



Greetings!

Spring officially arrived March 20, but proof is in seeing the crocuses bloom and the daffodils pushing through the soil, and the many birds chirping. Are you as excited as I am to watch it happening? Thoughts of toiling in the dirt for a yard or for containers come to mind.

Snowy weather for our March 13 meeting kept attendance down, but those who came learned so much from the presenter Cheryl English about the kinds of plants to encourage and protect pollinators. She emphasized the importance of planting 'native' plants rather than exotic hybrid flowers which may be sterile and not have the nutrients that the butterflies, bees and small birds need.

We hope to see you at the April 10 meeting to hear *Dick Skoglund* talk about the *Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge* - consisting of 6,000 acres of unique habitat, including islands, coastal wetlands, marches, shoals and waterfront lands along 48 miles of shoreline.

At the April General Meeting we will also consider a slate of officers to vote on for the next two years. When members of the Nominating Committee contact you, I hope you will give consideration to their request. New officers will be installed at the **Annual Meeting on June 21 held at the Dearborn Country Club.**

An exciting, challenging project for the "Mid-Summer" will be a **Garden Walk and Small Flower Show scheduled for July 29.** We plan to feature a few neighboring gardens (especially Henrietta Flanz) and hold a small flower show in the Presbyterian Church. We will be developing the format for the show inviting members and area garden club members to participate by entering a design arrangement or a horticulture specimen from their yard. One rule is that the horticulture specimen must be in the participants possession for 90 days. (In other words, not bought at the last minute.) So, start pampering your house plants and flowers that you plant so they will look their best come July.

More information later - but **mark your calendar** so that you can enter an item. We will also need many volunteers the day of the event to set-up and place the entries, to accompany the judges as they make decisions about blue, red, yellow and white ribbons.

Mary Bugeia, President
president@gardenclubdearborn.org

Key Meeting Dates

Board Meeting

April 5, 2017, 10:00 am
McFadden Ross

General Meeting

April 10, 2017, 12:00 noon
1st Presbyterian Church
Brady, Dearborn

Hostesses:

Linda Gunderson and Mary
Lou Herrst

Program:

Dick Skoglund: Detroit River
International Wildlife Refuge

Exhibits:

Artistic - Spring Flowers
Horticulture - Photos of Your
Favorite Tree or Shrub

Horticulture Therapy:

April 12, 2017, 9:45 am
Oakwood Common
Assisted Living
Arrangement by Shirley
Painter and Pat Knoop

Marjory Cooper Remembered...

Sue Wittick, Scholarship Chair, Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc. noted that the **Scholarship Committee of Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc. has gratefully acknowledged receipt of a \$25 donation** from The Garden Club of Dearborn given in memory of **Marjory Cooper**. A letter has been prepared for Marjory's family informing them of this gift. In making this donation, our club has helped to provide scholarships to students in Michigan universities who are enrolled in horticulture, landscape design, environmental science, crops & soil science, or related fields of study.



Happy Birthday!

Becky Chadwick - 5 April

Pat Knoop - 22 April

Debbie Cox - 23 April

Growing Great

Members of the Garden Club of Dearborn attended the *Growing Great Gardens* in Taylor on March 12th. Subjects covered included *Simplified Gardening*, which addressed tips for gardeners who are pressed for time, and for the mature gardener. "*Foodscaping*" - mixing vegetables in your flower beds - was also presented. The speaker mentioned that 182 million acres throughout the U.S. suburbs are wasted by not doing this. The science of soil was also discussed. The speaker challenged attendees to take a clean glass jar with a lid, fill it with soil from your yard, add water, shake and let sit for 24 hours. You will be able to see the various levels of soil types that you have in your yard as each group settles. *Heavenly plants* - very hardy, drought tolerant that withstand sandy soils - was the closing subject of the seminar.

Plans are already in the works for next year's Growing Great Gardens which will be held at the same place on March 17, 2018.

Member Profile:

A member of Garden Club of Dearborn since 1996, **Mary Ellen Zell** was born in South Bend, Indiana and was raised in the neighboring town of Mishawaka, where she attended that town's schools. Mary Ellen arrived in Dearborn in 1963, when her husband was employed by Ford Motor Company. Mary Ellen and Sylvester (Zeke) had five children. Mary Ellen says that she loves flowers in general and feels a closeness to God when working in the garden and touching the earth. She has been a Member of Garden Club for 21 years and is a member of the *Late Bloomers (formerly Petal Pushers) Study Group*. Mary Ellen recently participated in the 2017 Valentine Tea, hosted by her Study Group. For several years, she also served as *Chairperson of the (Dearborn Historical) Museum Guild*.



Mary Ellen Zell
Member: Late Bloomers

Take the Challenge

Contributed by Mary Lenart Kirchoff, Garden Club of Dearborn Member

Did you know that some of the culinary herbs used in meal preparation are also host plants for black swallowtail caterpillars? Just as milkweeds provide food for monarch caterpillars, bronze fennel, green fennel, dill and parsley provide food for the black swallowtail caterpillars as they progress through five instar stages (time between moltings) on the way to becoming butterflies.

I found this to be true last summer, after I gathered pots of bronze fennel, green fennel, and parsley to be used in butterfly host planters and in-ground planting beds in the **Million Pollinator Challenge Garden (a National Garden Club President's Special Project)** around the arbor and gazebo areas at the University of Michigan-Dearborn Community Organic Garden. Over about a week, while these plants were located along my driveway, female black swallowtails appeared. During their visits, they laid fertilized yellow eggs on the leaves and stems of the plants. I had become a novice caretaker of potential black swallowtail butterflies.

In the wild, only a small percentage of butterfly eggs mature into butterflies, so to increase the likelihood of survival, I covered the pots with netting. This protected the eggs and potential caterpillars from their natural predators, including ants, spiders and birds. I also placed a few twigs in each pot to provide places for mature caterpillars to attach and form their chrysalides when it was time for metamorphosis.

The eggs hatched, and caterpillars in the first instar stage began to feed on the plants. Each caterpillar had a black body with a white spot, or saddle, around the middle. A caterpillar's disguise at this instar stage is an attempt to repel predators by mimicking a bird dropping. As the caterpillars continued to munch on the host plants, they grew, molted, and progressed through **several instar stages**, increasing in size and changing in color.

While raising these caterpillars, I asked fellow **Southeast Michigan Butterfly Association (SEMBA)** members who raise caterpillars indoors, for advice. I learned that *black swallowtail caterpillars prefer to feed upon only one type of host plant throughout the five instar stages*. As the caterpillars in my care were pretty hungry during the later instar stages, it became necessary to *supplement the decimated potted plants with pesticide-free cuttings of the same types of host plants*. Fortunately, I was given permission to harvest cuttings from host plants located in the butterfly garden at Nankin Mills. I placed the plant stems into water filled bottles, tucked plastic wrap between the lip of each bottle and the plant stems to keep the caterpillars from crawling inside the bottle. This kept the cuttings well hydrated, and allowed me to replenish the bottle with fresh cuttings and water as needed.

As each well-fed caterpillar progressed into the fifth and final instar stage, it stopped feeding, attached itself to a plant stem, or twig, while bending into a C shape, and formed a chrysalis. After undergoing some time in metamorphosis, the new black swallowtail butterflies began to emerge from their chrysalides. Success!



Early black swallowtail instar disguised as a bird dropping to deter predators.



Final fifth instar in c shape about to form a chrysalis, attaching to a twig

Michigan Garden Club offers schools for members to expand their understanding in several fields. These are scheduled throughout the year at different locations, hosted by a District or local club. While the registration cost is reasonable, the need for lodging can be expensive so it is helpful if two members choose to take the classes together and share the hotel cost. Exact information can be found on michigangardenclubs.org, or talk to GCD President, *Mary Bugeia*.

Course II of the Landscape Design School will be held **April 24-25, 2017** Kalamazoo, MI. Landscape Design Study Courses offer a series of four 10-hour courses scheduled for two days of instruction. Courses need not be taken in succession, and Garden Club members completing the series (4 courses) are awarded the designation of **NGC Landscape Design Consultant**.

Chair: Carol Beckius, cbeckius@chartermi.net, or by phone at 269-372-6950

LDS State Chair, Terry Harding, wsharding@chrtermi.net, or 231-947-0568.

Course II Environmental Studies School April 17-18, 2017 Holland Mi. Registration is \$65 for two days of classes. Lodging at local hotel is \$126 per night at Hampton Inn, 12427 Felch St. Holland, MI 49423. 844-402-3687. One of four (4) courses designed to stimulate interest and understanding of our environment: Land Conservation and Trust, Water Conservation, Groundwater Protection, Air Quality, Energy Awareness, and Waste. Become **Environmental Consultants** and become eligible to join **Michigan Consulting Council**.

To register, contact: Lynn Miller, lmiller.garden@yahoo.com or by phone: 616-676-2274

Mark Your Calendars - Events in April *(also see Michigan Gardener)*

- Wednesday, April 5, 2017 3-5 pm, MSU Horticulture Gardens, East Lansing, MI - Hands on workshop to build & customize your very own native bee hotel. www.hrt.msu.edu
- Saturday, April 8, 2017, 10am to 4pm, Matthew Botanical Gardens, Ann Arbor - Hands on growing workshop at 11:30 LynnAllen0413@comcast.net.
- Saturday, April 1, 2017 - 11:00 am to 1:00 pm, Ray Hunter Florist & Garden Center, Southgate: Free Seminar: *Beyond Birds and Butterflies*, by Cheryl English Questions to 734-284-2500.
- Saturday, April 22, 2017 - 11 am Ray Hunter Florist & Garden Center, Southgate: Free Seminar: *Grow the Best Tomatoes*, by Paul Rodman