

From the Director



One hundred and thirty-five years ago, the people of Boston—and by extension, the world—received a remarkable and lasting gift from Harvard University. Harvard gave away the land where it had established the Arnold Arboretum to the City of Boston, to preserve it as a public park in Olmsted's Emerald Necklace. In the bargain, the University would continue to oversee all botanical, horticultural, research, and educational functions of the Arboretum for a term of one thousand years, with an option to renew for another millennium. While Harvard has shaped the Arboretum as a pioneering botanical institution with one of the finest and most important collections of temperate woody plants in the world over the past century, the landscape has remained free and open to all as an urban oasis for connecting with nature and finding peace and beauty in the heart of a city.

As a treasured public space, we recognize that engaging the public and orienting them to our landscape and collections remain an essential part of our identity. This summer we introduced a new and dynamic program to enhance our interaction with visitors—Arboretum Ambassadors. In this issue of *Silva* we profile our roaming Ambassadors, who now provide information and assistance to visitors on our grounds every day of the week—from offering help with wayfinding across our 281 acres to raising public awareness about our rules and guidelines for safety. As we continue to develop new and better ways to communicate with you in our landscape, we also endeavor to improve the amenities that make each visit special. On your next visit, take a break and enjoy the view from one of several new commemorative benches, individually crafted from the wood of felled Arboretum trees as a unique dedication opportunity for our supporters.

This fall and winter, I invite you to delve more deeply into the Arnold Arboretum and its incredible plant collections. Visit with friends and family, or come alone to commune with our plants, knowing that each and every moment spent in the Arnold Arboretum is unique and that our plants and landscape will enrich your life. Explore the Leventritt Garden or our diverse holdings of conifers from around the world at one of our popular Collections Up Close events, or observe the art of woodturning at a special exhibition and demonstration in October. Take a class to hone your knowledge of plants and their care, or attend one of the talks in our seventh annual Director's Lecture Series. Treat yourself to some quality time among our trees as the seasons change—we hope to see many of our members on October 21 for leaf peeping at our very first fall-focused Members' Tour Day. Thanks to our forebears, the Arnold Arboretum belongs to us all—and all are invited and welcome to explore. ∞

—William (Ned) Friedman, Director of the Arnold Arboretum and Arnold Professor of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology, Harvard University

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Pseudolarix amabilis (59-89*H)
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