

# Sow and Tell

Volume 59 Issue 3, November 2018

A Publication of The Five Hills Garden Club  
Member of the National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Central Atlantic Region, District III

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## President's Message

*Cozy fire a-burning bright, -  
Cozy tables robed in white, -  
Dainty dishes smoking hot, -  
Home! And cold and snow forgot!  
~Louise Weaver and Helen LeCron, "November", 1917*

This year our meeting falls in the same week as Thanksgiving, so our minds and hands will be busy with preparations. But we won't want to miss our fellowship and a nationally recognized speaker. Our presenter will be David Mizejewski, naturalist and spokesperson for the National Wildlife Federation who speaks nationwide and has made numerous appearances on network television.

In the spirit of thankfulness, I am so grateful for our vibrant club and active club members. We have a reputation as a welcoming group that is growing in membership, and our meetings are so well attended! Some of our newest members have stepped up to organize field trips, participate in our civic and therapy projects and help fill club needs in true "Five Hills Fashion." We are having a lot of fun with our monthly White Elephant sales; members are bringing home treasures, and their generosity is helping the budget. I am grateful for the many, many hands that work together to help me as president for the benefit of the club and our community.

~ Julia

*I can no other answer make but, thanks, and thanks.  
~William Shakespeare (1564-1616)*

autumn snow: Mohan Bhupathiraju



General Meeting:  
Tuesday, November 20

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## November Program

**David Mizejewski**, a spokesperson for the National Wildlife Federation, naturalist and television host, will give us advice for creating beautiful natural spaces to enjoy and share with birds, bees, and butterflies. He will detail the process to have our gardens recognized as official **"Certified Habitats"**.



<http://naturalist.nwf.org>



## December Greens Workshop

~ Rosemarie Jaksetic

On Tuesday, December 4, 2018, Five Hills will have our greens workshop. We will create Christmas wreaths and door sprays for Vienna's churches and public buildings. We expect 100% member participation.

To prepare your greens for the workshop: use a trash bag, add water and place your greens in the bag overnight. Remember to dump out some of the water before you bring in your greens the next day.

Bring the following items to the workshop:

- 1) prepared greens (from your yard, Christmas tree lot, or purchased from a garden center, but please, no berries),
- 2) garden gloves,
- 3) garden clippers,
- 4) broom and dustpan.

Also remember to bring a container/bag to take home extra greens — if they are available, after all the wreaths are completed.



Each team will need to decide who is going to deliver the wreath(s) they made after lunch.

The workshop is always fun, and the wreaths and door sprays are always beautiful and very much appreciated by the community.

## NOVEMBER CALENDAR

Tuesday, November 6, 9:30 am	Meadowlark Volunteers
Monday, November 19, 9:15 am	Garden Therapy, "Thanksgiving"
Tuesday, November 20, 10 am	General Meeting, Vienna Presbyterian Church
Tuesday, December 4, 10 am	Greens Workshop, all members

## A Call for Fairfax County Foster Children's Christmas Party Items

~ Barbara Tozzi

I am collecting items for the Fairfax County Foster Children's Christmas Party. This is a list of items, to give you some ideas:

- wrapping paper and ribbon
- children's books (in good condition or new)
- gently used stuffed animals
- items such as legos, puzzles, etc.
- items for older children (up to 18)
- items children can give their parents ~ mugs, scarves, adult books, jewelry

Anything else you think is appropriate. I will not be at the meeting, so please email me if you have anything to donate, and I will pick it up after Thanksgiving. Thank You, Barbara Tozzi ([barbaratozzi@aol.com](mailto:barbaratozzi@aol.com))

## Garden Therapy

~ Gail Gile and Janet Kremer

This month the residents at Braddock Glen will be creating fall centerpieces for their Thanksgiving table decorations. Even though Margaret Fleegal has moved out to her new store in Chantilly, she has graciously offered to continue donating fresh flowers and greens for our garden therapy program. Our volunteers are Karen Lucas, Darla Anderson, Elizabeth Huebner, Karen Fleming and Anne Nelson. We will meet at 9:15 on Monday, November 19 at Braddock Glen 4027 Olley Lane in Fairfax. Thanks to all of you for your help!!

*November comes and November goes,  
With the last red berries and the first white snows.  
With night coming early and dawn coming late,  
And ice in the bucket and frost by the gate.  
The fires burn and the kettle sings,  
And the Earth sinks to rest until next Spring.*

~ Clyde Watson

## Three Simple Fundraisers

~ Kathy Nebhut

1. **Ongoing** at our general meetings, except December, the White Elephant Table!

Donate items no longer wanted or needed from your homes. The buyer decides a fair yard sale price and pays into the basket on the table. Some more valuable items may be marked with a price on a bright dot.

2. **December** general meeting — The \$5 Raffle!

One may bring nice/gently used item(s) to donate to the raffle table and/or \$5 to take a turn choosing a treasure from the table. Buy as many tickets as you like if you want more than one turn.

3. **January** — *right after the general meeting & lunch in the wreath-making room.*

Natural Room Scents Workshop! We will add fragrance to our homes with these jars filled with various combinations of spices, herbs and fruits. Price to be determined.

All three activities benefit our wonderful garden club!



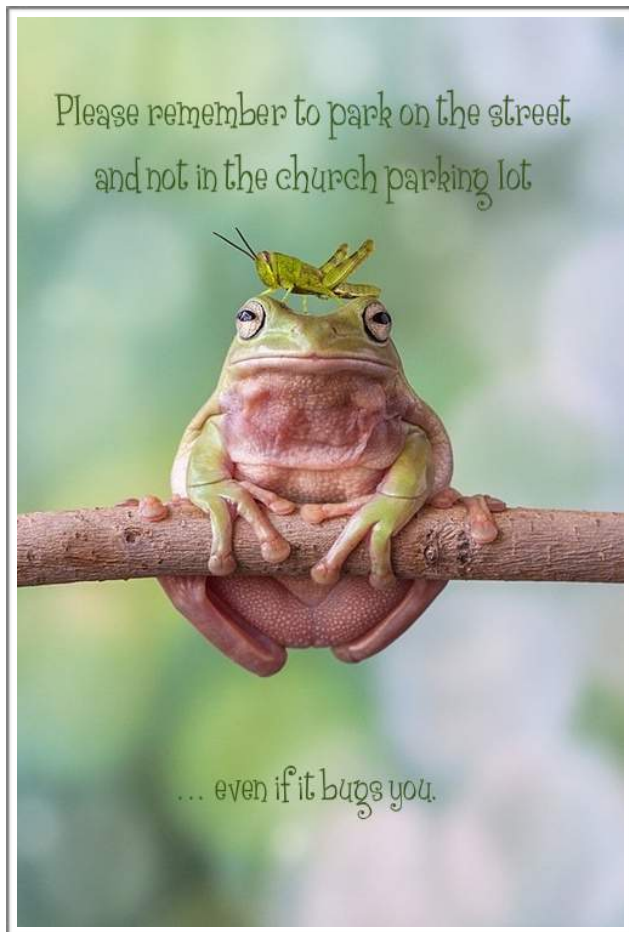
## Yearbook Correction

Please note that the correct street address for Ann Balch is 2922 Oakton Ridge Circle. The yearbook had printed it incorrectly as 2933 Oakton Ridge Circle.

If there are any other changes for members' contact information, please let Julia know. (703-385-2883, [jsmith5227@mac.com](mailto:jsmith5227@mac.com))

## Church Parking Lot Advisory:

Frog parking only —  
all others will be toad:



## Upcoming Fairfax Ferns Flower Show

Fairfax Ferns will be holding a small standard flower show on Sunday, November 18, 2018, 12 - 4 pm, at Historic Blenheim Civil War Interpretive Center, 3601 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA. It is free and open to the public.

The show will feature horticulture, floral designs, nature photography, educational exhibits as well as garden-related handcrafted items for sale.

## From Sharon Bulova's October Byline Newsletter

"The Virginia Native Plant Society selected the Trumpet Honeysuckle as Wildflower of the Year for 2014. At the suggestion of former Clerk to the Board Nancy Vehrs and the Potomac Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society, Fairfax County will be adopting this pretty wildflower as our official flower at our next Board Meeting. You can look for it to brighten up publications and grace pages of our web site."

[Bulova October Byline](#)

*Lonicera sempervirens* is a species of honeysuckle native to the eastern United States. It is a wildlife magnet, being used by, among others, ruby-throated hummingbirds in their natural range. Its delicate habit is very attractive grown over an arbor or along a fence.







This Month's Horticultural Challenge:

"Tick Tock, Change Your Clock!"

Make an arrangement using branches with berries - OR - bring a berried branch in an appropriate green bottle.

### "Dirt Simple" - My Favorite Garden Blog by Ann Balch

For many years, I have enjoyed the periodic posts of Deborah Silver on her blog, *Dirt Simple, The Observations of a Landscape Designer*. Deborah is a landscape and garden designer and owner of Detroit Garden Works, a very creative retail store for gardeners in Detroit, Michigan. In addition, she owns Branch Studio which fabricates original pots, pergolas, and fountains, some of which are used in her landscape installations. With all of this going on, I have never understood how she has time to write a blog post every week or so!



Her posts cover a variety of topics and include many excellent photographs. Among my favorites are those that feature the large seasonal pots that Deborah and her crew create for her clients. The posts not only picture the end product, but often show the mechanics of construction. There are pots to last a summer, welcome autumn, or bring cheer through the winter. The dramatic scale and use of interesting plant material inspires me to step up my game on my own deck and entrance. Editor's note: if interested, you can read her blog and subscribe to her newsletter here:

<http://deborahsilver.com/blog/>

## Drought and Climate Change Could Throw Fall Colors Off Schedule

by Elizabeth Huebner

A dry year can cause leaves to brighten early or late — or just turn brown.

The riot of colors that erupts on trees each fall drives billions of dollars in tourism and remains a key way for people to connect with nature. But that simple transition from summer's lush greens to fall's brilliant reds, oranges and yellows can be affected in surprisingly complex ways by weather and climate, and those effects may be even more pronounced in the decades to come.

This year, early drought across New England and Mid Atlantic, and then many inches of rain has led to color in some areas, none in others, depending on factors like the severity of the drought/too much rain and the species of trees affected. Climate change, through changes in temperature and precipitation, could have similarly complicated impacts on fall foliage which could affect tourism and views people see outside their doors.

As autumn rolls around, a variety of cues — including the shortening days and falling temperatures — tell trees that it's time to begin shutting down for the winter and preserving their nutrients for the next growing season. The trees stop producing the chlorophyll that makes their leaves green and is a key part of the photosynthesis that provides them with food. Left behind in the leaves of some tree species are carotenoids, which color the leaves orange and yellow.

Red leaves, on the other hand, are colored by anthocyanins, produced only in the fall; it is thought

that they act as both sunscreen and something like antifreeze to protect the leaves.

But it isn't just the environmental cues during the autumn that impact the timing and intensity of leaf color; conditions during the spring and summer growing season also influence whether nature's fireworks are at their brightest or more of a dull dud.

Severe drought during the growing season tends to cause trees to begin to turn color early and not last as long; it can even lead them to skip color all together, browning and falling before fall even really gets started. (*pictured, Meadowlark Gardens*)



More moderate drought, on the other hand, can delay the onset of fall color. The reasons for this seeming paradox aren't well understood but seem to be related to a slow-down in the metabolic processes of the trees when they are under only mild water stress, vs. the shutdown that comes from more intense pressure.

The effects of drought can also depend on the tree species. Some species are much more sensitive to drought than other species. Sugar maples, which provide some of autumn's most intense color, aren't as tolerant as oaks, which tend to have duller colors.

In the Mid Atlantic, tulip poplars and tupelos erupt in orange and yellow when rains are normal, but in drought the leaves kind of brown up and turn black and just fall off, a plant physiologist at Appalachian State University in North Carolina said, and that is what is happening in my yard and in River Bend and Great Falls parks. Plant ecologists were expecting red leaves to be less brilliant this year, but because mornings were just cool enough to stimulate production of anthocyanins some leaves will brown and fall, but others will color.

Like drought, severe heat stress can contribute to the early browning and loss of leaves, while moderate heat can delay the change to fall colors, because trees aren't getting the signal that fall is here.

In the future, temperatures are expected to increase in all seasons as the world warms because of excess heat trapped by greenhouse gases accumulating in the atmosphere. But the effect on fall leaves depends on just how much temperatures change. Future precipitation trends aren't clear, though there are indications that rain will come in more intense, episodic bursts, leaving more time between them for trees to experience drought stress.

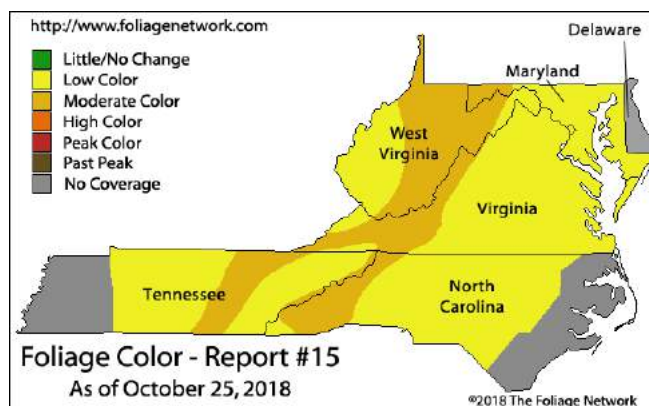
When droughts do occur, they will be more intense than those in the past, because higher temperatures will lead to more evaporation from soils and transpiration from plants. If it gets warmer and the precipitation stays the same, that's more drought stress for the trees.

Warmer temperatures could also affect the brilliance of red leaves in the future, as the [nighttime low temperatures](#) that help stimulate red pigments have been rising faster than daytime highs.

Local colors could also shift in the future as species migrate upwards in elevation and further north to stay in their preferred temperature range; sugar maples, for example, could move out of New England and into Canada.

While the future of fall foliage may be a lesser concern than sea level rise or extreme weather, these changes could have a serious economic impact: Fall is the biggest tourism season in Asheville, N.C., bringing in some \$600 million to \$800 million. Leaf peeping brings billions to the

economies of Vermont and New Hampshire and tens of billions across the entire eastern U.S. From an economic point of view, we don't want to see it go away.



But on a more philosophical note, autumn is the season that gets people to go out and see nature, and the more people interact with nature, the more they care about it.

In that way, fall foliage is a subtle way to increase environmental awareness. According to the Foliage Network, color in most of our region is "low." Like last week, the network is not being shy about how the leaves are progressing: "Yeesh. Not sure what else to say about this foliage season in the region," its report begins.

Although cooler nights and days have finally taken hold, and notable color increase has begun, it still seems that the damage has been done in many areas, especially as you head west and into the mountains.

Jiving with reports seen from multiple sources, the Foliage Network says it looks as though the best that can be expected is moderate color. With many trees, especially maples, the leaves are simply turning brown and falling. \* \* \* Many thanks to *The Washington Post* and *Scientific American*.



A big thank you to Julia for suggesting this reprint of a Smithsonian article by Adam Cohen:

## Ecologists Have this Simple Request to Homeowners — Plant Native

*A new study shows how quickly songbird populations fall off when gardens are planted with exotic trees and shrubs*

By [Adam Cohen](#)

SMITHSONIAN.COM

OCTOBER 31, 2018

They say the early bird catches the worm. For native songbirds in suburban backyards, however, finding enough food to feed a family is often impossible.

A newly released survey of Carolina chickadee populations in the Washington, D.C., metro area shows that even a relatively small proportion of nonnative plants can make a habitat unsustainable for native bird species. The study, [published last week](#) in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, is the first to examine the three-way interaction between plants, arthropods that eat those plants, and insectivorous birds that rely on caterpillars, spiders and other arthropods as food during the breeding season. Based on data collected in the backyards of citizen-scientist homeowners, the researchers arrived at an explicit threshold: In areas made up of less than 70 percent native plant biomass, Carolina chickadees will not produce enough young to sustain their populations. At 70 percent or higher, the birds can thrive.



“There has been a lot of press lately about [drastic insect declines](#) and [insectivorous bird declines](#),” says the study’s lead author [Desirée Narango](#), who pursued her research at the [Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center](#). “We hear a lot in conservation that things are in trouble, and they are. So I think this study is a nice example of something that we can actually do at home to make some positive ecological change.”

While studying for her Ph.D. in entomology and urban ecology at the University of Delaware, Narango hoped to focus her dissertation research on how nonnative trees and shrubs, popular in horticulture, affect food web interactions in urban areas. [Neighborhood Nestwatch](#), a citizen-science program housed within the Smithsonian’s National Zoo and Conservation Biology

Institute, provided tailor-made infrastructure for such a study. Founded in 1999 by Doug Tallamy, Narango’s Ph.D. advisor, and Pete Marra, director of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, Neighborhood Nestwatch enlists Washington-area community members to track color-banded birds and monitor nests.

In 2013, Narango and her colleagues placed tubes in the backyards of more than 150 Nestwatch participants to attract breeding Carolina chickadees, which nest in dead tree limbs and other cavities. Over the next three breeding seasons, the homeowners monitored the nesting tubes, inputting data into an online repository. Meanwhile, the researchers carried out systematic plant and insect surveys in the area around each tube, venturing into neighboring yards to match the 50-meter radius that makes up the territory of the breeding chickadees.



To build a population growth model, the scientists tracked the year-to-year survival of more than 800 adult birds, using the homeowners' reports and archival Nestwatch data. To determine the survival rate of fledglings that had left the nest, the research team employed a technique called radio telemetry, placing transmitters on adults and following them around the neighborhood to study their young. The results showed that, as the proportion of a habitat's nonnative plant biomass increases, chickadees are forced to change their diet and are less able to successfully reproduce. If more than 30 percent of total biomass in a given area is nonnative, chickadees are not able to maintain a stable local population.

"I was very impressed with the data quality and scale of analysis that allows for a robust test of how nonnative plants can influence the birds living in these habitats," says [Chris Lepczyk](#), a professor of wildlife biology and conservation at Auburn University who was not affiliated with the study. "This work is critically important towards advancing our understanding of nonnative and invasive species and how they may appear benign, but still markedly affect the ecosystem."

For the homeowners involved in the research, witnessing the effects that their landscaping decisions have on the ecosystem was a transformation experience.

Beth Stewart, a self-described "bird nerd" who lives in Silver Spring, Maryland, was "heartbroken" after Narango approached her in 2013. Narango said that the yard behind Stewart's recently purchased home would be a valuable one to include in the study, as it was "a perfect example of what not to do." Stewart agreed to participate and is now a vocal advocate for planting native, avoiding any nonnative additions to her yard and encouraging other community



members to do the same in her emails to the neighborhood listserv. "Being a part of any citizen science like this just opens your eyes," she says. "It just makes you an evangelical for trying to get people to do the right thing."

Debbie Hollander, of Arlington, Virginia, was similarly moved. In the first year of the study, her backyard was home to four chicks, only one of which survived to fledge. In the following years, there were no Carolina chickadee nests at all. "I always knew that native plants were important, but actually seeing these scientists walking around and counting caterpillars on the leaves really brought it home to me," says Hollander. "I would never, ever plant anything now that's nonnative."

Across yards like Stewart's and Hollander's, Narango's team documented roughly 360 different species of trees and shrubs. The most popular nonnatives in the region are ornamental street trees, such as ginkgo and crape myrtle.

"I like to joke, especially with crape myrtles, because they're really popular in D.C., that it's like a statue in someone's yard," says Narango. "It's not actually providing any ecological services, even though a lot of people find them very pretty."

Some of the nonnative culprits may be related to native species but still are not a boon to the local environment. American elm, red maple, and black cherry, for example, are far more beneficial to wildlife than Chinese elm, Japanese maple, and Japanese cherry. The 70/30 threshold, though, gives homeowners a bit of leeway. "If you have a really beautiful Japanese maple that your grandmother gave you, it's ok to have that one," says Narango, "as long as you have lots of native plants as well that can provide ecological services for the birds and support local food webs."

Despite the fact that the study focused on one bird species, the results hold implications for countless other species, including the migratory birds that rely on the same resources as Carolina chickadees on their journeys from South and Central America to the boreal forests of Canada. Likewise, the findings can be extrapolated to habitats beyond the mid-Atlantic U.S. "The general trend will almost certainly hold true, no matter where you are," says Narango. "Part of the reason that we chose the chickadee as a model species is because it is representative of insectivorous birds more generally."

Pete Marra, one of Narango's coauthors, looks forward to continuing to research how to best support native species in human population centers. To start, landowners can consult [National Wildlife Federation](#) and [National Audubon Society](#) databases that provide users with details on native plants, down to the zip codes in which they can thrive and the specific bird species that they support.

"We often think about the areas that we live in as being lost souls for nature," says Marra. "That's not the case at all. Some of the last frontiers that we can think about restoring are these urban, suburban settings. There are subtle things that we can do in human-dominated habitats to try to make them better for wildlife, and it's totally worthwhile to do."

All photos used in conjunction with this reprinted *Smithsonian* article were found at the Pixabay website.



## Virginia Bird and Wildlife Trail to View Migrating Birds

**Editor's Note:** In this Year of the Bird, fall migration is reaching its peak. If you are planning an outing to see the bird migrations, you can visit this website for information and trail locations to help you plan your visit:

<https://www.dgif.virginia.gov/blog/fall-migration-is-reaching-its-peak-visit-the-virginia-bird-wildlife-trail-to-view-migrating-birds/>

## Boxwood Blight Information

“Boxwood blight (also known as box blight), caused by the fungus *Calonectria pseudonaviculata*, is a serious fungal disease of boxwood that results in defoliation and decline of susceptible boxwood. In Virginia boxwood blight was first identified in a nursery location in Carroll County in 2011. By the fall of 2013 it was found in other commercial nursery/retail operations and landscapes in several counties in Virginia. Once introduced to a landscape, boxwood blight is very difficult and costly to control with fungicides. The major means of spread of this disease is by movement of contaminated plant material (e.g. container or field-grown boxwood, boxwood greenery used for holiday decoration), but boxwood blight spores can also be spread on pruning tools, clothing, equipment and anything that might have contacted infected plants. Home growers can best protect their boxwood by following the measures listed below to avoid introduction of the disease to their landscape

You may download a PDF document at this link through the Virginia Cooperative Extension — Virginia Tech and Virginia State University — on Best Management Practices for Boxwood Blight in Virginia: [http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs\\_ext\\_vt\\_edu/PPWS/PPWS-29/PPWS-29-pdf.pdf](http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/PPWS/PPWS-29/PPWS-29-pdf.pdf)

### *Cares and Concerns for Jill O'Donnell*

*Five Hills members wish Jill a speedy recovery after a recent fall. Should you wish to send well-wishes along to her ~ 10901 Timbermill Ct., Oakton VA 22124*



## Holiday Workshops at Twinbrook Florist

Five Hills and Margaret Fleegal share a long and special relationship — she contributes flowers to our Braddock Glen Garden Therapy program led by Gail Gile and Janet Kremer. We have enjoyed many workshops at her previous location, and she is holding a series of them in December. Here are the dates:

Tuesday, December 4, 6 pm – 7:30 pm: Wreath Making with Tonya  
[Click here to buy tickets](#)

Wednesday, December 12, 6 pm – 7:30 pm:  
Boxwood Trees with Tricia  
[Click here to buy tickets](#)

Tuesday, December 18, 6 pm – 7:30 pm: Holiday Candle Centerpiece with Amy & Gaby  
[Click here to buy tickets](#)



## Recent Events and Field Trips



Thanks to our volunteers for their recent work party maintaining our Blue Star Memorial and West End Cemetery: pictured at the memorial, left to right — Rosemarie Jatsetic, Karen Thompson, Ann Balch, Noreen Linnemann and Nancy Walker. Consider joining the next 'party' as "many hands make light work". Upcoming work dates will be announced.

Many thanks to Anne Nelson and Karen Thompson for sending in their delightful photos taken on two recent field trips. The collage is made up of Anne's photos (some are cropped for the collage) of historic Rosemont Manor in Berryville, Virginia. Group photos are especially appreciated!

