



## March-April 2023 News

See you  
at the  
Garden  
Tours!



*The new year started with a wonderful spring! The Gardening for Life Project Celebration was fun; we were proud to have been a sponsor. A club volunteer group staffed our exhibit and book sale. I would encourage others to get involved in club volunteer opportunities at Pearson's Falls workdays and at the Depot Garden spring planting and routine maintenance. I look forward to seeing everyone at these events and/or our upcoming Garden Walks and the Annual Luncheon! I am personally thrilled to see three of our community grant applications funded. One of these, the Saluda Historic Depot landscaping project, is moving quickly. They have removed all non-native plants surrounding their property, prepared to plant natives by Mid-March (photos page 10), and are establishing this new garden as a Homegrown National Park (see page 14 for info). Beth Rounds, President*

### Upcoming Events-April General Meeting

**There will be NO FORMAL APRIL MEETING, instead together with the Green Blades Garden Club members, we will have three days of garden tours.** No reservations; the tours are free of charge at 2 TGC members' and 2 GBGC members' gardens:

**Judy Thompson, Wednesday, April 19, 12n to 4 pm, 935 White Lake Blvd., Saluda**

**Vard Henry, Thursday, April 20, 10 am to 12:30 pm, 402 Hughes Creek Rd, Columbus (Green Creek)**

**Bob Rossier and Eldred Hudson, Friday, April 21, 12 noon to 4 pm, 355 Mimosa Road, Columbus**

**Karen Bird, Friday, April 21, 12 noon to 4 pm, 110 Mimosa Road, Columbus**

Donna Wise, Program chair, and the Tryon Garden Club Board are grateful to Judy, Vard, Karen, Bob, and Eldred for their willingness to host the TGC and the GBGC members in their gardens. Continue reading for information about each garden, directions, and parking instructions. If possible, carpool.

**TGC's Judy Thompson's serendipity garden and home** at 935 White Lake Blvd., Saluda, sits on 6 acres in the Whites Lake neighborhood. Three sides of the

house have been cultivated into 'project gardens.' There is a native plant garden at the front which leads you under an arbor and through a gate to a small Japanese garden with a water feature. Traverse down the railroad tie stairway to the moss garden with its small waterfall. View the southern garden from the lower deck, or wind your way along the path and the boardwalk to the daisy garden, flowering shrubs, and hosta bed (breakfast for the deer this year!). It's not at all a formal garden, but rather annual projects that incorporate a collection of Judy's favorite plants. The upstairs wraparound porch provides a one-level view of all the gardens, including the waterfall in the moss garden. Judy has a golf cart that we can use, if needed, to drive folks to the southern garden.

**Directions:** From Tryon and Columbus proceed through Saluda on 176, turn slightly left across the bridge, and past the Green River Barbeque. Continue almost 2 miles on 176 to Macedonia Road. (If you reach the bridge over the Green River, you missed the turn!) Turn right on Macedonia and go 1.7 miles. Turn left at the entrance to White's Lake. Stay on the main road, White Lake Blvd., as it winds by the pond, up the hairpin turn, and over the ridge. When you come down the hill and see the final cul-de-sac in the distance, look for a small black mailbox on the left, #935. Turn left and weave your way back to the house.

**April Meeting** continued page 20.

## Spring Walks with Andy Ruff at

**Pearson's Falls:** Andy will conduct personalized wildflower walks for TGC members and guests.

**When:** Each Thursday, starting April 6.

**Time:** 5:45 pm, after PF gate closes.

Meet at the gatehouse.

**Reservations:** Call Andy at 828-749-3031.

**Calling all Docents and Pearson's Falls Fans.** Bob Rossier, TGC club member, is hosting the Charlotte-based Wing Haven Garden Club in Tryon on **April 19**. He will bring the group to Pearson's Falls in the morning. Virginia, Andy, and Beth need your help; it will be a group of 65 people! If you'd be a docent/trail director, and/or history buff, please contact Virginia at

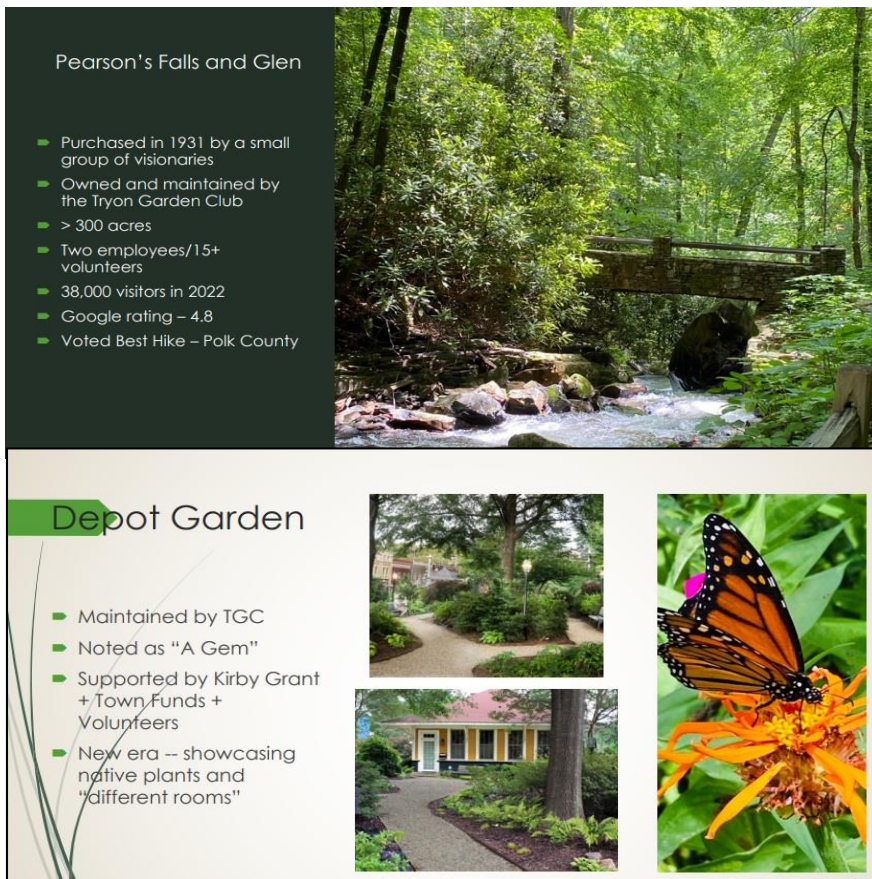
[vmeador8@gmail.com](mailto:vmeador8@gmail.com). More details about your assignment will be shared once you volunteer. Following the PF tour, helpers will be treated to sandwiches at Bob's home as a thank you. (Driving directions on page 20.)

## Club Business

**President's Report:** The sboard would like to thank TGC members Donna Wise and Corrie Woods for having the vision to establish the Gardening for Life Project. The March 4 event, sponsored and supported by many local organizations, was executed flawlessly! Praise goes to their team and their very hard work. Thank you to the TGC team who staffed our table and sold several gardening/nature books. The \$250+ earned went directly into the Community Grant Fund.

I spoke to the Tryon Kiwanis Club on March 1. The presentation was well received and can be used with other organizations. Many of the Kiwanis Club members learned something new about our organization. It was a terrific way to share our focus on giving back to the community.

*Beth Rounds*



Two of the slides from Beth Rounds' talk about the Tryon Garden Club presented to the Kiwanis Club, March 1.

**Financials:** John James reported in March that the club's finances remain in excellent shape. Sheds were purchased for storage at the Pearson's Falls and the Depot Garden. The documents are prepared and have gone to the accountant for our annual 2022 tax return preparation. The 2023-2024 club budget was approved.

In early April, John stated that the club is performing on budget. There was a total of 3,274 PF visitors this year, compared to 3,135 last year. An interesting coincidence is that PF had an identical number of visitors in February both this year and last year.

Three thousand dollars each has been spent on the Depot Garden advances, Pearson's Falls updates, and Civic Beautification Grant Fund grants. Spring beautification has been exciting and rewarding for the TGC.

**Kirby Grants:** Beth Rounds reports that a notice has been received about the club's 2023 allotment.

## Tryon Garden Club News March – April 2023

Editor: Donna Southworth, 828-286-4324, [donnas.garden@aol.com](mailto:donnas.garden@aol.com)

Member application inquiries: Jackie Weedon, 828-894-5970, [weedon@windstream.net](mailto:weedon@windstream.net)

**TGC Community Grants:** Beth Rounds reports that the committee has approved two applications: 1) Polk Central Elementary and 2) Saluda Historic Depot and Museum. Another application is ready for approval.

The TGC board voted to add an additional \$9,000 to the fund; over \$18,000 will be awarded to Polk County beautification and education initiatives. Thank you to the Grant Committee for their hard work!

**Marketing/Publicity Report:** Beth Rounds reports that early in February, Joanie N put together an annual pass Excel spreadsheet. Forty-seven annual passes were sold this past year; most passholders come from Tryon and Saluda. Long distance fans are from Charleston, Columbia, and Summerville, SC. Discussion has been held about how the club can add benefits for these passholders. One possibility is to allow individuals and TGC members to enter the glen early on certain days. No decision has been made.

Lucy B authored an article about the club's Community Grant program. Another on the Pearson's Falls spring wildflower season was featured in a Tryon Daily Bulletin online edition.

The Tryon Elementary 3<sup>rd</sup> grade grant presentation on plastic pollution was featured in the Tryon Daily Bulletin in April.

The Pearson's Falls postcard supply was running low. Beth identified three new images that feature spring, summer, and fall for the new postcards. These will sell for \$.50 each and should be at Pearson's Falls by late April.

The Spring Flower Guide/Poster is posted at Pearson's Falls. Website/social media visitors can download it off our website. Andy is also placing individual flower signage along the trail.

**Member Engagement:** Denny Crowe reports that a new member luncheon was held March 8. Beth R plans another new member gathering soon.

Membership engagement has been busy getting ready for multiple garden visits in conjunction with Green Blades Garden Club starting Wed., April 19.

TGC's Annual May Luncheon will be held at The Depot Garden this year! We hope, weather permitting, to have lunch in the garden!

**Secretary/Member Records:** Jackie Weedon reports that several people have requested membership applications. TGC has three new members, Patricia Attaway, Litchfield Carpenter, and Washington Dender.

An updated roster is on [pearsonsfalls.org](http://pearsonsfalls.org) website. If you have any problem accessing it, please contact Jackie; her contact information is below.

**Looking ahead--Consider becoming a TGC officer:** For the next club year, 2023-24, one board member will be needed and three team leaders. Board member Denny Crowe, currently in charge of Member Engagement, is retiring along with some of her team leaders: Donna Wise, Programs, and Cindy Caldwell, Hospitality/Events. Also, a Member Outreach person is needed. This year, Beth Rounds has been spearheading this effort along with her other duties. Those staying on the TGC Board are Beth Rounds, President, John James, Treasurer, and Virginia Meador, Pearson's Falls Chair. Jackie Weedon will return to the Board as Secretary.

For more information about what is involved in each of these jobs, please contact Beth Rounds, President.

### **Civic Beautification**

***Flower Petals from the Depot Garden:*** Chairperson Jane Herman reports that in late February through early April plants burst with colorful blooms in the Depot Garden. In early March, many daffodils, some hyacinths (grape and conventional cultivars), and a trillium were showy. This was delightful but meant that deadheading was needed every couple of days.

Lenten roses are spreading like weeds. Club members are invited to dig up seedlings. By reducing the number of seedlings, it is hoped that other flowers can be planted. A special thanks to Ellen R, who dug not only for herself but enough for others. Jane particularly appreciated member Michael W, who patiently spent 3 hours helping to assemble the club's new locked garden shed, making it possible to secure basic garden tools.

Now it is mid-April, and the Depot Garden has three major problems—the weeds are going wild; the rain keeps interfering with workdays; and the 24-degree night wreaked havoc on many of the shrubs.

**Depot Garden** *continued page 4.*

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## A Visit to the Depot Garden, Monday, March 13, 2023

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**Top Left:** The photo was taken from the parking lot looking toward the railroad tracks and positioned with the native redbud in the foreground and the mountain in the background. **Top right:** Lavender twisted redbud, *Cercis canadensis* 'Covey,' across Depot Street next to the building. **Bottom left:** Unidentified spring bloom. **Bottom middle:** Non-native Loropetalum. **Bottom right:** Creeping phlox or thyme, *Phlox subulata*

Photos by Virginia Meador

### Depot Garden *continued from page 3.*

Heavy pruning is needed, which means we may not have flowers. However, the plants' drive to survive continues to amaze us; most are making a comeback. Those that don't recover will be removed. The native azaleas are at their blooming peak and not only are their flowers beautiful, their scent is heavenly. The other azaleas are past their peak; they were exquisite the first week of April. Ferns are up. The native

ephemeral area is looking lovely; many other plants are popping out of the ground!

There continue to be disruptive critter visits. While annoying, this is their garden too ... or so we must keep telling ourselves.

Yes, it's a busy time in the Depot Garden, but all the work is made worthwhile by the beauty and the continued compliments heard whenever we're working.

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# PEARSON'S FALLS AND GLEN

**From the Mist:** Virginia Meador's report is visual. Mom/home schoolteacher, Christy, requested a guided tour and Virginia met them at PF. This group of home schoolers was eager to learn about the plants and the falls. They enjoyed their time there and sent with their thank you note a picture of themselves.

More info about the library PF tickets on page 11.



Above: The TGC donated family passes to Pearson's Falls that were distributed by the Polk County Library. Photo: V Meador

Mom/  
teacher,  
Christy,  
babe in  
arms,  
Lewin,  
Estelle,  
Scarlet,  
& Nola.



**Comma Butterfly** (pictured right) is very rare. In my years of teaching students about butterflies, this was my first sighting of this species.

**Congratulations to Andy Ruff for 9 years of taking caring for Pearson Falls and Glen and those who visit there.** The entire TGC membership thank you and wish you well as you continue your wonderful, caring stewardship!

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**Spring Pearson's Falls Guided Walks:** See page 2, 'Spring Walks with Andy Ruff at Pearson's Falls.'

**What's Blooming at Pearson's Falls?** The ephemerals are about 10 days early. They have been spectacular in PF and along Pearson Falls Road. Miami-like temperatures hurried the flowers into setting seeds. The blossoms have lured the butterflies to visit.



**Left:** Swallowtail, pale yellow wings with black veins and blue margins resting on phlox. (J Welch) **Middle:** Comma, whose foodplant is common nettle (*Urtica dioica*). Its scalloped edges and cryptic coloring of the wings conceal hibernating adults amongst dead leaves. (V Meador) **Right:** Swallowtail in bright sunlight resting on an azalea blossom. (A Ruff)

**February, and March, activities:** Andy Ruff reports that in February there were 46 people that took advantage of the 2 for 1 special on Valentine's Day. The glen was open every day, and there were no groups visiting. There were 1321 visitors.

March was a busy month at the falls. The volunteers, Gene, and Andy have been working on the trails, repairing post and rails, putting chips down, installing flower identification signs, and keeping up with the general jobs that make this place memorable for visitors—the things that make them want to visit again. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, the UNC-Asheville Plant Identification Class with 2 instructors made a visit. PF was open every day. There were 2341 visitors.

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**Spring at Pearson's Falls!** Left top to bottom-The new equipment shed with easy ramp access, a bashful Jack-in-the-pulpit, & new chips on the path along the rushing Colt Creek. (Photos: A Ruff) Center top to bottom: Sweet Betsy, the path looking inviting and safe, Bloodroot, and Spring Beauty. (Flower photos: V Meador) Right top to bottom: Dogwood blossoms, a plant identification sign, and one of the stained and sealed picnic tables. (Photos: A Ruff)

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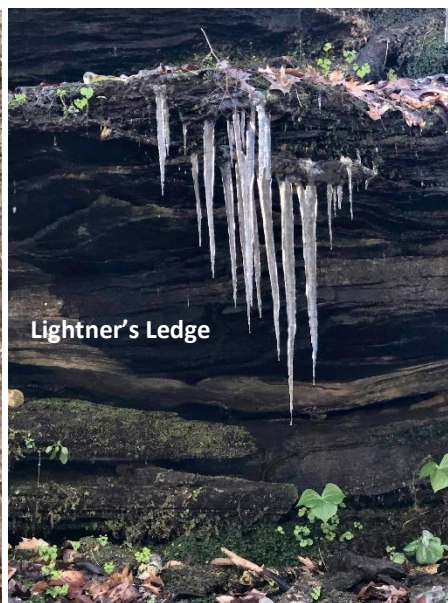


## Workday at Pearson's Falls:

Jim Welch thanks Andy (left middle photo) and Gene and those who labored February 22 to clean up the PF English ivy patch bordering the exit road. That morning, participants concentrated on the English ivy and the debris under it, downed limbs and logs. One participant, Alice D (left top photo), was really impressive; her work ethic was amazing. She arrived early and immediately started pulling and clipping ivy from the trees. Then she moved to the chain saw. She cut up several downed logs and carried them to the pile of debris. Sam P worked hard as did Gene and Andy and another TGC member,

Rosalie R (left bottom photo). They labored until Virginia M arrived with delicious cookies.

On March 15, the workday was cancelled. The dirt could not have given up its hold on the benches and picnic tables, and members' fingers would have been frost bitten by the cold.



Lightner's Ledge



Bloodroot braving the cold



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The weekend of March 18-19, ice formed again at PF.

On Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, Virginia Meador led a small group on a walk to the falls and took the PF photographs.

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**NC Butterflies,**  
presented by Dr.  
David Ahrenholz at  
the February TGC  
general meeting  
that was open to  
the public and well  
attended.

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### Eastern Comma - *Polygonia comma*



### References for Butterfly Watchers

- Minnow, M: *Butterflies of N. Carolina, S. Carolina and Georgia* (QuickGuide)
- Daniels, J: *Butterflies of the Carolinas*
- Ajilvsji, G: *Butterfly Gardening for the South*
- The best Carolina Butterflies website  
<[dpr.ncparks.gov/nbnc/PDFs/28th.pdf](http://dpr.ncparks.gov/nbnc/PDFs/28th.pdf)>  
(200 pages of county distribution maps )

### Why Do Butterflies Visit Gardens?

- They drink nectar from colorful flowers
- They will seek moisture from a water feature or damp sand
- Males can look for a mate
- Females look for larval foodplants

Photos by D Southworth & N Long.

**Tryon Garden Club News March – April 2023**

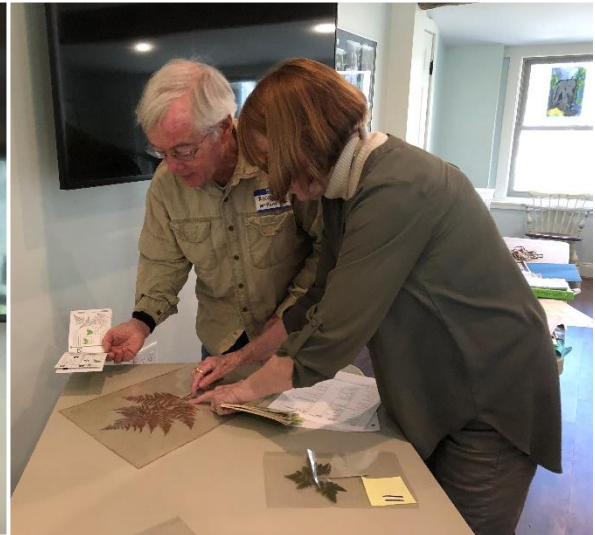
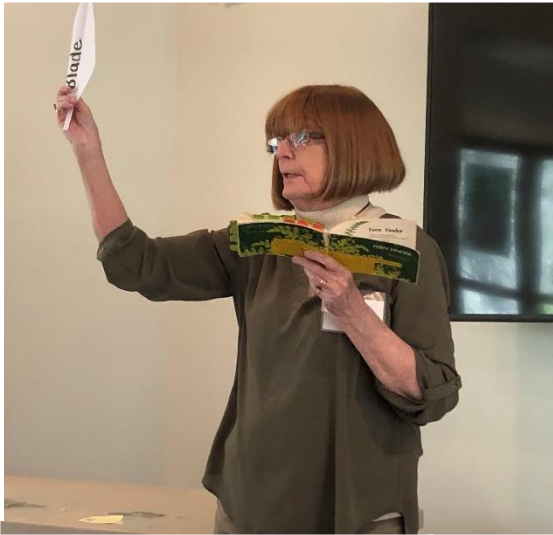
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**Ferns**  
presented  
by Virginia  
Meador at  
the March  
members-  
only  
meeting at  
Pearson's  
Falls. Each  
attendee  
received a  
*Fern Finder*  
book.

Virginia explained  
how to use it, and  
then the fun  
began, trying to  
ID the samples  
that were laid out.  
Later in the  
spring, when the  
ferns are showy,  
Virginia will  
conduct fern  
finding walks  
upon request.





**The First Tryon Garden Club Community Grant coming to fruition at the Saluda Depot Museum, Saluda, NC, Polk County under the leadership of former TGC member, Mary Reeves.** The Tryon Daily Bulletin, March 22, 2023, had an article about this project, TGC's financial support, and the application for Homegrown National Park status for the Saluda Historic Depot Garden. 10

Photos: Mike Reeves



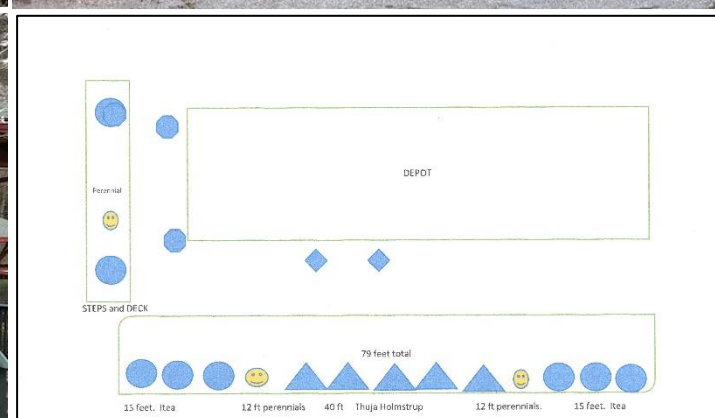
Saluda Train Station Before 1



Saluda Train Station Before 2



Area ready for new plantings



**THE PLAN:** Triangles = evergreens. Circle = Sweet spire, Smiley face = Reblooming yellow & purple perennials. Squares = Native grasses in pots on deck.

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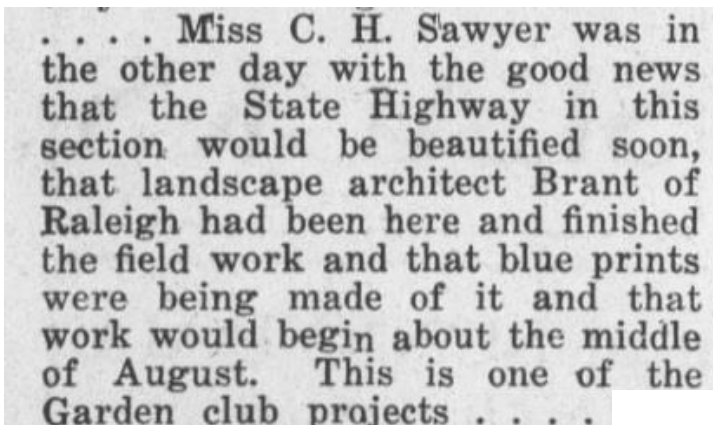


**The club donated family passes to Pearson's Falls to be distributed by the Polk County Library.** On February 25, it was posted on Facebook that the March allotment of free Pearson's Falls passes 'sold out' in four hours. Families had a second chance to obtain tickets for April at the end of March. See pictures of one group's visit on page 5.

The poster above was posted by Beth R on the club's FB page; it resulted in several 'shares,' and a few more people are now following us.

## Historical Tidbit

**The Club's 1938 Civic Beautification Project:** The Tryon Daily Bulletin Curb Reporter column, July 15, 1938, noted the following:



TGC Historian Joy Soderquist confirmed that the road to be beautified was Highway 176 on the way to Pearson's Falls. However, Joy noted that if you read the Tryon Garden Club minutes, Miss Sawyer was not pleased that after the state did its report, there was no follow-up. A few club members decided they were going to take matters into their own hands. It was mentioned that homeowners along 176 did not appreciate club members stopping by to suggest they clean up their front yards.

## Bob Tobey and Donna Martin Protect Land adjoining Pearson's Falls and Glen.



*The following information is from BlueRidgeNow, Times-News, March 20, 2023, blueridgenow.com: Local News, Politics & Sports in Hendersonville, NC. The article's author is Rose Jenkins Lane, communications*

*and marketing director at Conserving Carolina. Look for the full article online.*

When Bob Tobey and Donna Martin were looking for land, their vision was not only to create a home for themselves, but also to protect some land. If there's a beautiful place in the mountains, they reasoned that eventually someone will want to develop it. And, they could make a difference by buying the land for conservation instead.

At the time, they were living on a farm near Landrum, SC. They had been searching for property within a 50-miles radius. In 2000, their realtor took Bob to see this property next to Hogback Mountain. To reach this property you drive up a winding road that turns to gravel and navigate steep slopes alongside plunging creeks and slender waterfalls. The land is located above Pearson's Falls. On one side, it adjoins a vast tract of the protected Greenville Watershed.

**Tobey & Martin Protect Land** *continued page 16.*

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**The Celebration for Life Project organizers:** Vard Henry, Corrie Woods, Donna Wise, and Karen Bird.

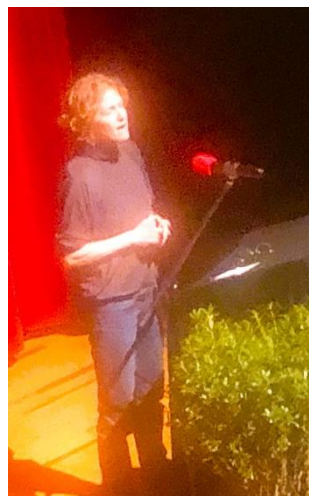
Photo Corrie Woods

## The Gardening for Life Project Celebration, March 4, 2023

**How did the Gardening for Life Project Get Started in the Tryon Area?** Tryon Garden Club member, Donna Wise, had an epiphany moment. She attended a Tryon Congregational Church justice team's webinar with author Doug Tallamy. There was supposed to be some connection to the church's justice work—gardening as care for the Earth. Donna says, "I've always liked a perfect garden—you know, pine needles, structure, mastery. When I heard Doug, it was like, 'Oh my gosh, how much I don't know!'" she says. "It was absolutely a life changing experience. I got off the Zoom meeting, and I said, 'He's coming to Tryon.' And people just said, 'Yeah, sure.'"

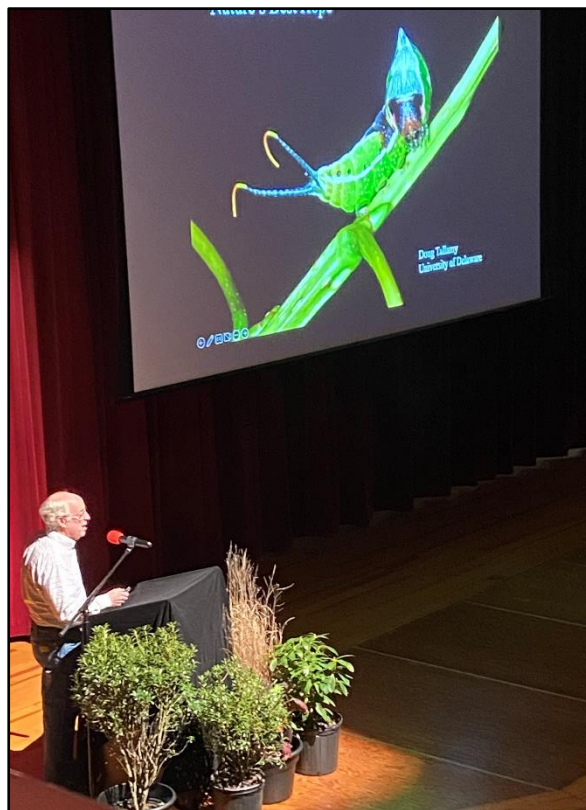
Hearing that talk shifted Donna's perspective on her lifelong passion. She says, "I was trying to be a *gardener*, that is, somebody that controls, and now he's talking about being a *guardian* and taking care of what we own."

Donna and a team of like thinkers, who feel passionate about our environment, found financial sponsors, like the Tryon Garden Club, who also feel passionate about protecting and preserving our environment and the movement grew



Corrie Woods welcoming attendees and introducing Doug Tallamy.

Photo: D Southworth



Doug Tallamy, University of Delaware, making his opening remarks.

Photo: B Rounds

from there. Hats off to the local volunteers who made the March 4 event happen!

**The Tryon Garden Club Contribution:** In addition to the club's monetary event support, the club held a book sale in support of the club's Community and Grants, talked to attendees about gardening and invasive plants, invited people to take a hike



The TGC's Gardening for Life Project Book Sale. Linda E, Donna S, and Virginia M.

Photo by B Rounds

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**Left:** Virginia M. at the TGC table with books for sale and invasive plant handout, and our poster display that drew attention from attendees and photographers.



**Right:** Native plants for sale.

Photos D Southworth

at Pearson's Falls, discussed members' participation in maintaining Pearson's Falls and the Depot Garden, and club membership.

Before and following Doug's lecture, the large room outside the Polk County High School auditorium was abuzz with activity. In addition to the TGC booth, vendors offered a wide variety of native plants; Doug Tallamy was signing books; Conserving Carolina had an educational display; and Loti Woods and Dale Weiler were explaining their work with school children. There were TGC members there in other capacities, directing foot traffic, making sure vendors had what they needed, carrying plants to cars, being customers and lecture attendees. For each attendee to take home and plant, there were white oak tree saplings and packets of wildflower seeds on which children had drawn pictures. Polk County Soil and Water also had an outdoor booth with a fun activity for children.



TGC member Sandy B in her volunteer vest.  
Photo D Southworth

**The Four Most Important Take Aways from Doug Tallamy's Lecture:** *The following is from the Conserving Carolina's website, March 20, 2023.*

**1. Shrink the lawn.** As of 2005, the U.S. has more than 40 million acres dedicated to lawn. If we cut

that area in half and restored it, we would have 20 million acres to work with, Doug calls this Homegrown National Park. To be part of this solution, think about how you can reduce your lawn, plant more native species, remove invasive species, and protect natural areas on your property. You'll be helping to solve both climate change and the biodiversity crisis simultaneously.

**2. Keystone plants are essential.** Just 14% of our native plants make 90% of the caterpillar food that is the basis of our food web. There are some native plants that are true all stars. Doug calls these "keystone plants." So our goal is not simply to plant natives, but to grow the keystone plants that sustain our local food webs. Oaks, for instance, support over 950 caterpillar species nationwide! To find what keystone species are best for our county, check out the National Wildlife Federation's Native Plant Finder.

**3. Turn the lights out at night.** A healthy habitat is a dark habitat. In fact, Doug stated, that light pollution is the leading cause of insect decline. Insects are drawn to lights at night, to their peril. Light pollution reduces insect populations due to exhaustion, collisions, incineration, dehydration, and increased predation. It can also disrupt circadian rhythms, foraging, mating, and reproduction. Reducing light pollution is as easy as putting a motion sensor on security lights or using

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yellow lightbulbs. Yellow LED lights are the best because yellow wavelengths are the least attractive to nocturnal insects.

#### 4. Make space for caterpillars beneath your trees.

Trees can only do so much! We need to pay attention to the ground beneath our trees as well. Many species finish growing, then drop off the tree and wiggle underneath the soil or leaf litter to pupate underground. Instead of raking or blowing off leaf litter, and compacting the soil, put beds around your trees, creating a soft landing filled with leaf litter and shelter for the caterpillars.

**HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK®:** The name was coined by Doug Tallamy and presented to the Tryon Garden Club members and other attendees at his March 4 lecture. It's a grassroots call-to-action to regenerate biodiversity and ecosystem function by planting native plants and creating new Ecological networks. *The following information is from the HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK® website.*

**The mission** is to regenerate biodiversity and ecosystem function because every human being on this planet needs diverse highly productive ecosystems to survive.

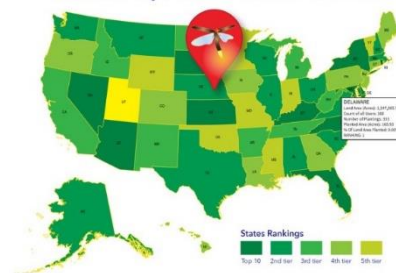
**The aim** is a collective effort of individual homeowners, property owners, land managers, farmers, and anyone with some soil to plant in to start a new HABITAT® by planting native plants and removing most invasive plants. It is the largest cooperative conservation project ever conceived or attempted. It's a bottom-up call-to-action to restore habitat where we live and work, and to a lesser extent where we farm and graze, extending nat'l parks to our yards and communities.

**The initial goal** is 20 million acres of native plantings in the U.S. This represents approximately ½ of the green lawns of privately-owned properties.

**Why do this?** We are at a critical point; we are losing many species from our local ecosystems. When these species are gone, we lose their ability to produce the oxygen, clean water, flood control, pollination, pest control, carbon storage, etc. In other words, we lose the ecosystem services that sustain us.

Doug Tallamy's message is a solution-based action - *small efforts by many people*. Together we will create new ecological networks that will enlarge populations of plants and animals enabling them to weather normal population fluctuations indefinitely.

**The map** is an interactive community-based visual that will show each person's contribution to planting native by State, County, and Zip Code.



**Can Pearson's Falls and the Depot Garden be added to this map?** Areas can only be added to the map if native plants are being planted. Therefore, Pearson's Falls and Glen does not qualify. Yes, the club members are trying to eradicate invasive English ivy and other undesirable plants, but we are not adding native plants that never grew in the glen. The club and its members are protecting and preserving the native plant life that is already growing there. However, in the Depot Garden, we can add more natives and contribute to the protection of the local ecosystem. The Depot Garden has been added to Home Grown National Park Map®. Jane Herman will manage that account and will update new plantings.

#### NORTH CAROLINA YEAR OF THE TRAIL 2023

On August 18, 2022, the NC Legislature declared 2023 North Carolina Year of the Trail, highlighting an opportunity to showcase, promote, and celebrate our state's extensive trail systems. It is hoped that in the future each of the 100 counties enjoy the benefits of trails, including the health and safety of their citizens, tourism and economic development, transportation, and the environment.

This statewide campaign will reach all communities and potential visitors with the message of how and where to experience the trails that crisscross our beautiful state. There is a trail for each of us both close to home and in different areas of NC.

Find more information by googling NC Year of the Trail. There are many sites offering more information.

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**Sugartina Crystalina® Clethra** Photos: Spring Meadow Nursery

## New Plant in the Marketplace

**Sugartina Crystalina® Clethra** (USPP 21,561), pictured above, is super useful; it has a dwarf habit and produces fragrant, pure white flowers in midsummer. It has dark glossy foliage that turns a nice bright yellow in fall, offering interest to the yard. It will attract pollinators, is native, dwarf and deer resistant. It doesn't mind clay soil or salt runoff. Developed by Dr. Tom Ranney at NCSU, it holds its tight, dense shape without pruning. Ideal scale and features for residential landscapes! It truly is a winner.

**USDA Zone**..... 4 - 9 (-30°F/-34.4°C)

**Exposure**..... Full sun, Part sun

**Height** ..... 2.5 – 3 feet

**Width** ..... 2.5 – 3 feet

**Finish Time**..... 1 season

**Type** ..... Deciduous

**Bloom Time** ..... Summer

**Flower Color**..... White

**Foliage Color** ..... Green

<https://springmeadownursery.com/plantfinder/sugartina-crystalina-15660>

## NC Native Plant for Your Garden

**Northern Maidenhair Fern**, *Adiantum pedatum*, for such a delicate-looking fern, it's difficult to imagine that this native is hardy in North Carolina. When planted in a shady spot with moist, humus-rich soil, the Northern Maidenhair Fern offers architectural interest with a delicate texture. Over time, the fern

will reach two feet tall. It's a slow grower, so give it some time.

It is a deciduous, clump-forming, native fern. It features finely textured, somewhat frilly fronds which have curved stalks and are palmately-divided (i.e., fronds divide into finger-like projections). Its wiry stems are reddish-brown to black. Coiled young fiddle-heads emerge pink in spring. Genus name comes from the Greek word meaning to the water repellent. Specific epithet means cut like a bird's foot.



**Northern maidenhair-fern**

Photo: Joshua Maer via Flickr

It is easily grown in average, medium, well-drained soil in part shade to full shade. It prefers moist, humus, acidic soils in full shade. Spreads slowly by creeping, branching rhizomes to form large colonies over time. It will also tolerate mild drought. High summer heat may cause fronds to brown, especially in dry soil or too much sun. This plant is seldom damaged by deer.

Information: [plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/adiantum-pedatum/](https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/adiantum-pedatum/)

## Invasive Plant to Eradicate

**Japanese or Wax-leaf Privet**, *Ligustrum japonicum*:

This shrub came late, mid-1940s, to the U.S. but quickly became widely dispersed throughout the southeast, including in North Carolina where it is a severe invasive threat. It is most common in moist forests, but it also tolerates drier conditions in the

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**Japanese or Wax-leaf Privet, *Ligustrum japonicum***

**Left:** Blossoms. **Right:** Fruit

Photos: The Internet

upland. Wildlife, especially birds, are most responsible for seed dispersal. It is most often seen growing along roadsides. It has been called the ‘playground bully.’

Japanese privet is a fast-growing, evergreen, shade tolerant shrub that grows up to 20 ft. with a diffusely spreading canopy. Glossy leaves, 2 – 3 inches long, are elliptical and oppositely arranged on the stem. The small white, fragrant flower clusters appear in midsummer. Fruits are blue to black, small, and oval-shaped. They ripen in the fall. It is used for hedges, but if pruned can become a tree.

Hand pulling of young seedlings will prevent future seed production. Cutting or mowing mature plants prior to seed production will prevent seed dispersal and subsequent plant growth. However, any stumps or large shoots that are cut need to be treated with an appropriate herbicide to prevent the regrowth of plants from stumps.

*Information from the NC Invasive Plant Council, [nc-ipc.weebly.com](http://nc-ipc.weebly.com).*

### **Tobey & Martin Protect Land *cont'd* from pg. 11.**

The land is covered by intact forests, and its clear headwater streams flow down into Fork Creek and Melrose Falls.

Their home has stunning views, including Mt. Pisgah, Mt. Mitchell, and Bearwallow Mountain. Near their home, they also cleared six acres of pasture and built barns for Donna’s unique menagerie.

Donna has three horses, a mule, two donkeys, a miniature horse, two hair sheep, chickens, two dogs

and two cats, as well as a zebra and a zonkey. The zonkey is the offspring of her zebra and a donkey.

Donna grew up on a 35-acre cattle farm in South Carolina. Bob, who grew up in Upstate New York, is an active member of the Tryon Garden Club and has completed the Blue Ridge Naturalist course at the North Carolina Arboretum. Along the roads and trails of their property, he can tell you about the many growing things in the woods – like the evergreen carpet of running cedar, the silverbell trees that bloom in spring, the many trout lilies, and the sourwoods, rhododendrons, and oaks growing in the forest.

Bob and Donna named the trails after their six grandchildren, such as “Jessica Dr.” and “Caroline Circle.” They named their place Greenhaven Farm.

Bob and Donna first protected a portion of their land through a bargain sale of 300+ acres to the North Carolina Plant Conservation program. Protected in 2005, this nature preserve harbors exceptional biodiversity including the endangered white irisette.

Now, they have donated a conservation easement on 79 forested acres to Conserving Carolina. This land is still their private property, but the easement ensures that it will never be developed. The easement does allow forestry, in accordance with a forest management plan developed by Ecoforesters. In addition, the easement ensures wide forested buffers along nearly a mile of headwater streams—vital habitat for wildlife.

“I really am into wildlife corridors,” Bob says. “We need to have a place where the bear can safely go from A to B.” Their newly protected land adjoins the North Carolina Plant Conservation Preserve and is located near the Greenville Watershed, Pearson’s Falls, and several nature preserves owned by Conserving Carolina, including Melrose Falls and Norman Wilder Forest.

This newly-protected land is part of more than 48,000 acres that Conserving Carolina has helped to protect in Polk, Henderson, Transylvania, Rutherford, and surrounding counties.

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## Exploring with Jim Welch

"The flowers of late winter and early spring occupy a place in our hearts well out of proportion to their size." Gertrude S. Wister – Editor of the Newsletter of the National Council of State Garden Clubs.

I love to saunter through our woods in late winter and early spring looking for the first blooms on the ground, in the shrubs, and along the branches of trees. When I see them, it brings great happiness and hope. Even though this spring arrived with freezing weather, it is always time for a good walkabout. Here are just a few of my recent observations.

**Eastern sweetshrub**, *calycanthus floridus*. One of the earliest flowering shrubs around our cabin and along the roads of Covington Woods with blooms that last well over a month. The fragrant twigs, leaves, and flowers lend credence to another common name for the plant, Carolina allspice.

**Sassafras**, *sassafras albidum*, is an aromatic, deciduous, flowering tree native to North Carolina, found in all areas except the high mountains. In early spring, small bright yellow-green flowers adorn the branches of this tree growing on the ridge just a few feet from our back porch.

**The common blue violet** (*Viola sororia*) is a perennial plant found throughout eastern North America and is quite prolific along the roadsides and in the open area of our woodlands. Considered a weed by some as it spreads its seed freely, it is a beautiful little flower and comes in many colors including blue, purple, and white.

**Bloodroot**, *sanguinaria canadensis*, its first blooms may appear in late winter, and it is a joy to find the



leaves poking through the ground, followed in a few days by the white flowers. Bloodroot is a native woodland

plant that opens in all its glory. Near our cabin, there were none but one day on a walkabout I found dozens of them growing along an abandoned logging road. I brought a few of them home. Now, three years later, they are doing well close to the house.

**Eastern redbud**, *cercis canadensis*, is called the harbinger of spring and although it is a native in much of North Carolina, the tree growing by our cabin was once an Arbor Day seedling. The delicate blossoms are most dramatic and when you view a single flower up close it is a beauty to behold.



**Trailing arbutus**, *Epigaea repens*, In my home state of Vermont and throughout New England the common name is Mayflower, as it was the first bloom to assure the Pilgrims in Plymouth that the first terrible winter was over. There are several of these plants



growing near our cabin and higher up on the ridge. Trailing arbutus is found from Newfoundland to Florida. This sweet-scented, pastel pink beauty blooms along running stems of shiny evergreen leaves, in moist, shady habitats and acidic (humus-rich) soil in oak forests.

Photos by J Welch.

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## No Need to Mow a Steep Bank or Slope - Plant

**Wildflowers:** *The following information is from [hello@e.americanmeadows.com](mailto:hello@e.americanmeadows.com), Feb. 1, 2023.*

Wildflowers are a great idea for steep or sloped areas of your landscape, especially if the slope makes mowing difficult or impossible! Here are tips on how to do that.

### Benefits of Wildflowers

- They can help prevent erosion. Their roots grow quickly, which makes them less susceptible to being washed away in a rainstorm.
- They grow deep, resilient root systems, grow back year after year, and provide years of low-maintenance flower blooms.
- Plant a mixture of annuals for first season blooms, and perennials for blooms that start blooming in their second season and return yearly.
- You can mow once per year for maintenance or skip mowing altogether to allow your meadow to take on a natural look.

### Preparation for Planting a Slope

Use a tractor or rototiller to dig up the existing grass and to loosen the soil. Whenever you're planting wildflowers, soil preparation is key. Seeds require good contact with the soil to germinate.

### Seeding Wildflowers on a Slope

Choose a seed mix that contains black-eyed Susans, zinnias, cosmos and more. Spread the seeds by hand



Before



After

for even distribution. Then using a roller, compact the seeds into the soil. This is a key step, especially in a sloped area. If it is a small area, you can simply walk on the seeds after planting to compress it. Compressing seeds into soil helps prevent seeds from washing away in the rain.

### Results in the First Year

Starting at the end of July and lasting through September, you should have blooms and have plenty to cut for bouquets.

### Tips To Make A “Messy” Wildlife Garden Look Good: *The following information is from*

*All about birds,*  
August 26, 2015.

The Cornell Lab

One of the top worries of people considering wildlife-friendly landscaping (or even just reducing the size of their manicured lawn) is a concern that it will look too messy. Here are few little tricks to make even the wildest yard look tame enough to fit in your neighborhood.

Research has shown that more than anything else, preferences for landscapes are determined by a set of implicit rules about what yards *should* look like. This is problematic when you want a landscape that not only appeals to your neighbors but also benefits wildlife. The solution? Including visible design cues of human intention in your wildlife-friendly landscape.

### Mow The Edges:

Meadows can be beautiful, but in the context of a yard they can look unkempt, or weedy. Mowing a



Create a meadow as a lawn alternative with mowed edges.

*Photo: Ursula Haigh*

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thin strip along human paths is a clear cue to onlookers that the property is actively managed.

The grounds at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca, New York, are maintained

this way, and it results in a lovely space, not only for wildlife—since most of the open areas are left to grow wild—but for visitors and staff who enjoy wandering the maintained pathways.

**Space Plants Wisely:** Some types of planting decisions can make a space look mess. One example is planting annuals too far apart. Sometimes this is because plants are expensive, and the number needed to fill a space was underestimated during planning. Other times the spacing instructions that came with the plant are misleading.

To accurately space plants, first check your USDA planting zone. The growing season on the planting tag is usually meant for 8 months.

Perennials, like shrubs, are often spaced too closely together. As they grow to their full size they are crowded and look messy. Sometimes, they are pruned to within an inch of their lives when mature to keep from crowding out other landscaping. It is important to consider their full size when planting, even if it looks bare when they are first planted. Most perennials need to be spaced around 18 inches apart; many larger perennials are best planted 24 or even 30 inches apart.



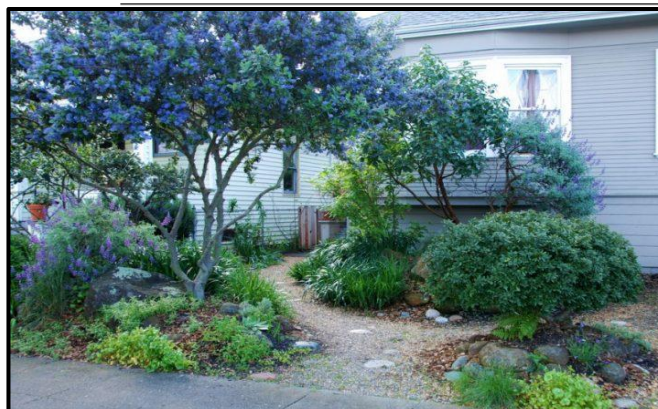
**Space plants wisely.**

Photo: Pete Veilleux, East Bay Wilds



**Massing and Drifting:** Clustering plants, rather than just using one of everything, can really create a rhythm in an otherwise wild yard. Notice the drama this planting of *Salvia spathacea* brings to this space. Also called massing, or drifting, larger clumps of single varieties can attract certain pollinators because of the efficient foraging they offer.

Photo: Bri Weldon.



**Above: Think High and Low:** Crisp edges and bold patterns in landscaping are another strong cue of management. An indication that your landscape is well managed is to build in elements that are both high (like large shrubs and trees) and low (like many flowering annuals and grasses). All of one or the other can make a space look flat. Turns out this is good for wildlife as well, since different animals forage, hide, sleep, or nest at different heights.

Photo: Pete Veilleux.

**Left: Containers, Structures, Other Objects:** Non-plant materials can go a long way towards defining spaces in your yard. The massive planter boxes depicted here elevate an otherwise messy collection of plants. You can accomplish this with a variety of materials such as rocks, paths, containers, and walls.

Photo by Mechanoid Dolly.



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**Left: Line of Sight:** This sequence shows how removing some yard vegetation can make a house visible from the street. This is one of those tricks for improving the perception of landscaping. If the house is hidden, the yard can be seen as unkempt and overgrown. If the house is visible, suddenly the yard seems cared for.

Photo: Steve Elgersma

## April Meeting *continued from page 1.*

**Thursday, April 20, 10 am to 12:30 pm:** GBGC's Vard Henry has a sunny garden in Green Creek, therefore the morning tour. When purchased, the property had been clearcut and was a tangle of small tree and underbrush. Vard is a plantaholic and her 20-year-old cottage style garden reflects that. She is constantly adding and expanding beds and trying to focus on native plants. This year's freeze damaged a lot of the spring flowering shrubs.

**Directions:** Starting from Landrum's Ingles head toward I-26 on Hwy 14, continue to Collinsville Rd at the top of a long hill. Turn right, go 2 miles on Collinsville Rd. Turn right onto Phillips Road. Go 1 mile. At the Stop Sign, go across the intersection to Hughes Creek Rd (row of mailboxes). Follow paved private road straight until it becomes gravel. You pass a house but continue downhill to her grey barn and house. PARK at barn. Handicap parking at the house.

**Friday, April 21, 12 noon until 4 pm:** TGC's Bob Rossier's and Eldred Hudson's garden is at 355 Melrose Mountain Road, Columbus. They describe their garden and home, Sunnyside, as works in progress with many future plans. The garden was started in 1952 when the house was built. They have the original 1952 landscape plan by William Pitkin and have replaced many missing plants that he specified near the house. There are two original lovely stone terraces with seasonal views of the foothills and the water features. In addition, hardscape, such as brick walls and walks, abound. They are creating extensive new planting beds and walkways. In addition,

hardscape, such as brick walls and walks, abound. They are creating extensive new planting beds and walkways on the property, as well as an arboretum of interesting four-season interest trees. Many native plants thrive on their 33 acres, in addition to non-native, non-aggressive favorites. They have only owned Sunnyside for a little over two years and are in the process of removing or controlling established invasive plants, such as English ivy.

**Directions:** From Hwy 108 in Lynn take Skyuka Rd to Mimosa Rd, the second left. Bob's and Eldred's house is at the top of the road.

**Friday, April 21, from 12 noon until 4 pm:** GBGC's Karen Bird's garden is at 110 Melrose Mountain Road, Columbus. She has lived nearly 5 years in her woodsy garden, during which time, she's been working to transition to primarily native plants. She has removed tons of invasives, mainly English ivy. There are at least 4 areas under renovation; this makes it possible to move, follow, and work in the shade! The mossy children's heart garden is complete, while the front section may or may not be complete by the tour date ... a former koi pond has been repurposed as a rain garden. Karen also enjoys starting plants from seed.

**Directions:** From Hwy 108 in Lynn take Skyuka Rd to Mimosa Rd, the second left. Karen's house is the second one on the right, #110. When you park at Karen's, **Please Do Not Park on the Grass**, use one side of the road. There is a turnaround at the road's end.

**Quote of the month:** "Acts of kindness are the stepping-stones to making the world a better place — because we become better people in it."

Jodi Picoult, *Change of Heart*

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