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CONNECTICUT

# Connecticut Landscape Architecture

SPRING 2023

*The Making of  
the Sandy Hook  
Permanent Memorial*



## Borrowed Views / West Kill, NY

This property in the Catskill Mountains is comprised of hundreds of acres that are all maintained in their natural state. Here James Doyle Design Associates found an easy alignment of their goals and their client's goals: contribute to the natural ecological surroundings through the landscape design, respond to the vernacular of the place, and preserve the unobstructed views overlooking the West Kill valley. All of this was coordinated while the home was under renovation and a separate garage was built.

Working with the architects, the garage was positioned close to the residence but not within view. This was achieved by sinking the garage and incorporating materials that would allow it to fade into the background. The landscape walls were designed with reclaimed barn-board and Cor-Ten steel, the same materials used on the garage. Local boulders were utilized to retain the grade and reduce the overall profile of the garage and parking area.

The approach to the residence is a gravel ribbon driveway. The lawn, which also became the parking area, was stabilized by a subsurface grid that allowed the area to be camouflaged and utilized as vehicular access to the house while also minimizing impervious surfaces. The landscape around the home was planned with a mix of native trees, meadow plants, and woodland perennials. Existing fieldstone walls were restored, and oversized bluestone was utilized for the walkways and terraces. Connections to the site trail systems were planned with a trail-building company. The result of the various interventions is a seamless melding of the old and new, and a preservation of the attributes that make this landscape beautifully diverse.



Above: The garage is sunken into the landscape to minimize the visual impact on the surrounding landscape. A mix of native perennials is planted on top of the walls. Boulders were carefully handled to ensure that existing moss was maintained. Left: Rear terrace with peaceful valley view beyond.



Above: A gravel ribbon driveway provides a pervious surface for vehicular access adjacent to the home. Left: An old fieldstone wall was reconstructed to make it structurally stable while still maintaining the vernacular of an old wall. Below: The edges of the forest were enhanced with plantings of shade-tolerant native ferns, carex, and perennials.



**CLIENT:** PRIVATE RESIDENCE **LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** JAMES DOYLE DESIGN ASSOCIATES **ARCHITECT:** DOUGLAS C. WRIGHT ARCHITECTS **CIVIL ENGINEER:** KAATERSKILL ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES **GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** HOBBS INC. **LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR:** KERN'S LANDSCAPE & NURSERY **TRAIL BUILDERS:** TAHAWUS TRAILS, LLC **IRRIGATION:** PRO SPRINKLER SYSTEMS, INC. **ARBORIST:** HEALTHY TREES, LLC **MASONRY:** LUPPINO LANDSCAPING & MASONRY, LLC **STONE SUPPLIER:** STONE RESOURCE, INC. **PHOTOGRAPHER:** NEIL LANDINO



*Achillea millefolium* /  
**Common Yarrow**

*Achillea millefolium* is a stand-out workhorse of a native perennial and is my favorite native perennial. A little background on the plant: it is ubiquitous across North America and is flexible in its soil requirements, though it does need sun at least half of the day for great flowering. All these traits make it easy to add to most planting plans. A facultative upland plant, it can handle drought and dry soils once established, thus requiring little irrigation. Being so widespread, it is also host to many pollinators and additionally provides nesting material for birds. The native species is white flowering and found in meadows, prairies, and disturbed farm fields and roadsides. It has also been bred in the horticultural world to produce a variety of colors, including light to hot pink, yellow, and orange, though personally,



my preference is for the straight white. This is my go-to plant for both traditional perennial beds as well as mixed with grasses or in meadow seed mixes, and it has thrived in all locations. These images illustrate the yarrow in a seeded meadow and its use in a perennial border planting.

**CHERYL BROWN, ASLA**  
James Doyle Design Associates, *Greenwich*



*Pycnanthemum muticum* /  
**Mountain Mint**

What plant has a more refreshing appearance and invigorating scent than native mountain mint!?! Although it is truly a magnet for all sorts of pollinators, including a profusion of butterflies and bees, its fresh scent redolent of the brightest spearmint and striking presence in the summer garden provide equal enjoyment to human garden lovers and beneficial insects. Its striking silvery-grey top leaves contrast boldly with its green lower leaves and its small but abundant lavender white flowers put on a sophisticated and long-blooming display the entire summer. A wonderful companion to ornamental grasses and late-flowering asters, this 3'+ tall and 3'+ wide perennial reliably returns each spring and matures to a robust mounded clump to provide a wonderful filler between more showy perennials and meadow flowers.

While completely herbaceous, this native perennial's faded stems provide habitat for wildlife and winter interest in the garden. Even in the depths of winter its leafless stems emit their brisk minty aroma when touched. Mountain mint is



*Pycnanthemum muticum* in a Greenwich, CT residential perennial garden.

a straight species that is found naturally along the entire eastern portion of the United States. It grows vigorously and dependably year after year. We have used this plant in both formal and informal gardens in a variety of soil conditions with great pleasure and success. While once a rarity, thankfully *Pycnanthemum muticum* is now widely available from local perennial sources. This plant is highly recommended for any garden situation where pollinators, wildlife, or native plants are valued.

**MATTHEW WILLINGER**  
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