

THE HERB SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC  
AWARD PROGRAM INFORMATION AND AWARD DESCRIPTIONS  
Approved May 2010, Revised February 2016,  
Amended May 2020, September 2024, September 2025

The Herb Society of America, Inc. (HSA or The Society) is proud to award individuals who have had significant levels of achievement in the world of herbs. The program began with the Award of Merit in 1952 and has expanded through the years to include the Helen de Conway Little Medal of Honor, the Nancy Putnam Howard Award for Excellence in Horticulture, the Gertrude B. Foster Award for Excellence in Herbal Literature, the Joanna McQuail Reed Award for the Artistic Use of Herbs, the Elizabeth Crisp Rea Award, the Madalene Hill Award for Excellence in Herbal Education, the Mighty Oak Award for Excellence in Conservation, and the Certificates of Achievement and Appreciation.

The HSA Awards Committee selects recipients from those names submitted for nomination by the membership. The HSA Awards Chair submits those selected by the committee to the HSA Board of Directors for approval. Awards will be presented annually virtually and/or at the in-person Educational Conference (EdCon).

General requirements for selection:

1. Membership in HSA is not a requirement for any of the awards or certificates.
2. A fully completed Award Nomination Form should accompany the nomination packet and is available from the HSA website or by contacting HSA Headquarters or HSA Awards Chair. Please note: Only one person for each nomination form will be accepted.
3. The nomination packet should include a letter of nomination and at least three letters of support. If these requirements are not met, the nominator will be advised of the situation. Nomination form and support letters will be retained for two additional years if the person nominated was not chosen that year.
4. All support letters (which must include a return address and/or other contact information) will be sent to the nominator who will select the best (only three are required; maximum of five) and forward them to the Awards Committee Chair as noted on the Nomination Form. The Awards Committee Chair will send the nominating packet to the Awards Committee for consideration. Support letters should contain substantive information about the nominee's work.
5. Submissions for nomination are accepted only from members of HSA. However, letters of support may be submitted by anyone except for members of the HSA Board or HSA Awards Committee.
6. Board members, their immediate family members and spouses, and Awards Committee members are not eligible for nomination for an award or certificate during their term of service.
7. As committee members review the letters of support for a nominee, they may conclude that

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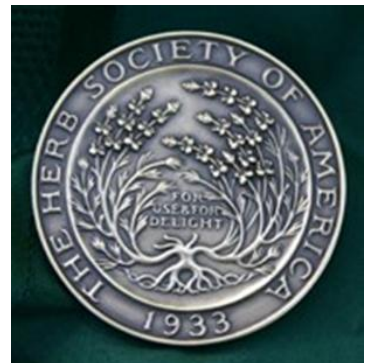
the nomination would be more appropriate for a different award or certificate than for the one proposed. In this case, the nominator will be informed of the committee's recommendation and will be asked to allow the individual to stand for the award the committee deemed most appropriate. If the nominator does not agree with the committee's recommendation, the nominator may request that the decision for an award for the individual be deferred until the following year, and if needed, will provide the committee with more information regarding the candidate.

8. The nominations remain confidential until the board has approved the awards and the HSA Awards Committee Chair has informed the award recipients and nominators. At this point, a "News Flash" is announced from headquarters in the form of an eblast to all HSA members and on the website, and the awards chair will submit an announcement for the upcoming national newsletter. The nominator has the responsibility of notifying those writing letters of support that the nomination is to be kept confidential until the nominee has been notified.
9. All awards and certificates are given at the discretion of the Awards Committee. There is no requirement to present every award or certificate annually. Unless otherwise stated, there can only be one award given to one person annually.

### AWARD DESCRIPTIONS AND BRIEF HISTORY

#### THE HELEN DE CONWAY LITTLE MEDAL OF HONOR

The Helen de Conway Little Medal of Honor is the highest award given by The Society and honors someone for outstanding service and dedication to The Society or the world of horticulture. It is also meant to create a challenge to achievement for members of The Society. Helen de Conway Little was a dedicated member of the New York Unit, and when serving as chairman of the HSA Awards Committee in 1956, proposed that a bronze medal of honor be struck to give to outstanding members. The original Medal of Honor Award was renamed for Mrs. Little in 1966 because of her many years of devoted service as Awards Committee Chair. The award is presented for "real service" to The Herb Society of America or for "outstanding ability" in the field of herbs.



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### THE NANCY PUTNAM HOWARD AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN HORTICULTURE

The Nancy Putnam Howard Award for Excellence in Horticulture was approved by the board in 1985 to honor individuals who perpetuate excellence in horticulture. Through its name, it also honors Nancy Putnam Howard, a long-time member of the Philadelphia Unit. A photographer, writer, lecturer, scholar, and teacher, Nancy always demanded excellence in herself as she continued to study the culture, history, and uses of plants.



Nancy served The Society in many roles, but the most important was as a superb horticulturist who espoused the use of correct nomenclature. Her extensive gardens and greenhouse were open for study, and she was always a willing teacher. Nancy set a high standard for those privileged enough to be considered for this award.

This award was originally designed by Susan Wood and consists of a Tussie Mussie holder. A male recipient receives a loupe.

### THE GERTRUDE B. FOSTER AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN HERBAL LITERATURE

The Gertrude B. (Bates) Foster Award is intended to encourage the dissemination of accurate herbal information and to recognize outstanding researchers, educators, and authors who exhibit exceptional scholarship in a published non-fiction book, which serves to inspire the "use and delight" of herbs. This award, established and funded in 1998 by the Connecticut Unit, honors Bunny (as she was known) and her pioneering role in the renaissance of herbal interest. Bunny was known and respected for her extensive contributions to the knowledge and interest in herbs and horticulture in this country and abroad through her generosity in sharing plant material, research, lecturing, and editorial leadership.



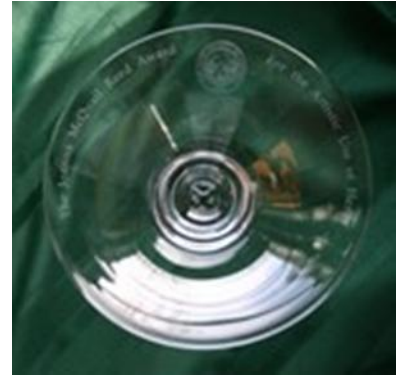
The author must be living at the time of the nomination. Selection of this recipient is done with the HSA Botany and Horticulture Chair, the editor of *The Herbarist*, and the curator of The National Herb Garden serving in an advisory role.

This award consists of an engraved crystal paperweight.

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THE JOANNA McQUAIL REED AWARD FOR THE ARTISTIC USE OF HERBS

Upon the recommendation of the Philadelphia Unit in 2003, the board of The Society approved this award to honor Joanna McQuail Reed. The award is intended to recognize those who like Joanna Reed express the delight of herbs through their artistic and creative abilities, whether it is original needlework, painting, photography, garden design, culinary, or other art forms. During her lifetime, Joanna's magnificent needlework and gardens were visited by people from all over the world. Her garden designs and needlework have been documented in many books and magazines. A woman of many talents, Joanna gave selflessly to The Society and to all those who knew her.



The nominee must be living at the time of the nomination. The award consists of an engraved glass bowl.

THE ELIZABETH CRISP REA AWARD

Upon the recommendation of the Mid-Atlantic District in 2014, the board of The Society approved this award to honor Elizabeth Crisp Rea. Betty was president of The Society from 1976 to 1978. She exhibited a love for herbs and herb gardens and was highly devoted to the establishment of the National Herb Garden as The Society's gift to the nation. Her meetings, often including the presentation of her signature "tussie mussies," with garden designers, congressmen, attorneys, and fundraisers contributed significantly to the accomplishment of this goal. She worked tirelessly to provide financial support for the garden with the organization of The Friends of the National Arboretum. This award of a "tussie mussie" holder will continue the spirit of Betty Rea.



The Society will award the Elizabeth Crisp Rea Award to an individual who has worked with determination to create and/or preserve a public garden and in so doing promotes herbs for "use and delight." The award is a tussie mussie holder or a lapel pin.

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### MADALENE HILL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN HERBAL EDUCATION

Upon the recommendation of The Society's Pioneer Unit, South Central District, this award was approved by the HSA Board in 2018 to honor Madalene Hill, HSA President from 1986 to 1988. She was an internationally recognized herbalist and author who ran a successful herb business and restaurant in Texas. She then became curator of the Susan Clayton McAshan Herb Gardens at Round Top Festival in Round Top, Texas. Through her guidance and leadership, the institute expanded its gardens and outreach efforts, and she oversaw special programs throughout the year to introduce visitors to the culinary and medicinal uses of herbs. Madalene Hill received numerous recognitions for her work. Seven herbs have been named to honor her, and now an award bears her name to recognize those who strive to follow in her footsteps of herbal education and outreach.



This award is to recognize those who have a passion for promoting the knowledge, “use and delight” of herbs through educational activities at any level.

The recipient must be living at the time of the nomination and can be either a professional or nonprofessional but must show a great zeal for sharing their passion for herbs with the public. This award is an engraved magnifying glass.

### THE MIGHTY OAK AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN CONSERVATION

This award was recommended by the HSA Awards Committee and approved by the HSA Board in 2023 to recognize the importance of conservation in its many aspects and the need to acknowledge those in our membership and communities that strive to support our environment.



The recipient of the Mighty Oak Award for Excellence will have made notable achievements in conservation efforts. The recipient will have demonstrated skill and dedication in the areas of using native plants, including plants not commonly known for their herbal attributes, and in other conservation areas such as habitat preservation, water usage, and/or pollinator protection through hands-on demonstrations, printed materials, and lectures, using herbs to demonstrate conservation methods to preserve and enhance life. The recipient will have used herbs to demonstrate conservation and to preserve and enhance ecosystem life.

This award consists of a multimedia artwork created by Patricia Kenny, a lifetime member of HSA's Potomac Unit, to represent the oak and the ecosystem that the oak tree supports.

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CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

Dating from 1976, the Certificate of Achievement honors those people who have made significant contributions in various ways to the work of The Society or the world of herbs. Certificates may be given posthumously, but focus should be on the living. No more than three certificates may be given in a year. This award is comprised of a congratulatory letter along with a certificate.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

The Certificate of Appreciation, designed in 1982, recognizes those who have contributed a great deal personally to The Society or to those who have admirably completed a special assignment or project. Certificates may be given posthumously, but focus should be on the living. No more than three may be given in a year. This award consists of a certificate.