



THE NATIONAL

gardener

FALL 2020

**GARDENING WITH
CHILDREN: READY,
SET, GROW!**

TWO GREEN THUMBS-UP

**DESIGNING FOR WILDLIFE
IN THE GARDEN**



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The National Gardener

Fall 2020 | Vol. 91, No. 4

National Garden Clubs, Inc.

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60 National Affiliate Member Organizations
330 International Affiliate Member Organizations

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THE COVER

Few plants rival chrysanthemums for reliable fall color. The frosty violet petals of the Mum Carousel radiate outward from the center, providing an exciting burst of autumn splendor.
Photo by Arabella Dane.

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Gay L. Austin
2019-2021 NGC President

President's Message

At the arrival of autumn, we anticipate shorter, cooler days and even cooler evenings.

Sweaters are hoisted from dresser drawers or closets. A mosaic of red, orange and gold leaves on the damp ground greets us on our walks through yards, neighborhoods or woodlands. We savor the familiar seasonal aromas that emerge from the kitchen.

NGC members know that fall signals many changes to the garden. The change of season provides us with the impetus to tackle all of those end-of-summer gardening chores – weeding, dead-heading spent blooms, harvesting the last vegetables, preparing mulch and compost and cleaning and storing garden tools. But perhaps most of all, we gardeners are excited to select and plant

spring bulbs that we know will provide us with a welcoming riot of color and texture following a long winter.

While we are focused on the changes to our gardening routine, many garden club members also take this time to plan and prepare for club projects in the coming year. A great resource for your club is the new NGC website! Recently launched by the NGC Website Development Committee, the new,

user-friendly website offers many new avenues of sharing and learning. I invite you to visit and explore the many new features at gardenclub.org

As you read through this issue of The National Gardener, you will see a section of articles on efforts by garden club members to introduce and incorporate youth gardening programs into their

“...many garden club members also take this time to plan and prepare for club projects in the coming year.”

communities. These stellar projects by garden clubs in Missouri, South Carolina and New Hampshire illustrate how a garden can be the perfect setting in which to cultivate a meaningful and fun learning experience with children. Gardening with children promotes team building, communication skills and provides the opportunity to learn how to plan a garden and research the types of plants for the space, as well as promotes personal responsibility, caretaking, independence and environmental awareness. And even though some of these projects were undertaken pre-COVID-19, your garden club can make plans now to plan similar or new outdoor learning experiences with children next year. NGC is proud of its long-standing focus on a wide range of youth-directed gardening initiatives. The impact these programs have on children, adult mentors, volunteers and communities is immeasurable. ■

Gay L. Austin

Cultivate our Garden Community

WITH GARDENING TIPS, IDEAS AND PROJECTS

Members of National Garden Clubs are a wealth of knowledge and information on all things in the garden.

The National Gardener would like to tap into your skills and talents, as well as showcase your favorite projects.

PLEASE SEND:

- **A brief description** of your idea or how a unique project fostered success.
- **A photo or two** of your project is welcome. Photos must be high resolution 300 dpi with photo credit information provided.

SEND TO:

Patricia Binder, editor
The National Gardener
patricia.b.binder@gmail.com



Do you, or your club, have gardening tips, tricks, ideas or project successes to share?

pennsylvania seed challenge

GARDEN CLUBS IN THE KEYSTONE STATE PLANT BURPEE SEED GARDENS

National Garden Clubs, Inc. and W. Atlee Burpee Company are joining forces to create beautiful gardens across America.

Burpee® approached the leadership of The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania with the idea of planting gardens all over the nation as a way to prove that superior seeds result in beautiful gardens. Burpee's DNA is steeped in a rich history of research and development beginning in the late 1800s and continuing today. Hundreds of innovative, high-quality flower, fruit and vegetable varieties have been introduced by Burpee.

The Pennsylvania Seed Challenge "test" will provide information to learn and establish best practices for a future larger



▲ The Burpee seed shipment arrived in February. Each of the 10 districts of The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania received 4,000 Burpee seed packets. Photos courtesy of Kay Bair.

national program using Burpee seeds. Garden club members in Pennsylvania were ready to go when the seeds were delivered in early February.

However, at the advent of COVID-19, district meetings were canceled and the plans, ideas and seed distributions of garden club members in Pennsylvania were washed away — or so they thought! The gardeners accepted the new challenges. Some seeds were distributed at pre-shutdown meetings, with distribution by car, mail or pickup following shutdown. Just as garden club members nationally have pivoted and reinvented ways in which to conduct club business as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, garden club members in Pennsylvania realized the situation provided more time to plan their gardens. So, with seeds in hand, they

▶ Beautiful radishes. Photo by Rosie Lawrence.

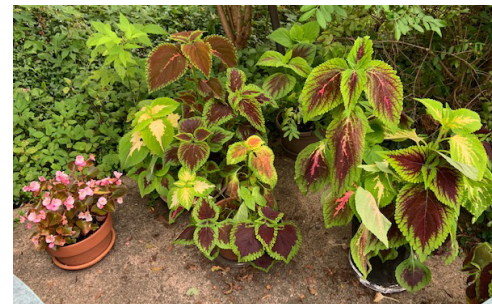


propagated seedlings in their homes and greenhouses and were able to spend more time nurturing their plants for transplantation in the spring.

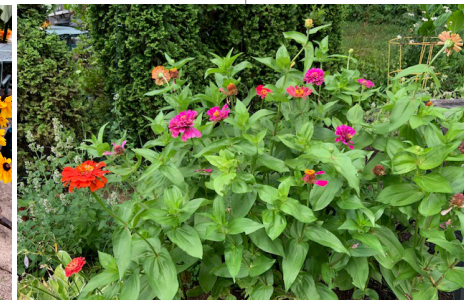
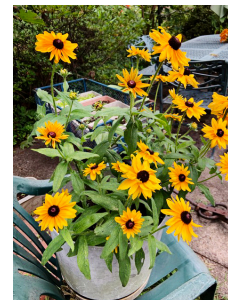
The Burpee seeds germinated and the seedlings developed and flourished. Our Pennsylvania gardeners met the Pennsylvania Seed Challenge - right in our own backyards. ■

Patricia Wolanski

Vice chairman
NGC Sponsorship Committee
pwolanski@verizon.net



◀ TOP LEFT: Coleus
BOTTOM LEFT: Gloriosa Daisy
RIGHT: Zinnia
Photos by Majorie Sears.



▲ Marion Walker, member of Town and Country Garden Club. Photo by Susan Swala.



◀ Santa Lucia Sunflower. Photo by Marianne Barnhart.

Spicy Saber Basil. Photo by Karen Wychock.

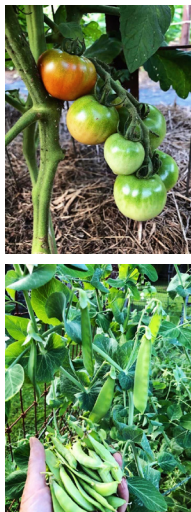


About Burpee Seeds

A true "heritage brand," W. Atlee Burpee Company was founded in 1876 by Washington Atlee Burpee in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The company, which began as a mail-order chicken business, quickly expanded its scope of products, including the sale of garden seeds.

In 1888, Burpee bought Fordhook, a farm near Doylestown, Pennsylvania, and transformed it into what would soon become a world-famous plant development facility. Successful experiments at Fordhook Farm led to

the best European vegetables and flowers being improved and adapted to American growing conditions – a mission that Burpee continues today. According



LEFT: Zinnia TOP: Burpee tomatoes grew "knee high by the Fourth of July." BOTTOM: Snow pea pods Photos by Sue Bunkin.

Burpee donates seeds to organizations across the U.S., including National Garden Clubs Inc. In 2015, Burpee distributed one million of its Bee and Butterfly Garden flower seed packets to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior to help combat rapidly dwindling populations of honey bees and other pollinators in support of

U.S. President Barack Obama's national pollinator initiative. The seed packets were specifically designed to foster bee-friendly gardens and habitats in home and school gardens across the country.

Burpee is based in Warminster, Pennsylvania, in the Greater Philadelphia area. All Burpee products are non-GMO. Burpee seeds and plants are available — and guaranteed for all growing zones. The company's highly recognizable catalog is available in late December each year.

For information on ordering, gardening techniques, recipes, gift cards and more, visit: burpee.com

to Jamie Mattikow, president and chief executive officer, W. Atlee Burpee Company, "Gardens fail due to inferior seeds and emphasizes Burpee's goal is for all gardeners to plant a beautiful garden using Burpee's superior quality seeds."

In 1915, the company began to promote efforts toward implementing community victory gardens during World War I and prioritized flowers and hybridization breeding programs. In addition, improvements were made to advertising and the catalog — mailing a million catalogs each year to America's gardeners. Within 25 years, Burpee had developed the largest, most innovative seed company in the world. Always an innovator in the industry, Burpee introduced seed-starting kits for beginners in the 1970s.



Fordhook Farm. Photos courtesy of W. Atlee Burpee Company.



NGC 2020 smokey bear and woodsy owl poster contest

The National Garden Clubs Inc. Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl Poster Contest is offered each year to elementary school students in first through fifth grade. It marks the collaboration of National Garden Clubs Inc., and the United States Forest Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture — a partnership that spans over 50 years.

The contest encourages budding young artists to create a colorful poster that showcases their talents, as well as an understanding of critical messages from the icons of the U.S. Forest Service — Smokey Bear, which encourages personal responsibility for fire prevention, and/or Woodsy Owl, which promotes exploration and stewardship of the natural world.

In 2019 the U.S. Forest Service marked the 75th birthday of Smokey Bear; Woodsy Owl has been the organization's antipollution steward since 1971.

The NGC 2020 Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl poster contest winner will be honored with a recognition ceremony in Washington D.C. at a date to be determined.

Patricia Smith

Chairman, Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl Poster Contest
Pasmith75@bellsouth.net



GRAND PRIZE WINNER

Second Grade

June Crawford

Germantown, Tennessee

Sponsor - Germantown Garden Club

GARDEN CLUB IN THE GARDEN STATE GETS TWO 'GREEN' THUMBS-UP FOR ames tool grant community project

As many members of garden clubs across the nation may attest, they are discovering new ways to adjust or reinvent efforts for planned community projects during COVID-19. Garden clubs that were the recipients of 2020 Ames Tool Grants also have changed or delayed their proposed projects.

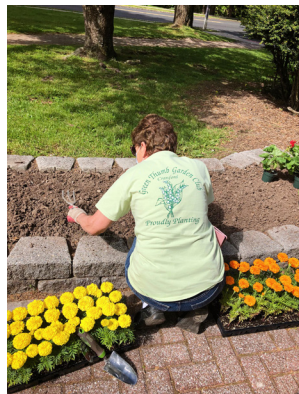
Members of Green Thumb Garden Club in Cranford, New Jersey, initially planned to utilize its 2020 Ames Tool Grant for a "Save the Bees" project with members of a local Girl Scout troop to increase the number



of plants that attract pollinators at a local park.

Due to area guidelines in conjunction with coronavirus restrictions, club members instead planted annuals to welcome visitors to Memorial Park, a green space that features monuments dedicated to local veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice during wartime service.

In addition, when the annual Memorial Day Parade in Cranford was canceled, club members made it their mission to tackle planting beds at the park and selected annuals in the colors of the rainbow – red geraniums,



AMES

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TOOL GRANT PROGRAM

AMES proudly sponsors the National Garden Clubs' Tools Grant Program since 2014. AMES provides tools for grant winners to support local community gardening projects.

"WELLNESS GARDEN"

In collaboration with the James C. Kennedy Wellness Center.
The Charleston Magnolia Garden Club, Mississippi

"RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE GARDENS"
The Burlington Garden Club, Vermont



"GARDEN BEAUTY"
The Wedowee Garden Club, Alabama



"POLLINATOR FRIENDLY GARDEN"
The Ramblers Garden Club Louisville, Kentucky



orange marigolds, yellow marigolds, green parsley and blue, violet and indigo petunias – to offer hope and cheer to area residents. Officials from Cranford and the local Veterans of Foreign Wars held a private ceremony available to residents virtually and the event also was televised by a local TV station, which highlighted the club’s beautification efforts.

Despite a number of challenges to fulfill a planned community project using the tools received from its Ames Tool Grant, members of Green Thumb Garden Club were able to pivot its energies and focus on other projects in their community. According to club members, the superior quality of the Ames tools they received, particularly the weeder/cultivator tool, made their efforts much easier. The result is a colorful, welcoming space for the enjoyment of the Cranford community. ■

Flossie Narducci

*Manager, Ames Tool Grants
Sponsorship Committee
NGCtoolgrant@gmail.com*

Photos courtesy of Green Thumb Garden Club

To register for an Ames Tool Grant, visit gardenclub.org/projects/ames-garden-tools



2020 AMES TOOL GRANT PROGRAM

Ames Tools transform gardens and communities.

National Garden Clubs Inc. and The Ames Companies Inc., the largest manufacturer of garden tools in the United States, forged a collaboration in 2014. In 2020, The Ames Companies generously agreed to extend its in-kind grant program, and set aside a total of \$4,500 (retail value) of garden tools for local community gardening projects performed or supported by NGC local member clubs. The tool selection was expanded in 2018, to include tools for children and a group of lighter weight and mid-sized tools, which are more conducive for use in school or garden therapy projects. Garden clubs are eligible to apply for tools with a total retail value of no more than \$250.

Twenty-six NGC garden clubs in 22 U.S. states were recognized for a 2020 Ames Tool Grant, selected from over 100 applications across the nation. To view a list of the winning garden clubs, see the summer 2020 issue of this magazine. The tools received by garden club winners are being used to beautify communities; introduce youngsters to horticulture; work with those with disabilities; increase accessibility to fresh food; and other projects that enhance well-being and the environment.



ESPOMA AND NGC

PLANT AMERICA Together

Be a part of Plant America and watch your community GROW!

Members of National Garden Clubs Inc. are passionate about growing with a purpose and The Espoma Company supports their mission. Since 2017, the firm has sponsored the annual Espoma Plant America Grant program to recognize NGC affiliated garden clubs that have a penchant for projects in communities across the United States. Clubs selected receive a \$250 grant for Espoma Organic plant foods and potting soils.

The following 20 garden clubs have been named recipients of the 2020 Espoma Plant America Grant. Their efforts and inspiring projects forged collaborations with civic organizations and created unique multigenerational opportunities for stakeholders and volunteers.

Chambersburg Garden Club, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania

Members of the garden club maintain a fragrance garden, colonial garden and Japanese garden on the grounds of the Franklin County Historical Society –



▲ Photo courtesy of Chambersburg Garden Club

Kittochtinny Genealogy Library and Museum in Chambersburg. Projects include ongoing maintenance of numerous garden beds, as well as the planting of colorful annuals. The garden club is a member of The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania.

Clarice Wilson Garden Club, Greenville, South Carolina

In 2005, the garden club launched a butterfly garden project. In 2020, members began rejuvenating the garden by removing overgrown shrubs and invasive species and replanting it according to best practices of the South Carolina Native Plant Society. The garden club is a member of The Garden Club of South Carolina Inc.

Cocoa-Rockledge Garden Club, Rockledge, Florida

Members of the garden club are creating a walk-through garden that includes existing native flora and fauna,

as well as new native plantings. Designed to attract pollinators and birds native to the state, the garden will serve as an educational resource and peaceful refuge for the community. The garden club is a member of Florida Federation of Garden Clubs Inc.

Eastside Garden Club, Greenville, Tennessee

Garden club members work in tandem with Tusculum University to create an interest in and provide education on colonial gardening for students of all ages. Members maintain garden plots of heirloom herbs and perennials used by early settlers for cooking, medicines and dyes. The gardens, near historic Doak House Museum, benefit residents, school groups and visitors through classes, workshops and tours. The garden club is a member of Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs Inc.

For the Love of Growing Garden Club, Shoshone, Idaho

The garden club collaborates with numerous government entities and enlists a vast network of community partners in the development of a large, native plant and pollinator garden in Neher Park, along the scenic Little Wood River. Project goals include Monarch City USA and Bee City USA designations for the city. The garden club is a member of Garden Clubs of Idaho Inc.

Granada Garden Club, Thomasville, Georgia

In October 2017, the garden club marked its 50th anniversary



▲ Photo courtesy of Grenada Garden Club, Mississippi

with a beautification project of a city pocket park, which included the planting of trees, roses and a seating installation. In 2020, garden club members plan to add crepe myrtle and border grasses to the walkway. The garden club is a member of The Garden Club of Georgia Inc.

Grenada Garden Club, Grenada, Mississippi

Garden club members

are planting a nature trail on the campus of Holmes Community College in collaboration with college officials and students, as well as members of local Boy Scout troops and area youth gardeners. The project includes native pollinator plantings; a bluebird trail with nest boxes; water sources for wildlife; educational signage; a Little Free Library; and wellness and relaxation areas with hammocks, a swing and benches made by students at the community college. The garden club is a member of The Garden Clubs of Mississippi Inc.

Lakemoor Hills Garden Club, Knoxville, Tennessee

The garden club completed three of four stages of a large pocket garden project in Lakemoor Legacy Park and Garden. The site, known for its

Photo courtesy of Lakemoor Hills Garden Club ▶



challenging terrain, now features native plant rain gardens, azalea gardens and pollinator gardens and is a Certified Wildlife Habitat® of the National Wildlife Federation and a Monarch Waystation of Monarch Watch. The ambitious project included the collaboration with neighborhood associations, city and county organizations and other garden clubs of Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs Inc.

Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club, Lookout Mountain, Tennessee

Another project by a garden club and member of Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs Inc., and in conjunction with local organizations, is the restoration of several garden areas utilized by residents and visitors at the Commons of Lookout Mountain. The area, visible from a scenic highway, includes pollinator gardens, bird sanctuaries and two native bee nesting sites.



▲ Photo courtesy of Plantation Lakes Garden Club

Mason County Garden Club, Ludington, Michigan

Members of the White Pine Village Committee of Mason County Garden Club regularly maintain 30 gardens, 20 planters and an heirloom vegetable garden at historic White Pine Village, a large living-history museum from the late 19th century. The garden club is a member of Michigan Garden Clubs Inc.

Plantation Lakes Garden Club, Millsboro, Delaware

Patients at Atlantic Shores Rehab and Health Center reap the many benefits of gardens established in two courtyards by members of Plantation Lakes Garden Club, who assist the activities director and staff and guide patients in gardening activities, including planting, weeding, deadheading, mulching and watering. The garden club is a member of The Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs.

Plaquemine Garden Club, Plaquemine, Louisiana

Members of the garden club refurbished four large planters and an expansive flower bed at historic Iberville Parish Museum. Completed in 1848, the museum once served as the parish's first courthouse. Two new large planters recently were added, and all planters are maintained and refurbished seasonally by garden club members. The garden club is a member of Louisiana Garden Club Federation Inc.



▲ Photo courtesy of Rose and Dahlia Garden Club

Rose and Dahlia Garden Club, Athens, Georgia

Garden club members work with residents of Iris Place, a senior residential facility, to plant and maintain containers of colorful plants in five raised garden beds as part of a garden

therapy program that fosters the love of gardening. Future plans include the installation of additional raised beds near dining and reception areas. The garden club is a member of The Garden Club of Georgia.

Stevensville Garden Club, Stevensville, Montana

On September 11, 2020, garden club members dedicated an NGC Gold Star Families Memorial Marker at Veterans Park in Stevensville. Plantings in two long planters situated near the new marker, as well as an NGC Blue Star Memorial Marker, are actively maintained by garden club members. The garden club is a member of Montana Federation of Garden Clubs Inc.

Roswell Garden Club, Roswell, Georgia

Members of the garden club maintain an NGC Plant It Pink garden at a historic home in Roswell. Azaleas form the base of the small garden and annuals are added each spring. A bench invites solitude and reflection. Originally planted in spring 2010, garden club members are refurbishing the area by amending soils and adding perennials. The garden club is a member of The Garden Club of Georgia Inc.

The Twenty Five Gardeners, Farmington, Missouri

Three years ago, the garden club partnered with the City of Farmington to establish a large community garden. Club members assist local gardeners in more than 40 garden plots and maintain

two club plots and common areas that feature a children’s garden, vegetable beds, herbs, fruit trees and more. In keeping with gardening best practices and organic principles, only organic seeds, fertilizers and soil amendments are used in the gardens. Surplus produce is donated to local food banks. The garden club is a member of The Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri Inc.



Photo courtesy of The Garden Club of McKeesport

The Garden Club of McKeesport, McKeesport, Pennsylvania

Garden club members maintain a 3.5-acre rose garden and arboretum in McKeesport, which features 2,000 roses, a butterfly garden, an herb garden, cutting gardens, perennial beds and a pond. The garden club is a member of The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania.

Tipton Federated Garden Club, Tipton, Iowa

Garden club members are working with the local school district on the development of the 1,000-square-foot

Tipton Schools Learning Greenhouse, which will provide a hands-on, multiple disciplinary based agriculture and horticulture learning experience for students in grades pre-K through 12. Club members will provide ongoing gardening instruction to educators, members of the local chapter of Future Farmers of America and students in the STEM academic discipline. The garden club is a member of Federated Garden Clubs of Iowa Inc.



Photo courtesy of Top O’ the World Garden Club

Top O’ the World Garden Club, Gunnison, Colorado

Members of the small, active garden club acquired their fourth public garden to install and care for in Gunnison. The gardens, which are visible to community residents and visitors, feature a teaching and demonstration garden in which new garden club members join forces with their experienced counterparts. The garden club is a member of Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs Inc.

Tuolumne County Garden Club, Sonora, California

Although few plants are considered

“fireproof,” garden club members designed a demonstration garden featuring fire-resistant plants and shrubs to be installed on a half-acre plot adjacent to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Tuolumne-Calaveras headquarters in Sonora. Plantings will offer insights on how to create defensible landscaping in areas prone to wildfires. Plans also include the addition of resting areas, interpretive signage and paths that offer accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, walkways will guide community members and visitors to the Blue Star Memorial Marker and Gold Star Families Memorial Marker, as well as the memorial to fallen California firefighters. The garden club is a member of California Garden Clubs Inc.

Members of National Garden Clubs Inc. extend their heartfelt appreciation to The Espoma Company for sponsoring the Espoma Plant America Grant to assist garden clubs in their community projects. ■

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The Espoma Company
Espoma Plant America Grant Committee

The National Gardener Schedule

WINTER

January, February, March
Articles and Advertising
due: November 1

SPRING

April, May, June
Articles and Advertising
due: February 1

SUMMER

July, August, September
Articles and Advertising
due: May 1

FALL

October, November,
December
Articles and Advertising
due: August 1



About The Espoma Company

The Espoma Company began production in 1929 with its first product, Espoma Organic, a proprietary blend of natural materials available near the company's location in Millville, New Jersey. The ingredients in Espoma Organic were blended and bagged using shovels, wheelbarrows and scales – tasks accomplished through the painstaking efforts and hard work of scores of dedicated employees.

With product in hand, Espoma founder H.G. Sanders set out on the road selling in the New York, Philadelphia and Washington D.C. markets. This successful strategy helped the company survive the economic hard times brought on by the

Great Depression and the years that followed. However, growth was slow and the work hard. During this time, Sanders anticipated the need for a new type of plant food specifically designed for hollies and other acid-loving plants. His pioneering spirit and industry insights led to the testing of several plant food formulations with local nurseries. The result was Holly-tone® – the first organically balanced fertilizer developed and formulated to fulfill the requirements of acid-loving plants.

Today, Holly-tone is considered by professional and amateur gardeners to be the number-one plant food for all acid loving plants. In addition to this

brand leader, Espoma offers over 70 popular organic products and manufactures over 50-million pounds of organic fertilizer per year, making it a leading provider of organic fertilizers for the retail lawn and garden industries.

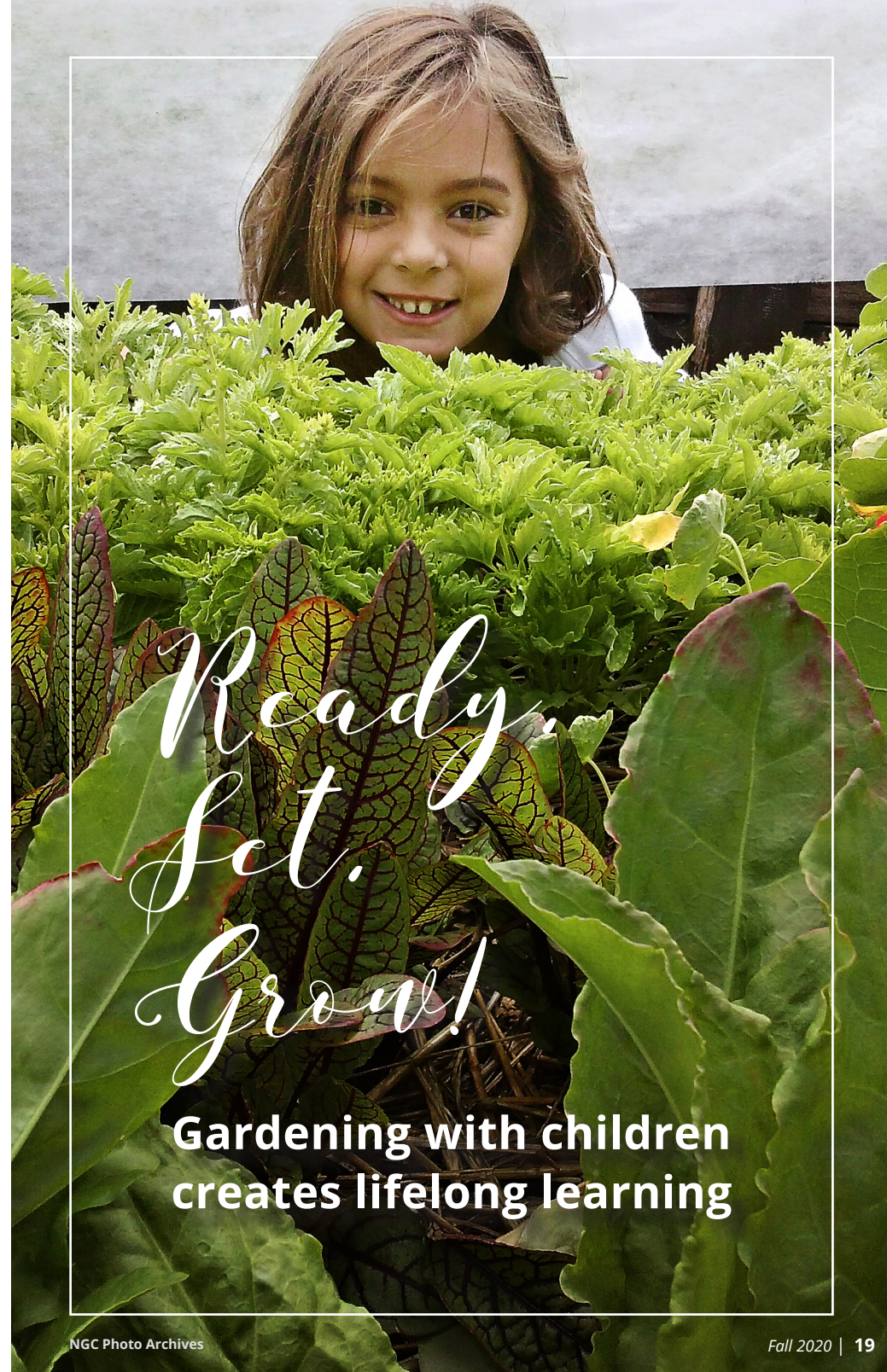
The evolution of Espoma's once-modest manufacturing facility to the capabilities of the modern, state-of-the-art operation in Millville today is a reflection of the company's growth and success through hands-on family ownership, quality products and dedicated workforce. This time-honored spirit will continue to provide the impetus for Espoma well into the 21st century.

Visit espoma.com

**Espoma is accepting applications
for the Espoma Plant America Grant**

October 1, 2020 – May 31, 2021

**For more information and/or to apply for the grant, visit
espoma.com/garden-clubs/ or gardenclub.org/projects/espoma**



*Ready,
Set,
Grow!*

**Gardening with children
creates lifelong learning**

Members of National Garden Clubs Inc. can attest that an appreciation for our natural world, its beauty and our environmental responsibilities grows from engagement, enjoyment and exploration at an early age.

Promoting gardening activities at schools and in communities are key elements of NGC's youth-directed initiatives, which create myriad opportunities to learn and grow. For example, nurturing a garden from seed to harvest boosts confidence, self-esteem and pride, promotes physical health, serves as a valuable vehicle for learning about nutrition and instills an appreciation for agriculture and larger role in feeding the world's population.

Sponsored and led by members of local, state and regional garden clubs, as well as international affiliates, youth projects often tap into community resources, inviting participation and collaboration with like-minded organizations.

NGC's outreach in garden-based education offers a wide range of activities designed to promote horticulture and a love of gardening, conservation, sustainability and environmental stewardship. In addition, NGC grows the future of gardening through an annual scholarship program, which offers financial aid to students majoring in fields of study related to horticulture and the environment – forging a path for myriad career options and cultivating a connection to horticulture and conservation.



growing a school garden

When the educational children's garden at Hurricane Deck Elementary School near Lake of the Ozarks in central Missouri was eliminated due to the construction of a new school building on the campus, the change impacted students, educators and also members of Lake Bloomers Garden Club, which had organized youth gardening activities in the garden. In addition, a nearby well-established Monarch Waystation on the grounds of a local day care was in peril due to the closure of the facility. Both projects represented two of the garden club's ongoing initiatives focused on youth activities, leaving the Blooming Lakers, the junior garden club established in 2003, as the garden club's only youth outreach program.

As soon as construction dust settled on the new school building, the administration at the elementary school approached members of the garden club to see if they would consider

“The children needed a garden, and they would get one.”

establishing a new garden. The designated area, surrounded by classrooms and the school library, received full sun and posed a number of challenges: situated on a steep slope, it was a mini watershed, consisting of rocky backfill and clay soil – not an ideal space for a garden, and particularly inhospitable to growing things. Undaunted, members of Lake Bloomers Garden Club grabbed their garden tools, and like all good gardeners, set out to turn a challenge into an opportunity. The children needed a garden, and they would get one.

An ambitious garden plan takes root

In 2019, Lake Bloomers Garden Club was one of 82 garden clubs across the nation that received an NGC Plant America Community Project Grant. Funding from the \$1,000 grant was given in recognition and support of the club's community gardening efforts and provided for critical items to get the garden started, including the purchase of topsoil, materials to build a retaining wall



▲ Terracing was done to prevent erosion and conserve water.

and the other necessities. In addition, the club submitted an application for and received starter products from Espoma Organic, which were instrumental for the project.

The plan for the 2,400-square-foot space was to establish a garden exclusively of native plants, which are critical to pollinators, provide low garden maintenance and are known for their ability to penetrate the soil more readily in challenging areas. The site's slope and

poor quality soil provided an educational opportunity on the value of soil and water conservation and how native plants support the environment. The project was launched!

The scope of work entailed:

- The spreading of three loads of topsoil.
- Terraces were formed to reduce soil erosion and provide water conservation.
- Landscape cloth was installed on the terraces to control weeds and reduce maintenance.

- Plants were planted on the terraced rows.
- To encourage the area to retain moisture and reduce maintenance, the entire garden was heavily mulched with mulch provided by the school.
- With the help of Espoma Organic nutrients, the native plants quickly took root.

The site also provided an opportunity to display various ecosystems. Garden plants were divided by type into sections that included a dry prairie, a meadow that required medium moisture and a damp rain garden area. The first planting included a combination of salvaged plants from the Monarch Waystation, newly purchased plants and plants from the home gardens of garden club members. Plants were selected to be pollinator friendly under guidelines to qualify the school garden as a Monarch Waystation, as well as a Wildlife Habitat® and Schoolyard Habitat® with the National Wildlife Federation. The garden features more than 120 native plants, and with the help of the Espoma Organic starter products, all but three plants thrived in their new location. The garden is visitor friendly and educational,



A student plants milkweed.

with each plant sporting its own plant identification tag.

In addition, two bird-feeding stations were constructed and a memorial donation funded the purchase of a 2,000-pound natural stone bird bath to accommodate winged visitors. Feeders for hummingbirds were added during the summer months to further encourage the pollination of native plants. Garden-based learning was integrated into classroom lesson plans. For example, students would study how to identify the types of birds that visited the garden and also tracked bird counts throughout the school year.

The junior garden club

Members of the Blooming Lakers Junior Garden Club, who are students at the school, played an integral role in providing the labor necessary to start and plant the garden, which also included areas designated for milkweed plants grown by horticulture students at the local high school. Junior garden club members were actively engaged throughout the planting process, with their attention pivoting from caterpillars to birds to butterflies and bees.

Fostering a love of gardening through hands-in-the-dirt education

The school's administration granted space for a garden learning center in the school's library. The unique space, with a view of the outdoor garden from expansive windows, was an idea brought forward by members of Lake Bloomers Garden Club and serves to educate students with an understanding of what they witness in the garden outside. A highlight of the garden learning center is a sturdy, portable easel funded by a Teaching Missouri Children to Plant America Grant program from The Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri Inc. Garden club members

A view of the garden from the library window.



select a different topic of learning each month that coincides with the Blooming Lakers Junior Garden Club curriculum. Educators are welcome to move the easel to their classrooms when topics relate to lesson plans.

In November, 2019, the new school garden and garden center were formally dedicated to the faculty and students at a full school leadership rally. As the garden also is open to the public, an outdoor informational kiosk was built to let students and visitors know what is happening in the garden. Color images show what is blooming; plant identification and recognition of all the sponsors and



grants that helped make the garden possible.

Enhanced learning outdoors

An ambitious new project for the school, an outdoor classroom, is being launched in Phase Two. The original garden plan allowed for this possibility, and garden planners tapped the back of the kiosk for a classroom area, complete with space for a dry erase board and seating for students. The seating area is just getting started. Funding for Phase Two is provided by the Teaching Missouri Children to Plant America

Grant program, as well as the garden club's newest sponsor partner, The Community Foundation at the Lake of the Ozarks. However, progress has been hampered by the school's closure due to COVID-19, but plans will resume when it is safe to gather.

In the interim, members of the garden club maintain

the garden, while observing the area's social distancing guidelines. Plans are in place to surprise students when they return to the campus with a completed outdoor classroom, a human sundial, magnifying eye stations to study garden specimens and additional plants in the expanded garden. Also, due to the garden club garnering a 2020 Ames Companies Tool Grant, students will have youth-size tools to use in the garden.

Mulch was applied to the native plant garden to retain moisture and reduce maintenance. ▼



“Garden club members select a different topic of learning each month...”



A natural stone birdbath and plant identification markers add to the garden's educational intent and ambiance.

teachers to find new ways to connect the students' outdoor learning experiences to classroom curricula. And, while members of the garden club are excited about the accolades they have received for this project on a state, regional and national level, they agree the greatest reward is seeing the gleam in the eyes of local youth and their excitement as they explore the garden and nature.

Lake Bloomers Garden Club is a member of The Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri Inc. ■

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Lake Bloomers Garden Club

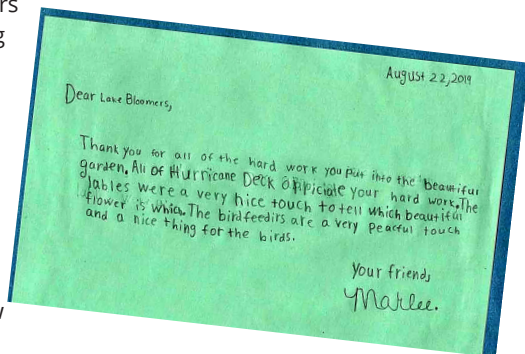
Visit fgmcentral.com/central-clubs/lake-bloomers-garden-club

Photos courtesy of Lake Bloomers Garden Club



For information on the Espoma Grant, visit espoma.com/garden-clubs/ or gardenclub.org/projects/espoma

For information on the Ames Companies Tool Grant, visit ames.com or gardenclub.org/projects/ames-garden-tools



The tools will be secured and carefully stored in a tool cabinet attached to the all-purpose kiosk.

A school garden can be a powerful educational tool

A project of this magnitude is a large undertaking. Members of Lake Bloomers Garden Club dedicated a substantial amount of club funding and work hours to help the school garden project come to fruition. There also was outstanding support from the school, especially from the school district's ground maintenance department, as well as community partners who donated time, equipment, materials, labor and discounts on supplies.

Although the garden was designed for minimal maintenance, upkeep will be provided by members of Lake Bloomers Garden Club and students in Blooming Lakers Junior Garden Club.

The school garden extends the classroom beyond traditional settings by expanding it outside. Students, faculty and staff at Hurricane Deck Elementary School now have an oasis to learn, study conservation and experience nature. Through gardening, students learn how to grow into responsible caretakers. It enables



planting seeds for success

Students receive assistance weeding the Ecotots Garden by Yaupon Garden Club members Ann Hughes and Jeannette Lyon.

Plant seeds of knowledge and nourish them, so they will last a lifetime," is a familiar adage embraced by members of Yaupon Garden Club in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, in its ongoing work with kindergarten students in the Budding Ecotots Junior Garden Club at Ocean Drive Elementary School.

Students are visited each month during the school year by the garden club's Ecotots Committee, whose members provide instruction on topics such as the proper ways to plant flowers and trees in a garden, the importance of recycling, the harm caused by littering and how to support and protect wildlife. In addition, other key environmental topics include:

- Sea turtles, and the harmful impact

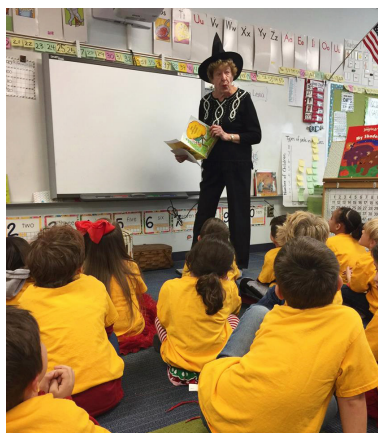
- of trash on these gentle sea animals;
- Recycling, and how to mitigate the effects of litter on animals and the environment;
- A reading of the children's book "The Wartville Wizard," in which committee members perform a memorable trash demonstration;
- Printed materials that reinforce each lesson, so that at the conclusion of the activity, each student is guided through a pledge to RECYCLE, REUSE and REDUCE to help care for the Earth we share.

The value of hands-on learning

As the academic year progresses, committee members reinforce messages on the importance of recycling, preventing litter and how to protect the

Yaupon Garden Club members guide students as they plant a camellia bush in the Ecotots Garden for Arbor Day.

The Ecotots listen as Yaupon Garden Club member Eileen Fox shares the story of "The Wartville Wizard," which explores the environmental message of what happens when you litter.



TOP RIGHT: A student gets assistance adding a plant to the class terrarium by Graceann Phillips, president, Yaupon Garden Club (left), Phyllis Green (center) and Mary Templeton. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Each kindergarten student planted a pansy in the Ecotots Garden.



legislation. As part of this unit of study, each student receives a bag of coins, each of which is engraved with the profile of a U.S. president, as well as a ruler that features the images of U.S. presidents from 1789 to present day. In spring, during "Bird Appreciation Month," students learn how to protect and support birds by making bird feeders from recycled material, and plant "saved" pumpkin seeds. They also learn the correct way to weed their Ecotots Garden.

Additional student activities include how to arrange flowers for a Mother's Day bouquet and planting a tree in honor of National Arbor Day. At the conclusion of the academic year, as a rite of passage for the "budding" Junior Ecotots,

each kindergarten student is awarded a certificate that highlights his or her accomplishments during the year.

Yaupon Garden Club is a member of The Garden Club of South Carolina Inc. ■

Mary Templeton

Chairman, Ecotots Committee, Yaupon Garden Club

For more information, contact Pam Maness, publicity chairman, Yaupon Garden Club, pammaness1511@gmail.com

 **Photos by Pam Maness**

everything's peachy!

GARDEN CLUB MEMBERS AND YOUNG GARDENERS ENJOY THE FRUITS OF THEIR LABOR

In the spring 2017 issue of this magazine, readers learned about the young gardeners of Derry Garden Club (DGC) in Derry, New Hampshire, and the many benefits and rewards of hands-on learning in teaching children about gardening.

This year marks the 12th growing season of the Derry Garden Club youth garden at the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Derry. In 2019 DGC members expanded the garden to include blueberries and two peach trees. The club also plans to add a native pollinator garden to educate the young gardeners and community about the critical importance of the many ways in which a garden ecosystem supports pollinators.

A peach of an idea

Three years ago, DGC volunteers and the young gardeners from the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Derry brainstormed on a garden "wish list," which is an annual exercise with the youngsters to help plan what will be planted for the season. Each year, the eager gardeners add bananas and other tropical fruits

to the list. Even though it was explained these types of fruit are not conducive for growing in the New England climate,

it sparked the idea to expand the garden to include a few fruit trees and bushes. Blueberry bushes made the list. Adding apple trees to the list was a consideration, but it was decided to grow peach trees, which are not quite as tropical as bananas or mangoes, but certainly less common than apple trees in New Hampshire. Although peach trees traditionally are known to flourish in the southern states of the U.S., New



Hampshire offers the "Reliance Peach," which is a cold hardy, self-pollinating sweet freestone peach that is excellent for eating fresh from the tree, or for use in baking or cooking.

The young gardeners and DGC volunteers were ready for the challenge. Holes were dug and seven blueberry bushes were planted. Two semi-dwarf Reliance Peach trees were planted in spring 2017. The wait for the trees to spring to life was a challenge for the young gardeners.



▲ Young gardeners carefully plant peach trees.

A bountiful harvest

In August 2017 the children were able to harvest 51 perfect Reliance Peaches from the new trees. In 2018 the trees yielded over 200 beautiful peaches, and in 2019 the gardeners picked more than 500 peaches, which enabled the young gardeners to take a bucket of peaches home to share with their families. The remaining peaches were prepared for freezing to be used later in peach crisps and cobblers, as well as enjoyed at the area's annual harvest and buffet celebrations.

A project that continues to grow

The two little Reliance Peach trees have grown extensively in three years. In spring 2019 the club invited a Master Gardener in New Hampshire to demonstrate the correct way to prune the trees. This year, DGC members put their own best pruning skills to the test, and the trees were in full bloom in March. Another bumper crop of peaches is anticipated this year.

The project of growing the Reliance Peach trees has been an enriching experience for the DGC young gardeners and volunteers. All of the gardeners express a collective "thank you" to Elwyn Meader for his persistence in the development of this outstanding peach variety, which gardeners and consumers in the Northeast can grow and enjoy.

Keeping agriculture essential

This year, members of Derry Garden Club continue their work in the youth garden at the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Derry without the participation of the children in compliance with area COVID-19 guidelines. The fresh produce grown and harvested in the garden continues to be available for free to area families in need, and is a welcome agricultural and nutritional benefit in the community – playing a critical role in the rise of food insecurity during the coronavirus.

Jackie Dempsey

Derry Garden Club
mjdempsey@mail.com



Photos courtesy of Derry Garden Club

References: www.saveseeds.org and www.themeadorfamily.org

A history of the Reliance Peach

In the 1950s, Elwyn M. Meader, a professor of horticulture at the agricultural experimental station at the University of New Hampshire, experimented on a peach variety that would grow successfully in the northeast planting zones of 4-to-5. He cross-pollinated an extra hardy Minnesota peach with a peach variety from Meredith, New Hampshire, and in 1964 the "Reliance Peach" was introduced. A prolific plant breeder, Meader began experimenting with fruits and vegetables in the 1930s. In addition to the Reliance Peach, he developed the Mericrest Nectarine and raspberry varieties of Fall Red and Fall Gold, as well as the Meader Blueberry and Persimmon. **Visit colsa.unh.edu/nhaes/**



Elwyn Meader
Photo courtesy of New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station, University of New Hampshire.

SOWING SEEDS OF hope

Overwhelming community support for an online plant sale by members of Woodinville Garden Club in Woodinville, Washington, enabled the garden club to present a check totaling \$16,000 to Hopelink, a nonprofit organization that provides essential food and shelter for area families, delivers emergency financial assistance and provides stability for vulnerable members of the community. Proceeds from the plant sale were earmarked for Hopelink's Greatest Need Fund, which provides critical response during COVID-19.

For more than 20 years, members of Woodinville Garden Club hosted an annual plant sale in their community, with proceeds allocated toward club and/or community programs. However, with the advent of COVID-19, garden club members found they needed to alter the way they typically hold fundraisers and conduct general club business. Just as they have done in past annual plant sales, Woodinville Garden Club members began to nurture seedlings in January



at a greenhouse made available to the garden club by an area family. This year, members planned and organized the annual plant sale to be held entirely online.

Community response was robust, with most plants selling out in less than one day, including the fulfillment of over 170 orders for plants at the greenhouse. Local purchases were delivered, or available for safe, curbside pickup at an area church parking lot. Leftover tomato seedlings were planted in pots and shared with area food pantries. Plants from the sale are now growing in gardens in Woodinville, as well as in the nearby communities of Bothell, Renton, Everett, Bellevue, Monroe and Seattle, Washington.

For 35 years, members of Woodinville Garden Club fostered projects that give back to its community, including civic landscaping and plantings, an annual Tour of Gardens and funding for two annual scholarships for students entering the field of horticulture. The garden club is a member of Washington State Federation of Garden Clubs.

Hazel Beatty

Woodinville Garden Club
jhbeatty@msn.com



Photo courtesy of Woodinville Garden Club

About Hopelink

Based in Redmond, Washington, Hopelink serves more than 64,000 homeless and low-income families, children, seniors and people with disabilities at multiple locations in the state of Washington. The nonprofit offers a full-range of programs including employment services, financial assistance, housing, transportation, adult education, financial capabilities, energy assistance and family development. Visit hopelink.org

Members of Woodinville Garden Club in the state of Washington organized a successful online plant sale, using proceeds to benefit a local nonprofit organization.



community project grants

GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION

The *PLANT AMERICA* Community Project Grants Program is sponsored by National Garden Clubs, Inc. for new or existing club projects in their respective communities. Projects may be a joint venture with another organization/s. The scope of these projects may include but are not limited to:

- Beautification and/or restoration
- Community gardens
- Youth gardening
- Habitat for Humanity landscaping
- Community Landscaping projects
- Implementation of environmental practices
- A horticulture or environmental educational event for the public

The Plant America Community Projects Grants program will continue for 2021. Clubs will find the necessary information and the 2021 Guidelines and Application Form on the NGC website at gardenclub.org

The deadline for receiving applications is **October 15, 2020**.

David Robson

Chairman
Plant America Community Project Grants
drobson@illinois.edu

Grant Amount:

Up to \$1,000.00 is available to be used for direct expenses of projects.

Who May Apply:

- Individual garden clubs that are members of National Garden Clubs, Inc.
- **NOTE:** Recipients of previous *PLANT AMERICA* Community Project Grants are NOT eligible to apply.

How to Apply:

- Application is limited to a **TOTAL of two (2) pages**.
 - ONE (1) PAGE - Application Form
 - ONE (1) PAGE - Budget
- Applications of more than two pages will NOT be considered. No photos or drawings!

For information on submission check the NGC website: www.gardenclub.org

Application Deadline:

October 15, 2020

- Recipients of grants will be notified, and all money will be awarded by **January 31, 2021**.
- Projects must be completed by **February 28, 2022**; final report forms due by **April 1, 2022**.

Judging Criteria:

In evaluating grant applications, judging is based on the following Scale of Points:

Benefits and visibility in community	40
Impact and scope of project	25
Involvement & participation by club members	15
Collaboration with other community groups	15
Application form complete	5
TOTAL	100

Funding Guidelines:

Grants will not be provided for:

- Projects in which club does not participate in some aspect
- Purchase of Blue and Gold Star Markers

Final Report:

- Competitive Flower Shows
- Scout projects
- Salaries or benefits of personnel
- Political action programs
- Capital drives and fund building
- Scholarships and endowments
- Private gardens
- Lawsuits and litigation
- Overhead costs

1. **Deadline:** within two months after the completion of the project or by April 1, 2022.

2. Email the following:

- A short two-to-three pages report describing the project including photos
- A copy of the final financial report including all income and expenses
- A copy of any publicity

NOTE: Please indicate if permission has been given for use of photos by NGC in print, website and social media. A release form for adults and minors can be found on the NGC website: <http://www.gardenclub.org/about-us/press-room/minor-image-release.aspx>.

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environmental, gardening and landscape design

SCHOOLS

Please note the following clarifications regarding the process of accrediting student and consultant records.

- The Course and Tri-Refresher rosters are completed by the local, state or event chairman. For a course, the state chairman sends the signed Form 5-course roster to the appropriate accrediting chairmen who review, approve and forward the form to the school's secretary.
- The Tri-Refresher chairman sends the ES, GS and LDS rosters with the summary to the multiple refresher chairman, who sends copies of rosters to the NGC accrediting chairman and appropriate state chairmen to verify the information on the roster is correct. Please note: only the state school chairmen have

the records of the students and/or consultants. He/she completes Form 7 – Consultant Refresher Accreditation Application, (or requests the consultant to complete Form 7), to be returned to the state school chairman for a signature. The accrediting chairman receives the form(s) from the state school chairmen, approves, signs and forwards Form 7 to the NGC school secretary. A signed copy of Form 7 is sent to the state chairman, along with consultant card(s) for students completing their fourth course; refresher card(s); master consultant card(s), for those completing their fourth refresher credit; and master consultant refresher cards. The accrediting chairmen will issue

consultant card(s) to new and refreshing consultants in states without a school chairman.

In addition, please note the secretary for NGC Schools requires a signed Form 7 for each consultant as verification that the consultant has earned a refresher credit to be recorded in the NGC school database. A "Letter of Good Standing" is created and sent by the secretary of NGC Schools. It is the only confirmation that the consultant records have been recorded on the NGC Schools database.

- Consultants should keep a copy of Form 7 for each of the schools – Environmental, Gardening and Landscape Design School – in which they are a consultant, as a reference for the next course/tri-refresher. For more information, please consult the "Guide for Students and Consultants," and the Multiple Refresher Chart on the Schools page of the NGC website to determine the number of refresher credits a consultant would be eligible for when taking a Tri-Refresher.
- It is the consultant's responsibility to log important information and

keep a personal file on the dates of consultant accreditation; a record of refreshed credits to achieve master status; the date of the fourth refresher (as that will be the date of attaining master consultant status); and all future refresher credits.

- To accrediting State and Local Chairmen: Please download the Handbook for more detailed explanations. ■

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Chairman, Schools Policy Committee
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Barbara Hadsell

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Greg Pokorski

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flower show

SCHOOLS

Please note the following amendment to the NGC Standing Rules Flower Show School, Symposium and Judges: Changes of Flower Show School policies and procedures recommended by the FSS Committee to the Executive Committee and approved by the Board of Directors shall become effective July 1 annually. (Please see the email NGC Inc. Board of Directors Recommendations and Amendments 7-17-20.)

- Flower Show Accredited Judge's Certificate Application Form 3 has been revised. It is a combination of

Form 2 and 3. Form 2 is no longer necessary; please use Form 3 (2020). It will be available on the new NGC website.

During the past several months, we have seen many cancellations of FSS courses and symposiums across the country. That does not mean that gardeners give up the good fight. We are a group that nurtures. Please note:

- State FSS and Symposium chairmen are rescheduling events in 2021.
- Clubs are preparing for Flower Shows in 2021. I am asking Judges'

Councils in every state to plan a Small Standard Flower Show during one of their meetings in 2021 or 2022. Success comes with doing.

- FSS Chairmen and Judges' Councils are working with students in small groups to keep their education going, or providing teleconference seminars with great tutorials. Join in!
- Now may be the time for judges who are interested in becoming a FSS instructor to contact the NGC FSS Horticulture Chairman, Darlene Newell, or the NGC FSS Design

Chairman, Gina Jogan. Their contact information is available on the FSS Committee list on the NGC website.

- The International Affiliates, under the direction of Sylvia Wray and Idalia Aguilar, are developing a plan for an e-study program relating to FSS.

I found encouragement for the future from the class titles in two recent flower shows, “**Mother Earth,**” and “**Plant America.**” In keeping with these messages, please remember:

- Find encouragement in the changing seasons, as we look ahead to a fresh start;
- Gardeners are well-rooted;
- Don't be contained – get out and enjoy all things great and small;

landscape design SCHOOLS

The Landscape Design Schools Committee recently made adjustments to the new curriculum adopted in 2018 for schools begun after July 1, 2019.

- Changes primarily affect Courses 3 and 4. This curriculum had required that taking Course 3 be a prerequisite to taking Course 4. While it is preferred to take courses of any school in numerical order, it is schools' policy that courses may be taken in any order. This is the reason for the curriculum change.
- Some minor changes to wording

- Support your local farmers market, which has fabulous savory herbs and spices;
- Look up into the trees. They are Earth's poem written across the sky;
- See the bonny blooms and garden jewels around you;
- Find a seed hidden in the heart. Then, on your mark, get set: hold or attend a virtual challenge class in design or horticulture.

Please keep me informed on your group's activities and share photos and information with the NGC Social Media Committee to get the word out. ■

Jan Warshauer

*Chairman, Flower Show Schools
jwarshauer@aol.com*


Please visit NGC Schools
Course Calendars at
www.gardenclub.org

and clarifications also were made. These updates are included in the revised 2020 ES, GS, and LDS Handbook on the Schools pages of the NGC website. For example, the LDS section of the Handbook now includes the content of LDS 2C (2019) Areas of Expertise for Instructors, LDS 27 Test Question Values and LDS 20 Supplemental Subjects. Added to pre-approved Supplemental Subjects are classes eliminated from the old LDS curriculum and other ASLA and landscape architect-suggested topics. For example, “Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to

gardening SCHOOLS

The NGC Gardening Schools Committee added Native Trees and Shrubs to the Gardening Schools Course 3 Curriculum, effective September 1, 2020.

This addition provides a more in-depth, cutting edge, yet straightforward understanding of how to best select native trees and shrubs to maximize positive restoration ecology for both local and global impact. More

knowledge on this topic will help ensure that the Plant America with Trees initiative will achieve maximum success.

For detailed information please consult the revised 2020 ES, GS, LDS Handbook found under Schools on the NGC website. ■

Barbara Hadsell

*Chairman, Gardening Schools
BarbaraHadsell@cs.com*

Conservation That Starts in Your Yard,” by Douglas W. Tallamy, recently was added to LDS recommended reading.

There still are some LD Schools in progress that commenced prior to July 2019 under the old curriculum using the text “Stewards of the Land.” They will complete their school series using the old curriculum. Please note a recent question:

“If a student takes some courses under the old curriculum, will there be any issue with completing courses under the new curriculum?”

The answer is no. To become a LDS consultant, students must complete all requirements associated with taking all four courses, but they receive credit for each of the four courses, whether the course was using the old or new curriculum. ■

Greg Pokorski

*Chairman, Landscape Design Schools
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THE *Happy* GARDENER'S *Guide*

STORING TINY TREASURES IN THE EARTH

When the temperature begins to drop and the earth begins to cool, I start storing up treasures for spring. I dig many a deep hole for daffodils, tulips, hyacinths, allium and the like. Glaring red tulips, sun-ripe daffodils, fragrant hyacinths and the rich purple globes of allium produce a riot of color in spring. When the frigid days of winter arrive, I've long been anticipating spring, and cannot wait to witness the first blooms of my buried treasures. When their tiny heads emerge, I gently gather some of these tender blooms and place them in small vases throughout my home. They are gentle reminders that spring is on the horizon.

Recently, I've taken to planting tiny bulbs. One chief advantage of working with these tiny treasures is that the holes don't need to be as deep as with standard-sized bulbs. It takes far less energy to dig a 4-inch hole than the 6-to-8 inch hole.



Another plus to planting tiny bulbs is their space-saving aspect. They can easily accommodate tight spaces. It's easy to find parking spots for them. For example, many miniature tulip species have a small footprint, but offer dazzling color combinations that fit nicely near their taller counterparts. Often, they may bloom at different times, thus extending the show. Because of their compact size, extensive planting isn't necessary – just stick a few here and there for the fun of it! I typically don't record where I place these tiny bulbs, and I enjoy the surprise that forgetting allows.

You may consider some of these tiny treasures in your garden:

- The tiny electric-blue blooms of Siberian squill (*Scilla siberica*) form a lovely welcome mat. It is a ground-cover type bulb that can be placed almost anywhere in the garden.



- You will find glory-of-the-snow (*Chionodoxa forbesii*), another ground-cover type of bulb, celebrates spring early, but quietly. Its unique star shape, tinted with white and purple, adds a bit of stardom at the edge of a border.
- The snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*) has the reputation for being an early-bird bloomer. For many gardeners, the snowdrop symbolizes hope after a long winter because its tiny, white bell-shaped bloom often emerges after a brief thaw in January or February. The crisp scent of the snowdrop attracts pollinators, especially the first bees of the season.
- Another tiny sweetheart of a bulb is the grape hyacinth (*Muscari azureum*). Growing only 3-to-4 inches tall, its clustered bells of sky blue provide good early color in the garden. It also multiplies over time –

“The cuteness factor of tiny treasures cannot be matched.”

an added early reward.

- The cuteness factor of tiny treasures cannot be matched. While standard-size daffodils make a dramatic landscape statement, nothing is more endearing than the tete-a-tete daffodil. This perky heirloom miniature stands barely 4-to-6 inches tall and typically blooms a bit earlier, serving as a sweet precursor to its standard-size siblings.

The blooms from the standard-size bulbs I plant each fall are a welcome sight in spring, but I discovered I cannot do without these mini-versions that are certain to generate smiles wherever they are planted. ■

Charlotte A. Swanson
Consultant, Gardening Schools
 swanson@daltontel.net

📷 Photos by Charlotte Swanson





**garden clubs
OFFER SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**

Gardening is one of the top five leisure activities in America, and you're never too old or too young to take it up. Gardening can be as diverse as growing your own vegetables or tending beautiful shrubs and flowers. It can take up a large area in your yard or just a few containers on the patio or in your home.

There are many reasons to join a garden club – meet people, learn new things, have fun, and give back to your community. Connect with people in your own area and throughout the state to share ideas and knowledge about

—
“There are many reasons to join a garden club...”
 —

gardening, landscape design, floral design, environmental safety, conservation, improving our communities, helping our

youth, and so much more.

More than 300 people in Humboldt County are members of eight garden clubs, including local groups in Trinidad, Eureka, Fortuna, Ferndale and Weott, all part of California Garden Clubs Inc. The statewide organization was created in 1931, and is the largest nonprofit,



▲ Members from several garden clubs in Humboldt County, California, help to preserve native western azaleas at Stagecoach Hill Azalea Reserve in Humboldt Lagoons State Park. Pictured (left to right) Sue Bennett, CGCI president, 2015-2017, Krystal Migliore, CGCI president, 2017-2019 and Mary Lou Goodwin, CGCI president, 1991-1993. On the far right is Michelle Forys, California State Park Naturalist.

◀ As part of its ongoing community beautification efforts, members of Eureka Sequoia Garden Club in California plant and install large hanging flower baskets at Old Town Eureka Gazebo Square, as well as smaller flower baskets at surrounding businesses.



▲ Fortuna Garden Club members maintain many flower gardens in their community.

Garden clubs regularly offer interesting tours of area public and private gardens. A heather garden was the site of a recent tour hosted by the Heather Enthusiasts of the Redwood Empire garden club in Arcata, California.



▲ Ferndale Garden Club annually enters a display in the educational division at the Humboldt County Fair. Over the years, the club garnered multiple blue ribbons for its displays.



volunteer gardening organization in California, with some 350 clubs, plant societies, affiliates and youth groups representing more than 21,000 members in 28 districts. Some of the clubs concentrate on certain plants, so if your interest is in heaths and heathers, African violets or succulents, there is a club for you.

National Garden Clubs Inc. offers a wide range of educational programs and speakers on the latest gardening techniques, floral design, conservation, environmental issues, and the study of pollinators. In addition, garden clubs develop and participate in a variety of local, state, regional and national projects.

So, are you hot on horticulture? A floral design fanatic? Environment enthusiast? There's something for everyone.

As one of our garden club members said, "Join a garden club. Come for the knowledge. Stay for the friendships."

Chuck Goodwin

Parliamentarian, Eureka Sequoia Garden Club and Southern Humboldt Garden Club 2019-2021 Chairman, NGC Local, State, Region Projects Team, Pacific Region Goodwin-CGCI@outlook.com

Photos by Chuck Goodwin

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Landscape

DESIGN

DESIGNING FOR WILDLIFE IN THE GARDEN

BY: KATHY ITOMURA

Public gardens such as the McConnell Arboretum & Botanical Gardens in Redding, California, offer ideas on how to mimic gardens in landscaping at your home.

There are good reasons to accommodate wild creatures in our garden landscapes; indeed, many are already there whether or not we see them.

If you are interested in inviting more wildlife into your garden spaces, it is helpful to first explore your intentions. Perhaps you live at an interface between suburbia and wilderness areas and you've noticed that wild creatures are already coming in. Or, perhaps your motives are more far-reaching. According to noted science and conservation experts across the globe, scores of wildlife on our planet are now considered endangered and/or face the threat of extinction. The chief reason is due to loss of habitats. Opening your gardens to wildlife can provide one solution.

Making gardens accessible to wildlife can be a rewarding, enriching experience. However, gardener-homeowners must first consider their goals and explore who it is they really wish to invite in. It is a very personal choice whom we want to share our spaces with.

Most of us remember when we were young and saw wild creatures in the garden every day, such fellows as the horned toad, a salamander, and so many different varieties of butterflies, birds and even different lizard species – all in our backyards. It is the unusual garden today that is visited by any toad – much less the now rare horned toad – but we can change that. The first step toward reconnecting with wildlife is to ban herbicides, pesticides and chemical fertilizers from our gardens. We're going organic in our kitchens, so let's invite our fellow creatures back by going natural in the garden. Are you concerned your garden cannot survive without poisons? After a period of adjustment, your garden will become a living system, sustained by all the plants and creatures in it, with just small tweaks from your



▲ Frequent garden visitors include the Gulf fritillary and mantid.

hand. Begin this process by taking poisons off your garden shopping and chores lists! The many soil organisms that keep your plants alive, wild creatures all, will thrive as poisons are reduced and removed from your soil.

Establish ground rules

The rock bottom, so to speak, of a garden's sustainability lies in its soil and the trillions of wild organisms living there. Plant roots depend on the teeming networks of living creatures in the soil, including insects, worms, fungi, mycelium, mycorrhizae and thousands of one-celled organisms, most of which



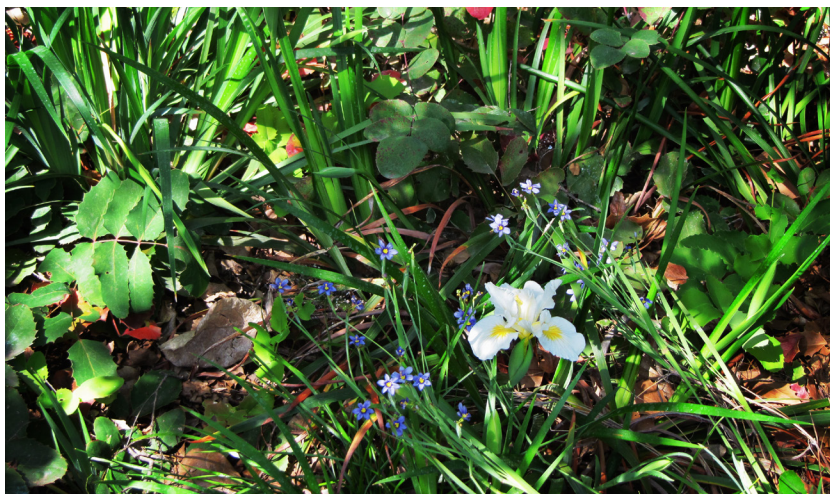
are mutually beneficial. If we could see all of these creatures and watch their activities, it would make downtown New York City look like a rural outpost. This fantastic network converts organic and inorganic materials into accessible nutrients for roots. It is not easy to see this, so we must imagine it and then do no harm to this living soil. Plant and soil biologists now recommend disturbing the soil structure as little as possible because such disruptions break the interconnected systems of the living soil network.

If you must dig a hole, dig it no bigger than it needs to be. Plant from the smallest size root ball that will achieve your purpose. Plant from seeds when you can! The smaller your plant is when it goes into the ground, the better chance it has to adapt and grow strong. Also, the less damage you will do to its living soil support system. Always mulch with organic materials, as organic mulches will eventually be broken down and eaten by that invisible city of soil workers. And, many gardeners know when they need to

work in a wet garden, boards are placed on the soil to better distribute weight and avoid compaction.

If we do no harm to the living soil, we will have less work to do in the garden in the end. There will be fewer fertilizer applications, less weeding, and more beneficial insects, birds and lizards showing up to dine on pests and help keep the garden in a healthy balance. Finally, a living soil will absorb and retain more water, reducing plant stress and the time and money

► **'Leaf it be!'**
Whenever possible, allow leaf litter from plants to stay in place. Leaves contain the same nutrients plants need for growth next year. Leaf litter also attracts hungry birds to the garden as it provides a habitat for insects and lizards.



you spend to irrigate. The more carbon you add to the soil through organic mulching, the less water you'll need to apply.

Guess who's coming to dinner?

If you are a lazy gardener, as I am, you can sit back and wait to see who comes for dinner. I have a composter and many creatures show up to do the work of digesting my leftovers and litter. Worms, beetles, flies and various larvae make this their headquarters. A compost bin may also bring in lizards, snakes, mice, rats, squirrels, moles and voles – whatever creatures can get at all that bonanza. Because I do not want the larger critters in the composter, I keep it lidded with a locking lid and secured with a steel hardware mesh on the bottom, to prevent entry by digging. A compost bin must be well-ventilated, and its many narrow openings are sufficient to let in all the important insect guests. Every few months I harvest the rich, dark, organic compost they create and

distribute it in the garden.

Doubtless worms and other creatures are also distributed, and that's fine. They will do the same productive dining wherever they are placed. Importantly, they and their offspring will become dinner for the birds and lizards that live in my garden. The organic compost will be a smorgasbord for the trillions of underground diners, who will pull those materials down into the soil and convert them into food for roots. Do you see how this is a perpetual meal for everything that lives in a garden?

The plants thrive in this environment of mutual feasting. They need far less fertilizer (if any at all, as most native plants need none added); less water for irrigation and their healthy vigorous growth crowds out most weeds. I, the lazy gardener, am served well by these reduced maintenance

requirements, and I can spend more time watching the butterflies, bees and birds that come to feast and stay to raise families.

—
“The plants thrive in this environment of mutual feasting.”
—

Landscaping for wildlife

To invite in these larger, more visible creatures you will need to do more than mulch and eliminate harmful chemicals. Select an area you want to improve and begin small. I first decided to renovate my front yard landscape about 30 years ago because I wanted to bring to it some of the character of the chaparral canyons and hillsides where I enjoyed hiking. I wasn't thinking about attracting wild creatures, but more about the fragrances, textures and colors that I found when walking in the hills.

Visits to native plant nurseries showed me what was available to recreate the



▲ Catalina silverlace, native verbena, and purple sage recreate favorite fragrances and textures.

special smell and feel of the places I enjoyed and plants were selected accordingly.

The garden and plants are now so dense that weeds are uncommon. There is plenty of food and shelter for birds and lizards. From the view from my desk, I look out at the bird bath and see numerous bird species come and go, drinking, bathing and socializing. In the warm seasons, several butterfly species – painted ladies, California dogface, mourning cloak, western tiger

swallowtail, fiery skippers, southern whites and monarchs – arrive to bask and gather nectar.

The plants, insects, birds, lizards and even the snails are all living together in a system bound by a living soil. Because it is a system, this landscape requires little maintenance from me: occasional watering if winter rains don't come or aren't sufficient, pruning to keep walks clear and once-a-month watering in warm months to keep the native plants from going dormant. Little weeding is required since the mature native plants crowd out most weeds. No fertilizers are applied, and of course there are no herbicides or pesticides used here. While the wildlife lives in this garden, people enjoy it too. Guests and strangers appreciate the smell of wild sage that permeates the air. The garden is doing what I had hoped, making my home a cousin to those wilderness hikes I once enjoyed.

Habitat forming

If you've noticed the wild creatures that live in your vicinity, at your local public botanical gardens or in wilderness areas, then perhaps you've noticed what they seek when they venture into our human realm. Understanding what they want is the first step to bringing them into your garden.



◀ Water is a primary necessity for all wild things. Planning areas in your landscape at which wildlife can pause for a drink of water is critical. For example, a garden urn makes a lovely addition to any landscape, but also serves as a resting place for a platter of water for birds. By placing sources of water along a well-traveled path, we are reminded to clean dishes and supply fresh water daily.

- Water is a primary need for all wild things, be they bird or bee, deer or coyote. Water is needed year round and especially in the warm months. If you provide water on your property, they will come. Think about where you can place water that works for both you and for the creatures you want to be able to observe. For example, I place water for birds in shallow platters hung from low tree branches or atop urns. I also select locations where I will be able to watch birds come and go, yet they will feel safe from visiting cats or other predators. Water needs to be placed where I will see it every day, for two reasons. First, I want the pleasure of observing who comes to the water, and second, I need to remember to top off the water and keep it clean. Any vessels holding water must be cleaned almost daily and refilled, so don't hide them in corners you don't visit (out of sight, out of mind). Birds drinking water from dirty dishes are likely to become ill.
- Bees will visit the same shallow dishes that birds do, and though we don't think about it, bees need lots of water. Keep your garden well pollinated by setting out water for the bees!
- Butterflies aren't as attracted to free-standing water since they can become trapped if a wing becomes caught on the surface. Also, butterflies are prey, so they usually avoid the same water source that attracts hungry birds. For your

“The plants native to your area are most important in recreating the habitats that your wild creatures need.”

butterfly pollinators, arrange for an area of your garden that is open and muddy or boggy – they will appreciate and use that! This might be accomplished by converting a poorly draining area into a bog garden. Or, you may choose to create a shallow pool with an area of mud at its edge. While a “mud zone” may not sound lovely, when it is populated by butterflies sipping its moisture, it is as beautiful as any flower.

- If you set shallow dishes of water at ground level, you will probably invite neighborhood cats and local coyotes. That is fine too; if those are the creatures you want to see. Providing water is the first thing to design into your garden; just be sure to put it where you can see it and where it will attract the visitors you want to see.
- If public gardens are open in areas near you, visit during early hours and just before evening. Sit quietly near water features and see who visits. Which creatures do you most appreciate and want to see in your space? Figure out what you need to do to entice that black-winged flycatcher or blue dragonfly – what kind of water, what kind of plants?

Finding harmony

Wild creatures are like us, they get hungry. Set the table and they will come. The plants native to your area are most important in recreating the habitats that your wild creatures need. Look again to your local botanic gardens for information and plant sources. Native trees, shrubs, grasses, bulbs

and groundcovers will feed your guests best. Think about year-round food if you want them to stay year-round. Instead of dead-heading flowers and grasses, let them stand in place to produce seed and provide a perch upon which winter foragers can feed. If you have space, let branches and logs lie at garden edges. A wilderness of insects will find habitat there. Ground-nesting birds will find both shelter and food in the same places. A well-planted native garden with layers of tall, medium and low native plantings will never require bird feeders to attract birds.

Perhaps from your visits to and your observations at public botanical gardens, you may have noticed that most wild creatures do not spend a lot of time on lawns (the crow may be an exception, but even they typically don't remain idle on lawns for long). You may consider removing some of your lawn areas and converting them to feature native plants. These same plants that provide the berries, nuts, seeds and fruits for your wild guests also create the shelter wild creatures need to make your garden their home. Wild creatures need shelter, feed, make nests and raise their young at different elevations in the garden. Give them plenty of choices. Leave plant litter on the ground where it falls – this becomes a habitat for the insects and lizards birds will hunt for. Just as you will

not need to buy and set out food for wild creatures, so, too, you will not need to build bird houses to attract nesting birds. It is okay to do that, and the birds may even use them, as they will also eat seeds and nuts in feeders if you set them out. A well-planted native plant garden actually can provide all the water, food, shelter and nesting places your wild creatures need.

Your practices of sustainable gardening in landscaping will create a system of interconnected lives working together to make a garden to repair the world.

Imagine it. Start small. Create it. ■

Kathy Itomura is a lifelong gardener and licensed landscape architect. Itomura currently is president of Burbank Valley Garden Club, a board member of the San Fernando District of California Garden Clubs Inc. and serves as wildlife chairman for the Pacific Region of National Garden Clubs Inc. A skilled photographer and visual storyteller, her photos and insights into landscaping design can be viewed on multiple social media networks.

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 **Photos by Kathy Itomura**



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NGC Calendar

Annual Conventions

- | | |
|------|--|
| 2021 | East Rutherford, NJ,
May 17-20 (installation) |
| 2022 | Orlando, FL,
May 17-20 |
| 2023 | White Sulphur Springs, WV,
May 2-5 (installation) |

Fall Board Meetings

- | | |
|------|----------------|
| 2022 | TBD, September |
|------|----------------|

FROM THE NGC Member Services DEPARTMENT



The 2021 Vision of Beauty Calendar primarily is a showcase for the floral designs of members of National Garden Clubs Inc. and offers inspiration to all designers!



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