

Message from The President



Dear Gardeners,

The hot weather and showers have certainly made our flowers (and weeds!) grow. It will be exciting to see what surprises and ideas the Garden Walk holds. Please be sure to help out in this important activity that not only acts as a fund raiser but importantly also educates our community and gives them an opportunity to learn more about our amazing club. Maybe you have a new neighbor, or a longtime friend who now has the time to join. Get them to come on the walk!

I always think that one of the best gifts is the joy of gardening and a love of nature. No matter where you are, you can find something interesting. Whether it is another walk in Ryerson Woods to see which natives are blooming, or a trip in the United States—North Carolina, Colorado, Arizona, or a trip outside the US—England, China, Africa—it is so interesting to find the plants we buy and put in our gardens in their natural environment. A hike in Colorado or Arizona will reveal local species of columbine while North Carolina is home to at least a dozen species of trillium. I had the good fortune to travel to Norway in June and was struck by the number (and size!) of all the foxgloves I saw. It turns out that *Digitalis purpurea* is native to Europe and has naturalized here. We do have a native foxglove, but most of us call it Penstemon (*Penstemon digitalis*). Speaking of trips, the Garden Club trip to England certainly was a success; the pictures are inspiring, and we can't wait to hear more. Is there a volunteer to put together a slide show of this trip?

Perhaps no one exemplifies a lifelong love of gardening, nature, an always curious mind than our own Elaine Petersen. We are glad she is back in the club (she served as President of the Club also) and we all wish her the happiest 100th Birthday! Elaine you are an inspiration.

We are still looking for someone to take over the newsletter. Nancy has offered to do training! Please contact me.

I'd like to close with a heartfelt thank you to Kathleen Abdo for her wonderful leadership these past years and to the hard working and innovative board that has given so much of their time to all of us and our community.

See you out weeding!



A Walk in “The Shire” Garden Walk

A Walk in “The Shire”

Saturday, July 19, 2025

10:00am - 3:00pm

Starting Point: Spring Lake Park

48 Oxford Drive, Lincolnshire



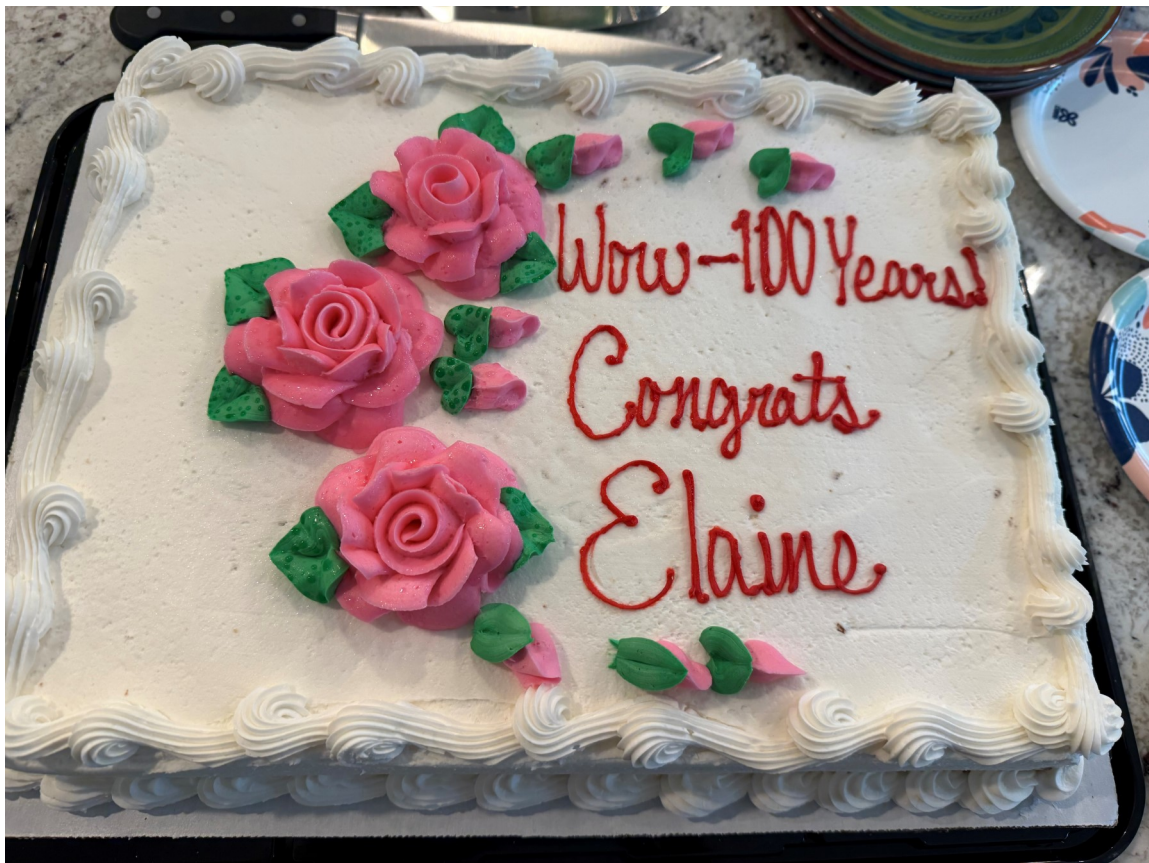
Our garden walk is only a few weeks away. Thanks to all the members who have already sold tickets Your sales effort promotes the garden walk to be a successful fundraiser enabling our club to continue giving back to the community. I

f you need more tickets to sell, please contact Mary Ainger or Jan Stefans. Tickets are also available on our website.

Additionally, we need a few more volunteers at some of the gardens on the walk. For those of you who cannot help out at the Blue Star garden this year, volunteering to sit at one of the gardens on the walk is a great alternative.

With five beautiful residential gardens and featured artists on the walk, we're looking forward to a great turnout!

Summer Meeting - June 19, 2025



How To Go Plastic Free In Your Garden

The article below was shared by Jana Wagner. It appeared on the English website: [thegarden](https://thegarden.rhs.org.uk/2025/06/06/how-to-go-plastic-free-in-your-garden-2/content.html)

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Plastic is really useful in the garden but it comes at a cost to the environment and wildlife. Luckily there are many alternatives, and sometimes they're better for your plants too

Lightweight, cheap and rot-proof even when damp, plastic is an incredibly convenient material in the garden. In the 60 years it has been in widespread use it has permeated every area of gardening, from seed trays and plant pots to horticultural fleece, hoses and fruit cage netting.

But the very qualities which make plastic so useful come at a high price to the wider environment. Plastic is among the worst pollutants of our oceans, devastating marine wildlife and washing up as unsightly rubbish on beaches. Changing the way we garden to avoid using plastic, by turning to biodegradable materials like wood, paper and coir and making careful choices, reduces the environmental cost of gardening – and sometimes it's better for your plants, too.

Nine ways to reduce garden plastic

Here are some hints, tips and simple swaps that will help minimize the amount of plastic used when you're gardening.

1. Seed trays

Seed trays (HDPE) last well and are lightweight but once broken are difficult to recycle. Swap them for wooden or bamboo seed trays.

You can buy wooden seed trays or make them yourself from scrap wood. They are easily repaired, so last indefinitely when well looked after. Wooden trays are heavier and must be stored somewhere dry over winter. They need more watering, but it's easier to re-wet dry compost as wood is absorbent so doesn't let water run straight through as plastic can.

Bamboo seed trays give the look and feel of plastic and are lighter than wood. But they aren't repairable and you can't make your own.

How To Go Plastic Free In Your Garden

2. Modules



Black plastic modules can't be recycled once they break



Toilet rolls can make an excellent replacement for plastic modules

Modules (PP or PS) are often flimsy and shatter easily; they are rarely recycled. Swap them for newspaper pots, soil blocks, toilet roll inners or pulp modules. Buy biodegradable pulped cardboard modules or make them for free from newspaper or cardboard toilet roll inners (best for larger seeds). Plant seedlings without removing containers, which rot away in the soil.

Soil blocks are cubes of compressed blocking compost, shaped using a soil blocker; sow into the top and the seedling's roots bind the compost into a natural module. Home-made modules take time to make and need more frequent watering. But seedlings never suffer from pot bound roots and establish more quickly.

3. Plastic-free plant labelling



Plant labels can degrade quickly in sunlight and are hard to recycle



Bamboo and wooden plant labels can be composted at the end of their usefulness

Plant labels (PP) are easy to write on and reuse but break quickly and are difficult to recycle. Swap them for wooden lollipop sticks, bamboo plant labels, slate labels, copper or aluminum metal labels.

Buy lollipop sticks cheaply from craft shops; wooden plant labels are also widely available, though more expensive. You can also make your own by splitting thin pieces of scrap wood lengthwise.

Untreated wooden labels wick up water from damp compost, though, and writing becomes blurred, so they're perhaps best for short-term labelling such as vegetables sown in a greenhouse then planted out. Bamboo is less absorbent, so labels stay legible all season. Slate labels are expensive but handsome and easily reused; metal labels cannot be reused once engraved.

How To Go Plastic Free In Your Garden

4. Plastic string and netting



Plastic twine can be bad for plants as well as the environment



Natural twine is less likely to cut into plants as the stems grow

String and netting (PP, PET) are strong and long-lasting but rarely recycled; wildlife can become entangled in plastic netting, too. Swap for: jute or hemp twine, jute netting, metal mesh. Natural twine is readily available and kinder to plants than plastic ties as it won't cut into stems. It needs replacing every couple of years. Jute pea netting looks beautiful but again, you can only reuse it once or twice.

To protect fruit and vegetable crops from birds, make individual cages from fine 1cm (1/2in) gauge galvanized metal mesh stapled onto wooden frames. It is more expensive and heavier but doesn't tear like plastic can, so lasts many years.

5. Pots



Plastic pots are difficult or impossible to recycle due to the pigments used in their manufacture



Bio-degradable Vipots are made from plant waste including cocoa shell and grain husks

Plant pots (PP, LDPE, HDPE) are lightweight and cheap, but difficult to recycle once broken. Alternatives include terracotta, coir, fiber, VI pots, bamboo and waste cardboard.

Single-use biodegradable containers are widely available. They are not removed before planting, avoiding root disturbance, but this means they must be bought anew each year. Coir is made from imported coconut hulls, so has a high carbon footprint. It can also be slow to decompose in dry soil. Fiber pots, made of cellulose, break down more quickly.

Terracotta containers are handsome and last years, but they're heavy and, like most of the biodegradable containers, dry out more quickly. Lightweight options, reusable for 3-5 years, include VI pots, made of rice and grain hulls, and bamboo. All are expensive, but you can make them for free: cut out 7cm (3") square boxes from waste cardboard, tape together with paper masking tape, then plant.

How To Go Plastic Free In Your Garden

6. Compost bags



Even peat-free and organic composts are sold in plastic bags



Homemade compost avoids plastic use but isn't generally suitable for seed sowing

Compost bags (LDPE) can be reused as rubbish sacks but can be recycled only if cleaned first. You can avoid plastic use by making your own compost at home or re-using compost bags where possible.

Buying growing media in large quantities, as bulk bags or loose loads, cuts plastic use but requires space. One Kent garden center, [Edibleculture](#), sells compost in refillable 'bags for life', but remains the only retailer to do so. Make your own potting compost by blending topsoil, garden compost, leafmould, grit and fertilisers in a bucket or wheelbarrow according to requirements. Home-made composts are more susceptible to weed seedlings and soil-borne disease, and it takes practice to get the mix right, but you can tailor it precisely to your needs.

7. Watering equipment



Plastic watering cans have a finite lifespan



Metal watering cans last many years

Watering equipment (PVC, HDPE, LDPE) comes in multiple types of plastic, including vinyl (used in most hoses), linked to harmful toxins. Swap plastic for metal watering cans and water butts for galvanised troughs.

Hoses and automatic irrigation systems are exclusively made of plastic, so the only plastic-free alternative is to stop using them. Metal watering cans are heavier and watering takes longer, but hand watering uses water more economically and targets irrigation more efficiently – plus metal cans have a much longer lifespan than plastic ones.

When replacing rigid plastic water butts, galvanised steel cattle troughs make attractive alternatives. Stand on bricks and fit a tap into the drainage hole, then add a wooden lid. Troughs come in various sizes and are priced similarly to plastic.

How To Go Plastic Free In Your Garden

8. Plant protection and insulation



Fleece degenerates over time and cannot be recycled



Glass cloches last much longer than their plastic counterparts

Glasshouse insulation and plant protection (HDPE, LDPE, PP, polycarbonate) includes bubble wrap, polythene cloches and woven plastic meshes and fleece which shred easily into fragments and cannot be recycled. Rigid polycarbonate contains the toxin bisphenol A. Plastic-free solutions include glass cloches, hessian and straw and cardboard insulation.

Glass tent or barn cloches are heavier than relatively flimsy polythene tunnels and stay in place better in bad weather. Though they are more expensive and can break, they usually last much longer.

Delay planting frost-sensitive plants to avoid using horticultural fleece and wrap tender plants such as bananas in hessian or newspaper stuffed with straw over winter. Lining greenhouse walls with cardboard also offers some insulation over winter.

9. Plastic-free packaging



Buying bare-root plants can save on both plastic and peat use



Growing your own from seed is the best way to go plastic-free

Most gardening purchases come packaged in plastic, from mail order blister packs to fertilizer bottles. New plants also bring more plastic pots. Most is single use and difficult to recycle. Look out for plastic-free mail order nurseries, buy bare root plants and grow your own from seeds, cuttings and divisions.

How To Go Plastic Free In Your Garden

Careful shopping choices help: fertilizer, for example, is often offered in cardboard boxes. Home-made fertilizers are also very effective. Some nurseries now wrap mail order plants in waxed paper or newspaper. Perennials, roses, hedging, fruit and wallflowers are available bare-root from autumn to spring; they are sold when growing conditions are at their best, though availability for perennials remains limited.

Raising bedding from seed avoids plastic plug trays and blister packs; you can also raise more unusual perennials, shrubs and even trees from seed, cuttings or divisions. It takes longer but can be considerably cheaper (and more satisfying!).

How to switch responsibly

A like-for-like exchange of biodegradable substitutes for plastic brings its own environmental cost. Firing and transporting heavy clay pots, for example, has a high carbon footprint and contributes to global warming.

Wherever possible, opt for home-made alternatives which reuse waste materials, and when buying, opt for sustainably sourced products and second-hand items available online or at auctions and salvage yards

What to do with existing plastic in the garden

Continue to reuse plastic pots, trays and other equipment until they reach the end of their useful life to keep them out of the waste system as long as possible. Compost bags can be put to multiple new uses as rubbish sacks, weed-suppressing ground cover or for growing new potatoes.

Once they need replacing, substitute for biodegradable alternatives and recycle spent rigid plastic wherever possible to keep the plastic in circulation. Many garden centers offer pot recycling collection points, and a few councils accept pots in curbside collections. Larger municipal tips also accept colored rigid plastic, but not black, as recycling equipment cannot 'see' black pigments.



Author Sally Nex faces up to her use of plastic in the garden

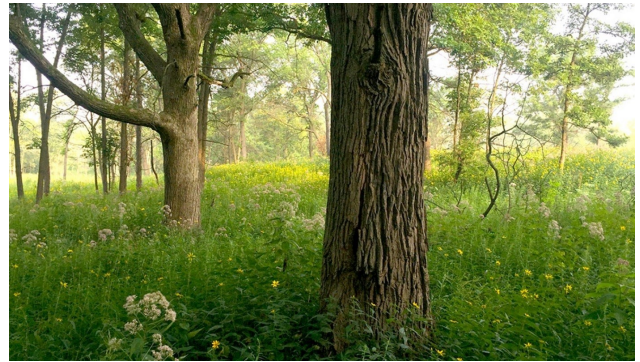
Wild Ones Lake-to-Prairie Chapter Outdoor Event

The following notice was shared by Marj Lundy
Chapter Walk at Somme Prairie Grove
Nature Preserve

Join us for a guided summer walk at beautiful Somme Prairie Grove. This rare savanna ecosystem lies between Somme Prairie (to the west) and Somme Woods (to the east). Groves of bur oaks interspersed with grassy, flowery openings host species not found in either prairies or woodlands. Look for eastern kingbirds, savanna blazing stars, and other rarely seen butterflies, dragonflies, and other small animals that depend on this unique habitat.

Located in Northbrook, Illinois, this 85-acre nature preserve is known for its high-quality black soil savanna and woodland habitats. The area has been actively restored, and the ongoing restoration efforts have led to the return of many rare native plants and animals, making it a thriving example of an ecosystem brought back from the brink.

The trails are unpaved single-file paths covered with path rush (*Juncus tenuis*). This allows the visitor close observation of the many plants and insects, without disturbing the surrounding vegetation.



Date: Saturday, July 12, 2025

Time: 9:00 - 11:30 am

Registration is required
Space is limited to 30 people

Please RSVP wildones.laketoprairie2@gmail.com to
register for this event

GCI 2025 Summer Meeting



The Garden Clubs of Illinois, Inc. 2025 Summer Meeting Hosted by District I

Monday, July 21, 2025, 8:30 am - 2:30 pm
Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden
2715 South Main Street, Rockford, IL 61102

Presentation by Corrinne Sosso, Education Director at Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful



KLEHM ARBORETUM AND BOTANIC GARDEN is one of Rockford, Illinois' top outdoor family-friendly destinations. There's something for everyone. With 155 acres of woodlands and botanical gardens that feature a children's garden, observation tower, garden pavilion for hosting weddings and social functions, 1.4 miles of paved paths, 3 miles of wooded trails, and specialty gardens which provide a showcase for themed plantings of ornamental shrubs and trees as well as annual and perennial plants and much more!

Photo credit: <https://www.facebook.com/KlehmArboretum>



CORINNE SOSSO, the education director at Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful in Rockford, Illinois acts as the public liaison and cheerleader for recycling and litter prevention. Corinne imparts information and gives presentations at schools, corporations, organizations, and community functions. With a dozen years as a classroom science teacher and more than three decades of informal hands-on science education in children's museums and science centers, Corinne uses her knowledge and skills to promote environmental stewardship across the region. Her energy and enthusiasm have earned her monthly recurring appearances on local morning TV news and radio shows where she entertains and informs.



GCI 2025 Summer Meeting



The Garden Clubs of Illinois, Inc. 2025 Summer Meeting

Hosted by District I

Monday, July 21, 2025, 8:30 am - 2:30 pm

Klehm Arboretum and Botanic Garden

2715 South Main Street, Rockford, IL 61102

Monday, July 21, 2025

- 8:30 am - 11:00 am Registration
 Meet & Greet
 Raffle baskets on display throughout for your perusal
- 9:00 and 11:00 am Docent led garden tours of Klehm Arboretum
 Or tour on your own at your leisure
- 11:00am - 12:00pm GCI business meeting and award presentation
- 12:00pm - 1:00pm Buffet lunch and raffles
- 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm Program: **Think Green, Live Clean** by Corinne Sosso



REGISTRATION FORM

Early bird registration ends June 12, 2025

Registration deadline is July 12, 2025

Morning beverages and treats, garden tours, buffet lunch, meeting, and speaker

April - June 12	\$55.00
June 13 - July 12	\$60.00
Amount Paid	_____

Tour - Please select one
(accessibility tours are available)

- ☐ 9:00 - 10:00 am tour
☐ 10:00 - 11:00 am tour

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email _____ Phone _____
Club _____ District _____
Dietary Restrictions _____

Please check all that apply:

- ☐ Club Member ☐ Non-member Guest ☐ Club President ☐ District Director ☐ GCI Board of Directors

Make checks payable to **The Garden Clubs of Illinois, Inc.**
send form and payment to **Debbie Nagy 1318 Eustace Drive, Dixon, IL 61021**
Have a question? debnagy55@gmail.com

GCI News

To access the Members Only Page
on the GCI Website



Go to the Member Information Tab
and enter the Password: **GardenClub22**

Message from the Editor

I wanted to share this photo taken at Stanley Park in Vancouver on June 12th. I was struck by how lush and large the azaleas were. Between the climate and the rainfall, some were as large as ornamental trees.

Thank you to this month's content contributors:



Ann Maine, Trish Hughes, Mary Ainger, Marj Lundy and Jana Wagner.

Have a fantastic summer!

Nancy

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2025-2026

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Website: <https://lincolnshiregardenclub.com>
Facebook: <https://facebook.com/LincolnshireGardenClub>
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~ Our Mission Statement ~

The mission of the Lincolnshire Garden Club is to provide financial support to promote community beautification, nature restoration, environmental responsibility and to further the education of members and the public in the fields of ecology and conservation, home gardening, horticulture, landscape, and floral design.