



# The Hidden Gem

September, 2024

## THIS MONTH:

- GCI Flower Show
- Ikebana Creations
- Hydrangea Blooming Issues
- Growing Garlic
- Monarch Butterflies
- Managing Rabbits
- Meet a Member: Jennifer Sparrow
- Perennial of Month: Clematis
- Native of Month: Anise Hyssop
- Conservation Corner
- Healthy Gardener: Ladder Safety
- Upcoming Events

**Town & Country Garden Club of Libertyville**  
**celebrates 72 years of serving the greater**  
**Libertyville area with civic plantings,**  
**scholarship awards, local charitable donations**  
**and our**  
**Hidden Gems Garden Walk.**

How is your late summer garden doing? Despite the challenges of August –the heat, my sometimes inconsistent watering pattern, and maybe just a few weeds that I never quite seem to pull out – my plants are hanging in there and still look beautiful. The thing I love most about flower gardening is being able to go outside and cut a fresh bouquet of whatever is blooming that day. Hope you are having the same experience.

Thanks to all the watering crews that are maintaining our pots and gardens around Libertyville. The butterfly garden is only two years old and looks amazing. We had a monarch caterpillar! The Blue Star Garden is filling in nicely and the various pots around the village are absolutely beautiful. Please take the time to drive by and view all our projects; you'll be very proud of how much our Civic Projects enhance the beauty of Libertyville.

Enjoy the remainder of your summer!

Sally Steele, President, TCGC



Monarch caterpillar, August, 2024, TCGC Butterfly Garden

Photo: Sue Hazelwood

## Editors:

Ann Baker

Laura Edwards

Janet Lichtenberger

*"Summer's lease hath all too short a date" - William Shakespeare*



# News and Notes: GCI Flower Show

Garden Clubs of Illinois sponsored a NGC Flower Show at the Chicago Botanic Garden August 3rd and 4th, "Once Upon A Time". Four club members participated, earning awards. Congratulations!



Risé Barkhoff, 3rd Place,  
Rudbeckia



Risé Barkhoff, 1st Place,  
Poblano Pepper



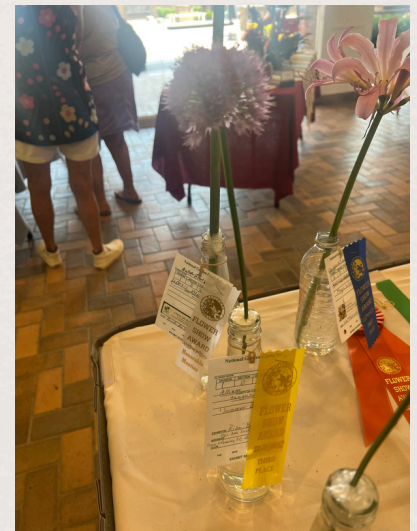
Risé Barkhoff, Honorable  
Mention, Crespedia



Sally Steele, First Place,  
Butterfly Weed



Sue Hazelwood, Second  
Place, Allium



Risé Barkhoff, Third Place,  
Allium



Ann Baker, Joe Pye Weed,  
First Place, Division Winner  
Perennials

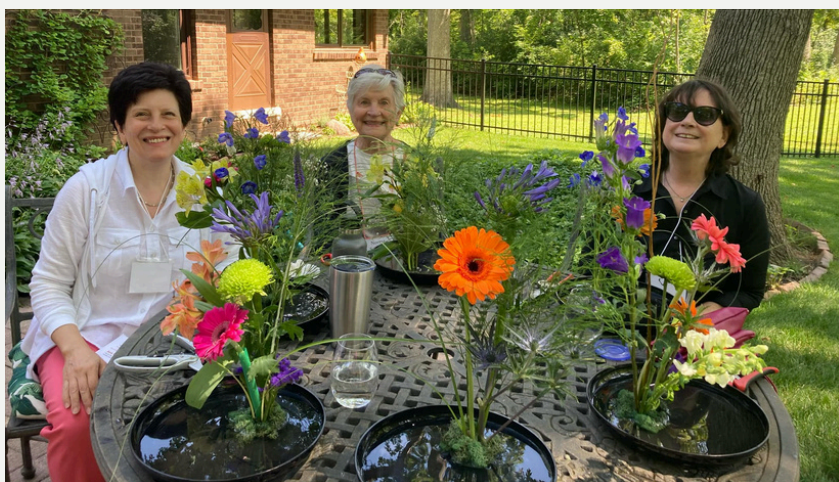
Ann Baker, Second Place,  
Scented Geranium





# August Meeting: Ikebana

Mary Gay Kay, TCGC member and Past President, presented a program on Ikebana floral arranging, with members creating their own designs to take home. Ikebana is the Japanese art of flower arrangement, minimalist yet modern and evocative. Enjoy our efforts!



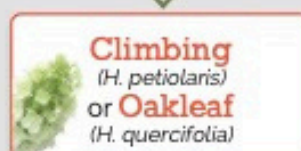
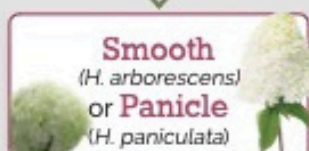




# WHY ISN'T MY HYDRANGEA BLOOMING?



Which hydrangea do you grow?  
(see reverse)



Still have questions about hydrangeas or other Proven Winners ColorChoice Shrubs? We're here to help you be successful in the garden! Visit [www.provenwinners.com/feedback](http://www.provenwinners.com/feedback).

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# Horticulture: Garlic

Looking for an easy-to-grow organic crop?

National Garden Clubs says to try garlic!

Plant in fall for a July harvest in northern areas, and June in the south. Garlic does best in soils with an abundance of organic matter. Therefore, make sure to amend soils with compost or well-rotted organic matter. In addition to adding organic matter, apply two to three pounds of 10-10-10 fertilizer per 100 square feet before planting.

Deer, groundhogs and other animals avoid garlic - good news after this rabbit-heavy year!

Although it can be susceptible to some soil-borne fungal diseases, rotating your planting location each year will avoid that problem. Basically you plant it in fall (each individual clove about 4-6 inches apart) and forget about it until harvest. Garlic should be harvested when half of the leaves have turned yellow, usually around late June and early July. Bulbs should be cured in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area for several weeks. Once the garlic is cured, cut off the stems and roots and clean the bulbs, removing the outermost skin. Just make sure not to expose the cloves. Finally, they should be stored in a cool, dry, dark place.

The only care is making sure that it is watered and removing the scapes in spring to stimulate clove production. The scapes can be sauteed for a delicious treat - or click for other [garlic scape recipes](#).

In our area, softnecks will not survive, so we plant hardneck varieties in the fall. According to the [Illinois Extension](#), in order to properly produce, garlic requires a cold period. It should be planted six to eight weeks before the ground is expected to freeze. Now is the time to order seed garlic for planting this fall. Hardneck garlic varieties that do well in Illinois include Spanish Roja, Carpathian, Georgian Crystal, Music, Metechi, and Persian Star.





# Monarch Butterfly: Illinois State Insect

*by Laura Edwards, Illinois Master Gardener*

I hope some of you get the opportunity to see a Monarch Butterfly caterpillar feeding on milkweed. It is a beautiful sight.

Recently, Merlleanne Rampale from SWALCO gave a presentation titled Healthy Yard, Healthy Home. Merlleanne spoke about the importance of maintaining a healthy environment in our yards to protect many species of insects and birds who are important in maintaining a healthy ecosystem.

One of the subjects addressed in her talk was the Monarch Butterfly. We've heard that the Monarch is endangered. It is startling to look at the statistics. New data shows that the eastern monarch butterfly colonies wintering in Central Mexico occupied 2.2 acres during the 2023-2024 winter, as compared to 5.5 acres that scientists observed in the previous year. That is 59% less than the previous year. Over the past 20 years, the population has dropped by 90%. The Monarch is currently on the list for Endangered Species Act protection.



Photo: Laura Edwards



Milkweed is the only food source for Monarch caterpillars. There are over 100 native milkweed species in North America. The Latin name is *Asclepius*. There are over 20 native species in Illinois.

How can you create a healthy yard for the Monarch? Rampale suggests growing multiple species of milkweed that are native to our area in your yard. This will encourage egg laying females to visit your yard. She recommends planting at least five plants. Purchase true native plants. Some easier to find plants include Common Milkweed, Swamp Milkweed, Butterfly Weed, and Whorled Milkweed.

Next time you are near the Libertyville Civic Center, stop by our T&C Garden Club Butterfly Garden and see if you can find any caterpillars!



# Rabbits: Humane Garden Management

by Janet Lichtenberger



Rabbits are adorable little creatures. Who doesn't love a bunny? For gardeners, rabbits can be very destructive, eating whole sections of a garden to the ground. This year, the rabbit population is extremely high, as is the garden damage. Here are some ideas to prevent rabbit damage humanely.

The most effective way to control rabbit damage is to create a barrier (fencing). Place chicken wire fencing

around the areas that need protection - for individual plants or whole garden areas.

Inexpensive and reusable, [green-colored fencing](#) is available, blending well with the garden. The fence should be two feet tall, with a mesh one inch or smaller. Rabbits can also gnaw on trees - an [expandable trunk protector](#) can help.

No plant is truly rabbit-proof, but it can help to plant what rabbits do not prefer. Rabbits do not like plants with strong scents such as basil, garlic, rhubarb, hot peppers, spicy basil, and mint. Many lists of rabbit resistant plants are available online - like [this one](#). This doesn't always work - rabbits adapt to available food options, and baby bunnies will eat anything. A patient gardener can discover and plant rabbit resistant flora, but plant losses during this time are often painful.

Another idea is to remove potential nesting spots. A rabbit can have 10 babies in a litter. Rabbits prefer overgrown and grassy areas, so keep your yard free from these types of spots. If you do find a nest, leave the nest alone and undisturbed. Removing the nest isn't recommended.

Predators are a natural way to control the rabbit population. Hawks, owls, foxes, and coyotes are natural enemies. This is nature at work. The presence of a dog can also scare rabbits away. Placing dog or cat fur, or other items with predator scents, can deter rabbits.

Commercial repellants are available, or DIY with cayenne pepper and soap, like [this recipe](#). Spray the plants thoroughly, repeating after rain. Other creative home remedies include using shaved Ivory or Irish Spring soap, coffee grounds, garlic powder, or hot peppers as scent deterrent. Some have tried visual deterrents such as metal pinwheels, rubber snakes or owls.

Humane traps can be used to trap and relocate rabbits. Traps can be scented with apple cider and baited with lettuce or apples. Place the trap in shade and relocate the rabbit quickly to avoid harm. Something to consider: while many of us use humane traps to relocate rabbits or other wildlife, experts say relocating animals which do not naturally roam over a large area to another area, even if similar to their first home, leads to almost certain death. They don't learn new hiding places, sources of food, and other environmental resources that they need.

Never attempt to poison rabbits. There are no registered or effective poisons for rabbits, and poisoned small mammals can kill the predators (hawks, owls, etc.) who eat them.



# Meet a Member: Jennifer Sparrow

The first garden club I joined was just stumbling after my parents around the yard. I remember walking through the asparagus, laughing while getting covered with ladybugs. Pretty sure we were treated to DQ after dead-heading the dandelions! They encouraged all five of us to be outside, get dirty and enjoy watching the seasons pass. To various degrees, we're still all gardeners.

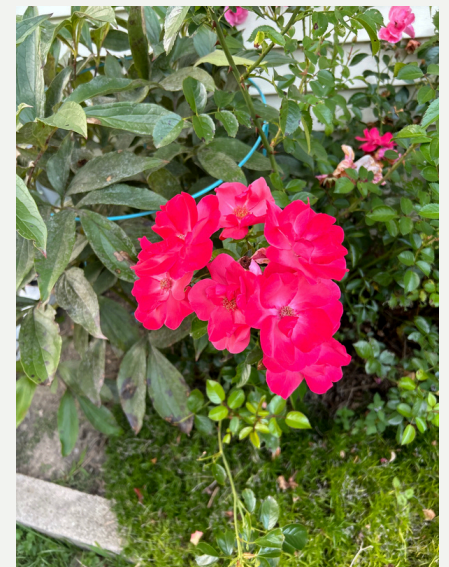
During my years living and working in Chicago, I only had space for a few herbs and an occasional tomato but trips to visit my parents' gardens kept my hands green. My mother had long been a member of a local garden club which focused not only on gardens but also on flowering arranging. (I'm not at my mother's skill level but I do know how to spruce up a grocery spray.) On his retirement, my British-born father expanded the gardens. One day I'll recreate his onion skin mapping of bloom time for my own gardens.



I'm still working but since it's helping high school students find their own garden to establish roots, it's just another type of gardening for me. I downsized by half eight years ago from an acre of mostly shade to half that amount of mostly sun. Thankfully, I brought with me plants from the house where I grew up and from where, together with my husband, we raised two muddy boys who enjoyed driving "Dear John" (our John Deere).

These past 5 or so years, I had been gratefully accepting plants from friends and extending my gardens, probably a bit too fast. Now I'm loving rearranging and simplifying. It never stops and that's a joy!

Every day when I walk my gardens, I set goals for the day but my tip is to be flexible. The phrase "You plan, God laughs" so applies to gardening. As I do my walk-about, I inhale the beautiful roses from my mother's yard, the huge hostas from my father's first designed gardens and the forget-me-nots from my previous gardens. I can't pick a favorite as they're family and friends.





# Perennial of the Month: Clematis



Clematis are among the most decorative and spectacular of all the flowering vines. They are a group of mostly woody, deciduous vines. Most of the large-flowered hybrids grow to around 8 to 12 feet tall, but cultivars vary in height. Initial growth may be slow; once established, growth is vigorous. Bloom time depends on the cultivar - most bloom in late spring, early summer, though 'Sweet Summer' blooms in late summer/early fall.

Clematis like their "heads in the sun and feet in the shade". Though the plant's stems and foliage should be in sun, the roots like a cool, moist environment - mulch!

Clematis are divided into three groups based on the recommended pruning methods used for each. Spring bloomers - don't prune, just tidy. Large flowers in early summer? Don't prune, wait and tidy, prune back to healthy buds in late winter. Late summer blooming clematis should be pruned in winter to a height of 12- 18 inches. Make sure you research your particular variety before pruning.

## Clematis: Illinois Extension

## Chicago Botanic Garden: Clematis for Northern Landscapes

# Native of the Month: Anise Hyssop

Anise hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*) is a midwestern native that can reach a height of 4 feet with a spread of 3 feet. It blooms from June through September with lavender flower spikes that attract hummingbirds and butterflies; the seeds are attractive to birds. Anise hyssop is not fussy about soil types or conditions, as long as it is well-drained. It will tolerate partial shade but does best in full sun. The crushed leaves smell of licorice.

(Chicago Botanic Garden)



According to Illinois Wildflowers, in the wild, Anise Hyssop is rare in Illinois; it is known to occur in only Menard county in central Illinois. This species is more common in areas that lie northwest of Illinois. Many gardeners include it in native beds because it attracts a wide variety of bees, insects, moths, and butterflies.



# Conservation Corner

by Jennifer Sparrow



What to with lemon peels?

After you've squeezed all the juice out of the lemons, for that yummy lemon cake or for restorative lemonade, you can use the peels for:

1. Put in a microwave safe bowl in hot water and nuke for 4-5 minutes. Then just wipe down the interior – easy peasy with a great smell.
2. Then chop up those same peels into small pieces and freeze in cubes trays with water. Use one in disposal to clean and get rid of any smell.
3. Or, instead of #2, add to household vinegar and water to clean glass and mirrors.
4. Or add peels to cinnamon, lavender to a simmering pot of water for an easy air freshener.
5. OR, harking back to my sister's high school tricks, rub the peels over your hair to lighten the color while in the sun. (Well, she did that on her dark brown hair and on her skin to remove her few freckles with little results and today, we'd all know to cover our face and hair while outside in the hot sun. So, I don't suggest either of these uses 😊)
6. The lemon point? Reuse, recycle and renew.

## The Healthy Gardener: Ladder Safety

1. Dress for the job. Wear comfortable clothing but nothing loose that could catch on objects. Wear non-slip shoes.
2. Don't climb on a wet, rainy day.
3. Know your capabilities - should you even be up on a ladder?
4. Choose a ladder tall enough to do the job - you shouldn't be wobbling on the top rung or stretching to reach up.
5. Enlist a buddy - spouse, friend, neighbor. An extra eye and steadying hand is a great idea!
6. Only one person on the ladder at a time.
7. Make sure the ground is free of debris, wet leaves, mud, slippery drop cloths, or anything else that can cause the ladder to slip.
8. Make sure the ladder is level.
9. Don't over reach - either up to to the side.
10. NEVER stand on the top rung.

Ladders are a necessary household tool. You will need to use one, for some job, some day. It's up to you to take the precautions to keep yourself safe!





# Upcoming Events



June 28th, 2025  
Mark your calendars!

Five exceptional gardens

Meet the gardeners and be inspired by unique designs and specimens.

Stay tuned for details

Free Webinar: "The Beauty and Benefits of Hedgerows" with Heather McCargo on September 19th at 6 PM (CT).

Explore the ecological and aesthetic advantages of hedges and hedgerows in our upcoming free Wild Ones national webinar, "The Beauty and Benefits of Hedgerows" with Heather McCargo, founder of Wild Seed Project.

Healthy Hedges (Buckthorn Eradication)

Wednesday October 16th 2024

Presenter: Lake County Forest Preserve District, Matt Ueltzen. Manager of Restoration Ecology He has been with the Forest Preserves for 24 years and manages the District's prescribed burn and reforestation programs. He works on habitat restoration projects including invasive species management - the eradication of buckthorn



## Fall Bulb Sale

BULB	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	HOW MANY DO YOU WANT?
	<b>Allium 'Giant Gladiator'</b> A majestic, statement flower with tall 42" plants and flower heads that reach 8-10" across. Long-flowering, spectacular purple blooms. Great for pollinators and also Deer Resistant. Recommended planting 3 per sq. ft. Blooms late spring-early summer. Great for naturalizing.	Each Individual Bulb	
		\$6.00	
		Bag of 6 Bulbs	
		\$30.00	
	<b>Lycoris Squamigera (Surprise Lily, Resurrection Lily, Naked Lady, Magic Lily)</b> These striking, large, pale pink flowers emerge separate from their leaves and appear to come out of nowhere. Each bulb produces multiple blooms 24" tall in late summer-early fall. 3 per sq. ft.	Each Individual Bulb	
		\$6.00	
		Bag of 6 Bulbs	
		\$30.00	
	<b>Daffodil 'Sir Winston Churchill'</b> One of the most fragrant daffodils. This double-flowering daffodil has clusters of up to 4 blooms per stem. The flowers have creamy white petals with ruffled creamsicle-colored petals in the center. Flowers reach 15" tall. Recommended planting 6 per sq. ft. Early-Mid Spring. Naturalizes.	Each Individual Bulb	
		\$1.50	
		Bag of 12 Bulbs	
		\$16.50	
	<b>Daffodil 'Yellow Cheerfulness'</b> Delightful, double-flowering, soft yellow flower clusters. Each bulb has multiple stems with multiple fragrant flowers. Grow 16" tall and emerge in late spring. Deer resistant and great for naturalizing. Recommended planting 5 per sq. ft. Naturalizes.	Each Individual Bulb	
		\$1.50	
		Bag of 10 Bulbs	
		\$ 13.50	
	<b>Daffodil 'Replete'</b> A double-flowering, fragrant beauty with white outer petals and pink/salmon frilly inner petals. Reaches 16"- 18" in height. Recommended planting 5 per sq. ft. Flowers Early-Mid Spring. Deer Resistant. Great for naturalizing.	Each Individual Bulb	
		\$ 2.00	
		Bag of 10 Bulbs	
		\$18.00	
We accept Cash, Check or Credit Card Payment. We can take Credit Card payments in-person or send you an invoice via email.		TOTAL DOLLAR AMOUNT	

Limited quantities so order before they run out! Thank you for your donation and support of the Round Lake Area Garden Club and all of our programs. For questions, email [rlagardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:rlagardenclub@gmail.com)