



# Plymouth Garden Club

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Pat Parker, President

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Club Flower - Plymouth Gentian

Website: [PlymouthGardenClub.org](http://PlymouthGardenClub.org)

## Membership

<b>Active</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Associate</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Life:</b>	<b>2</b>

## **The Start of Something Big From Joy Sand**

When asked to describe a positive relationship people have with our planet, most can only think of the crises: climate change, plastic pollution, or scarcity of biodiversity. But gardeners, whether veteran or newbie, know that plants and gardening feed the spirit and the stomach, as well as the planet. It is well known that expanses of trees remove CO2 from the atmosphere and release O2. But this is equally true for gardens, fields, and pastures.

Gardening begins with the soil. Regenerative agriculture is a new movement in soil management that minimizes the extensive application of chemical fertilizer on lawns and gardens and embraces the use of compost in its place. Add a layer of compost in the spring or fall to the lawn or garden and precipitation will bring the nutrients into the topsoil. The roots of grass, vegetables, and flowers only use these top few inches. There is no need to till or double dig compost deep into the soil.

(over)

**Happy New Year to all our wonderful members!** Since we are not able to meet in person due to the pandemic we have arranged for our January speaker to present his program via Zoom to our members on **Wednesday, January 13 at 1pm**. Join the **Zoom Meeting** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83857325220?pwd=NVZRYVILWXVLb2lTRUUxMVZERGOxQT09>

Blake Dinius is the Plymouth County entomologist educator and he will speak to us about “The Good, The Bad and The Ugly, Garden Insects”. We will explore the many insects found in our own backyard and talk about the many ecosystem services they provide and how to separate the good from the bad and ugly. There will also be a brief business meeting.

**GREEN SALE SUCCESS:** The final results of the Greens Sale have been determined: **we netted \$2728.38 after all expenses**. The Board voted to transfer \$1500 from the profits to the scholarship fund. **Thank you** to everyone who helped make the sale such a success. An especially big thank you to Jennifer Harris, Director of the Library, for working so hard with us to make it happen and be such a success. We congratulate her on her retirement and wish her many happy days.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:** We are trying to remain an active club while protecting our member’s health. Our February speaker has agreed to present via Zoom so we will meet via zoom again in February with a program on Natural Gardening and Living Soils. More information will be in the February newsletter.

Board members are also working on planning ‘Books and Blossoms’, a favorite event at the Library, our postponed Club Flower Show for September, our May Plant Sale, and Garden Tours this summer. Of course, all depends on reducing the Covid 19 pandemic so it will be safe for us to gather together.

**WAYS and MEANS:** Cynthia Sykes, Debbie Clark-Lalley and Janet Voyer set up an online market on our [PGC website](http://PGC website). Ways & Means has Plymouth Garden Club logo merchandise and other gardening related items for sale on the website at this time. You can call Cynthia to arrange for pick up or delivery of purchased items.

**Cultivating Longevity:** Fresh air, plants and the sun – corner stones of gardening – boast an array of benefits. For instance, vitamin D can regulate weight, stabilize mood and fight disease. While gardening won’t get you into triathlon shape, it’s still exercise. And studies show that just 15 minutes of light daily exercise – such as turning the earth and pruning rose bushes – can boost your life span by 3 years.

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Compost, also called organic matter, traps carbon in the top soil, encourages healthy microbes and better retains moisture. Soil that is less disturbed can hold more carbon. But adding a layer of compost is not a “one and done.” The process must be repeated.

However, regenerative agriculture is not a cure for all carbon issues leading to climate change. Bagged soil mixes that contain peat moss are leading to depletion of peat lands. Peat moss grows extremely slowly in giant bogs especially in Canada. Peat lands store 30 percent of soil carbon, 2x that of forests. But peat grows so slowly that its more similar to fossil fuel production than a renewable resource. In the UK, there is an established boycott of peat containing mixes. Read labels and use only peat-less mixes.

Amendments such as coir and rice hulls can be added to lighten soil mixes for seed sating.

To learn more about restorative agriculture, look for books by Robin Wall Kimmerer and Charles Dowding.

Order veg and flower seeds early. Seed catalogue giant Burpee reported tomato, pepper, eggplant and basil ran out early last year.

I can't wait for gardening weather!

## *Building Community through Gardening Together*

### **CONSERVATION TIPS from Joan Bartlett**

The time has come to speak of water. One of Plymouth's most treasured gifts.

Plymouth Garden Club has received praise and won awards for our excellent program teaching elementary school children about the conservation of Plymouth's aquifer and how to sustain it. But how are we doing at home and as a town about water conservation?

Help support our youngsters and make them proud,  
Around the house:

- Do not leave the faucet running while brushing your teeth
- Conserve water in bowl and tub after washing to rinse out hand washable items or wash the dog
- Be aware of water running in kitchen and bathroom sink when not needed
- Follow the lead of other countries. Keep a basket next to toilet, for toilet paper; instead of flushing it and clogging septic system.

Tack a note next to the toilet:

*In this land of surf and sun,*

*We rarely flush after number one*

- If you do not have a rain barrel to catch water for your gardens, consider researching it now to install in the spring.
- Watering lawn consumes and wastes great quantities of water. Convert areas of lawn to flower and vegetable beds.
- Chose native plants for the garden that grow easily in local conditions and require less water
- If you have an irrigation system have it checked and adjusted in the spring and adjust watering times during the summer as needed so as not to waste water.

Around town:

Become aware of what the town is doing about water conservation Attend or listen to the new Water Conservation Committee, the Planning Board, Selectmen and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings and/or call your town meeting member.

It's normal for developers to try to convince town boards that development will bring funds to town and will lower taxes. This is not true. Moreover, new developments need water.

**PENNIES FOR PINES:** Due to the widespread devastating wildfires in California and other western states the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts (GCFM) has requested member clubs send contributions to Penny Pines to support the replanting of trees. Since we have not met to pass the can as we usually do, and this seems like such a worthwhile cause to support, the board voted to send a \$300 donation for planting trees at wildfire sites.

**MAYFLOWER:** The GCFM magazine is no longer mailed to member's homes, but it is available on their website: [GCFM.org](http://GCFM.org). The December issue is the latest, but you can also read past issues and find other interesting information on the website.