Hort Report March 2018

I love Magnolias, of which there are many species, both evergreen and deciduous. Today I have brought a branch from a Magnolia grandiflora hybrid ‘Timeless Beauty’. It’s an evergreen variety, with beautiful glossy green leaves that have a fuzzy brown underside. The large, white, waxy flowers have a wonderful smell, and later develop into large red seed pods. This tree is multi-stemmed and grows 20 feet tall and 25 feet wide. While deciduous Magnolias bloom once in the spring, this Magnolia continues to bloom all summer long! We live at the northernmost limit of its hardiness zone, so it should be planted in a sheltered but sunny location. Bees love their flowers.

Sharon used to have two Magnolia macrophylla trees; but sadly, they died. They have the largest simple leaf of any North American tree-up to 30 inches long! You can find a few at Longwood Gardens on the shaded hillsides.

I have a 20 foot tall deciduous Magnolia ‘Butterflies’ that has lovely fragrant yellow blossoms in mid April. Unfortunately, the blossoms only last a week or two, but it’s a spectacular show while it lasts.

I also have a deciduous Magnolia stellata. It has fragrant star-shaped white flowers in March, which are subject to frost damage. It tripled in size in a season when I cut down the tree that shaded it. It’s more of a large shrub than a tree, growing 15-20 feet high and wide.

There are many more varieties in pinks and purples; it’s a must have for every garden.