



Club Flower  
Plymouth Gentian

# Plymouth Garden Club

April 2016

Judy Ingram, President

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## Membership

Active:	79
Life:	1
Associate:	10
Honorary:	2

## Horticulture

by Joy Sand

### *Who Doesn't Like Hummingbirds?*

One of the most beautiful sights in my garden for me is the flitting jewel of a Ruby-throated Hummingbird. These tiny birds can be seen in flower gardens, woodland edges, and parks from early spring to early fall throughout the eastern U.S. In the fall, they head south for the winter. The unforgiving cold of this early April is devastating for hummers.

Hummers are surprisingly bold among humans. I've had hummingbirds approach me to inspect flowers printed on a tee or the silk blooms on my sunhat. And incidentally, I've learned during this inspection that hummingbirds don't "hum". Their wings make a sound like *zub, zub* as they zoom by. Hummers make their tiny, nickel to quarter size nests of thistle and spider silk in the forks of slender tree or shrub branches, such as lilacs or Buddleia. They love the gentle spray from a garden fountain or a mister hose.

Hummingbirds seem to prefer blooms in red, orange or hot pink and of trumpet or tube shape. Favored varieties include salvia, penstemon, Monarda, Agastache,

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*No matter how long the winter,  
Spring is sure to follow. – Proverb*

**Join us for Presidents' Day** on April 13, as we celebrate our past presidents with a program displaying their many and varied talents. Our guests will include GCFM officers, SE District presidents and their guests. We'll start to assemble at 12:30 pm; see you there!

**Special thanks to Entergy** for supporting the Junior Gardener program with a grant of \$1,250. *Geri Williams*, who made the request, says the grant will buy pine tree seedlings for the popular environmental effort for two years! Thank you, Geri!

**Tree in a bag.** Speaking of Jr. Gardeners, volunteers are invited to meet at Geri Williams' house to help bag some 500 or so pine seedlings (see above) for distribution to all Plymouth 5<sup>th</sup> graders. The date is Tuesday, April 26, at 10 am. Sign-up sheet at Wednesday's meeting.

**And tree planting.** The final touch to this program is an Arbor Day tree planting at Federal Furnace Elementary School on Thursday, April 28, at 1:30 pm. The Plymouth Parks Department provides the man-power; PGC members are invited to attend and share tree-growing tips with the students.

**SE District Luncheon** is Thursday, April 21, at the Plymouth Country Club. A tasty Continental breakfast will be served from 8:15 to 9 am; program will start shortly after 9 am. Thelma Shoneman is the featured speaker; three PGC members have volunteered to create table arrangements: *June Aronson, Linda O'Neill and Meghan Rinker.*

**Library Clean-up.** *Norene Casey* has scheduled the library bed clean-up for Saturday, April 23, at 9 am. Plan to bring your gloves, tools, kneelers and bags. Should the weather look "iffy", call Norene. If you can help for an hour or two, there'll be a sign-up sheet at Wednesday's meeting.

**Garden Therapy** will visit Lifecare on Wednesday, April 27, at 10:30 am. *Natalie Caramello* will have a sign-up sheet at Wednesday's meeting. Join us for this very worthwhile and fun community service.

**Dues Are Due** (so soon!?) at the May meeting. You can give your check to *Donna Olsson* or *Jane Bishop* that day, and also pay for our Annual Luncheon on June 11 at the Plymouth Country Club. Dues are \$40; luncheon is \$33 for lobster Caesar salad or \$27 for chicken Francaise. You can also mail your check directly to Donna.

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(...hummers, continued)

red columbine and cardinal flower. Favorite vines and shrubs include honeysuckle, fuchsia, hibiscus, trumpet vine (invasive) and Buddleia.

**Steps to attracting hummers:**

1. Provide food. To maintain energy and body weight a hummer must consume 50% of its body weight.
2. Plant spring-thru-fall-blooming tubular flowers.
3. Flowers extending outward rather than down are easier to reach.
4. Plant patches of favorite flowers throughout the garden to keep the peace; both genders are territorial.
5. Feeders will attract birds in early spring; keep them scrupulously clean, replacing solution every 3 days—sooner if it gets cloudy.
6. Feed with 1:4 mixture of cane sugar to water. DO NOT use red food dye; choose a feeder with red ports or attach bright ribbons or faux flowers.
7. Birds need insects for protein and to feed their young. Avoid pesticides (including systemics) which can poison nectar.
8. Offer a mister or shallow birdbath to encourage bathing and splashing. Sticky-winged hummers can't fly!

**And in closing:**

*First a howling blizzard wakes us,  
Then the rain comes down to soak us,  
Then before the eye can focus,  
Crocus.*

*Lilia Rogers*

**Art in Bloom** is just around the corner (April 30-May 2). If you were at our March meeting you saw the subject *Johanna Longo* and *Jean Dobachesky* are working with—a portrait of Major Thomas Savage. Jean prepared a few notes describing their initial thoughts. “Major Thomas Savage is very current to us Plymouthans because we are getting ready to celebrate 400 years as a colony. If it weren't for men like the major, we might be speaking a different language! The painting evokes warm shades of brown and gold which we hope to replicate with our various shades of flowers. The features we observed were his smooth forehead and his golden shoulders. Our container also has smooth round ovals.” Interestingly, it was used by Jean in her first Art in Bloom over 10 years ago!.

**Horticultural Challenge** time is upon us. The SE District Flower Show is at the Cahoon Museum in Cotuit on July 19-21. If you're planning to enter the challenge, now's the time to start your plants. Nasturtium seeds will be available from *Joy Sand* at Wednesday's meeting, along with directions. Choose from vining or mounding variety. Directions: Plant seeds NOW. Presoaking helps germination. Vines may have support. Enter one plant per pot. Bring entries to the Museum on Monday, July 18.

**Plant Sale Notes.** Our annual plant sale is May 21, and now is the time to start planning to make this year's event the best ever. Here are some thoughts from the captains:

**Horticulture**—*Joy Sand*. Select your perennials for bare root prep; lift those you want to pot up so they can recover and look good. Use craft sticks or plastic flatware as labels. If donating Heritage Plants (see March newsletter), label as “Heritage.” Container gardens of pansies, petunias or other annuals are popular, as are herbs. If you can, help a friend by being a “plant taxi.”

**Kitchen Treats**—*Natalie Caramello*. Everybody is expected to bake or bring something special from their kitchen. Note any special ingredients like nuts or other allergens. Package items ready for sale (in plastic wrap, by dozens or ½ dozens, in baggies, etc.)

**Attic Treasures**—*Meghan Rinker*. Bring those favorite items that no longer fit your décor. Somebody else will love them!

**Boutique**—*Stacy Connor*. Put your crafter's cap on and see what appeals to your creative child.

**In general**—Please sign up to help set up and price Friday afternoon, May 20; sell on Saturday, May 21; and clear up after the sale. Let's all get involved, for the good of the club! Questions? Call a captain!

**2016-16 Slate of Officers.** The Nominating Committee (*Gail Conner, Chair; Stacy Connor and Jean Dobachesky*), recommended the following slate of officers for next year, which was approved by the Board. Voting will take place at our May meeting; initiation will be at the Annual Luncheon, June 11. The slate includes: *Linda O'Neill*, President; *Susan Denehy*, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President; *Pat Parker* and *Stacy Connor*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Presidents; *Donna Olsson*, Treasurer; *Jane Bishop*; Assistant Treasurer; *Jean Whitten*, Recording Secretary; *Janette Somerville*, Corresponding Secretary; *Liz Branch*, Auditor.