

All the Dirt Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 1

Winter 2024

Hillsborough Garden Club

Wildflower Plantings Help Native Bees Thrive

By Sarah Meadows

Ever wonder whether your native plant gardening really makes a difference? Now scientists have an answer – YES!

Part of our mission as land stewards is to nurture beneficial insects, as well as growing plants. Now we can do both.



In a recent study, environmental scientists conducted experi-

ments in Northern California to see whether native wildflower plantings grown next to agricultural crops had more native bees and more varieties of species as compared to “regular” field borders.

The scientists monitored underground nests, numbers of bees, and types of bees. The results? “Wildflower plantings significantly increased nest densities and the richness of bee species using them.

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Calendar of Events

Social at 9:30 am, Meeting at 10 am

Saturday, Jan. 13, 2024

**Orange Co. Cooperative Extension Office,
1020 US Highway 70 West, Suite 130,
Hillsborough**

**Program: Winter Sowing and Other
Secrets of the Winter Garden**

HGC President Tammy Dorfman will offer insights into winter sowing, including how to grow tulips in a crate for beautiful blooms in spring.

Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024

Hillsborough UMC

**Program: Adapting our Gardens to
Climate Change**

Preston Montague, noted Durham artist, educator, and landscape architect, will discuss what to expect from climate change and how to adapt your garden to meet this challenge.

**Thurs., March 14
Hillsborough UMC**

**Program: Where the Wild Things Grow:
Hedgerows**

Katherine Schlosser, Board Chair, Friends of Plant Conservation, will discuss North Carolina's hedgerows, home to wildflowers, birds, rabbits and a harvest of fruits, nuts, and herbs for culinary and medicinal use.

What Each of Us Can Do

East of the Mississippi River, about 85% of all land is privately owned. If we planted native plants on 50% of this private land we would restore biodiversity. Each of us can take action, in our own back yards, and make a difference for decades to come.

1. Shrink the Lawn

Turfgrass offers no ecological benefits. Reduce your lawn by half for walkways and paths.

2. Remove invasive species

Invasive plants are like a cancer. Try to get rid of the most egregious species.

3. Plant Keystone Genera

Landscapes that do not contain one or more species from keystone genera fail food webs, even if the diversity of other plants is very high. Try planting 2 keystone plants this year.

4. Be generous with your plantings

Increase the abundance and diversity of your plantings. If you have one tree in your yard, consider adding two more.

5. Reduce your nighttime light pollution

Our porch and security lights are major causes of insect decline. Consider turning off your lights at night. Or use motion sensor security lights that light up only when an intruder enters your yard. Use yellow wavelength LED bulbs.



6. Network with neighbors & get on the Homegrown National Park Map

As you transform your property by planting natives in tasteful ways, it is likely your neighbors will follow suit. Check out the HNP Map and add your property.

<http://tinyurl.com/mwrwawcn>

7. Build a conservation hardscape

Install a water bubbler for resident and migrating birds. Set your mower to 3 inches. Install window well covers.

8. Create caterpillar pupation sites

Replace the lawn under trees with well-planted

beds with groundcovers appropriate for your area. Most caterpillars drop to the ground and pupate.

9. Do not spray or fertilize

Creating soils rich in organic matter is entirely sufficient for healthy plants. Fertilizers are not needed.

10. Educate your neighborhood or HOA

Rules may need to be updated. Property owners think they cannot use native plants. The “new luxury landscape” is one of meadows or formal native planted gardens – it is no longer rolling green lawns.

Article taken from: wpengine.com/getting-started/

By Doug Tallamy, Author of *Bringing Nature Home* and *The Nature of Oaks*



“The ultimate test of man’s conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard.”

Gaylord Nelson,
founder of Earth Day



Plant Spotlight: Christmas Rose

Helleborus

Ranunculaceae family

The hellebores were popular plants of the ancient Greeks. Roman author and naturalist Pliny wrote about the use of Christmas rose as early as 1400 B.C. Ancients used Christmas rose medicinally and considered it to be a potential cure for a number of conditions, including insanity.

In warmer climates, Christmas rose blooms in December. The genus provides interest in the winter months with its waxy, dark green leaves

and cup-shaped blooms, now in a variety of colors. The flowers tend to point downwards.

Hellebores are toxic if large quantities are eaten. All parts of the plant are toxic. Sap can cause skin irritation.

These perennials are great for a border front, in patio plantings, along walkways, or in protected, shady spots like under shade trees. It will self-seed easily and when planted in small groups or mass planted it makes an attractive clumping groundcover

even when the flowers are spent.

Light requirement: deep shade to dappled sunlight

Water Requirement: dry to wet

Attracts: pollinators

Tolerates: clay or sandy soil

Deer resistant: High (poisonous)

Native Bees Thrive Continued

(Continued from page 1)

Such benefits occurred within the first year of planting and persisted up to four years post establishment." A major difference seemed to be that wildflower plantings have a better habitat for successful bee reproduction, especially for ground-nesting species.

<http://tinyurl.com/mrxfhc29>

Join the Bee City subcommittee by contacting Sarah Meadows to help spread the word in our community.

Sarah Meadows

smeadows100@gmail.com



HGC Plant Sale 2024

Even though it's winter, the plant sale committee has been hard at work planning this year's plant sale. We are excited about the variety of native plants, pollinator and host plants, cut flowers and vegetable garden starts that will be offered at this year's sale.

We are partnering with Backyard Butterflies again this year to provide a variety of milkweeds (host plants for monarchs), asters (keystone plants), monarda (nectar plants) and so much more. Attention to both sun-loving and shade-tolerant plants went into our selection process as well.

We are also working with a student at Cedar Ridge High School. With a full green house set-up, she is working on growing a variety of plants. We were delighted to meet Mackenzie this past fall. She has a passion for growing plants from seed and caring for her own cut flower garden.

She plans to attend Alamance Community College in the fall and pursue a degree in horticulture. She will be helping us with plant sale set-up and day-of sales. We're excited for you all to meet her.

We also hope you'll consider sharing plants from your gardens or seed starting. We love variety and depend on you to share your

bounty! Let us know what you have to share or what you would love to see us grow for the sale. We still have time to source and/or grow plants. If there is something you've been wanting to add to your garden, please let us know.

A great plant sale means more opportunities for us to fund scholarships, grants, and special projects like the Visitors Center. We're excited...we hope you are too!

The plant sale will be held at the Exchange Club of Hillsborough on **May 11th**. Plant sale committee: Bonnie Maddux, Kristen Compton, Tammy Dorfman



**Plant Sale
2024**

May 11th

Exchange Club
of Hillsborough

Spread the
news!

Black-Eyed Peas for New Year's Day

Have you ever wondered why it's considered good luck to eat black eyed peas and collards on New Year's Day?

Black-eyes peas were brought to North America by African slaves. They grew the peas and ate them during times of celebration. This may be why we connect

them with New Year's Day.

Legend has it that when Union soldiers raided farms they left the black-eyes peas in the field, thinking they were feed for animals. With nothing else to eat, Southerners began to eat them in order to stay alive.

Hence, people in the South eat black-eyed

peas for good luck on January 1st. Some connected the peas with coins and collards with paper money.

Black-eyed peas have become a staple in Southern kitchens. Some Italians and some Jews also eat legumes for holidays. Other cultures have other traditions similar to ours.

So eat your black-eyed peas!



Hillsborough Garden Club

President: Tammy Dorfman
 Vice President: Bonnie Maddux
 Secretary: Sherry Appel
 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

History of the Club

The Club was very active, until World War II intervened in 1942. Mrs. H. W. Moore reorganized it on November 7, 1946, and the following years saw a notable increase in Club interests and activities.

Flower shows were held frequently. Honorable Mention for the "Purple Ribbon" was received in 1947.

In 1949, a purple ribbon was given the Club for a Show and Spring Pilgrimage, entitled "Colonial Hillsboro." This was the first undertaking of its kind in the history of the

State Garden Club.

The American Legion Building served as headquarters and housed the Flower Show. A few years later, an award was received in the State Model Mile Contest, and the Club sponsored the sale of bone china memorial plates showing the William Hooper House.

The Garden Club cooperated with the Town's Bicentennial Celebration in 1954, by holding a House and Garden Tour.

Over the years, the Club has

been listed almost continually on the State honor roll, and the Club year book has often received recognition. The aims of the Club have always been for civic improvement. From its earliest inception, projects have stressed Restoration and Preservation of our Heritage.

<https://openorangenc.org/>

