December Hort Report

One of my favorite deciduous shrubs is Hydrangea paniculata ‘Limelight’, which was recommended by Margaret Hennes. My two were in quart size pots when I planted them in 2007, but within six years reached what was supposed to be their limit of eight feet high and wide. Now, I prune them quite severely in March to keep them within that size range. ‘Limelight’ likes sun to part shade (mine get morning sun), and blooms in July. The large, conical blossoms start out white, then turn pale lime. Around September they get a rose blush, then as they dry out for winter, become tan. Because my shrubs are protected from the west winds, the dried blossoms stay on until March, making a lovely display against the white of my house. The weight of the blooms sometimes causes the branches to bend, for a nice cascading effect. It’s a favorite of goldfinches, who eat the small seeds. Former member Sheila Sanford had a similar shrub, Hydrangea aborescens ‘Annabelle’ which made a lovely hedge. It’s stunning white flowers had a rounder shape than ‘Limelight’, but were about the same size.