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Michael Warren Thomas
Blocks in Bloom
Forest bathing

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Volume Twenty-nine, Issue Three
May-June 2023

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We love this issue; it heralds the arrival of the most anticipated time of the year, and what better place to celebrate it . . . we love *UGJ*! Years of devotion to the gardeners and gardening in WNY. You inspire us all to get out there and garden.

This issue is where we expound on what is essential and new for the season at hand, and there's so much; it's simply not possible in a paragraph or two. So our reassurance to you is that we are on it! We are lovers, collectors, and curators of all things plants. We aim to facilitate the universal need to plant by being your source for a lovely collection of diverse, unusual, and suitable plants for your garden.

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We want to celebrate (and thank) all the new gardeners rush since COVID season. From our standpoint, it truly helped all regain that need to be involved in all aspects of gardening. Keep the momentum going by mentoring all the freshly found plant lovers.

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On the cover: *Papaver orientale* 'Pink Ruffles' Pink Ruffles
 Oriental Poppy in Williamsville, NY, by Bonnie Guckin

Contents

Ear to the ground 5

A new chapter for Michael Warren Thomas..... 6-9

Building community with Blocks in Bloom14-15

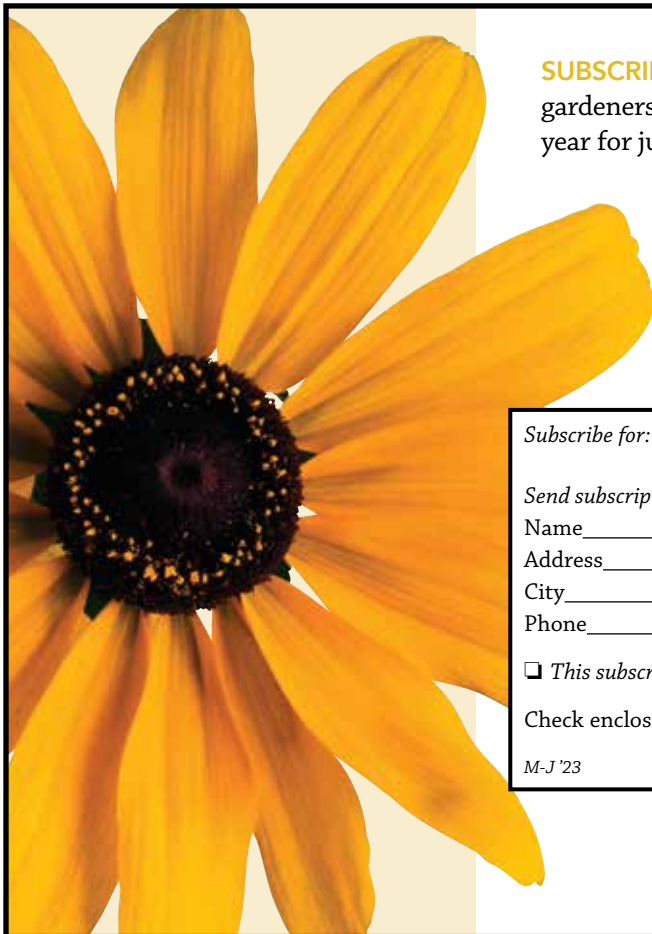
Calendar18-24

Forest bathing 26-27

Almanac..... 28

Backyard habitat 32-33

On the bookshelf..... 34



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Ear to the ground

Welcome, dear readers, and thank you for picking up this copy of *Upstate Gardeners' Journal*!

We have a wonderful issue in store for you, from an update on our favorite radio personality/horticulturalist Michael Warren Thomas, who is embarking on a brand-new career, to a profile on an award-winning urban gardening program run by the Master Gardeners of Monroe County's Cornell Cooperative Extension, to a piece on the merits of forest bathing . . . and lots more.

May and June are arguably the most exciting months in the garden and there's lots to do. It's tempting to work sunup 'til sundown. But I love the message in this issue's almanac (page 28): ". . . take care of yourself. Gardening is hard work." Sometimes the best thing to do is sit in the garden and just enjoy the sunlight on your face. Don't overdo it!

Happy gardening—



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A new chapter for Michael Warren Thomas

By Michelle Sutton; photos courtesy Michael Warren Thomas

ABOVE: Redbuds in bloom in Thomas's Rochester city backyard—with his dog, Rook, looking back at the camera.

Michael Warren Thomas is known to many in the Finger Lakes for his award-winning, long-running radio shows and podcasts about this glorious region, its gardens and agriculture, winemakers, and culinary delights. Now he has a new vision for his professional life, under his Naturally Green business umbrella.

After decades as a garden coach, Thomas is redirecting his energy to nature coaching—helping clients identify and expand upon their property's resources for the benefit of pollinators, birds, frogs, and other wildlife. This shift in focus feeds Thomas's biggest vision: to help create what entomologist and author Doug Tallamy calls the Homegrown National Park, a place where at least half of every lawn is replaced with biodiverse corridors of managed habitat. "Less Lawn—More Nature" is Naturally

Green's mission at its most distilled.

"A nature coach helps you find mini ecosystems that exist in most properties (that aren't 100% lawn)," Thomas says. "The examples are countless. You might find amazingly precise sections of leaves cut out by the leaf-cutter bee on the leaves of a native redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) tree. There might be seedlings of various trees planted by the squirrels throughout the yard, and invasive plant species like swallowwort (*Vincetoxicum rossicum*) that need to be removed." The enjoyment for the human stewards of nearby nature observation can be life-changing and soul-saving, as many people experienced during the pandemic.

Thomas's newer role as a nature coach is a pursuit decades in the making. He grew up helping his parents with their vegetable, fruit, and flower gardens on their





I wish I had realized how crucial native plants are several decades ago.



home property in Rome, Oneida County, New York. Both sets of his grandparents were connected to nature and modeled how to slow down and observe. His California grandmother paid him 25 cents for every tomato hornworm he could scout and remove. “These caterpillars are green and look like the stems, but as they get bigger you can listen for the sound of their chewing to help locate them,” he says.

His Oregon grandmother loved birdwatching and collecting poems about birds. With his father, Thomas hiked, canoed, and fished in the Adirondacks and in Algonquin National Park in Ontario. His parents and grandparents encouraged him to spend time outdoors exploring on his own as well, catching crayfish in the creek behind their house and looking for signs of muskrats.

“They all taught me to respect and cherish the natural world,” he says. “I hope to share that curiosity and wonder of nature as a nature coach who can help individuals, families, and groups to become more aware of the nature around them in parks, natural areas, and in their own backyards.”

...

Thomas has worked in horticulture for 33 years, but it was only recently when reading Doug Tallamy’s books (*Nature’s Best Hope*, *Bringing Nature Home*, and *The Nature of Oaks*), that he says he realized the devastating impact of lawns and non-native plants on our local ecosystems.

“In the past I’d assumed that birds would eat non-native fruit and that caterpillars would eat non-native foliage, but I’ve since learned that in most cases they don’t even touch them,” he says. “In traditional horticulture training, it was seen as a benefit that the leaves of non-native plants wouldn’t be damaged by insects ... but the other way to look at it is that these plants are of almost no value

to our ecosystem. They look nice, but they take up space that could be used by native trees, shrubs, and perennials to feed the caterpillars, which would feed the birds. A pair of Chickadees need 6,000 - 9,000 caterpillars to feed one clutch of eggs! They won’t find many caterpillars on our Norway maples (*Acer platanoides*), zelkova (*Zelkova serrata*), Callery pears (*Pyrus calleryana*), and Japanese maples (*Acer japonicum*).”

Thomas explains that non-native insects like the spongy moth (formerly called gypsy moth) can overrun our forests precisely because the native birds don’t eat them—or at least not very many of them. He says that folks using sticky tape on the trunks of oaks (*Quercus* spp.) and other species to prevent spongy moths from ascending to the foliage should remove the sticky tape when the worst of the spongy moth infestation has moved out of the area. This is because sticky tape left on too long can prevent desirable native caterpillars from reaching the ground to pupate.

“I wish I had realized how crucial native plants are several decades ago,” he continues. “I’ve always used them in landscape designs, but interspersed with non-native plants—not as the primary focus.” Thomas wishes he had talked to the landscaper who designed his parents’ yard in Rome in 1970. His name was Parker Scripture and he used mainly native plants long before they were in popular demand, plants like American hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), white pine (*Pinus strobus*), yellow dogwood aka Cornelian-cherry dogwood (*Cornus mas*), witchhazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), shadblow aka serviceberry (*Amelanchier* spp.), blueberries (*Vaccinium* spp.), and a red oak (*Quercus rubra*). “We had bird nests in our yard almost every year,” he says.

Parker Scripture would be pleased to know that in more

ABOVE LEFT:
Thomas at age 3 in the family cucumber patch.

ABOVE RIGHT:
Sunflowers from his parents’ garden towering over a thirteen-year-old Thomas.



ABOVE LEFT:

When he was working at Kepler's Garden Center in the 1990s, Thomas's maternal grandmother, Dorothy, and parents, Britta and Bob, stopped in to join the weekly tour he led of the gardens.

ABOVE RIGHT:

Here, Thomas is scouting for (and finding) Hemlock Woolly Adelgid in Washington Grove Sanctuary in Rochester.

OPPOSITE RIGHT:

Thomas enjoying the 2023 Eastman Museum's Dutch Connection.

OPPOSITE LEFT:

A two-striped garter snake Thomas found sunning itself in the Nature Conservancy's Thousand Acre Swamp in Rochester, one of his favorite places.



recent years, Thomas has raised more than 1000 monarch butterflies in his small city yard. "You don't need to have acres of land to create a natural habitat and have a significant impact on our ecosystem," he says. In the past ten years, he has raised the monarchs from eggs that were laid on the common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) and swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) that are intermixed with all the other plants in his one-tenth-of-an-acre yard in the city of Rochester.

"Monarch butterflies usually only lay one egg per plant, so those eggs can be very hard to find if you don't happen to see the monarch lay the egg," he says. "The big threat is that spiders will eat the baby caterpillars. To prevent that, I began putting the milkweed leaves with the eggs and caterpillars in bins covered with vinyl window screening, and then I closely monitor their development so as to release them at the right time. Several neighbors and folks from The Bird House and Broccolo Garden Center have helped me raise hundreds of monarch caterpillars each summer."

In the process of looking for monarch eggs on his milkweed, Thomas discovered the aphids on the underside of the leaves. Then he noticed the lady beetle larvae, looking like miniature alligators, but known as "aphid wolves" for their voracious appetite for the plump and juicy aphids. He saw lacewing eggs suspended from milkweed leaves on tiny filaments. There were milkweed bugs, and ants farming the aphids (feeding on the aphid honeydew while protecting the aphids from predators like lady beetles), as well as tiny beneficial wasps visiting the milkweed flowers.

"Once you start looking for monarch eggs under the leaves (almost always laid under the leaf to protect them from the sun and rain), you notice all sorts of other insects living in those same areas," Thomas says. "I saw a milkweed beetle for the first time on a milkweed plant at a rest area off I-81 in Pennsylvania. Nature shows up even next to an interstate highway."

In the small front yard of Thomas's city property grows an American hornbeam, also known as musclewood for its sinewy trunks, like the one that Parker Scripture planted back in Rome. After Thomas admired a client's huge American hornbeam, they gave him a three-inch-tall seed-

ling. "I didn't think it would survive among the goldenrod in our front yard, but now it is 20 feet tall and long ago shaded out the goldenrod," he says. "Blue Jays have nested in it a few times. They are surprisingly quiet when they are nesting, but when a fledgling flew to the ground, the Blue Jay parents screamed and dove at us before we realized what was happening. Fortunately, we have a good view of the action from inside the house as well."

Elsewhere in the yard Thomas has a five-by-seven-foot pond that has seen as many as 29 toads at one time, mostly males, singing at the pond perimeter in the spring. "Our daughters have picked up toads that kept singing while they held them, so intent were the toads on mating," he says. "The toad eggs are fascinating, by the way, appearing as black dots in gelatinous coiled strings. Our daughters have had fun investigating those, too."

...

From 2016 to 2022 Thomas spent an increasing amount of time helping his mother, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, including full-time care during the pandemic. He sought out nearby nature to bolster his own wellbeing during these intense years. "I spent a lot of time walking through Thousand Acre Swamp and Genesee Valley Park, especially after a challenging meal or situation with my mother," he says.

He continues, "I found comfort in going to some of the same places. When you go back to the same places again and again, you notice more details. I was able to see the snakes coiling in their mating ritual at Thousand Acre Swamp in April, observe a large wasp nest in a dead tree next to the trail, and watch the bright green ramps (*Allium tricoccum*) emerge in early spring. I especially love Thousand Acre Swamp because it is so much more than a swamp. There are meadows and an upland forest, as well as a pond where three pairs of Canada Geese fight over control of a small island."

Thomas also contributed to citizen science during these years, spending more than a hundred hours scouting for the voracious spotted lanternfly (SLF) in the Finger Lakes. Between lunch and dinner with his mother, he would drive to a town like Hammondsport or Geneva and scout for



trees of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) which are the favorite host for SLF. “It was an ideal activity for the pandemic because it was easy to keep socially distanced while checking trees of heaven which are often in disturbed areas along highways, around railroad tracks, or at the back of urban properties,” he says. “Luckily I didn’t find any SLF, but infestations have since been found in Ithaca, Syracuse, and Binghamton.”

With his mother’s move to assisted living in 2022, Thomas decided to return to his landscape design roots

and focus on helping to engage people with nature in their own yards via nature coaching. He is also teaching gardening classes through Brighton Continuing Education—details are on his website, naturallygreenflx.com, which also has an excellent biographical narrative for Thomas’s many endeavors over the years.

[Michelle Sutton](#) is a horticulturist, writer, and editor.



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Building community via gardening— one block at a time



Story and photos by Kathy Lewis

Can people build a stronger neighborhood through flower gardening? They can and they do through Blocks in Bloom, an award-winning initiative of the Master Gardeners at the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County (CCE-MC).

Now celebrating its 10th year, Blocks in Bloom builds community on blocks in lower-resourced neighborhoods in Rochester.

We have two goals—strengthening community and beautifying blocks, and both are equally important.

The Blocks in Bloom model is very simple—all materials are donated by the community and everyone who assists is a volunteer. “This means we don’t have to spend time fundraising and can focus on working with the blocks,” says Ashly Piedmont, Master Gardener coordinator at CCE-MC.

A block starts out with one person who wants to get the ball rolling on his or her block. That person becomes the “block captain” and signs up at least five other households to participate. At that point, two “block mentor” volunteers are assigned. They agree on a time for a planning meeting with the block captain, who encourages everyone to come.

The participants work together with their mentors to plan their spring calendar—to walk around as a group and assess each front yard and to prepare beds for planting.

Meanwhile, the Blocks in Bloom volunteers are spreading the word to area gardeners and asking for divisions of perennial plants. They especially seek “tough as nails” perennials such as daisies, day lilies, hostas, coneflowers, etc. Each year more than 1600 donated perennial plants appear at the Cooperative Extension for Blocks in Bloom. Lowes makes a generous donation of perennials each year and the City of Rochester donates annuals to fill in spaces in the new perennial gardens. (Interested in donating plants? Visit the Blocks in Bloom link at the end of this story.)

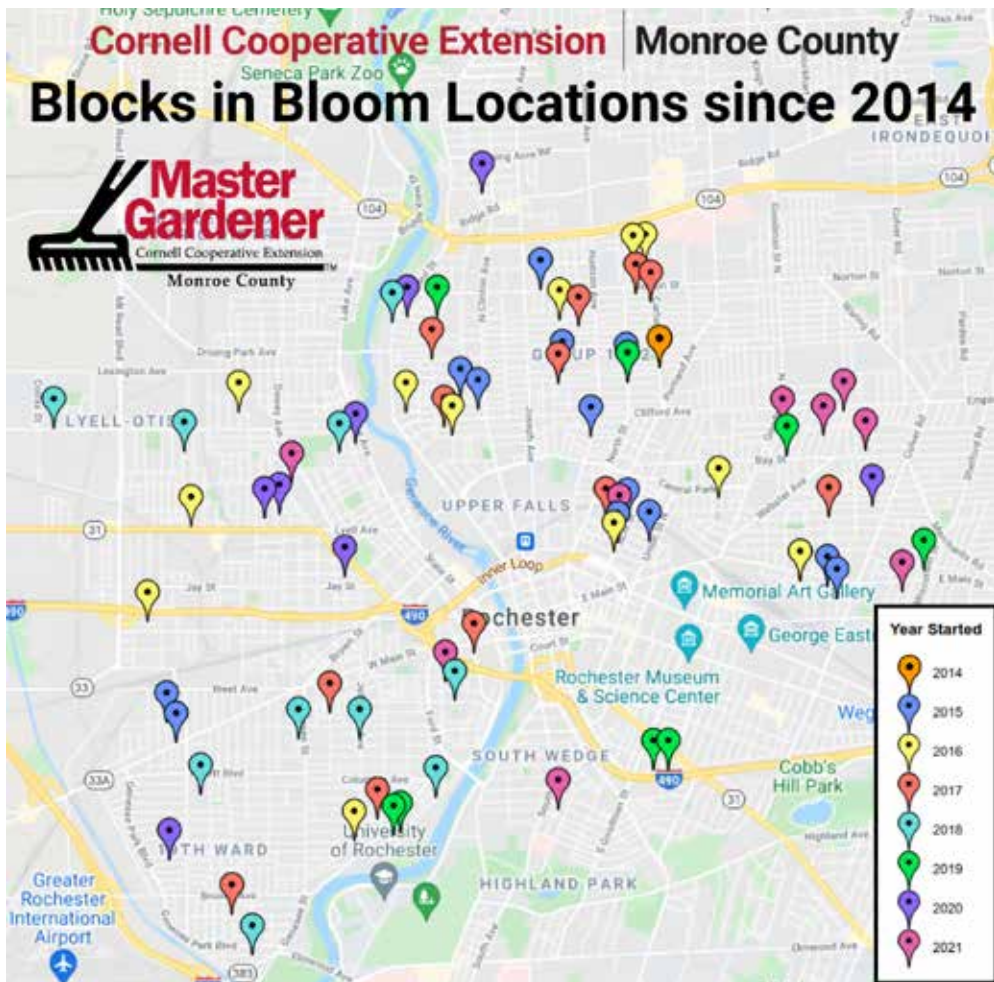
“These are small front yards, and small gardens,” says Master Gardener and Block Mentor Dorrean Nelson. “And we work with both renters and homeowners.” Houses in lower-resourced neighborhoods are often built on 25-foot-wide lots, and the house is often six to 10 feet back from the sidewalk. Some participants choose to plant in the tree lawn between the sidewalk and the street.

On the first Saturday in June, each block picks up their plants from the Cooperative Extension—with lots of “oohs” and “aahs.” The ground has already been prepared, using compost and mulch that the City of Rochester delivers to each block. Mentors help to place and space the plants and coach on planting and watering.

“Magic happens when neighbors come together and work on gardening,” says block captain Wendy White

LEFT: Blocks in Bloom mentors celebrate together another successful season.

RIGHT: Participants learn plant division at Blocks in Bloom fall celebration.



Sprague. “I had lived on my block for 20 years, and only waved at my neighbors. Now we are family!” Wendy’s block tackled an added project—they cleaned up and planted a scrubby area at the dead end of their street, creating an informal park for everyone to enjoy. Some streets have gone on to tackle other community issues such as nuisance properties. Others have begun to hold cookouts.

Blocks in Bloom has worked with 86 blocks, including more than 884 households in its first 9 years. It works with an average of 12 blocks per year. “During COVID, we just moved our block meetings from living rooms to front yards, and wore masks. Gardening is a great, COVID-safe activity” says Blocks in Bloom block captain and mentor Cheryl Robinson.

At the beginning all block mentors were Master Gardener volunteers. As the project grew and they needed more mentors, the Master Gardeners set up a 12-hour training program for former block captains to learn to mentor other blocks. Since the initial training in 2018, several block captains have gone on to become Master Gardeners. “We call it our leadership ladder,” says Piedmont.

During the past year the volunteers who run Blocks in Bloom have offered this model to other communities for replication. They have presented at statewide and national conferences involving other Cooperative Extension pro-

grams. Any community interested in starting a Blocks in Bloom program can contact Piedmont at ap824@cornell.edu.

More information (including how to donate plants) is on the web page, including brief videos:

monroe.cce.cornell.edu/horticulture/blocks-in-bloom.

The program has also garnered several awards, including:

- Community Greening Award from the Horticultural Society of America (2020)
- Zone III Civic Improvement Commendation from the Garden Club of America (2021)
- Environmental Innovation Award from the Seneca Park Zoo Society (2023)
- Search for Excellence ‘Innovative Project’ winner from the International Master Gardener Conference (2023)

Kathy Lewis has been a volunteer Master Gardener with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County since 2013, when she retired from a career of working on community improvement for non-profit organizations. She serves as the team leader for Blocks in Bloom.

ABOVE:
Blocks in Bloom locations since 2014.
Map data:
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Above: Mark with pollinator plants
Left: Beautiful Rosa 'Sunrita' in bloom

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SPONSORED LISTINGS

BUFFALO

June 11: WNY Rose Society Annual Rose Show
10am–4 pm. Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens, 2655 South Park Ave., Buffalo, NY 14218. More than 100 roses on display!

ITHACA

June 3: Spring Plant Sale, 9am–3pm. Finger Lakes Native Plant Society will hold a joint sale with Cornell Botanic Gardens. There will be native plants propagated from locally collected seeds and divisions of native species from members' gardens. The sale will include plants from Cornell Botanic Gardens' gardens and propagation efforts—a wide range of horticultural species, herbs, perennials, trees, speciality annuals, tropicals and house plants. Cornell Botanic Gardens' Plant Production Facility on Forest Home Drive, Ithaca, NY. Visit fnps.org for a map to the facility.

BUFFALO

REGULAR CLUB MEETINGS

African Violet & Gesneriad Society of WNY meets the third Tuesday of the month, March–December, at 7pm, Greenfield Health & Rehab Facility, 5949 Broadway, Lancaster. judyoneil1945@gmail.com.

Alden Garden Club meets the second Wednesday of the month (except July & August) at 7pm, Alden Community Center, West Main Street, Alden. New members and guests welcome. Plant sale each May. 716-937-7924.

Amara Garden Club meets the second Wednesday of the month (except January) at Ebenezer United Church of Christ, 630 Main Street, West Seneca. Visitors welcome. 716-844-8543, singtoo@aol.com.

Amherst Garden Club meets the fourth Wednesday of the month (except December, March, July & August) at 10am, St. John's Lutheran Church, Main Street, Williamsville. New members and guests welcome. 716-836-5397.

Bowmansville Garden Club meets the first Monday of the month (except June, July, August & December) at 7pm, Bowmansville Fire Hall, 36 Main Street, Bowmansville. New members and guests welcome. For more information, 716-361-8325.

Buffalo Area Daylily Society. East Aurora Senior Center, 101 King Street, East Aurora. Friendly group who get together to enjoy daylilies. Plant Sales, May & August. Open Gardens, June–August. Facebook.

Buffalo Bonsai Society meets every second Saturday at 1pm at ECC North Campus, STEM Bldg, 6205 Main St, Williamsville, NY 14221. Two exceptions on the 3rd Saturday: 4/15 and 9/16. buffalobonsaisociety.com. April 15: at ECC north John Wiessinger topic *Fertilizers*. May 13: at ECC Workshop bring and tree and work on it with the help of club members. June 10: at ECC north Scott Russo Topic *Wisteria*. June 17 and 18: *Bonsai Tree show at Botanical Gardens*. July 8: at ECC north Dan Zac topic *intro to Bonsai*. September 16: ECC north topic *TBD*. October 14: ECC north Les Allen topic *Suiseki*. November 11: ECC north Christine Wilkolaski topic *Plant Physiology*

East Aurora Garden Club meets at noon on the 2nd Monday of each month, except January. We meet at Nativity Lutheran Church, 970 E. Main Street, East Aurora, NY (just west of the 400 Expressway exit). The club's objective is to stimulate, create interest

and promote education on horticulture, the art of gardening, flower arranging and environmental conservation; and to promote the beautification of surrounding areas. For more information about the club or membership call 716-912-1589.

Federated Garden Clubs NYS – District 8.

Nancy Kalieta, Director, nancyk212@aol.com. gardenclubsofwny.com.

Forest Stream Garden Club meets the third Thursday of the month (September–May) at 7pm, Presbyterian Village, 214 Village Park Drive, Williamsville and other locations. Summer garden teas & tours. Ongoing projects include beautification of the Williamsville Meeting House, garden therapy at a local nursing home, youth gardening & Victorian Christmas decorating. eileen.s@markzon.com

Friends of Kenan Herb Club meets the third Monday of the month at 5:30pm at the Taylor Theater. New members are always welcome.

Garden Club of the Tonawanda meets the third Thursday of the month at 7pm, Tonawanda City Hall, Community Room.

Garden Friends of Clarence meets the second Wednesday of the month at 7pm, September–June, Town Park Clubhouse, 10405 Main Street, Clarence. gardenfriendsofclarence@hotmail.com.

Hamburg Garden Club meets the second Wednesday of the month at 10am, VFW Post 1419, 2985 Lakeview Rd, Hamburg, NY. June plant sale. Summer garden tours. Guests are welcome. Contact lonabutler4@gmail.com. July 8–9, 10am–4pm: *Buzz Around Hamburg Garden Walk. Find the club at the memorial park, located at corners of union and lake streets (Hamburg, NY) and learn about the projects the club is involved in—you are sure to find the exact fit for you to be a part of. Meet a new circle of friends. Look for them in the red tent.*

Kenmore Garden Club meets the second Tuesday of the month (except July, August & December) at 10am, Kenmore United Methodist Church, 32 Landers Road, Kenmore. Activities include guest speakers, floral designs and community service. New members and guests welcome. songnbird@aol.com.

Ken-Sheriton Garden Club meets the second Tuesday of the month (except January) at 7pm, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 576 Delaware Road, Kenmore. Monthly programs, artistic design and horticulture displays. New members and guests welcome. 716-833-8799, dstierheim@gmail.com.

Lancaster Garden Club meets the second Wednesday of the month (except January, July & August) at 7pm, St. John Lutheran Church, 55 Pleasant Avenue, Lancaster. All are welcome. Meetings are currently on hold. 716-685-4881.

Lewiston Garden Club meets the fourth Monday of the month. See website for meeting information, lewistongardenfest.com/garden-club.html or contact at PO Box 32, Lewiston, NY 14092.

Tropical Fish Society of Erie County meets the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm, Lake Erie Italian Club, 3200 South Park Ave, Lackawanna, NY 14218.

Niagara Frontier Orchid Society (NFOS) meets the first Tuesday following the first Sunday (dates sometimes vary due to holidays, etc.), September–June, Botanical Gardens, 2655 South Park Avenue, Buffalo. niagarafreierorchids.org.

Orchard Park Garden Club meets the first Thursday of the month except July and December at 11:30am at St. John's Lutheran Church, 4536 South Buffalo St., Orchard Park. Contact Diana Szczepanski at 716-674-8970 for membership information. Guests are always welcome.

Ransomville Garden Club meets the third Wednesday or Saturday of the month at 5:45pm, Ransomville Community Library, 3733 Ransomville Road, Ransomville. Meetings are open to all. Community gardening projects, educational presentations, June plant sale. bbonnie2313@gmail.com.

Silver Creek-Hanover Garden Club meets the second Saturday of the month at 11am, Silver Creek Senior Center, 1823 Lake Road (Rte. 5), Silver Creek. edlorrie@yahoo.com, Facebook.

South Towns Gardeners meets the second Friday of the month (except January) at 9:30am, West Seneca Senior Center. New members welcome.

Town and Country Garden Club of LeRoy meets the second Wednesday of the month (except February) at 6:30pm, First Presbyterian Church, 7 Clay Street, LeRoy. New members and guests are welcome. 585-768-2712, ritawallace005@gmail.com, Facebook.

Western New York Herb Study Group meets the second Wednesday of the month at 7pm, Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens, 2655 South Park Avenue, Buffalo.

Western New York Honey Producers, Inc. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County, 21 South Grove Street, East Aurora. wnyhpa.org.

Western New York Hosta Society. East Aurora Senior Center, 101 King Street, East Aurora. Meetings with speakers, newsletter, sales. Hosta teas first Saturday of July, August, September. h8staman@aol.com, wnyhosta.com.

Western New York Hosta Society Breakfast Meetings, a friendly get-together, first Saturday (winter months only) at 10am, Forestview Restaurant, Depew. wnyhosta.com.

Western NY Iris Society meets at the Julia B Reinstein Library, 1030 Lossion Road, Cheektowaga, NY at 1:30 pm on first Sunday of each month.

Western New York Rose Society meets the third Wednesday of each month at 7pm. *Meetings on May 17, June 7, July 19*. St. Stephens-Bethlehem United Church of Christ, 750 Wehrle Drive, Wmsvl. Check the Facebook page or website for meeting content, wnyrosesociety.net.

Youngstown Garden Club meets the second Wednesday of every month at 7pm, First Presbyterian Church, 100 Church Street, Youngstown.

FREQUENT HOSTS

BECBG: Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens, 2655 South Park Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14218. 716/827-1584; buffalogardens.com.

DRAV: Draves Arboretum, 1815 Sharrick Road, Darien, NY 14040. 585-547-3341.

CLASSES / EVENTS

F- Indicates activities especially appropriate for children and families.

S- Indicates plant sales/swaps.

T- Indicates garden tours.

O- Indicates online event.

May 13: Basic Tree ID, 10am–12pm. Registration Required. \$12/person. **DRAV**

S May 20: Plant and Seed Exchange, 10am–2pm. Also accepting pots, planters, garden ornaments.

University Presbyterian Church, 3330 Main Street at Niagara Falls Boulevard, Buffalo, NY 14214. Sponsor Samuel P. Capen Garden Walk, capengardenwalk@gmail.com, ourheights.org/gardenwalk

May 25: Orchid Repotting Event, 5–8pm. The Niagara Frontier Orchid Society will hold a repotting event in the Administration Building at the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens. Repotting supplies will be available for sale. The group will also be selling supplies and repotting at the 6/24 & 6/25 Buffalo Style Garden Art Sale located on “Plant avenue.”

S May 26–27: CCE Erie Master Gardener Plant Sale, 8:30am–3pm. Huge selection of quality plants from the gardens of Master Gardeners. Perennials for sun and shade. Native and pollinator plants. Herbs, vegetables and shrubs. Hypertufa pots, draped concrete vessels, garden treasures, annuals and hanging baskets. Soil pH testing is available for \$2 per sample/3 samples for \$5. First Presbyterian Church, One Symphony Circle, Buffalo, NY 14201. For information contact 716-652-5400 (x176) Cornell Cooperative Extension Erie County, 21 S. Grove St., East Aurora, NY 14052, erie.cce.cornell.edu.

S June 3: Herb and Plant Sale, 10am–3pm. The sale will be held on the Kenan lawn at 433 Locust St., Lockport, NY 14094, Friends of Kenan Herb Club.

June 3: Dr. Beth Brantley with “The Conifer Conundrum,” 1–3:30pm. Climate change, cultural conditions, pest and pathogens present challenges for many of our favorite conifers. This presentation will review species in decline, health issues, and opportunities for alternative species. Bark beetles, scall insects, phytophthora root rot and foliar will be featured. Registration required. **DRAV**

June 10: Shinrin-Yoku with Debra Denome, 1–4pm. Registration required. Repeats October 7. **DRAV**

June 3: Allegany Engine Co. Flower & Garden Show, 10am–4pm. Rain or Shine. RH Livingston Community Center and Fireman’s Park, 188 W. Main St., Allegany, NY 14706.

June 3: Small Space and Urban Gardening. Backyard Gardening Horticulture Series. **BEBCG**

June 10: Creative Containers and Raised Beds. Backyard Gardening Horticulture Series. **BEBCG**

S June 10: Ransomville Garden Club Annual Plant Sale, 9am–2pm. Ransomville Free Library, 3733 Ransomville Rd., Ransomville, NY.

S June 10: Hamburg Garden Club 19th Annual Perennial Plant Sale, 7:30am–1pm. Perennials are from members gardens. A sale of previously loved gardening items will be available for sale. Proceeds go to several civic organizations and World Gardening. Hamburg Farmers Market, Hamburg Moose Lodge 523, 45 Church St., Hamburg, NY.

June 11: WNY Rose Society Annual Rose Show 10am–4 pm. Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens, 2655 South Park Ave., Buffalo, NY 14218. More than 100 roses on display!

June 15: Herb Container Garden. **BEBCG**

June 17: Herbs & Medicinal Plants. Backyard Gardening Horticulture Series. **BEBCG**

June 17–18: Lewiston GardenFest 2023, 10am–5pm. lewistongardenfest.com

June 24–25: Buffalo Style Garden Art Sale, Sat. 10am–4pm, Sun. 10am–3pm. No garden is complete without art. Need something unique and/or handmade to complete your garden? Visit more than 50 vendors of nature-themed items or works that can be displayed in a garden setting. Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens, 2655 South

Park Avenue, Buffalo, NY. More information at gardensbuffaloniagara.com/buffalo-style-garden-art-sale

June 24: Vegetables & Organic Gardening. Backyard Gardening Horticulture Series. **BEBCG**

July 7: Bricks and Brews, 6–9pm. Enjoy craft brews, food trucks, and live music on the grounds of the Martin House estate. \$70/general, \$60/members. The Martin House, 125 Jewett Parkway, Buffalo, NY 14214. 716-856-3858; info@martinhouse.org; martinhouse.org.

July 8: 5th Annual Open Tour, 1:30–3:30pm. Registration required. \$12/person. **DRAV**

July 8: Tough Plants for Tough Sites. Backyard Gardening Horticulture Series. **BEBCG**

July 8–9: Buzz Around Hamburg Garden Walk, 10am–4pm. Rain or shine. More details at: hamburggardenwalk.com

SAVE THE DATE ...

T July 21, 22, 23: Lancaster Garden Walk 2023, Friday 8:45–11pm, Sat & Sun 10am–4:30pm.

T July 21–22: Ken-Ton Garden Tour-Night Lights, 8:30–11pm. kentongardentour.com

T July 22–23: Ken-Ton Garden Tour-Day Tour, 10am–4pm. kentongardentour.com

August 23: New York State Arborists Regional Educational Seminar, 4pm. **DRAV**

ITHACA

REGULAR CLUB MEETINGS

Adirondack Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society (ACNARGS) plans to meet in person in the fall of 2022 on the third Saturday of September and October, and the second Saturday of November at 1pm. Meetings are open to all. Check the current newsletter on the website for meeting location: acnargs.org or [Facebook.com/acnargs](https://www.facebook.com/acnargs).

Auraca Herbarists, an herb study group, usually meets the second Tuesday of the month at noon, Cornell Botanic Gardens, Ithaca. Brownbag lunch at noon followed by the program and herb of the month. Field trips during the growing season. All are welcome. Contact: Pat Curran, pc21@cornell.edu.

Elmira Garden Club meets the first Thursday of the month, April–December, at 6pm, 426 Fulton Street, Elmira. Annual plant sale, workshops, monthly meetings, local garden tours and community gardening services. Karen Coletta, 607-731-8320, Facebook.

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society meetings are usually on the 3rd Tuesday of the month Sept–May. flnps.org, info@flnps.org.

Windsor NY Garden Group meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 10am, members’ homes or Windsor Community House, 107 Main Street, Windsor. windsorgardengroup.suerambo.com.

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FREQUENT HOST

CBG: Cornell Botanic Gardens, 1 Plantations Road, Ithaca, NY 14850. Inquire ahead for meeting locations. 607-254-7430; km274@cornell.edu; cornellbotanicgardens.org.

T May 14: Spring Wildflower Walk, 2–3pm. Tour the woodland pathways and plant habitats of the Mundy Wildflower Garden, an 8-acre natural area and naturalistic garden. Early spring is the ideal season for spotting & learning about the natural history and identification of wildflowers, such as trillium, bloodroot, and Solomon’s seal. **CBG**

O May 16: Verdant Views: Conserving Nature—The Global Role of Botanic Gardens, 4–5pm. Free. **CBG**

S May 19: Spring Garden Fair and Plant Sale, 12–6pm. The Plant Sale features a wide variety of vendors who offer specialty plants of all kinds and offer gardening advice for different skill levels and garden styles. Free. Ithaca Farmers Market, 545 Third Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. 607-272-2292, csetompkins.org.

May 19: Mindful Botany Walks, 12–1pm. Third Friday of the month May 19 through October 20. Free. **CBG**

May 20: Secret Lives of Plants, 12–1pm. Join Garden Guide Dana Kruser to explore the hidden world of plants and their fascinating adaptations and interactions with other organisms in their environment. \$12/person. Program repeats June 24, July 22, August 19, September 30, and October 14. **CBG**

May 21: Exploring the Trees of the Arboretum at FR Newman Arboretum, 2–3:30pm. Is your knowledge of trees limited to the ones in your backyard? Join our tree tour to learn about the wide diversity of tree species in the F.R. Newman Arboretum and why this diversity is so important to humans. \$12/person. Program repeats July 16 and October 15. **CBG**

S June 3: Spring Plant Sale, 9am–3pm. Finger Lakes Native Plant Society will hold a joint sale with Cornell Botanic Gardens. There will be native plants propagated from locally collected seeds and divisions of native species from members’ gardens. The sale will include plants from Cornell Botanic Gardens’ gardens and propagation efforts—a wide range of horticultural species, herbs, perennials, trees, specialty annuals, tropicals and house plants. Cornell Botanic Gardens’ Plant Production Facility on Forest Home Drive, Ithaca, NY. Visit flnps.org for a map to the facility.

T July 9: Fall Creek Garden Tour, 11am–3pm. Eight-plus home gardens in Ithaca’s Fall Creek neighborhood will be on display in this year’s tour. Hidden delights abound and garden hosts will be present to answer questions. Maps available day of the tour at Thompson Park (corner of Cayuga St. and Cascadilla Creek). Raffle and t-shirt sales at park. Free; self-guided.

June 17: Botanic Gardens Highlights Tour at Brian C. Nevin Welcome Center, 11am–12pm. Take a relaxing stroll with a garden guide through the gardens around the Nevin Welcome Center and discover the beauty and diversity of our cultivated plant collections. Free. Tours repeat every Saturday and Sunday at 11am June 17 through October 1. **CBG**

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Rose Show

hosted by
WNY Rose Society
June 11



Bonsai Show

hosted by
Buffalo Bonsai Society
June 17
June 18



at the Buffalo Botanical Gardens

BUFFALOGARDENS.COM

The Buffalo-Style Garden Art Sale!



**Saturday & Sunday,
June 24 & 25, 10am**

**Buffalo Botanical Gardens
2655 South Park Ave, Buffalo**

There is something for every garden and gardener: 55+ vendors, live music, food trucks, and a basket raffle make shopping fun! View the vendor list at GardenArtSale.com



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 Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-6pm, Sat. & Sun. 8:30am-5pm

Calendar

ROCHESTER

REGULAR CLUB MEETINGS

7th District Federated Garden Clubs New York State, Inc. meets the first Wednesday of the month. 7thdistrictfgcnys.org.

African Violet and Gesneriad Society of Rochester meets the first Wednesday of the month (except in summer), 7–9pm, Messiah Church, 4301 Mount Read Blvd., Rochester. All are welcome. *Meetings are on hold until further notice.* Stacey Davis, 585-426-5665, stacey.davis@rit.edu, avgsr.org.

Big Springs Garden Club of Caledonia-Mumford meets the second Monday evening of the month, September–November, January–May. New members and guests welcome. 585-314-6292, mdolan3@rochester.rr.com, Facebook.

Bloomfield Garden Club meets the third Thursday of the month at 11:45am, Veterans Park, 6910 Routes 5 & 20, Bloomfield. Visitors and prospective new members welcome. Marlene Moran, 585-924-8035, Facebook.

Bonsai Society of Upstate New York meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Brighton Town Park Lodge, Buckland Park, 1341 Westfall Road, Rochester. 585-334-2595, Facebook, bonsaisocietyofupstatenewyork.org.

Canandaigua Botanical Society meets for in-person botanical events. See website for event schedule. canandaiguabotanicalsociety.blogspot.com

Conesus Lake Garden Club meets the third Wednesday of the month (April–December) at 7pm, Chip Holt Nature Center, Vitale Park, Lakeville. Welcoming new members. Contact Dottie Connelly, 585-703-1748.

Country Gardeners of Webster Do you like to dig in the dirt, smell the roses, learn about the birds and bees, take a walk in the park, eat, drink, and be merry, or live in Webster? Then the Country Gardeners of Webster would love to have you join them! They meet the second Monday of the month. Contact Elaine at 585-350-8270 to try this fun-loving club out.

Creative Gardeners of Penfield meets the second Monday of the month (except July & August) at 9:15am, Penfield United Methodist Church, 1795 Baird Road, Penfield. Visitors welcome. Contact 585-385-2065 or 09green17@gmail.com if interested in attending a meeting.

Fairport Garden Club Member club of Federated Garden Clubs of NY State. Meets 3rd Thursday evening of the month (except January & August), members' homes. Educational topics through speakers, workshops or local tours. Accepting new members. fairportgc@gmail.com, fairportgardenclub.com.

Finger Lakes Daylily Society members garden in west-central NY, covering an area from Batavia to Syracuse and the Southern Tier. Meetings are held in Rochester or the Canandaigua area. There are generally four regular Saturday meetings held in February, March, May, and September. Visitors and prospective new members are welcome to attend. Contact Deb Lawrence for information, binxers1@yahoo.com.

Friends of Ellwanger Garden meets all season long on Tuesday mornings. To volunteer at the garden, please contact Cindy Boyer at 585-546-7029, x12 or cboyer@landmarksociety.org.

Garden Club of Brockport meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7pm, Jubilee Church, 3565 Lake Road, Brockport. Learn gardening tips from knowledgeable speakers, make garden ornaments through our hands-on classes and explore beautiful local gardens. For more info call or email Kathy, 585-431-0509 or katyd5950@gmail.com.

Garden Club of Mendon meets the third Tuesday of the month, 10am–1pm, Mendon Community Center, 167 North Main Street, Honeoye Falls. Work on community gardens and gather new ideas in a casual, social environment. 585-624-8182, joanheaney70@gmail.com.

Garden Path of Penfield meets the third Wednesday of the month, September–May at 7pm, Penfield Community Center, 1985 Baird Road, Penfield. Members enjoy all aspects of gardening; new members welcome. gardenpathofpenfield@gmail.com.

Gates Garden Club meets the second Thursday of the month (except July & August) at 6:30pm, Gates Town Annex, 1605 Buffalo Road, Rochester. New members and guests welcome. 585-247-1248, scece6@yahoo.com.

Genesee Region Orchid Society (GROS) meets the first Monday following the first Sunday of the month. Meetings in December, January, and February will be virtual. It is likely that meetings from March–May will be in person at the JCC. Please see the website for information, geneseeorchid.org.

Genesee Valley Hosta Society meets the second Thursday of the month, April–October, at Eli Fagan American Legion Post, 260 Middle Road, Henrietta. 585-889-7678, sebukner@frontiernet.net, geneseevalleyhosta.com.

Greater Rochester Iris Society (GRIS) meets Sundays at 2pm, dates vary. St. John's Episcopal Church Hall, 11 Episcopal Ave. Honeoye Falls, NY. Public welcome. 585-266-0302, thehutchings@mac.com.

Greater Rochester Perennial Society (GRPS) meets the first Thursday of each month at 7pm, Twelve Corners Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 1200 South Winton Road, Rochester, except in summer when it tours members' gardens. Lectures being held virtually and garden tours are being scheduled. See website or Facebook for updates. cap704@frontiernet.net, Facebook, rochesterperennial.com.

Greater Rochester Rose Society meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm on Zoom Jan., Feb., and Mar. Email j.chorder@gmail.com for meeting link. Questions: 585-694-8430. Facebook: Greater Rochester Rose Society.

Henrietta Garden Club meets the 2nd Wednesday, except May–Aug and Dec, at 6:30pm in the lower level of the Henrietta Town Hall, 475 Calkins Rd. Guests are welcome for a free visit. Handicap accessible. sites.google.com/site/henriettagardenclub or call 585-747-6780.

Holley Garden Club meets the second Thursday of the month at 7pm, Holley Presbyterian Church. 585-638-6973.

Hubbard Springs Garden Club of Chili meets the third Monday of the month at 6:30pm at the Chili Community Center, 3237 Chili Ave., Rochester. dtoogood@rochester.rr.com.

Ikebana International Rochester Chapter 53 meets the third Thursday of each month (except December and February) at 10am, First Baptist Church, Hubbell Hall, 175 Allens Creek Road, Rochester. 585-301-6727, 585-402-1772, rochesterikebana@gmail.com, ikebanarochester.org.

Kendall Garden Club meets the first Wednesday of the month at 7pm, Kendall Town Hall. 585-370-8964.

Klemwood Garden Club of Webster meets the 2nd Monday of the month at 7pm (except January & February) in members' homes or local libraries. Accepting new members. 585-671-1961.

Lakeview Garden Club (Greece) meets the second Wednesday of the month (except January & February) at 7pm, meeting location varies depending on activity. Meetings may include a speaker, project or visits to local garden-related sites. New members always welcome. Joanne Ristuccia, rista1234@gmail.com.

Newark Garden Club meets the first Friday of the month at 1pm, Park Presbyterian Church, Newark. Guests are welcome.

Pittsford Garden Club Pittsford Garden Club meets the third Tuesday of the month at 10:30am at the Spiegel Center on Lincoln Avenue in the Village of Pittsford. The club usually meets in Room 18, but ask at the desk. Masks are required at all times in the building unless requirements change. New members are always welcomed. May 21 plant sale, location TBD. Look for signs in the village.

Rochester Dahlia Society meets the second Saturday of the month (except August & September) at 12:30pm, Trinity Reformed Church, 909 Landing Road North, Rochester. Visitors welcome. See website for up-to-date information concerning meetings & shows. 585-865-2291, Facebook, rochesterdahlias.org.

Rochester Herb Society meets the first Tuesday of each month (excluding January, February & July) at 12pm, Potter Memorial Building, 53 West Church Street, Fairport. Summer garden tours. New members welcome. rochesterherbsociety.com.

Rochester Permaculture Center meets monthly to discuss topics such as edible landscapes, gardening, farming, renewable energy, green building, rainwater harvesting, composting, local food, forest gardening, herbalism, green living, etc. Meeting location and details: meetup.com/rochesterpermaculture.

Seabreeze Bloomers Garden Club meets the fourth Wednesday of the month (except January) at 7pm, location varies depending on activity. Meetings may include a speaker, project or visit to local garden-related site. Monthly newsletter. New members welcome. Meetings are currently cancelled; contact Bonnie Arnold with any questions. Bonnie Arnold, 585-230-5356, bonniearnold@frontiernet.net.

Stafford Garden Club meets the third Wednesday of the month (except December & January) at 7pm, Stafford Town Hall, 8903 Morganville Road (Route 237), Stafford. Plant auction in May. All are welcome. 585-343-4494.

Victor Garden Club meets the second Wednesday of the month (except January & February) at 6:30/6:45pm. New members welcome. Meeting and location details: victorgardenclubny2.com, victorgardenclub.org.

Williamson Garden Club. On-going community projects and free monthly lectures to educate the community about gardening. Open to all. 315-524-4204, grow14589@gmail.com, grow-thewilliamsongardenclub.blogspot.com.

FREQUENT HOSTS

BGC: Broccolo Garden Center, 2755 Penfield Road, Fairport 14450. 585-424-4476; broccolotreeandlawn.com.

CCE/MON: Cornell Cooperative Extension, Monroe County, 2449 St. Paul Blvd., Rochester, NY 14617. 585-753-2550; monroe.cce.cornell.edu.

FRUIT: Fruition Seeds, 7921 Hickory Bottom Road, Naples, NY 14512. petra@fruitionseds.com, fruitionseds.com

RPM: Rochester Public Market, 280 North Union Street, Rochester, NY. 585-428-6907; cityofrochester.gov/flowercitydays.

SG: Sonnenberg Gardens & Mansion State Historic Park, 250 Gibson St, Canandaigua, NY 14424. 585-394-4922; sonnenberg.org.

CLASSES / EVENTS

F- Indicates activities especially appropriate for children and families.

S- Indicates plant sales/swaps.

T- Indicates garden tours.

O- Indicates online event.

May 1–August 30: Underground Railroad Exhibit. Free with admission. **SG**

May 6: I Love My Park Day. Sign up to volunteer at your favorite park in this statewide event: ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day

May 12–21: Lilac Festival. See festival events listed here: rochesterevents.com/lilac-festival

S May 12–21: Monroe Co CCE Master Gardeners Volunteers Tent/Highland Lilac Festival, 10:30am–7pm. Located in the vicinity of the Lilac Adventure Zone children's playground, 249 Highland Avenue, Rochester, NY. Featuring a variety of lilacs and specialty items for sale. Plus an opportunity to "Ask a Master Gardener."

S May 13: Genesee Land Trust Native Plant Sale, 9am–1pm. Brighton Town Hall, 2300 Elmwood Ave. Large selection of native plants at great prices to support local land conservation. www.genesee-landtrust.org

S May 13: Webster Arboretum 23rd Annual Plant Sale, 8am–12pm. Perennials from standard to uncommon, annuals, dwarf conifers, geraniums, herbs, dahlias, tomatoes various garden club offerings and more. Arrive early for the best selection. 1700 Schlegel Road, Webster, NY 14580

May 13, 14, 20, 21: Ellwanger Open Garden Days, 12–3pm. Stroll through this historic perennial garden, tucked away among pear trees and boxwood-lined paths. \$5/person donation suggested. 625 Mt Hope Ave, Rochester, NY 14620.

T May 14: Durand Eastman Park Arboretum Tours, 2–4pm. The Monroe Co. CCE. in conjunction with Monroe Co. Parks will lead spring public tours of the historic Durand Eastman Park Arboretum. The routes will traverse moderate hills and wooded trails so dress accordingly. There is no charge but donations to support the Extension's Master Gardener Program will be accepted. Meet at the kiosk on Zoo Rd. (off Lakeshore) next to the park maintenance center.

May 14, 21: Fruition Seeds Free Farm Tour & Tastings, 2:15–4pm. **FRUIT**

S May 14, 21, 26, 28, 29, June 4, 11: Flower City Days at the Market, 8am–2pm. This is a paradise for novice and experienced gardeners who want to cultivate gorgeous ornamental and/or veggie gardens. These legendary horticultural sales are Market and community favorites, full of annuals and perennials, hanging baskets, succulents, gardening accessories and much more. **RPM**

May 14: Mother's Day Special, 9:30am–4:30pm. Tell your mom how much you love her as you stroll the nine formal gardens and walk through the historic mansion and greenhouses. All Moms get in for \$5. **SG**

S May 17: Stafford Garden Club Annual Plant Sale, 3–7pm. Emery Park, 6079 Main Rd. (Rt. 5), Stafford, NY.

S May 20: The Bloomfield Garden Club's 49th Annual Plant Sale, 9am–1pm. Bloomfield Historical Academy Building, 8 South Ave, Bloomfield, NY 14469.

May 20: Pressed Flowers, 10–11:30am. Join "J" in making a sand casting from hosta or similar leaves to serve as a small bird bath or tray. Will need to return two days later after product dries. \$35/person. Registration Required. **BGC**

S May 20: Spring Garden Gala, 10am–1pm. CCE Genesee office. Cornell Cooperative Extension, Genesee County, 420 East Main Street, Batavia, NY 14020. 585-343-3040, ext. 132; genesee.cce.cornell.edu.

S May 20: Annual Henrietta Garden Club Plant Sale, 9am–3pm. Tinker Nature Park, 1525 Calkins Rd.

May 20, 21, May 27, 28, June 3, 4: Tree Peony Festival of Flowers, RSVP required. Linwood Gardens, 1912 York Road, West Linwood, NY 14486. [\\$10/person.](http://linwoodgardens.org)

May 20: Hypertufa Workshop, 10am–12pm. Master Gardener Jessica Kanaley will guide you through making a hypertufa leaf or bowl. Supply list and registration on website, \$10/person. Program repeats June 17. Cornell Cooperative Extension, Ontario County, 480 North Main Street, Canandaigua, NY 14424. 585/394-3977 x427; nea8@cornell.edu; cceontario.org.

May 27: Make Your Own Concrete Garden Stone, 2:15–4pm. Hands-on. Sliding Scale. **FRUIT**

May 27: Market in the Park, 8am–1pm. Sponsored by Monroe Co. CCE Master Gardeners. Vendors on site to offer a variety of perennials, annuals, succulents, herbs, vegetables, shrubs, trees, and garden art. Master gardeners will be on site with their "Ask a Master Gardener" booth. Periodic tours of the Warner Castle gardens. Located at Warner Castle, corner of Mt. Hope and Reservoir Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620. **CCE/MON**

June 3: Pressed Flowers, 10–11:30am. Create an 8 x 10" glass framed piece of art with fun flowers. Learn how to layer natural dried cuttings to make a beautiful wall hanging. Bring any embellishments like script, verses, or other additions to make it unique and personal. \$35/person. Registration Required. **BGC**

June 3: Ontario Pathways Botanical Walk, 10am. The Canandaigua Botanical Society will help celebrate the Ontario Pathways 30th Anniversary as they enjoy the newly installed Eagle Scout project on National Trails Day. Park at the Ontario County fairgrounds on CR 10, Canandaigua, NY and meet on the Ontario Pathways trail to the west side of CR 10. See the CBS website for other events: canandaiguabotanicalsociety.blogspot.com.

June 3 & 4: Ellwanger Open Garden Days: Peony and Rose Weekend, 12–3pm. 625 Mt Hope Ave, Rochester, NY 14620.

S June 10: CCE Monroe Co. Master Gardener Plant Sale, 9am–2pm. 2449 St Paul Blvd, Rochester NY 14617.

June 10: Decoupage Stepping Stones, 10–11:30am. Celebrate pollinator week and create one-of-a-kind stepping stones for a patio or garden using stunning nature-themed fabrics. Learn to decoupage with fabric to decorate ordinary steppingstones and transform your walkways and use as unique garden accent pieces. \$35/person. Registration Required. **BGC**

June 10: Greater Rochester Rose Society Rose Exhibition, 11am–3pm. A display of gorgeous roses from members' gardens in vases and arrangements. Rose photography will also be featured. Free and open to the public. Henrietta Public Library, 625 Calkins Road, Henrietta, NY 14623.

June 18: Father's Day Car Show, 11am–4:30pm. Celebrate Dad with classic cars. Food, flowers, and fun for the whole family. Tickets at the door or presale. **SG**

June 26: Shady Characters, 2pm–3pm. Learn how to plant a shade garden and maximize even the most difficult areas to grow in your yard. Free. **CCE/MON**

SYRACUSE

REGULAR CLUB MEETINGS

African Violet & Gesneriad Society of Syracuse meets the second Thursday of the month, September–December and March–May. Pitcher Hill Community Church, 605 Baily Rd., North Syracuse. 315-492-2562. jimviolets@verizon.net

Baldwinsville Women's Garden Club meets the first Thursday of each month except January at St Marks' Lutheran Church in Baldwinsville at 7pm. The club plants the village flower barrels, raises money for the village flower hanging baskets, maintains the Pointe Garden, donates Arbor Day trees to schools, and gets involved in village improvement projects. Perennial sale yearly on Memorial Saturday morning in the village. See more information at Facebook, Women's Garden Club of Baldwinsville.

Bonsai Club of CNY (BCCNY) usually meets the second Wednesday of the month at 7pm, Pitcher Hill Community Church, 605 Bailey Road, North Syracuse. 315-436-0135, lnewell1@gmail.com, cnybonsai.com.

Central New York Orchid Society meets the first Sunday of the month, September–May, St. Augustine's Church, 7333 O'Brien Road, Baldwinsville. Dates may vary due to holidays. 315-633-2437, cnyos.org.

Fairmount Garden Club meets the third Thursday of the month (March–November) at 6:30pm, Camillus Senior Center, 25 First Street, Camillus. Speakers & community projects. All are welcome. tooley.susan@yahoo.com. *April 20, 6:30pm: Fred Miller, CNY Gladiolus Society Speaker, Camillus Sr. Center(CSC).* *May 18, 6:30pm: Marissa Lathrop, Pollinators, CSC.* *June 14, 12pm: Rose Day, E.M. Mills Rose Garden, Thornden Park.* *July 20, 6pm: Summer Picnic, Erie Canal Park, Camillus.*

Federated Garden Clubs NYS–District 6. 315-481-4005, dist6fss@gmail.com.

Gardening Friends Club meets the third Tuesday of the month, March–December, at 6:30pm, Wesleyan Church, 4591 US Route 11, Pulaski. 315-298-1276, Facebook: Gardening Friends of Pulaski, NY, VicLaDeeDa@frontiernet.net.

Gardeners in Thyme (a women's herb club) meets the second Thursday of the month at 7pm, Beaver Lake Nature Center, Baldwinsville. 315-635-6481, hbaker@twcny.rr.com.

Habitat Gardening in CNY (HGCNY) meets the last Sunday of most months at 2pm. Liverpool Public Library, 310 Tulip Street, Liverpool. HGCNY is a chapter of Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes; wildones.org. Free and open to the public. hgcnycny.org and ourhabitatgarden.org. Subscribe to the free e-newsletter by emailing info@hgcnycny.org.

Home Garden Club of Syracuse usually meets the first Tuesday morning of the month. Members are active in educating the community about gardening, horticulture & floral design and involved with several civic projects in the Syracuse area. New members welcome. homegardenclubofsyracuse@gmail.com, homegardenclubofsyracuse.org.

Calendar

SYRACUSE cont.

Koi and Water Garden Society of Central New York usually meets the third Monday of each month at 7pm. See website for meeting locations. 315-458-3199, cnykoi.com.

The Men and Women's Garden Club of Syracuse meets the third Thursday of every month at 7pm in the Reformed Church of Syracuse, 1228 Teall Avenue, Syracuse, NY. Meetings feature guest speakers on a variety of gardening and gardening-related topics. Members maintain gardens at Rosamond Gifford Zoo and Ronald McDonald House and host annual flower shows. Regular club meetings for the rest of this year will take place in the months of April, May, August, September, and November. See facebook.com/MWGardenClubOfSyracuse for more information on each month's meeting and member tours/events. Email mwgardenclubofsyracuse@gmail.com for more information.

Southern Hills Garden Club meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month, February–November. Meetings will take place at the LaFayette Firehouse, 2444 US Route 11, LaFayette NY 13084 and start at 7pm, unless otherwise stated. Occasional off site meetings typically have an earlier start time. *Guests are welcome and membership is open to anyone interested in gardening. For information regarding meetings or membership, contact Cathy Nagel, 315-677-9342 or CEN42085@aol.com. May 16, 6pm: Container Planting at Plumpton Farms, 3990 Coxe Rd, Jamesville, NY 13078. Bring your own containers and soil will be available. June 20, 6pm: Sycamore Hill Garden Tour, Sycamore Hills Gardens, 2130 Old Seneca Turnpike, Marcellus, NY 13108. There is a fee. July 18, 5:30pm: Little York Plantation Tour, Little York Plantation, 6088 NY-281, Little York, NY 13087.*

Syracuse Rose Society meets the second Thursday of the month (except December) at 7pm, Reformed Church of Syracuse, 1228 Teall Avenue, Syracuse. Enter from Melrose Avenue. Club members maintain the E. M. Mills Memorial Rose Garden, Thornden Park, Syracuse. Public welcome. syracuserosesociety.org.

FREQUENT HOSTS

LYP: Little York Plantation, 6088 NY-281, Little York, NY 13087. 607-749-4861, 315-960-3228. info@LittleYorkPlantation.com, littleyorkplantation.com.

CCE/OND: Cornell Cooperative Extension, Onondaga County, Suite 170, 100 South Salina Street, Syracuse. 315-424-9485; lm1273@cornell.edu; cceaonondaga.org.

CLASSES / EVENTS

F- Indicates activities especially appropriate for children and families.

S- Indicates plant sales/swaps.

T- Indicates garden tours.

O- Indicates online event.

May 5: How to Design with New 2023 Plants. 1–3pm. Sponsored by Griffin Greenhouse Supply. Barbara Lassen (Proven Winners) will be sharing her expertise on what's new in 2023. Register required. **LYP**

May 10: CommuniTree Stewards: Introduction to Tree ID and Taxonomy, 6–7:30pm. Come learn how to identify a tree and how trees got their names. **CCE/OND**

May 13: Birds & Butterflies, 12:30–1:30pm. Learn how to create a friendly environment in your yard to attract birds and butterflies. **CCE/OND**

May 16: Natural Methods of Weed Control, 5:30–6:30pm. More and more people are seeking ways of controlling garden problems that don't rely on human-made chemicals. Find out why, and how you can have a healthier yard for you are your family, as well as for plants and wildlife. Repeats May 27. **CCE/OND**

T May 16: What's in Bloom Walking Tour, 9am. Guided walk through their nursery to see the latest flowers in bloom. Q&A. Wear comfortable walking shoes. Repeats June 6. **LYP**

F May 20: Kids Totally Tomato Workshop, 1–2pm. Fun workshop for children to plant a tomato seedling. Children will be guided how to prepare the soil, plant, and care for the seedling plus they will learn about different types of tomatoes and companion planting. Seeds to take home too plant. Registration required. **LYP**

S May 20: Annual Master Gardener Plant Sale, 9am–12pm. Perennials, herbs, ferns, grasses, and native plants will be available. All plants grown locally. Cash or personal checks only. Immanuel United Methodist Church, 303 Kasson Rd, Camillus, NY 13031. Master Gardener CCE of Onondaga County.

May 27: Make Your Own Memorial Day Planter Workshop, 1–3pm. Create a stunning flower planter using red, white, and blue annuals. Take home a memorable planter and a new understanding of plant arrangement. You may bring your own pot. Registration required. **LYP**

May 31: Native Plants – Creating a Backyard Habitat, 5:30–6:30pm. Gardening with native plants helps pollinators and other native species. Learn what plants are native to our area...and all the benefits of planting them. **CCE/OND**

June 3: Container Gardening Workshop, 1–3pm. Learn about annual flower combinations that work well together and the best choices for sun or shade locations. Basic container gardening techniques will be covered. Materials provided. Registration required. **LYP**

June 4: Introduction to Beekeeping, 1–3pm. Learn the basics of beekeeping and how to get started with your own hive. Registration required. **LYP**

June 10: Creating a Cut Flower Garden, 1–3pm. They will discuss the different types of cut flowers, including annuals and perennials, and how to choose the right plants for your garden plus garden care techniques. Registration required. **LYP**

June 17: The Secret Life of Plants—Botany for Gardeners, 1–3pm. Linda Kellish will provide an overview of some of the basic concepts of the science of botany and apply it to your everyday gardening. Registration required. **LYP**

June 20: Native Plants- Creating a Backyard Habitat, 1–3pm. Learn about topics such as plant selection, design, and care, and how to create a healthy and sustainable garden. Registration required. **LYP**

June 23: Skaneateles Garden Club "A Celebration of Roses." Buffet luncheon event at the Skaneateles County Club featuring renowned gardener Leon Ginenthal, owner of Der Rosenmeister Nursery. \$52/person. Check website for details Skaneatelesgardenclub.org.

June 27–28: Hypertufa Pot and Planting Design Workshop, 1–3pm each day. The first day will cover the properties of hypertufa and building a pot. The second day will be unloading and creating the textured surface. Linda Kellish will make recommendations for types of plants to complement this handmade pot. Registration required. **LYP**

Get your club or event listed here free! Send your submissions to kim@upstategardenersjournal.com. Deadline for Calendar Listings for the next issue (July-August 2023) is, June 9, 2023.

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Forest bathing for a happier, healthier, smarter you!

Story by Deborah Denome; photos by Bonnie Guckin

Our species evolved in nature over millennia. Our DNA is deeply entwined with the rest of the natural world. Only in the last two hundred years have we become an industrialized society. For the first time in history, more than half of the world's population is living in urban centers with little to no access to natural spaces. Suddenly, while our genes are still living in nature, our bodies live in a disconnected, busy, modern civilization. An epidemic of stress related disease and environmental crises has ensued. Reconnecting with our living environment can have radical positive effects for us all. Relatively small, consistent doses of nature connection can significantly reduce stress, increase peace of mind, boost physical vitality, and inspire innovation, dramatically improving our ability to think expansively and make superior decisions. Studies also show that nature connected humans are also more empathetic, generous, and willing to share with others and care for the environment. Forest bathing is a simple yet profound practice for reconnecting, remembering, and deepening our connection with our natural habitat.

Forest bathing is known by many names and looks different depending on where and with whom you are practicing. One form of forest bathing, created by the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy Guides and Programs, is inspired by the Japanese practice of Shinrin-

yoku, which mostly closely translates into “immersing in the atmosphere of the forest.” It is also known as forest therapy or forest immersion, based on the principle that the forest and our natural surroundings are the “therapist.” Researchers in Japan developed Shinrin-yoku/forest bathing in response to the “death by work” or the high suicide rate in Japan in the 1980’s due to stress. The World Health Organization has named stress as the number-one health epidemic of the 21st century. Forest bathing has been so successful in Japan, it is now integrated with the healthcare system as preventative medicine and has grown into a whole field of forest medicine. Other countries are following suit. Around the world there are thousands of certified forest therapy guides who can guide you into this relaxing, therapeutic experience with nature, including some here in western New York.

Whether you are in nature all the time or are reluctant to walk in the wild alone, on a forest bathing walk you will be skillfully guided into a refreshingly new, gentle, enjoyable, full sensory experience of our natural world. Your mind can rest as you slow down as the guide offers invitations that engage your senses—taking in the images, sounds, aromas, breath, touch and wisdom of the forest. In between each invitation the group gathers together to share what is being noticed. People often start seeing metaphors for their life in the forest and insights are often

profound, with participants becoming more aware of their own inner terrain and how we are completely supported by the natural world in every moment of every day. Each forest bathing walk is concluded with a tea ceremony, with a foraged plant that we have encountered on our walk. This helps to incorporate the whole experience to take home with us.

Forest bathing is not only effective but fun! The international standard for forest bathing walks is two-and-a-half to three hours and most people do not want it to end. Trails chosen are level and gentle, usually less than half a mile, can be ADA accessible, and are mainly through forest canopy. Forest bathing is not a hike for exercise and not a naturalist walk. Trails are easy, so participants don't need to think about physical fitness, footing, or safety, they can just sink into connecting with the other nature beings who live there. Walks can be scheduled in the city, suburbs, or our stunning Finger Lakes hills and valleys. Walks can be open to the public or arranged privately for individuals, families, organizational and corporate leadership and wellness programs, staff development, outdoor recreation, conservation clubs, those living with or recovering from illness or disability, caregivers, and anyone who feels drawn to the forest.

Let's take a tour of some of the mental, physical, cognitive, and social benefits of forest bathing.

MENTAL HEALTH

Nature connection improves mental health. It reduces anxiety, depression, anger, and rumination. Breathing the air and touching things in an intact ecosystem exposes our bodies to a richer diversity of microbiota, stimulating neurotransmitter precursors which help our brain work better, increase feelings of pleasure, and improve our mood.

Nature connection also reduces stress. Even sitting and looking at trees reduces the stress-related hormones cortisol and adrenaline and increases serotonin. Being immersed in nature has a positive effect on heart rhythm—it supports greater heart rate variability, shifting us out of the fight/flight mode of our nervous system, and into the calm-cool-content response.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Exposure to nature enhances our physical health in profound ways. It benefits our cardiac system by lowering blood pressure. It improves pulmonary function, reduces inflammation, reduces blood glucose levels, and improves sleep. Nature connection help us feel vital and energetic. It improves the microbiota of our skin, lungs and our gut, protecting us from allergic responses, and helping us to digest food better.

Exposure to nature also protects us from disease. It boosts our immune system. Trees create phytoncides, airborne chemicals that plants use to protect themselves. As we breathe them, our bodies respond by increasing the number and activity of “natural killer” (NK) cells, white blood cells that attack cancer- and virus-infected cells. Time outside also is noted to accelerate recovery from surgery and illness.



CREATIVITY

The number-one quality employers are looking for in employees is innovation, just as many people are looking for more creative solutions to their everyday life challenges. Exposure to natural environments dramatically improves our ability to think expansively and make superior decisions. Researchers have discovered that biomimicry—contemplating and emulating natural systems—expands that innovative potential. Nature provides countless examples of ingenuity and problem solving that can be applied to personal and workplace situations. Historically, many inventors, artists and leaders of all kinds have experienced pivotal “a-ha” moments while in nature.

Even short immersions in nature decrease mental fatigue and confusion, and enhance cognition and our ability to focus, increase clarity and creativity, connect us to our intuition, and enhance our problem-solving capability.

RECIPROCITY

Connecting with nature in a group, with family, co-workers or peers, not only enhances our understanding how we are part of nature's web, but fosters human interconnection. Researchers have found that exposure to nature results in people valuing community and connectedness over more superficial concerns, such as personal gain or fame.

Participants can also become more empathetic, generous, and willing to share with others and care for their environment. They are more likely to feel their life has meaning and to report a sense of connection and belonging with other human beings and the natural world.

Spring is emerging with great beauty! Perhaps we'll see each other in the forest!

Deborah Denome is a certified forest therapy guide, horticultural therapist, herbal educator, and owner of Finger Lakes Forest Immersion. You can learn more about regional Forest Bathing walks and retreats at FLForestTherapy.com.

What to do in the garden in May and June



ABOVE: Keep pinching out the growing tips of mums until early July to have many flowers on dense plants come autumn. Photo courtesy Wikimedia-Commons: Agnieszka Kwiecień.

Harvest asparagus when plants are about a foot tall. Keep an eye on them so you don't miss this fantastic opportunity! It is time to harvest rhubarb, as well. Twist off the stalks instead of cutting them. If you slice stalks with a knife the remaining part of the stalk will wither and die. If you twist off a stalk it will separate from the parent

plant close to the roots. This signals the plant to regrow a new stalk from the roots—this means more rhubarb to harvest later.

Don't be in a rush to plant tomatoes, beans, peppers, squash, or eggplant. Years ago folks planted their vegetable gardens near Memorial Day. If the soil is cold, plants won't get established any earlier. Tomatoes are especially prone to blossom end rot due to their inability to take up calcium from the cold soil. And plant your tomatoes sideways. Remove the lower leaves. Plant about an inch down in the soil. This leads to root development along the stem, stronger plants, more tomatoes, and happier gardeners.

Purchase compact, healthy plants with unopened buds that are appropriate for your gardens. Read plant tags and note the final height and width. Are they appropriate for your space, soil, and amount of sun? Planting holes should be as deep as the root mass and twice as wide. Be sure to "spider" the roots to encourage growth into the soil instead of self-circling roots which lead to a weaker plant. Mix 1/3 compost, well-rotted manure, or other organic materials into the soil before planting. Mulch lightly around the new plants.

Did you purchase hanging baskets? Replant them in larger size baskets now. This enables you to spread the roots out thereby preventing them from forming circles of useless roots. It also means that you won't have to water the pots as often due to their increased capacity of the pots. Use potted flowering plants to liven up areas of your gardens that need interest. This can be done all season long. Move the pots or replant them as your gardens change over the seasons.

Cutting the lawn? Set the height of the lawn mower to about three inches. This shades out unwanted weeds, encourages deeper roots, and saves on watering. Leave clippings in place. They will decompose and feed the lawn

naturally. Consider reducing the amount of lawn by adding another garden bed with native pollinator plants. Think about pollinator species when planting. Members of the aster, daisy, or carrot families provide food and pollen to insects. Native plants are the best for attracting beneficial insects, including pollinators.

Don't mulch your gardens until the soil has warmed up. Mulch can keep heat in, but if applied too early it can also keep soil from warming up. And get a handle on those weeds, because they steal water and nutrients from the plants you want to grow. The sooner you remove them the easier it will be. The best time to weed is as soon as you spot them—and before they drop seed.

If you have lesser celandine, recognizable by its glossy leaves and yellow flowers, in your gardens or lawn, *carefully* dig it out being sure to get all the tubers at the end of each root. Herbicides seem to work best on lesser celandine *before* the flowers form.

If you don't have a compost bin, put your garden waste (not weeds with seeds or lesser celandine) in a dark polyethylene bag. Add water to moisten. Place in the sun. Open the bag every week or so to let in fresh air and to stir the contents. Soon you will have compost for your garden.

To prevent slugs or other pests from entering the drainage holes of your outdoor potted plants, get them off the ground with pot feet. You can also block the entrance by covering the hole inside the pot with newspaper, a coffee filter, a stocking or anything that will allow the pot to drain while keeping critters out.

Lastly, take care of yourself. Gardening is hard work. There is no shame in asking for help. If possible, kneel when weeding or sit directly on the earth. When hoeing, use tools that have long handles so you are not forced to bend over. It is sometimes best to do part of a gardening task one day and save the rest for another day.

—Carol Ann Harlos & Lyn Chimera,
Master Gardeners, Erie County

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Little York Plantation—



A seed planted fifty years ago

Story by Kimberly Burkard; photos provided by Little York Plantations

Starting with a simple roadside vegetable stand fifty years ago, Little York Plantation has grown to become Central New York's "Garden Destination." But according to its owner, the credit for the business's success lies elsewhere.

"We are thrilled to be celebrating our 50th anniversary," says Jackie Crane, owner of Little York Plantation.

We owe our success to our loyal customers and our dedicated team of professionals who have worked tirelessly to create and maintain beautiful outdoor spaces throughout upstate New York. We hope to inspire homeowners to create outdoor living spaces for their enjoyment and to add value to their property."

Spanning six acres, eight greenhouses, and an inspiring nursery/garden center space, Little York Plantation serves the Syracuse, Cortland, and Ithaca regions with professional services as well as merchandise such as plants and supplies.

Little York Plantation is home to a tremendous selection of plant material, garden art, landscaping needs, and more. Over the past five decades, the team has built a reputation for exceptional customer service, attention to detail, and an overall superb garden shopping experience.

To celebrate its 50th anniversary, Little York Plantation

has planned a series of special events and promotions throughout the summer season, including festive themed events such as garden picnics and "An Enchanted Evening." Emporium weekends are scheduled monthly with art vendors, food trucks and family activities. There are new classes and workshops are planned. And, last year, the Antique Shop Upstairs in the barn was added with more than 1500 square feet of antiques and vintage goods—all great reasons for a road trip and a little shopping!

LEFT: Welcome to Little York Plantation

RIGHT: Aerial view of the property

Little York Plantation

6088 State Route 281, Little York, NY, 13086

littleyorkplantation.com

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TOP LEFT:
The Antique Shop
Upstairs opened
in 2022

TOP RIGHT:
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Birds of a different color

By Liz Magnanti



Our native red-tailed hawk provides a wonderful example of color variations, as these photos show..

LEFT: Photo courtesy WikiCommons: Kathy Munsel, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

RIGHT: Photo courtesy WikiCommons: Bob Swingle, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

A very rare, yellow-colored Cardinal that recently made an appearance in Syracuse has spurred a lot of interest. There is a tropical species of bird called the Yellow Cardinal that lives in South America, but the yellow-colored Cardinal seen locally was the species native to this area, the Northern Cardinal. This sighting has spurred a lot of questions and conversation about color morphs and abnormalities in birds and other wildlife. Although some color variations are fairly common, there are others that can be quite rare.

The yellow Cardinal that has been spotted locally is not one of a kind. Several years ago another Cardinal with the same color abnormality was seen in Alabama and caused birders near and far to flock to it. There is a probable reason for this color abnormality—a gene mutation that causes the bird to express the pigments it gets from food to be yellow instead of red. This genetic mutation even has a name, *xanthochroism*. Many species will get their color pigments from the foods they eat. Flamingoes are a good example as their pink coloring comes from the algae and brine shrimp that they ingest. Cardinals are no exception and like flamingoes get their coloring from the brightly colored berries they eat.

There are other color abnormalities that you may come across as you watch your feeders and explore the outdoors. *Leucism* is a pigment defect which results in white patches on animals. It is not uncommon to come across a bird with

some kind of leucism. Every year locally we hear reports and receive pictures of birds that are almost completely white or have white patches on their bodies or wings. Sometimes this leucism is temporary and is only expressed on the bird until their next molt. Leucism can occur over time also due to old age or an injury. The downside of birds with leucism, especially with a severe case of it, is it leaves them more susceptible to predators. A true albino animal is rare to come across, due to their unfortunate susceptibility to predators and poor eyesight.

Melanism, a condition that causes an animal to be darker than usual, is another pigment variation. Sometimes these animals are called “dark morphs” of their species. Red-tailed Hawks are a good example of a bird that has a fairly common dark morph. Black squirrels are another local example. They are a melanistic form of the common gray squirrel. Instead of being gray in color they are a very dark brown or black. These melanistic gray squirrels can be common in pockets locally and are more common in their local ranges.

There are other unusual plumage variations you may come across as you spend time outdoors or looking at your feeders. Bald birds can pop up here and there, especially bald Blue Jays and Cardinals. These species are sometimes known to molt all the feathers in their head at once. While this can look disturbing, it only lasts for a brief time and the bird is not sick. After about a week the feathers will start to grow back and the bird will again begin to resemble the other members of its species.

An abnormality in birds you should always be on the lookout for is conjunctivitis. If you see any birds at your feeders that have some kind of eye irritation, or an eye swollen shut, make sure to take your feeders down for a



few days and clean them thoroughly. The conjunctivitis will clear up on its own but it can easily spread when birds are congregated in close quarters.

Variations in nature are diverse and widespread. You never know what you will see—even in your own backyard! Keep an eye out for some of these as they

can pop up as birds are shedding their feathers for the breeding season ahead.

Liz Magnanti is the co-owner of the Bird House in Pittsford.

ABOVE:
Photo courtesy
WikiCommons: Tom
Koerner, USFWS

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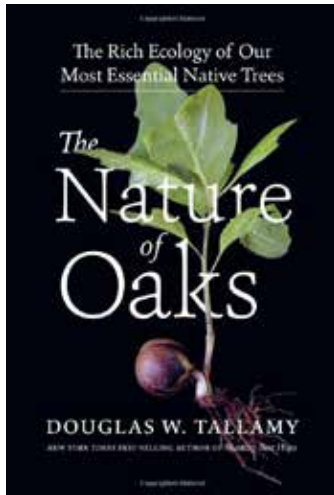


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The Nature of Oaks

By Kimbelry Burkard



As a holiday gift, I received a copy of Douglas Tallamy's *The Nature of Oaks* and I couldn't have been happier. While some might think such a book to be a dry read, it is not. Tallamy uses his wonderful gift to communicate facts and science about our most important genus of native flora, the oaks, in a way that anyone could understand and enjoy. And I would wager that you will more than enjoy the book—it will make you want to plant an oak, like yesterday!

Tallamy covers some of the many species over a span of a year that call the oak home—native oaks support hundreds of species. And as most of our songbird species feed their young insects, especially soft-bodied caterpillars, oaks will be a key element in supporting local bird populations.

So if you love the song of birds in the morning and want your backyard to be an oasis, skip your gingkos, Japanese maples, and invasive Callery pear trees as they are like “plastic trees” for our indigenous life. Add oaks native to your region to your landscaping and watch birds and other fauna take up residence. And yes, you will definitely want to add this book to your reading list. To excite you a little more, I leave you with this thought to consider . . .



Oaks support more forms of life and more fascinating interactions than any other tree genus in North America.



“We cannot casually accept the loss of oaks without also accepting the loss of thousands of other plants and animals that depend on them. Oak declines in the United Kingdom, for example, threaten the survival of some 2,300 other species (Mitchell et al. 2019). Fortunately, there is no reason why we should accept the loss of oaks as inevitable; there is no trick to restoring oak populations, and no shortage of places in which to restore them. If you were to add up the amount of land in various types of built landscapes that is not dedicated to agriculture—suburban developments, urban parks, golf courses, mine reclamation sites, and so forth—it would total 603 million acres, a full 33% of our lower 48 states. We have not targeted these places for conservation in the past, but that was back when our conservation model was based on the notion that humans and their tailings were here and nature was someplace else. That model of mutual exclusion has failed us dismally; there simply are not enough untrammelled places left to sustain the natural world that until now has sustained us. Our only option, then, is to find ways to coexist with other species. That's right, we must construct ecosystems that contain all their functional parts right where humans abound.”

Kimberly Burkard is the *Upstate Gardeners' Journal* Managing Editor and Chairperson of the Town of Canandaigua's Environmental Conservation Board

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