



## **Gaston Grower Spotlight Sep & Oct 2023**

### **A Local Source of Fall Color**

As October quickly passes many have probably noticed tree color beginning to change and leaves begin to fall. Some trees may be shedding their leaves a little prematurely this year due to our dry conditions in late summer. Many people including myself love fall color in their neighborhoods, city parks, and along our streets. Very rarely do we consider where some of these trees spend their time before becoming a vibrant display for us to enjoy. North Carolina is home to many field grown nurseries growing these trees that are planted for our benefit. One operation, Long Pond Nursery can be found here in Gaston County. Most of the trees within this nursery will spend 3 to 5 years on site to develop and grow to a sellable size. During a tree's life on the nursery it is fertilized, pruned, managed for pest, diseases, and weeds, all to ensure a product worthy of new home in a local landscape. When you see a planted tree standing out this fall take a moment to appreciate the work that a nursery has put in prior to that point.



## Adapting to Urban Demand

Long Pond's tree inventory consists of trees primarily utilized in urban development projects. The Trees pictured below (left) are [Kindred Spirit](#) oak trees. This oak tree is a great example of the plant breeding efforts that take place to meet the demand that urban growth brings. Kindred Spirit is a hybrid oak tree that has columnar growth habit. These oaks at maturity will get no wider than 10ft and will be 20ft-40ft tall. Its narrow habit allows for this tree to be utilized in tighter spaces making it desirable for multiple landscape uses in urban settings



## It's Not All About Fall

Lee Suddreth at Long Pond Nursery grows a variegated [Nellie R. Stevens Holly](#) (above right). This holly provides breath taking color all year long rather than the fall display that many of the deciduous trees he grows provides. This plant was a product of a mutation found on a Nellie R Stevens Holly, showcasing one of the interesting ways that new plant material enters the market. From the management, to bringing unique plants to production every plant has a story behind it. These stories often go untold but those who are a part of the nursery community understand the role they play in bringing the front cover of that story to our landscapes.



N.C. Cooperative Extension prohibits discrimination and harassment regardless of age, color, disability, family and marital status, gender identity, national origin, political beliefs, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation and veteran status. NC State University, N.C. A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and local governments cooperating.

