

BUDS & BLOOMS

From our Director's Desk

February, though a quiet winter month (besides the Super Bowl and Valentine's Day), is tense with planning for the rest of the year. I realize that we do not need to act alone with this. As this newsletter will show, there are ways to join in at any level, from club all the way to the National Garden Club height.

Our gratification of work well done is when others join in our excitement. Share your projects and events using the Buds & Blooms digital issues to spread the word. Also, consider contacting me to send invitations throughout the District in order for others to join in your fun. Join our fellow gardeners at the March 18 Zoom District Meeting for more sharing and fun. Details and more below.

Flower Pounding District Informational Session on January 17 was popular. Requests to attend exceeded the 100 zoom capacity. These programs weren't recorded, so there is a worksheet of Flower Pounding for paper or cotton fabric. Some websites also have resources for this potential Garden Club project.

The next **District Instructional Zoom is on February 15 at 7:00 on Ticks.** More detailed information to come.

Seed Money from GCFP is open for requests until February 15. **Perennial Bloom Award** applications should be completed and sent to the District Director by March 1. District II/III nominations have received state recognition for the last two years.

March 18 is the first District II/III Meeting this year hosted as a ZOOM meeting by the Upper Perkiomen Valley Garden Club. A wonderful speaker and photographer will be **Karen Campbell** presenting the conversion of her yard into a natural wonder. **Trash to Treasure winner announced**, District 2024 budget approved and your wonderful reports will make up the meeting. Page 14 of this issue has listed what reports are due when for district meetings and the Buds & Blooms.

It is time to form a **Nominating Committee** for District II/III officers for the next two years. Officers are District Director, Assistant Director, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer. If anyone is interested in those positions, let me know.

2024 Philadelphia Flower Show



Judges Council Flower Show

The Northeast Judges Council is hosting a Small Standard Flower Show "Heavenly Gardens" on March 26, 2024 from 12:00 to 4:00 pm at Emmaus Moravian Church, 146 Main St., Emmaus.

If you want to exhibit contact Chris Leskosky. You are also invited to visit the show.

- Barbara Campbell, Chair of NEJC

From our Director's Desk, con't.



NATURE IS ALL AROUND US is the illustrative theme of Reading Public Museum from January 20 to May 12, 2024 and featured in Homeschool Days at the museum. The Garden Club of Reading attends a flower bed of many years used for artists, photography, celebrations, weddings and more. I cannot imagine the May 27 homeschool session of “yards and gardens” will not venture onto this geometric layout. As the Museum publication states, “Nature is thriving right under our noses and in our cities and towns.”



April 7-9, 2024 is “Petals and Patchwork” GCFP annual conference in Lancaster, PA. You could not ask for a closer location unless we hosted it ourselves. Registration is now open. Check with your Garden Club president for registration form or go online to pagardenclubs.org for convention information. Topics include Dessert Plants for Your Garden, Winter Fun Planters, An Arboreal Amble and GCFP Judges Council final day luncheon, A Perfect Harmony: Floral Designs Inspired by Quilts!

District II/III will have two tables at the convention set up for Citizen Scientist rain data and the art of Foraging.

Floral Design Education Joint Endeavor:

Clubs in the Lehigh Valley area have joined together to offer Floral Design Workshop to club members. Accredited judges and experts will introduce various approaches to design starting March 19, 2024 in Emmaus. This monthly program will continue into September. Organized by Ginnie Tietjens, the series is presented at little cost and clubs are asked to have a design presentation at their following Garden Club meeting. The concept can be replicated in other areas of the District to offer garden club members skills in designing floral arrangements. Equally, geographically close clubs can hold joint Flower Shows and/or Garden Tours. Use District meetings to get to know one another and share in the opportunities which are endless.

Community Gardening:

Upper Perkiomen Valley Garden Club started with a community vegetable garden in 2017. Thanks to the guidance and oversight of Jackie Jackson, their original wooden structures first year produced 250 pounds of food. With the installation of metal tubs, 2023 production increased to 2,500 pounds. A six-year span with ten-fold in production. Any farmer would be proud!

- Jane Kruse, District II/III Director

Conservation

For the birds !!

In a suburban landscape the Cardinal in your yard is not just a cardinal in your yard. It's your Cardinal! When wild creatures can no longer depend on wild natural plants to sustain themselves, you must assume responsibility for their well-being of your Cardinal, your Blue Jay or any other animal in your yard.

All the creatures that once lived in a wild landscape now depend on you to meet their needs. Fortunately, it's easier to care for local wildlife than it is to take care of most traditional pets. You can rebuild some or much of the food web that once existed in your yard by including plants that provide nourishment, cover and forage for local wildlife. They may not even notice that you live amongst them.

Studies have shown exposure to nature and natural interactions in your yard with wild animals can bring you some emotional benefits that are gained from living with cats and dogs.

Also, exposure to the natural surroundings produces medical and social benefits for humans. For example, plant a tree outside a classroom window and the student's test scores improve. Plant a tree outside a hospital room window and patients heal faster.

If plantings are near apartment buildings with tree courtyards, families live happier lives with less juvenile delinquency than nearby apartments complexes with no trees.

One of the things that I remember as a child was that my mother used to take me on long walks on a Sunday. I very much looked forward to this wildlife exposure. We did different types of hikes, some in the woods behind our house and others were along a creek or riverbed. It became clear to me how good it was to be out in nature. I looked forward to these outings. Often, I was so curious about what went on around us while walking together. In today's world where computers and AI are so in front of us, wouldn't it be nice to just go for a long walk for yourself and for the birds.

- Maria DiCecco, Conservation Chair, GC of Reading

Awards & Seed Money

GCFP Seed Money requests are due February 15, 2024. These are funds to help Clubs defray the costs of community projects. Small grants are given to qualifying garden clubs to help defray expenses for projects that assist the club to become more visible and active within their community. Consider a cooperative project with other civic groups, youth or churches.

Download the Seed Money application from pagardenclubs.org website Awards section. Send a photograph of the area. One application per garden club is sent to Marjorie Sears at: 8 Saint Dunstons Road, Hatboro, PA 19040-4526 or stilwellmarj@aol.com. Call or text 215-450-7195 if you have any questions. Funds will be available in time for spring projects.

Perennial Bloom Award, Marilyn Small, GCFP Awards Chair

Consider recognizing long time garden club members who have grown and bloomed with their continuous support of the gardening goals and objectives. These indispensable members have shared their love of gardening, planted many seeds at programs and events, and exhibited their leadership by nurturing others to bloom. This person may not have held an office position, but is someone who can be depended upon.

Perennial Bloom Award nomination process, starts with completion of the application found on Page 9 of the [GCFP Awards Manual](#) (GCFP Website under "More" then "Awards"). Clubs will need the [GCFP / CAR-SGC / NGC Application Cover Sheet](#) and the [CAR-SGC Special Application](#). Read instructions and requirements carefully.

(Please disregard incorrect dates on the CAR-SGC Application.) Be sure to include a head shot photo of your candidate. Four pages of narration are permitted.

Nominations from clubs are due to District Directors by **March 1**. For District II/III, that is Jane Kruse at DDirector23@gmail.com. District winners are forward to Sheri Lowry by **March 15**, GCFPAwardsMSmall@gmail.com , GCFPAwardsSLowry@gmail.com

The state winner (one chosen from all 10 districts) will be announced at the GCFP Convention in Lancaster, April 7-9. State winner is advanced to CAR-SGC for regional consideration, announced at their fall conference.

- Chris Rader, Awards & Grants Chair, Emmaus Garden

Emmaus Garden Club:

Emmaus Garden Club: Flowers & Memory Care

The Emmaus Garden Club has member, Donna Call, take the flowers from our Horticulture Tournament each month, as well as flowers donated by two local grocery stores to a local memory care facility. She does this following our General Meeting each month. Donna spends time helping the residents make small arrangements with the flowers donated.

- Chris Rader, President, Emmaus GC

Hazleton Area Garden Club:

Hazleton Area Garden Club has **three horticulture therapy programs** that we are involved with:

In the spring, HAGC teaches foster care children in Brandon's Forever Home the basics of caring for plants. Members help the children create container flowerpots and answer their questions. Bob Smith's Floral donates geraniums, and several garden club members bring potting soil and pots to this home. The children enjoy getting their hands dirty and are proud of their flower containers.

Another horticulture project we do in the fall is at the Hazleton Active Adult Senior Center. Former HAGC Presidents bring containers, flowers and shrubs from our yards and also buy items as needed. We then show members of the center how to create floral designs. We also bring some potted plants and show them how to take care of them. At the end, all designs and plants are chanced off to the senior members. The director said they look forward to our program and it is the only program where there is no talking.

Our last horticulture program we do in December takes place at Providence Place, a senior living facility. This past year we helped residents create Christmas designed containers using poinsettias in the middle and fresh shrubs and flowers surrounding them. We had over 20 residents signed up and had to turn residents away since there was so much interest.

- Nancy Mensinger, President, Hazleton Area GC

Parkland Garden Club:

The Parkland Garden Club, PGC, has a long-standing Horticulture Therapy program. The purpose of the club is to allow residents to get their hands dirty as working in the soil has been proven to be so beneficial. The PGC visits a nursing home (Luther Crest) twice a year. Our Horticultural Therapy Chair, who is also a Registered Nurse, schedules our visit through the Activities Director. We usually meet in the dining hall and our program and usually centers around a theme tied to a calendar event, such as springtime, Halloween, or Memorial Day.

Previously we held a program in the spring and helped the residents plant carrots, bell peppers, and tomatoes. Sometimes we also supplied basil. We provided the vegetables that the residents voted on. After the produce grew, the residents would have cooking sessions using them. The PGC also provided annuals and perennials to plant in an alcove of the nursing home. The last several years, the staff has planted tulips in the raised beds, and the PGC has adapted by coming up with crafts involving plants.

Several of our most recent crafts included planting succulents in teacups, making bird feeders out of teacups, and making a pumpkin toilet paper cover. Our program always includes singing some old familiar tunes, taking a seasonal quiz with pertinent questions about the holiday we are celebrating, and making a craft (usually with a gardening theme). Sometimes we have a live piano player for the sing along. The hands-on activity often involves planting something. Even if we do an indoor craft, we continue to provide vegetable plants for the residents in the spring session. Food and drink are always part of our activity. There is always chocolate from Josh Earlies, a local chocolatier, a delicious cake from Wegmans, some pretzels or other snacks, and beverages such as lemonade, tea, or water.

The dining room is usually set up for 4-6 residents per table. The PGC volunteers take the crafts, food, etc. to individual tables and provide assistance as needed. The volunteer also stays at a table during the quiz or sing along. It is gratifying to see the smiles and hear all the appreciation for the event. Even the confused residents' spirits soar, and we often find they still remember the words to the songs they sang so many years ago. The same is true for the quiz. Questions regarding things from the past seem to be embedded in many of the residents' memories. Again, the gratitude from not only the residents but the staff, and families is heartwarming. The total time involved in the actual activity is approximately two and a half hours from set up to clean up. Usually, PGC has approximately 8-9 volunteers. Since COVID restrictions were implemented, the PGC was limited to 6 volunteers which also made additional planning and less involved crafts necessary. We continue to adapt the program in conjunction with the needs of the facility, residents, and the external pressures of the greater environment.

While PGC routinely goes to the nursing home, we also provide programs on request. We received a call from the Director of Recreation in South Whitehall Township requesting an indoor program for seniors to be held in late winter of last year, 2023. On March 09, 2023, the PGC went to the South Whitehall Township Building to provide a program for seniors. There the PGC members helped the seniors make indoor water gardens with green glass gems to add a reflective element, succulent teacups, and one of our crafty members, Evelyn Broad, taught the attendees how to make florist bows for their water gardens. Since the activity was right before St. Patrick's Day, PGC used ribbons with shamrocks to add to the festivities. One attendee had just lost her husband and working with plants provided a soothing atmosphere. All attendees were very positive about the experience.



The first pix with Mary: Mary Stanley, Chair of Horticulture Therapy demonstrating how the finished tea cup bird feeder should look. The second pix with Horticulture members L to R supporting our Christmas activity include Helen Papatthanasiou, Mary Stanley, Chair, Evelyn Broad, Patty Molitoris, Megan Stanley, Claire Kukielka, and Carol Nagle.

Environmental/Recycling Report

Plastic Pollution – A Global Crises

Plastic pollution statistics are overwhelming. It is important to review and understand the current state of plastic pollution so that organizations, governments and responsible citizens can prioritize mitigation efforts and actions.

Mismanagement of plastic materials have made it one of the biggest environmental problems of our lifetime. Millions of tons of plastic waste are dumped every year, a majority of which makes its way into the oceans, harming wildlife and ecosystems in the process. Yet 91% of all plastic that has ever been made is not recycled. Key statistics surrounding plastic pollution, as described below, are shocking. It is crucial that we take action NOW before it's too late to reverse the damage.

The World Generates over 400 Million Tons of Plastic Annually

The first commercially available plastic product was launched in 1907 but mass production did not start until 1952. Since then, annual plastic production has increased nearly 200-fold today, we produce as much plastic globally as two-thirds of humanity's total mass. Our reckless plastic use and consumption has driven the world to generate over 400 million tons of plastic waste each year ⁽¹⁾ to keep up with demand, 60% of which ends up in our natural environment or landfills.

The US Produces 42 Million Metric Tons of Plastic Every Year, the Highest in the World

The world's biggest contributor of plastic pollution is none other than the US, according to a 2021 US congressional report.⁽²⁾ The country, which is already one of the world's top contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, generates about 42 million metric tons of plastic waste each year, amounting to 130kg (287 pounds) per person. In comparison, the US produces almost twice as much as China, and more than all the countries in the European Union combined. An estimated 1.13-2.24 million metric tons of that waste is leaked into oceans and the environment every year.

More Than 8 Million Tons of Plastic Enter the Oceans Annually

When plastic waste is dumped into landfills or irresponsibly discarded, significant amounts are leaked into natural environments and at least eight million tons of plastic ends up in ocean waters every single year. It is estimated that roughly 40% of the ocean's surface is covered in plastic debris and if our plastic consumption and behavior continues, scientists warn that there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean as soon as 2030.

Ocean Plastic Pollution on Track to Rise to 29 Million Metric Tons by 2040

Some 11 million metric tons (or eight million tons) of plastic waste and pollution enters the world's oceans every year which has detrimental impacts on marine wildlife and the health of ecosystems – animals can ingest plastic, get entangled in them, and plastic debris increases the risk of invasive species to just list a few. Plastic pollution is set to grow to 29 million metric tons per year in less than 20 years from now. But scientists claim it is possible to slash 80% of that pollution: by reducing the growth of virgin plastic production, improving waste collection systems, and investing in recyclable plastics.

100,000 Animals Die from Plastic Entanglement Each Year

Aside from the debris consisting of plastic bottles, containers, and even face masks, between 500,000 and one million tons of ghost fishing equipment – fishing gear that are lost, abandoned or discarded left by fishermen – enters the ocean each year. Fishing equipment are either dumped from fishing boats or washed away from ships and shorelines. As a result, at least 100,000 marine animals die from getting entangled in fishing litter from either asphyxiation or trapped from traveling for food and are starved to death.



50%

Of the plastic ever manufactured was made in the last 17 years.

79%

Of plastic waste is sent to landfills or the ocean, while only 9% is recycled.



8,000,000

Pieces of plastic pollution find their way into our oceans daily and harm marine ecosystems.

100%

Of baby sea turtles have plastic in their stomachs.



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Environmental/Recycling Report, con't.

Humans Ingests 5 Grams of Plastic Every Week

Many marine animals accidentally ingest plastic waste or microplastics in which larger plastic debris breaks down into smaller plastic particles that are invisible to the human eye. As that plastic travels up the food chain, it is inevitable that humans will end up consuming plastic. Humans ingest about five grams of plastic every week – a spoonful that weighs about as much as a bottle cap. Combined throughout a year, the amount of plastic we ingest amounts to a full dinner plate. In 10 years, we would have eaten five pounds of plastic and 44 pounds worth of plastics over the course of a lifetime.

Plastics Set to Release More Green House Gas Emissions in the US than Coal by 2030

Plastic pollution is more than just waste that is discarded and left to rot in the environment, its production is also contributing to air pollution and global warming. In the United States, plastic production is currently responsible for 232 million metric tons of greenhouse gases every year, which is the equivalent of 116.5 gigawatts of coal plants. But the production will outpace coal plants in the country by 2030, according to a 2021 report. What's more, to produce plastic food packaging and drink bottles gases need to be fracked from the ground, transported, and processed industrially, processes which contribute millions of tons of greenhouse gas emissions, particularly methane, which is considered to be 25 times as potent as carbon dioxide.

COVID-19 Added 25,900 Tons of Plastic Pollution in the Ocean

To mitigate the contagion of COVID-19, single-use surgical face masks, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and plastic bottles of disinfectant have become essential daily needs. Lockdowns and safety measures have also driven up the use of food takeaway packaging. This extensive increase of plastic consumption has resulted in an estimated 8.4 million tons of plastic waste generated from 193 countries since the start of the pandemic, 25,900 tons of which – equivalent to more than 2,000 double decker buses – has leaked into the ocean, according to recent research.



How do we Tackle this Enormous Global Crisis – In subsequent reports on this subject, we will take a closer look at focused efforts underway by organizations and governments to mitigate the growing plastic pollution crisis. There are many solutions readily available and some that are new and innovative. For example, across the milk-consuming parts of the world, milk containers have changed from glass to plastic in the last 50 years. Milk containers of all sizes are one of the most commonly used plastic containers. Millions are produced daily. Unfortunately, many of these plastic containers end up in landfills, rivers, and oceans, causing harm to wildlife and the environment. While milk bought in glass can be more expensive, it diminishes the avalanche of plastic containers since glass is much easier to recycle indefinitely. New technologies are being deployed to overcome some of the difficult challenges such as recycling plastic bags which continues to be challenging with conventional plastic recycling processes. This is a serious issue since globally we use 160,000 plastic bags a second and 5 trillion per year. There are encouraging reports from academia⁽³⁾ indicating successful conversion to Hydrogen from plastic waste using high temperature decomposition process. This can be a game changer since clean Hydrogen can also contribute to our global energy needs which currently is predominately fossil fuel based.

- Naser & Marsha Chowdhury

Co-Chairs of Environmental/Recycling Committee,

GCFP District II/III and Members of Parkland Garden Club (Orefield, PA)

References:

“How to recycle plastic bags,” Marina Maletic, GreenCitizen, July 5, 2023

“Eight shocking plastic pollution statistics to know about,” Olivia Lai, Earth.Org, May 30, 2023

“New method to convert plastic trash into clean Hydrogen,”

TrchExplore, Nanyang Technology University, Singapore, April 8, 2022



Citizen Scientists: District Precipitation Study

In 2023, sixteen members from nine clubs participated in the Citizen Science Precipitation Study. We shared monthly results and looked for patterns, such as latitude, longitude and elevation, to understand where the rain was falling. Interestingly, none of these seemed to be significant factors.

In 2024 we plan to explore how topography might be a more likely influence. For example, one participant who lives in the Hawk Mountain area consistently received more rain each month than other observers and reported the highest total amount of 45.64 inches for the project season. As a benefit, participants discovered that tracking rainfall daily provided them with a tool for knowing when to water their gardens.

We look forward to welcoming returning and new contributors in 2024 and increasing our observation points in the district. The study requires little time. During April through October, participants record rainfall each morning for the previous 24 hours. At the end of the month, they send me the total for the entire month. I collect the data and compile monthly reports.

We will be organizing our 2024 effort in March to be ready to start our observation on April 1st. Please let me know if you would like to learn more about this project. diana.rudloff@outlook.com

- Diana Rudloff, Upper Perkiomen Valley Garden Club



Birds & Raptors

I was recently gifted a great book by David Allen Sibley, entitled “What It’s Like to be a Bird, From Flying to Nesting, Eating, to Singing, What Birds are Doing and Why”. I thought I’d share some fun facts from the book that I found interesting, specifically about our local birds.

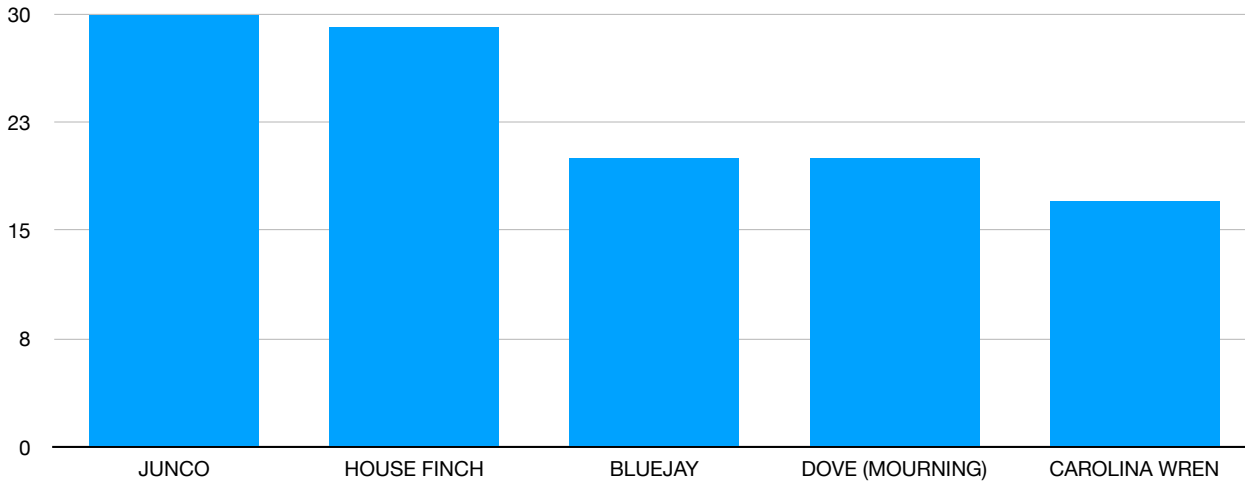
- Male and female Canadian Geese are similar in appearance, the only way to tell them apart is observing them in a family, the male tends to stand taller.
- Fewer than half of all Mallard hatchlings survive the first two weeks, and only a third of those survive the next six weeks to fledging.
- Chickadees in hard winter climates are very diligent about storing food for the winter. A single chickadee can store up to a thousand seeds in a day. This strategy is called scatter hoarding, as the birds simply tuck food away in any crevice where it will fit and can remember where each item is stored. The hippocampus-the part of the brain involved in spatial memory-is larger in birds that live in colder climates, where storing food is more important; it grows large in the fall, then shrinks in the spring.
- Nuthatches nest in cavities in trees but rarely use birdhouses. Red-breasted Nuthatches “paint” the entrance holes with sap that they carry from pine, spruce, or fir trees using either their bill or a small bit of bark as a paintbrush. The sticky resin deters squirrels and other birds from entering.
- Have you ever noticed a mockingbird standing on the lawn and flicking its wings above its back? This is known as wing flashing and is a trick the birds use to try to scare insects out of hiding. It makes the insect “blink” and if an insect moves, even slightly, it reveals its location and the bird can try to catch it.
- Why do birds take baths? Besides the obvious: that it helps with the removing of dirt from the feathers, the most important function seems to be that it helps to restore the shape of the feathers. Like human hair, feathers can be bent and misshapen by everyday pressures. Simply wetting and drying the feathers restores them to their proper alignment. The birds always follow the bath with a preening session to put the feathers back in alignment.
- In many species males offer food to their mates as part of courtship, presumably signaling their ability of provide for future offspring.

I hope you enjoyed some of the many interesting facts taken from this book. Pick up a copy and you’ll continue to be amazed about birds.

- Janet Hurlbrink, Birds & Raptors Chair, GC of Reading

Citizen Scientist: Backyard Bird Count

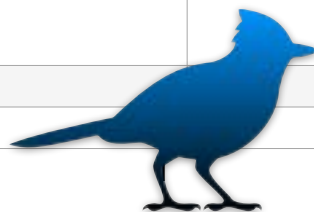
DECEMBER DISTRICT II/III BACKYARD BIRD COUNT



■ Top Five Birds Seen in December, 2023

SPECIES

	DECEMBER (6 watchers)	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	SEASON TOTAL
JUNCO	30				
HOUSE FINCH	29				
BLUEJAY	20				
DOVE (MOURNING)	20				
CAROLINA WREN	17				
ROBIN	14				
DOWNEY WOODPECKER	11				
HOUSE SPARROW	10				
TUFTED TITMOUSE	9				
COWBIRD	8				
NUTHATCH (RED-BREASTED)	8				
CHICKADEE (BLACK CAP)	7				
CROW	7				
CEDAR WAXWING	6				
NUTHATCH (WHITE-BREASTED)	5				
RED-HEADED WOODPECKER	4				
BLACKBIRD	3				
CARDINAL	3				
BLUEBIRD	3				
SONG SPARROW	3				
RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER	2				
STARLINGS	2				
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	2				



FEEDER BIRD ID PHOTOS



Junco



House Finch



Blue Jay



Mourning Dove



White breasted Nuthatch



Blackbird



Carolina Wren



Robin



Downey Woodpecker



House Sparrow



Red headed Woodpecker



Cardinal



Tufted Titmouse



Cowbird



Red-Breasted Nuthatch



Starling



Song Sparrow



Black Cap Chickadee



Crow



Cedar Waxwing



Mocking Bird



White Throated Sparrow



Carolina Chickadee



Red winged Blackbird



Eastern Bluebird



Red Bellied Woodpecker



Cooper's Hawk



Didn't anyone see me? I hang out on the ground under feeders. I'm a Flicker!



House Finch



Purple Finch



Hairy Woodpecker Downey Woodpecker



10-14" ht.

Sharp Shinned (Sharpies) or the old name of Sparrow Hawk



14-20" ht.

Cooper's

Can you tell us apart? Compare us at Audubon or Cornell Ornithology websites.



FLOWER POUNDING ON PAPER OR CLOTH

Supplies

Hammer or rubber mallet
Wood board or hard, smooth surface
Newspaper
Water color paper or cotton cloth
Painters or wash tape to hold flowers
Wax paper or paper towel to cover
Sturdy table or floor
Fine point Markers
Finishing supplies

Flowers

Pansies	Tick seed
Daisies	Delphinium
Chrysanthemums	Saxifraga
Zinnias	Rose
Marigolds	Plumbago
Stock	Geraniums
Balloon Flower	Lantana
Purple Verbena	Cosmos
Dandelions	Ivy
Coreopsis	Fern

Create a Pounding Flowers craft with watercolor paper or cotton cloth.

The end product can be a card, picture, gift tag, notebook or shirt. The project takes a half an hour plus time to dry.

1. Arrange tools needed such as a hammer, wooden board no smaller than project, newspaper to absorb bleeding, watercolor paper or cotton cloth to receive image, and painters' tape to hold stems.
2. If using cotton fabric, prepare the cloth to ensure permanence of transfer. To mordant fabric, follow the following steps below.
3. Cut moisture laden fresh flowers of vibrant colors and varying shapes in the morning after dew dissipates. Leaves and stems can remain on flower. Flowers with flat surfaces work best. Multi-stems flowers can be separated and arranged individually. The peduncle or receptacle can be removed to make the flower lay flat.
4. To avoid bleeding of color onto a multi-layered cloth (tote bag or shirt), place paper towels or an absorbent cloth under the first layer. Smooth for no wrinkles.
5. Arrange the flower face down on a prepare paper or cloth. Look for a pattern, bouquet design, outline or free form as desired. Additional leaves or plant life may be added. To hold stems in place, a small piece of painter's tape may be added.
6. Cover the flowers with a paper towel or wax paper. The paper towel will allow one to see the degree of transfer being done. The wax paper may also be secured with some painter's tape.
7. Using a hammer or mallet, gently pound from edge of flower to the middle. Multiple taps to all points of the flower. Then move to the next flower or leaf.
8. Check the transfer of color. If poor, try tapping again to transfer more pigment. When complete, remove the top cover. Additional transfers can be added to the design by following the same process. Leaves will require greater pounding to transfer.
9. Gently remove the foliage and discard. Difficult foliage to removed can be cleared after drying. Allow the transfer to dry for 30 minutes by lying flat in a cool, dry location.
10. Optional: Use markers to outline or enhance the image.
11. Cut the paper to fit into a picture frame. Fold into a card or notebook.



Preparing cotton fabric:

It is important for all cotton fabric, white or neutral to be pre-treated or mordanted to hold the color.

1. Wash the fabric: Wash the fabric in cold water without any fabric softeners or detergents. This will help remove any sizing or dirt that may interfere with the flower pounding process.
2. Prepare the alum soak by mixing hot water (120-140 degrees) in a glass bowl. Stir in alum (aluminum sulphate) which can be found in a grocery store spice aisle. Proportion is based on fabric weight. A general rule of thumb is a 16:1 ratio. Using a couple of dishtowels, one tablespoon should suffice.
3. Soak the fabric in the mixture for about 15-20 minutes. It can soak for 24 hours. Alum is a natural mordant that helps to bind the pigments to the fabric.
4. Rinse the fabric: After soaking, rinse the fabric thoroughly with cold water to remove any excess alum.
5. Dry the fabric: Hang the fabric to air dry or tumble dry on low heat. Do not use fabric softeners or dryer sheets, as they can interfere with the flower pounding process. Iron as needed.



Color transfers may not appear as the cut plant. Over time plant color will fade.

Clear acrylic spray can help preserve integrity of transfer arrangement.

Colors will dim over time. Do not wash; dry clean, if necessary.

A tannin bath, use oak gall powder in simmering water and soak for 1 hour or longer. This will help fiber absorb the color better. Fabrics will absorb some of the tannin dye. Soy milk can also be used as a tannin.

Put Alum into tap warm water, stir fabric in water and soak overnight. Let dry and cure for a few days. Cream of tartar can be added to keep fabric soft

Flower pounding, or Tatakizone, is an ancient Japanese technique of hammering plants to create patterns on fabrics.

NGC President

NGC President Brenda Moore promotes two new programs during her 2023-2025 reign – Plant America, Feed America and Plant America-Landscape for Wildlife.

Plant America, **Feed America** focuses on donating our garden harvests to those with food insecurity. It can be helping out a neighbor from your garden to donating food from community gardens. Gardeners have a heart. Show this by recording this year's harvest and having NGC tabulate food donated. Forms on National Garden Clubs website or <https://gardenclub.org/plant-america-feed-america#:~:text=PLANT%20AMERICA%2DFEED%20AMERICA%20DONATION%20FORM%2C>.

Plant America – **Landscape for Wildlife** promotes registering your yard through National Garden Club Certified Wildlife Habitat.

As garden club members we should be aiming to practice sustainability in our personal landscapes. Habitats are being lost to development and we can hold the key to preserving them for future generations. As development pushes natural habitats further and further back, we can encourage wildlife to co-exist with us in our own landscapes. Biodiversity is a key to successful wildlife habitat.

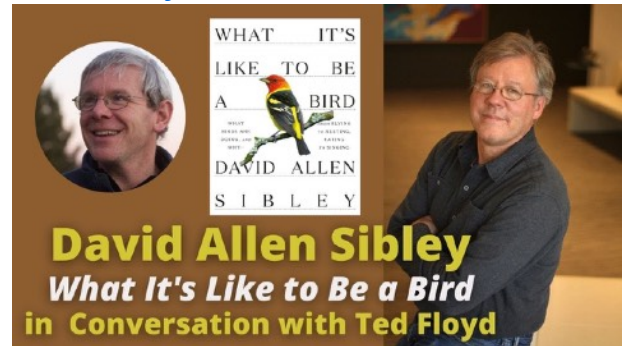
You get to choose the wildlife you want to encourage. It may be only birds, small mammals, and insects. You can provide food, water, cover and places for animals and insects to raise their young. Work to reduce areas of lawn. Make conscious choices when choosing plants for your garden. Look for plants that are native and keep away from invasive species. Good plant choices provide fruit and seeds for native wildlife. Native trees make good choices. Keep a clean water source such as a small fountain or birdbath, or if you have enough property, build a pond. Provide a wood pile or leave a dead tree.

A simple application asks about wildlife provision of food (perennials, trees), water (natural or provided), shelter (trees, bush piles) and space (sustainability practices).



Citizen Scientist Report, con't.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hcdmsjGFEVE>



David Allen Sibley, "What It's Like to Be a Bird" -- Highlights

In this video, we share some highlights from our event with David Allen Sibley, author of "What It's Like to Be a Bird: From Flying to Nesting, Eating to Sin...

www.youtube.com



GCFP District II/III

March 18, 2024 Meeting

10:00 AM via Zoom

Guest Speaker Karen Campbell

My Wonderful Wildlife Garden

Karen Campbell, an award-winning macro photographer and naturalist, will share stunning images of the wonderful wildlife in her naturalized garden. Her tiny photo subjects include pollinators, native plants, and important prey/predator relationships.

Her stories explain how her natural approach to gardening sustains wildlife.

She'll leave us with tips on how to encourage wildlife to appear in our gardens too!

Karen and her husband transformed an old corn field and hedgerows in Lehigh County over 20 plus years ago to a native plant preserve where they document its wildlife.



Photos copyrighted by Karen Campbell



Zoom Information will be published closer to March 18th.

Hosted by Upper Perkiomen Valley Garden Club



Schedule for Buds & Blooms 2024

Buds and Bloom Submission Suggestions:

Spring Issue May 3:

Committee Chair Reports:
Trees
Raffle
Bees and Butterflies
Laurel Awards
Blue Star Marker

President's Reports:
Horticulture Therapy
Recycle, Reuse, Repurpose

Summer Issue August 2:

Committee Chair Reports:
Water Issues
Horticulture/Landscaping
Youth Activities
Habitat for Humanity

President's Reports:
Road Trips Taken

Fall Issue November 1:

Committee Chair Reports:
Habitat for Humanity
Life Membership
Horticulture Therapy
Citizen Scientist Final Report

President's Reports:
Recommended Speakers

Others that can be included at anytime:

Education Coordinator – as topics arise
Parliamentarian – serves at meetings
Newsletter – four issues of Buds and Bloom
Inspiration Leader – serves at meetings

Make sure your information is complete:

Include your name, title, and club are directly on the submission. It saves me figuring out who wrote the document and if I need to contact you.

Send your submissions to, and if you need help, Tracy M Sabocheck at tracyartemis@icloud.com or 610-207-2103.

Reports for District Meetings 2024

District II/III Meetings:

March 18 District Meeting via ZOOM

Hosted by Upper Perkiomen Valley GC

Committee Chair Reports:
Bees and Butterflies
Birds/Raptures
Environmental/Recycling
Horticulture/Landscaping
Trees
Water

Also:

Inspiration Leader - Invocation
Parliamentarian – position
Club President Reports (upcoming events and winter activities!)

June 5 District Meeting In Person

Hosted by GC of Montrose

Committee Chair Reports:
Blue Star Marker
Citizen Scientist
Conservation
Habitat for Humanity
Raffle
Youth Activity

Also:

Inspiration Leader - Invocation
Parliamentarian – position
Club President Reports (Community Service Projects)

September 9 Annual District Meeting & Lunch

Hosted by Emmaus Garden Club

Committee Chair Reports:
Awards/Grants/Scholarships
Horticulture Therapy
Laurel Awards
Life Members
Raffle

Also:

Inspirational Leader – Invocation/Memorial
Parliamentarian – position
Laurel Awards – presentation
District Raffle – coordinate
Club President Reports (Special gardening activities)



Calendar of Events and Submittals 2024

Feb 15	Seed Money Application for Projects	searsmarj@gmail.com
Feb 15	ZOOM by GCFP for Club Membership Chairs and Treasurers	via separate email for connection
Mar 1	Citizen Scientist Project	diana.rudloff@outlook.com
Mar 1	Perennial Bloom application due	DDirector23@gmail.com
Mar 1-10	Philadelphia Flower Show "The Enchanted Garden"	
Mar 18	District Meeting hosted by Upper Perkiomen Valley GC via ZOOM	via separate email for connection
Mar 11	Trash to Treasure Club Entries	diana.rudloff@outlook.com
Mar 22	PA Bird Day	
Apr 7-9	GCFP State Convention in Lancaster	Info in Keystone Gardener Winter Issue!
Apr 15	Keystone Gardener article submissions due	
April 22	Earth Day	
April 26	Arbor Day	
May 1	GCFP Dues and Membership Roster	GCFP
May 3	Spring Issue Buds & Blooms	tracyartemis@icloud.com
May 31	Form 990 501-c-3	GCFP
June 2-8	National Garden Week	
June 5	District Meeting hosted by GC of Montrose ...	In Person Event
June 15	Keystone Gardener online article submissions due	
Aug 2	Summer Issue Buds & Blooms	tracyartemis@icloud.com
Aug	Laurel Award for Club Members	to be announced
Sept 9	Annual District Meeting and Luncheon hosted by Emmaus GC	
	In Person Event	

2024 Contact Information

National Garden Club -

Brenda Moore, President

website gardenclubs.org

1709 Edgewood Drive, Oak Hill, WV 25901

BMoore@gardenclub.org or headquarters@gardenclub.org

"Go Green...Plant America"

Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania

Leeanna Ryba

website pagardenclubs.org

2777 Leechburg Road, Lower Burrell, PA 15068-3138

GCFPPresident@gmail.com

"Plant America, While Keeping PA Beautiful"

Central Atlantic Region - State Garden Clubs

Monica Hanson, Director

21 Henning Drive, Orchard Park, NY 14127

CARS GC.RegionDirector@gmail.com

"Together, We'll Plant America Cleaner, Greener and Healthier"

District II/III

Jane Kruse, Director

625 Schuylkill Avenue, Pottsville, PA 17901

DDirector23@gmail.com 570-628-4802

"Garden Opportunities Await Us"

Claire Kukielka, Assistant Director

4177 Kistler Road, Schnecksville, PA 18078

clkuk@ptd.net 484-695-0160