



Trent Woods Garden Club

January 2024

Hello TWGC Members,

I hope you have all enjoyed the Holidays with your friends and family. With the new year we now have news. As you all know, we no longer have a grower for the herb sale. It is important for TWGC to continue providing two \$1,000. scholarships to worthy local students in the agriculture, ecology, forestry, and related fields. The fundraising committee has decided to hold a Spring Tea, for members and friends on March 23, 2024.

The event will be held at Broad St. Christian Church 802 Broad St., New Bern from 2-4 pm (thank you Sue Wyatt). The event will include delicious savory and sweet nibbles, teas, lovely set tables, some delightful raffle items and a wonderful afternoon with new and old friends.

Ann Hall has graciously offered to organize the hostesses for each table. I believe she needs three more hostesses, and she can help you with everything you need to know.

Paula Hartman is thankfully leading the centerpiece committee, Please see Paula if you would like to design a floral arrangement specially made for a particular tablescape.

Tickets will be offered to TWGC members first and then the public, in the very near future.

If you are interested in attending or helping please contact either Rhona Beadle at rhonab451@gmail.com or Deb Tallman at Deborah_t_07760@yahoo.com The \$25.00 Spring Tea tickets will be sold on a first come basis.

Thank you to all the volunteers that have already signed up to help make this a success. This event is shaping up to be a nice fun affair that everyone will enjoy! If you have any questions please contact Rhona, Deb or me.

Raye Lynn Longhini, TWGC President

Member of National Garden Clubs, Inc.

And

Garden Clubs of North Carolina, Inc.

TWGC Executive Board 2023-24

Raye Lynn Longhini

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2nd Vice President, Ann G. Hall

Recording Secretary, Marcia Sproul

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Corresponding Secretary, Gail McLamb

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TWGC 2023-2025 Standing Chairs

Awards Chair-Paula Hartman – paulamhartman1947@gmail.com 252-670-3233

Beautification and Civic Development Chair- Sue Wyatt – swyatt@suddenlink.net 252-636-0278

Communications Chair-Deb Tallman - deborah_t_07760@yahoo.com 732-539-8846

Environmental Concerns/Conservation Chair- Maureen Loomer – bee27534@aol.com 252- 638-5502

Finance Chair- Rhona Beadle - rhonab451@gmail.com 862-266-7888

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Garden Therapy Chair- Jeanne Garner - jag1law@aol.com 301-332-2591

Horticulture Chair-Maureen Loomer– bee27534@aol.com 252-638-5502

Hospitality/Liaison with New Bern Golf & Country Club Chair- Judy Boyd – judysboyd@embarqmail.com 252-638-6597

Memorials Chair- Frances Eder – minfrances@gmail.com 252-634-4114

Parliamentarian/By-Laws Chair-Deb Tallman - deborah_t_07760@yahoo.com 732-539-8846

Photographer Chair-Kathleen Marty - martykathleen558@gmail.com 207-350-6031

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Yearbook Chair-Judy Lott – judylott@netzero.com 252-665-1352

Youth Gardeners Chair- Paula Hartman – paulamhartman1947@gmail.com 252-670-3233

Trent Woods Garden Club Members' Meeting

January 11, 2023

New Bern Golf & Country Club 4301 Country Club Road, New Bern, NC 28562

10:00 am – Coffee and Social 10:30 – Meeting and Program

12 Noon – Lunch

Program

Olwen Jarvis
Local Bird Expert

Menu Selections

Davis Cup Salad – Crisp Romaine lettuce with grilled chicken breast, raisins, candied walnuts, strawberries and blue cheese crumbles

OR

Grilled 6 ounce Culotte Steak – sauce forestiere, whipped potatoes with chef's choice of vegetable

Please contact Judy Boyd to make a reservation by Tuesday December 9th and indicate your choice judysboyd@embarqmail.com

Lunch cost \$25. due before start of meeting.

Meeting only \$10.

Trent Woods Garden Club presents a

SPRING



TEA

Saturday March 23, 2024 2-4pm

Broad St Christian Church

This event will include delicious savory and sweet nibbles, teas, lovely set tables, some delightful raffle items and a wonderful afternoon with new and old friends.

If you are interested in attending please contact either Rhona Beadle at rhonab451@gmail.com or Deb Tallman at Deborah_t_07760@yahoo.com \$25.00 tickets are on a first come basis.

Horticulture Corner-January 2024

By Maureen Loomer



*Secret Gardens of the heart
Where dreams live on forever
I see you shining through the night
In the ice and snow of winter*

-- Judy
Collins, American singer and songwriter.

Although I was born and grew to adulthood in southern California, I love the change of seasons we enjoy in North Carolina. Collins wrote this song in memory of her grandmother and I chose it for this month's column mindful that this season brings memories of absent loved ones as well as optimism for new beginnings. May the peace of a winter garden bring joy as well as comfort to us all.

Imported to the US from the Mediterranean in the mid-19th century, the carnation (*Dianthus caryophyllus*) is **January's primary birth flower** per the *Old Farmer's Almanac*. Like roses, carnations traditionally communicate a sender's sentiments: light red (admiration), dark red (deep love), white (pure love, remembrance), pink (affection, mother love), purple (capriciousness), yellow (disappointment, rejection), striped (regret).

Spring finds many cultivars of this mostly evergreen perennial in our garden centers come spring but be warned that they are extremely heat-intolerant (<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/dianthus-caryophyllus/>). I have had some success with them in lightly shaded and well-drained areas that can be kept cooler in the heat of summer. I love the spicy scent and deer don't.

Winter Blooms: You may enjoy this article from Our State magazine discussing several winter blooming plants for the North Carolina Garden. <https://www.ourstate.com/a-winter-guide-to-north-carolina-blooms/>. Snow drops (*Galanthus*) are January's secondary birth flowers and, depending on the variety, can bloom late autumn, late winter, or early spring. I have never tried *Galanthus* because our winters are frequently so warm and wet. This plant is usually started from bulbs and also reseeds although the seeds must have temperatures of 20° to germinate.

Member question: When is it too late to plant fall bulbs? The planting "sweet spot" depends on soil temperature. Here I will make yet another plug for every gardener to have a combination soil meter for temperature, light, pH, and moisture. Ideal fall bulb planting requires soil temperature below 60°F (<https://wayne.ces.ncsu.edu/2023/11/plant-bulbs-this-fall-for-spring-flowers/>). Because of our long, warm autumns, I planted narcissus bulbs in early December and had them come up nicely in March so they had enough time for root development. In the ground, my challenge with many bulbs is that they rot if they get too warm and wet for too long and so (as with many plants) I like them in containers.

Speaking of containers, a few cold-hardy plants (violas, dusty miller, and coral bells) in a purple bowl were my whimsical horticultural specimens for December. Just a bit of relief from red and white. So until next month....

January 2023

Environmental Concerns and Conservation

By Maureen Loomer

February 4, 2024 is **Craven County's "Little Sweep" Clean Sweep event!** Volunteers are needed to help clean up our communities. <https://www.cravencountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/13619/Clean-Sweep-Flier---Feb-4th>

December's rainfall totals ranged from average/normal to twice normal across most of North Carolina with Craven and Pamlico counties enjoying over 3X normal precipitation. Mild drought in the Piedmont and moderate drought in the mountains persist, but soil conditions are good so far.

<https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/ConditionsOutlooks/CurrentConditions.aspx>

North Carolina's firefighters battled 360 wildfires that burned 845 acres between December 1 and December 28, 2023. As of this writing, all but two in Onslow County were at least 80% contained. The NC Forestry Service points out that careless debris burning is the leading cause of wildfires in North Carolina. Trent Woods' burning ordinance permits outdoor burning of yard debris ONLY. Burning is permitted ONLY on Tuesday, Thursday, and the first full weekend and the third weekend of each calendar month from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm. The fire cannot be added to or increased after 6:00 pm. All embers must be completely extinguished by 10:00 pm. (For the purposes of the ordinance, "weekend" refers to a consecutive Saturday and Sunday) https://www.trentwoodsnc.org/index.asp?SEC=5E7B70C8-E15C-4D77-BC65-E004174D66BD&DE=6843B0F2-2BE1-4017-B15A-87BE27E13D6F&Type=B_BASIC

The ordinance is overruled on state weather service Red Flag days during which conditions make outdoor burning unsafe.

Good news for Craven County is the award of 172 acres for what will be one of the largest nature parks in the state. I will provide more information on this important project when I have it.

<https://newbernow.com/2023/12/craven-county-receives-land-for-new-172-acre-nature-park.html>

January 2024

How to care for 'holiday' plants

By Judi Lloyd

We are often given holiday plants at this time of year: Poinsettias, Paperwhites or Amaryllis, but how do we care for them now and after their beauty has faded?

First, keep them in a sunny window and avoid sudden temperature changes. *Poinsettias*: keep soil moist, but don't let water stand in the pot saucer. In late winter reduce watering to a minimum and store in a cool place until late spring. When frosts are past, set pots in sun outdoors. They often stay quite nice over the summer months, but do not "re-bloom" the next winter without much effort. It's easier to toss and buy a new one. *Paperwhites*: can be forced to bloom in just water. Fill vase with water until it is within 1/8 inch from bulb – water should not touch the bottom of bulb as this can cause rot. You can fill the vase with marbles or pebbles to keep it from toppling over as these stalks tend to grow very tall. Keep in a cool, dark area for a week allowing bulb to root. Then bring vase into area with good light. It should bloom within 3 to 4 weeks. Maintain water level while bulb is growing. Paperwhites can be planted outside after the last frost.

Amaryllis: can be forced in either a light potting soil or in a shallow dish with stones and water. The bigger the amaryllis bulb the better, as it will produce more than one stalk of blooms the first year. The smaller ones, while a little cheaper, will probably only produce one stalk. They like to be pot-bound, so choose a container that is only an inch or two bigger than the bulb. Make sure that the top third of the bulb is exposed and put the pot in bright, indirect light. Keep the soil moist but not wet. A thick flower stalk will shoot up and flat leaves will follow within two to eight weeks. Rotate the pot every few days so that the flower stalk gets consistent light on all sides (otherwise it will grow crooked). And, the best part is that where we live, you can plant it outside in the spring and it will come up every year after that with gorgeous blooms in your yard!



What is the difference between Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter cacti?

You can probably guess by their names when these beautiful plants generally bloom; Thanksgiving cacti typically begin in late fall and Christmas cacti around a month later. An Easter cactus starts to produce flower buds in February or March. Of course, any of these can bloom earlier or later due to growing conditions.

Both the Thanksgiving and Christmas plants look very similar and fall under the genus *Schlumbergera*. Their colors are the same and they require the same care. The leaf segment edges of Christmas cacti are smooth and rounded whereas Thanksgiving cacti have pointy, jagged ones.

Both of these cacti need cool temperatures (roughly 55 to 65 degrees) to begin flower production. To "push" when your plant will bloom, keep track of the outside temperatures. When nights are consistently below 50 degrees, place the plant by a drafty window or when it hits the ideal 55 to 60 degree range, put it outside. The main reason that Thanksgiving and Christmas cacti bloom when they do is the seasons longer periods of uninterrupted darkness, around 13 to 16 hours, and shortened days. So, if your plant is where there is light (even artificial) for long periods, it may interrupt the bloom time for you.

My biggest piece of advice for you if you want a Christmas cactus to bloom later in the season, is to make sure it actually is a Christmas cactus and not a Thanksgiving one. When purchasing a new cactus go by the botanical name instead of the common one. A Christmas cactus is *Schlumbergera x buckleyi* and a Thanksgiving cactus is *Schlumbergera truncata*. Of course, depending on where you purchase your plant, it may not be marked as such.

Easter cacti (*Rhipsalidopsis gaertneri* or *Hatiora gaertneri*) have bristles on the edges of their leaf segments. The flowers of the spring variety also are more star-shaped. Something to consider, especially with the Easter cacti, is how much water they need. Easter species are especially sensitive to overwatering, which can cause great damage to the plants. Make sure you wait until the soil in the pot is dry before watering it. Remember, these are cacti and not your typical houseplants.

As for now, manipulate your cactus's exposure to light and temperature conditions to try to achieve the perfect blooming season for your needs.

Enjoy these beauties during times of the year when not much else is blooming!

Garden Therapy Schedule 2023-2024

Jeanne Garner – ag1law@aol.com

301-332-2591

Karen Kimball - karenkimball2@gmail.com

603-438-1839

Monday, January 15, 2024 10am Karen Kimball - 603-438-1839

Golden Heights, 603 West Street
Pinecone feeders

Monday, February 12, 2024 10am Annette Daugherty 252-671-7112

Homeplace, 1309 McCarthy Blvd
Floral arrangements

Monday, March 18, 2024 10am

Rhona Beadle 826-266-7888

Monarch, 1320 Health Drive
Pinecone feeders

Monday, April 15, 2024 10am

Jeanne Garner 301-332-2591

River Point Crest, 2600 Old Cherry Point Road
Plant Vegetable Garden

Monthly Program December 2023

TWGC members were treated to an expert bow tying by our own Gail McLamb. Gail also provided a lovely example of gift giving of an amaryllis in a cute top hat planter with a grand bow tied on the brim.



Trent Woods Christmas Parade

TWGC had a grand time riding in the Trent Woods Christmas Parade. Sullen skies could not hamper the delight of TWGC members throwing candy and wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas from five convertible cars. Participants included: Paula Hartman, Frances Eder, Maggie Ferrara, Jan Cahoon, Ann Hall, Jeanne Garner, President Raye Lynn Longhini, Gail McLamb, Rhona Beadle and Verna Kuyper and Deb Tallman



December 2023 Seasonal Design by Debbie Durham



Bishop Memorial Home

A couple of TWGC elves decorated the outside of Bishop Home in early December. They created swags from greens and bows for the two side entrances and the front door. A resident stopped to speak with us and was so happy that we were sharing our Christmas cheer!



December 2023 Garden Therapy

TWGC volunteers visited Brookdale in December. Everyone had a wonderful time helping the residents create holiday arrangements.



December 2023 Beautification

The committee was busy planting winter cabbage at the Blue Star memorials and in the Trent Woods parks.



January 2024 Bird of the Month

Shoebill Stork

by Michael Creedon



This year we are going to wander away from the birds of eastern N.C. and explore some birds from other parts of the world. The continental US holds 974 of the more than 10,000 species in the world, N.C. having 400 of those. And, in case you haven't read, the "Authorities" of the bird world have decided to rename every bird in the world that has an individual's name attached to it. Good time to be old (er).

This month we will look at the Shoebill Stork. When I first saw a photo of this bird, I dreamed that someday I might actually be able to see it, but at the time it was only a pipe dream. I have just returned from Uganda where this extremely vulnerable bird can be found and find it we did.

The Shoebill Stork is a very long-legged wading bird with a bill that resembles a shoe. It lives in East African swamps, largely papyrus swamps. It is a very tall bird, from 4 to 4 1/2 feet tall, with the third largest bill, after

pelicans and other large storks. Its feet are exceptionally large, with the middle toe measuring over 7". When it flies on its 8' wings, it has one of the slowest flapping rates of any bird. They appear in wall paintings of ancient Arabic as well as in Egyptian hieroglyphs.



The freshwater swamps it inhabits must either be very shallow or have beds of floating vegetation for it to stand on. They are solitary birds, and their method of foraging has led them to be called "Statue-like". It will stalk its prey with very slow patient strides, frequently motionless. When prey is spotted, the Shoebill strikes quickly and violently, and depending on the size of the prey, handling can take up to 10 minutes. Their preferred diet consists of lungfish, tilapia and catfish, as well as long snakes.

Bird of the Month (continued)

Shoebills are monogamous from an early age. When breeding, the pair require isolation, vigorously defending up to 1 1/2 square miles of swamp from others. They build their nests on floating vegetation, flattening an area 10' across, creating a nest 6' wide. From 1 to 3 eggs are laid, rarely raising more than one chick. The other eggs are considered backups. Both parents are involved in incubating, about 30 days, as well as feeding and protecting the chick. Fledging occurs at 105 days, ability to fly at 112 days. They will stay with their parents for up to 4 years, before departing to find their own territory.

Shoebills are long lived, living up to 35 years



in the wild. The population is estimated at from 3 to 5,000 birds, with habitat destruction, illegal capture and hunting its main threat. They can command \$10 to \$20,000 from zoos and private collectors. The indigenous communities that surround the swamps it inhabits have killed the birds and taken their eggs as food supplies. Only in recent years have some of these communities begun to see the value of protecting the Shoebill to encourage the birders who come to see it.

So the next time you are in Uganda, do hire a guide to take you to the Mabamba Swamp just outside Kampala, and see if you can find this magnificent bird.

Vegetable Stew by Tasty

Serves 6

Ingredients for 6 servings

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 10 oz baby bella mushroom, quartered
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 3 carrots, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon dried rosemary
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
- ¼ cup flour
- ¾ cup dry red wine
- 4 cups red potato, diced
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 2 dried bay leaves

Preparation

1. In large pot or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Once the oil begins to shimmer, add the mushrooms and cook for about 5 minutes, or until most of their juices have been released.
2. Add the onions, carrots, and celery, and cook for 4-5 minutes, or until onions are semi-translucent.
3. Add the garlic, rosemary, thyme, pepper, tomato paste, and soy sauce, and cook for 2-3 more minutes, until the herbs are fragrant.
4. Add the flour and stir until fully incorporated. Add the wine and stir until mostly absorbed.
5. Add the potatoes, vegetable broth, and bay leaves, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes are tender and the stew has thickened.
6. Remove the bay leaves and enjoy