



Club Flower
Plymouth Gentian

Website: PlymouthGardenClub.org

Plymouth Garden Club

March 2018

Linda O'Neill, President

Volume 48 Issue 9

Membership

Active	76
Life:	2
Associate	13

Horticulture By Joy Sands

Winter Wrap-Up

Indoor gardeners are confused by the winter flowering cactus all called "Christmas cactus". The cactus your grandmother displayed and passed cuttings among family and friends was *Schlumbergera truncata*, the long-lived (often more than a century) lobster cactus. The foliage boasts points along its foliage, but is less common on the retail market today because the 'foliage', called Phylloclades, are actually flattened stems and are delicate and breakable. They can be broken simply during watering. Pieces are easily rooted in slightly damp potting or seed starting soil. The phylloclades of contemporary Christmas cactus, *Schlumbergera brigesii*, have smooth sides. A third cactus, the Easter cactus, *Rhipsalidopsis gaertneri*, has smooth sides to the 'leaf' and a fluffy blossom or sometimes two at the tip of the 'leaf'. They bloom in March or April. (over)

Our **MARCH MEETING PROGRAM** will be Suzanne Mahler who's always fun. She'll present a slide show entitled "A Garden for Butterflies, Hummingbirds, and Other Creatures (Frogs, Toads, Raccoons, Dragonflies, and Native Bees)". She is the Past President of the NE Daylily Society and an Overseer for Mass Hort Society. We will start promptly at 1pm, come early to socialize.

Yvonne Cappela was wonderful for our Valentines Day Meeting, she created 4 beautiful terrariums that you can see on the website, check out our updated website. We also had a chance opportunity for 3 or 4 arrangements that Liz Hester and Linda O'Neill made at home.

NEW MEMBERS – Please welcome our two newest members:

Paula Butterfield

Joan Govoni

JR. GARDENER ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM – We received a generous grant from Entergy Plymouth to pay for the seedling trees that we will give out to the 5th graders for Arbor Day. We will need to package the seedlings between April 24-26 and need someone to host the packaging session.

The school presentations begin on March 5 and continue through April. We still need a volunteer to assist on March 26 and 28. If you can help out, contact Geri.

PLANT SALE ALERT - There are only three 'Garden Cub Days' until the **Spring Plant Sale, May 19**. As the garden awakens, make note of perennials that are crowded and dig and pot plants for the sale. Trees, shrubs and bushes can be dug and potted while still dormant. Store the pots in a spot that receives morning sun and partial afternoon shade. Keep the potted plants moist but not soaked. Include a name label. If digging is not your 'thing', consider container or basket gardens. Line baskets with plastic food containers and cut slits for drainage. Fill with potting soil and annuals or grasses.

Plants and other Sale donations are to be brought to the Church on Friday, May 18 afternoon. To make this sale a success, remember, we need YOU to help set up on Friday, help the day of the sale and clean up afterward. See you then!

(continued)

The Christmas cacti come in red, magenta, white, yellow, tangerine. The Easter cacti come in magenta. All three like well-drained, light potting soil. Keep out of direct sun and allow soil to dry before watering. Provide temp of 55 to 60 degrees and 12 to 14 hours of darkness to encourage blooms.

This has been a horrendous winter for our birds. I have noticed a decline in the feeder census since November. It is crucial to provide feeder food. The seed heads left in the garden last fall have been stripped. I recommend a variety of seeds (except millet) plus dried insects, fruit and seed cakes. Some birds prefer ground feeders. Millet attracts sparrows who bully and drive away other birds from the feeders now, and nesting sites later – even bluejays.

According to Birds and Blossoms there are new guidelines for feeding birds. This winter/spring the recommendation is using only previously uncooked rendered beef fat.

There are too many additives and nitrates in bacon fat. Bread, rolls, cakes are unhealthy because they host mold that is toxic to birds.

Seed are most birds' natural diet. Leave gardens 'au natural' in the fall. Then supplement with feeders. Carnivores such as robins, catbirds, mocking birds welcome freeze dried insects and dry fruit. Nuthatches and wood peckers adore suet cake with added seed and fruits.

I am hosting a flock of 30 turkeys, hens and toms, in my garden. Do you have any idea how much 30 turkeys can eat in 20 minutes? Yikes!

GARDEN THERAPY - The next Garden Therapy program will be on **March 8 at 9:45 am at Life Care Center** on Obery Street. You will help patients make small floral arrangements to take back to their room. Call or e-mail Meghan Rinker. Join in on the fun!

LIBRARY FLOWER BEDS – A date has not been set yet to clean up the beds for spring. We can always use more help maintaining the beds through the growing months. Please contact Susan Denehy to confirm that you will continue to maintain a bed or to sign up to help.

Last years volunteers:

Bed 1 (closet to South St) Liz Hester

Bed 2 Susan Denehy

Bed 3 Monica Mooney/ Fran Minichiello

Bed 4 Janet Voyer/ Elaine Finneral

Bed 5 June Gillette/ Gail Conner

Bed 6 Tina Cappucci/ Gay Flood

Bed 7 Norene Casey/ Joy Sand

Bed 8 Jean Dobachesky/ Patty O'Brien

Bed 9 Marge Galletta

Bed 10 (closest to Library) Linda O'Neill

A Big THANK YOU to ENTERGY PLYMOUTH for their generous grant to underwrite the costs of the Jr. Gardener Program, as well as the purchase of daffodils and plantings to enhance Brewster Gardens.

The **SE DISTRICT MEETING** will be on **April 19** at the **Coonamessett Inn**. It will start at 8:30 am with Continental Breakfast, followed by the meeting and a program with 3 District designers creating 'Art in Boom' displays. Lunch choice of Shrimp or Chicken salad. Cost \$40. You can give your check, made out to GCFM, to Jane Bishop at the March meeting. The deadline for registration is April 6.

WAYS and MEANS – We welcome anything that you might like to contribute to the Ways & Means table to be sold at the March meeting. Our goal is to keep the excitement and interest growing at the W&M table. Be sure to **CHECK IT OUT!**

PULL TABS – Linda will have a box at the March and April meetings to collect the pull tabs you have been collecting. If not turned in by then you will have to hold on to them until September.



Welcome Spring!