

Summer 2022

Gardening for All

Hello All!

Thanks to all of you who let me know what was on your mind as far as meeting topics, how we should meet, etc.

The end of June I attended a District 1 "coffee" at the arboretum. It was interesting to hear what other clubs were doing and how they managed during the pandemic to stay in touch and to stay safe. One word that kept coming up over and over in relation to meetings was the word "hybrid." Doing things a little different each month. Going places outdoors, ZOOMing where appropriate, outdoor meetings when the weather allowed. In our case we "ZOOMED" often (Thank you, Mary!) and our last meeting was outdoors at the Arboretum.

We're planning our year as I write this, and we'd be starting out and ending our year with outdoor events. In the winter, we'll hope to ZOOM during January and February, where the program especially adapts well to a video meeting. (We'll see about our holiday meeting!)



Mount Airy Clay Breakers Garden Club Newsletter

From our Members

When I (Lorraine) dropped Arminta off the other day, Arminta invited me to the back side of her house to see the really tall "Tall English Phlox" in her yard. She said that it is the tallest it has ever gotten! Some of the phlox is over 5 feet tall!

Also, on the way home to NJ recently I stopped at the Tropic Bay Water Gardens store on Central Avenue. My brother Peter has a water feature near his house and I thought a water lily would be a good gift. They helped me pick out a nice plant and we put it in the water as soon as I arrived at my brother's. Within a couple of minutes, a very happy frog was sitting on one of the water lily leaves and looked so happy. Just what that water garden needed!

Below is photo of the coleus on the portico of the Marlton Pool--it is rather shady - just right for coleus! The second is of the begonias in front of the pool sign. I planted them using the method we learned about at our meeting at the arboretum in May. The method: putting cardboard or newspaper down and planting the plants in a deep layer of compost on top of the cardboard. It really worked well. The last picture is from the spring with Lucille standing in front of her camellia bush in the springtime. It is a beautiful bush and its flowers are in shades of pink and white.



Photos by Lorraine Leonard

Our Officers:

President – Lorraine Leonard

Vice-President – Elaine Arnold

Treasurer – Connie Dalpra

Secretary – Gilda Allen

Editors – Mary Woodruff
& Pam Smart

Mount Airy Clay Breakers is a proud
member of the National Capital Area
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District 1



Photo by Deborah Determan



Photos by Lorraine Leonard



"I am beginning to learn that it is the sweet, simple things of life which are the real ones after all."
Laura Ingalls Wilder



Photo by Pamela Smart

PLANT A NATIVE GARDEN *By Pamela Smart*

As with many of us as children, our first interaction with wildlife was watching pollinators whether we realized it or not-butterflies, bees, moths, beetles and other insects-as they flitted from flower to flower. Brightly colored swallowtail butterflies and furiously buzzing bumblebees on my parents' grapes and vegetable gardens were some of my favorites.

But these insects are not just beautiful to watch. As they move from flower to flower, drinking nectar or eating pollen, they also collect pollen on their bodies, then transfer it from male flowers to female flowers. The act of moving pollen or pollination, allows plants to create seeds and reproduce.

About 80% of all plants including many of those we eat, require pollinators to reproduce, the remaining 20% are pollinated by wind and water. It is not just insects that do this important work. Some species of birds, bats and even small mammals are pollinators.

Many pollinators are declining now due to loss of feeding and nesting habitat. Pollution, misuse of chemicals, disease and changes in climate all contribute to shrinking pollinator populations. According to Pollinator Partnership there are at least 41 pollinators federally listed as either endangered or threatened-one fly species, three bats, five birds, eight bees and two dozen butterflies or moths.

What can we do as responsible caretakers of our properties? It's pretty simple. Create a garden with native flowering plants that supply pollinators with nectar, pollen and homes. We all know the emphasis there should be on native plants. The garden does not have to be large to be worthwhile, several square feet of native pollinator plants will attract many butterflies, bees and other beneficial insects. Even a large container garden is helpful! And it can go anywhere...from a suburban yard, pasture or open field, schoolyard to a commercial property.

Consider providing food sources throughout the growing season. Here is just a sampling of examples for our Chesapeake Bay Watershed throughout the year. **Spring:** eastern red columbine, wild geranium, foxglove, beardtongue, squirrel corn, wild lupine and golden ragwort. **Summer:** common milkweed, beebalm, joe-pye weed, zinnia, butterfly milkweed, woodland sunflower and narrowleaf mountain mint. **Fall:** white wood aster, gray goldenrod, New England aster, cardinal flower, wrinkleleaf goldenrod and white turtlehead.

The Pollinator Partnership has more detailed native plant guides for all US regions in case you want to pass this along. Go to pollinatorpartnership.org and go to Resources and choose Planting Guides. Depending on where you live in the Bay watershed, you can download one of the specific guides. Page 7 of each guide shows the region's boundaries. The guides also have information on where you can purchase plants native to your state.