



THE GREENHOUSE BEET



JUNE 2024

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE >>>

by: Anne Ediger

As outgoing president of the GCT, I would like, first of all, to welcome all of our new officers and especially our new President, Natasha Lewis. I also want to thank Judith Narcelles, or new newsletter editor, for taking on the challenge of putting out this newsletter. I'm looking forward to reading more of these!

As I think back over the past 4 years in the role of President, I want to remember, again, the members that we lost early on - Len Schwartz and Bob O'Brien, and more recently, Sara Jones. We have certainly missed them very much, and their shoes have been hard to fill.

I am looking forward to the wonderful, approaching summertime (our gardens are just getting started!) I would like to ask everyone to remember a few things:

- We are a community of people with different backgrounds and experiences so we want to be respectful of each person
- Please show a little extra humanity and grace in working alongside other members
- Think generously about what YOU can do to be responsible for your garden plot, bench, walkway, or work group, and how your actions affect others in our community
- Keep looking for ways in which YOU can contribute to making our community a warm, friendly and nurturing one where everyone feels welcome and valued for who they are.
- Thanks everyone - it has been a pleasure to serve you all in this organization.

Anne

WHY GARDENING IS SO GOOD FOR YOU

Source: [New York Times](#), May 2024

By Dana G. Smith

>>> GARDENING GETS YOU MOVING

Gardening is not just about pretty flowers and vegetables – it's also a great way to get some exercise! It's like going to a green gym that helps improve your heart health and allows you to reach your weekly activity goals. Whether you're digging or tending to your garden, it's a full-body workout. While some studies don't show significant physical health benefits from gardening, especially with lower intensity activities done for just 10 or 15 minutes at a time, a study in Colorado found that participants in a community garden were more physically active compared to those on a waiting list. The additional activity accounted for almost 30% of their weekly exercise recommendations, providing a more enjoyable way to stay active than traditional methods like using a treadmill.

AN AUSTRALIAN STUDY FOUND GARDENING MORE EFFECTIVE TO PROTECT AGAINST DEMENTIA THAN WALKING, EDUCATION, OR MODERATING ALCOHOL INTAKE!

GARDENING DOES WONDERS FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

"Engaging in gardening has numerous mental health benefits. It can lead to reduced anxiety and depression scores, increased self-esteem, and lowered cortisol levels. In addition, it provides physical activity, a sense of purpose, and opportunities for social connections. Spending time in nature or tending to a garden can effectively reduce stress, improve mood, and boost self-esteem even in short periods."

<h3>Stress Relief</h3>  <p>Gardening can help reduce the level of stress hormone Cortisol</p>	<h3>Immunity Booster</h3>  <p>Direct exposure to dirt and plants can help boost your immune system</p>	<h3>Work Out</h3>  <p>3 hours of moderate gardening could equal a 1 hour gym session</p>
<h3>Bacteria Friends</h3>  <p>Soil contains a natural antidepressant that can make us happier</p>	<h3>Green Diet</h3>  <p>Those who grow veggies are more conscious about having a healthy diet</p>	<h3>Brain Health</h3>  <p>One study revealed that daily gardening can reduce risk of dementia by 36%</p>

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ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20522508
ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16411871
caiorielab.com
hortmag.com

GARDEN PLOT POINTS

»»» SUMMARY OF MAY'S MEETING MINUTES

Here's a rundown of all the latest happenings in our green oasis:

- Time to shuffle those plants out of the greenhouse by June 16th, and give your area a sparkling clean! .
- The legendary Anne is passing the presidential torch soon, but not before giving a big thank you to all the hardworking members.
- Treasurer Mark is stepping down after 7 fruitful years, leaving us with record-high funds in the bank - hooray!
- Post-Plant Sale debrief: We rocked it with lush plants and fab displays, but let's tweak those watering schedules and jazz up our signage for next time.
- New faces in leadership - all confirmed with cheers and no competition, more information coming in future issues.
- Newsletter comeback in the works - Judith's on board to make it pop!
- From Arbor Terrace to Hawthorne School, we're spreading green joy everywhere welcoming anyone who wants to learn about green spaces and growing plants, without leaving anyone out due to ability or age!
- In the pipeline: a garden crawl, plant sale fiesta, and a garden-themed bash fit for royalty! See upcoming events for more info.

**Exciting times ahead, green thumbs!
Let's keep the garden magic alive.**

**WANT TO
DETER
SLUGS?
WATER YOUR
GARDENS IN
THE MORNING!**



Slugs prefer to come out and eat in the cover of darkness. Watering plants in the morning, instead of the evening, allows time for the surface dirt and stems to dry, limiting movement.

IN GARDENING NEWS:

Be on the lookout for the invasive Joro spider expected to arrive in the tri-state area soon. - Originally from east Asia, first spotted in the US in 2014. - Expected to spread across most of the eastern US. - They travel by "ballooning" with wind or human transport. - Adult females are large with blue-black and yellow stripes. - Not considered dangerous to humans or pets. - Impact on native wildlife and biodiversity unknown

Source: www.northjersey.com

I look scary but I'm harmless and I eat spotted lantern flies! So don't kill me, please!



Soil Health:

DEMYSTIFYING "NPK" ON THE FERTILIZER LABEL

By Dr. Marilyn Figueroa

>>> WHAT DOES NPK MEAN?

Ever wondered what the numbers and letters in your plant fertilizer mean? "NPK" stands for nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. These are the three main nutrients plants need to grow. Plants need about 16 nutrients. They get some from water and air, and the rest from the soil.

The numbers on the label, such as 5-10-5, tells us the the percentages of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. In this example, this fertilizer contains 5% nitrogen, 10% phosphorus, and 5% potassium. This fertilizer contains a total of 20% nutrients; the remaining 80% comprising fillers or minor nutrients.

>>> WHAT DO THESE NUTRIENTS DO

Nitrogen:

Nitrogen is essential for making chlorophyll, thus important for leaf development. Plants that are almost all leaves need a lot of nitrogen. If you are growing leafy plants you will need a fertilizer with a high "N" percentage. The yellowing of leaves often indicates the plant's need for nitrogen



Phosphorus:

Phosphorus is essential for the growth of roots, blooms, and fruits. Tomatoes and root crops favor fertilizer of 5-10-10

Potassium:

The final number or the "K" gives the percentage of potassium. Potassium contributes to the general health and strength of plants. It helps your plants resist disease and aids in the movement of water and nutrients in plants. Because most soils contain potassium, this third number in the fertilizer tends to be the smallest

**IF UNSURE
WHAT YOUR
PLANTS NEED,
USE COMPOST!**

>>> CHOOSING A FERTILIZER FOR YOUR PLANTS

1 - *Test your soil!* If your soil is high in nitrogen and you use a fertilizer with a high nitrogen ratio this may do more harm than good. Contact [Rutgers](#) or [UConn](#) for soil testing procedures and prices

2 - *What are you planting?* Leafy greens (e.g spinach, kale) will need more nitrogen. Flowering and fruiting (e.g broccoli, beans, peas) will need more phosphorus.

Continuing this discussion, next issue's article: Organic versus Non-Organic Fertilizer...



Featured Recipe: Strawberry Fool



INGREDIENTS

Yield: 4 servings
 1 pint strawberries
 ½ cup sugar
 1 cup heavy cream
 1 tsp vanilla extract

Step 1

Hull strawberries, then wash them and chop into ¼-inch-thick pieces. Toss with half the sugar, and wait 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until they give up their juices.

Step 2

Place half the strawberries and all the juice in a blender, and puree. Pour puree back in bowl with chopped strawberries.

Step 3

Whip the cream with remaining sugar and vanilla until cream is stiff and holds peaks easily. Fold berries and cream together, and serve immediately, or refrigerate for up to two hours.

WHAT ARE WE HARVESTING THIS MONTH?

New Jersey's agriculture showcases summer favorites like strawberries, blueberries, cherries, lettuce, spinach, snap peas, and radishes in June.

What Flowers Can Be Planted in New Jersey in June & July?

In late June or early July, plant zinnia seeds for summer and fall blooms, attracting butterflies. Black-eyed Susans, both annual and perennial, bloom in summer and self-seed. Marigolds thrive in summer heat, while Chrysanthemums can be transplanted in summer for fall blooms. Asters are hardy perennials ideal for fall gardens, and Hibiscus plants offer large tropical-looking flowers in New Jersey gardens, attracting hummingbirds and butterflies.



**“Gardening requires lots of water
 – most of it in the form
 of perspiration.”**

–Lou Erickson

WHAT'S GROWING ON AROUND US?

LOCAL GARDENING EVENTS

RUTGERS SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Tuesday June 18th, Native Plants for Pollinators

Learn about pollinators and the native plants they prefer.

Native plants will be given to attendees. - \$10.00/pp

Tuesday June 13th, Rain Barrels and Water Collection

Learn about water conservation, how to create a rain barrel, and rain barrel installation & maintenance. \$5/pp

For More events, head to the Rutgers' NJAESs Calendar

NORTH EAST EARTH COALITION

June 8, 15, and 22, Plant-Based Culinary & Garden Yoga Workshop Series

Learn about the benefits of plant-based eating, growing your garden, and sustaining a healthy style of living - Fee Required

NEW JERSEY BOTANICAL GARDENS

Every Sunday, 2pm - Free Guided Garden Tours

Knowledgeable NJBG docents take you on a tour of what's blooming around the Botanical Garden.

UPCOMING GARDEN CLUB EVENTS:

--June 22-23 - Annual GCT member garden crawl. For

information or to participate contact Roslyn

--June 30 Spring Sale Celebration

--July 4th - Teaneck's Independence Day parade

»» Want more gardening articles? ««

Understanding the New Zone Maps

How to prep a brand new garden

Curious about Sustainable Gardening?

What is the benefit of Mulching?

Garden Club

Contact Information

Website: [the Garden Club of Teaneck](#)

Facebook: [facebook.com/GardenClubofTeaneck](#)

Email: gardenclubofteaneck@gmail.com

Location: [Directions and Map](#)

EDITOR'S NOTES:

We hope you enjoyed this issue of our newsletter! Every member, from green thumbs to new buds, is a cherished part of our green family.

Reach out to sow your stories, feature your favorite plant, or sprinkle some wisdom and insight to all members! Let's grow together!