

JANUARY 2025



COMPOST HEAP

An Official Publication of Rumson Garden Club



SMILING FACES AT ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL CHRISTMAS GREENS!!!

DON'T STOP READING UNTIL YOU GET THIS MONTH'S MEMBER TIPS!

**We look forward to seeing you at our
January Membership meeting!
9:00am Tuesday, January 21, 2025
at Bingham Hall**

[RSVP TO JANUARY MEETING HERE](#)

Schedule:

8:00am Passing

9:00am Judging and Breakfast Served

10:00am Business Meeting

11:00am Speaker, Art Walk

*****Please bring \$10 cash or check made out to RGC.*****

JANUARY SPEAKER

“Bulb Forcing for Beginners and the Seriously Smitten”

Art Wolk

Bulb Forcing for Beginners and the Seriously Smitten: Based on Art's book by the same name, this program will help both novices and "seriously-smitten" bulb forcers learn what it takes to successfully force a wide variety of bulbs indoors during the winter. Art has more than thirty years of experience in growing and exhibiting bulbs for the Philadelphia Flower Show, where he twice won the Grand Sweepstakes Award as the top individual competitor. Art combines his laugh-out-loud sense of humor with clear, concise information that will keep your audience's attention and give them the knowledge and confidence to succeed.



JANUARY SCHEDULE

PASSERS:

FLORAL: ANN ROSSBACH, LOUISA RENN

HORT: SUSAN OLSON, BETSY FORD

BOTANICAL ARTS: MISSY FALKENBERG, BONNIE TORCIVIA

PHOTOGRAPHY: LIZ DUSKO, GAIL VAN WINKLE

CLERKS:

FLORAL: LISA ATALLAH, SUSAN SOROKOLIT

HORT: ROBBYN O'NEILL, ELAINE EADON

BOTANICAL ARTS: NATASHA HALBOUT, KATHRYNE SINGLETON

PHOTOGRAPHY: TYLER HAWLEY, CASEY KEGELMAN

JUDGES:

FLORAL: TAPHY HARCSAR, PEEKA TILDESLEY

BOTANICAL ARTS: JOAN LYNCH, MAYA SPEELMANS

HORT: ALEXANDRA SMITH, CYNTHIA LABRECQUE

PHOTOGRAPHY: LUCY KALIAN, AVERY BRIGHTON

Please take a moment to download, print, and fill out your entry cards prior to dropping off your entries. If you need entry cards or have questions, contact our

Staging Chairs:

Wendy Wilt (wendytwilt@gmail.com) or

Mary Brodsky (mary.brodsky@foxroach.com)

JANUARY SCHEDULE

FLORAL DESIGN

Tea for One

“Live in the sunshine, swim in the sea, drink the wild air.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Class 1 Create a Miniature Design Arrangement – diminutive in stature but not in charm – contained in a cherished teacup of your choosing. The design, which needs to be less than 2.5” from the center of the arrangement, will be viewed from 3 sides on an approximately 50” high table with a white tablecloth. Accessories are allowed.

Class 2 Novice. Same as above.

*** GCA defines a Miniature Design as “one which should not be more than 5” in height, width, and depth with all components.” GCA Scale of Points used in judging Miniature Design: Design 30, Scale/Proportion 25, Creativity 15, Conformance 10, Interpretation 10, Distinction 10.

Please call or email to register an entry: ohare.maryjane@gmail.com or 973-945-3855.

BOTANICAL ARTS

Purr-fect New Year for Botanical Arts

Class 1 The purr-fect start to the year! Let’s have some feline fun. Decorate the paper mâché cat provided to you in any way you wish and make sure to include a gem collar. The entry will be displayed on a 30” high table with a white tablecloth and viewed from all sides.

Class 2 Novice. Same as above.

Botanical Arts – All plant material used must be dried – this includes flowers, foliage, seeds, pods, nuts (in or out of shells), vegetables, twigs, vines, reeds, etc. Only plant material, mechanics, and their treatments (i.e. plants, nail polishes, varnishes, waxes, etc) are permitted. Artificial, endangered, and locally invasive plant material may not be used. Non-plant material (i.e. cardboard, metal, twine, string, etc.) may only be used in construction and not show.

Please call or email to register an entry: bltorcivia@gmail.com or 908-812-6416.

JANUARY SCHEDULE

HORTICULTURE

All entries must be properly identified with species and cultivar information.

FORCED BULB GARDEN

Class 1 A collection of three to five flowering bulbs of the same species, displayed in one container of your choice. May be exhibited in water, rocks or soil.

Class 2 Novice. Same as above.

AMARYLLIS CHALLENGE

Class 1 One "First Love" amaryllis bulb planted in the exhibitor's own container. Bulb must be planted the week of December 9th to be entered. Stakes are permitted. May be exhibited in water, rocks or soil.

Class 2 Novice. Same as above.

Class 3 One amaryllis bulb, grown in the exhibitor's own container. Any variety is acceptable. May be exhibited in water, rocks or soil.

Class 4 Novice. Same as above.

PHOTOGRAPHY

New Jersey The Jersey Shore

Class 1 Winter on the beach. Take a color photograph of the beach in winter.

Class 2 Novice. Same as Class 1.

Class 3 Winter on the beach. Take a black and white photograph of the beach in winter.

Class 4 Novice. Same as Class 3.

Please call or email to register an entry: gailfvw@gmail.com or 732-233-1955.

All entries must be submitted by January 18th to Gail Van Winkle's home, 51 Lippincott Rd, Little Silver. Follow rules in By-Laws. Four entries per class. Please contact Liz Dusko with questions at ldusko@gmail.com.

Happy 2025! Hope you all had a relaxing and joyous holiday filled with family and cheer. I'm excited for this new year and all that is in store for us Rumson Garden Club ladies! Maybe your resolution is to reach out of your comfort zone and try something new? Well, this is a great time to get started!

Bingham Hall will be a cozy location for our January Show, lecture, and light breakfast. It may be the dark, cold days of winter now, but we have some bright plant contests coming our way! The January Show will be a busy one with four divisions of challenges – Floral Design miniature arrangements, Botanical Arts cats, Hort bulbs, and Photography beach photos. If you have not entered anything in a Show yet, this is an excellent time to do it. If you have any questions about entering, please reach out to me at tyandsusanolson@mac.com. I am more than happy to help!

We have a fabulous Speaker this month – Art Wolk, a bulb expert with years of experience at the Philadelphia Flower Show. His lively lecture will be informative and fun!

Hope to see you all on Tuesday, the 21st!

**Warm wishes,
Susan**



Our November Fundraiser made over \$1000 which goes to our RGC Community Fund!

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Feb. 3, 12:30pm - New Members Valentine luncheon (New Members)**
- Feb. 5, 12pm - "Underwater Floral Workshop", Bingham Hall (Floral Design)**
- Feb. 11 - "Blooms and Beyond" GCA Floral Design virtual conference, see GCA website for details (Floral Design)**
- Feb. 20, 11am - Container Garden workshop, Bingham Hall (Hort)**

FLORAL DESIGN:

TEACUP “MINI” CHALLENGE – The next floral design opportunity will be on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 with the miniature – 5” or less - “tea cup” challenge. January is also this season’s Botanical Art’s challenge. Contact Bonnie Torcivia at bltorcivia@gmail.com or 908-812-6416 if you still need a cat figurine to embellish.

UNDERWATER FLORAL WORKSHOP - Wednesday, February 5, 2025. We are excited to have Mimi Carrington, Zone IV Floral Design Chair, lead this special floral design workshop to inspire us and share her expertise. At the end of the class, each participant will be able to take home their own beautiful “underwater” arrangement. An “underwater design” requires that all, or most, of the plant material in the arrangement be underwater. This hands-on workshop is in preparation for the April 2025 Flower Show “underwater” challenge. The workshop will last from 12 noon until approximately 1:30 pm at Bingham Hall with a \$35 per person fee to cover the cost of your vase and supplies. Cash or check, made payable to Rumson Garden Club, is accepted. **To sign up, please contact Louisa Renn at louisarenn@gmail.com or 732-859-4418. DEADLINE for signing up is January 25!**

Philadelphia Flower Show News:

Interested in entering a floral or botanical art arrangement at the 2025 Pennsylvania Horticultural Society’s (PHS) Philadelphia Flower Show scheduled for March 1-9, 2025? Registration is OPEN and classes are filling up quickly. Go to <https://phsonline.org/the-flower-show/participate/exhibit/artistic-classes#arrangement> and see what classes are still accepting entries and to review all rules to exhibit. PHS offers free or low-cost arrangement master classes to flower show exhibitors and non-exhibitors who want to learn about entering the Show. Dates of the remaining classes are Jan. 11 and Jan. 18 from 10am – 12noon at PHS Town Hall. Lectures and demonstrations are given, and exhibitors are encouraged to try ideas. You do NOT need to be a member of PHS or planning to exhibit to take these classes. To sign-up for a master class, go to <https://tickets.phsonline.org/events/7ffa4888-c379-885e-48d3-fed2fdb61fa5>.

GCA News:

This winter’s GCA Floral Design Committee virtual conference, “Blooms and Beyond,” is Tuesday, February 11, 2025. If anyone would like to participate in a club watch party, please let Louisa know at 732-859-4418. The conference is free, but pre-registration is required. More information can be found on the GCA website.

The 2024 GCA Floral Design Study Group (FDSG) fall workshop was held last fall in Santa Fe, NM comprising 64 attendees from all 12 GCA Zones (of which 19 were first time students). The 2025 FDSG will be in Hawaii, so be on the lookout for more information about this incredible opportunity to study floral design with an international instructor.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Mary Jane, Stella, Bonnie, and Louisa

HORTICULTURE:

Please contact Betsy Ford at betsyford72@gmail.com if you are entering any of the Horticulture classes for January 21. She needs to know how many tables to reserve.

Also:

Container Garden Workshop

Thursday, February 20, 11am

Bingham Hall

Brad Silver-Smith

Fabulous landscape designer, gardener to the stars and collector of the weird and wacky will guide us through the process of creating our own unique terrarium or miniature garden.

Bring your own container no larger than 12" x 12" open or closed.

All materials will be provided and plants will be available for sale.

The cost is \$25 plus plants and accessories.

Sign up at the January meeting or contact Betsy Ford:

betsyford72@gmail.com

CONSERVATION:

Please consider joining the Monmouth County Audubon Society on Saturday, February 8, 2025 at Sandy Hook from 10:00 AM- 12:00 PM for a brisk February walk in search of winter birds and other creatures! Registration required: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/winter-birding-at-sandy-hook-old-visitor-center-spermaceti-cove-tickets-1110646095369?aff=oddtcreator>

Please consider participating in the Rutgers Green Infrastructure Champions program!

<http://water.rutgers.edu/Projects/GreenInfrastructureChampions/GIC.html>

Join the world in connecting to birds February 14-17. Watch the video in the enclosed link to learn more. Sign up through your email on this link, or download the Cornell U. APPS, Merlin or eBird, where your submissions will be automatically recorded on the worldwide map. Spend time in your favorite places to watch birds, or just spend the 15 minutes in your backyard during the 4 day period. Identify the birds, using the apps count them and submit your counts to help scientists better understand and protect birds around the world. Watch observations roll in from around the world. Each submitted checklist becomes a glowing light on the bird sightings map. The Backyard Count annual event happens in February and is designed to track birds before the Spring migration. RGC Conservation is preparing a native plant list that can be planted to supply more food for the migratory birds that pass through the Atlantic Flyway in our community. <https://www.birdcount.org/>

CONSERVATION:

"Bee the First to Learn About Pollinators & Trees"

January 14th from 2:00 pm -3:30 pm

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5464082848479145055>

January 15 from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

The Art & Science of Growing Native Plants from Seed: Why, When and How with Randi Eckel
Wednesday Webinar Series

National Seed Swap Day

Saturday, January 18 from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Freneau Woods Park Visitor Center, Aberdeen

Do you find yourself getting excited to start up the garden again, or maybe you have some leftover seeds you don't need anymore? Join us at the Park System's Seed Swap Event!

Vegetable/Annual/Perennial/Native seeds are all welcome! Please, no invasive species.

Place seeds in a sealed envelope or Ziploc bag, labeled with the A) plant name, B) year collected, C) where it was bought or collected from, and D) a photo of the plant (optional).

Throughout January, if possible please deliver your seed submissions to Huber Woods Environmental Center, Middletown.

For more information on the event, call 732-872-2670.

January 30 from 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Spring for Natives! NPSNJ Monmouth Groundhog Day Celebration

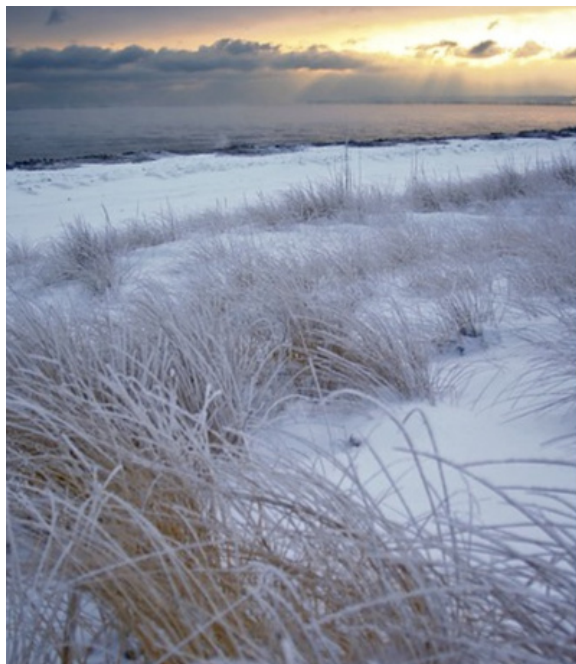
Monmouth Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse 1475 West Front Street, Lincroft, New Jersey

It's almost Groundhog Day, when we officially start looking forward to spring planting. Let's get together to celebrate the emergence of Punxsutawney Phil! Bring a savory or sweet finger food to share.

March 1st from 9:00am - 4:00pm

Community Garden Conference "Eat Real Food"

Think ahead to planting your vegetables and attend the Rutgers Cooperative Conference "Eat Real Food!" In person at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum 353 East Hanover Ave in Morris Township
Sponsored by Rutgers U Cooperative Extension of Morris County

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Photography Show this January 1/21

Take a picture of Winter on the Beach...snow or no snow:)

4 classes, 16 photos total

Class 1. Color photo of the beach in winter

Class 2 Novice

Class 3. Black & white photo of the beach in winter

Class 4 Novice

If mounting is not your thing, I'll be glad to help... and if you can't attend the meeting, you can still enter a photo.

Please text Gail 732-233-1955 before dropping off.

Anytime before Saturday 1/18

PARTNERS FOR PLANTS:

P4P fall planting at Sandy Hook

NEW MEMBERS:

Taphy Harcsar, Susan Sorokolit and Joan Lynch invite all new members to a Valentine luncheon which will be hosted by Taphy at her home, 10 Osprey Lane, on February 3rd at 12:30pm. Our guest speaker, Maya Speelmans, will be speaking on the ins and outs of passing and clerking.

CHRISTMAS GREENS:

Our heartfelt thanks for making our first year as Christmas Greens co-chairs a success! We made 48 wreaths and 40 arrangements for 19 organizations! All of you that were able to help this year played a crucial role in making this huge endeavor a seamless process!

From first time wreath maker, Wendy Wilt, she became a pro in 15 minutes, to the ladies that cheerfully delivered arrangements at a moment's notice.....Mary Brodsky, Pari Harrison, MJ O'Hare, Besty Ford, and Wendy Wilt (again)! Machiko Maki was another wreath making machine, I don't know if this was her first time, but she is a star!

A huge shoutout to Taphy Harcsar, she was an early arrival on Friday morning and fearlessly helped us put the kraft paper down! The wiring ladies on Friday morning.....Casey Kegelman, Tyler Hawley, Susan Robertson, Peeka, Chris Hetzler, Laura Wallach, and Barrie Fahey to name a few....your work was invaluable! ALL 40 arrangements were completed in this two hour workshop along with the wiring of more than 70 ornaments! The set-up ladies in the afternoon helped wire the wreaths for hanging....something I didn't even think about...Louisa Renn to the rescue and they tied up all the loose ends!

Sarah Fleming brought her daughter, Charlotte, with her on Saturday...together they made beautiful wreaths! Amy McCooey, Susan Sorokolit's daughter and a prospective member, came to help on Saturday morning even though her mom couldn't because of a cold!

We applaud Robbyn O'Neill and Stephanie Hoitt for starting the Christmas Greens ball rolling with Robbyn donating all of the mason jars and Stephanie for grabbing the red wired ribbon at Costco in September! Yes, ladies Christmas Greens really starts in the summer months!

On Saturday morning, DPW took our greens by mistake...Susan Olson came to the rescue and located them and DPW brought them back! But many of you replied to our last-minute greens call and brought more! Heather Robinson kindly moved our young volunteers around to suit our whims, thank you Heather, for setting up Sign up Genius and for securing young volunteers!

And the biggest shout out to Barbara Spinelli, the bow maker extraordinaire! Barbara, on her own, was making bows through the summer and when we connected in September, she had the task well in hand! Under her tutelage, I am proud to say that I know how to make a perfect Barbara Spinelli bow!

We are very pleased with how smoothly Christmas Greens went...amazing work and a job well done by everyone! We look forward to doing it again next year!

Best,
Cynthia and Teresa

2025 CHRISTMAS GREENS!!!



NJ COMMITTEE:

2024 | 2025



The New Jersey Committee of the Garden Club of America was founded in 1987 to utilize surplus funds from the GCA Annual Meeting hosted by Zone IV clubs. In 1994, **The Growing Fund** branched off to raise funds to provide Zone IV clubs with grant money to fund worthwhile projects within the state. **The Growing Fund** generates about \$25,000 a year through the generous donations of the members of the Zone IV Garden Clubs.

Over the years, every club in Zone IV has received multiple **Growing Fund** grants that have allowed them to actively pursue local endeavors that help educate others as well as to beautify and restore our New Jersey environment. To date, **The Growing Fund** has gifted over \$572,000 to support over 94 projects.

We encourage all Zone IV Garden Club members to donate to help our Garden State flourish!

CLICK HERE TO MAKE A DONATION

VISIT
<http://www.njcommitteegca.org/>

SCAN
the QR code with your phone's camera

OR

If you prefer to donate by mail, write a check to **"NJC of GCA"**
Mail to: **Fran Ciolino**
49 Afton Drive
Florham Park, NJ 07932

When you donate, please note your **Garden Club Affiliation**.
Contributions of \$100 and over will be acknowledged.
We are a 501(c)(3) organization. Please consider us if your employer has a matching gift program.
Deadline for donations is May 31, 2025.

NJC of GCA Executive Board

Beth P. Riley , Chair Garden Club of Madison	Fran Ciolino , Vice Chair The Short Hills Garden Club	Peter Simone , Treasurer Plainfield Garden Club
Carolyn Von Meister , Corresponding Secretary Garden Club of Somerset Hills	Lesley Hetherington , Recording Secretary Garden Club of Somerset Hills	

Save the date:
NJ Committee lecture and luncheon, November 5, 2025,
Canoe Brook CC
Speaker: Debra Prinzing,
author of “The Flower Farmers” and
theflowerpodcast.com

RGC ON INSTAGRAM!:

Don't forget to check out the Rumsongardenclub Instagram for the latest happenings!
And please send Pari Harrison photos of any events, workshops, or any special plants you encounter, including pictures from your garden or others.
Text Pari Harrison @ 732-915-3051

GARDEN HISTORY & DESIGN:

Enjoy a tour of the January 2025 featured garden: Grafton/Undercliff
Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts

<https://www.gcamerica.org/members:news/get/id/4833>

GCA ZONE IV SHOW INFORMATION AND SCHEDULE:



The GCA ZONE IV Meeting and Show, *Gardens on the Hill*, hosted by Summit Garden Club takes place on May 20-21, 2025. Information about this event can be found [HERE](#).

The ZONE IV Show Schedule is [HERE](#). Please take a look at it and see if there is anything you would like to enter. Registration opens for all divisions except Horticulture on November 25, 2024.



The GCA invites you to the
2025 Virtual Photography Conference

Thursday, February 6, 2025
11:00 AM – 2:00 PM ET
(10am CT, 9am MT, 8am PT, 6am HT)

Photographs capture moments in time. As photographers, we rely on our personal sensibilities and the use of our photographic toolkit to elevate the moment of capture from pure documentation to artistry.

Join us! This year's conference will feature one of those creative masters who can achieve this artistry in an array of photographic genres. In session one, we will learn how to **VISUALIZE** the decisive moment and use the available elements to support that vision. In session two, we will be introduced to the tools we need to fully realize our **VISUALIZATION** and bring our intention to life.

This day is guaranteed to improve your photography skills. You are not going to want to miss it!

Karen McCormick, Jean Jarvis, Stephanie Young
2025 Photography Conference Chairs

**Registration is free and open to all
GCA club members.**

**If you are hosting or attending a watch
party, we request that all participants
register for the conference individually
to ensure clear communications.
[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE AND
REGISTER](#)**

MGRGC. "A RARE NIGHTTIME VISITOR IN THE MORNING"

I was half asleep, but something stirred me awake. A pair of glaring eyes was staring at me. Something on my balcony. Usually, mourning doves make their daily round there or an occasional sparrow. But what was this so early in the morning? It was barely eight o'clock. I fumbled for my iPhone. I had to have a record of this visitor before I lost it. So bleary eyed I check it out on my Merlin bird finder. It told me it was an immature yellow crowned night heron. (*Nyctanassa violacea*). A night heron! What was it doing awake and glaring at me early in the morning. It should be asleep. But, however, despite its name it does feed during the day.

Adults have boldly marked black and white heads with yellow crowns, though the yellow can be hard to see depending on lighting conditions. The underparts of the immature birds are brown- grey with white speckles all over the feathers, and short, (for a heron), orange-yellow legs. It has a stouter bill than most herons, designed to crack the shells of crustaceans and crabs, they being their favored delicacy. In some areas of the country, it is called "crab eater." Although since our creek has been over- fished for crabs lately, all crab lovers, birds and humans, would be hard put to find any.

They are very solitary and secretive, common in parts of the southeast. So, what was it doing here in the northeast. Perhaps blown off course by a storm? A poor young bird with no sense of direction. Lost and alone.

This was August and fledgling season. Maybe it had parents who also found themselves at the Jersey Shore and had nested here. Could our youngster have been pushed out of its nest by them and told to be self sufficient? It looks bedraggled and somewhat hungry. Is it looking for a mate, who would also be a rare visitor. Would they decide to set up house and start a family. Their permanent residence is in Florida. Apparently, because of global warming, a few have now wandered far to the north. So, something told them that New Jersey is the place to raise a family. Good thinking.

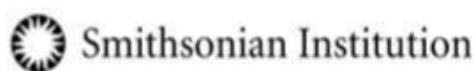
It paced along the balcony trying to see or find something edible. The river was close by, surely a better bet than my balcony. Eventually, it gave up and flew off down to the driveway and away from the river. GPS challenged, maybe. But where was it going?



Haiku
Looking worse for wear
A yellow crowned night heron
At home in Jersey



Enjoy another one minute report!



A Garden History & Design **One Minute Report** from the Archives of American Gardens (AAG)

"We must find our greatest help at home; we must teach children to love and protect wild flowers," wrote Ervanna Bowen Bissell in the GCA's 1921 *Bulletin*. In the 1920s, The Garden Club of America played a pivotal role in educating children about wildflower preservation. In the aftermath of rapid urbanization during the Progressive Era (1896–1917), the importance of conservation was recognized and promoted across the United States. The GCA prioritized nature education to instill a desire in the younger generation to protect native plants.

Wildflower Preservation Education for Blooming Young Minds



Left: "Enjoy & Not Destroy: Hands Off The Wild Flowers," conservation poster by Beatrice Woods of The GC of Cincinnati won first prize at the International Flower Show, circa 1925-1940. Right: Alice Earle Hyde's *Chart of Wildflowers*, circa 1927, illustrated 25 diminishing wildflowers and was on the approved distribution list for New York City schools. Lantern slides like these were used in lectures to educate both adults and children.

The GCA used various methods to engage children and cultivate their interest in wildflowers. Many clubs joined with the Wild Flower Preservation Society in educational endeavors, such as distributing posters and giving slide lectures. Clubs organized "Nature Lovers' Leagues" at local schools and funded lecturers to teach children about wildflower care, sometimes giving out small buttons with the "Enjoy, Not Destroy" slogan to wear. One league reported a membership of over 30,000 school children at its 15-year mark.

Wildflower committees held essay competitions that encouraged children to express their understanding and appreciation of wildflower conservation in their own words. "Over three thousand children competed," the Wilmington Garden Club announced in 1924, "and all the essays were so good that it was difficult to select the best." Wildflower exhibits, also called "Nature Corners," were organized in public libraries, and clubs donated books, specimens, and photographs for children to learn about the importance of preserving wildflowers.

Through these efforts, the GCA made significant contributions to the early environmental education movement, fostering in children a love for nature and an understanding of the critical role of conservation. Thanks to the GCA Collection at AAG, stories like this one help preserve our garden heritage.

*Images from The Garden Club of America Collection at the Archives of American Gardens.
By Sara Riley, AAG/GCA Garden History and Design Intern, December 2024.*

Have a tip to share or a question to ask other members for advice? We'll post it here!

Email Anne @ annejdreiss@gmail.com