Volume V Fall 2022

Mayflower

The Newsletter of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts

September 2022

Please click "view entire message" at the bottom of this email.

Please forward this to your membership.

** Looking Ahead **

- The **Plymouth Garden Club Flower Show** Sat Sep 30 from 1:00pm - 4:30pm. Sun Oct 1 from 10am - 4:30pm. Plymouth Public Library Fehlow Room 132 South Street, Plymouth. See flyer at bottom.
- **Falmouth Garden Club** Harvest House Tour Sat Oct 8 10am - 3pm. See flyer at bottom.
- **GCFM Landscape Design School,** Course 4, Series 16 via ZOOM on October 26-28, 2022. Courses can be taken in any order. The registration form can be accessed through the GCFM website. For any further assistance, contact Susie MacPherson at Rmacpham@me.com
- The **first lecture for GCFM's Horticulture Morning Series**will be Feb 6 at 10 am. Laura Bibler will share her research on women who led the

way in gardening literature. The lecture will be offered on Zoom free of charge to GCFM members. Registration will open on the website soon.

- On Wed, Oct. 12 at 12:30 Ginny von Rueden, President of the **Marblehead Driftwood Garden Club**, will share an illustrated presentation on the club's custom-designed tour of some of the most spectacular gardens in England. She will also showcase the world-famous Chelsea Flower Show with its extraordinary displays of blooms and unique show gardens. On Nov 16 at 12:30 Sarah Hitchcock, landscape designer, will demonstrate how to create three winter garden containers. Sarah is a long-time member of the Arrangers of Marblehead and designs many of the beautiful flower boxes and garden containers in Marblehead. Both are Free to Public at Jewish Community Center, 4 Community Rd., Marblehead. See flyer at bottom.
- **New England Garden Club Annual Meeting** Oct 18 - 20, Nashua, NH. This meeting will include a fashion show, a fall and winter wreath competition (information included below) and a Photography Show – sponsored by the NEGC Photography Club (Catch their latest newsletter **here**). Please consider attending this meeting. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet your counterparts from all over New England.
- **Topsfield Fair Flower Show** Sept 30 - Oct 10. This wonderful event still has some design classes open, so please encourage your members to take a look at the schedule and stretch their design wings. The Topsfield Fair is also a great event for a garden club field trip. Come and admire the wonderful design efforts of garden club members from across the state. **Topsfield Fair Flower Show Schedule**

A note from the GCFM president

Dear Members,

Summer is almost over as I write this. I've been looking back at what I did over the summer and have realized that many of the fun things I did were garden club events!

Garden tours in Weston and Andover, flower shows in Marshfield and at the Heritage museum, field trips to the Stevens Coolidge house with the Garden Consultants and to New Hampshire to visit Bedrock and Fuller gardens. I even got to the Hydrangea Festival for the very first time. Our garden clubs were very busy this summer. I expect that energy to continue into the fall with a number of house and garden tours, art in bloom exhibits and flower shows. Check out the club calendar on gcfm.org to see what's coming.

Happy fall!

Jill Malcolm

Educational Opportunities

September means Back to School!

Isn't it time for you to invest in yourself and your gardening passion and *finally* sign up for the GCFM schools you have been wanting to take for the last.....how many years is it now?

Flower Show School

Landscape Design School

A quick but important note about MFA Art in Bloom

GCFM has been contacted by the **MFA Art in Bloom** team about next year's show. They asked us to provide contact information for our clubs, but that is contrary to our privacy rules so we have had to work out another solution. If your club is interested in participating in the 2023 Art in Bloom event, please review the following information and contact the MFA team directly. This is a wonderful opportunity for our Garden Clubs and we don't want you to miss out.

The 47th annual Art in Bloom will be held at the MFA Boston April 28-30, 2023. Formal letter and application for floral designers will be coming later this Fall. Please note the important dates for designers below:

February 27, 2023 1pm Art in Bloom arranger orientation at the MFA March 6, 2023 1pm snow date for above

April 27, 2023 Arranger Day at the MFA

MFA Garden Club Coordinators:
Karen Fitzgerald
mfaa.karenfitzgerald@gmail.com
781-780-1162
Meg Kasuba
mfaa.megkasuba@gmail.com
617-512-8356
Susan Meikleham
mfaa.susanmeikleham@gmail.com
781-929-4738

(Your wiley Mayflower editor snuck in a photo of herself and her Art in Bloom partner, Deborah Brown, both of Wellesley Gardeners' Guild during our stint at the MFA in 2016.)

Grant Recipients for 2022-2023

Sandra M. Joyce Grant

Groton Garden Club
What better exemplifies Sandra M. Joyce, former President of the GCFM, love of horticulture and garden club work than planting one hundred native plants to celebrate their 100th anniversary as a

club? The Groton Garden CLub is adding ten new trees or shrubs or perennials to ten sites they have developed and maintained through the years which have significance to the Town.

Congratulations!!

Groton Garden Club is awarded the first Sandra M. Joyce Grant of $1000.

GCFM Development & Historic Landscape Grants

Acton Garden Club is awarded a grant of $750 towards revitalization of the landscaping they have maintained since l984 in front of Town Hall. The oval garden will now become a focal point rather than a drive by feature in co-ordination with the Town of Acton's scheduled Traffic Redesign Project construction. This will also extend the clubs horticultural education efforts as one of each species will display professional plant labels, a continuation of the club's Botanical Labeling Project.

Medway Garden Club is awarded a grant of $750. This tiny club of 14 members will cleanup and replant the frontal plantings and stone well at the Jacob Ide House, purchased by the Town of Medway thru Community Preservation Funds and home of the Historical Society Museum. The plantings to have the look and feel appropriate to this Federal House.

Hopkinton Garden Club is awarded a grant of $500 towards the plantings to beautify the Claflin Memorial Fountain. This "bedding out "project, which is changed 3 x's a season is appropriate to the restored Victorian style fountain located on Hopkinton Town Common, a central gathering place for residents and town activities.

Congratulations to all!!

Garden Clubs Can Get Involved with

Town-wide Garden Pollinator Projects

By Maria Bartlett, Environmental Awareness Chair, GCFM

As we all know, pollinators are essential to a healthy living ecosystem and they are in drastic decline due to habitat loss, effects of global warming, and pesticide use. What can we as gardeners and garden club members do to help stem the tide? Here are some ways to make a difference:

- Join the Massachusetts Pollinator Network (MAPN. This organization is only a year old, is sponsored by NOFA (Northeast Organic Farming Association) and is open to all. Rosemary Malfi has been the director since the start and hosts monthly zoom meetings online. Check out the website to sign up for the newsletter and online meetings.
- The Massachusetts Pollinator Network hosts monthly meetings to exchange knowledge, ideas, and updates about local actions. Whether you're a seasoned community organizer or new to pollinator protection concerns, everyone is welcome! Great source of information on how to start a pollinator project in your town.
- Consider joining with other organizations in your community (conservation commissions, garden clubs, sustainability groups, Rotary Clubs) to start a POLLINATOR PROJECT. Pollinator Pathways was founded to help communities do just this. Check out the their Massachusetts website for ideas and how to register your town for a free page on the website. Over 40 MA towns are on this website already.
- Plant native pollinator plants. There are many rsources on planting native pollinator plants (Xerces, Native Plant Trust). Fall is a great time to plant….just make sure your plants are grown without neonicotinoid pesticides….these kill pollinators.
- Reduce the size of your lawn for more space for pollinator plants.
- Resist the urge to use pesticides on your lawn and plants.

CASE STUDY: New Project. Andover Garden Club has just recently called together groups (Conservation Commission, all three garden clubs, Select Board members, resident Board members of ELA and Grow Native, Andover Green Advisory Board members; community gardeners; and Town employees) to meetings to start a Pollinator Project in Town. We have had three meetings; we held a zoom meeting with contacts through MAPN to get ideas about what other towns are doing; we registered for a table at Andover Day in September to get the word out; we set in motion design work for our own Andover Pollinator Project yard sign and some demonstration plots around town; we are working with the library to set up a series of public talks in the spring; and we commissioned a local nursery to sell native pollinators plants.

CASE STUDY: Established Project. Cape Cod's project is well-established. Pollinator Pathway Cape Cod is a coalition of 22 organizations, including 14 towns and many garden clubs. They have a great page on the website (listed above) that includes pictures of their pollinator gardens, many links to the organizations involved, and a map including all the PP pollinator gardens on the Cape. They give talks, developed a flyer, agreed upon a list of principles they ask gardeners to adopt, and have held plant sales.

CASE STUDY: Established Program. Another program is Lexington Living Landscapes. Four organizations teamed up in 2000 to launch this initiative, including

Lexington Field and Garden Club. LLL did not sign onto the Pollinator Pathway website but rther established their own website, Lexingtonlivinglandscape.org. Check it out for lots of great ideas!

A Note from your Mayflower Editor

Thank you everyone all for all of your wonderful contributions to this issue of the Mayflower! This newsletter is only as fun and as useful as its submissions. You are all so busy out there raising money, planting, creating, touring, volunteering, designing, presenting, and writing (!). This issue is all the richer for your efforts.

NEW for winter edition: In addition to looking for updates and club news and events, please submit 1-3 best practices of your club. For example, how you attract new members, raise funds, get members to take on club roles. All clubs face challenges at different times and your advice/best practice may just help another club get through a tough time!

Please submit your articles in the body of an email or in a google document. Please do not attach them as a PDF or similar. Photos should be attached to the email and any descriptions included in the text portion of your submission and sent to me at joanminklei@gmail.com by December 10 for the Winter issue.
THANK YOU!

Garden Clubs at Work

The Waltham Garden Club explored a new concept this summer, Garden Gatherings. There are several members who are expert gardeners in our group.. They have beautiful gardens to be enjoyed. As to not let this talent go untapped, Garden Gatherings began. The club met six times over the summer to enjoy one another's "green thumb." Each garden displayed a kaleidoscope of color, arrangement and plant selection. It was an opportunity for everyone to visit one another and enjoy an evening out.

Thanks to Jane Gibbons, Vera Rubin, Gail Drakos, Nancy Eyster-Smith, Laura Cooper and Kathy Montesanti for hosting us in their beautiful gardens.

The Laurelwood Garden Club held its first meeting Friday, September 9, 2022 at 9:30 at the Fitchburg Historical Society.

Susan Navarre, Executive Director of

the Fitchburg Historical Society walked us through the paths of keeping history, programs and Open-house exhibitions. The club presented various donated garden club items to catalog and preserve the history of the garden club.

The Laurelwood Garden Club held its 11th annual scholarship tea on Saturday, September l7, 2022, at the Fitchburg Art Museum to benefit its scholarship fund. Tables were decorated with a different Tablescape theme displaying a variety of colorful, whimsical and interesting centerpieces with the theme carried throughout the table with dishes and artifacts.

This year's $1,000.00 scholarship was awarded to Harrison Taylor a graduate of Lunenburg High School. He will be attending University of Vermont at Montpelier with a major in environmental Sciences.

Garden club officers elected at the Annual Meeting held at Oak Hill Country Club on June 3, 2022. Left to Right: Mary Ed Cain, Corresponding Secretary of Leominster, Lucille Cormier, Secretary of Fitchburg, Kathryn Nowosielski, President of Leominster, Tisha Schiavitti, Treasurer of Leominster, Treasurer, Lynn Houston, Vice President of Ashby, Absent Claire Lavin Assistant Treasurer of Ashby.

The annual planting of 1.000 daffodils bulbs as the club's Civic Beautification project was held on Tuesday October l8th in various public areas in Fitchburg.
This year's Art in Bloom will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary from Thursday - April 27, through Sunday April 30. The club partners with the Fitchburg Art Museum to present the event. We invite you to interpret.

Although there was no monthly meeting held in July, that does not mean that members of the club were inactive! The *Meals on Wheels* committee convened to make over 100 Fourth of July themed decorations to be placed on meal trays distributed to community members who receive home delivered meals through town services. This committee creates similar decorations throughout the year and are greatly appreciated by those receiving them.
On July 8th and 9th, three members of the Falmouth Garden Club opened their gardens for the benefit of the club during the annual *Cape Cod Hydrangea Festival.* The gardens hosted over 1,200 visitors who marveled at the beauty of the various types of hydrangea, garden designs and much more!

The June meeting of the **Falmouth Garden Club** was held at the scenic Flying Bridge restaurant overlooking Falmouth Harbor. At this meeting, two scholarships were awarded to local students who are advancing their studies in horticulture or related sciences. In addition, 14 provisional members were recognized at this meeting and moved onto active status bringing the yearly total to 17 new active members! Lastly, the *Florabunda Award* was presented at this meeting to Suzanne Buzanoski for her outstanding contributions to the club in the area of communications and community outreach.

In addition to participating in the *Cape Cod Hydrangea Festival*, July and August have been busy months for members who have been organizing their efforts for the upcoming *Harvest House Tour* to be held on Saturday, October 8th. Houses have been selected, designers have been collecting ideas and multiple committees have been formed to decorate some of Falmouth's quintessential homes. From historic homes on the Village Green to beachfront classics, visitors will enjoy seeing these beautiful homes appointed with stunning autumn floral arrangements, tablescapes, mantle treatments and more. To purchase tickets and learn of further details, go to falmouthgardenclub.org

Dracut Garden Club enjoyed a busy summer season. September's meeting included "Winter Pruning: Why, When, and How to Prune Your Shrubs" with guest speaker, Jan Weathers, MA Master Gardener Association.

Members are busy collecting raffle items to fill a Garden Wagon for Dracut's Old Home Day. Garden gloves and tools, apron, bulbs, seeds, garden art and gift cards all for the lucky winner! Lastly, a trip to beautiful and inspiring Bedrock Gardens, Lee NH for all members to enjoy!

A rock painting collaboration with the Dracut Children's Library was fun for all!

Field trip to Pickety Place in NH was delightful!

Plymouth Garden Club at Work

The ten large garden beds along the pathway to the front portico of The Plymouth Public Library were originally designed in the early 1990s by Past Club President June Aronson and propagated and planted with the help of local high school students and her fellow club members. Throughout these thirty years The Plymouth Garden Club has been honored to maintain the

beds: pulling out underperforming shrubs, installing new plants, mulching, weeding, and celebrating the seasons with tulips, daffodils, summer perennials, and chrysanthemums. So many dedicated women have coordinated this annual Civic Beautification project and Past President Coletta Candini is always there to direct and inspire them.

In 2021 Coletta withVice President Kate Angley and Communications Coordinator Crystal Payne set out to create something new. One of the beds was transformed to be the club's first, but not last, public pollinator garden. Several members donated plants, some native, from their own gardens to successfully attract bees, butterflies and colorful moths from spring to fall. All the plants are labeled encouraging members of the public to create a similar pollinator oasis of their own.

** Massachusetts Bearberry, Veronica, Liatris 'Blazing Star', Rudbeckia, Echinacea, Asclepius Tuberosa, Lobelia Cardinalis, Chelone, Aster Dumosus 'Woods Pink', and Autumn Joy Sedum 'Herbstfreude' **

Garden Clubs Working Together

The Jeremiah Lee Mansion is one of Marblehead's local historic treasures. Built in 1768 by Jeremiah Lee, a merchant and the wealthiest man in Massachusetts Bay Colony and his wife, Martha, this Georgian mansion remains virtually untouched from colonial times and houses museum quality paintings, furniture, porcelain, and silver. The home also features 18th century English scenic wallpaper, the only place in the world where this variety of paper still hangs in its original location. Visitors come from all over the world and the U.S. to see this wallpaper and also to learn about Lee's patriotic efforts to prepare the colony for war with England by bringing back guns on his ships from Spain.

Since 1909 the Marblehead Museum and Historical Society has been the caretaker of the home and for many years, Marblehead's garden clubs have created floral arrangements for the great hall. While the **Marblehead Garden Club** has maintained the mansion's period garden, currently members from the **Driftwood Garden Club**, the **Arrangers of Marblehead**, the **Cottage Gardeners**, the **Winter Garden Club**, and most recently the **Nahant Garden Club** participate in making the floral arrangements. The designers generally use flowers from their own gardens and the Lee garden, however there are times when flowers must be purchased and donated. For over 10 years this effort was coordinated by Becky Robinson of the Arrangers of Marblehead and for the past two years by Karen Fitzgerald of the Nahant Garden Club.

These combined efforts make the mansion beautiful and welcoming to its many visitors. The mansion is open June through October, Tuesday through

Saturday with docent led tours.

Arrangement by Laurie Boggis of the Driftwood Garden Club.

Patricia Adams of the Arrangers of Marblehead.

This past June, the **Weston Garden Club** held its once-every-decade garden tour. Ten club members opened their properties to the public.

Ten club members opened their properties to the public.
The Town's Native Plant Garden, maintained by the Club, was also on view. Proceeds from the tour will support local conservation and environmental efforts and the Club's ongoing community education and beautification projects. Thank you to the many GCFM members who attended the tour! Highlights may be enjoyed here.

The **Driftwood Garden Club of Marblehead** celebrated its 70th Birthday at their Annual Luncheon in June 2022.
Founded in 1952, the same year Elizabeth II became Queen of the United Kingdom, Driftwood members have focused on projects that create beauty and foster community education in town.
DGC Historian and current President Ginny von Rueden highlighted the Club's history at the summer luncheon and also in an interview aired on Marblehead Community Media, marbleheadtv.org. Happy 70th Birthday to the Driftwood Garden Club!

Driftwood Garden Club at their Annual Luncheon

Magical and deliciously festive floral cupcakes.

The **Southbridge Garden Club** visited a pollinator garden in Wales, MA, on July 19. The program focused on protecting and preserving space for the generational life cycle of the Monarch butterfly.

In 2021, an Eagle Scout planned the garden, conducted a fundraising campaign, and solicited support and guidance from the local community. The SGC donated and installed the plants; the scout monitors and maintains the garden. Monarch Watch has listed the garden as a Monarch Waystation.

The **Groton Garden Club** has maintained a 9/11 memorial garden and 6 planters at the Center Fire Station since 2016. In 2021, junipers planted on both sides of the doorway were dying out. We top dressed with compost and fertilizer in hopes of saving them, but when spring came it was obvious that the junipers needed to go. In May, we planned a new garden and enlisted the help of the firemen to pull out the old shrubs. Existing daylilies, sedum "Autumn Joy," and some other sedums were divided and replanted. We added 4 new junipers, 4 mid-height blueberry bushes, daylilies, siberian iris, and stonecrops. And then it stopped raining. Our committee watered the new garden every other day through the hot, dry summer and thanks to their diligence, the gardens look fabulous.

The **Garden Club of Norfolk** recently installed three birdhouses from Wooden Expression Birdhouses, in a few of our Civic Gardens – Adele's Birdhouse Garden, H Olive Day School's Butterfly Garden, and Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary's Butterfly Garden. In addition, the butterfly garden at the Federated Church was certified as a MonarchWatch.org Waystation, giving the GCN three monarch waystations.

Burlington Garden Club

Even with the water ban starting in May, Garden Club members persevered and have continued to hand water the 8 planters on the Town Common every week using our own supplies. The planters contained false-sunflower (Brown Eyed Girl Helianthus) blue lobelia and sceavola, white calibrachoa and bright green sedum. In June members had a great time making hypertufa pots, each unique in style and design. The club helps in the Native Plant and Pollinator Garden as well as the Burlington Community Garden which

supports the People Helping People food pantry. In August members came together at our 3rd annual Summer Garden Party to catch up with friends, get ready for the Fall fundraiser, and learn about upcoming 2023 programs.

The **Stoneham Garden Club** ventured on with “producing produce” in the gardens at the Stoneham Senior Center and the Whip Hill site. As last year, the harvest was donated to the Food Pantries of Stoneham. The dry days did put some limits on garden growth but each week the Club has been able to make a welcomed donation. meadow at the Whip Hill site)bordering the Mystic Fells.

A developing project of the Club is the beginning of a pollinator meadow. This is in addition to the ongoing plantings at Whip Hill in the walled garden that once served as a kitchen garden for the Crockett family who were the original owners. In doing this work, the Club is hoping to grow and develop and also honor the garden’s initial development.

The Club also once again awarded a $1000.00 scholarship to a Stoneham student planning a career in an environmental or horticulture related field. This year’s winner, Margaret Peters, will be studying at University of New Hampshire.

The **Hamilton-Wenham Garden Club** recently held their second "Seedling Day" at their Pingree Park

Garden which is open to the public and accepts donations in exchange for plant seedlings from the garden. The event was held Saturday, September 10. Some photos of the event are to the right and below.

On Sept 14, Kathy Leva, Middlesex District Director, presented a floral program for the **Old York Garden Club** in York Maine. It was titled "Go from Ordinary to Extraordinary". What a surprise when two unexpected guests arrived! A former GCFM President and the current President of GCF of Maine. Also in attendance was former MA State President Diane Bullock.
Diane Bullock is also the Chairman of Flower Show Schools in MA.

Left to right Club VP Deneen, Maine State President Harriet Robinson, Club president Carole Freeman and

Kathy Leva MDD

After a June Garden Party, **Hopkinton Garden Club** Beautification was the focus: 14 planters on Town Common and 5 garden sites. With extremely dry conditions, members spent hours watering to keep plants healthy and enjoyed by town residents. At Hopkinton Family Day on 9/17 club will have pumpkins free pumpkins for children to decorate, always a fun activity to start fall.

Wellesley Gardeners' Guild members enjoyed a fantastic first meeting of our 2022-23 season with the MFA Art in Bloom Roadshow in the Putnam Room at Elm Bank Reservation. Arrangements were raffled off and one lucky winner, Claudia Ticktin (Metrowest District Director) donated her prize to the Wellesley Council on Aging where it will be enjoyed by many visitors.

This Fall, we will hold our second annual Bulb Planting Program and Fundraiser. Members can order pre-selected bulb kits ("WGG curated list") from Brent and Becky's as well as anything else from the catalog. We order Dahlias in January just in time for our March presentation on "How to Grow Dahlias".

Club Flyers and Events

Brought to you by Falmouth Garden Club

in cooperation with Falmouth's Museums on the Green

Tour some of Falmouth's quintessential homes decked out for the many occasions of fall by Falmouth Garden Club floral designers. From historic homes on the Village Green to beachfront classics, you will enjoy seeing these beautiful homes appointed with stunning autumn floral arrangements, tablescapes, mantle treatments and much more.

Scan the QR Code or visit www.falmouthgardenclub.org for more information and to purchase tickets.

ARRANGERS of Marblehead

GARDEN PROGRAM presented at the JCCNS

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 12
12:30PM

Light refreshments will be served

Ginny von Rueden, president of the Marblehead Driftwood Garden Club, will share an illustrated presentation on the club's custom-designed tour of some of the most spectacular gardens in England. She will also showcase the world-famous Chelsea Flower Show with its extraordinary displays of blooms and unique show gardens.

FREE and everyone is welcome, but please RSVP to sewing@jccns.com.

JCC Everyone's Welcome
north shore
Est. 1912

JCCNS.ORG
4 Community Road
Marblehead, MA 01945

The Plymouth Garden Club

Presents

"Plymouth – Celebrating 400+ Years"

An NGC Small Standard Flower Show

September 30, 1pm - 5:30pm
& October 1, 10am - 4:30pm

Plymouth Public Library Fehlow Room
132 South Street, Plymouth, MA
508-830-4250

The Plymouth Garden Club is a member of
The South Eastern District of
The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, Inc. and
National Garden Clubs, Inc. and New England Garden Club

Penny Pines: A Worthy Competition

Pennies Restore Forests

Through the

Penny Pines Plantation

Penny Pines is a Reforestation & Forest Education program supported by a partnership between the National Garden Club and the USDA/US Forest Service.

Penny Pines donations, along with Federal Funds, are used to:

- Replace burnt or damaged trees
- Replant pine and other native trees
- Restore damaged soil

Penny Pines plantations provide:

- Soil protection & stabilization
- Watershed protection
- Future harvestable timber
- Protection and Beautification to our National forests

In Massachusetts, Penny Pines donations are used to maintain and restore Urban Parks & Conservation areas, among other preservation and restoration projects.

Please consider doing your part by donating $68 at a time to Penny Pines for reforesting and restoring our nation's natural resources.

To keep this program in fore front, GCFM is announcing a competition among the districts. The

timeline is September 2022 – May 2023. For the district that collects the most donations, GCFM will send a donation of $68 'In Honor of ' the District/District Director. For the individual club that donates the most donation, GCFM will send a donation of $68 'In Honor of' the Club. Due to the diversity of our club sizes the award will be calculated based on the size of the district and club.
We will recognize the winners at the GCFM Annual meeting. The winners will be posted in Mayflower and GCFM website.
By entering this competition we will be actively participating in our national and urban deforestation program.

LET'S START THIS COMPETITION!
LET'S SUSTAIN OUR FORESTS!

Any concerns or questions on Penny Pines Program, please contact Aparna Kumar at aparnakum34@gmail.com

Important Forms and Links

- Blue Star Memorial Information - ornament order form
- Presidents Pins Form

Click Here for the main GCFM Website

Spotlight on Red Bearberry

by Linda Jean Smith

Red bearberry *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* is also known as bear's grape, hog craneberry or hog-crawberry, sandberry, mealberry, mountain-box, fox-plum, and barren myrtle and kinnikinnick. The genus name of *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* comes from the Greek words *arctos* (meaning bear) and *staphyle* (meaning "bunch of grapes") in reference to the fruits which form grape-like clusters. In the wild, the fruits are commonly eaten by bears.
This plant is native throughout Alaska to California, east to the Rocky Mountains and across the northern U.S. and Canada to the Atlantic coast as well as northern parts of Europe and Asia. It grows in a variety of habitats typically including gravelly or sandy exposed sites, dry, rocky slopes or outcrops, forest margins and clearings. It is primarily confined to cool alpine regions in the more southern parts of its growing range.

Red bearberry is a creeping, slow-growing, prostrate, woody evergreen shrub growing to 2–12 inches tall, that spreads by flexible branching (roots at the nodes) to 3-6' wide or more. Wild stands of the species can be dense. The trailing stems will layer, sending out small roots periodically. The finely textured velvety branches are initially white to pale green, becoming smooth and red-brown with maturity.

The leaves are shiny, small, and feel thick and stiff, measuring 1½ in. long and ½ in. wide. Their tops are darker green than their undersides. They have rounded tips tapering back to the base, held vertically by a twisted leaf stalk in an alternate arrangement on the stem. In autumn their color changes to a reddish-green or purple, pale on the underside.

Terminal clusters of small urn-shaped flowers bloom from April to May. The flowers are white to pink, and bear round, fleshy, bright red to pink fruits called drupes. The smooth, glossy skinned fruits range from ¼ to ½ inch in diameter. Drupes are green in summer ripening to red in fall, sometimes remaining on the plants throughout winter. Each drupe contains 1 to 5 hard seeds.

Bearberry should be grown in acidic, dry to medium, well-drained, sandy soil in full sun, but it will tolerate light shade. It grows well in poor infertile soils and likes exposed open sites. Plants should not be fertilized. It is drought tolerant once established. It is best grown in USDA Zones 2-6 and grows poorly in hot and humid summer climates, zone 7 or above. It is difficult to transplant from the wild; so propagate by cuttings from the current season's growth, by layering, by division (with care because roots dislike disturbance) or species plants by seed. Seeds need to be scarified and stratified prior to germination to reduce the seed coat and break embryo dormancy.

Historically, bearberry fruits and leaves were used by the Blackfeet Nation as food. Drupes are bittersweet raw off the plant, but sweeter when first boiled. Fruits are technically edible for humans, but are generally considered to be mealy and lacking flavor, but can be used to make jelly. The berries were used as seasoning and cooked with meat. Leaves are rich in tannins and have been used in the process of tanning hides/leather. The young leaves have been made into tea. Teas and extracts of the leaves have been used in traditional medicine of First Nations people over centuries as urinary tract antiseptics, diuretics, and laxatives. (The plant has hydroquinones, mainly arbutin, which is in the leaves, and metabolizes to form hydroquinone, a potential liver toxin. Ingestion of large doses can cause allergic reactions, with nausea and seizures.) Though thought to be an astringent or cure for sexually transmitted diseases, as of 2017, there was no high-quality evidence from clinical research that such treatments are effective or safe. Dried bearberry leaves are the main component in many traditional North American Native smoking mixes, known collectively as "kinnikinnick" (Algonquin for "smoking mixture") Native Americans and later early pioneers sometimes smoked the dried leaves of bearberry (alone or mixed with other leaves, tobacco and/or the dry inner bark of red osier dogwood) in pipes. Native Americans also used the plant to make yellow dye.

There are no serious insect or disease problems. If grown in poorly-drained sites or in climates hotter than preferred, this bearberry becomes more susceptible to certain diseases such as root rot, black mildew, leaf gall, leaf

spot and rust.

Bearberry is an attractive year-round evergreen groundcover for gardens, and is useful for controlling erosion on hillsides and slopes due to its deep roots. There are several cultivars that are propagated for use as ornamental plants. It offers spring bloom, summer fruit and fall foliage. It is tolerant of sun and dry soils, and is thus a common groundcover in urban areas, in naturalized areas, and in native plant, rain or rock gardens. It serves as a host plant for 14 species of butterflies and is very interesting to the smaller of our native bees. The berries are consumed by song birds, ruffed grouse, band-tailed pigeons, evening grosbeaks, sparrows, and other ground-feeding birds. The berries are browsed by bears, foxes, and coyotes. The twigs are browsed by deer, so to protect the plant cover with pine boughs. It is rabbit resistant and salt tolerant. Sprigs of green leaves with red berries may be used as Christmas decorations.

National Garden Club News

LEARN, GROW, CONNECT, AND SERVE TOGETHER

The 3-Rs (Recruit, Retain, Revitalize) series started on last fall and all three videos can be found on the **website** under the Member Resource Library.

For more educational videos, drop into the

Video Cafe

Follow GCFM on Facebook