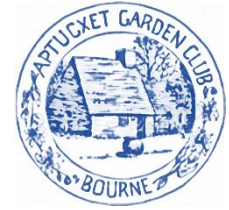


Aptucxet Garden Club of Bourne



Stewards of the Earth

Monthly Newsletter

March 2022

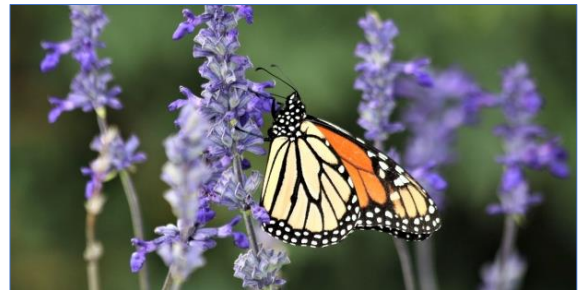


*We shall be known by the company that we keep
By the ones who circle round to tend these fires
We shall be known by the ones who sow and reap
The seeds of change alive from deep within the Earth.
- Song by MaMuse*

February Meeting Report

January ended with a horrific storm that buried the Cape in two feet of snow. Two weeks later club members had survived the worst of it and were ready to think about the joys of gardening! Thirty members gathered by Zoom for the monthly meeting. Kristen Andres from the Association to Preserve Cape Cod gave a delightful presentation.

She discussed using native plants to create an eco-friendly garden that can play an important role in the health of the Cape. Native plant loss has contributed to a 40% decrease in insects and a 29% decrease in birds. We learned that Cape Cod native plants are salt spray tolerant, drought tolerant and will grow in nutrient poor soils. And WooHoo, they are low maintenance!



Kristen detailed how native plants support pollinator species and support the local ecology. Pollinators include butterflies, moths, beetles, wasps, flies, and hummingbirds. These pollinators are the producers of caterpillars, which are critical for the survival of baby birds. Ninety percent of caterpillars need native plants.

How can we design a native plant garden? At least 70% of the garden needs to be native plants. Plant more than one plant, ideally 3-5 plants. Reduce lawn area by growing a *Cape Cod Lawn*. Avoid the use of fertilizers and pesticides. Leave the leaves and seeds for overwintering insects. To help create a corridor of native plants, see pathway.org/towns/cape/cod. Choose the perfect native plant by going to capecodnativeplants.org. And remember, *If something is not eating your garden then you are not part of the ecosystem.* – By Cheryl Hafela

Flower Shows Continued

By Judy Sheehy, Co-Chair Artistic Design

Last month we talked about one section under the BOTANICAL ARTS heading that might be seen in a Flower Show. This section is called **Botanical Arts**.



Example: A wreath.

Another section under Botanical Arts is called **Artistic Crafts**. Here you may find objects with a function like a hat, a dress, shoes, jewelry, or home décor.



Example: A hat

Items may be made out of fresh or dried plant material.



Example: A shoe with fresh flowers

Anything dried can be painted. The colors that you see may be dazzling. Often the intricate work is appreciated more the more you look at it.



Example: Ladies bra top

So, enjoy the many facets of a flower show!

Time to Start Planning for Our May Plant Sale



Now is a good time for club members to plan for what plants they'd like to dig up for the May Plant Sale. Winter is the time to dream about digging! Survey your garden and look at what needs to be thinned out. And perhaps you have plants that you have wintered indoors that have babies or can be propagated with cuttings.

Please save the May 7 date of the Plant Sale on your calendars. This is a fun "all hands" club member event. And as always, many volunteers will be needed to make it a success. More details will follow in next month's Newsletter.

- *Jan Rogers, Chair Ways and Means*

Xerces Report: State of the Fireflies of the US and Canada



Summer nights and fireflies have a magical connection. But the population of these delightful beetles is on the decline. This Xerces report is the first to present conservation recommendations for fireflies. A copy of the report is available at xerces.org. To begin with you can learn about the 3 classes of fireflies: glow-worms, flashing and day-time dark. The study found that 14% of the species are threatened or nearing extinction. You can also watch an interesting video on *The Jewels of the Night*.

The Cornell Lab – Bird Academy Courses

In January, our program speaker Chris Walz from MASS Audubon introduced us to the ebird.org website by The Cornell Lab. Today we'll take a deeper dive in one of the virtual class that is offered by The Cornell Lab, through their Bird Academy at academy.allaboutbirds.org

Course: Growing Wild: Gardening for Birds and Nature

This course has six lessons. This self-paced course includes instructional videos, photo galleries, and plant lists to help you transform your outdoor spaces. It provides guidance on how to provide for birds throughout the year, and attract specific species.



Cape May Warbler with Gray Dogwood Berry

Registration for the course is \$59. It is so nice that you can take each lesson on your own schedule. The six lessons are:

1. Joys of Naturescape,
2. Give Birds What They Need,
3. Keys to Gardening for Birds,
4. Gather Your Local Knowledge,
5. Dig In!
6. Enjoy and share.

The website also offers a preview of each lesson with a brief excerpt and photos. Life is about learning; and here is a great way to unite our love of gardening with our love of our feather friends!

And who knows, if you enjoy this, you might also want to take their new course on **The Wonderful World of Owls.**

Grow Native Massachusetts grownativemass.org

Check out this great website. They have a program series called **Evenings with Experts**. The programs are all free and the videos are available on their website. Here are two programs that you will enjoy.

- **2021 Designing and Planting a Resilient, Ecologically Vibrant Home Garden** by *Kelly D. Norris, Author, New Naturalism*
- **2020 Nature's Best Hope** by *Douglas Tallamy, Professor of Entomology and Wildlife Biology at the University of Delaware*



The one who plants trees, knowing that he will never sit in their shade, has at least started to understand the meaning of life.

- *Rabindranath Tagore*

Looking Ahead - AGC March Events

<p>March 14 Bourne United Methodist Church Fingers crossed, we hope to be back in person. Maximum attendance of 40 and masks need to be worn. Look for email from Kathy Sargent-O'Neill for details.</p>	<p>Day Meeting, 12:45 PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Artistic Design - Horticulture - Program: All About Kitchen Herbs, Growing and Eating Betsy Williams <p>Betsy is a lifelong gardener, herb grower and cook. She will share her knowledge of history, plant lore and seasonal celebrations. You are sure to enjoy this entertaining program, as Betsy weaves stories and legends throughout her fun presentation.</p> <p>No refreshments will be served.</p>
<p>March 16</p>	<p>Garden Therapy 10:00 AM Cape Cod Nursing Home</p>

NOTE: Save June 8th at 5:30 PM for our Annual Dinner at the Pocasset Country Club. Details to follow in next month's Newsletter.

Other March Events of Interest

From	Date	Program
<p>American Horticultural Society To register go to ahsgardening.org and enter Mt. Cuba Center</p>	<p>March 10 7:00-8:00 PM \$10.</p>	<p>Newly Research on Wildlife Usage of Native Hydrangea arborescens Sam Hoadley, Manager Horticulture Research at Mt. Cuba Center</p>
<p>Grow Native Massachusetts Register at grownativemass.org</p>	<p>March 16 7:00-8:30 PM Free</p>	<p>Native Species, Hybrids and Cultivars: What is Best for my Garden? Uli Lorimer, Dir. Horticulture, Native Plant Trust</p>



Heritage Gardens & Enterprise Article

See capenew.net/sandwich on 1/28/22 for a Lovely article titled **A Winter Garden's Muted Beauty**, by Les Lutz. Mr. Lutz is the Director of Horticulture at the Heritage Gardens. He reminds us of the beauty in garden during the quiet, serene season of winter.

Then check out the Heritage Gardens website to see photos of what will be in bloom in March.

Did You Know: Stems Come in Many Different Forms

We all know what a stem is. Most of us would describe a stem as a branch on a plant, protruding above ground. But some stems grow below ground and specialize in helping certain types of plants to propagate. Many underground stems help plants survive harsh weather conditions. Here are the four most common underground stems.

Bulb



A bulb is a modified stem of certain seed plants, particularly perennials. There are two types, one with a papery covering and one with angular scales.

Examples:
Onion, Lily



Tuber



A tuber is a short fleshy stem bearing minute scale leaves, each of which bears a bud capable of reproducing.

Examples:
Carrot, Dahlia



Corm



A corm is a short, vertical stem that forms corms that can be divided away from the parent to reproduce, particularly perennials.

Examples:
Gladiolus, Crocus



Rhizome



A rhizome is a horizontal stem that produces roots to the soil below and plant leaves and flowers to the ground above.

Examples:
Iris, Hostas



Where Have All the Flowers Gone, by Stephanie Cain, New York Times

(Excerpts shown in blue)



Empty shelves at the NY Flower Market in January

The photographs of trashed flowers still haunt florists. In 2020 when Covid locked down the world, many flower farms' crops were discarded. Since no one knew what was going to happen, new crops were not planted. Now, because of supply chain challenges, labor shortages and poor weather conditions in major growing areas, there is a global shortage of fresh flowers, especially the kinds grown for events like weddings.

What we are facing is an abrupt halt in the entire floral world. It's hitting at the same time as a boom in weddings. It could take until 2023 for business to function as it did before the pandemic.

The fresh-flower business involves a complicated supply chain. Most flowers sold in the United States come from the Netherlands, Colombia, Ecuador, and Kenya. While there are flower farms in the United States, they tend to specialize in rarer varieties because they cannot compete with volume produced by growers in other areas of the world, or the lower prices they charge.

Flowers used at events are different from those sold at grocery stores or online retailers. So-called event flowers are bred to a higher quality, reaching peak bloom by the day of an event. These flowers are often harvested by hand about 10 days before a wedding, which is roughly the amount of time it takes to fully open. The flowers at grocery stores are meant to have a longer life and are harvested earlier so that the petals stay tightly closed and won't open before purchase. But many times, they never fully open, which is why they aren't of use to most wedding florists.

After fresh flowers are harvested, they go to auctions and markets for wholesale sellers, who package and ship them via trucks and planes, always temperature controlled, to warehouses and other distribution points around the world.

After the shutdowns of 2020, not only did growers plant less, they also changed what they were planting. Many farms switched from growing event flowers to the kinds sold at grocery stores because those were more profitable at the time. Farms have since resumed planting event flowers, but it's a slower process because they have to wait until what's growing is harvested, or rip those flowers out, to plant new ones.



Boston Flower Market

Colder than usual temperatures in 2021 along with a rainier growing season in South America crushed crop yields for flowers like roses and carnations, both popular for weddings. And droughts in California have continued to pose a challenge to flower farms in the state, which has the largest number of such businesses in the country.

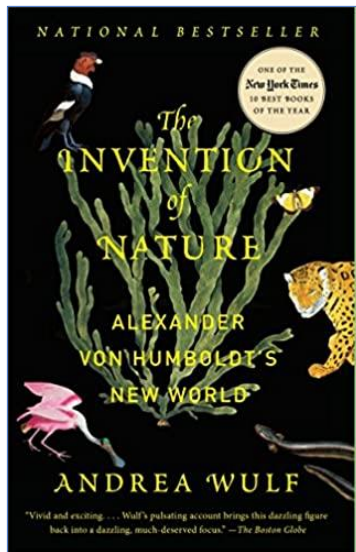
For a complete copy of the article, see the February 2, 2022, edition of the New York Times.



Book Review Corner

The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World

By: **Andrea Wulf**



Alexander von Humbolt 1769-1859

This is the story of an amazing life. Alexander von Humbolt was born with money; but he dies broke. One of the most famous men of his times; he is largely forgotten today. His childhood was marred by the death of loving father and a life with a cold distant mother. He never married. He traveled the world with a few male friends to explore the natural world. He was passionate about documenting everything he saw; and his books and articles were widely published.

Alexander explored the Andes, Russia, and the Americas. This book lets you walk in his shoes. Travel 200 years was rough. You'll wonder how he did it. From hiking up the Chimborazo volcano in Ecuador without hiking boots or oxygen, to canoeing down the rapids in the Orinoco river in Venezuela. All the while lugging plant samples, journals, and precious barometers.

To many he is the true father of the environmental movement, the genius behind the concept of "Gaia" and the first to forecast climate change. When many thought that nature was placed here for man to use, he had the insight and the genius to see nature as a complex and interconnected global force that does not exist for the use of humankind alone. He inspired Darwin, Thomas Jefferson, Simon Bolivar, and John Muir, just to name a few.

Andrea Wulf spent years researching Humboldt's extraordinary life. Here is a quote from her book that speaks to our mission to be good Stewards of the Earth.

Humboldt was driven by a sense of wonder for the natural world – a sense of wonder that might help us today realize that we will protect only what we love.



Alexander von Humbolt at 38

The Invention of Nature was selected by the New York Times as one of the ten best books of 2015. This riveting biography was fascinating. I give it 5 stars. – Pat Nemeth

Interesting Plant Facts: Jack in the Pulpit



Jack in the Pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*)

Hey little plant, are you a male or a female? Well, it all depends. This plant has the unusual ability to be both. It can switch from year to year. If the plant has enough energy stored to produce fruit, the flower will be female. If not, the flower will be male. What amazing dexterity!

This ability of the plant to change its sex is called *sequential hermaphroditism*. In small plants, most of the flowers are male. As plants grow larger the spadix produces more female flowers.

This unique perennial is native to North America. The plant blooms from April to June and grows 2 feet tall. During late summer the "hood" falls away and is replaced by a cluster of red berries.



Jack in the Pulpit prefers a shady location and moist soil. It grows from a corm. The roots and the corm are poisonous.



Message from the President

Dear Ladies,

It is always a sign of spring when my snowdrops and hellebores start to pop up. I get so excited about what will come next.

It was so nice to see so many members at our February meeting. Kristin Andres gave a fascinating talk. I love learning more about pollinators and native gardening.

The next day I watched [Starving for Darkness](#) by Jane Slade on the GCFM web site. It is near and dear to my heart to be able to see the constellations at night. Darkness is especially important for our birds, wildlife and insects. It is scary to note the number of birds that are lost yearly to buildings and lights in their flight paths.

I encourage all of us to turn off our outside lights as we go to bed. Perhaps we can work with the Town to encourage new developments to lower the lumens. To learn more about the Darkness Movement, check out www.anatomyofnight.com and the podcast [Starving for Darkness](#).

Now I am off to Georgia to pick up my new puppy. Final name TBD!

- Sally Baer



The Aptucket Garden Club of Bourne is a member of the Southeastern District of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, the New England Garden Clubs and the National Garden Clubs, Inc.

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Visit the Aptucket Garden Club Website www.aptucketgardenclub.com