



www.actongardenclub.org

The Monthly AGC 'Dirt'

October 2022

October 4th monthly meeting in room 204 at Town Hall and hybrid
The Acton Garden Club's October Meeting can be accessed via Zoom.

Zoom address:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81378724275?pwd=bWpUMXRqQmZuSEIUREdzS3FOUjUrZz09>

Meeting ID: 813 7872 4275

Passcode: 739789



We have been requested not to park at Town Hall or the Library. Use the Congregation Church parking lot or behind the Acton Center Fire Station. Don't forget to use the flashing light at the crosswalks on Main Street. Why not carpool to the meeting?

9 AM Introduction of *Acton's Looking Good* winners

9:15 AM Business Meeting

10 AM Social Time

10:15 Program:



The Bee-ecology Project; Native Pollinator Decline and Conservation

Why is ecological pollinator conservation so important?

Dr. Robert Gegear, director of the *New England Bee-ecology Project*, will help us understand this question and how the Bee-ecology Project can speed up the process of identifying major stressors before threatened species become extinct.

Dr. Gegear is an Assistant Professor of Biology at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. His research interests include the conservation of native pollination systems, floral evolution, and

Bumblebee ecology. Previously he taught at Worcester Polytechnic Institute where he founded the *Beecology Project*, funded by the *National Science Foundation*. This initiative uses citizen science to collect much-needed ecological data on native pollinator species and pollinator habitat.

Pollinators are declining in abundance, species richness, and geographic distribution at an unprecedented rate – **and this topic is HOT!** But understanding how to create landscapes that truly support pollinator biodiversity is a complex topic that goes way beyond observing bees buzzing for nectar around flowers. Rob Gegear gives us a great introduction to the intricacies of this subject, with a particular focus on our native bumblebees. He frames the issue within the concept of pollination systems – exploring the needs both pollinators and plants – to help us start to develop conservation strategies that will be genuinely effective.

October 9th 10 AM-1:30 PM The club will have an exhibit at the **Acton Boxborough Farmers' Market** to introduce the community to club and to sell spring flowering bulbs. ***This is your chance to purchase those spring bulbs you failed to order this summer!***

When to Plant Bulbs

Spring-flowering bulbs are planted in the fall. Okay, but what does that mean? Fall is three months long, and the weather fluctuates dramatically depending on where you live in the country.



The ideal planting times for the United States are mapped to the left. This is a useful guideline, but truth be told, you can plant as long as the ground isn't frozen.

October 11th Horticulture Study Group: **Field trip to Green Animals Topiary Garden**



The **Green Animals Topiary Garden**, located in **Portsmouth, Rhode Island**, is the oldest and most northern topiary garden in the United States. The 7-acre estate overlooks the Narragansett Bay. It contains a large collection of topiaries including eighty sculptured trees. This small country estate in Portsmouth was purchased in 1872 by Thomas E. Brayton, Treasurer of the Union Cotton Manufacturing Company in Fall River, Massachusetts.

Meet at the Acton Center Fire Station parking lot at 9 AM to carpool. Wear comfortable shoes and bring water and a snack.

October 18th 9 AM **Floral Design Study Group** will meet at **St. Matthew's Methodist Church** on Central **Cathy Fochtman and Thelma Shoneman will present the program: "New Modes of Expressions" – Functional Table Arrangement.**

The design will coordinate with a table setting on a tray you supply. All other materials will be provided for the cost of \$25. Bring your pruners and your *tool box*.

October 25th 9 AM **Board Meeting** at **Cathy Fochtman's** house, 18 Wright Terrace.

Anne Sterling would like to thank everyone who offered to care for the unsold **pollinator plants** over the winter and to pot them up for the plant sale next spring. All the plants have been picked up and hopefully are now planted.



The photo at left shows the pollinator plants that the **Wildflower Garden Committee** placed in the ground at the top of **Meeting House Hill**. **Jean Butler** tells us that some committee members bought plants as it was "fewer to plant!" Again...thanks to all those who purchased *pollinator plants* as well as those acting as nursemaids over the winter!
If you purchased some of these wonderful pollinator plants, please send your check made out to the *Acton Garden Club* to **Ruth Schemel, 9 Hillcrest Drive. **Label the "for line" *Pollinator Plants*.****

GCFM Development & Historic Landscape Grants



Acton Garden Club is awarded a grant of \$750 towards revitalization of the landscaping they have maintained since 1984 ***in front of Town Hall. The oval garden*** will now become a focal point rather than a drive by feature in co-ordination with the Town of Acton's scheduled Traffic Redesign Project construction. This will also extend the clubs horticultural education efforts as one of each species will display professional plant labels, a continuation of the club's Botanical Labeling Project.

Here is your chance to show off your creative vibes you acquired through the AGC Floral Design Workshops.

This is a wonderful way to contribute to our contributions around town by volunteering to craft a small to medium size flower arrangement once during the year to be placed on the ***circulation desk*** at the ***Acton Memorial Library***. You no doubt have seen the pretty and often whimsical creations that are so appreciated and enjoyed by patrons and librarians alike. ***This will be our sixth year supporting this project!***

If you would like to be a contributor, email **Peggy Garrison** at peggygarrison1@verizon.net and she will create a schedule with detailed instructions. When you respond, please indicate any weeks you know ***you will be away***.

A signup clipboard will be passed at the October 4th meeting to enable you to volunteer for this project!

On September 16th, members of AGC visited ***The Garden at Clock Barn in Carlisle***, home of ***Maureen and Michael Ruettgers***. In addition to experiencing the extraordinary garden, there was a display that explored the connection between the Victory Gardens of WW2 and the Covid-19 pandemic: ***how the garden is a source of emotional sustenance as well as nourishment.***



A reminder that everyone can share photos on the AGC Google Photo Page by putting them in the proper folder. Just be careful not to delete them or remove anything that is already there. <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1H5IkVG-0Z5G9UEXIoCufyYxUb46yNYeV?usp=sharing>

The Kelley's Corner Infrastructure project will be breaking ground soon.

The Town should have a clear project schedule within the next few weeks. In the meantime, I wanted to reach out to you to share a link to the construction update website. This website will be updated bi-weekly based on the contractor's schedule. The website can be found at the following link and is now live: www.Actonma.gov/kc

Kristen Guichard, AICP, Planning Director and Zoning Enforcement Officer, Town of Acton

A historic apple orchard revived

A collection of historic apples that was threatened by disease is **having a second act** at the New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill in Boylston, Mass., where a three-year-long restoration of their orchard of 119 antique varieties has just been completed.

It's a story of going the distance to see those old varieties into the future in the age of climate change, and of what goes into making a successful forward-looking orchard—from smarter watering methods to native underplantings and more.

Mark Richardson, the garden's Director of Horticulture, oversaw the recent apple orchard restoration project. He told what imperiled the historic collection, which succumbed to fire blight, a disease that didn't used to decimate Northern orchards; what it took to save them; and lessons learned that can help gardeners who want to successfully grow fruit.

Insect census: There are [2.5 million ants for every human](#).



Boston Globe 9/23/22

Invasive adult spotted lanternfly found in Stow, officials say

The Stow Conservation Department said in a statement that a homeowner on Harvard Road found the lanternfly Tuesday morning, after recently picking wild grapes on local conservation land and bringing the fruit into the house.

Goldenrod and asters look beautiful in your garden now.



New England Garden Club Annual Meeting October 14-15 in Nashua

There will be a "Gather in The Garden" NEGC Photography Show with attendees voting on their favorite photo.

The photo Jodi submitted (her friend Toadie) has been chosen as a finalist and will be on display. The photo was also chosen to represent the NEGC in an Inter-Club Photo Competition.

If anyone from our club is attending, please give her a vote!

She is thinking of going; if anyone wants to go with me, please get in touch. jodihomemaker@yahoo.com or 978-494-2674

GARDEN AS IF THE EARTH MATTERS!

Planting for Biodiversity and Climate Resilience

Speaker: Anna Fialkoff, Wild Seed Project

Thurs., Oct 13, 7pm

Acton Town Hall, Room 204 & Virtual



Please register at [EnergizeActon.org](https://energizeacton.org) or use the QR code on the above poster.

This event is co-sponsored by [EnergizeActon.org](https://energizeacton.org), the Acton Garden Club, and the Acton Conservation Trust. Many thanks to the Acton Garden Club for co-hosting this event as part of their special Shirley Towle Lecture Series.

**Garden As If the Earth Matters
Planting for Biodiversity and Climate Resilience**

October 13th, 7-8:30 PM

Shirley Towle Lecture

Join **Anna Fialkoff**, from the **Wild Seed Project in Portland, Maine**, as she explores how gardening with native plants helps foster biodiversity and creates more resilient landscapes. Formerly of the Native Plant Trust in Framingham, MA, Anna highlights the wonderful ecological connections that happen in our own backyards and public spaces when we focus on native plants. Without sacrificing beauty, we can create extraordinary, vibrant habitats for the insects and birds who are essential to a healthy ecosystem. Anna shares many concrete suggestions for planting and for landscape care, all designed to enrich our soils and to help mitigate the stresses of climate change. Instead of taming nature, find ways to cooperate with nature and create a beautiful community in your yard.

This event is co-sponsored by EnergizeActon.org, the Acton Garden Club, and the Acton Conservation Trust. Many thanks to the Acton Garden Club for co-hosting this event as part of their special **Shirley Towle Lecture Series**.

This is a hybrid event with an in-person option at the Acton Town Hall Room 204 and with a virtual option. In either case, we ask that you pre-register, as we may need to communicate with you about last-minute adaptations in case the public health situation changes.

We request that Acton Garden Club members register as well so we can get an estimate of headcount.

Register at [EnergizeActon.org](https://energizeacton.org) or use the **QR code** on the above poster.