



FEBRUARY 2021

# Bloomin' Times

[www.rakeandhoegec.org](http://www.rakeandhoegec.org)



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### QUIET NIGHT

Photograph by Joe D.

# MEMBER NEWS

## News from Plainfield Members

### NEW HOUSE FOR ANNA

Anna D. and family are moving into the Sleepy Hollow area of Plainfield. They closed on the new house in late December but need to make modifications before they can move in. The house is on the corner of Ravine Rd, a major road through the warren of Sleepy Hollow. Ravine Rd. is relatively easy to find because it dead-ends at Woodland Avenue.

### STORM DAMAGE AT BARB'S

Barb S. had significant tree damage from the Christmas Eve storm. We suspect one of Santa's reindeer was driven off course by the high winds and ran into the tree.



### TREE DOWN AT ADAH'S

Last year, in the middle of summer no less, Adah lost an enormous tree on her property in Sleepy Hollow. The fallen tree covered her entire front yard.



### Contributors to this issue

Nina, Margot, Adah, Anna, Karen, Kay,  
Barb S., Sharon S., Beth S.  
Editor: Joe D.

## Member Walkabouts

Horticulture Committee: The **Winter Tree ID Walk** in Echo Lake Park is coming up on Tuesday, February 16, 11:00 a.m. Contact Barb S. or Clare M. if you wish to participate. They will be bringing hot chocolate and will need a head count.

\* \* \*

Margot recommends: "We went out for a walk at Cattus Island Park in Toms River on Wednesday. What a nice area! Has many different levels of walking areas."

\* \* \*

The Pelikans: "In addition to enjoying the changing of the seasons of our neighborhood, we also enjoy the walking loop at Nomahegan Park in Cranford. The lake features birds and floral and the woods portions feature wetlands and wildlife. It's a leisurely 2 miles and popular, so it's safe."

\* \* \*

Barb S. recommends Colonial Park in Somerset, "Half an hour away, it has an incredible collection of evergreen specimens, with a stream flowing by. I got great photos of a Blue Heron and also a Kingfisher. Benches sprinkled throughout the area make walking easy."

**Attention Walkers: Send BT a note on your favorite walks, for an expanded article next month. Include photos if you have them.**  
**(jodamart@comcast.net)**

## Member Birthdays

### February

2 Jeanette Pelikan

11 Inge Bossert

14 Cathy Becker

16 Pam Kolb

19 Regina Dowd, Martha Triarsi

20 Peggy Smith

26 Lee Perry

27 Tracy Criscitiello

28 Kay Cross



# CLUB NEWS

## Juniors

The Juniors met in December to make evergreen wreaths for the holidays. Using a grapevine wreath as a base, they then added various evergreens and red winterberries. They will meet in February to make Potpourri Sachets.

Sharon S.



Pictured from left to right-

Back row- Alissa Stumpf, Malissa Morabito, CJ Strauss, Riley Dupuis

Front row- Arabella Morabito, Sophia Poeschl

## Flower Design

*Ed Note:* There was not enough room in the last issue to display two of the arrangements created in the Thanksgiving workshop. Here they are:



Margot P



Nina S.

## Awards Committee

In addition to coordinating horticultural competitions and conferring awards on outstanding members, the Awards Committee reimburses members for their attendance at horticultural courses. See page 4 in this issue for the article by Margot on Landscape Design School and think about signing up in 2021. Margot also offers tips on creating a Kitchen Garden, in next month's issue.

## Long-Range Planning

The committee zoomed on January 7th. Discussion centered on the results of the recent fundraising survey, as well as other long-range initiatives.

## By-Laws

Also on January 7th, the By-Laws folks convened to review R&H's operating documents. Discussion focused on the geographic makeup of the club.

## Mindowaskin Park

R&H has accepted the responsibility for caring for the urns at Mindowaskin Park. An Ad Hoc committee will oversee this for the time being. If you are interested in participating in the planting and/or water maintenance of the urns, please contact Lee.

## Birdhouse Workshop

March 26, 2021

Virtual Birdhouse Workshop - 1:00pm  
Lena and Natalie Peitsinovski, co-chairs  
Sign up in February and March.

## Jardine Academy

A thank you basket arrives from Jardine Academy:

"Our older students make the sea glass as a vocational project and the club members came to mind because perhaps it can be used to decorate some of the beautiful plants you grow! Some of the younger students made the other treats.



"We wanted to use this holiday season as a way of giving back and wishing all of you well! The Rake and Hoe Club has always been so very good to us! From the faculty and students at The Jardine Academy we wish you a very happy and healthy New Year!"



# CLUB NEWS

## NEW MEMBER PROFILE

### Sue Feldman



Sue has enjoyed growing houseplants since she was a teenager, expanding to outdoor gardening at her home, including aquatic plants in a koi pond. She is also currently nurturing a bonsai. She enjoys visiting the Philadelphia Flower Show, and touring gardens. Her other interests are dog rescue and genealogy.

Sue grew up in Pennsylvania and has lived in Westfield for 41 years with her husband Mike. They have two daughters, ages 36 and 39. She retired in 2019 from a Japanese pharmaceutical company, where she worked in Human Resources.

Sue is interested in joining Artistic Crafts, Garden B's, Horticulture, Photography, and the Miller Cory House committees.

Sue was introduced to R&H by Betty Gulinno. Contact Sue at 908-447-4127 or by email at saef420@comcast.net.



## NEW MEMBER PROFILE

### Lesley Parness

"Having worked at public gardens for the past 4 decades, I am looking forward to finally being a garden club member. I especially love putting containers together and growing herbs. Dwarf conifers are a new interest that I plan to indulge in this coming year.



The study of garden history propels much of my writing and public speaking and you can see more about that at [www.lesleyparness.com](http://www.lesleyparness.com). My garden reflects an ever-growing appreciation of native plants and is a certified Wildlife Habitat in which birds are the boss. I am always up for a trip to a new garden or garden center and look forward to the companionship of club members on these adventures.

I am interested in the artistic crafts, photography and horticulture committees and in helping with the miller cory house."

Contact Lesley at 973-912-0541.

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOL

Are you going to establish a vegetable garden or re-establish the garden you already had this summer? Topics found in the Landscape Design School could help you plan your project.

Landscape Design School is presented in 4 classes; the curriculum has been developed by the National Garden Club. We are lucky to be able to attend these classes at the Holly House at the Rutgers Gardens. Usually a course is offered once every year. It would then take 4 years to complete the program.

- ◆ Course 1: Space, Design, and People; Developing your Garden Plan; and Design for the Environment.
- ◆ Course 2: Designing for Pollinators; Plants in the Landscape; and Redesign of Areas.
- ◆ Course 3: Landscape Design with Maintenance in Mind; Suburban Design (alternatives to turf and garden responsibly); and Creating Your Own Home Garden Landscaping Plan.
- ◆ Course 4: Contemporary Landscape Design trends which includes Community participation in Landscaping projects such as the history and development of Community Gardens.



*Submitted by Margot P., Awards Committee*

# CLUB PHOTOGRAPHERS

## SECATEURS



Photo by Kay C.

## PATIO BEAUTY



Photo by Kay C.

## HENRY and the SNOWBIRD



Photo by Barb S.

## NATURE'S ORNAMENTS



Photo by Anna D.

# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

## INVASIVE APPLES?

Apple cores tossed out of car windows are [ruining native apple trees](#) in Scotland. Scientists found that more than half of the apple trees along the country's highways were grown from non-native, supermarket apples. In total, about 30 percent of 'wild' apple trees are actually hybrids.

Most wild apple trees in woodland areas have not been greatly touched by human development, but pollen from non-native apple trees in the yards of home gardeners have traveled to create hybrid trees. The hybrid genes can eventually propagate enough to remove pure wild apple trees from the environment. A secondary problem is due to people inadvertently planting apple trees in the wild by "chucking their apple cores out of their car windows." These well-intended folks have invited invasive species' into their ecosystem.



**A similar problem exists in the Northeast United States**, where invasive species of earthworms have spread due to residents using [worms as part of their compost](#). Notably the '[Jumping Worm](#)' species have been spreading into forested areas. Although earthworms are known to be useful in composts and gardens, they aren't so useful in forests. The worms end up eating the nutritious top layer of the soil, leaving less for the seeds of native plants and trees to germinate from.

A lot of native species are spread unknowingly, but it doesn't mean there's little that can be done about it. Environmentalists recommend keeping your cores, worms, and other waste with you until you can find the best way to dispose of them, in other words: Observe Litter Laws.

## THE WAXWORM

(Hero or Villain?)



Plastic waste is a 300 million ton per year problem. A recent discovery shows that the waxworm is able to eat through common types of plastic, including polyethylene, a nonbiodegradable plastic that is the most commonly used type worldwide.

The waxworm is both predator and prey. Wax larvae are pests for bees, naturally feeding off honeycombs and running the risk of reducing bee populations and crops. Their ability to digest beeswax is likely connected with their ability to turn plastic into an edible food source.

Waxworms are used to feed reptiles and captive predatory insects. They are used for fishing bait, and can be purchased through eBay and Amazon.com.

They are voracious feeders during the larval stages and have been found to ingest and metabolize polyethylene at unprecedented rates. The hope is that if the bacteria can be harnessed that helps caterpillars so easily break down plastic, it can be used to design better ways to eliminate plastic from the environment.

## PEST CONTROL

(The Natural Way)

If someone says you eat like a bird, it may not be a compliment. Consider that the world's bugs devour about 500 million tons of insects each year. That's as many as 20 quadrillion individual bugs.

So thank our little feathered friends for keeping plant-eating insects under control. Other predators such as bats, frogs, lizards are also valuable bug eaters but are less effective natural enemies of plant-eating insects.

Some of the most popular items on the avian dinner menu include beetles, flies, ants, moths, aphids, grasshoppers and crickets.

According to a study published in the journal, *The Science of Nature*, the amount of food consumed by birds is similar to that of the human world population: 450 million tons of meat and fish a year.

Doyle Rice, USA Today



# GARDEN POTPOURRI

## SCENES IN A GARDEN

Scene #8: Preparing for her dinner party, Bertie's Aunt Dahlia "was doing something ghastly with hollyhocks and an ornate china vase." Bertie marvels as a guest steps in to rescue the arrangement.

"'May I?' asked Iona, plucking the secateurs from Aunt Dahlia's mystified hand and setting about the stems with the rapacious thrust and parry of a fencing mistress. 'The aim' she said, rotating the vase as she slashed away, 'is to create symmetry, volume, and depth from every angle. Especially if the arrangement is to be positioned in front of a mirror.'

I've never seen Aunt Dahlia impressed. But this bravura display of horticultural savagery had the old bird well and truly gripped. 'Iona, my dear, this is quite divine. How green your fingers must be. Now, might you assist me in my study, where I am at war with some really quite frightful hydrangeas?'''

Ben Schott.  
*Jeeves and the King of Clubs*,  
a novel, p. 148.



## GARDEN LIMERICKS

I enjoyed the first snow of the season  
How I loved looking out on the trees and  
    The lawns winter white  
    What a beautiful sight  
Nature's magic thrills me beyond reason.

jdr



## GROW LIGHTS FOR INDOOR PLANTS

You can keep plants happy indoors even while the soil is frozen outside. Grow lights promise easy installation and low heat. They also emit no sound, which means you can nurture your indoor plants without having to hear a spooky fluorescent buzz. Fluorescent grow lights and LED lights will not burn your plants, so you can hang them or place them fairly close to your plants without fear.

Here's a look at the top three types of grow lights you can find on the market today.

- ◆ **Fluorescent grow lights:** These are relatively inexpensive. These are also good for seeds or herbs, but the light is not very strong, so the plant likely will not flower.
- ◆ **LED grow lights:** These are a popular option: They consume very little power, produce very little heat, and last a long time. Some can be adjusted to show more red (flowering) or more blue light (foliage.)
- ◆ **HID (high intensity) grow lights:** These are far more intense than is required for your collection.

## GARDEN LIMERICKS

The first day of winter is here  
Just ten days until the new year  
    Hellebores are in bloom  
    With a whiff of perfume  
In short time the first bulbs will appear.

jdr



bss