

## MEMBERS' FORUM

### NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE APPEALS

I wanted to share with you some of the reasons why I enjoy being an AHS member and reading *The American Gardener*.

Although I receive magazines that are more focused on gardening in California, where I live, I have very diverse interests. It gets cold enough here (temperatures in the mid-20s occasionally in the winter) that we get a spring of sorts, with blooming fruit and ornamental trees. At the same time, it is warm enough that I can grow subtropicals and tropicals such as palms, bougainvillea, etc. I have a greenhouse into which I can move really tender things like *Plumeria* for the winter. Our family also has a small cabin in Idyllwild, up 5,000 feet in the mountains, where we get real winter with lots of lilacs in the spring.

In short, I can grow most of what you report on in the magazine. I also do some fruit and vegetable gardening, so I like the way you focus not just on ornamentals but on edible plants. And as I move slowly toward retirement, I have more time to develop even more variety in what I grow. For instance, I kept a copy of an article on arums you published a few issues ago, and I am going to order some of the more exotic ones when I have a little more time.

I have never had the right schedule to be active with local gardening groups, so you also keep me up to date on gardening research, new plant cultivars, and other important information.

Jesse Thomas  
Murrieta, California

### Member Services

We love to hear from our members! If you have questions about your American Horticultural Society membership, would like to become a member, renew your membership, give a gift of membership, or update your mailing or e-mail address with the AHS, please call (800) 777-7931 ext. 119 or e-mail us at [membership@ahs.org](mailto:membership@ahs.org).



*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*

### ASTER UH-OH

I'm sure I am not the first reader of your January/February 2009 edition to point out the nomenclature error in the photograph caption at the bottom of page 22 (ironically in an article on changes to plant nomenclature). The revised botanical name for the New England aster is actually *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*.

David Clark  
Sevenoaks, Kent, England

### SUSTAINABILITY OF PEAT MOSS HARVESTING

I read your article on potting soils and mixes in the March/April 2009 issue and appreciated your discussion relating to the issue of peat moss.

For future reference, please consider that the research shows the sphagnum moss—as well as other bog vegetation—is well established within five years of restoration after harvest, and not, as the article stated, that “peat moss often starts to re-grow within five years.”

Also it is the rate of accumulation of the dead sphagnum and other bog vegetation that is slow, rather than the growth of the living ecotone. Often the distinction between the living ecotone that contains the sphagnum peat plants and other plant life and the dead and decaying peat biomass of the bog is misunderstood.

I would also like to comment on the reference in the article to whether harvested sites are left to return to their nat-

ural state or converted to alternative uses such as farmland, other wetland types, or forests. This is often a decision made by the regulating body and not by the peat harvesting company. The industry is guided by these decisions, which are made not only for ecological reasons, but for social as well as economic values.

Paul Short  
President

Canadian Sphagnum Peat Moss Association  
Alberta, Canada

### FOAMFLOWER FAUX PAS

In the article on Charles and Martha Oliver in the March/April 2009 issue, there's a small caption error on page 28 that might frustrate readers trying to locate the pictured plant at nurseries. The correct name for the *Tiarella* selection shown in the photograph is 'Pink Brushes'. The name



*Tiarella* 'Pink Brushes'

seems apt for such a cute foamflower, but Charles Oliver is a bit apologetic about taking credit for it. In an interview I had with him, he told me: “'Pink Brushes' got a temporary working name that never got replaced by anything better.”

Bill Scheick  
Austin, Texas

**PLEASE WRITE US!** Address letters to Editor, *The American Gardener*, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308. Send e-mails to [editor@ahs.org](mailto:editor@ahs.org) (note Letter to Editor in subject line). Letters we print may be edited for length and clarity.