

Bloomin' Times

March 2024



Centerpiece
Beth Siano

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CLUB NEWS

JUNIORS

The Junior Garden Club members made 35 small floral arrangements of red and white carnations, greens, a heart decal on each container and a Valentine Day Card signed from the R&H Juniors Club. They were delivered to the Complete Care Nursing Home in Westfield. *Betty Clark*



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Regina Kelley, "Profiles"

Jeanie Pelikan, Photography

Richard Pelikan, Photography, "Jersey Gems"

Mabel Woloj, "Native Plants"

Joe Da Rold, Editor, Photography, "Native Plants," "Garden Limer-

MOBILE MEALS PREP



17 R&H members gathered on 2-6-24 to create mini floral arrangements for food trays delivered by Mobile Meals.

Pictured at left is 2007 R&H President, Nancy Smith.



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 Joanne Womelsdorf

12 Irene Greenstein

18 Nina Sylvester



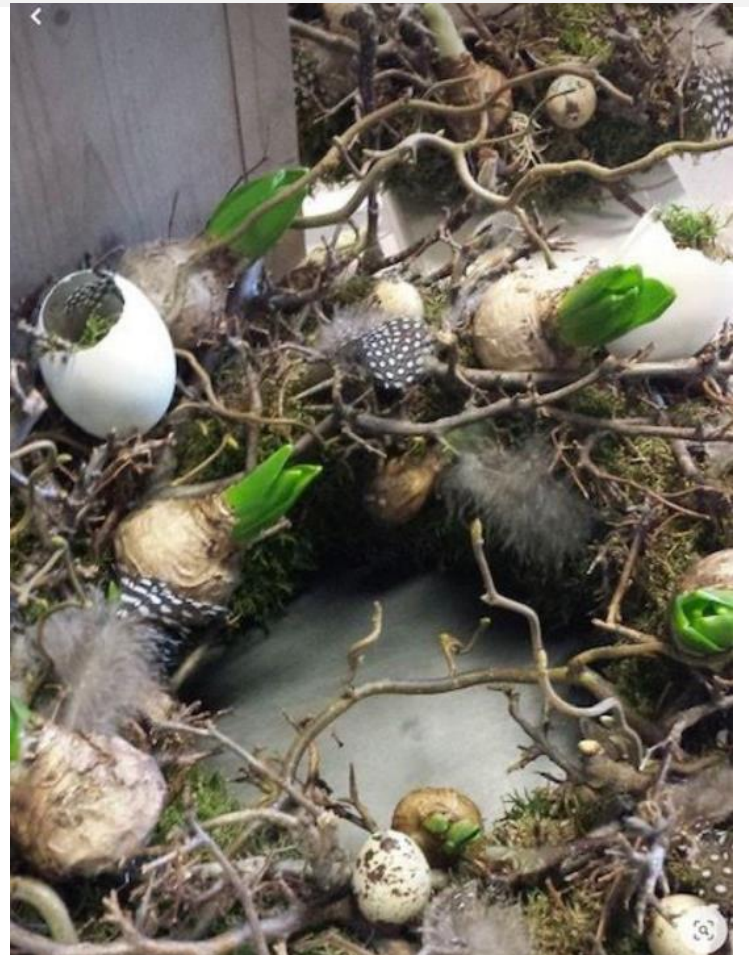
CLUB NEWS

EGGSHELL WORKSHO

The workshop to create these 10" egg wreath centerpieces, or door wreaths if you prefer, is March 12th, 1:00 pm, at the Mountainside Public Library. The cost is \$10 and will be collected at the workshop.

You will need to bring egg shells, ribbon in a color that suits your decor, and a glue gun.

We will provide the wreaths, moss, some quail eggs, and some feathers. Shown below are 2 examples to guide you. Please RSVP to Kris Luka, kluka@comcast.net, as soon as possible.



CLUB NEWS—NEW MEMBERS

Liz Ryan



Eileen Morris



Joann Androconis



Cheryl Katz



GARDEN POTOURRI

SEED PACKETS FOR 2024

You can never start early enough to think about your garden, especially your vegetables. If you are clever you can sow some varieties directly outdoors. "Choose Wisely!"



A FRUIT TREE IN YOUR GARDEN

An anonymous gardener wrote that he planted a lemon tree from seed, and it took 8 years for it to give the first three blossoms. The next season, 20



blossoms appeared, and now it is a regular producer. The author boasts of harvesting oranges and grapefruit now, GROWN FROM SEEDS. He suggests that it takes trust and patience to grow fruit trees. He recommends the Meyer Lemon as your best bet for an indoor citrus tree. For other possibilities, Google "dwarf citrus trees."

ATTENTION PATIO GARDENERS

Having lived in Southern California for 29 years and learned to love Mexican food, I want to tell you about Anaheim Peppers. They are the best for making Chili Rellenos. Although similar in shape to Jalapenos they are milder but still spicy. Poplanos are often recommended for Chile Rellenos, but their chubby shape gives them the wrong proportion with the stuffing. Be advised, Peppers for Rellenos must always be fresh, never dried. Second warning: NJ Dept of Agriculture has banned the shipping of Anaheim chilis into our state, but their seeds may be shipped. jdr

GARDEN LIMERICK

The first snows of winter have cleared
And the sun has at last reappeared
But the temperature lows
And the noses they froze
Mark the start of the cold spell we feared.



CLUB PHOTOGRAPHERS



Photo by Jeanie Pelikan



Photo by Jeanie Pelikan



Photo by Lee Perry



Photo by Maryfran Annese

NATIVE PLANTS

by Mabel Woloj and Joe Da Rold



FLOWERING LAWNS

Mother Nature will choose many of these wildflowers to place in your lawn. Once established, you get to sow the rest, with no watering.

Aconites	Hawkbits
Bluebells	Knapweeds
Campions	Ox-eye daisies
Clover	Sheep sorrel
Cranesbills	Snowdrops
Crocus	Vetches
Dandelions	

Go Wild With Your Lawn!



Are you dismayed by the idea of tearing up your lawn just to be “environmental”? Are you afraid of having a “wild” unfinished yard, drawing nasty looks from your neighbors? Are you afraid of the cost and care required of a new type of lawn? Do you not want to lose the traditional, neat, English-type garden that you have spent so many years in developing?

Here are some things you might think about:

- Consider having a different landscaping approach to your front yard than from your side or back yard.
- Situate your “wildflower lawn” so that seeds do not blow into parts of the garden where you don’t want them.
- Re-landscape over time, year by year, not all at once. Carve out sections little by little. Wildflower lawns will take several years to establish themselves.
- Can I afford to plant an environmental lawn? Americans spent \$105 billion in 2020 to maintain lawns. That’s an average of \$1,700 per household. A flowering lawn has a small start-up cost, and very little required maintenance.

MORE TO KNOW ABOUT FLOWERING LAWNS

- Flowering lawns will support beneficial pollinators. They do not need fertilizers or pesticides and are safe for children and pets to play on.
- Lawns that are low in nutrients are rather good meadows, because the grass won’t outcompete the others. These lawns can be very low maintenance, too.
- If you want your lawn to flower, always pick up your lawn cuttings. If you leave them behind, you will feed the soil and promote grasses over wildflowers.
- Be aware of the watering needs of the different parts of your garden. The flowering lawn will need no water, and the water table may be lower in other parts of your garden.

JERSEY GEMS

by Richard Pelikan

Sixth in a series of articles by Richard Pelikan, featuring overlooked places of interest to visit.

New Jersey - The Diner Capital of the World

We all have dined at some time at one of our area's local diners, perhaps after bird watching or a busy day of Garden Club activities. They are well-known for a large variety of good comfort foods at affordable prices. New Jersey became recognized as "the Diner Capital of the World," boasting of 525 diners throughout the Garden State. Most of the original diner manufacturers were here: companies such as the Jerry O'Mahony Diner Co. of Elizabeth, Silk City Diners of Paterson, and more than twenty other companies. All are now gone.



Summit Diner



Excellent Diner

The "diner" concept began in the 1870s in Providence, RI, where lunch wagons were pulled by horses. They offered basic, simple foods to customers along city streets. The trend in NJ began in Trenton in the 1890s, then spread to other NJ cities. Soon after, the lunch wagons evolved into permanent building locations, stayed open for longer hours, provided more food choices, then became known as "diners." Jerry O'Mahony created the original style of a diner as a long railroad car because it was easy to ship via rail. Many of NJ's classic diners, e.g., the Summit Diner in Summit and the White Diamond in Clark, retain this traditional shape. Many were operated by Greek immigrant families and their descendants,

as are many of today's modern NJ diners.

Many of us remember the "Excellent Diner" on North Ave. in Westfield, another O'Mahony creation. It closed in 1995 after 60 years in business, then was sold and shipped to a buyer in Germany, and is now located in Disneyland Paris. One of our favorite diners is the "Clinton Station Diner" adjacent to Route 78 in Clinton. You can dine in a traditional restaurant setting, or you can dine in a railroad car. If you're really hungry, bring 9 Rake and Hoe friends to the Diner. If



Clinton Station Diner

TRIVIA:

Recently, the Somerset Patriots minor league baseball team announced they are being renamed the "Jersey Diners."

all can devour their 105 lb. burger plus bun in one hour, you will win \$2000! If you come alone, you might prefer their 3 lb. burger. It's free if you can eat it in 45 minutes! The diner has been featured on the "Food Network." NJ diners have survived the fast food, drive-in craze.

Next time you're in a New Jersey diner, remember that you are in ...
"The Diner Capital of the World."

AMAZING GLASS FLOWERS

by Nina Sylvester

The Ware Collection of Blaschka Glass Models of Plants

If you are in Boston, I highly recommend visiting the Harvard Museum of Natural History in Cambridge, MA. The museum is diverse. There is something for everyone. The museum exhibits showcase items from Africa, Asia, and Central and South America. A Harvard professor needed life-like models to teach botany, so the college commissioned these glass life-sized models in 1887. The Blaschkas, father and son, shaped some flowers from molten glass, while other flowers were blown. They used colored glass for some flowers, and meticulously painted others, using small amounts of wire and glue as supporting elements to keep the ornaments intact.

My favorite exhibit is the Ware collection of Blaschka Glass Models of Plants, a stunning collection of glass flowers that consists of 4,300 glass models of 780 varying species of plants. It was created over the course of 50 years by Czech glass artists, Leopold and Rudolf Blaschka. These plant studies are remarkably precise, depicting the nuances of flower anatomy.



You will be amazed by the beauty, detail and accuracy of these flowers. The exhibit boasts an impressive variety of plants, ranging from North American species like roses and daisies to tropical varieties such as bromeliads. These models are not only educational artifacts, but also exquisite pieces of art. The gallery is an excellent place to see realistic models of plants from around the world.

Nina



The Glass Flowers allow year-round study of tropical and temperate species, as they are always in bloom.

ENVIRONMENT

TIPS ON FEEDING YOUR BIRDS

from the *GARDENING KNOW-HOW Website*

Provide Wider Food Choices

'With so many different types available, it can be quite difficult to know which is best,' says Eric Michels, wildlife expert and bird food specialist [C.I Wildlife](#).

'It all depends on the birds you see mostly in your area and what types of foods they prefer. To encourage specific species, try providing their favorite meals.'

Sunflower seeds are almost universally popular, and are devoured by a wide range of birds.

Nyjer seeds are particularly enjoyed by finches, buntings, redpolls, juncos, and mourning doves.

Safflower seeds are popular with cardinals, as well as woodpeckers, grosbeaks, chickadees, and native sparrows.

Corn and peanuts are enjoyed by some desirable visiting birds, but also by pests, so be conservative with these.

Mealworms are loved by a huge range of birds, including robins, wrens, woodpeckers, nuthatches, titmice, and bluebirds.

Suet and lard are important fat sources for many birds. Increase



supplies of these over winter.

Vary Your Feeders

Different species of birds have different feeder preferences – some like to feed from the floor, or on flat, sheltered feeding tables. Others enjoy the experience of perching on hanging feeders.



'The best way to encourage a wider variety of birds to the garden is to place an array of feeder types, so all birds feel welcome,' says Eric. 'Feeders should be tailored to food types, such as suet feeders, nyjer feeders, mealworm feeders, and peanut feeders.'

Don't forget to include [bird attracting berry plants](#) and

flowers that have edible seeds to complement the food source you provide. Sunflowers and many wildflowers will provide a rich source of food for birds.



Invest in a Birdbath

Birds need a fresh supply of water – even in the winter, when many water sources may be frozen. A heated bird bath is ideal.



'Bathing is vital for birds' survival, and being able to clean their feathers in clean water each morning will help prepare them for another cold night ahead,' says Eric. 'Providing water is simple – either choose a bird bath or create your own mini wildlife pond using an old plant pot, pond liner, and stones for perching.'

'Keep them topped up each day with clean, fresh water and sanitize regularly with a veterinary-approved disinfectant to prevent illness.'

Add a Bird Box

According to the [National Audubon Society](#), there is no one-size-fits-all policy when it comes to the type and position of nest boxes.



'Eastern bluebirds, for instance, will go for boxes that face east towards open land, while barn swallows will nest in open boxes that are set up in sheltered areas close to a mud source.'



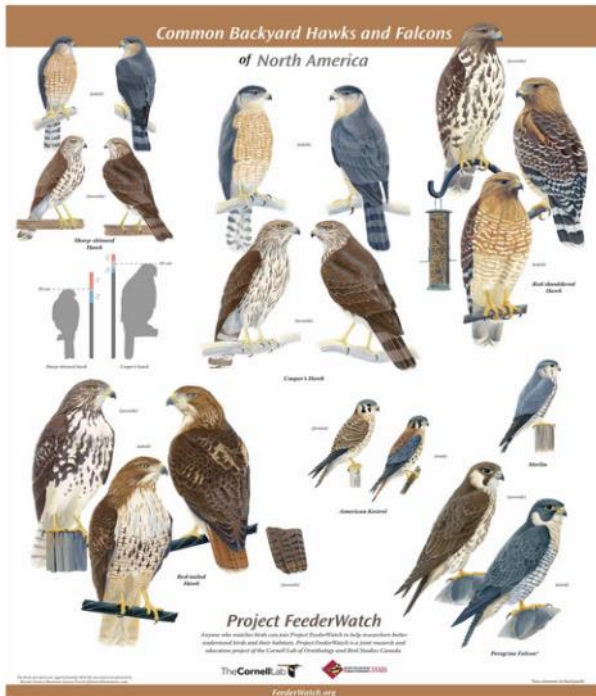
BREAKING NEWS



The Cornell Lab of Ornithology



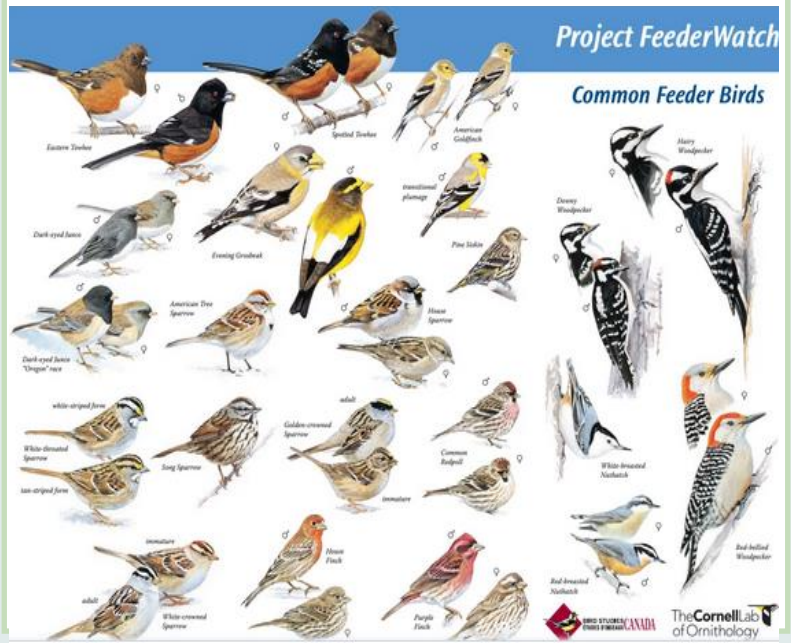
Project FeederWatch



This poster of Hawks and Falcons of North America is available through the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Feeder Watch Program

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology

This brochure-sized, double-sided poster PDF features illustrations of birds commonly seen in winter, depicted in their winter plumage.



On the Street Where You Tweet

On a street in Takoma Park, Md. is a rare pay-phone. Instead of placing voice calls, it plays bird calls. Violinist David Schulman created it in 2016 as part of a public-art competition, rewiring an old pay-phone so that it plays different bird songs. To get the avian sounds, he contacted the Cornell Lab of Ornithology which sent him recordings of native birds. Each button on the phone plays a different call. No. 1 is reserved for Schulman's favorite: the night heron.



Change of Program Speaker in March

Nath Kaplan, Photographer

Nath is a retired nurse who spent the last two decades in healthcare information technology. He is a past president of the Essex Camera Club and is still a member of the club. He also helped out with the disbanded Essex County Nature Photography Club. He is an avid photographer who enjoys Black & White and Color photography. He has also done extensive work in Infrared photography and iPhone photography.