

All the Dirt Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 2

Spring 2025

Hillsborough Garden Club

Passalong Plants

Passalong plants are those that we receive when another gardener shares a seed, a cutting or a plant. Sharing plants and seeds is one of the oldest traditions in gardening. Some of our favorite passalong plants—



those often cultivated by our grandmothers—remain popular today.

They make a garden special because they come from fellow gardeners, including many varieties that are often not available at large retail nurseries. The inspiration and wisdom we gain from generous individuals who share their plants are invaluable, as seen in

plants like hellebores, iris, hostas, bee balm, and more.

Passalong plants tend to be hardy and easy to propagate. They often come with valuable advice on how to ensure their success. An added bonus is that when these plants come from friends and neighbors, they are typically free! Because passalong plants are easy to spread, it's helpful to inform the recipient about how these plants reproduce. Some plants are quite adept at sharing themselves!

Join us...

Thursday, May 8, 10 am

Program: Passalong Plants and Their Care & Potluck Lunch



Hillsborough United Methodist Church

9:30 am social,
10:00 am program, **Potluck lunch** following short program

Presenters: Gardening Panel, HGC Members

Calendar of Events

Social Time at 9:30 am, Meeting at 10 am unless otherwise stated

Hillsborough Garden Tour

Saturday, May 3, 10 am to 4 pm

Showcasing 10 private gardens, 6 of them are attached to 100-year-old or older homes. Three are public gardens that are maintained with the help of garden club members.

Thursday, May 8, 10 am

Hillsborough UMC

Program: Passalong Plants and their Care and Potluck Lunch

A panel of HGC members will share hints about planting, grooming, dividing, propagating and sharing favorites, such as hellebores, daffodils, iris, hostas, roses and more.

Thursday, June 12, 10 am

Duke Campus Farm

4934 Friends School Road, Durham

Program: Duke Campus Farm

Saskia Cornes, Program Director and Assistant Professor of the Practice at the Duke Franklin Humanities Institute, will lead a tour of the one-acre working farm owned and operated by Duke University. It provides sustainably grown produce and food systems education for Duke and the surrounding communities.

The farm is located directly across from the Carolina Friends School in Duke Forest.

Sunday, June 22, 11 am, 1:30 & 3:30 pm

Queen Flora Saves the Bees

Eno River Farmers Market Pavilion

A play for the entire family will be put on by members of the community.

Garden Tour 2025

The gardens are blooming, and garden owners are putting the final touches to welcome guests. This year's tour features 10 private gardens. Six of these gardens are attached to 100-year-old or older properties, while the remaining gardens evoke a sense of history through their plants and designs.

Additionally, the tour includes three public gardens maintained with the help of garden club members, for a total of thirteen gardens.

Here is a preview of what you can expect to see on the tour:

- In one backyard, a tranquil water feature is surrounded by a diverse collection of perennials.

- The front yard features remnants of original flower beds along a 180-foot flagstone walkway, with some peonies over 130 years old.

- One garden is a haven for family heirlooms, native and nativar perennials, self-seeded annuals, thousands of bulbs, and various woody shrubs and trees.

- Another space showcases a mixture of perennial, woodland,

cottage garden plantings, a kitchen garden, a pergola, and an arbor.

- Look for the wattle fence, an aged storage shed, and a unique Taj Mahal-inspired chicken coop.

- A greenhouse made from old windows serves as a workspace, housing citrus trees during winter and starting seeds that support the cutting garden.

Eight of the gardens are located within a 3-mile radius of Downtown Hillsborough, while the remaining two properties are just a short drive away, off St. Marys Road.

Purchase Tickets (in person) & Booklet Pick-up

Rain or Shine

Please share with friends, family, and neighbors that tickets can be purchased in person:

Saturday, April 26
9 am-noon; \$35

Friday, May 2
9 am-noon; \$40

Saturday, May 3
8 am-noon; \$40

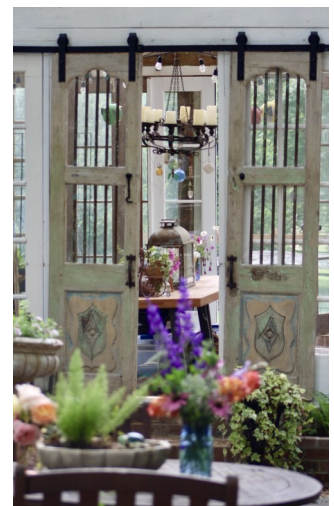
Hillsborough Visitors Center
150 E. King St
Hillsborough, NC. 27278

Ticket holders will receive the Garden Tour Booklet, allowing entry into each garden. It will contain addresses for each garden and detailed parking information.

Tickets can be purchased online at www.hillsboroughgardenclubnc.org.

Many thanks to our generous sponsors:

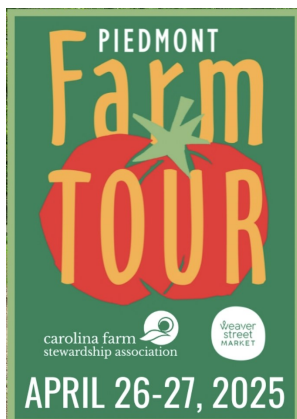
Union Grove Barn
Visit Hillsborough
Pat and Bo O'Reilly
Gro Smart
Deep Roots Natives
Garden Environments
Terra Nova/Kara Pittman
I Must Garden
Bailey Bee Supply
Ashlyn Scoggins Design
Grateful Trees and Bees
The Colonial Inn
Simchock Stone



June 16-22, 2025



Common Blue Curls



A Sneak Peek at Pollinator Week June 16-22, 2025

Each year since 2016, The Bee City Committee of the Hillsborough Garden Club has planned and conducted fun and educational activities to highlight our town as the 35th Bee City USA. Here are a few highlights for this year:

The club will distribute 500 Wildflower of the Year seed pamphlets from the NC Botanical Garden at several locations, including the May 3 Garden Tour and throughout the week of June 16-22 at the OC Public Library and at several merchant sponsors. This year's plant is the Common Blue Curls, *Trichostema dichotomum*.

June 18, from 9 am-1 pm there will be a free rain or shine "Open Garden" event at Home-grown Cut Flowers, a

new flower farm located off Orange Grove Road, hosted by owners (and HGC members) Karel and Julie Leemkuil. Volunteers are needed 9 am-1 pm to assist with parking.

On **June 22** we will sponsor a family-friendly Scavenger Hunt, possibly on the Visitor's Center grounds. The theme will be matching pollinators with host plants. It will be aimed at elementary and early middle school children and families. We will lead a concurrent craft activity (making bee or moth antenna headbands). Volunteers are needed 10 am-3 pm to assist with the hunt and craft activity. We especially need help before the date to make signs for the hunt.

Also on **June 22**, the finale event will be three performances of *Queen Flora Saves the Bees*, an original children's play to be held at the Margaret Lane Pavilion. The play is written by HGC members Sherry Appel and Pip Merrick, with production help from several club members. The director and performers are from Backyard Productions, a theatrical organization based in Durham. Volunteers are needed to distribute educational material, answer questions, and other support. For updates, check the [club website](#).

To volunteer for any of the events or to join the Bee City group contact Sarah Meadows, Chair, Bee City Subcommittee smeadows100@gmail.com

Piedmont Farm Tour April 26-27

The Piedmont Farm Tour, hosted by the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association and Weaver Street Market, is an annual celebration of sustainable, local food and farming in NC's Piedmont region.

Over thirty farms, scattered across the beautiful landscape of Alamance, Chatham,

Durham, Orange, and Person counties, open their farm gates to the public and invite over 2,000 visitors to experience and enjoy local agriculture at work firsthand.

This year, the Piedmont Farm Tour is held on Saturday, April 26, and Sunday, April 27, from 2-6 pm each day (select

"Kickoff Farms" open at 12pm!), rain or shine.

Bring the whole family, get some mud on your boots, and reconnect with the land.

Purchase tickets at www.carolinafarmstewards.org/piedmont-farm-tour/ or at the Weaver Street Market.

Share the Blooms

It's time for picking flowers and making bouquets! Club members gather from April to September to pick flowers and make arrangements for Orange County Meals on Wheels recipients.

Hillsborough's Firefly Farm welcomes us twice a month to glean their fields and use their barn for arranging 100-120 small bouquets each week to share. No experience or special tools are needed. Scissors, buckets, baskets, vases

are all provided.

Dates: 9-11 am

April 23, June 4 & 18,
July 2 & 16, August 6 &
20, September 3

Sign up [online](#) or email
Tammy Dorfman
at tamdorf@aol.com.



Spring Grants Awarded

The Hillsborough Garden Club announced four community grant awards for spring 2025. Our members are excited to support these local organizations that are doing great things for our citizens and for the environment. These awards are one of the ways we can give back to our community, as our members have been doing for a 100 years. During 2025, the Hillsborough Garden Club is celebrating our Centennial.

The grantees are:

OE Enterprises, serving individuals with disabilities, received \$1,000 to pay part of the costs to renovate an existing raised bed garden for the benefit of their clients. These participants will benefit from

working in and visiting the garden.

Backyard Butterflies, which promotes butterfly and moth education, has been awarded \$1,560 to purchase lighting and equipment to expand their citizen science Moth Crawl events. They want to increase their capacity to offer more local and regional educational sessions.

The **Master Gardener Volunteer Association of Orange County**, NC, was awarded \$755 to fund a new phase of the Easy Edibles seed program based on research and real-world testing in local conditions. Easy-to-grow vegetable seeds are distributed at no cost to food insecure families to grow in containers or backyards.

Wendy Olsen Arboretum, Inc.

received \$300 for membership and educational fees in the NC Association for Nonprofits.

Financing supporting grant awards and scholarships to local students comes from Garden Club fundraising events, such as the biennial Plant Sale (held in even-numbered years) and Spring Garden Tour (held in odd-numbered years).



NC STATE EXTENSION

Master Gardener | Orange County
Volunteer Association

HGC Native Tree and Perennial



Cowslip



**Eastern Redbud Tree
and Flower**



Our founding members selected the Crepe Myrtle and Cowslip as our club tree and flower. While we will continue to honor the historical significance of these choices, the HGC Board of Directors believes it is important to also recognize the value of native trees and plants in our landscapes.

After conducting research, the board suggested three native trees and four native perennials as potential representatives for the club over the next 100 years. We invited input from our members during the April meeting, and the results are in.

Native Trees

The Eastern Redbud received the most votes, followed closely by the Sassafras tree and the American Fringe tree.

Native Herbaceous Perennials

The Eastern Red Columbine garnered the most votes, with the Purple Coneflower just one vote behind. Goldenrod and native sunflowers also received votes.

All of the suggested native plants would enhance our landscapes while providing essential habitats for bees, butterflies, and birds.

Eastern Redbud *Cercis canadensis*

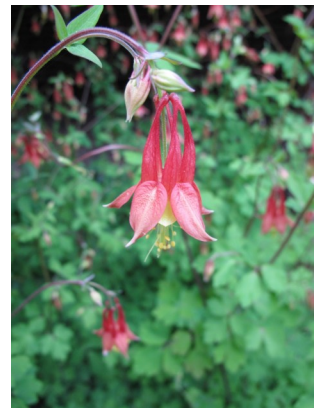
Native to North America, the Eastern Redbud grows to a height of 20–30 feet with a spread of 26–33 feet. Its flowers range from light to dark magenta pink and bloom in spring to early summer, attracting nectar-seeking insects, including early-season butterflies. The leaves are dark green, alternate, simple, and heart-shaped, turning yellow in the fall.

The flowers are edible; Native Americans traditionally ate redbud flowers either raw or boiled, and they roasted the seeds. George Washington even noted in his diary the beauty of this tree and transplanted seedlings from the nearby forest to his garden.

Eastern Red Columbine *Aquilegia canadensis*

Aquilegia canadensis

This native perennial produces red and yellow flowers in early spring, which last for about a month, offering early nectar sources for hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees. Once the flowers fade, the foliage creates lovely ground cover. This plant freely self-seeds, providing delightful surprises in the garden.



**Eastern Red
Columbine**

Hillsborough Garden Club

President: Tammy Dorfman
Vice President: Bonnie Maddux
Secretary: Adrienne Scurtu
Treasurer: Kristen Compton
Newsletter Editor: Lynn Odom

Club Motto: To preserve what is good. To grow what is good. To display what is good.

Conservation Pledge: I pledge to protect and conserve the natural resources of the planet Earth and promise to promote education, so that we may become better caretakers of our air, water, forest, land, and wildlife.

Affiliate of the Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc. and National Garden Club, Inc.



www.hillsboroughgardenclubnc.org

Club Members can access Member Portal: est1925

