

Muddy Gloves Quarterly

Spring 2019 Edition

Brought to you by the Stewards of the Thielke Arboretum

Muddy Gloves Spirit by Lisa Summers

We are thrilled to launch the first edition of *Muddy Gloves Quarterly*! It will keep you informed about the Arboretum's projects, upcoming events, and opportunities for using your skills – or learning new ones – as part of our volunteer "family." Each edition will provide useful information about plants that beautify the landscape *and* support local wildlife.

It's an exciting time at the Arboretum with many new things happening, but we promise to keep you *in the know*. We have big goals– to achieve the gold standard for conservation and ecological restoration and provide a model for other parklands to follow. This includes research-based landscape stewardship and innovative programming for all ages. In the last year alone, we installed hundreds of native plantings, debuted classes in our new Environmental Education Building, and facilitated dynamic field experiences.

With each new improvement, we remember and honor the memory of Carol Thielke, visionary, master gardener, and beloved friend, who spearheaded the rehabilitation of the property, originally a "rough-cut diamond," as she called it. Carol's commitment was legendary; she spent countless hours with a shovel or trowel in her hand. And if you didn't find her at the Arboretum, you could have tried her email: "muddy gloves@." A perfect address for Carol and just the right name for the newsletter. We hope you enjoy Muddy Gloves Quarterly!



Carol Thielke

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Rite of Spring by Pat O'Connor

Planting! Our stewardship director, Jean Epiphan, is putting plant orders together right now. Just as our own favorite growers do, the wholesalers she uses discount based in part on quantity of plants ordered. This is a blessing, since it enables the acquisition of far more plant material than we could otherwise purchase. It's also a challenge, since unless we can get those plants in the ground reasonably promptly we'll lose some to drying out, some that outgrow their containers, and some to still other problems.

To meet that challenge, stewards will soon be planting steadily and often. But we will also sometimes have to plant quickly, especially when we receive a shipment of small plants or bare-root shrubs or trees, so Jean will schedule "pop-up plantings" on short notice. These PUPs will likely happen Saturdays when, instead of working only from 9-12, stewards and their allies will be able to come and work anytime between 9 and 3. If you are interested in receiving emails for PUPs, please send a message to stewardship@thielkearboretum.org with "PUPs" as the subject line.



Volunteer with Us !

Stewardship Volunteer Hours - 9am-12pm - Every Tuesday & Saturday
weather permitting

Winter Field Report by Herb Arbeiter

Projects: Trail maintenance, bulb planting, tree pruning, winter sowing, etc.

Dates: December 2018 – March 2019

Present:

Stewardship Director: Jean Epiphan

Veterans: Tom B, Peter B, Joe B, Albina D, Naomi G, Fred G, Fred L, Rose SM, Pat O, Jennifer O, Barbara P, Lisa S, John T

Newbies (mostly 2019 Master Gardener Students): Marie A, Herb A, Cynthia D, Ed D, Lisa G, Lillian K, Diane VK, Caroline N, Jerry R, Zoran V, Jeannie Y, Joe

Students: Alex H, Max K, Johnnie P (If we missed anyone, let us know!)

Conditions: Varied from blustery cold, frigid, snow flurries, drizzling rain to bright, sunny 50° weather

Days/Times: Tuesdays & Saturdays / 9:00 AM - 12:00PM, with occasional "Special Project" days for, e.g., bat house installation and professional tree pruning coordination. Tuesdays were led by Master Gardener Barbara P; Saturdays, by Jean Epiphan.

Blustery cold did not keep Thielke Arboretum's stalwart stewards from doing their jobs. Only a few days were missed because of temperatures in the teens or snowfall. One Saturday had to be canceled because the Education Center was rented out as the headquarters of a 10K charity race. Otherwise, it was work as usual. We stayed warm by working hard and keeping busy, living by the song "Ain't We Got Fun." Highlights of this winter's work include:

1. Planted almost 1,000 deer resistant wild tulip bulbs and allium, generously donated by John T, in the gazebo area and in the new Children's Garden.
2. Harvested bamboo for future use in fencing projects. Stalks behind the Boy Scout fishing kiosk were cut down; more were collected from a local homeowner.
3. Winter sowed many native flowering herbs in mini gallon-size green houses with hopes for copious spring plantings.
4. Maintained/improved trails. Moved previously-harvested materials (one trail through a sensitive area was closed by this method). Harvested new material from downed trees and placed it along trails, including the new trail along Diamond Brook. Cleared deadfall, including a Norway maple along the brook that gave us a particularly tough time. The final 10 foot long stump did not want to submit. Not being insured for the use of chain saws, we resorted to all kinds of non-power tool methods to topple it. Wedges, saws, axes, and even a "Johnny-on-the-Pony" game simulation were attempted. Finally, victory was ours. And yes, "we had fun!"



Stellar Stewards



"Have you heard the one about the corkscrew willow and the woodpecker?"



Winter Sowing Bee

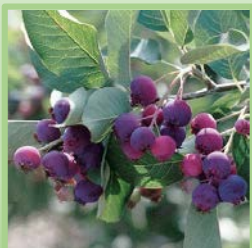


Norway Maple Nightmare or Herb-on-a-Pony

TREE OF THE SEASON

Serviceberry, *Amelanchier canadensis*

- Full to Part Sun
- Moist, Rich Soil
- Spring Flowers
- Tasty June berries



Invasive Vice or Native & Nice, What is Your Garden Made of ? By Jean Epiphan

INVASIVE

LESSER CELANDINE, *Ranunculus verna*

Have you ever stumbled across a dense carpet of low yellow flowers in one of our local parks? If so, you probably found lesser celandine, *Ranunculus verna*. This invasive plant is a spring ephemeral, which means it shows up in spring, blooms and then completely disappears before summer. But it still has live bulbs below ground waiting for next spring.



Unfortunately, this early disappearing act allows them to invade under the radar. Many comment that this plant is not much of a problem because it disappears before you know it, but this is completely false! Lesser celandine is a severe problem in our forests and parks. It takes over rapidly and pushes out all the native flora that needs to occupy the forested ground layer, such as native spring ephemerals, mosses, sedges, and ferns. These native plants are rapidly losing ground to lesser celandine, aided by the devious disappearing act.



It is important to know how to identify this plant to help control the spread. Its bright yellow unmistakable flowers last only 1-2 weeks. The leaves pop out as early as mid-winter and stick around through most of May. The leaves are rounded to heart-shaped with slightly scalloped leaf margins, and with mottled light green spots. This plant proliferates in moist soils and typically spreads along stream corridors and floodplains.

If you live near wetlands or streams your garden may be at risk of invasion. Removal methods are meticulous, but not impossible if caught early. It has small white bulbs in little clusters that can be dug out with a spade or trowel. Early detection and rapid response is the key to saving your property from this tenacious and sneaky scourge.

NATIVE

TROUT LILY, *Erythronium americanum*

In early spring the mottled leaves of trout lily, *Erythronium americanum*, emerge through the leaf litter, blanketing the forest floor. The camouflaged pattern and low stature enable them to grow unnoticed by deer. In our local suburban habitats, their populations are limited to ecologically intact areas like native forests.




In late April, the nodding yellow flowers bloom providing nectar and pollen for pollinators, specifically the native mining bee called the trout lily andrena, *Andrena erythronii*. It is a trout lily specialist (they have a mutual relationship); trout lily is the main food source and this bee pollinates the flowers leading to successful reproduction.

Soon after, the seeds develop which have an outer layer of lipids that attract native ants from the genus *Aphaenogaster*. These ants have evolved a specific appendage to haul this seed back to their nests; *Aphaenogaster* ants and trout lily have co-evolved. The lipids are eaten and the remaining seed gets moved into a



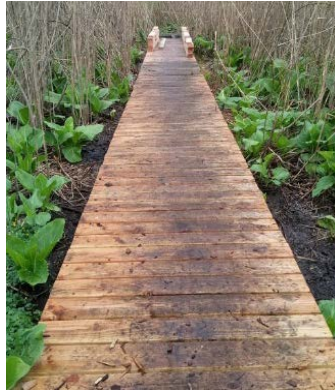
perfect location – a fertile discard pile outside the nest richly apt for germination. Scientists have found that if these specific native ants leave the forest, the trout lily populations disappear. Additionally, lesser celandine is invading trout lily territories which further devastates local populations.

If you have trout lily in your yard – protect them by leaving native tree leaves as mulch and not making drastic changes that would disturb native ant populations. Trout lily are commercially available in few locations. If you have a natural area apt for planting, like under an oak canopy, this treasured plant is worth the effort. Remember, trout lily is a spring ephemeral, a perennial that disappears by summer, but it still needs our protection year round.



Trail Triumph by Pat O'Connor

Muddy gloves were the least of it! According to Eric Boyer, the Eagle Scout who is the prime mover behind the construction of the Arb's newest trail, completing the work took standing in knee-deep muck during the 95-degree days of August 2018. He and two friends helping with the last 30-foot long bridge "could only work for a little while, and then had to take a serious break," he recalled during a recent interview.



The quarter-mile of trail has a total of seven bridges—including the spectacular one shown here. The yet-to-be-named trail, which is set back from but runs along Diamond Brook for much of its length, is a triumph in execution, with engineering as sophisticated as many trails found in state and national parks. In addition, however, the very fact of its existence is a triumph of persistence and teamwork. Its story is one of brother Scouts, the Glen Rock Borough Council, friends, family, and Arboretum volunteers working together to help a young man achieve his goal of making a significant contribution to the public good at a place he'd enjoyed since he was a child.

The next time you find yourself in the northernmost section of the Arb, listening for redwing blackbirds as you stroll with dry feet in a swamp, please remember to give silent thanks to all the people who gave their time and skill to make your hike possible. For an overview of the nuts and bolts of trail construction, please go to <https://vimeo.com/284176784>. This video, shot by Rick Van Rumpf for Glen Rock TV, features Glen Rock Volunteer Facilitator Michael Shelter interviewing Eric as the two of them walk the new trail. To learn more about the story, including the many volunteers whose contributions helped bring the project to completion, look out for our new project blog soon to be added to www.thielkearboretum.org

"Dear Tom" by Tom Bender

Dear Tom, My town has severe water restrictions. I have a flower garden in full sun. What can I plant this spring that will still look good when it's hot and dry?
-Frustrated Gardener

Dear Frustrated Gardener,
Many sun-loving native plants are drought tolerant plus are "mega foods" for pollinators and host plants for several butterflies. For a late spring blooms consider a blue wild indigo, *Baptisia australis*. For mid-summer flowers, try orange-blooming butterflyweed, *Asclepias tuberosa*, or purple flowering wild bergamot, *Monarda fistulosa*. For yellow flowers there are many choices, thread-leaf coreopsis, *Coreopsis verticillata*, sunflowers, *Helianthus spp.*, black-eyed susans, *Rudbeckia spp.*, and goldenrods, *Solidago spp.* And don't forget native grasses: little bluestem, *Schizachyrium scoparium*, switchgrass, *Panicum virgatum*, and purple lovegrass, *Eragrostis spectabilis*. For more options, come to my free program – *Best Gardening Advice with Tom Bender*, every first Tuesday of the month. And remember, at the nursery check the Latin name on the plant tag! A non-native won't support native pollinators and might become invasive. Lastly, a rain barrel is a great option for capturing excess water to use during droughts.

Send your gardening questions for our next edition to:

stewardship@thielkearboretum.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Su. 3/24 Top 10 Trees for NJ 1-4pm
Sa. 3/30 Rain Friendly Gardens 1-3pm
Tu. 4/2 Best Gardening Advice 7pm
Fri. 4/5 Nature Nerd Night 5-7pm
M. 4/15 Nature Sprouts 1-2pm

ARBOR DAY WEEKEND CELEBRATION

Sa. 4/27 Open House 10am-2pm
Plant Sale & Giveaway 10am-2pm
Arbor Day Tree Planting 12pm
Su. 4/28 Open House 10am-2pm
Plant Sale & Giveaway 10am-2pm
Giant Trees! Guided Tour 2pm
W. 5/1 Proper Tree Planting w/
Special Guest Jason Grabosky 7pm
Fri. 5/3 Nature Nerd Night 5-7pm
Sa. 5/4 Weed Warrior Day 9am-12pm
Tu. 5/7 Best Gardening Advice 7pm
M. 5/20 Nature Sprouts 1-2pm
Fri. 6/7 Nature Nerd Night 5-7pm
Fri. 6/21 Nature's Fireworks! 7:30-9pm
Su. 6/23 Fishing Derby 10am-12pm
Tu. 6/25 Bugs in the Brook 10am
W. 6/26 Bugs in the Brook 10am
Fri. 6/28 What in the World is a
Watershed? Time: TBD

For complete information or
to REGISTER visit:

www.thielkearboretum.org

