



February 2025

FLOWER POWER

The Avondale Estates Garden Club
*Member of the National Garden Club &
The Garden Club of Georgia*

Volume XI Issue 1

THE NATIVE NUDGE *Rubus odoratus* Flowering Raspberry



This beauty grows in part to full sun and gets to be 5' tall. It does not have thorns. The flowers are rose to magenta and are one to two inches wide in loose clusters. The fruit is tart and tasty and appear when the flowers fade in the summer. They are bright red-purple somewhat mushy berries. The leaves are a pretty light green color This shrub will colonize by creeping rhizomes. Landscape use is for a more informal border.



Local Resident Jessica Neese Discusses Flowers at February Meeting

Jessica Neese is the founder of Field and Flower by In Bloom on Valley Brook about five minutes from Avondale Estates. She will be our speaker and talk about flowers that work well in our area. A topic to be covered will be a benefit to our members as she will discuss crop preparation from seed, bulb or corm to the moment the flowers are perfect and ready to be plucked for an arrangement.

Jessica is a grower whose clients are the Atlanta wholesale and retail markets. Her season begins in January and goes through November. She is busy in winter forcing bulbs and spring and fall for those season's bloomers. In the heat of the summer the star is Lisianthus.



DeKalb Federation Life Membership Meeting

At the February meeting of the DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs, individual clubs honor some of their members for their contributions to their garden clubs. This year AEGC is honoring Patricia Calcagno, Susan Stewart and Helen Dorroh.

The meeting is a luncheon and everyone is invited. We plan to have a group from our club there and invite all of our members to come. It take place at Callanwolde Thursday, February 27th at 10:30. We will have a carpool from the LakeHouse. If you wish to join your fellow members, please get in touch with Patricia. We will sit together but need to know how many are coming.



It is fascinating to hear the life stories of this group of interesting men and women. See you there!

AEGC MISSION STATEMENT

The Avondale Estates Garden Club offers education and service opportunities to inspire the appreciation of the various horticultural arts and to promote the awareness of environmental responsibility.

Be A Citizen Scientist!

Backyard Bird Count Happens This Month



From Seoul to Saskatoon, Alaska to Albania, Melbourne to Miami, Patagonia to Palm Springs, South Africa to South Carolina and India to Indiana there will be people of all ages and backgrounds counting birds for 15 minutes at a time February 14-17. This time capsule is just before the migratory season and allows ornithologists viewing results to have a better understanding of the world population of birds.

To be bird counter during this event is to become a Citizen Scientist. What a lovely title and an important one. You only need stand still for about 15 minutes and record the count and the species of birds you see. Then send that information from your computer or phone.

How to Participate:

Step 1: Decide where you will watch birds.

Step 2: Watch birds for **15 minutes or more, at least once over the four days**, February 14–17, 2025.

Step 3: Identify all the birds you *see or hear* within your planned time/location and use the best tool for sharing your bird sightings:

If you are a **beginning bird admirer and new to bird identification**, try using the free [Merlin Bird ID app](#) to tell us what birds you are seeing or hearing.

If you have **participated** in the count **before** and want to record **numbers of birds**, try the [eBird Mobile app](#) or enter your bird list on the [eBird website](#) (desktop/laptop).

For more information, go to **[ebird.org/participate](#)**. This is important work.



Flower Power Staff

Editor..... Susan Barton
Contributors..... Donna Tanner
Christi Granger
Patricia Calcagno
Helen Dorroh
Adam Barton
Scott Legg
Jean Kingsbury
Beth Langhorst

AEGC Disburses Funds to Deserving Organizations for Second Time in Two Years

When the AEGC Board of Directors saw that we had an amount in our treasury that would allow us to disburse \$10,000.00 to the community, a committee was appointed to find places that would best serve our mission statement. This was the second time in two years that we were able to donate to deserving agencies.

Each recipient met the criteria of our Mission Statement. The list was approved by the membership at the January meeting and follows here.

Emory/AG Rhodes \$1000—This recipient is a therapeutic gardening program which is involved in propagating the Starvine, a native plant that is only found in 22 locations, 12 of which are in Georgia and the largest concentration is on the Emory campus. This project meets two of our criteria.

Georgia Native Plant Society \$1000— A statewide organization with a local chapter concentrating on natives, education and rescuing natives from construction sites and propagating and/or relocate them.

CHaRM \$1000— The Center for Hard to Recycle Materials — thanks to Peggy Burgess, we have been doing Recycle Rodeos for a few years by caravanning from the LakeHouse to CHaRM downtown. Lucky for us, they have a new location about a mile from us now. This comes under the Environment concern of our Mission Statement.

Cherokee Library \$1000— Part of the Atlanta History Center, the Cherokee Library is keeping all of our AEGC scrapbooks from 1931 forward. We donate to them in gratitude and as part of our Education component.

GCG Scholarship Fund \$1000— These scholarships go to UGA students who are studying Horticulture. We named this year's scholarship in honor of our longtime member Mary Lovings.

Avondale Elementary School \$1500— This year the school asked if we could help with the purchase of shades or umbrella for their outdoor classroom.

Asheville Botanical Garden \$1000— Asheville needs and is receiving a lot of out of area help with the result of the devastating floods of last year. The Asheville Botanical Garden is a woodland garden filled with native plants and is free to the public. We felt compelled to make a gift to Asheville and after research, we felt this was a good idea. It meets our education and native environment criteria.

The Museum School \$700— As there are many local children who attend the Museum School we felt a gift of books would be ideal. The books we are funding are all based in horticulture or agriculture. There are books for all ages and several to help the teachers make lesson plans in those fields.

The Wild Nest Bird Rehab \$600— It is located on the campus of Legacy Park, but is not open to the public. This is a rescue operation for backyard birds, the little songbirds we hear everyday. It is almost fully a volunteer operation and is an important part of our environment.

Georgia Regional Hospital Therapeutic Gardening Program \$600— This program is sponsored by DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs. A member is an employee of the hospital and has instituted this wonderful program. It started small and has grown. The patients enjoy being outside and working in the garden. It is a win-win program. The chef there has made dinners featuring the fruits of their labors. The need to continue to expand and our gift will help them do so.

Woodlands Garden \$600— An urban garden oasis of seven acres of native plants and trees. They have education projects and concerts and trails to walk through the garden. It is a place to volunteer and a place for the community. Again, it checks several of our criteria boxes.

Grateful Words from Our Grant Recipients:

Thank you for considering a donation to GNPS! It is fantastic when our members cross-pollinate with local garden clubs. We appreciate your support and hope your native gardens thrive this spring! ~Lauren Owens

What a generous gift to the GA Regional Hospital Garden Project - Thank you Avondale Estates Garden Club so much!! ~ Mary Cochran

I am overwhelmed, thank you! Your generosity and support mean so much to us. We are so happy to be neighbors!! ~Peggy Whitlow, Director CHaRM

I am deeply grateful for the steadfast support of the Avondale Estates Garden Club. I am honored that the Club has ensured its collection to the Cherokee Garden Library. ~ Staci Catron

Please thank everyone in the Avondale Estates Garden Club for choosing to donate to our Horticultural Therapy program and Starvine conservation project. The funds provided by the club will go towards the materials we need to grow the Starvine and to make improvements to the area where we grow it.

~ Kirk Hines, Director of Therapeutic Gardening at A.G. Rhodes

We have lost a lot of canopy, but that gives us opportunity to plant some things we haven't been able to introduce into the garden. Your donation will go a long way to help. Thank you so much.

~ Laura Schnitzlein, Director of Development, Asheville Botanical Garden

Thanks to our AEGC members who supported these gifts and were integral to raising the funds through hard work on our fundraisers in the last two years.



THE PLANT SALE IS COMING, THE PLANT SALE IS COMING!

It is time to take a walk around your front and back and side yards to see what you can dig up, separate and pot up for the Plant Sale. This is a great time to do that without damaging tender roots. If some of your perennials need division to make them healthier, don't hesitate to take this opportunity. Every donated plant is 100% profit and we depend on that for the financial success of the Sale (and our treasury!). Another important task is to let the Chairmen know what you will be donating so they can make a plan for what to offer this year.

Deborah Levine Peg Wyse Susan Carney Ann Umbaugh

APRIL 19th AT THE LAKEHOUSE



Why do these members look so happy? They are sporting their new AEGC aprons. There are still a few left at the amazing price of \$15!



Joan Kidd



Donna Tanner and
Peggy Burgess



President,
Patricia Calcagno

Walter Says . . . Prune one-fourth of the branches from your overgrown fig bush. Removing any more will reduce the number of fruit this summer. Concentrate on saving the horizontal ones. . . . Remember to turn houseplants 180 degrees every two weeks to prevent uneven growth. . . Look for blooms on your Lenten rose (*Helleborus orientalis*). Few other plants can supply the year-round interest of this evergreen groundcover.

Force Winter blooms: . Bring branches of spirea, forsythia and flowering quince indoors. Placed in a vase, they will bloom in just a few days

A GOOD HAMMERING Flower buds need plenty of water to start the process of opening. After cutting your branches, use a hammer to gently mash two inches of the cut end of each branch. The hammering doesn't have to be vigorous. Just tap the wood enough to separate the bark and fibers. This will allow the branch to absorb plenty of moisture through the cut end. **A LONG SOAK** Covering the buds overnight in room temperature water helps them break dormancy. A guest bathroom tub that is not used regularly is a perfect spot to submerge the branches completely for several hours. Afterwards, bring the branches out of the water, let them drain and stand them upright in a bucket of water. **A COOL WAIT** Place your bucket of branches in a place that remains cool but has some sunlight. Again, an unused bathroom or guest bedroom is perfect. An unheated basement with sliding glass doors is also ideal. Examine your branches every few days. Only a week or so after you cut them, the buds will begin to swell. Two weeks after you cut them they will be ready to burst. **A WARM ROOM** When color appears in the buds, it is time to arrange them in a vase. Don't wait until the blossoms are fully opened. Use greenery from aucuba, mahonia or magnolia plants for a glossy background. Take the arrangement into a warm room and wait. Within a day or so the flower buds will unfurl along the formerly bare branches and you'll have a great looking arrangement while it is still cold outside.



