



Sproutings

The Chatham Garden Club

chathamgardenclub.org | facebook.com/chathamgardenclub

September 2023

"I used to love September, but now it just rhymes with remember." — Dominic Riccitello

What's Happening in September?

[All links are underlined in blue](#)

Sept. 6th & 20th: Chatham Lighthouse Tours 1:00 - 3:00

Sept. 9th & 10th: Chatham Fine Arts & Crafts Festival - Chatham Community Center

Sept. 9th, 16th & 23rd: Strong Island Guided Walks. Go to this link:

[Chatham Conservation Foundation](#) website for more information and tickets

Sept. 12th: GCG Board Meeting 1:00 Community Center - small conference room

Sept. 19th: Luncheon & General meeting 12:30 Celebrating our 55th Anniversary*

Our program with Donna LePage who with her husband, built a portable hydroponic garden. Go to the September 19, 2023 program on our website for more information.

Sept. 23rd: Autumn begins

***September 19th Luncheon:** To celebrate our 55th Anniversary, we will be having a special luncheon prepared by our own Bette Hahner. A separate email with more information was sent to you with instructions and cost of \$12.00 per person - Past Presidents will be our guests at the luncheon. **Scroll to bottom of this newsletter for more information.**

[Special Note for October meeting](#) - We will hold the October meeting (and again in May) at a different time - **4:30**, with the usual social half hour and meeting to begin at 5:00.

Chatham Food Pantry donations for [October](#) meeting! We are planning our second annual Food Pantry collection for October - List of requested items will be emailed to you.

Festival of Trees: Saturday, December 2nd, Atwood House - Please plan on joining in the fun by decorating/donating a tree and/or helping out the day of the event. Look for one of these beautiful trees at our September meeting! Contact one of the following members:

[Lynne Payne](#) [Ellen Healy](#) [Bette Hahner](#) [Debbie Gaines](#)

Plant Sale: Saturday, June 1st at Community Center front lawn: Contact either of these co-chairs if you want to be on the committee: [Nancy Boughton](#) or [Kit Curtis](#)

A Message from your President

What a “fun” ride this first year of my term was! A lot of work, but with so many of our members' help and support, we were able to accomplish so much!

I want to thank all of our members who generously contributed articles to Sproutings. This is a club for all members and I appreciate the many of you that have taken the time to write an article or two for our monthly newsletter. If you haven't yet contributed to Sproutings, please consider it or share some of your gardening pictures with us! Contributors to Sproutings this past year: the always dependable article contributors: Liz Scheld and Beth Taylor. Also thanks to Jo-anne Sheehan, Barbara Cotnam, Amanda Davis (Amanda's article on Sears Park made it to the Chronicle!), Cece Motz, Madonna Hitchcock, pictures from Eileen Yeates' raised bed gardens, and one from last year that I enjoyed and visited (The Blue Garden in Newport RI) by Nancy Boughton who promises more articles to come! I am hoping to start a “Conservation Corner” on a regular basis. Beth Taylor and Liz Scheld have already agreed to write some articles for this addition in Sproutings and I would welcome others to write an article that is conservation-related!

Our “Year of Fun” included the start of a Mentor Program, the re-birth of our Beautification awards (aka 'Curbside Appeal Award”), our OctoberFirst celebration, our annual holiday luncheon at Wequasset, a generous member's support of donations to our Chatham Food Pantry, the French-themed Spring Soirée, our float in the Fourth of July parade, our annual Hydrangea Tour in July, and successful selling of our exclusive Hydrangea aprons. All town garden volunteers received a ‘pretty in pink’ tee shirt for their hard work and to make the public aware that we maintain all of the town gardens, as well as new signs for some of our Town Gardens showing the gardens are “Maintained by the Chatham Garden Club”. We brought back the ‘Silver Trowel’ Award, given to one of our members that was a combination of an ‘unsung hero’ and one that played a major role in one or more of our fundraisers. This year's well deserved recipient was Edie Hamilton.

I am looking forward to bringing back the “Festival of Trees” on December 2nd at Atwood House, where members decorate a tree to auction or sell. We are also returning to our Plant Sale on June 1st!

We have recently joined the Federated Garden Club of Massachusetts, and look forward to programs and information they offer members as well as insurance for our club.

My only goal this year (so far!) is to hold some sort of “Art in Bloom”. Floral design is in our Mission Statement and other than a member contributing a centerpiece to our monthly meetings, and one program a year for floral arranging and a workshop, I feel we have fallen short of this part of our Mission Statement. Please email me if you are interested in being involved in an Art in Bloom!

I hope you all had a fun-filled summer with lots of plants and gardening and learning more and getting to know other members in our town gardens and at our various events.

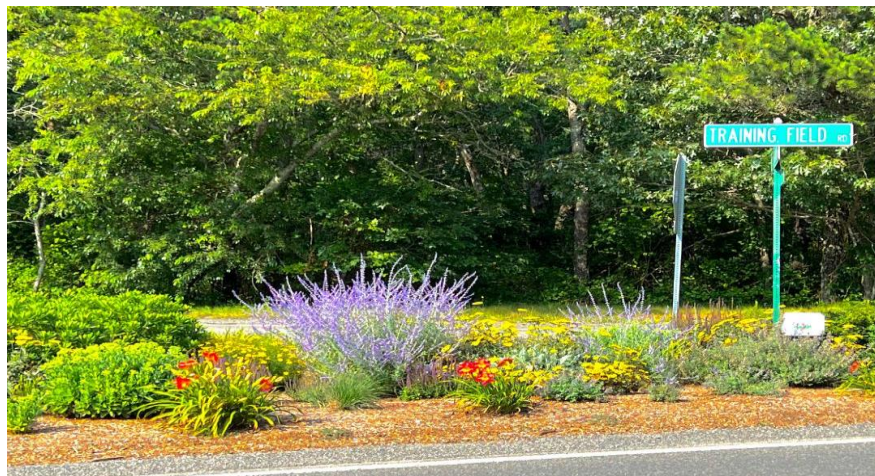
Donna

Be sure to check out the gardens maintained by Linda Halvorsen & her crew at Old Queen Anne & Training Field intersection! Please slow down or view it when you are at one of the stop signs and appreciate how wonderful these gardens look! Great job ladies! Thank you all!



Old Queen Anne view July 2023

photo by Linda Halvorsen



Training Field side - July 2023

photo by Linda Halvorsen

Conservation Corner:

Local summer outings - Liz Scheld Conservation Chairperson

From the [Fisherman's Alliance newsletter](#), I heard about a talk in July on the "Surge of the Black Sea Bass." The main speaker was Hannah Ver Kamp, scientist at the [Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation](#). Her main significant point was news of the growth of Black Sea bass in the Mid-Atlantic and New England, especially in Buzzards Bay and Nantucket and Vineyard Sounds. Read more @ [Black Sea Bass](#). She introduced another key topic that was positive for the fishing community. With the increase in demand for fish and with the growth in technology, there comes a growing partnership between *scientists* and *fishers*, collaboration where both parties learn and benefit from each other.

This researcher's discussion and data was coupled with a talk of a local weir fisherman's current experience. Kurt Martin, a Fisherman's Alliance Board member and commercial fisherman of lobster and sea bass, spoke of the positives and the challenges. These talks with a Q&A opportunity, coalesced to a common theme: try out this light whitefish, delicious in fish tacos and sushi! And look for the Fish chowder and other great products sold by Fisherman's Alliance.

Another treat in July/ August was a heart-warming screening at the Orpheum Theater. The main film was "Explore the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge." This was a three-year project in the making that showcased the [refuge's](#) beauty and described the incredible wildlife that the refuge supports. In addition, there was a preview of a coming documentary "No Refuge: Cape Cod's Coastal Crisis." Fundraising is ongoing to bring this documentary to fruition.

Fortunate are we for the involvement of Friends of Monomoy Refuge; for talented people who produce conservation films; and the nonprofit Orpheum Theater who with sponsors offer Sustainability screenings to keep the public aware of our priceless, but fragile local environment.

Most of the Fish Pier crew: August, 2023



Donna, George, Claire, Gay & her dog Archie, JoAnne, Midge (our leader), Jan, Elizabeth, Sara & Barb

Rain and Rabbits: Unlike the past few years, we were fortunate enough this summer to have more rain, LOTS more rain for our flowers and vegetables!! Not so fortunate for our Hydrangea Festival, but the people still came and just dressed for it! “Don’t rain on our parade” was I think the second theme for Chatham’s Fourth of July parade and our float, but with paper flowers - they didn’t like to be watered! We filled our ‘vases’ at the parade site after a brief shower in the morning, and ended it with our poor flowers getting drenched and windblown on the way back to the original spot! So rain on certain flowers is not a good thing! Thankfully we have had no water bans this summer and our trees, shrubs, lawns and plants are all looking good!

Rabbits on the other handif we weren’t talking about the weather, I constantly heard and also complained quite often myself about the abundance of bunnies! We all compared and shared our thoughts on rabbit (and deer) repellants. Some had luck with Rabbit Scram, although it didn’t seem to deter the rabbits in my yard when I tried it a couple of years ago. I have had luck with Liquid Fence (horrendous odor), but like most repellents and with the frequent rains, I had to remember to reapply! I’ve heard good things on Plantskydd, so when I run out of Liquid Fence, I’m going to give that a try (it’s supposed to be rain proof). Some of us are just putting up fencing and I read about some small ‘cages’ available at Lowe’s but couldn’t find them online. I did find a “plant umbrella”, but at a cost of \$56.99 each, I passed on those! I have had success with spraying a repellant on a new plant right after I plant them in the ground and then repeat

in a few days.....this is supposed to 'train' the rabbits to stay away! I have saved some coneflowers doing this, so that's good right?

We are all supposed to accept rabbits and rodents as part of nature.....OK, I'm willing to do that as long as they stay away from my darn flowers! I haven't resorted to planting a clover lawn as I think the rabbits consider clover an h'orderve before they move onto the main entree of my flowers!

Most nurseries now have sheets they give out with a list of rabbit-resistant plants, but as many of us know, rabbits will at least nibble on almost any plant! Don't you hate it when they just bite the stem off and your lovely flower lies on the ground?

Hydrangeas: We all bemoaned the loss of our popular bigleaf mopheads aka Hydrangea macrophylla this year with the 40 hour "polar vortex" that occurred in February, but I was excited to see a few shrubs that DID produce some flowers. My Mathilda Gutges had quite a few flowers, one lacecap was profuse with blooms and one pink bush (I forget the name) had about six to eight big blooms that I happily donated to Jo-anne Sheehan for our Hydrangea Festival tables. It was not fun dealing with all of those bare 'sticks' that we had to clip off and seemed to take forever, only to discover yet another bush that hadn't been clipped! Thankfully our paniculatas thrived as they bloom on new wood and some of my smaller bushes that grow on both old and new wood produced a few blooms too. Growers are constantly trying to cultivate new varieties that are more 'bud hardy', and I saw one hydrangea tag this summer that stated it was hardy to -30 degrees! But any extreme fluctuating temperature change & range seems to do the most damage when we have warm warm warm days and then the temperature plunges. From UMass, here's some facts on:

[Why Hydrangea macrophylla don't flower](#)

John Forti's Heirloom Salad recipe: *See link below*



[John Forti's Heirloom Salad | Kitchen Vignettes for PBS](#) (get through the PBS ad to see a video of John Forti's Heirloom salad!) Scroll down on the link for the recipe and some of his 'foraged' ingredients. John's book is available through our CLAMS network.

Some pictures below from Beth Taylor's gardens - July 2023. Coming soon: photos of Beth's well-known dahlias that she will have available at our Plant sale!

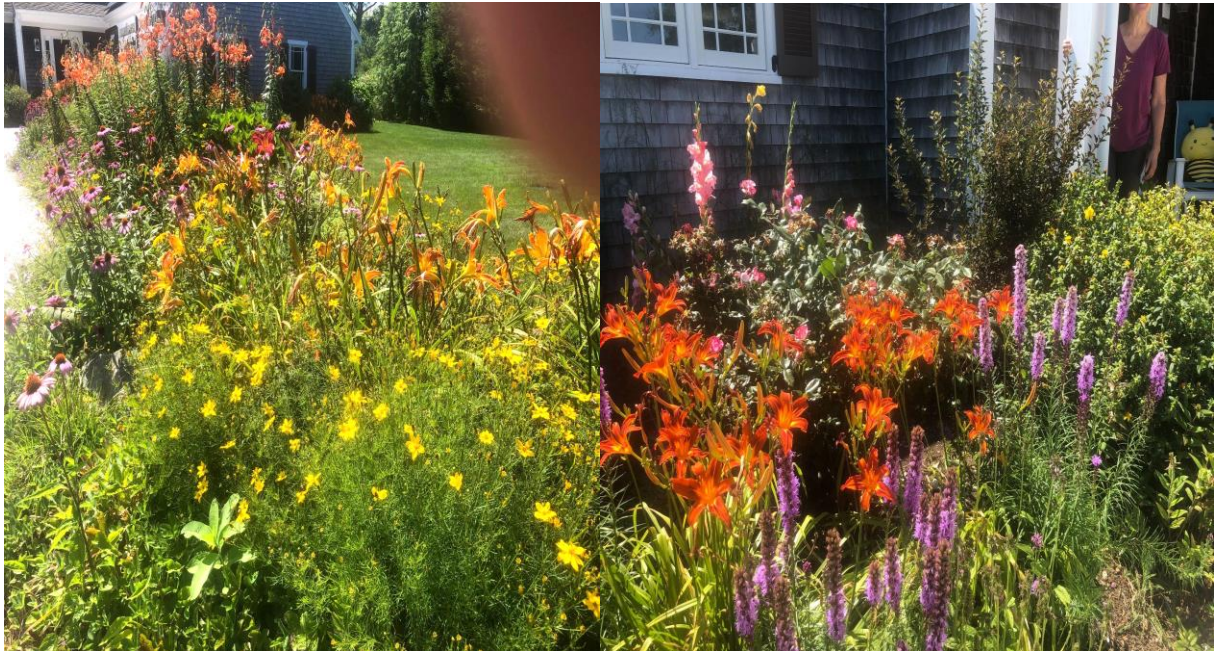
Send me some pictures of YOUR gardens!

Photos of Beth's gardens

photos by Donna Maiocca



More of Beth's gardens below.....



What's Happening to our Beech Trees?

Attacking our beech trees here on Cape Cod is a disease known by a few names (below), but with the same outcome, causing death to many. It is actually being caused by *both* scale insects *and* bark-cankering fungi. I read that the larger trees are more susceptible because of their size. When I first learned of this disease, I thought of the Beech Forest Trail on Race Point Road in the Provincelands of Cape Cod National Seashore, and sure enough, with more research, here is a quote from a visitor to this area (*from CC Times*):

“On a recent trip to the Cape Cod National Seashore's Beech Forest Trail in Provincetown, it was easy to see BLD's (*Bark Leaf Disease*) effect on the area's signature beech trees. Some exhibited early signs of the disease, with dark green stripes visible on leaves in the canopy. In other instances, the disease has progressed to significant swaths of brown and curled leaves.”

"It looked horrendous this spring," Seashore plant ecologist Stephen Smith said. "I suspect what will happen is some of these trees will die."

For more information on the devastating effect on our beech trees, see links below:

[Beech Tree Diseases](#) *from Penn State*

[Beech Bark Disease](#) *from UMass Ag*

[Beech Leaf Disease](#) *from Cape Cod Times*

* We will be holding an Anniversary luncheon prepared by Bette Hahner at our general meeting on September 19th. Due to the cost of the luncheon, we have asked that all members complete and return the form previously emailed to you with your check for \$12.00. Email [Donna](#) if you did not receive. All of our past presidents will be honored and will be our invited guests at the luncheon. Our program following the luncheon is a special presentation by a local Chatham resident, Donna LePage on hydroponic gardening. She will be demonstrating a portable hydroponic garden cart designed and built by Donna and her husband. For more information, go to our website under the September 2023 program. Link: [Chatham Garden Club website](#)

“By all these lovely tokens September days are here,
With summer’s best of weather and autumn’s best of cheer.”

- Helen Hunt Jackson