

# GROWING MATTERS

*Tor Spirea*

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**Growing Matters** is an informative newsletter for clients and associates of Jeffries Nurseries. It is published quarterly with the sole objective of assisting you in meeting the challenges of the nursery, garden centre and landscape industry.

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## News Briefs

Canada finally has its own official day to celebrate trees. The first National Tree Day will be September 21, 2011.

Mike Touchette travelled to Guelph in late January and to Vancouver in February as part of his responsibilities with the CNLA research committee.

Wilbert and Sharon enjoyed a two week cruise travelling in January through the Panama Canal and spending a couple days in the south before and after the cruise.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring may be "just around the corner" but as I write on March 8<sup>th</sup>, it seems that the "corner" has moved back a week or so. We have had some very cold nights for greenhouse heating and our winter snow is not abating. We hope the next four weeks will see most of the snow disappear so winter protection on the containers can be removed in early April and container shipping start in mid April.

Our trade show season is behind us and in general the mood is one of slight optimism. There are a number of infrastructure projects that are moving to the landscaping stage and this is encouraging. With high agricultural commodity and oil prices the prairie and northern plains economy should be improved.

This spring our company will begin a **consumer advertising** effort in prairie garden magazines promoting new plants as well as Jeffries' Northern Garden Collection. In the past we have supported trade advertising and while this will continue, we are seeking to help the retail trade by creating market demand for outstanding new cultivars. Linked with P-O-P materials, signage and reference guides, increased consumer interest should be seen in improved sales. Remember, you can still add new plants to your spring order and use your P-O-P points towards reference guides and signage.

We are planning a **customer open house** on August 11<sup>th</sup> and would ask you to mark that date on your calendar. Tours of the field and container pads as well as an introduction to our new plants will be featured. This spring, you will see more of Liz Werner as she calls on additional customers in North Dakota, Saskatchewan and NW Ontario. We hope that the next quarter will produce the resounding sales success that our customers need to start off a good industry year.

**Wilbert G. Ronald**



**Grand Mum®**  
Monarda

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**ultimate  
living fence**

Excellent  
supply of 3-4'  
in #5 & #7 for  
retail sales



# Consumer Advertising

By Philip Ronald

This spring, Jeffries is undertaking an advertising campaign in several relevant prairie gardening magazines. Colourful advertisements promoting new tree and herbaceous perennial cultivars will appear in the spring issues of Gardens West, Manitoba Gardener and Alberta Gardener. These advertisements direct consumers to local garden centers where they will be able to purchase this new plant material.

The brand **Northern Garden Collection** refers to the entire plant family at Jeffries Nurseries. This collection features **1000** ornamental and fruiting plants and includes both woody and herbaceous perennials. The consumer website [www.northerngardencollection.com](http://www.northerngardencollection.com) was recently upgraded to feature an interactive copy of the 2011 Northern Garden Reference Guide as well as links to 20 of the most popular **Northern Garden Introductions**.

Garden centers are encouraged to stock these new cultivars for spring in order to take advantage of consumer print advertising. Take a moment to view the enclosed order form and ensure that you have adequate quantities of these new plants. For many of these exciting cultivars, its not too late to add additional stock for spring delivery. Access an up-to-date availability list at [www.jeffriesnurseries.com](http://www.jeffriesnurseries.com)

**STARLITE®**  
Flowering Crabapple

- White spring flowers
- Disease-free foliage
- Tiny, retained fruit

Goldspur® Amur Cherry

Purple Spire® Columnar Crabapple

**Refined ornamental trees with proven cold hardiness**  
[www.northerngardencollection.com](http://www.northerngardencollection.com)

**Northern Garden Collection**



**GRAND MUM®**  
**MONARDA**



Developed in Morden, Manitoba along with *Coral Reef®*, *Grand Marshall®* & *Grand Parade®*



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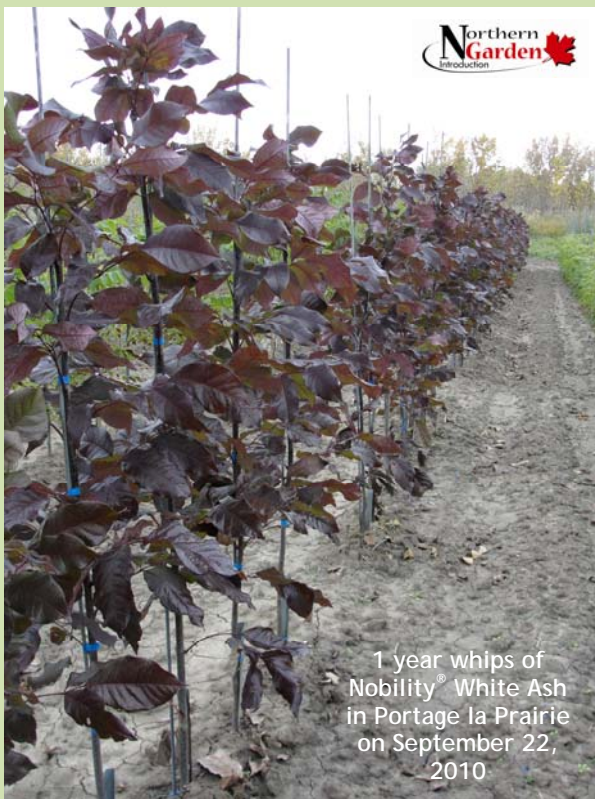


**Jeffries Nurseries Ltd.**

invites you to join us for **Customer Appreciation Day**  
August 11, 2011  
More details to follow

## Nobility® White Ash

By Philip Ronald



1 year whips of Nobility® White Ash in Portage la Prairie on September 22, 2010

The development of new tree cultivars takes on many forms. New selections may be the result of interspecific hybridization (e.g. Northern Treasure Ash). Alternatively, we can hunt for improved genotypes in seedling populations grown from superior trees. Such is the story of Nobility White Ash, a new shade tree selection with prairie cold hardiness and outstanding fall colour.

Back in December 2002 I pulled off a highway in northwestern Wisconsin beside a forest that contained a mixture of deciduous trees including ash. My goal was to locate a superior female white ash tree with seed set that could serve as a genetic base for future evaluation. I found such a tree but to my dismay it was nearly limbless 5 meters up from ground level. I managed to pull myself into the canopy and approximately 200 seeds were collected along with several dormant branches in order to confirm species identity.

Those precious seeds made their way back to Manitoba where they were grown out and compared to seedlings of eight northern White Ash seed sources from Ontario and Quebec. Each tree was rated for cold hardiness, vigor and fall colour in 2006, 2007 and 2008. One seedling (412) from the Wisconsin seed source stood out as superior to the others. Budwood was sent to nurseries in British Columbia and Oregon. In the fall of 2009 and 2010, these budded trees were compared to three prairie cultivars including 'Northern Blaze'. At each of these sites, the performance of '412' supported its release as a cultivar. Bareroot samples of Nobility® White Ash will be available to wholesale growers for trial this spring, followed by a retail release in 2012.



## BAREROOT SMALL FRUIT

Asparagus, Raspberry, Strawberry

[www.jeffriesnurseries.com/avail.htm](http://www.jeffriesnurseries.com/avail.htm)



## Bridging the Generation Gap

By Michel Touchette

The arrival of March means the RRSP season is finally finished. Our society is presently struggling with all the implications associated with an aging Baby Boomer generation: retirement, financial worries, health care, spare time and the list goes on.

Is there a new opportunity for our industry? Is our industry making the necessary adjustment for the Baby Boomers?

- Twenty years ago, I was responsible for four children and the May long weekend was for visiting a crowded garden center and planting the garden. Not any more, now I drive past a crowd.
- Twenty years ago, I planted my flowers in the ground with my children's agile fingers. Not any more, now those same fingers are agile with I-Phone and Blackberry. Now my back and knees prefer an upright position!
- Twenty years ago, my children sent my heart revisiting my childhood happiness. Not any more; now my grandchildren trigger a similar response.
- Twenty years ago, July 1<sup>st</sup> meant children were out of school and it was time for a holiday. Not any more; with an empty nest, September is the preferred time for a vacation.

Is it time for the horticulture industry to foster an "echo weekend" to the May long weekend for the Baby Boomers? Are we providing a shopping experience tailored to the Baby Boomers?

With successful marketing we have the ability to create a positive emotional response toward an experience. Let's consider starting a new tradition: "Garden with the Grandchildren" weekend sometime in late June. Could the grandchildren plant a container garden for their grandparent's patio? Who knows what this might mean for end-of-June sales?

As the Baby Boomers shift toward a new stage in their lives, old traditions will be dropped and new ones will emerge. Successful businesses will recognize this lifestyle shift and capitalize on new opportunities.



# Improved Monardas for Prairie Gardens

By Wilbert Ronald

Two Canadian-bred Monarda cultivars that have stood out as important breeding advances in recent years are **Marshalls Delight** and **Petite Delight**. 'Marshalls Delight' was introduced as a powdery mildew resistant cultivar with medium plant height (30"- 80 mm) and clear, pink flowers. It has stood the test of time for close to 25 years and still remains a very popular cultivar. The disease resistance found in 'Marshalls Delight' encouraged the garden use of Monarda particularly under high humidity and partial shade. Although there are occasional reports of some powdery mildew on 'Marshalls Delight', this cultivar remains the "gold standard" for disease resistance. 'Petite Delight', is a miniature (12"- 30 mm) plant with dark-green, mildew-resistant foliage and pink-purple flowers. 'Petite Delight' is the first true dwarf cultivar of this perennial group. It has become very popular as a bedding or edging plant in the landscape and like its progenitor, 'Marshalls Delight' it possesses good resistance to powdery mildew.

The fact that Monardas are a North American native and are very attractive to butterflies and hummingbirds has helped make them popular amongst gardens trends of recent decades. As mint family members with useful aromatic and herbal properties they are considered to have added value in the landscape. The protracted late summer flowering is valued in the garden when many other plants have finished flowering. The added feature of deer resistant foliage is also valued in areas where deer are active.

Behind the development of any new plant there lies a story and the two cultivars above are no exception. In the late 1950's, Henry Marshall, working as a self-educated botanist and plant breeder at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Brandon Research Station in southwestern Manitoba, successfully crossed the tender eastern North American *M. didyma* with the northern and western North American *M. fistulosa*.var. *menthifolia*. The resulting plants showed hybrid vigour and increased tolerance to the cold, dry prairie conditions. Marshall's plant breeding success with this crop, other perennials and shrub roses led him to be transferred in 1970 to the Morden Research Station, which had a more active horticulture program including landscape plant breeding. Marshall worked the last 12 years of his career full time on plant breeding and was awarded an honorary Doctorate from Brandon University as well as many other accolades for his work. The 'Marshalls Delight' cultivar, although introduced after his retirement, owed its development to Marshall's breeding genius. After 25 years it continues to hold its popularity across climatic Zones 2-8 as a disease resistant, perennial garden plant.

**Petite Delight** Monarda introduced in 1998 was part of a new dwarf series which also included the pink-flowered cultivar, **Petite Wonder** (2001). These cultivars owe their development to Lynn Collicutt who carried on the Morden breeding work from 1981 to the early 1990's. These very distinctive dwarf plants were unlike any other Monarda cultivars and continue to be superb for planting in small confined spaces.

Research downsizing in the late 1990's led the Morden Research team to seek partners to carry on the Monarda work and bring it to a measure of completion including cultivar release. Two Canadian nursery companies, Aubin Nurseries Ltd. and Jeffries Nurseries Ltd., and the American company, Bailey Nurseries Inc., formed a growers consortium in 1998 in cooperation with the Morden Research Centre. Together with Morden staff, they completed the evaluation of the remaining germplasm and have introduced the following four highly regarded cultivars of which the last three are in a mid height size (16-20" = 40-50 cm).

**Coral Reef**<sup>®</sup> 'ACreef' (2003) forms a medium-sized (28"= 70 cm) mound with deep coral pink flowers. **Grand Parade**<sup>®</sup> 'ACade' and **Grand Marshall**<sup>®</sup> 'AChall' were 2006 introductions with bright lavender purple and fuchsia purple flowers, respectively. Plant form of Grand Parade and Grand Marshall is compact (20"= 50cm) with dark green, disease resistant foliage. The 2009 introduction of **Grand Mum**<sup>®</sup> 'ACmum' completed the semi-dwarf series from AAFC-Morden. Grand Mum has an attractive cushion form with light pink mauve flowers. These recent plant introductions are just now becoming known in the perennial trade.

Jeffries Nurseries has an excellent selection of these cultivars in 3.5" and 1 gallon pots for spring. This article on monarda and related advertisements will also be appearing in the spring issues of Gardens West, Manitoba & Alberta Gardener.

