



Garden Club Newsletter

Gardening For All Seasons

December, 2007

<http://www.chesapeakegardenclub.org>



Dates to Remember

December 2007

- 5th Hanukkah Begins
- 8-9 Hammond Harwood House Greens show
- 7 Garden in Lights begins at Annmarie Garden
- 8 Calvert Historic Society Open House
- 8-9 Solomons Walk
- 11th CGC Holiday Party
- 22nd Winter Solstice
- 24th Christmas Eve (full moon too)
- 25th Christmas Day
- 26th Boxing Day

January 2008

- 1st New Years Day
- 15th Executive Board Meeting
- 21st Martin Luther King Day
- 22nd Full Moon

February 2008

- 6th Ash Wednesday
- 14th Valentines Day
- 18th Presidents Day
- 19th CGC Regular Meeting 10:00AM

The Calvert Tourism Website is a great source for what is happening in the county.

http://www.ecalvert.com/content/tourism/special_events/index.asp



December Birthdays

No member birthdays in December.

Decembers Meeting Is a Party!

We will be going to Marybeth Krovisky House on Dec 11th @ 11:00 AM for our Christmas Party.

Please bring a covered dish and a \$10.00 gift to swap. Her address is 7320 Stone Court, St Leonard, MD 20685 for MapQuest directions.

Design

Winter Holiday Arrangement Designer's Choice of plant material and design

Horticulture

A flowering houseplant in a pot not to exceed 10" across

A foliage houseplant in a pot not to exceed 10" across.

Double potting permitted

Plantings from the President

Submitted by Mary Alys

Hi Everyone,

The Hospice Tree!

I want to let everyone know I think the 2007 Chesapeake Garden Club tree was one of the

best ever! I hope everyone got a chance to see it!

Kay, Grace and Denise, put all their talent, time and effort into this project. They also contributed a lot of their own materials. A Thousand Thanks!

The Greens Show!

We do not have a final tally yet, but I think we did very well!

Jo Ellen and Melinda did a great job of pulling it all together with the help of all our members. They had a workshop taught by Dorrie, 12 members attended to help make the beautiful centerpieces from the greens donated by various members and friends. It was great to see our new members pitching in.

A big thanks to those of you who made the cookies. There were plenty and they were delicious.

We tried something new this year with the "live Auction" it was a big hit and everyone had fun! Pattie At Lee was a great Auctioneer!

Thank you again to all of our members for your help and support. Wishing you all a blessed Christmas and a Healthy New Year!

Thanks,
Mary Alys



Just a Note

JoEllen and I wanted to acknowledge a few members who when asked to go the extra mile came thru for us.

Sybil helped in so many ways that we can't list them all. She had to handle all the money and solicited most of the silent auction items. In addition, she helped with the little things that are so important to pull off an event like this.

Sybil, Sande, and Jane hit the jackpot with the Silent Auction. It was a huge success and one of our biggest moneymakers of the day!!!

Dorrie's advice really helped us to pull off making all those centerpieces. She was able to turn those of us who had little practice in this area into creative "designers". The beautiful designs that she created were a big hit during the auction and brought in lots of money for our club.

Bev was our go-to girl, putting in extra time and even fetching sandwiches for the labors!

Last but not least, Vicky! She did a great job with the entertainment of our guests and I think all of us learned a thing or two from her tips of the trade.

Although Peggy was missed, we were able as a club to come together and to have a great fundraiser as well as some fun in the process.

Thanks again,
JoEllen and Melinda



Treasurer's Report

Submitted by Sybil Russell

Balance on Hand as of Nov 13th 2007
\$6,712.49

Hammond Harwood House Greens Show and Sale

This annual 18th century Greens Show and Sale at the historic Hammond-Harwood House features the sale of fresh holiday decorations, home-made refreshments, and tours of the period rooms in their holiday splendor.

December 6th-9th, 2007, 10:00-4:00 p.m.

Free admission for sale of greens only. **The museum will be open for tours Dec. 6th-**

9th, 10:00-4:00; 13th-16th from 12pm-4:00pm; 20th-23rd from 12pm-4:00pm.

\$8.00 Admission for adults, \$5.00 for children. Call 410-263-4683 ext. 13 for information.

Conservation Corner

Submitted by Bernie Halloran



It's the Runoff Ladies, the Runoff

By Bernie Halloran

Our neighborhoods are a major source of water pollution. When rainwater runs across roofs, lawns, driveways, parking lots and public roads, it picks up all kinds of chemicals and small particles; stuff like loose soil, lawn care chemicals, pet waste, heavy metals, oil, antifreeze, industrial and yard waste.

Follow the flow. This dirty water then runs through ditches or into storm sewers and directly into our local streams, rivers and then into the Bay, carrying with it all matter of additional pollution. There's no filtering. There's no sanitation rest-stop for run off.

How careless are we? Here's an example: according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 40 percent of "do-it-yourself" mechanics pour or spill used motor oil onto roads, driveways or lawns, releasing a total of 80 million gallons each year. Consider this: just one gallon of oil can create an 8-acre oil slick.

How bad can dog poop be? The EPA has also determined that just 2 or 3 days of droppings from 100 dogs in a small bay watershed can contribute enough bacteria to close the area to swimming. Then consider that Americans own 73 million dogs.

Anne Arundel is already spending 11 million dollars a year to control its runoff, but the county also has a long-term, outstanding need to spend 1.3 *billion dollars* to control the damage that runoff has done and continues to do rivers and streams and, yes, the Bay.

That's \$10,000 per household. "Save the Bay" license plates don't save the Bay.

The Villian: Impervious surfaces like roofs, parking lots, driveways and highways increase the power of rainfall runoff, leading to increased erosion and downstream flooding. Removing trees and native grasses from the banks of rivers and streams and large swaths of property bordering on the Bay or in our own backyards, presumably to "beautify," actually eliminates the natural buffer areas that help filter runoff before it reaches the already choked streams, rivers and the Bay.

Excess nutrients from improperly applied fertilizers and pet waste promote algae blooms, which eventually cause fish kills. Disease-causing bacteria from pets and wildlife run off lawns and roadsides into creeks, and streams and you know the rest.

Poultry Pollution. Then there's Maryland's dirty little secret: the poultry industry. The full impact that the poultry industry's chicken waste is having on nutrient loads in the Chesapeake watershed is a secret, a state secret.

According to the Waterkeeper Alliance, run by Robert F. Kennedy Jr., ninety percent of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal waters are impaired by nutrient pollution. A large part of this pollution comes from industrial farms whose seepage and runoff turns much of the bay into an anoxic dead zone each summer, choking aquatic life, closing beaches and causing illness in people, livestock and pets and killing thousands of fish.

Much of this agricultural pollution makes its way into the Chesapeake Bay in the form of chicken waste; one billion pounds of chicken litter is produced in Maryland each year – far more than the state's farmland can absorb as fertilizer.

Remarkably, neither the Maryland poultry industry nor the State government will divulge any specifics about how Maryland's industrial chicken facilities operate. The Maryland Department of Agriculture, which is responsible for overseeing the disposal of chicken waste, has classified the nutrient management plans, which are supposed to detail how each farm will safely dispose of this waste, as **SECRET**. We, the citizens, are kept from knowing the size, location ownership,

and other basic information about these factory farming facilities and how they dispose of their waste.

Doing our Share. We can reduce the area of impervious and paved surfaces around our homes with some careful planning. We can re-plant where woody vegetation has been removed or mowed down. We can re-establish native grasses or other vegetative cover on bare spots. Where hillsides are too steep, we can use other landscaping groundcovers, mulch and shrubs to cover the soil.

We can bag and bury pet poop. We can keep de-icing materials on paved surfaces and only de-ice what's necessary. And we can clean up de-icing residue after the thaw. We can compost yard waste, drive less, and recycle used lawnmower, weed-whacker and other oils. We can re-direct rainwater from down-spouts into garden beds where it's really useful. And we can live with gravel driveways, parking pads and other permeable paths.

Finally, we can contact our local officials and demand full disclosure on our too secret poultry industry. Our man, Senator Mike Miller, (410) 841-3700, (301) 858-3700 1-800-492-7122, ext. 3700 (toll free) email: mike.miller@senate.state.md.us. Delegate Sue Kullen (410) 841-3231, (301) 858-3231, 1-800-492-7122, ext. 3231 (toll free) e-mail: sue.kullen@house.state.md.us and Delegate Joe Vakkario (410) 841-3488, (301) 858-3488, 1-800-492-7122, ext. 3488 (toll free) joseph.vallario@house.state.md.us Jim Proctor (410) 841-3083, (301) 858-3083 or 1-800-492-7122, ext. 3083 (toll free) e-mail: james.proctor@house.state.md.us

A Little Bird Told Me



Winter Bird Feeding Ideas

By Bernie Halloran

If you are a veteran bird feeder, you've probably gained lots of insight into the foods your backyard birds prefer. Perhaps you've learned through trial and error, or perhaps you did your homework and read up on the subject like some of us who overuse Google.

If you are just getting started in bird feeding, or if you are frustrated by a lack of success in attracting birds to your feeders, the first thing you need to determine is whether you are feeding the right foods. If you are not giving the birds what they want, you might not have many birds.

Black-oil sunflower seed. This seed is the hamburger of the bird world. Almost any bird that will visit a bird feeder will eat black-oil sunflower. Birds that can't crack the seeds themselves will scour the ground under the feeders, picking up bits and pieces.

Bird feeding in North America took a major leap forward when black-oil sunflower became widely available in the early 1980s. Why do birds prefer it? The outer shell of a black-oil sunflower seed is thinner and easier to crack. The kernel inside the shell is larger than the kernel inside a white-or gray-striped sunflower seed, so birds get more food per seed from black-oil. This last fact also makes black-oil a better value for you, the seed buyer. Striped sunflower is still fine (evening grosbeaks may even prefer it slightly), but black-oil is better.

Suet. Most humans don't want a lot of fat in their diet, but for birds in winter, fat is an excellent source of energy. Ask at your grocery store butcher counter if you don't see packages of suet on display. No suet feeder? No problem-just use an old mesh onion bag. If you want to get fancy with your suet, you can render it. That is, melt it down to liquid,

remove the unmeltable bits, and then allow it to harden; this is best accomplished in a microwave oven. Rendered suet lasts longer in hot weather, and while it's melted, you can add other ingredients to it, like peanuts.

Nyjer/thistle seed. Though it can be expensive, Nyjer, or thistle, seed is eagerly consumed by all the small finches-goldfinches, house, purple, and Cassin's finches, pine siskins, and redpolls. You need to feed thistle in a thistle feeder of some kind-the two most commonly used types of thistle feeder are a tube feeder with small thistle-seed-sized holes, and a thistle sock. A thistle sock is a sock-shaped, fine-mesh synthetic bag that is filled with thistle seed. Small finches can cling to this bag and pull seeds out through the bag's mesh. Two potential problems with thistle: it can go rancid or moldy quickly in wet weather, or when guys like me carelessly water the garden, and uneaten seeds can germinate in your yard, creating a prickly patch of thistle plants. Fortunately, all thistle seed is imported to North America, and it is all supposed to be sterilized prior to entry into this country.

Mealworms. We fed mealworms to bluebirds almost all year. This year, they rewarded us with three broods of young bluebirds. Most feeder birds, except goldfinches, will eat mealworms if you offer them. Mealworms are available in bait stores, or by mail order. We get 3,000 large or medium each month from The Worm Man (1-800-318-2611). Mealworms aren't slimy and gross. In fact, they aren't even worms; they are larval stage of a beetle (*Tenebrio molitor*), if that makes you feel better. June keeps her mealworms in a tub of old-fashioned rolled oats and feeds them to the birds each morning before going to work. They know when it's breakfast time.

Forget cheap wild bird mixes; you'll be wasting your money on what the birds won't eat

One of our Members: Lisa Bierer-Garrett owns a Bird supply store. You can find good quality bird food and suet there. As well as feeders and all sorts of accessories to make bird feeding practical and fun! Visit her web site at www.wildbird.com/bow

**Merry Christmas!
And
Happy New Year!**

