



NEVER DONE!

THE GARDEN CLUB OF HARVARD
VOLUME XXVII, ISSUE 08



President Ponderings

MaryAnn Piasecki

Hello Gardeners. I feel like we have finally come out of a long hibernation. As we emerge from our caves I have many members to thank. It has been an extraordinary year for all of us. We have beaten the virus both physically and mentally with our persistence and perseverance. Hats off to us for learning how to Zoom, sit through video presentations, reading an e-yearbook, doing the holiday greens outside in December on picnic benches, creating a real and virtual Bloom N'Art exhibit and wrapping it up with a great plant sale,

Let's not forget the extraordinary people who stepped up this year:

Connie Grabowy: Our own P. Allen Smith. Horticultural presentations on Zoom .

Deb Dowson and Denyse Cox: Holiday Greens arrangement with mittens on.

Kathy Jackson: Whiskey Barrels are us around the general store.

Marijke Vallaeys and AnaMaria Nanra – Movie producers and star makers.

Theresa Ledoux: Program Boomer Zoomer extraordinaire, We learned how to make a grilled cheese sandwich, maybe like some bugs, get ready for spring and take photos of our cats.

We had a great Plant Sale thanks to Abby Besse and MaryJane Ellison. They can now add to their resumes: mushroom and worm poop pushers! The geniuses of the signup had a record turnout and a perfect day.



One last thumbs up and a huge thank you to all our members for sticking with us this year. You helped make this club what it is with all the contributions, both large and small. Some of you even laughed at my jokes.

Membership

*A hearty welcome to 2 new members this month:
Maureen Remeika of Stow Road
and Lina Formicelli of Quarry Lane.
We look forward to seeing you 'around the Garden!'*



Lina Formicelli happily landed in Harvard 4 years ago. She lives with 5 boys: 2 dogs, 2 children and a husband. The camaraderie of smart enthusiasts who plan, design and grow things attracted her to the Garden Club.

Annual Meeting & Lunch

Info: Maria Day, mvsday@gmail.com

After more than a year of virtual meetings and limited personal contact we will gather safely in the garden of Maria Day for the Annual Meeting & Lunch on June 7, 2021



When: June 7, 2021

Time: 11:30 am

Where: In the garden of 77 Pinnacle Road in Harvard.

A boxed lunch will be catered by Panera Bread. Make your choice of a sandwich or a salad. There will be coffee, ice tea, water and cider with additional desserts.

Below is the sign up link for ordering lunch or you may send your choice in an email to Maria. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0C45A5AE2CA6FA7-gchannual>

Please promptly send or deliver a check of \$20 for your food order.

Please make the check out to Harvard Garden Club

and send it to Maria Day - 77 Pinnacle Road, 01451 Harvard by May 30.

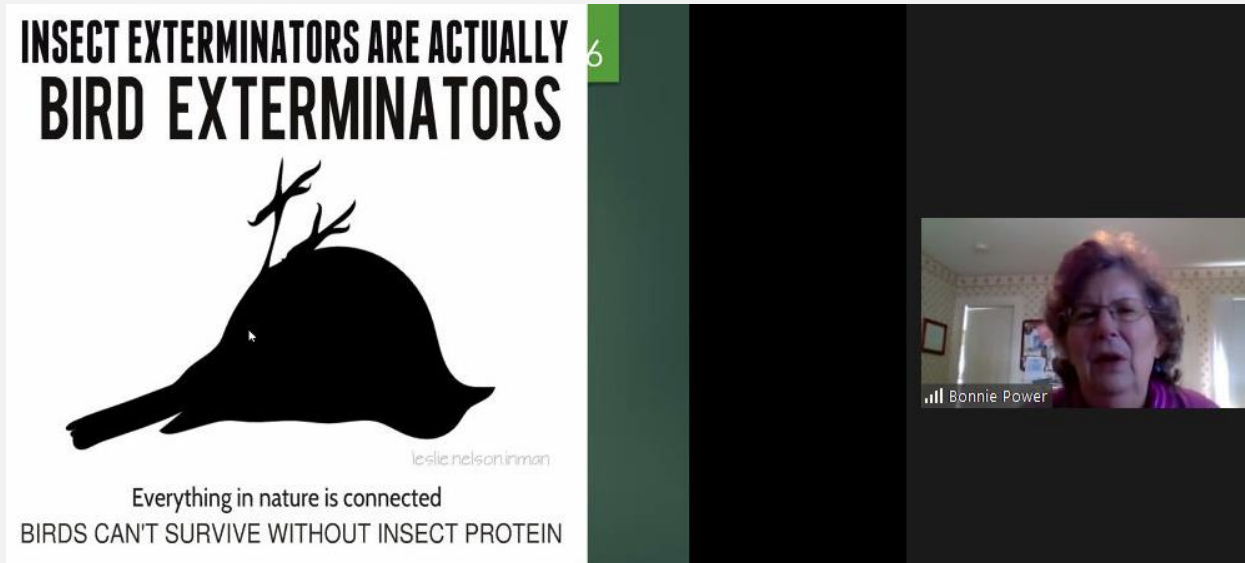
Parking is on Old Meadow Lane immediately to your left in the grass for those who can walk down from there.

Sunday, May 30th is the last day to sign up!

April 26 program: What's Bugging You?

Speaker: Bonnie Power

Info: Theresa Ledoux



There are good bugs and there are bad bugs. The question is: how do I recognize them? After a test I realized: 'it's not that easy!'.

Did you know that spiders are beneficial arthropods? Stop chasing them...



It's important to have native plants in our gardens. It helps the bees. So plant squash, goldenrod, sweet joe-pye weed (picture), milkweed and sunflowers

One of the bad bugs is the nearly eradicated winter moth, a good bug is the lightning bug or the firefly but because of light pollution the population has dramatically decreased.

Civic Beautification

Info: Kathy Jackson



Kathy's work is never done!

Cleaning up at Fivesparks with Judy Warner, AnaMaria Nanra and Marijke Vallaeys.



Spreading mulch around the Civil War Monument.

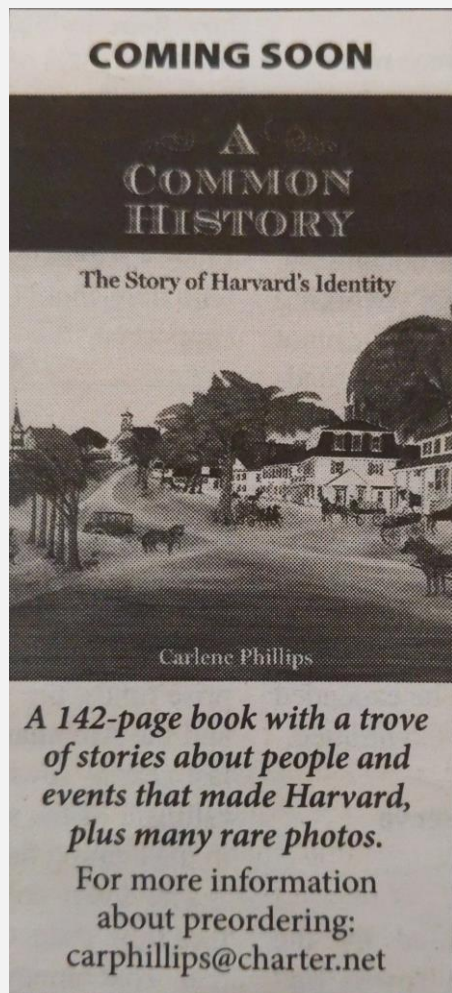
And filling the planters at the General Store with MaryAnn Piasecki and Janice Rusiecki.





For many years Nancy Gasser and her husband Gary have been brightening each season with plantings in the horse trough at the Harvard Historical Society. This spring's display is particularly attractive in its combination of colors. The society and many passers-by are cheered by the flowers in front of the old meetinghouse and appreciative of the Gassers' efforts. (CP) (picture Judy Warner)

Our club Historian, Carlene Phillips, has written “a 142 page book with a trove of stories about people and events that made Harvard, plus many rare photos.”



That's a quote from the advertisement for her book in the May 14 Harvard Press.

Carlene has been researching and writing the stories appearing in this book for years and it's about to be published. A series of her stories have appeared in the Press over the years and this book is a collection of them.

The cover of the book is beautiful with a painting of an historical view of the Common. It is one of the four paintings by Pollard in the Historical Society collection.

More info could be obtained from Carlene. I'm sending this in without prompting from her, but I think the Garden Club members should be informed.

I think that the number of books to be published is motivated by the preorder numbers. I am ordering mine today!

(Suzan Osborn)

Nature Trails

Info: Pam Durrant



April 29 Dolan Mason Trail and Small Land

Pam Durrant and Marijke Vallaeys brave the rain!

May 20 Highlights of the Harvard Park, Stone land and Millie's path walk:

Male AND female Scarlet Tanagers chasing about at mid story near the beginning of the park trail. Nice sighting of a Great Crested Flycatcher. Golden's Pond. Bowers Brook. Jessie Panek Carole Herbin, and Pam Durrant

"Where do Garden Club members meet unexpectedly? Well, yes, Dorene Lewis and I met at Lancaster Gardens.

But it was a surprise to meet again at the manure stand at Great Brook Farm Park in Carlisle. (Barbara Heim)



*The sun is shining, gardens are getting prepared. Composted cow manure bags are readily available at the farm for pickup. Aged a year, odor-free.\$5.50 per bag, four bags for \$20
Location: 247 North Rd Carlisle, MA 01741*

In our garden



Spring colors *in the garden of Pat DeLuca*

So long trees, hello opportunities...
in Kathy Hewett's garden.

Two diseased trees (maple & ash) in the side yard had to go. We needed big machinery to haul the overachieving invasive poplar from the driveway.





After 3 summers in our house in Harvard, we are finally making some noticeable progress with the overgrown and uncared for property we acquired. Last summer, after a lot of physical work sealing concrete and rubber lining for leaks, we were able to get our small fish pond and fountain working. It is such a wonderful sound early in the morning while putting about the garden, birdsong mixed with tinkle of running water.

This spring, many neighboring critters have discovered it and are thoroughly enjoying it, some of which I managed to photograph, and many I could not. Visitors enjoy drinking, bathing and eating other visitors! Some of the more unusual birds include Pileated Woodpeckers, who seem to have a nest in a dead tree nearby, Baltimore Orioles, and Winter Wrens. More common birds such as American Robins and Mourning Doves are particularly fond of bathing in the shallower pools. Last week we even had a pair of Mallard Ducks spinning around for the duration of a morning. How they

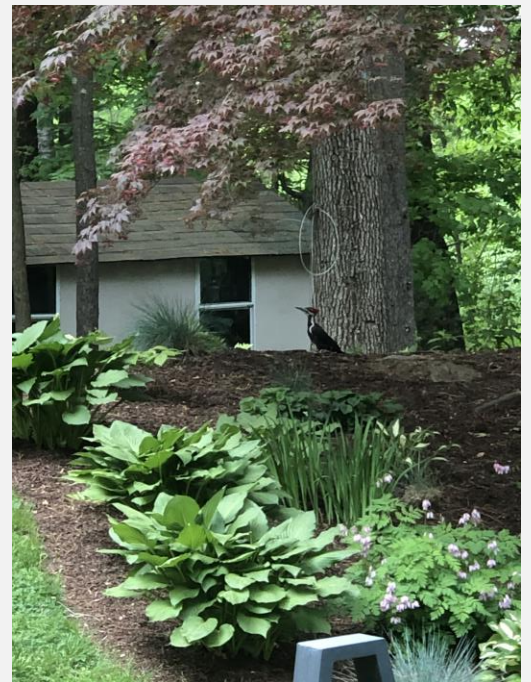
found the tiny pond, I don't know!

The pond itself has numerous clusters of amphibian eggs, which in past years have hatched into several different types of frogs and salamanders. In the photo you can see two of our current resident frogs, which I haven't identified with confidence, maybe Green Frog?

In addition to the rat race of chipmunks and squirrels, we've seen a red fox drinking and perhaps he/she feasts here as well, since we've found evidence of mammalian, avian and snake meals on the edge of the pond. I agree with whomever it is! It is a lovely spot for meal!

Our desire for this little pond does not align with whomever designed and installed it I'm sure. Although koi are lovely fish, we want to try to keep our little pond a blend of natural and maintained waterscape, a task easier said than done. Every spring we have the dilemma of needing to clean out the pond of excess debris so it doesn't turn into a murky, smelly, mosquito-infested cess pool. But how to do this when the amphibians are so quick to lay their eggs, sometimes even before frosty nights are over? We've learned to work with a delicate touch, and hope that too much disturbance doesn't halt development. For all its headache, the little pond seems well worth the trouble, for now at least!

AnaMaria Nanra



Garden Club Plant Sale

Abby Besse and MaryJane Ellison
Pandemic Plant Sale Partners 😊



Abby and Mary Jane



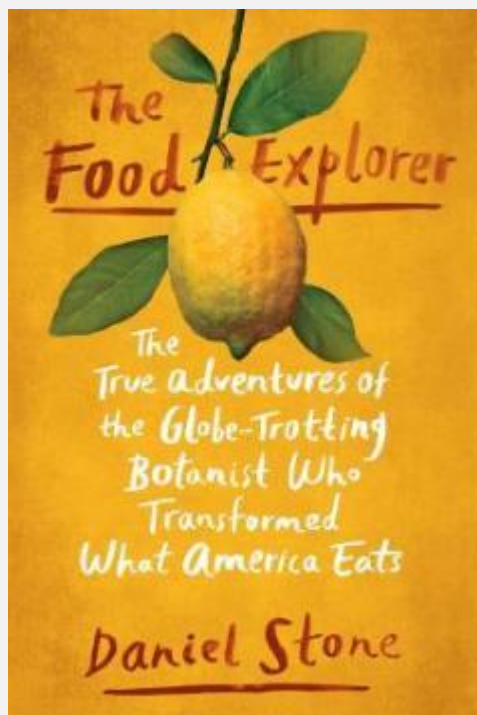
Mary Helen Vesenka Turner

As last year, the sale happened at Westward Orchard. Thanks!

Book Club

Info: Helen Jean Berry

The HGC book club is still going strong! We meet every few months, so there's ample time to read the selections.



The newest selection is: **The Food Explorer**, by **Daniel Stone**.

(The true adventures of David Fairchild, a turn-of-the-century food explorer who traveled the globe and introduced diverse crops like avocados, mangoes, seedless grapes—and thousands more—to the American plate.)

Meetings start at 5:00 pm with the informal chat and move on at 5:30 to the “book discussion” as people may want to join only for certain parts of the meeting.

Books read and discussed in the past:

- October 2020: *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life* by Barbara Kingsolver
- January 2021: *Plants go to War* by Judith Sumner

Digging Harvard's ice-age dirt

By Catherine Warner, member of the Garden Club

Soils here in Massachusetts were created by retreating glaciers approximately 11,000 years ago. Depending on the terrain, Harvard's; glacial till either has weathered into coarse loam that is good for agriculture or, on steeper slopes, eroded into thinner soils with shallow depth to bedrock.

Thus, the two most common types of soil locally are the agriculturally rich Paxton (the official state soil of MA) and Chatfield-Hollis, categorized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as "not prime farmland". In addition, varied wetlands around Harvard are characterized by lots of organic plant material, sediments, and anaerobic soil. They are legally protected, so should be appreciated but remain free to do their own thing.

The terrain found in your landscape tells you a lot about the kind of soil you have to work with. To learn about your soil is to look at what grows there naturally. White pines and oaks grow in thin, rocky, acidic soils. Sandy and dry soil is favored by ants who work as seed dispersers. So I decided to turn the anthill portion of my lawn into a meadow fringe with native wildflowers and prairie grasses.

Plants don't just react to the soil; they also make the soil, in conjunction with the soil's microorganisms. Protozoa, fungi, algae, bacteria, and little arthropods do a lot of the work to make Earth's skin produce life by cycling nutrients, water and air through the soil. Microbiologist and former professor Elaine Ingham characterized the complex interactions among these organisms, the soil, and plant as the "soil food web" to highlight how important the processes going on below ground are to supporting life above it.

Tips for better soil

Even those of us blessed with good soil need to manage it to prevent erosion and loss of nutrients.

- *Add compost*
- *Do not till.* Tilling disrupts the topsoil and exposes it to air and rain, often killing the good microorganisms, especially the beneficial fungal threads that form around root systems.
- *Avoid overwatering.* It may lead to salinization of the soil. Do not let water pool on top of the soil - you may starve your plants of air and kill off good microorganisms.
- *Do not allow your soil to lie bare at any time during the season.* You can plant a cover crop or use mulch. Observe and enjoy your soil

In conclusion, do less and enjoy your garden more, in whatever form it takes.

"Excerpted from The Harvard Press (April 30, 2021)

Hildreth Elementary School



Hello Kathy and Jessie,

I wanted to personally thank you both so much for all of your help these last few months! The planters look great and I really appreciate you lending your expertise in determining a planter style that would look classy and welcoming for the new school! Thank you for also donating the beautiful Mandevilla plants! And thank you, Kathy, for your help planting the pots this afternoon. I could tell the girls were so proud of the final product; they were beaming as staff were exiting the building and saying kind words about the planters.

Thank you, again!

Warm regards,
Jessica Stone Beauchemin

Bloom 'N Art



Marijke Vallaeyes, AnaMaria Nanra, Cindy Fontaine, MaryAnn Piasecki, Cindy Harris and Elizabeth Hoorneman.

A picture of the 2021 Recognition Ceremony.

The 2021 exhibit was virtual but to make it happen the Garden Club and the Bromfield art teachers worked enthusiastically together.

We acknowledged the art teachers' contribution to the BnA exhibit with a Dipladenia plant.

This year the ceremony was not very 'ceremonial', it was it short but cordial and the meeting took place in the driveway in front of the art department.

Proposed Slate Officers for 2021-2022

President: MaryAnn Piasecki
Vice President: Jessie Panek
Secretary: Stephanie Hooper
Treasurer: Pauline Carroll

Committee Chairs

Historian: Carlene Phillips
Hospitality: Pending Covid Restrictions
Membership: AnaMaria Nanra
Newsletter: Marijke Vallaey
Nominating: Margaret Murphy, Janice Rusiecki
Programs: Margaret Murphy, Janice Rusiecki
Publicity: Marty Green

Projects

Annual Luncheon: Maria Day
Civic Beautification: Kathy Jackson Garden
Therapy: Mary Maxwell
Garden Tour: Suzan Osborn, Carlene Phillips
Graduation Flowers: Jessie Panek and Kathy Hewett
Holiday Greens Workshop: Deborah Dowson, Denyse Cox
Horticulture: Connie Grabow
Library Books: Helen Berry
Book Discussion Group: Helen Berry
Library and Meeting Flowers: Mary Jane Ellison
Nature Trails: Pam Durrant
Plant Sale: Claudia Wesley and Bill Loehfelm
Webmaster: Betsy Howard
Yearbook: Marijke Vallaey
Bloom N Art: Marijke Vallaey, AnaMaria Nanra