



February 2024

FLOWER POWER

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

Volume X Issue I

THE NATIVE NUDDGE
Euonymus americanus
Hearts-a-burstin'



This deciduous, clump-forming native gets 3-8' tall in part shade to part sun. It needs moist but well drained soil.

The tiny yellow flowers are insignificant as flowers go, but in the fall the fruit is spectacular. They start off with a round red pod which bursts open to reveal orange seeds. The seeds are inedible for humans, but the birds find them to be a gourmet delight.

This is a perfect and easy plant for that woodland area of your garden. For winter interest it shows off lovely green stems.



A Return Engagement by Popular Demand Dr. Cornelia Cho and Sam Landes

Because the membership found the subject and presenters so fascinating last April, they requested another “meeting” with the experts. Thus, we will be further educated and entertained by Dr. Cornelia Cho, a local pediatrician and President of the Mushroom Club of Georgia. Dr. Cho, along with her husband, Sam Landes will share their extensive knowledge of fungi.

Fungi are ubiquitous on the planet. They have a massive communication network, work together with trees to everyone’s benefit (including ours) and store vast amounts of carbon below the surface of the earth and can store it there for a thousand years.

There is an entertaining and informative documentary on NETFLIX called **Fantastic Fungi**. It is a perfect introduction to the subject and is very well produced.



AEGC MISSION STATEMENT

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

*Environmental Responsibility Committee Presents
Native Plants in Atlanta
What to Plant and Why they Matter*

Ben Ackerley loves plants. As a horticulturist and garden designer living in Atlanta, Georgia, Ben is on a mission to share their knowledge and passion for gardening with others through their online platform at iloveplants.com

Ben discovered a passion for plants while living in Cincinnati, Ohio, and was fortunate enough to study Horticulture at the University of Cincinnati. After working in horticulture at Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum and the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden, Ben moved south to Atlanta and worked at the Atlanta Botanical Garden before moving to Decatur to manage Woodlands Garden of Decatur. Currently working to create a library of educational content, Ben hopes to inspire new and seasoned gardeners alike.

The program is scheduled for March 5th at the LakeHouse at 7:00 p.m. **The public is invited** to attend this presentation sponsored by the AEGC Environmental Responsibility Committee.

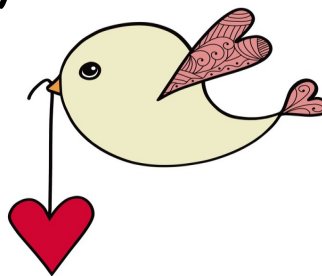


Calendar ...

- February 16 AEGC Membership meeting 10:00 and Arbor Day Tree Planting after at Willis Park
- 16-19 Great Backyard Bird Count by AEGC members and everyone else on earth
- 20 Recycle Rodeo trip to ChaRM Carpool leaves LakeHouse at 9:15
- 22 Federation Meeting and Life Member Luncheon (no charge) 10:30 Callanwolde
- 27 Capital Conservation Day at the Capital 8:00-2:00
- March 5 Ben Ackerly's Presentation LakeHouse 7:00

*Dear Avondale Estates Garden Club Members,
You are loved and appreciated.*

Happy Valentine's Day



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Join the Great Backyard Bird Count On February 16-19

Become a Citizen Scientist

Begun 25 years ago by the Cornell Ornithology Lab and the Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count has helped ornithologists learn about the bird population across the United States. Birds Canada joined in 2009 and now, due to the online in real time statistics entered in eBird, the GBBC has become a global project.

From the organization:

How to Participate—

Participating is easy, fun to do alone or with others, and **can be done anywhere** you find birds.



Photo by Michael Laughlin in United States/GBBC.

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 16–19, 2024.**

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 [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)

There are three ways to send your count: The Merlin Bird ID, eBird Mobile, or with your desk top or laptop. For instruction on entering your data, go to birdcount.org/participate.

Editor's note: The Cornell Ornithology Lab offers its bird ID app at no charge. It can identify birds by image or song. It is ideal for those of us who can identify by sight a few birds but don't know their songs. It will identify the bird, record them and play them back. I recently heard a loud cacophony from nearby trees. I opened the app and in seconds found that the trees were full of angry sounding robins. Possibly they weren't angry, but definitely they were loud. I also discovered that the beautiful song I hear frequently comes for a little brown Carolina Wren.



Clockwise from top left: Maria Kalardi in Sweden, Pradip Mishra in India, Taylor Long in United States, Irvin Calicut in Kuwait.



CONSIDER A POLLINATOR GARDEN



This might seem a little more ambitious than you'd care to undertake for a pollinator garden, but every pollinator-friendly flower you plant will make a difference to some small creature. In addition to honey bees and wild bees there are lots of critters that do the job of pollinating. Hummingbirds, bats, butterflies, ants, wasps, moths, mosquitos, flies, beetles and lemurs to name a few. If you see a lemur in your garden, try to get a photo.

AEGC is going to be a sponsor for the upcoming Decatur Pollinator Festival Which will occur in June during the National Pollinator Week June 17-23. The event in Decatur is June 20th. There will be all kinds of exhibits and information for the public and will be held on the Square. Mark you calendars.



Avondale Estates Garden Club is proud to be a Member of National Garden Club, Inc., Deep South Garden Club, Inc., The Garden Club of Georgia, Red Bud District and The DeKalb County Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.



AEGC Members attend DeKalb Federation Meeting in January



The program at the Federation meeting at Callanwolde last month was about the history of Woodlands Garden and was presented by Kate McAlpin, the Executive Director of Woodlands. She talked about the history of the garden which began as a private residence owned by people who loved and protected that patch in Decatur. Many natives were planted in the beginning and that is still the order of the day.

In addition, there was a mini flower show exhibited by Smoke Rise Morning Glories Garden Club which was judged by Diane Hunter, First Vice President of the Garden Club of Georgia.



Christi Granger won the raffle at the meeting!



Redbud District to Host the 96th Annual Garden Club of Georgia Convention And, It's Just Down The Street

Remarkable Redbuds, it is time to register now to attend the April 16 -17th convention in **Peachtree City**, GA! "Bloomin' in the Heart of Georgia – Y'all Come" is our theme. The event will feature two formal luncheons, the Awards night dinner and six speakers on a wide variety of topics. Redbud Co-Director, Bonnie Dudley, and Redbud Advisor, Quill Duncan, are the Co-Chairmen of the convention, and a red ribbon committee of Redbuds is on the convention board to make it a wonderful experience for all of you to enjoy. You will love to see the creative floral designs and educational exhibits that will fill the pre-function area of the conference center. And there will be some music involved!

And the best news is that the venue, the Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center of Peachtree City, is right in Redbud's district! You don't have to travel far, and you will enjoy the charm of this secluded facility. It is a beautiful, wooded campus perfect for our meetings, dining and hotel rooms. You will see your favorite vendors and meet some new ones, and it's always great to spend time and relax with our friends from across the state. This fun convention has one additional treat. We are offering a designers' challenge as a free post-convention event after the concluding luncheon on Wednesday. Designers from across the state will create unique designs using the same materials. How exciting to be able to watch their creative ideas come to life.

How do you register for the convention and the hotel? Go to www.gardenclubofgeorgia.org, scroll down to the bottom of the home page and you will see the details and the links. Also, the beautiful winter issue of Garden Gateways has all the detailed information. Don't wait! You will want to be there to enjoy this exciting event. Better yet -- come and bring a friend! Redbuds, "Y'all Come!"!! See you in April!

From the Garden Club of Georgia

REDBUD DISTRICT GARDEN CLUBS

ATLANTA

Breckenridge Garden Arts I

~~Lullwater Garden Club~~

[Shenandoah Rose Garden Club*](#)

AVONDALE ESTATES

[Avon Garden Club](#)

[Avondale Estates Garden Club](#)

BARNESVILLE

Moonflower Garden Club

CONCORD

Concord

CONYERS

Conyers Garden Club

COVINGTON

Covington Garden Club

Satsuki Garden Club

DECATUR

Hunting Hill Garden Club

~~Leafmore Hills Garden Club*~~

DUNWOODY

[Dunwoody Garden Club](#)

GREENVILLE

[Merry Weather Garden Club](#)

GRIFFIN

Dogwood Garden Club

Evergreen Garden Club

The Garden Club of Griffin

JACKSON

Azalea Garden Club

Cherokee Garden Club

Mimosa Garden Club

JOHNS CREEK

The Designers Club

~~LaGRANGE~~

Iris Garden Club

Laurel Garden Club

Pine Needle Garden Club

Talisman Garden Club

Wisteria Garden Club

LILBURN

Ladybugs Garden Club

NEWNAN

Driftwood Garden Club

PINE MOUNTAIN

~~Gahano Garden Club~~

SHARPSBURG

Old Town GC of Sharpsburg

STONE MOUNTAIN

Mountain Mums Garden Club

Smoke Rise Garden Club

Smoke Rise Morning Glories GC

STONECREST

Stonecrest Garden Club

THOMASTON

Green Thumb Garden Club

Spade and Trowel Garden Club

Thomaston Garden Club

COUNCILS

[DeKalb County Federation Of Garden Clubs, Inc.](#)

The Elms and Roses Garden Club Council

*Grand Gardener Club





USDA Provides more than \$70 Million to Protect our Food Supply and Natural Resources from Invasive Pests and Diseases in 2024

WASHINGTON, Feb. 6, 2024 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing over \$70 million in 374 projects through the Plant Protection Act’s Section 7721 program. The work will strengthen the country’s defenses against plant pests and diseases, safeguard the U.S. nursery system, and enhance pest detection and mitigation efforts. Universities, states, Tribal organizations, federal agencies, and others will manage these projects in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Jenny Moffitt, Under Secretary for USDA’s Marketing and Regulatory Programs, highlighted that these funds provide states, universities, tribal organizations, and partners nationwide the tools they need to protect U.S. agriculture, our natural resources, and food security. “With our partners throughout the country, these projects will help in the fight against invasive plant pests and diseases, protecting growers and creating more export opportunities for American products,” Moffitt said.

Out of the 374 projects funded this year, 353 are managed by the Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program and 21 are supported through the National Clean Plant Network. The Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program projects are organized around specific [goal areas](#) that represent critical needs and opportunities to strengthen against, prevent, detect, and mitigate invasive pests and diseases. The National Clean Plant Network helps maintain the infrastructure needed for pathogen, disease, and pest-free-certified planting materials, benefiting U.S. specialty crop producers.

Some of the projects selected for funding this year include:

Agriculture plant pest detector dog teams: \$6,265,992 allocated to California, Florida and nationally to support detector dog team training and maintenance for domestic pest detection.

From the USDA