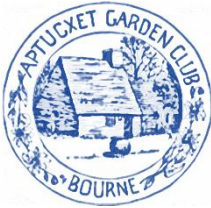
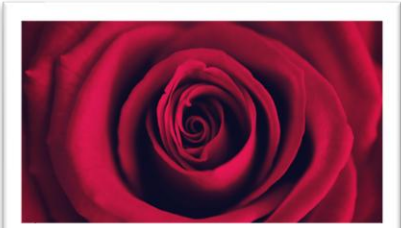


Aptucxet Garden Club of Bourne



"Go Green - Plant Bourne"

Monthly Newsletter June 2025



"I'd rather have roses on my table than diamonds on my neck"
Emma Goldman

May 12, 2025 – Floral Design Workshop

The Floral Design Workshop was sponsored by the family of Sally Zeghibe in her memory and honor. We also remember another dear member, Bobbi Lingard, who we lost this past month. The members thoroughly enjoyed creating together under the tutelage of Alda, Judy, and Paula. Great fun was had by all. Everyone came home with a gorgeous arrangement using wire no oasis.



Such a Fun Floral Design Workshop



New Member Tea - May 1st, 2025

We welcomed our 12 new members at an afternoon tea. They were introduced to the many club projects that we support in the Town of Bourne..



Educational Opportunity

Aptucxet Clean Up Day

Our cleanup day was on May 3rd. We had a great turnout, the regulars as well as several new members. The best combined effort in recent memory!!

We made quick work of the Wildflower Garden and the 1627 Herb and Household Garden. The crew enthusiastically tackled the much neglected Three Sisters Garden after completing the other two areas. There is still more work to do to plant and care for the Three Sisters Garden, but with our enthusiastic crew, we are optimistic that we can bring it back!

Submitted by Marcia Willmott



Looking Ahead - AGC Month Events

June 1, 2025 Membership Dues - Make payable to AGC, P.O. Box 844, Pocasset, MA 02559

Wednesday, June 11, 2025, 12:00 pm - Pot Luck lunch and Social at Aptucket Trading Post.
Bring a chair and a dish to share.

Wednesday, June 18, 2025, 10:30 am -Garden Therapy at Bourne Manor

Heritage Museums & Gardens – National Garden Club Standard Flower Show “SILVER ANNIVERSARY “
WEDNESDAY JULY 23: 1:00 5:00
THURSDAY JULY 24 : 10 to 7:30
FRIDAY JULY 25: 10 to 5:00

We have several members and grandchildren of members participating in the show. .

I received the below email /thank you note from a Town Hall Employee – Nice to be appreciated!
Nancy Buckley

Good morning:

I work in the Town Administrator's Office and had to write to say "great job!"

Thank you so much for creating such lovely planters on the front steps of Town Hall. I noticed them this rainy, windy morning and it brightened the whole day. Once again your efforts make everyone coming to Town Hall smile and feel welcome.

With appreciation,

Kathleen Cibroski Thut

Compost, Mulch, and Topdressing: Understanding the Differences and Uses – AGC Horticulture Talk by Cheryl Keown on May 12, 2025

Compost, mulch, and topdressing are all valuable materials used in gardening to improve soil health and plant growth. While they may seem similar, each serves a distinct purpose and is applied in different ways.

Compost is decomposed organic matter, often made from kitchen scraps, yard waste, and other biodegradable materials. It is rich in nutrients and microbial life, which makes it an excellent soil amendment. Compost is typically mixed into the soil to:

- improve its structure
- increase water retention
- provide a slow-release source of nutrients to plants

It's especially beneficial in vegetable gardens, flower beds, and any area where you are actively growing plants that need fertile soil. Compost helps sandy soils hold moisture and nutrients, and breaks up heavy clay soils to improve drainage and root penetration.

Mulch*, on the other hand, is a protective layer of material spread on the surface of the soil. It can be organic, like wood chips, straw, shredded leaves, or bark, or inorganic, such as gravel or rubber. Mulch is not primarily used to feed the soil, although organic mulches do decompose slowly and contribute some nutrients over time. Instead, mulch serves several practical purposes:

- moderates soil temperature
- prevents erosion
- prevents unwanted soil movement
- suppresses weed germination
- helps retain of moisture
- creates a buffer against extreme temperature fluctuations

Mulch should be of fairly uniform size and porous, to encourage water penetration to the soil below. Mulch is best applied in June, after spring rains have thoroughly moistened the underlying soil. Mulch is most beneficial around trees, shrubs, perennial beds, and pathways where its insulating and protective properties support long-term plant health and reduce maintenance. Mulching mistakes to avoid.”

- applying mulch too thick or too often
- mulching directly against the stems/trunks of plants
- use of materials that may harbor weed seeds, such as hay
- choosing materials that are mostly wood (like arborist chips or many “bargain” commercial mulch products) because they can skew soil carbon to nitrogen ratios and have a higher potential for harboring artillery fungus.
- too many fine grains inhibit water penetration

Roger Swain, editor of Horticulture Magazine, presenter of WGBH's The Victory Garden, and New Hampshire resident, says this about mulch: "Two of the essential requirements for a good mulch are that the material be readily available and also inexpensive." Bourne residents are lucky to have exactly that kind of readily available and inexpensive material, free for the price of a dump sticker, at the Bourne landfill. I am a regular user of that material, so I contacted Phil Goddard of Bourne's Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) and learned a lot about its mulch and compost products.

ISWM makes mulch by sending the contents of the stick and brush pile through a tub grinder. Most of the resulting wood chips are sold wholesale off site in large quantities, but some is made available to residents in one of the two stock piles on either side of Dorothy's. It is not aged; therefore, as it deteriorates, it may tend to deplete nitrogen from underlying soil. It also includes both chunky and fine grains, so may tend to inhibit water penetration.

ISWM's compost is made from the grass and leaves pile; it is moved into windrows away from public access, to compost naturally for several years, and then screened. Because the ISWM mulch and compost originate from the two different dump piles and are processed differently, it is important that we residents pay attention to the signs and pile sticks with sticks and grass with grass.

The windrow compost piles get hot during decomposition, but are not temperature-monitored to guarantee absence of viable weed seeds. Furthermore, there is no screening for pesticides, fertilizers or invasive species; the compost is offered 'as is'. Some is made available for residents' use, occasionally in the pile to the left of Dorothy's, but most is used on site, to cap the engineered landfill.

I asked Phil if there was anything he'd like our members to know, and he said this:

Yes, please remove all inorganic matter from your yard waste, brush, or food scraps, plastic bags, strapping, tinsel, holiday lights and other contamination. We have recycling carts for lights next to the trash compactor where you can dispose of plastic bags. Unfortunately we see too many bags left on the ground next to the piles. Also, do not include food scraps or manure in our yard waste or brush piles. The food scraps go into separate carts near the guard shack and we do not take manure. Finally, we also encourage folks to compost at home, with a discount rate for home composters, rain barrels for water diversion and instructions from DEP on how to compost. More information is on our website

<https://www.townofbourne.com/integrated-solid-waste-management/pages/composting>

and

https://www.townofbourne.com/sites/g/files/vyh1if12841/f/uploads/bourne_flyer_2025.pdf

[*For more on mulching practices, see UMass Hort Notes 2025 vol. 36:3 May Tips of the Month: "Mulch, Mulch, Mulch".](#)

Finally, **Topdressing** refers to the practice of spreading a thin layer of material—often compost, soil, or a sand-soil mix—over the surface of a lawn or garden bed. In lawns, topdressing is commonly used to improve soil structure, level uneven areas, and encourage thicker turf by enhancing seed-to-soil contact when overseeding. When compost is used as a topdressing, it also introduces beneficial microbes and nutrients to the soil surface. In garden beds, topdressing can help refresh nutrient levels without disturbing existing plants. Unlike mulch, which is usually thicker and left undisturbed, topdressing is typically raked in lightly to blend with the topsoil.

Where Each Is Most Beneficial

Compost is best used in planting areas, such as vegetable gardens, flower beds, or during new plantings and should be worked into the soil to provide a nutrient boost and improve soil health over time.

Mulch is most beneficial as a surface covering around established plants, trees, and shrubs. It excels at weed suppression and moisture retention, making it ideal for ornamental beds and permanent landscapes.

Topdressing is ideal for lawns and existing garden beds to improve soil quality without full-scale digging. It is especially useful in turf management, helping to maintain a healthy, even lawn.

In summary, compost feeds the soil, mulch protects it, and topdressing refines and enhances it. When used in the right way and place, these materials can work together to build healthier, more productive landscapes.

*For more on mulching practices, see UMass Hort Notes 2025 vol. 36:3 May Tips of the Month: “Mulch, Mulch, Mulch”



May Basket Workshop
Beautiful Selection of May Baskets were created to sell at the Plant Sale



Annual Plant Sale – May 10, 2025

Our sale was a great success despite the cold day- Thanks to all the members who participated in digging, planting, selling, baking, working, and donating. BIG THANKS TO JULIE AND MOE for all their hard work as Co-Chairs of this fundraiser.



Program Title: Propagating Outdoor Plants in Containers

Speaker: Betsy Szymczak

Betsy Szymczak is a Principle Certified Master Gardener, past president of the Natick Garden Club (NGC), NGC consultant, Flower Show Judge, and a lover of begonias and dahlias. The AGC was the first to hear her ongoing project of propagation of outdoor plants. Betsy simply called it "Making more Plants" detailing inspirational books for reference, questions for consideration, and general reproduction cycle of a plant.

Why might you ask should we make more plants? The answers are varied including cost effectiveness, personal choice of unusual or special plants we would like to propagate, it can be challenging, and but most important it is FUN! The possibilities can be endless depending on your time, space for all the new babies, your imagination, enjoyment of experimenting and then there is the patience factor.

Betsy discussed seed propagation, also known as sexual propagation, is the process of reproducing plants from seeds. It's a natural and common method used by farmers and gardeners, offering advantages like genetic variation and virus-free plants. Vegetative propagation is a form of asexual reproduction in plants where new plants are grown from vegetative parts like stems, roots, or leaves, resulting in genetically identical offspring. Asexual reproduction common methods include stem cuttings, layering, division, grafting, budding, and tissue culture. Cloning is considered asexual reproduction however the new plants are genetically identical to the parent plant.

Additional suggestions, hints and tricks for success included tools, including scalpel, exacto knife, and razor blades; rooting mediums, and rooting hormone. "Potting Up" included key materials and conditions to encourage the newbies. Methods/suggestions for how to maintain humidity for those new plants, and other supplies that might be needed.

The final pictures of her progress, babies in various windows and containers, planters and pots filled with her healthy and variety of plants was inspirational. Her caution that not all plants propagate quickly, and make sure that the plants used are not patented.

Betsy is continuing her propagation program and will be adding to the information that she currently has collected. We as members were privileged to have her first program on her current experiments and methods. I myself will be interested in seeing her progress and addition pearls of wisdom that she has to share in the future. I don't remember the exact question that Betsy asked of the audience but my takeaway was the program interesting and meaningful? A resounding YES could be heard from all!

Submitted by Diane Conroy

Horticulture Presentation –May 21st Evening -Growing Flowers from Seed by Laura Bergeron

Seeds contain all the genetic information needed to develop into an entire plant.

What do seeds need to grow?

Light

Water

Soil temperatures between 50 and 75

Why do we plant seeds?

Variety

Rarity

Benefit pollinators

Control over where to place seedlings

Accomplishment!

Save money when you harvest seeds from spent flowers

You can start seeds indoors or outdoors:

Inside, You have a controlled environment, including light and temperature

Outside, heavy rains can wash seeds away and animals can eat them.

When I plant outside, I use a container and transplant seedlings when they have a couple of sets of leaves, or I thin and leave them in the container. I'll sometimes plant directly in the soil.

Read the seed packet:

it includes the conditions they like in terms of sun and soil.

It explains when to plant.

When the plant blooms.

The seed spacing and depth.

I prefer to buy bigger seeds because they are less likely to blow or wash away. I plant garlic cloves near seedlings to keep pests away.

Nasturtiums

In addition to their beauty, every part of the nasturtium is edible: flower, leaves and stems. Visit the Isabelle Stewart Gardner Museum around Easter to see the stunning hanging baskets of nasturtiums.

To grow nasturtiums, scarify the hard outer seed coat by buffing it lightly with sandpaper to speed germination. I have collected and packaged nasturtium seeds, which I am distributing to everyone at this meeting.

Plan your seed choice, noting that the Cape's warming climate has resulted in a change to zone 7a, which allows a wider range of plants that can survive a warmer winter low temperature of 0-5 degrees.

To learn more about horticultural issues in your garden, contact Moe Smith to sign up for a garden visit this summer. A group of your fellow gardeners will visit your garden and offer advice on issues you identify. Visits are scheduled once a week. You can attend the visits, without signing up for a visit to your own garden.



Congratulations to Laura on becoming a Master Gardener !

Hospitality Team – Night Meeting May 21, 2025 – Theme: Freedom and Honor



Main Street Beautification Committee Planting Day





Message from the President

Its June! It's the best time to visit on Cape Cod, but it is also the best time to live on Cape Cod because it is finally warmer, sunnier, and so colorful.

Our club members have been busy at work getting many of the town gardens and planters ready for the summer. Thank you to all who raked, pulled weeds, pruned and trimmed shrubs at Briggs McDermott House and Aptucxet Trading Post. I've heard that the work was completed quickly because many of our members, new and seasoned, came out to help. Great job everyone.

Aptucxet Garden Club is a value-added organization to the town of Bourne. Garden clubs across the country are engaged in projects like ours. Each club has committees, like ours, who plant trees, create wildlife habitats with pollinator, and restore native species. Garden clubbers educate communities when they plant public areas and community gardens. Local garden clubs are important.

On a fun note, did you know that some cruise ships going through the Cape Cod Canal, dock at Mass. Maritime to tour the academy and then visit the Aptucxet Trading Post Museum? T

This summer, the Trading Post docents will greet more than 20 tour groups. I recently attended a meeting of the Bourne Historical Society. They voiced a big thank you to all AGC club members that weeded and tilled the gardens to ready the Three Sisters Garden for planting.

If your MA history escapes you, the "Three Sisters" are crops planted together to nourish each other as they grow. They are corn, beans, and squash, with the help a small fish as the fertilizer. The Trading Post also showcases the 1627 Herb Garden and the Native Wildflower Garden. Turns out that half of the cruise ship visitors, want to know more about the gardens than the history of the Trading Post. Our gardens add to the historic importance of our town.

SO, if you are interested in being a garden docent when the cruise ships dock on Thursdays and some Sundays, let me know and I will pass along your contact information.

As we close out this AGC year, I encourage you to take pride in all our club has accomplished. Our community gardens and planters look beautiful and will bring joy to those who see them. We've had a fun year encouraging new floral arrangers too. Mission accomplished! Enjoy your summer.

Peace,

Jan

The Aptucxet 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.

Newsletter Editor: Nancy Buckley, nzbuckley@yahoo.com
Visit the Aptucxet Garden Club Website www.aprucxetgardenclub.com