



The Monthly AGC 'Dirt'

June 2023

June 6th Meeting at St. Matthew's Methodist Church, Central Street

9 AM Social time

9:30 AM Business Meeting

10:15 AM Program: GCFM Middlesex District Director, **Kathy Leva** will demonstrate how to select blooms and greens that showcase the season. A few lucky members will take home her creations.



Kathy Leva is a Nationally Accredited Master Flower Show Judge. She has represented her garden club, Lexington Garden Club, for the past 11 years at the Museum of Fine Arts "Art In Bloom".

Kathy has shared her talents with many GCFM clubs, classes and workshops including as the Headliner for the Tewksbury Garden Club Gala in 2022 and 2023. She is currently the GCFM Middlesex District Director.

In today's program Kathy will show us how to:

- Choose the right size and shape container for your arrangement.
- Select blooms and greens that showcase the colors of the season.
- Prepare and care for your designs so they last as long as possible.

Noon: High Tea provided by the members of the Executive Board

Members only!

Our Board Members are multitalented. They carry out their board duties, get their hands dirty in their gardens, as well as being creative in the kitchen.

The High Tea being served will consist of finger sandwiches, various salads and imaginative deserts.

Do you remember the "fascinators" worn by the ladies at the royal weddings? Perhaps you need one of these for the occasion.

Hats and gloves optional.

Should we ask Helen if we are doing this correctly?

June 13th Horticulture Study Group

9 AM Field Trip to Avant Gardens in Dartmouth. It is a fabulous nursery with many temptations. We will meet at 9:00 AM in the **K-Mart parking lot** because the lot behind the fire station in town center has a lot of construction material in it. **Please note this is a change** from what is written in the Yearbook.

Those who wish to have lunch before returning home, are invited to gather at the *original Not Your Average Joe's* in Dartmouth.

Wear comfortable shoes and bring water and a snack.

Membership

We are pleased to welcome as a new member of the Acton Garden Club Lazarus Michaelidis. He's just in time to help with the Annual Plant Sale!

Lazarus is interested to helping in the Wildflower Garden or the Herb Garden. He is quite a gardener and would like to learn more about the Horticulture Study Group. His computer skills will certainly come in use for the club. He learned about the club through the Annual Plant Sale.

Please put his information on page 86 in your yearbook.

Lazarus Michaelidis
7 Marian Road
Acton, MA 01720
Cell # (617) 458-1928
lazarus2060@verizon.net



The sign on the Red House says it all!



Judy is busy filling up the annuals tables with eye catching begonias.



Elizabeth Howley is checking out the inventory of shade loving plants before the doors open for the plant sale.



Wouldn't you buy raffle tickets from these ladies? They could sell ice cubes to the Eskimos.



Sue Whitcomb ready to hand out advise.



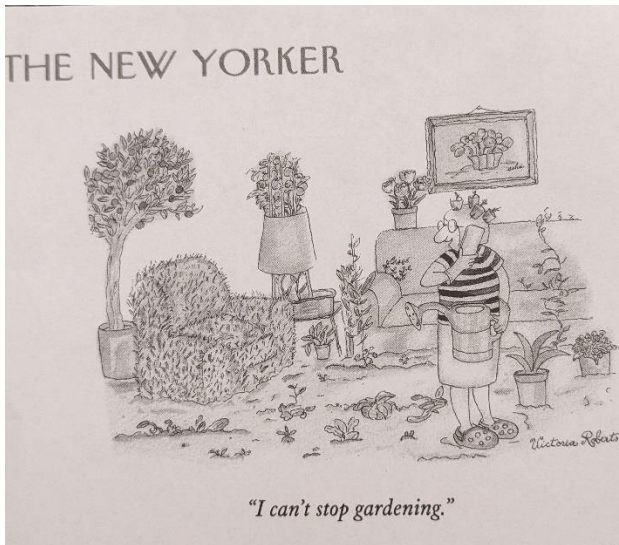
Two sales mavens, Diane Krasnick and Ann Marie Testarmata, before the rain dampened their hairdos. I agree with Diane's shirt: **Never Enough Plants!** *It made her the perfect salesperson.*



Tanaz, Cathy and Fran looking rather chipper before the beginning of the sale.



Eileen and Susanne are smiling broadly because it is all over with.



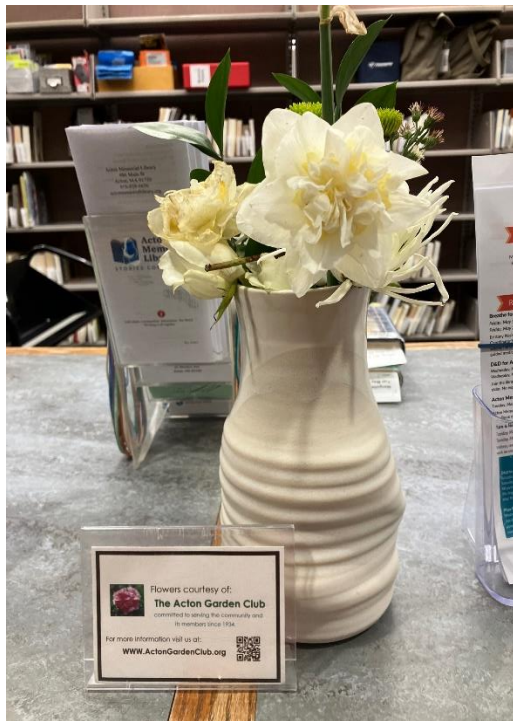
After participating in the Plant Sale, Maura couldn't help but send this into the *Dirt*.

Maura had a fun time videoing the hustle and bustle of the Plant Sale.

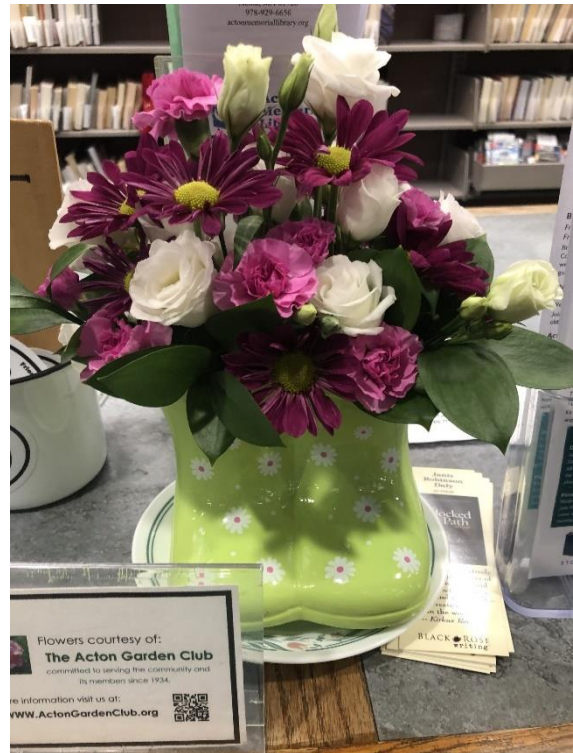
Click to view.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/pjDgyS9cuAobdu3N7>

If you picked up any of the fine leftovers off of Susanne Fuller's driveway, don't forget to send your check made out to *Acton Garden Club* to Ruth Schemel, 9 Hillcrest Drive, Acton. Put *Plant Sale* on the for line.



5/4/23 Barbara Bender's lovely white on white floral arrangement greets patrons at the circulation desk at the Acton Memorial Library.



Don't you love Noreen Rowe's rainboot vase for her whimsical arrangement at the circulation desk at the Acton Memorial Library.



The Acton Garden Club Educational Grant program was established in memory of 2 long time garden club members. The grant is open to any full-time Acton employee or any designated representative of a town organization. It provides funds for horticultural or environmentally related programs or projects.

The seed bank was established at the West Acton Citizen's Library. Patrons can donate seeds or check out sides for the old card catalogue at left.

Janet Irons submitted info about a different option for local plant shopping, Rob's Gardens.

Tanaz alerted Janet to a wonderful small garden with (mostly shade, lots of native, hard to find) plants for sale. The owners are retired, are real plant-lovers and grow everything right there in their yard. This past weekend Janet bought yellow trillium, red stem Solomon's seal, an interesting Epimedium and a bottle gentian. Tanaz found to her liking bottle gentian, multi color Corydalis, and a green center cone flower. ***This should be inspiration enough to entice you to try out the place.***

Some things are potted up and priced on shelves, but you're also free to wander their yard and garden and if you see something you want, they'll pot it up for you. It's a real gem of a place with friendly knowledgeable owners. In May they are open Friday-Sunday 10 AM – 5 PM. Can't make these days, you can shop by appointment. Call 508-254-6329 for an appointment. **Rob's Gardens, 9 Tadmuck Trail in Littleton.**

Thanks Ann Marie Testarmata for the following info

Publicity for the 2023 BioBlitz from the Acton Conservation Trust

Please join us as we document and celebrate biodiversity in Acton and Boxborough, which together host over 2,000 acres of conservation areas. From cattail marshes and ponds to fields and forests, these habitats thrive with snapping turtles, frogs, insects, birds, and mammals galore. Another 3,000 acres of private lands provide habitat for wildlife, including what's two steps outside your door! What kind of wildlife lives here? Let's find out this June 1 through 15. How to participate? Download the "iNaturalist" app on your smartphone and click on our "Nature of Acton and Boxborough 2023" project. Or visit <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/nature-of-acton-and-boxborough-june-2023>.

Garlic Mustard – A Nonnative Invasive Plant

Do you have this pretty plant with lovely white flowers booming in your woods, garden, compost pile or even lawn or garden?

It's **Garlic Mustard** and it is a nonnative **invasive** plant. You should pull it before it goes to seed in June.



You may want to look around and see if you have some and pull it. It is a nonnative invasive plant from Europe that impacts the growth of native species.

It's best to pull it while flowering and before it goes to seed. It is easy to pull now. It is better to pull than mow so it will be less likely to grow back. Put it in a black plastic bag and put the bag in the sun for 5 days which cooks and kills any seeds. You can then dispose in the trash as recommended below.

Attached are some interesting videos.

<https://youtu.be/-3odmy6rq4k>



<https://youtu.be/V4LJgJuyUi4>



Starting June 1st, snap away at any plant, animal or fungus you see and get it on our list. Can we break 200 species this year? Who can ID the most? Taking observations of wildlife helps advance science too! According to National Geographic, "High quality data uploaded to iNaturalist become part of the [Global Biodiversity Information Facility](#), an open source database used by scientists and policy makers around the world." Happy BioBlitzing!

We continue our observations from the Acton Boxborough BioBlitz as part of the City Nature Challenge Boston area in 2021. The 2023 BioBlitz is a collaboration of people from Acton Conservation Trust, Green Acton, Acton PIP Stem, Acton Men's Outdoor Club, Energize Acton and Boxborough Conservation Trust.

Asiatic Bittersweet

Celastrus orbiculatus

Description: Perennial, deciduous, woody vine. Twines around mature trees and climbs high into the canopy, or sprawls over low-growing vegetation. **Leaves:** Simple, alternate, round to somewhat elliptical, 2-4" long, with wavy or weakly toothed edges, turning yellow in fall. Leaves abruptly pointed at tips or in sun more tapering toward pointed tip. **Flowers:** Green-yellow, 5-petaled, small, clustered in leaf axils, ~June. **Fruit:** Distinctive yellow aril covers orange-red seed. Fruits mature in fall and persist into winter. **Bark:** Light brown bark with raised light tan lenticels. **Roots:** bright orange.

Native range: Japan, China, Korea. **How arrived in U.S.:** As an ornamental.

Reproduction: By seed and vegetatively. Plants are usually dioecious; males do not produce fruit. Fruits are eaten and dispersed by birds and small mammals, or by careless disposal of bittersweet wreaths. Seeds are viable for about one year. New shoots may sprout from the root crown, and root fragments may also regenerate

Habitat: Forests, forest edges, woodlands, old fields, beaches, and dunes. Moderately shade tolerant; more productive in sun. Tolerates dry to moist soils.

Documented Ecological Impacts

- Changes in soil chemistry and leaf litter decomposition rates were seen in areas with Asiatic bittersweet compared to areas without it, across different site conditions and soil types. ([Leicht-Young, et al. 2009. *The American Midland Naturalist* 161 \(2\):219-231](#))
- Asiatic bittersweet interrupted old-field succession and resulted in a vine-dominated community rather than the expected forest vegetation. ([Fike and Niering. 1999. *Journal of Vegetation Science* 10:483-492](#))
- Thickets of Asiatic bittersweet have the potential to harbor increased tick populations and other invasive species. Asiatic bittersweet can also serve as an alternate host for a bacterium that can transmit several crop diseases and tree diseases such as variegated chlorosis. ([Fryer, J.L. 2011. *Celastrus orbiculatus*. In: *Fire Effects Information System*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service](#))



Control Methods

Very small plants and seedlings may be pulled up by the roots when soil is moist; larger vines can be cut, but aggressive re-sprouting will occur. Cut larger vines at chest height and also at ankle height to prevent new vines climbing up old ones (you can also treat the rooted part of the vine with cut-stem herbicide if desired). Persistent cutting alone, multiple times during the growing season over several years, may kill the plant, but diligence is required (at least 6x/yr for 3 yrs is suggested). Vines can be left to die in the canopy; pulling the vines from the trees can cause additional damage. Mowing can prevent seedlings from establishing.

Herbicides[†] are effective as foliar applications (triclopyr solution, foliar glyphosate not as effective on this species), cut-stump applications (glyphosate or triclopyr solution applied immediately after cutting except during early spring), or basal bark application at any time of year (for stems < 6" diameter, triclopyr in bark oil). For dense thicket-type growth and very large infestations, cut or bush-hog all vines at mid-summer, then foliar spray triclopyr solution the following summer before flowering when plant height is lower and less herbicide is needed.

* Correctly dispose of all plant parts[‡] † Follow all label directions when using herbicides[‡]

The New Yorker 5/22/23

What We Owe Our Trees

Forests fed us, housed us, and made our way of life possible. But they can't save us if we can't save them.