

# A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

## New Meadows Garden Club

### Topsfield, Massachusetts

### March 26th through April 16, 2019



There has been a lot of talk these days about the fact that our pollinators are in trouble. Check out The Green Thumb Corner to learn more about these creatures, how we depend on them and what we can do to help them.

The objectives of the New Meadows Garden Club shall be to foster knowledge of home gardening, decorative arrangements and an interest in civic projects.

March 26



Our regular membership meeting will be held at the Topsfield Town Library at 6:30 pm. Lorraine Erickson and Pat Durgin are teaming-up to present a very special artistic program. **We will be the stars, creating our very own Spring Door Decorations.** Instructions with a list of materials needed for three different projects, a design in an umbrella, a swag, or a design on a straw hat were sent to all in a message from Co-President, Sandy, on Thursday, March 21st. The choice is yours! Gather your materials and assemble your door decoration at our meeting, make it ahead of time and show it off at our meeting, or just attend our meeting without doing the project. There are a few outlets available at the library for glue guns, if you have one to bring. Please don't stay away...we'd love to see all of you, especially those who have returned from a winter in the tropics!

Hostesses: Shirley Holt and Mary Connor

April 9

Our next board meeting will be held at the Topsfield Library Meeting Room at 10 am.

April 11



The North Reading Garden Club is presenting its Silver Tea with guest speaker, Bill Graham, who will present his program "Suddenly Spring!" The doors open at 6:30 pm for the 7 pm program at the Union Congregational Church, 148 Haverhill Street, North Reading. There will be delectable desserts served and a gift basket raffle. The guest donation is \$12.00 in advance (contact Lisi Lesch, 978-664-8379), or \$15.00 at the door.

April 13



The Topsfield Garden Club will sponsor its Grow Spring! EXPO on April 13, 2019 at the Emerson Center, the Gould Barn, The Commons 1854 and on the Topsfield Green from 10 am to 3 pm. Our club is participating with a table providing educational information about the importance of Pollinators. Members are needed to work at our table for shifts of an hour or two during the event. Please contact Jane Cullinan or Sandy Whelan if you would like to lend a hand and share in the excitement of the day!

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April 16



At our next regular membership meeting, we will be treated to a very special design workshop presented by **Tina Lefebvre of the Platinum Posies Florist in Middleton**. The meeting will be held at the Topsfield Town Library at 6:00 pm. **\*\*Please note that this is a change in time from that printed in our program books. Tina will provide the flowers and containers, and of course, the guidance, as we create our masterpieces! The cost to members is \$15.00, and \$25.00 for your guests, who are welcome to join us! So that Tina can provide enough flowers and containers, it is very important to RSVP to Janet Hanson with your check made out to New Meadows Garden Club by April 9th.**

*Hostesses are Linda Mann and Marsha Stevens*

April 17



The Village Gardeners of Topsfield have invited us to join them at their meeting at the Topsfield Town Library at 6:30 pm. The program will be "Welcoming Native Plants & Insects to our Garden." Learn all about it and enjoy delightful refreshments and conversation as well!

April 24



The Northern District Annual Meeting will be held at the Tewksbury Country Club, 1880 Main Street, Tewksbury. As always, there will be guest speakers, drawings, boutique vendor shopping, breakfast and lunch! The cost is \$45.00, and your reservation must be made no later than April 11th with Laurie Peloquin at [lpeloquin97@gmail.com](mailto:lpeloquin97@gmail.com). For more information and a registration form, please go to:

[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/cbe110\\_8960cf0f3dfb4653891ccfb32aefb1a6.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/cbe110_8960cf0f3dfb4653891ccfb32aefb1a6.pdf)

April 25



Arbor Day will be held at the Steward School, 261 Perkins Row, Topsfield at 9:15 am. It's best to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the ceremony so that you have time to check in at the office. As our club does each year, a tree will be donated and planted on the school grounds. You are invited to join in the celebration of this rite of spring with the children in Kindergarten through Grade 3.

April 27—29



We're very excited that Claudette Poor will be our club's designer this year at **Art In Bloom at the MFA Boston**. Co-President, Jane Cullinan will assist. Claudette has received her assigned object pictured at left. This ancient sandstone sculpture is 2000 years old and is one of the great treasures at the museum. **The Torso of a Fertility Goddess (Yakshi)** stood at the Great Stupa (Buddhist shrine) at Sanchi near Bhopal in India in its day, and formed part of the decorative scheme on one of four gateways. She is associated with good luck, fertility and wealth, and placed near a temple signified protection and welcome. You can view her and Claudette's design in the **South and Southeast Asia Gallery (Gallery 176)**.

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## NOTES



♥ Join us at our newly re-planned conservation meeting at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem at 11 am on May 1, 2019. \*\*Due to a change in schedule at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, it was necessary to cancel the tour our Conservation Committee had planned for our club on May 22, 2019. The Peabody Essex Museum will provide our club with a docent-guided tour of their exhibit Nature's Nation: American Art and the Environment. (first exhibit tracing environmental awareness in American art over the last three centuries.) The cost will be \$20 per person (no library passes can be used) and is open to 10 to 50 persons. Here's a link for more details about the exhibit: [www.pem.org/exhibitions/natures-nation-american-art-and-environment](http://www.pem.org/exhibitions/natures-nation-american-art-and-environment).

► Please make your reservation and send your check for \$20.00 made out to New Meadows Garden Club to Penny Rogers as soon as possible. Co-President Sandy suggests that a convenient way to do this would be to bring your check to our March 26th meeting! *Save the date!*

♥ Our Annual Meeting and Banquet will be held on June 6, 2019 at the Ipswich Country Club. *Save the date!*

♥ Our fundraiser at the Strawberry Festival will be held on June 8, 2019! *Save the date!*

### *New Meadows Garden Donates New Urns to the Topsfield Town Library*

*Many thanks to our member, Donna Ryan, who has donated two new urns to the Topsfield Town Library in the name of our club. Donna is pictured at right with one of the urns and a few of our members.*

*Thanks so much for your thoughtfulness, Donna!*



*...more news on the following page...*



*...Bits and pieces...*



*February 2019  
Mid-Winter Social  
at the home of  
Donna Ryan*



*Pat Durgin and Lorraine Erickson  
prepared us for our March Spring Door  
Decoration workshop.*



*Donna Ryan and our meeting hostesses served  
delectable specialties for us.  
♥ See the recipe below for the most popular appetizer!*

***Cranberry Pecan Goat Cheese Truffles***

***The recipe:***

***Prep 15 minutes***

*10 oz goat cheese (room temp)  
6 oz cream cheese ( room temp)  
2 tsp cinnamon  
3 Tbl honey  
1 1/2 c pecans, chopped , divided  
1 c dried cranberries  
1/2 minced fresh parsley*

*In large bowl beat the cheeses, cinnamon and honey until fluffy. Fold in 1/2 cup pecans.*

*Combine the rest of the ingredients in a small bowl.*

*Spoon or scoop out cheese mixture and form into 1 inch balls and roll each in the coating mixture. Place in a container and refrigerate until serving time.  
They can be made up to 3 days in advance.*

*Note: a thin pretzel can be placed in the ball for ease in serving,*

## Green Thumb Corner

Okay, today let's start with a Botany lesson! Plants are the backbone of all life here on Earth. Everything we eat comes either directly or indirectly from plants. In addition, plants help purify and distribute our water, and by means of transpiration, move moisture into the atmosphere.



And, one quarter of all medicines we are prescribed are also derived directly from plants. Considering the extreme importance of plants to all of us, it should be our number one priority to keep them happy and growing! Plants reproduce by a process called pollination. Since plants are immobile, those that can't pollinate themselves by means of wind or in some other manner require assistance in order to perform this function. That's where pollinators come in. While pollination isn't necessary to make flowers bloom, it is necessary for many plants to grow fruit. If plants aren't properly pollinated, they will not bear fruit or produce seed. Pollinators make plant reproduction possible by transporting pollen from the male structures of flowers to the female structures of the same plant. This results in the fertilization of the flower's eggs, which then leads to the formation of seeds. Without the work of our trusty pollinators, we would not be able to enjoy apples, almonds, blueberries, tomatoes, grapes, avocados, broccoli, carrots and a variety of other foods we have come to take for granted. Pollinators are, in fact, necessary for 3/4 of our food crops. As important as pollinators are to us, there is also something in this process for them as well...nectar and pollen from flowers provide carbohydrates, proteins, fats, minerals, vitamins...all they need nutritionally.

So, who are these pollinators anyway? Honeybees might be the first to come to mind. Did you know that these insects are not even native to North America? They were imported from Europe in the 17th century, and have since become an extremely important part of the agriculture industry in this country. But, honeybees are not the only pollinators we depend on. Others include bee species such as mason bees and bumblebees, wasps, butterflies, beetles, some birds and bats, moths, flies and even mosquitoes.

And yet, in spite of this diverse list, we hear more and more about the fact that we are facing a shortage of pollinators. How can this be? Here's what is known: declines in pollinator populations can be attributed to a loss in good feeding and nesting habitats. Also, pollution, use and misuse of certain chemicals and changes in climate patterns are contributing to shrinking pollinator populations. Of all of these, the use and misuse of certain pesticides is most worrisome. We have been using pesticides for a very long time, so it is curious that they are affecting our pollinators so negatively now. Unfortunately, this has to do with the type of pesticides we use now, which were developed to replace the older more toxic

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products of the past. Many of these pesticides belong to a class of chemicals called "neonicotinoids," developed in the 1980s and considered to be improvements over the products available up until that time. They were considered less toxic to mammals, but it turns out that they may be affecting pollinators in very adverse ways.

But, pesticide use is only part of the story. Perfectly manicured, weedless lawns don't fill the nutritional needs of our pollinators the way flowering meadows and woodlands used to. Substituting non-native plants for native landscaping is another issue. And, of course, open land is continuously being built up, eliminating pollinator habitats completely. This becomes an issue for pollinators who migrate and depend on food sources along the way. Once these sources disappear, many pollinators may not be able to make the distance.

Hopefully I have been able to demonstrate to you that, without our help, the future of our pollinators looks a bit bleak! We have put our pollinators in this position, and now it is our job to get them out of it! So, what can we do now to help reverse this trend? Here are a few ideas:

- Plant a pollinator-friendly garden in a sunny spot with a variety of flowering plants that will provide blooms from spring to fall, providing nectar and pollen all season. Plant annuals and perennials in groups of three or more so that it is easier for the pollinators to locate plants. Live in a condo? Container gardening on a deck will do! The Mass Audubon has a wonderful list of plants to choose from at their website: <https://www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/help-pollinators-thrive/plant-a-pollinator-garden>.

- Plant native! In addition to making your gardening chores easier, pollinators will thank you for providing them with the very best nutrition!

- Try to use pesticides as little as possible. Even organic pesticides may harm pollinators. Check labels for the lowest risk product and, if you must, spray early in the day or in late evening when pollinators aren't out and about.

- Think about letting a part of your yard remain "wild." A small, unmowed meadow planted with wildflowers would provide lovely shelter, food and nesting spots for pollinators.

- Provide a water source, especially in dry weather. Clean containers often, and keep them filled.

Without a doubt, spring is coming, and it's time to start planning your pollinator garden, big or small! Join the nation's gardeners by registering your "pollinator outpost" with the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge at [MillionPollinatorGardens.org](http://MillionPollinatorGardens.org), just as our garden club has done with our Pine Grove Cemetery Garden and our two traffic island gardens at Prospect Street, and Linebrook Road. ♥

