

Sow and Tell

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 Member of the National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Central Atlantic Region, District III

President: Noreen Linnemann, 703-281-1770, noreenlinnemann@gmail.com
 Editor: Brigitte Hartke, 703-585-5504, BrigitteHartke@gmail.com
 fivehillsgardenclub@gmail.com



President's Message

Autumn is a second spring where every leaf is a flower. ~ Albert Camus

The leaves are starting to fall, the late summer flowers are in bloom and the vegetable gardens are fruitful. It's September and I love the idea that cool fall days are just ahead. Most of all I am excited to see all my garden club friends again.

I hope you have all had a restful summer and have had a fun time in your gardens. We were fortunate to have many rainy days to keep our gardens from drying out. Even the grass is still green!

Many of you have been busy this summer helping to get our new year off to a good start. I first want to thank Anne Nelson for the fantastic job she did with our yearbook. It is just beautiful! One look at the front cover and we all know that the incredible photography comes from the talented Brigitte Hartke. Thanks to all of you who contributed information to the yearbook and helped with the editing.

We have many opportunities available to us this coming year. Karen Fleming has planned some fun field trips. There are also field trips and learning opportunities through District III and NCAGC. I hope you will take advantage of some of these.

Lisa Adelman has set up some very interesting programs for us. Since we had two successful yard sales last year we have been able to afford some great presenters. This is also our year to have a flower show. Willow Prall has graciously agreed to open her lovely home up for our flower show and is working with Lisa to make this a wonderful experience for everyone. Karen Lucas is going to have monthly mini shows to help us get ready for our flower show.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone and having a good year with friends and flowers. I want to share this Chinese proverb with you:

To be happy for an hour, get drunk;
 To be happy for a year, fall in love;
 To be happy for life, take up gardening.

Blessings, Noreen

September / October Calendar:

Tuesday, September 5	Meadowlark Gardens Volunteers, 9:30 am
Thursday, September 14	Landscape Design School
Friday, September 15	District III Fall Meeting, 10 am, Meadowlark
Tuesday, September 19	Five Hills General Meeting
Wednesday, Sept. 20	Judges Council General Meeting
Monday, September 25	C & O Canal Field Trip

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Upcoming Events

Jim Heins to Talk About the C & O Canal

Jim Heins will give a lecture and present a slide show with music on the history of the Canal. He will explain how it came to be, what made it work, and how it is used today. Jim is a board member of the C & O Canal Association, involved with the National Canal Historical Park, and responsible for all volunteer maintenance projects of the Park.

A future guided field trip to the Canal is in the works.



Field Trip Planning



Jim Heins, this month's speaker, has agreed to lead a VIP tour of the Canal as part of our September field trip.

Look for Karen Fleming with her clipboard at Tuesday's meeting to make sure you are signed up for the C & O Canal field trip on Sept 25. Karen will follow up with a list of drivers, detailed directions, and a sign-up sheet for a picnic lunch.

Possibly of interest: Mark Stutzman's original C & O Canal artwork (posters are now available at <http://www.candocanal.org/store.htm>)



Upcoming Fall Native Plant Sales

Saturday, September 16, 8 am to 1 pm Vienna Community Center

Native Plant Sale. Contact 703-255-6360 The sale will be held in the VCC parking lot. Native plants available as well as interesting and informative presentations.

Saturday, September 23, 9 am to 2 pm

Northern Alexandria Native Plant Sale.

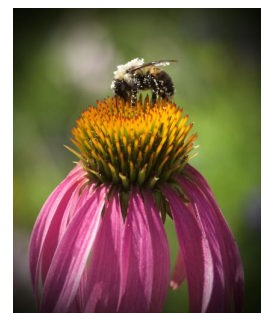
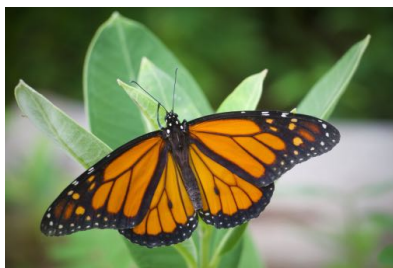
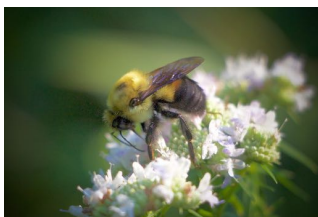
Location: The Church of St. Clement 1701 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria, VA 571-232-0375. 12 vendors



Sunday, September 24, 10 am to 2 pm, Earth Sangha Fall Open House and Plant Sale, at their Wild Plant Nursery, off 6100 Cloud Drive in Franconia Park, Springfield. For directions – <http://www.earthsangha.org/wpn>

October 14 & 15 – ArborFest Fall Festival and Plant Sale, rain or shine, at Blandly Farm, State Arboretum. Entrance on Rt. 50, 400 Blandly Farm Lane, Boyce, VA. Fall perennials - small trees and native plants. Carload fee of \$10

Planting natives will support pollinators



Monday, October 2, 7:30 pm Falls Church Garden Club hosts Thomas Rainer presenting “*The Layered Garden*”

The presentation, “The Layered Garden: Combining Plants for More Beauty, Resilience, and Less Maintenance,” is presented by Thomas Rainer, a renowned landscape architect. Mr. Rainer has designed landscapes for the U. S. Capitol grounds, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, the New York Botanical Garden, and many others throughout the eastern United States.

Mr. Rainer is the co-author of *Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes*, which was selected by the American Horticultural Society as one of the best books of 2016. Praised as a universal how-to guide to sustainable landscaping, the book exposes many of the limitations of “horticultural best practices” and provides practical steps to create more resilient landscapes.

For further information, see: phytostudio.com.

Mr. Rainer's presentation will take place at the meeting of the Falls Church Garden Club on Monday, October 2nd, 7:30 PM, at American Legion Post #130, [400 N. Oak Street, Falls Church](http://www.fallschurchva.gov). Most attendees will have to use on-street parking.

Morning of Design Thursday, October 12

NCAGC Judges Council is sponsoring a Morning of Design – “Seasonal Delights” – hosted by the Garden Clubs of District III on Thursday, October 12, 2017. It is being held at the Little Falls Presbyterian Church, 6025 Little Falls Road, Arlington, VA, 22207 from 10:30 to 12. A \$6 per person donation is suggested.

Garden Therapy at Braddock Glen, Monday October 9

We are starting off a new year at Braddock Glen Assisted Living Center on Monday, October 9th. This is a date change from Monday, September 25 because of the field trip scheduled for that same day. We will be helping the residents create a fall arrangement using beautiful flowers donated by Margaret Fleegal of Twinbrook Florist. We meet at 4027 Olley Lane in Fairfax at 9:15 and it usually lasts 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Our volunteers this time are Debbie Doody, Brigitte Hartke, Kathy Nebhut, Anne Nelson, and Valerie Warriner. It is really a rewarding experience to work with the lovely people at Braddock Glen, and we welcome anyone else who would like to join us. Thank you, Gail Gile and Janet Kremer

Calendars

Please remember to bring in your 2016 and 2017 calendars which are collected each month for military members in appreciation for their services. Janet Kremer will deliver them to the Army's Fairfax Family Health Center. Thank you!

Club Parking

Please continue to find parking near the Church, but not in the Church parking lot. Thank you all for your continued cooperation.



Horticulture and Design Judged Exhibits

In order to educate our members, Five Hills includes judged horticulture and design shows at many of our regular monthly meetings. One or more designated classes of horticulture are listed with the monthly programs in the yearbook, and they are also included in the newsletter when applicable. The purpose of these judged exhibits is two-fold. It is an excellent way for members to become more familiar with exhibiting, and it also encourages members to bring horticulture to the meetings for others to see. Horticulture is to be displayed in an appropriately sized green bottle with cotton or plastic wrap used as wedging material. All specimens are to be correctly named, labeled, and groomed. Only one specimen per category may be exhibited. The horticulture committee will provide entry tags.

When offered, the design class may be divided into categories based on each member's level of experience. The three categories are as follows: Novice, a member who has never won a blue ribbon in design; Advanced, members who are flower show judges; Intermediate, those who have won a blue ribbon and who are not flower show judges.

Members are encouraged to participate in these mini shows and strongly encouraged to participate in horticulture twice during the year and design at least once. One blue and multiple red, yellow and white ribbons may be awarded in each class. Subdivision may be made if warranted. All entries must be placed by 10 AM to be judged. Ribbon winners will be announced at the meeting.

For the Horticulture Table: Bring a hort specimen from your garden or an ornamental grass in a proportional green bottle.

The design theme is back-to-school — designer's choice or a small arrangement of your choice.



Conservation

I was thinking about what to write this month and finally, while watching my hummingbirds eat at my window, I realized they will soon be leaving for warmer climes and decided to write about them as each of us could do a bit to help them when they are here.

Hummingbirds are truly remarkable and fascinating creatures. They may be some of the smallest birds in the world, but fluttering those tiny wings can be quite a workout. Flapping away at up to 90 beats per second burns up calories fast; to maintain their momentum, hummingbirds need to eat – a lot! To satisfy their speedy metabolisms, these busy birds consume half their body weight in bugs and nectar, feeding every 10-15 minutes and visiting 1,000-2,000 flowers per day.

Hummingbirds at Home help these amazing birds – participants in Audubon's Hummingbirds at Home observe hummingbirds and their insatiable feeding, and report their observations to the program. Since 2013, twenty-one species of hummingbird have been reported to Hummingbirds at Home as well as 371 identified blooming plant species.



Hummingbirds are specialized for nectar-eating, evident by long bills and grooved tongues ideal for probing flowers. Sugary nectar supplies fast energy and makes up 90 percent of a hummingbird's diet. Unfortunately, due to development and climate change, hummingbird-friendly habitat may be changing across many hummingbird migration routes. You can create a healthy environment for hummingbirds with these steps:

- Fill your yard with native flowering plants, vines, shrubs, and trees. To create a customized list of bird-friendly native plants for your area and get connected to local native plant resources, check out our [native plants database](#). Even one plant in a window box or hanging basket can help.
- Grow native plants like trumpet honeysuckle, bee balm, and hummingbird sage, which provide much more nectar than hybrids and exotics.
- Plant native red or orange tubular flowers to attract hummingbirds, in addition to native plants rich in nectar.
- Group similar plants together and choose species with different blooming periods so that there will be a steady supply of flowers nearly year round.
- Leave some sticks and small branches on bushes and trees to enable ready perches for hummingbirds.
- Minimize or eliminate the use of pesticides in your yard.
- Encourage your neighbors to make their yards hummingbird friendly. An entire corridor of habitat is much more valuable than scattered patches.

Planting for nesting hummingbirds

Hummingbirds prefer to nest near a ready supply of nectar and other food, and you can encourage them to nest in your yard by maintaining some shrubbery and small deciduous trees in which they can seek protective cover, especially around the edges of your yard. They build their tiny, expandable nests on tree limbs and other small horizontal surfaces, often constructing them from lichens and spider webs.



Perches

Make sure you have plenty of safe places for hummingbirds to rest and sleep in your yard. Hummingbirds often perch to rest or survey their territory; some spots should be in the open and obvious for territorial birds, while others should be in protected areas, hidden from view and buffered from any cooler overnight temperatures.

Insects

Hummingbirds need protein from pollen and insects to maintain their bodies and grow new feathers. Like swifts, hummingbirds are specialized aerial hunters, and can snatch small insects from the air. Hummingbirds also glean insects from leaves and from spider webs. To maintain a healthy ecosystem in your yard:

- Eliminate pesticides. Spiders and insects (arthropods) are an important part of an adult bird's diet, and young hummingbirds still in the nest are almost exclusively fed arthropods.
- Make sure your yard contains insect-pollinated flowers as well as hummingbird-pollinated plants.
- Hang a basket with overripe fruit or banana peels close to a hummingbird feeder to attract tiny fruit flies.
- Use native plants. Doug Tallamy's research (in *Bringing Nature Home*) has detailed that native plants will support a greater concentration of insects and spiders available as prey for hummingbirds and other birds, than do alien ornamentals.

Water

- Hummingbirds like to bathe frequently – even in the pools of droplets that collect on leaves. Provide your yard with a constant source of water from a drip fountain attachment or a fine misting device. A misting device is an especially attractive water source for hummingbirds

You can help these hardworking foragers get the nutrients they need by providing them with their favorite post-workout meal – nectar. This hummingbird sweet treat can be made right at home with a few simple ingredients. By filling your feeder with this DIY delight, you can complement [nectar-rich plants](#) and watch these beautiful little birds feed and flutter all day.

Materials:

[Conservation Editor's note: Please do use refined white sugar. Honey can promote dangerous fungal growth. Organic, natural, and raw sugars contain levels of iron that could be harmful. Plain white table sugar is sucrose, which, when mixed with water, very closely mimics the chemical composition of natural nectar.]

1/4 cup refined white sugar • 1 cup boiling water • Bowl • Spoon

Note: There's no need for red dye here. Red coloring is not necessary, and the chemicals could prove to be harmful to the birds.

Steps: 1. Mix sugar and boiling water until sugar is dissolved. 2. Cool and fill feeder. 3. Hang up your feeder outside and wait for the hummingbirds to come.

Backyard hummingbird feeders provide hummingbirds with nectar critical to their survival, especially during fall and spring migration. Follow these steps to ensure your yard is a safe and nutritious stopover for hummingbirds:

- Hang several feeders far enough apart that the hummingbirds cannot see one another; this will prevent one bird from dominating the rest.
- Hang your feeders in the shade to prevent the sugar solution from fermenting.
- Be sure to change the sugar water regularly – before it gets cloudy, or about twice a week in warm weather.
- Clean the feeders with a solution of one part white vinegar to four parts water about once a week. If your feeder has become dirty, try adding some grains of dry rice to the vinegar solution and shake vigorously. The grains act as a good abrasive.
- Rinse your feeder well with warm water three times before refilling with sugar solution.
- Check [Hummingbirds at Home](#) and [eBird](#) to find out when the first hummingbird sightings occur each spring, and hang your feeders up a couple of weeks before that. In the fall, keep your feeders up for two weeks after you see the last bird using it. *Elizabeth Huebner*

Thanks to www.audubon.org/features/celebrate-hummingbirds

Fall is the best time to plant!

Although temperatures are slowly dropping, the root system of plants is still very active. As long as the soil temperature is 50 degrees, those roots are still growing. This means that a plant will continue to grow throughout the fall and winter months. There's lots going on underground, even though we can't see it! In spring, these plants will boast a stronger, larger root system. In other words, a very healthy and beautiful plant. Keep up the watering when needed.

Let's face it, gardening in the fall is so much more enjoyable than during the heat of the summer! And according to our friend, David Roos, plants at your local nursery are a better buy in the fall.



Features

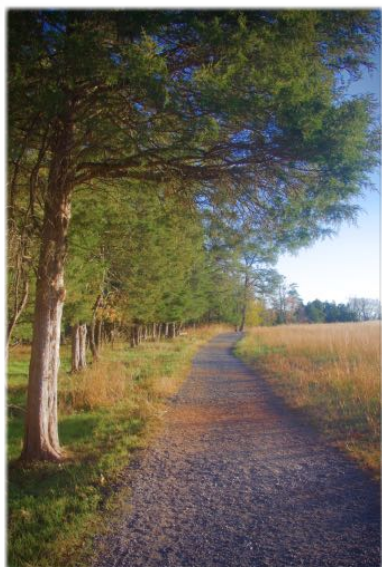
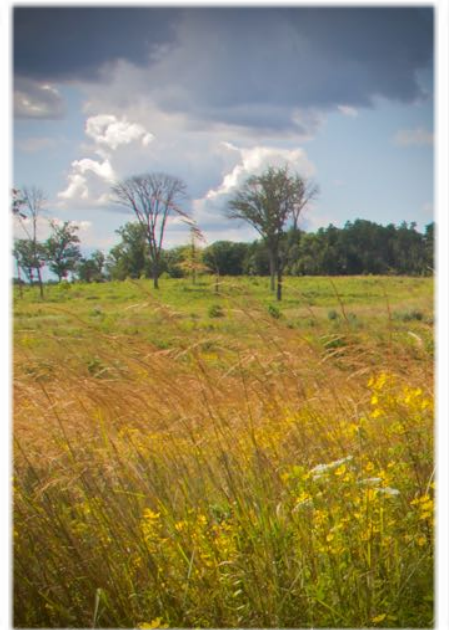


Fields of Wildflowers

Northern Virginia is blessed with many beautiful places to hike, and September and October are two of the best months of the year to see wildflowers and the changing leaf color. Skyline Drive is wonderful, but it is possible to find enjoyable walks closer to home. The Manassas Battlefield's Deep Cut, left, is ablaze at this time with yellow Tickseed, Indian Grass and many other blooming native plants, while at Sky Meadows, Golden Ragwort, among others, abounds. For a butterfly walk, try Merrimac Farm in Nokesville on Sunday, Sept 17, 1-3 pm; they also hold ongoing bird walks on the last Sunday of every month of the year except December.



*Above, Sky Meadows
Below, Deep Cut on
northwestern part of the
Manassas Battlefields, both
taken last week*



*Left, Bull Run
views, and the
Stone Bridge
Hike at the
Battlefields*



Perennial Bloom Award for M'Ellen Alden

Last Spring Five Hills Garden Club honored long-time and valued member M'Ellen Alden with the Perennial Bloom Award in appreciation for the work and support she has given our Club. Standing with flowers, and then with FH President Noreen Linnemann with her certificate



Cares and Concerns for Maurine

Continued good wishes for a speedy recover to Maurine Thomas who is recovering from hand surgery.

