



From the President's Desk

By Melody Corcoran, Class of 2016

Pollinators — whether they are bees, butterflies, moths, wasps, beetles, or flies — we can't do without them. They are essential for our food crops and other flowering plants.



We gardeners plant gardens specifically to support them. We reduce or, preferably, eliminate our use of pesticides to protect them. We offer them nesting and shelter sites in the form of specific plants, such as milkweed for monarchs and bare ground for ground-nesting bees.



U.S. Dept. of Agriculture photo
White-lined sphinx moth (Hyles lineata).

Pollination, however, does not take place only during daylight hours. Pollination also occurs after dark. There are moths, beetles, and even bats that visit flowers at night to feed on nectar. Moths are especially good at pollinating because their hairy bellies are excellent at collecting pollen.

A hazard unique to night pollinators is artificial light. Moths, other night pollinators, and fireflies can become disoriented by these lights and have difficulty finding food sources and mates. Turning off unnecessary lights, such as façade and tree lights, or using motion sensors to turn on lighting only when activity is detected, are two of the best methods to help these insects.

(See 'Pollinators' on page 2)

Reminder: MG education and volunteer requirements have been suspended through Dec. 31, 2020. While there may be opportunities throughout the remainder of the year for online volunteering or continuing education, there will be no total hour requirements for MG recertification for this year.

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HORTICULTURE

A walk on the weedy side

By Miriam Taub, Class of 2011

In last month's President's Desk column, Melody Corcoran introduced us to the [New Jersey Weed Gallery](#) — a compilation of 133 weeds with names (common and Latin) and photos on the Rutgers website. I usually refer to most weeds by a four-letter word. But, in a desire to extend an olive branch I chose to better acquaint myself with the weeds on my property.

At least once a day, I walk through my "back 40." I've never been as grateful as now to have a place to escape without wearing a mask and latex gloves. I've been in my home for 28 years and, while the yard has changed over time, I can always find something new and different to marvel at — even if it's only a w-e-e-d.



Broadleaf plantain with a side of clover.

Most abundant in my yard is **broadleaf plantain** (*Plantago major*). The website [Natural Homes.org](#) reports that young, tender plantain leaves can be eaten raw while the older leaves can be boiled in stews. Meanwhile [Natural Homes](#) reports that broadleaf plantain serves medicinal purposes as well.

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If lighting must remain on after dark, the lights can be dimmed. Lights can also be shielded to direct light away from the trees, shrubs, and grass where the insects are most likely to be found. Red filters can be used on lights to minimize their visibility to insects.



Sign identifies Melody Corcoran's property as pollinator-friendly.

The [Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation](#) is an excellent resource for more information on protecting pollinators, conserving endangered species, and reducing pesticide use. Check it out.

Learn more about moth pollination from the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#).

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A poultice of the leaves can be applied to wounds, stings, and sores to reduce pain, heal, and prevent infection. I should keep that in mind after an evening mosquito attack.

Second most-abundant in my yard and an early spring nuisance is **wild garlic** (*Allium vineale*). Rutgers refers to this plant as a “noxious weed in lawns, pastures, and many other crops.” Enough said.

All parts of the wild garlic — bulb, leaves, and flowers — are edible, according to [The Spruce Eats](#), which notes that “the leaves can be eaten raw or cooked, and they make a useful addition to bland foods, such as a cream or cottage cheese. They can also be used in a pesto in place of basil or other herbs or in a sauce for a background hint of garlic.”

If you don't want to eat them, you probably want to get rid of wild garlic, you must discard the plant, roots and all. Don't shake off the soil when you remove the plant from the ground, Janet warns. Tiny nodules that cling to the roots will spread during the shaking-off process. They'll grow into new plants, and you're back where you started or worse.

Ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) is especially plentiful under my shrubs and at plant borders. Rutgers

terms it a “weed problem in turf and ornamentals.” Occasionally, I'll go on a tear — literally — and pull out the vines until my lower back advises me to stop. But (fun fact!) ground ivy does have culinary uses. The flavor is pungent and minty with the younger and smaller leaves being more palatable, writes Emily Han in a story about edible weeds on [thekitchn.com](#).

Emily goes on to write that “A few leaves provide a nice earthy, peppery punch” in a salad. I'll stick with arugula for a peppery punch. I'm not crazy about eating things I've stepped on with muddy soles.



Ground ivy.

Those are the Smiths and Joneses of my yard in terms of abundance, but there are plenty more invaders. New to my yard this year, although maybe I never noticed it, is **Indian strawberry** (*Duchesnea indica*). Rutgers describes the plant as having yellow flowers and red, tasteless, dry fruit. It spreads rapidly in thin turf by means of rhizomes and stolons.

Meghan O'Brien offers this recipe using Indian strawberries for a cooling and medicinal drink for an upset stomach. It appears on the [Bellarmine University](#) website. Take 8 oz. of water and add a ¼ cup of the wild Indian strawberries. Blend or crush them in the water. Add honey, vanilla, or mint for taste, and drink on ice. Wouldn't it be easier to pop the top of a can of warm ginger ale for a tummy ache? And if you want a natural drink, keep the sweetener and mint leaves, substitute bourbon for water, and eliminate the Indian strawberries. Mint julep, anyone?

Lambsquarters (*Chenopodium album*), says Rutgers, “thrives on rich soils so is a problem in gardens and farm fields. It enjoys some favor with the natural food folks.” In “Lambsquarters: Prince of Wild Greens,” from the [Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association](#), author Jean Ann Pollard, says that steamed lambsquarters makes a delicious addition to basmati rice, bean salads, colorful vegetables, such as carrots or sliced tomatoes, and side dishes of yogurt. Like many greens, she advises, lambsquarters will shrink when cooked, so pick a lot, which is often easy, because plants often grow in clumps.

If you try a side of lambsquarters, I hope you enjoy it. However, I'll be removing the plant in individual or clump form and buying my greens at the farmers market.



Free to a good home

This 7-foot cactus is 40 years old and in need of a new home since the owner is relocating. It's free to the person who wants to transport it from Fair Lawn.

If interested, contact [John Gurrieri](#).

WEBINARS

Here's a sampling of free webinars available online for your educational enjoyment.

July 1, noon-1 pm: Ecological Landscape Alliance sponsors Specialist Bees, the last of a free webinar series. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

July 1, noon-1 pm: Penn State Extension sponsors Pruning Trees and Shrubs. Free. Click [here](#) to register. *Registration deadline June 30.*

July 14, 2:30 pm: University of Illinois Extension sponsors Living Carpets: Ground Covers. Free. Click [here](#) to register. Click [here](#) for the list of topics through November.

July 22, 3-4:15 pm: Penn State Extension sponsors Gardening for Pollinators. Free. Click [here](#) to register.

Recorded webinars: View at your convenience

Caldwell Environmental Commission sponsors Doug Tallamy of the University of Delaware, who lectures on Nature's Best Hope - Creating a Habitat in Your Yard. Click [here](#) to view.

University of Illinois Extension sponsors Creating a Living Flower Arrangement. View on [YouTube](#).

Charles Dowding, British author and expert on no-dig gardening, lectures on Start Out No Dig (get rid of weeds with cardboard and compost). View on [YouTube](#).

Ecological Landscape Alliance sponsors Why Native Plants Matter to Songbirds. View on [YouTube](#).

Garden Federation of Massachusetts sponsors Native Plant Design. View on [YouTube](#).

TRIPS AND TOURS

Rutgers Gardens has reopened

Enjoy a visit to Rutgers Gardens even while social distancing and wearing a mask (which is strongly recommended). Rutgers Gardens is open Saturday-Thursday from 8 am-7 pm; it's closed Fridays.

Click [here](#) for the policies that must be observed when visiting Rutgers Gardens as well as parking instructions. The address for GPS purposes is 130 Log Cabin Road, New Brunswick.

On Fridays, Rutgers Gardens hosts Cook's Market, a farmers market, from 11 am-3 pm. Click [here](#) for additional public health rules that apply to Cook's Market.

Boscobel House and Gardens

The [Boscobel House and Gardens](#), an historic house museum in Garrison, NY, is offering a limited number of tickets for admission to the garden, grounds, and woodland trail. Hours are 10 am-dusk Friday-Monday. Reservations are required. Click [here](#) for more information and pricing.

All buildings are closed except for the ADA/family restroom outside the visitor center. Masks and social distancing are required.

Untermeyer Gardens Conservancy

Untermeyer Gardens Conservancy in Yonkers, a 43-acre park, is open for small group tours on weekends (no more than 10 people per tour).

Reservations are required, and [tour tickets](#) go on sale at 7 am the Thursday before the tour. Tours are 90 minutes. Masks must be worn and social distancing observed. Visitors must leave the property when the tour ends. The gardens are located at 945 N. Broadway, Yonkers.

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A virtual visit to 11 mostly British gardens

Kew Gardens, Hidcote Manor Gardens, and Birmingham Botanic Gardens are among the gardens featured on the [Gardens Illustrated](#) website. Some tours are in video format while others are composed of still photographs.

As you click on each tour, you'll find additional links to other tours. Enjoy wandering around the Internet. You'll experience the crunch of gravel under your feet while never leaving your home.

Gardens Illustrated also offers gardening advice, ideas, instructions, and much more. You'll find an extensive section devoted to the 2020 virtual [Chelsea Flower Show](#).

THIS AND THAT

Joel talks hort therapy on the radio

Hear Joel Flagler during an interview with Doug Stephan on the American Family Farmer [radio show](#). Joel discusses horticultural therapy. **Note:** Fast forward to 7:15 of the 40-minute show to hear Joel.

Vertical farming in Jersey City

Ten vertical farms will be created at Jersey City senior centers, schools, public housing complexes, and municipal buildings in a joint project with Aero Farms, a Newark-based developer, and the World Economic Forum. Click [here](#) for the story from CoStar News.

Rosie Lee Tompkins quilts on display

View quilts from [Rosie Lee Tompkins: A Retrospective](#) at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) via a virtual tour or slide show. Tompkins is "widely considered one of the most brilliant and inventive quiltmakers of the late 20th and early 21st centuries." Read a feature story about Tompkins from the June 28 [New York Times](#).

Enjoy Ellen Breger's Ikebana designs

Ellen Breger, a member of the Garden Club of Harrington Park, is a physical therapist by profession and an Ikebana artist by hobby. Click [here](#) to see the arrangements she's created since March 13 when she began sheltering in place.



Photo by Ellen Breger

Ellen has titled this arrangement "Social Distancing During the Pandemic."

Ellen said she's always been drawn to Ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arrangement, for its beauty and simplicity. She has taken adult education classes through the New York Botanical Garden and the Paramus Community Adult School where, prior to the pandemic, she studied with Sensei Doris Lin. Ellen is a student in the Ikenobo school, the most traditional school of Ikebana. "I consider myself an Ikebana student who has a lot to learn, but I am having fun in the process," Ellen said.

All floral materials in the arrangements Ellen posted came from her garden or those of her friends with the exception of one purchased bouquet that resulted in two arrangements (one with the orange lilies and red roses in the white, boat-shaped vase with the circles and the other of yellow mums she arranged in a low, black circular vase.

Story idea submitted by Ann-Ingrid Millikan,
Garden Club of Harrington Park

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FARMERS MARKETS



All farmers markets are practicing social distancing, require masks to be worn, and require vendors to serve you (no self-service).

Oradell Farmers Market, 618 Veldran Ave. (post office parking lot); through Nov. 22; Sundays, 10 am-3 pm.

Paramus Farmers Market, Petruska Park

north parking lot, 475 Farview Ave; expected to open in September.

Ramsey Farmers Market, Main Street train station, through November; Sundays, 9 am-2 pm. For the complete list of rules and other information, click [here](#).

Ridgewood Farmers Market, train station parking lot, Godwin and West Ridgewood avenues; through Nov. 22; Sundays, 9 am-3 pm weather permitting.

River Vale Farmers Market, town hall parking lot, 406 Rivervale Road; through Oct. 29; Thursdays, 2-6:30 pm. Click [here](#) to preorder from a list of vendors.

Teaneck Farmers Market, municipal parking lot, Beverly Road and Garrison Avenue; through Oct. 22; Thursdays, noon-5 pm.