



# Garden Club News

February 2016

PO Box 3253 Teaneck, NJ 07666 [www.gardenclubofteaneck.org](http://www.gardenclubofteaneck.org)

## GARDEN CLUB OF TEANECK EVENTS: FEBRUARY-MARCH 2016

**Thurs., Feb 11th, 7:30 PM,** GTC meeting. "Native Plants for Butterfly Gardens", Dr. Hubert Ling, speaker. Rodda Center, Multipurpose Room 2B (Second Floor), 250 Colonial Ct., Teaneck, NJ 07666 The public is welcome. **Pick up your membership cards at this meeting.**

**Sat., Feb. 6th, 10 AM.** Meeting of the Greenhouse Committee of the Garden Club. Greenhouse.

**Sat., Feb. 20th, 11 AM.** Workshop. Joe Papa, Greenhouse: *The Good, The Bad and the Ugly (Pest Management)*. See p. 3 for details.

**Tues., March 8th.** Bus trip to Philadelphia Flower Show, sponsor: Garden Club of Englewood. See p.2.



**Dr. Hubert Ling**

***Native Plants for  
Butterfly Gardens***

Why is a butterfly garden essential to wildlife --- especially to butterflies? Find out from Dr. Hubert Ling what you can do this year to save butterflies, especially the Monarch. Learn about nectar for adult butterflies and foliage for the larvae, as well as how to obtain and grow specific plants.

Dr. Hubert Ling has been excited about nature starting in his youth when he had to pass a test to go to camp. At Northrup Nature Camp, he won every blueberry-picking contest and explored all flora and fauna.. His interests led him to a Ph.D. in Biology, and work in industry and academia, which focused on general biology, microbiology, mycology, and botany. He has served on the board and as horticulturist for the NJ Native Plant Society. He uses his expertise as a consultant, speaker, and field trip leader for various organizations. Now retired, he is back at Northrup Nature Camp, this time as a board member. He is on the Bridgewater Shade Tree Commission, and is also a monthly contributor for the *Gardener News*.

## Highlights: 01/09/2016

**Meeting of the Greenhouse Committee Greenhouse Director.** Len Schwartz stated that the temperature is set at nighttime ( 7 pm to 7 am) 55 ° F, daytime, (7 am -7 pm), 75 ° F.

**Horticultural Director.** Joe Papa outlined the schedule for arrival of plants. The first geranium shipment of 800 plants will come to the Greenhouse in the first week of February. Joe will be at the Greenhouse to show groups how to make pots. The groups are responsible for making 800 pots.

**Garden Club President.** Pat Fromm. The Sky-lands decoration was proposed. Elections are this year for the Garden Club. The Nominations Committee will be announced in March, and will present nominations in April. Elections will be held in May for both Garden Club and Greenhouse Committee.

**Herb Garden.** Peter Goldman provided detailed information about the 40th anniversary of the garden. The group plans to re-dedicate the Garden.

More information can be found in the Jan. 9th Greenhouse *Minutes*.

**FOR GCT MEMBERS: Go to the  
The 2016 Philadelphia Flower Show**

A bus will be travelling to and from the Show on March 8, 2016, sponsored by the Garden Club of Englewood.

Email Susan Eastman for details:  
susanmeastham1@gmail.com

(Also refer to cover letter sent with this newsletter  
for details before emailing.)  
More: theflowershow.org



**Letter from Pat Fromm,  
GCT President**

The cold winter days of February (finally!) are a good time to plan the calendar for the year ahead. Of course, we must get in those vacation days, special family events, weddings, etc. Make sure you note all of the GCT meetings, Greenhouse events, THE PLANT SALE, Spring Luncheon, Harvest Fest, and on and on--- on your calendar.

We have a series of workshops coming up at the Greenhouse this spring, please participate and help make these events successful. The workshops are open to ALL members. Our monthly lectures at the Rodda Center also have some interesting speaker/topics lined up for this spring. Remember, meetings are on 2nd Thursday of the month, until May. We're also working on plans for a couple of field trips to some nearby gardens this spring. So, watch your newsletter and emails for announcements! It's going to be a busy and fun Spring! Daylight hours are now getting longer. YEA!

PS: GCT is looking for a few Good Men and Women for the new executive board. If you are interested, please contact one of the current board members.

**Report from Len Schwartz,  
Greenhouse Director**



Cold, then warm, then cold without snow...what a very strange winter we are having. As we draw closer to the start of preparations for the plant sale, the Greenhouse is doing OK. Due to lots of heat loss, on cold nights our two heaters struggle a bit to maintain a 55 ° F minimum and there are some cooler spots. But our plants seem to be doing well. Nancy Lichtenstein had a good suggestion: we can decrease drafts by covering the exhaust fan openings on the inside. Why haven't we thought of that before?

In the meeting room, Peter Goldman is close to finishing the installation of 12 re-conditioned light fixtures, using T8 bulbs, which will greatly improve the usability of this space. He has also replaced failed bulbs and ballasts in the long 8' lights of the Greenhouse itself, so nighttime lighting there will remain as dim as it is without getting worse.

Rudy will be starting work on the bathroom floor project this week. It will include a new Champion 4 max toilet, which is a top *Consumer Reports*-rated unit.

There are three open benches available, two along the east wall (which no one seems to want) and one along the center aisle (which some of us may find desirable). We will have a bench lottery following the February 6th meeting. If you have any questions, let me know.

The Greenhouse election of officers will happen in May. There definitely will be openings for two very big essential positions: Treasurer and Horticultural Director. We will need some new people to step up.

See you all on First Saturday, Feb 6th.

Len

## Horticultural Director's Report : Joe Papa

I presume we have all started planning for our 2016 gardens. I will be germinating onions and leeks in the next three weeks for spring plantings. We are still eating onions from the 2015 crop. I am also doing fennel, as my Grandmother would say, "finocchio", which is a refreshing vegetable. With us, it was typically eaten after the main meal. This will be sown in late July (fall growing); it has a tendency to bolt in the spring.

In February we will be receiving our first plugs, geraniums. I am looking forward to working with the soil and seeing the display of color we witness in the Greenhouse in April. Our groups are assiduously propagating plants for the Hawthorne School children's sale. There are some very special plants for the children to select.

We will be offering a larger variety of perennials for this year's sale, thanks to the efforts of Doug Raska, who has toiled endlessly in setting perennial beds on the east side of the Greenhouse. It should also be noted that County Lane Landscaping (owner, Ted Capriatti) donated 4 cubic yards of compost to the club for its use in these beds.

It won't be long before we are playing in the dirt.

### MEMBERS' WORKSHOPS

**Sat., Feb. 20, 11 AM.** Joe Papa: *the Bad, and the Ugly*. Identifying pests in the vegetable garden and their organic controls. Recognizing beneficials and developing a habitat for their presence.

#### Other Workshops:

**Sat., Mar. 12, 10:30 -12.** Robyn Lowenthal, *Plant Propagation*.

**Sat., April 24,** Time:TBD. Myriam Fieulleateau: *Gardening Tips*.



Witch hazel in the snow



## Monday Greenhouse Group Visits

**Brooklyn Botanic Garden** by Pat Fromm

Three determined Monday Greenhouse group members (Pat Fromm, Anne Ediger, and Bob O'Brien) braved the cold temps and enjoyed a very lovely morning in Brooklyn with a wee bit of snow. The contrasting red and warm sunshine in the Japanese Garden provided enough eye candy for the aspiring photographers. The delicious blossoms in the Conservancy gave us excuses to prolong our visit in the warmth.

In spite of the cold, we noticed jonquils peeping up, and both witch hazel and magnolia blossoms nearly trembling with energy to burst open! BGC is free in the winter months. We highly recommend a daytime visit to see a different perspective on the peaceful gardens.

## Budget Hearings and Street Trees

Almost one street tree a day is felled by DPW, due to storm damages, aging trees, etc. But, for some time, there has been no funding allocated for replanting after removal. The Shade Tree Advisory Board (STAB) will have information on or before Feb. 4th about the date(s) the DPW budget will be discussed by Town Council. Council meetings on Feb. 4th, 11th, and 18th are labelled "Budget Meetings". Check the Township site under *Government/Council/Agendas*.

Also check the Garden Club of Teaneck website on the top of the Calendar page for Council dates to advocate your opinion about shade tree funding.

## Plant of the Month: Winter aconite

by Robyn Lowenthal



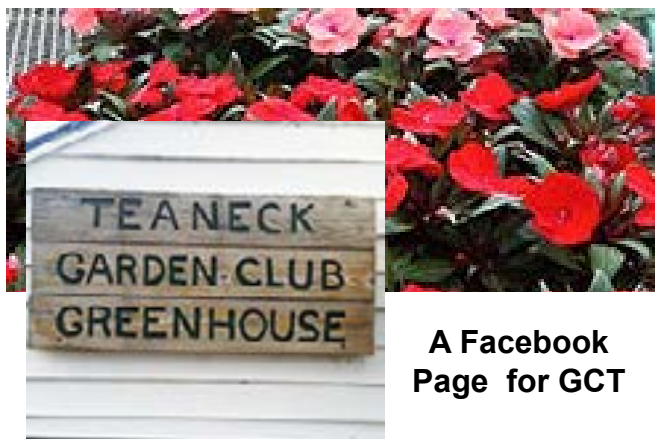
Gardeners like us, who live in a cold part of the country, usually reach our limits around February, wondering "Is Spring EVER going to arrive?" This is about the time that winter aconite pushes up out of the hard, cold soil with bright yellow blooms encircled by a green foliage ruff.

*Eranthis hyemalis*, commonly called winter aconite, is native to Europe (France to Bulgaria). It is a late winter bloomer (before crocus) that features cup-shaped, upward-facing, bright yellow, butter-cup like flowers on stalks to 3-4" tall. Each flower is surrounded by a collar of leaf-like bracts. A true harbinger of spring, these rugged plants often send their shoots up through snow. Lobed, basal, green leaves emerge after the flowers. Leaves fade by late spring, when the bulb goes dormant. These lively little showstoppers make wonderful companions to *Galanthus* (snowdrops).

*Eranthis* grows from small tubers, which should be planted late summer to early fall, in humus-rich, well-drained soil with medium moisture. They do well under deciduous trees and shrubs that provide full sun in winter and dappled shade in summer. Winter aconite needs consistent moisture year-round (albeit less in summer and fall), even though plants go dormant by late spring. They spread easily in humus-rich soil.

*Eranthis* has no serious insect or disease problems. They are deer -resistant, because the entire plant is poisonous when ingested. The Wild Garden at Wave Hill, the exceptional public landscape in New York City, has a lovely display of early spring bulbs, including Winter aconite.

Plant some *Eranthis* in the fall and in a few years you'll have a nice, naturalized patch that you can count on getting you through the end of winter with electric color and a promise: "Spring IS just around the corner. "



**A Facebook  
Page for GCT**

<https://www.facebook.com/GardenClubofTeaneck/>

Denise George created a Facebook page for all of us. It features links to gardening sites and videos of our own members demonstrating gardening techniques. Robyn Lowenthal shows propagation methods in a video.

She answered questions about this page:

1. *What gave you the idea to do the Facebook page?* "I was thinking that we could give people who know nothing about the Garden Club a glimpse at what it was about. With so many people on social media, we could allow them a peek in and get them curious enough to get involved in the Greenhouse."
2. *What have you enjoyed most in doing this project?* "I have had interaction with a few gardeners who've asked questions on gardening topics. I've sent them articles and they report back on how it has helped."
3. *What do you see being on the page in the future?* "I'd like to posts more video tutorials and maybe showcase members' individual gardens."

Give it a "Like".

### **Garden Club of Teaneck Newsletter**

**February 2016** © Garden Club of Teaneck

**Editor:** Patricia O'Brien Libutti. **Circulation/Proofs:**

Bruce Libutti, Janet Austin. **Graphics & Photos:**

Anna Kurz, Peter Goldman, Pat Fromm, Denise

George, Bob O'Brien..Robyn Lowenthal. **Logo:**

Marty Steeil. **Published** on the first of the month

Except July-Aug). **Article deadline:** 20th of the month.



## REPOTTING A HISTORIC BIRD OF PARADISE PLANT

Photos: Peter Goldman



Sara Jones' *Bird of Paradise* plant  
"Before".

The *Bird of Paradise* plant (*Strelitzia reginae*) that is living in the Greenhouse originally belonged to Lou Schwartz. He gave the plant to Sara Jones, who grew it to a spectacular size. This plant has been a favorite of schoolchildren, who looked at its unusual blooms during the Hawthorne school program every March.

But it was time to repot it. Len Schwartz and Peter Goldman took on this task (that's Len's arm holding the plant, below). Now there are five new *Bird of Paradise* residents, to impress the children during the School Program.



The plant with a  
flower about to bloom.

The roots are  
quite bound up.



The "cut"



Five new *Bird of Paradise* plants.