

Sow and Tell

VOLUME 59 ISSUE 9 JUNE 2019

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

Five Hills has had a wonderful year, full of friendship, service and fun. There was something for everyone to learn from our monthly speakers and from well-researched articles by our own members. And we traveled; to James Madison's Montpelier, Rosemont Manor, the Philadelphia Flower Show, Charleston SC and Sycamore Island in the Potomac River. Many members took advantage of the NCAGC educational schools, and we all enjoyed the hospitality of our monthly luncheons. The Vienna and Braddock Glen communities benefitted from our time and talents, and the club won awards for those efforts and for our publications. I hope everyone had a chance to "Branch Out and Try Something New."

A couple of us broke some bones or endured surgeries, but we are supported by this group of caring friends. We mourned the passing of two dear members, and the family members of others. But we are growing. We are fortunate to be a vibrant and active group evidenced by the fact that we are encouraging our friends to join us!

It was the year for a fundraiser; we had great success with the Plant Sale as well as the newly created White Elephant Table. We did some internal housekeeping and further refined our Bylaws, more than once! We won't stop for the summer. Many of us will be planning programs and budgets, creating the yearbook that greets us each fall and working directly in the dirt to prepare to plant bulbs with preschoolers. It's been fun to take a look back at my first year as president. Thank you for being an active member of the Five Hills community. Enjoy this season and travel safely.

All the best, Julia



NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 18

at the home of Barbara Tozzi
8995 Kildownet Court
Vienna, VA

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CALENDAR & UPCOMING EVENTS

CALENDAR

Tuesday, June 4 Meadowlark Gardens Volunteers
Friday, June 21 District III President's Coffee, 9:30-12:00, Meadowlark, Vienna

Five Hills June Meeting at Barbara Tozzi's Home

Get ready to kick off summer at our June general meeting. On Tuesday, June 18, we will be meeting at the home of Barbara Tozzi. We are invited to bring our swimsuits if we wish! Thank you, Barbara! Barbara's address:

8995 Kildownet Court
Vienna, VA
703 402-2450

We will have a relaxed start to the meeting that morning. Members are welcome to arrive after 10:00 to socialize and to look at tables that Barbara will set up regarding Five Hills history, the Prize Raffle, books and items to donate, etc. Brigitte will have a slideshow of photos taken through the year. This will also be the time to fill out forms to earn raffle tickets for prizes! Submit an idea for a program, field trip, gardening tip, or recommended gardening book and you will receive a raffle ticket. If you have more than one idea, you'll earn more tickets. We were so generous with our donations to the District III Fundraiser that Anne Nelson & Company were able to create another beautiful Italian Gourmet basket which will be raffled. In addition, a copy of Clare Walker Leslie's book Keeping a Nature Journal will also be a raffle prize.

Following our business meeting, we will have time to share and exchange ideas. Recently Gail spoke about the "hidden treasure" that is Williams Greenhouses in Sterling, and Rosemarie has a helpful hint about dipping woody stems in alum (a pickling ingredient) before placing them in water. We are our own best resource for good ideas, so feel free to come with something to share with the group.

Lura and her team has coordinated a Mexican Fiesta for lunch by the pool, and Barbara has generously offered three bedrooms and two bathrooms for changing into our bikinis. We will be able to relax and spend time together in a beautiful setting.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING PARKING: Barbara reports that the County will be working on her road that day and that cars parked there will be towed. Please do not park on Kildownet Court (Barbara's street) or Miller Lane, the cross street. Parking is available on Country Club Drive NE, the street that intersects Miller Lane, and it's not a long walk. The Tozzis' cars will have been moved from their driveway so anyone who needs to drop off food for the lunch or other items will be able to unload in the driveway and will then need to move their cars to Country Club Drive. It will be possible to drive on her road to deliver things, but not to stay parked there.

President's Project - Preschool Bulb Garden

The Preschool Director and Vienna Presbyterian Church have given us the go-ahead to do a bulb planting project with the Four-Year-Old classes next fall. We will be working in the raised bed that adjoins the preschool playground, along the Park Street entrance to the church. The "fun part" will be planting the bulbs with the children in October. But we have some work to do to prepare the planting area! The soil is hard and needs weeding and renovation to make it workable in the fall. I will be passing around a sign-up at the meeting to find volunteers willing to spend an hour or so one summer morning, digging out soil, amending it, etc. With several of us there, it should not be overwhelming. Thank you for your help! I also welcome your advice on soil amendments, horticulture of bulb planting and recommended varieties of early blooming spring tulips and daffodils. ~ Julia



Ending our Fiscal Year

Please be sure to submit any receipts you have from expenses this year to the Valerie, our treasurer. Submitting receipts and cashing any reimbursement checks from the Club really helps close the books on this year with no "loose ends."



"It was June, and the world smelled of roses. The sunshine was like powdered gold over the grassy hillside."

- Maud Hart Loveless

Have a wonderful summer!

Mt. Cuba Plant Trials – A Great Source of Information

ANN BALCH, HORTICULTURE

A year or so ago, Karen Fleming organized a Five Hills field trip that included a stop at Mt. Cuba. I was not able to join the group, so I don't know whether you explored the Trial Gardens or picked up the Research Reports. If not, and for those who did not attend, it's great to know that they are all available at no cost online and can be downloaded to your computer as PDF files. I find them to be extremely useful when selecting perennials for my garden.

The current hybridizing industry is so active that there can be dozens of named varieties available for any particular perennial. Heucheras are a great example. Our old Coral Bells are now represented by over 75 varieties in the Mt. Cuba trial. There are many beautiful new ones, but some are notoriously short-lived. I was delighted to see my Heuchera 'Citronelle', which I planted in 2008 and which has returned beautifully for over 10 years, ranked Number One on the trials. The Research Report also provides many other tips, such as relative size, color, bloom time, and even indicates visitor favorites.

For some plants, there are multiple species available, each with its own preferred growing environment. For example, I recently was looking for a Coreopsis that could tolerate a damp area. The Research Report provided great information on which species prefer wet, and which dry. I was also able to consider bloom time and height. Plus there were terrific pictures of the varieties in the trial.

The web site for the Research Reports is <https://mtcubacenter.org/research/trial-garden/>

The following reports are currently available. Obviously the more recent reports are more helpful, with more current varieties represented. There are two Coreopsis reports listed on the site, but they have been combined.

2015-2017 -- *Phlox for Sun & Phlox for Shade*

2014-2016 – *Monarda*

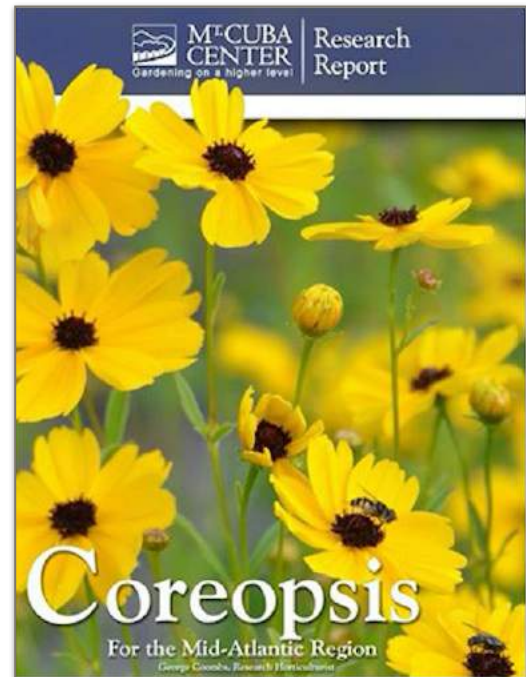
2012 -2015 – *Baptisia*

2012-2014 – *Coreopsis*

2012-2014 – *Heuchera*

2007-2009 – *Echinacea*

2003-2005 – *Aster*



Sprinkled throughout the reports are growing tips and maintenance considerations. Also helpful is the fact that this research was done in the mid-Atlantic region, and thus is especially pertinent to our gardens.

So take a peek at these reports. You can view them online or download them to your computer.

Happy gardening!

Nature Study Books — for Children, Grandchildren or for Yourself

Editor's Note: When Clare Walker Leslie found she had double-booked her engagement with us and won't be delivering our June program, we missed our opportunity to learn about nature journaling at our meeting; but it need not stop us from exploring and developing this enjoyable and eye-training skill on our own, capturing what we observe in the garden and on nature walks. It might be something interesting to try during the summer months.

Your editor found an online blog about nature journaling by a woman named Tonya who recommends the following books on the subject, as well as materials she recommends. Explore her site; there's much information to get you started nature journaling: <https://www.scratchmadejournal.com/blog/kids-nature-study-resources>

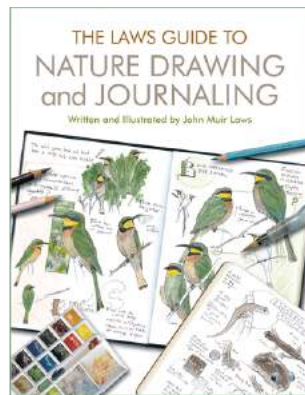
On Facebook, search for her as *Scratchmade Journal*. The following reviews, in her words, are taken from one of Tonya's blogs and contain clickable links:

[Handbook of Nature Study](#) by Anna Comstock

This book has pretty much become THE resource for nature educators and can keep one busy in the wilds for decades. The contents include plenty of discussion and identification tips along with questions and prompts to heighten observation and study. Now in the public domain, this massive volume is offered as a [free PDF](#) to download or read online. However, the work is so extensive and useful, I highly recommend splurging for a hard copy.

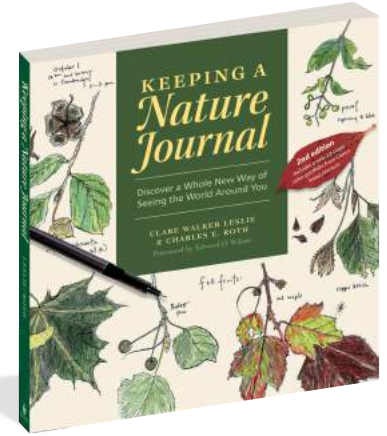
[Journaling a Year in Nature](#)

This is an interactive, yearlong nature study and journal published by *Simply Charlotte Mason* for grades 1-12. However, this book is currently on my to-buy list because I'm excited about using the yearlong study for myself! The book is divided into four seasons and includes weekly prompts of what to study each season with room for notes and drawings. Plus, it is full of inspiring quotes, helpful nature tips, and more. You can download a free sample at the link above.



[Keeping a Nature Journal](#) by Clare Walker Leslie & Charles Roth

This was the first nature journaling book I ever purchased, and I still read it constantly. The main portion of this book is divided into seasons, and reading it feels as if one is taking a nature walk alongside a master naturalist who asks great questions along the way. Highly inspirational, I recommend it for parents, teachers, and children in and up.



middle grades

[The Laws Guide to Nature Drawing & Journaling](#) by John Muir Laws

This is one of my favorite nature journaling resources, and I've posted a full review [here](#). I highly recommend this book for kids in middle grades and up.

[Take Along Guides](#)

Each of these little books have fun identification tips, nature facts, and questions to spark imagination and interest along with several activities and experiments. There is no journaling space, but that could easily be provided separately. I recommend these for ages 4-8. If you are looking for something similar for older children, try [A Country Diary for an Edwardian Lady](#) or the series of books by [Maryjo Koch](#).

[Charlotte Mason's Original Series](#)

Charlotte Mason was a British educator who included the art of nature study into all manner of teachings and studies. Her series on education can be [read for free](#), or compilations of Mason's writings are often published and republished. Currently, there is an affordable volume of her teachings on nature study at [Amazon](#).

[Exploring Nature with Children](#) by Lynn at Raising Little Shoots

This book is currently only available as a PDF download, but it offers a month-by-month, year-long guide to nature study full of prompts, questions, information, and activities. You can download a free sample at the link above.



A New Invader: Spotted Lanternfly

ELIZABETH HUEBNER, CONSERVATION

The **spotted lanternfly** attacks fruit trees, but not the fruit itself. It uses its piercing-sucking mouthparts to feed on the sap in trunks, branches, twigs and leaves. ... The honeydew and sap also provide a medium for growth of fungi, such as sooty mold, which can cover leaf surfaces and stunt growth. The Spotted Lanternfly adult is approximately 1" long and 1/2" wide at rest.

How many eggs does a spotted Lanternfly lay?

The Spotted Lanternfly lays columns of eggs side by side. There can be as many as **30-50 eggs** per clump. The mass of eggs is then covered in a grey putty-like covering. Adults do not **survive the winter**, but egg masses are hardy enough to withstand brutal weather conditions. Those eggs hatch in late spring, revealing nymphs with black and white spots.

Quick Facts: Invasive

Habitat: Spotted lanternflies can live on a variety of host plants, including fruit trees, grape vines, hops and various hardwoods. Their preferred host, especially as adults, is the [tree-of-heaven](#) (*Ailanthus altissima*), which is also an invasive species.

Range: The spotted lanternfly has been seen in parts of Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York and Virginia.



Diet: Sap from fruit trees, grape vines and various hardwoods

Lifespan: 6 months

Officials in Winchester are quarantining the city and surrounding Frederick County in an attempt to protect Virginia crops from the spotted lantern fly.

Elaine Lidholm, a spokesperson for the Virginia Department of Agriculture, admits that a quarantine may not stop the insect's spread.

"Quarantines cannot ever work 100% because the bugs can move on their own," Lidholm says. "You know, they fly."

But they can't fly very far. Their main means of long-distance travel is hitching a ride with careless humans. The first lanternflies detected in Virginia were in a stone yard near Winchester — they likely traveled into the commonwealth on a shipment across state lines.

One single adult male lanternfly was found in Maryland in 2018, in Cecil County on the Eastern Shore. In Virginia, lanternflies have so far been confined to Winchester and Frederick County. So, officials are trying to keep them there. The quarantine requires a permit and inspection to transport items ranging from potted plants to recreational vehicles — basically anything that has been stored outside could host eggs or insects themselves.

Permits can be obtained after completing a \$6 online training, and inspections can be conducted and documented by anyone who has done the training. **Residents are also encouraged to report sightings to Virginia Cooperative Extension.**

The list of items that fall under the quarantine is long: plants, lumber, firewood, construction materials, stone, wood crates or boxes, outdoor grills, mowers, outdoor furniture, RVs and "any means of conveyance."

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY



ACTUAL SIZE: 1"

Adult (with wings closed) can be found July–December



ACTUAL SIZE: 1/8"

Nymph (early stage) can be found late April–July



Egg mass (fresh) can be found October–December



Adult (with wings open) can be found July–December



ACTUAL SIZE: 1/2"

Nymph (late stage) can be found July–September



Egg mass (older) can be found January–June



Fairfax County Sustainability Tour:

Look who your editor ran into at last Sunday's June 9th Sustainability Tour in the Vienna and Oakton area! The tour was sponsored by Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District. Ann Balch (pictured with my friend) and Willow Prall were staffing a table at the Oakton Library where we heard all about the Library's rain garden — "one of the most beautiful and successful rain gardens in the Fairfax County system". I regretted later not getting a photo of Willow and of tour guide Matt. There were nine home gardens and locations on this inspiring tour.



Views from Five Hills May Plant Exchange on May 21 at the Nelson Home

Thanks to Anne Nelson for once again inviting us to hold our meeting and annual plant exchange at her home! What treasures we found and shared as we chatted and exchanged plant wisdom in the beautiful setting of her garden! This was followed by a delicious lunch, which members enjoyed both inside and on the deck on a picture perfect day; many thanks to the luncheon team. Here is a collage of moments captured on that lovely day.



RECENT EVENTS & FIELD TRIPS

On June 5, Five Hills Members had a ball at Glen Echo Park, enjoying a fascinating look back at the evolution of this famous DC area amusement park that has undergone a number of transformations and renovations over its long history. On our tour, we visited the Spanish Ballroom, rode the Dentzel Carousel, and observed artisans as they worked in the glass-blowing studio. Today, as it has for decades, the Park offers craft lessons in many mediums, and dance lessons in the Ballroom.



GLEN ECHO PARK FIELD TRIP

RECENT EVENTS & FIELD TRIPS

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On the second leg of our field trip we visited Sycamore Island, a small private island in the Potomac near Lock 7 on the Canal towpath, just down the road from previously-visited Glen Echo Park. The Sycamore Island Club was founded in 1885. Our President Julia Smith is a longtime member of the club (though not THAT long!), as were her parents, and she and her husband visit frequently as volunteers, taking their turns at ferrying visitors from one shore to the other. At her gracious invitation to visit, we made the towpath trek, rang the bell and summoned the ferry to the island. “And then along came Mary” to take us across to the island!

We learned some of the Island’s history, once again experiencing the feeling of stepping back in time to a Washington DC area club of a bygone era. We shared our picnics with each other on the deck at water’s edge, with lovely views of the Potomac and its wildlife; a handy rope swing provided an opportunity to engage in a simple pleasure of our youth.