsis spicata* - spike winterhazel**

Texture: Bold

This winterhazel is a widespreading shrub which will grow to 10 feet high. The leaves, which grow on crooked branches, emerge deep burgundy and change to bluish-green as the spring progresses. The fragrant, yellow flowers emerge before the leaves in March. They appear in pendulous clusters along the branches.

***Corylopsis willmottiae* 'Spring Purple' - Willmott winterhazel**

Texture: Bold

The Willmott winterhazel is a large shrub which will grow between 6 and 12 feet tall. The fragrant, pale green

flowers appear in March before the leaves in 2- to 3-inch long pendulous clusters along the branches. 'Spring Purple' has plum-colored new growth which changes to bright green each season.

***Corylopsis veitchiana* - winterhazel**

Texture: Bold

This winterhazel is a dense rounded shrub which will grow to 6 feet high. The bright green leaves have faint purple markings along the bottom. In April, the fragrant, striking yellow flowers form on 2-inch long pendulous stalks.

***Disanthus cercidifolius* - disanthus**

Texture: Bold

Disanthus is a small open shrub with slender, spreading branches which will grow to 12 feet. The heart-shaped leaves remain dull, medium-green throughout the summer. If the shrub is in a sunny location, the leaves will turn to a striking maroon as fall approaches. If in shady conditions, the leaves will drop earlier, revealing a surprise. Hidden among the leaves, delicate dark purple flowers will appear in August. Each flower is only 1/2 inch long and has a slightly spicy odor. This shrub needs well-drained, fertile soil.

***Echinacea* 'Big Sky Sunrise' - Echinacea Big Sky**

Texture: Bold

A member of the Big Sky introductions, 'Sunrise' offers a unique color to the realm of Echinacea. The fragrant buttery-yellow flowers reach a height of 2-foot. Blooming from June to Sept., 'Sunrise' prefers full sun.

***Eupatorium hyssopifolium* - Hyssopleaf Thoroughwort**

Texture: Bold

This perennial is wildflower found in Chesapeake watershed. The narrow leaves grow in whorls of three or four and are slightly toothed. At the top of 3 feet, white tubular flowers in dense, flat-topped clusters appear from summer into fall. Hyssopleaf Thoroughwort prefers sandy soil in a dry to moist site.

***Eupatorium* 'Gateway' - Joe-pye weed**

Texture: Bold

A clump-forming perennial, Joe-pye weed will grow as much as 8 feet tall. The robust stems have whorls of 1-foot long, linear blue-green leaves. In late summer, pale rose-colored flowers form in stout clusters on long stalks just above the leaves. Joe-pye weed is great when used in the back of the border or near waterways and drainage areas.

***Firmiana simplex* - Parasol Tree**

Texture: Bold

This deciduous tree produces 10 to 15 inch panicles of lemon yellow flowers in the summer and develops green fruit in the fall. The rich green leaves create a cooling dense shade which turns yellow in the fall. The specimen in the Nason garden exhibits a lovely green bark.

***Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Alice' - oakleaf hydrangea**

Texture: Bold

The oak-leaf hydrangea is an upright, 6-foot tall, stoloniferous shrub. It produces coarse, oak-like leaves up to 8 inches long, which are deep green and change to bronze-purple in the fall. The fragrant flowers first appear in late June on pyramidal clusters which are 10 inches long. The prominent white sepals change to pink and then brown as the season progresses. This hydrangea, which needs moist, well-drained soil, creates a statement especially when planted in mass.

***Hypericum calycinum* 'Brigadoon' - Aaron's Beard**

Texture: Bold

This rhizomatous shrubby ground cover that typically grows to 12" tall. The attractive yellow foliage produces gold flowers in the late spring to early summer. This low maintain planting only requires a pruning of old wood in later winter to encourage a flush of new colorful growth. It prefers full to part sun and well-drained soils.

***Geranium wlassovianum* - Cranesbill**

Texture: Bold

This hardy geranium is a bushy, clump-forming perennial which typically grows to 24" tall. The flowers bloom a dusky violet color with deep violet veining and a small white center. The foliage turns an attractive red in the autumn. Cranesbill is easy to grow in average to wet well-drained soil and in full sun to part shade.

***Ilex verticillata* 'Winter Gold' - winterberry holly**

Texture: Fine

This deciduous, native holly is a 6-foot tall, multi-stemmed shrub. The bright green foliage has no significant fall color. 'Winter Gold' displays striking, yellow-orange fruits which last throughout the winter months and into May.

***Ilex × meserveae* Blue Angel®**

Texture: Bold

Blue Angel®, one of the blue hollies, is a dense, rounded shrub reaching 8 feet at maturity. The crinkled leaves are a glossy, dark blue-green. Deep red fruits remain

throughout the winter, contrasting beautifully against the foliage.

***Juniperus virginiana* 'Grey Owl' - eastern red cedar**

Texture: Fine

'Grey Owl' is a compact, evergreen shrub form of the native eastern red cedar growing to 3 feet tall and 6 feet wide at maturity. Soft, silver-gray foliage on the low, arching branches is a great contrast against bold textures.

***Mahonia repens* - creeping mahonia**

Texture: Fine

Creeping mahonia is a stoloniferous, evergreen groundcover which will be 18 inches high at maturity. The stiff, dull, blue-green foliage turns rich purple each winter. The fragrant yellow flowers appear in April and steel-blue fruits last from August to September.

***Panicum virgatum* - switch grass**

Texture: Fine

Switch grass was once a major component of the tallgrass prairies of North America. It is a highly variable species which can grow from 4 to 8 feet tall. The finely-textured foliage ranges in color from greens to blues in the summer and yellows to reds in the fall. Switch grasses can be used in many ways in the garden such as for screens and even as a container specimen. Cut back each year in late winter or early spring.

'Hanse Herms' grows to just over 4 feet tall. The leaves of this selection are green throughout the summer and will turn burgundy beginning in August.

'Heavy Metal' grows to just over 5 feet tall. This narrowly upright form has dusky blue leaves.

***Paulownia tomentosa* - empress tree**

Texture: Bold

The empress tree, a native to China, is used as a cutback shrub in this situation. One year's vigorous growth will create stems reaching 12 to 15 feet. The young stems produce enormous leaves 24 to 36 inches long and wide. When treated in this manner, the empress tree will not produce flowers. If left to grow, the tree will become 50 feet tall and produce much smaller leaves and pale violet flowers will appear in May.

***Pinus mugo* var. *mughus* 'Enci' - mugo pine**

Texture: Bold

This mugo pine is a low-growing form that will not be more than 8 feet tall. It has 2-inch long, dark green, rigid leaves. This plant is excellent used in groups or as a foundation planting.

***Opuntia humifusa* - Prickly Pear**

Texture: Bold

Enjoying the full sun of the pathway through Nason Garden, Prinkly Pear produces large vibrant lemon, yellow flowers from May to June. This perennial enjoys dry to average well drained soil. The large thorny pads of this cacti add a unquie bold texture to the garden.

***Rhus typhina* Tiger Eyes<sup>™</sup> - Tiger Eye Sumanc**

Texture: Bold

Tiger Eye Sumanc adds color to the garden with its deeply-cut, almost lacy leaves. The leaves emerge a vivid chartreuse color and develop into a bright yellow. For fall color, the leaves turn a brilliant scarlet-orange. Tiger Eyes is not are large or invasive as the straight species often seen along Pennsylvania roadsides, reaching only 6 ot 8 feet in height. It prefers well-drained soil and full to part sun.

***Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Frisia' - black locust**

Texture: Fine

Here, the black locust is cutback so it produces its rounded, bright golden-yellow leaves on shrubby new growth. If allowed to grow, this tree would become 50 feet tall and produce clusters of fragrant, white flowers in May. This plant can thrive in many tough growing conditions.

***Rudbeckia maxima* - coneflower**

Texture: Fine

This popular perennial has 7-foot tall stems above 1-foot long gray-green basal foliage. The abundant flowers, which appear throughout the summer, have drooping, bright yellow rays with protruding black centers. This hardy, native perennial prefers well-drained soil in full sun.

***Salix alba* 'Chermesina' - white willow**

Texture: Fine

The leaves of the white willow are bright green above and silvery on the bottom. As winter approaches, the young stems of 'Chermesina' become bright orange and remain so throughout the season. To achieve this effect, the plant should be cut back to 12 inches tall each year in March to encourage the vigorous new growth which produces the stem color.

***Sambucus nigra* 'Aurea' - common elder**

Texture: Fine

The common elder will grow to 20 feet tall. In this garden situation, the shrub is cut back yearly to produce new, bright yellow foliage, which fades as summer progresses. An

unpleasant odor will be emitted when the foliage is bruised. The creamy-white flowers form in flat clusters in June.

***Telekia speciosa* - Oxeye Daisy**

Texture: Bold

This sunflower-like perennial produces a vibrant yellow blooms in late summer to fall. In ideal conditions, Oxeye Daisy will naturalize in your garden, attracting birds and butterflies to your property. In addition to its showy flowers, Oxeye Daisy has fragrant foliage. Oxeye Daisy prefer full sun to part shade and medium moisture. It reaches a height of 4 to 6 feet.

***Thuja plicata* 'Artrovirens' - western arborvitae**

Texture: Bold

'Artrovirens' is a large, pyramidal selection which will stand 50 feet high when mature. The ascending branches display shining, dark green foliage. 'Artrovirens' is an excellent specimen for a garden and can be used to help create a variety of garden settings from formal garden areas to screens.

***Viburnum* 'Conoy' - service viburnum**

Texture: Bold

This spreading, densely branched shrub has glossy, dark green leaves which have a maroon tinge in fall. In April, clusters of dark pink buds turn to creamy-white flowers. In August, the red fruit appears and changes to black as fall progresses.

***Viburnum* 'Eskimo' - linden viburnum**

Texture: Bold

'Eskimo' is a dense, compact shrub, 4 to 5 feet tall. The semi-evergreen foliage is a lustrous, dark green. Pale cream-colored flower buds open to pure white flowers which look like snowballs. This viburnum is resistant to bacterial leaf spot which commonly affects viburnums.

***Yucca filamentosa* - Adam's needle yucca**

Texture: Fine

Adam's needle is a low evergreen shrub. The gray-green leaves, which are 2 feet long with sharply pointed tips, appear to emerge directly from the ground. The edges of the leaves curl inward and have loose, thread-like filaments. The pendulous white flowers form on 3- to 6-foot high erect conical panicles in mid-June.

**Credits**

The cover illustration for this brochure was created by Barbara Seymour. This brochure was written by Allison

Necaise, Education Intern 1998-2000 and modified by Becky Wehry, Member and Visitor Programs Coordinator 2006.

### **About the Scott Arboretum**

The Scott Arboretum is a public garden covering more than 300 acres of the Swarthmore College campus and displaying over 4,000 different kinds of plants. The Arboretum is a garden of ideas and suggestions, displaying some of the best trees, shrubs, perennials, and annuals for use in the Delaware Valley. Established in 1929 as a living memorial to Arthur Hoyt Scott, the Arboretum is open to the public year-round, free of charge, from dawn to dusk. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Memberships to the Associates of the Scott Arboretum are available. The Scott Associates, aid efforts through financial and volunteer support.

For more information, please call the Scott Offices at (610) 328-8025. We welcome your questions, suggestions and most of all, visits to the Arboretum.

Visit us on our web site at [www.scottarboretum.org](http://www.scottarboretum.org).

©2006 The Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College  
500 College Avenue  
Swarthmore, PA 19081-1397  
(610) 328-8025