



Sproutings

Chatham Garden Club

chathamgardenclub.org | facebook.com/chathamgardenclub



February 2023



"A bird in the hand is a certainty, but a bird in the bush may sing!" - Bret Harte

What's Happening in February?

[All links are underlined in blue](#)

February 2nd: Groundhog Day - Will he see his shadow?

February 5th: [Full Moon Exploration](#) at Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

February 14th: CGC Board Meeting: 1:00 Small conference room

February 17th: National Random Act of Kindness Day - Brighten someone's day today!

February 21st: General Meeting 12:30/1:00 Community Center. No program this month - it's Soup and Bread month but we need input from all of you for future Programs!



Unfortunately, we have to share that we have lost another member, Jean Dana passed away on November 26th.

Link: [Jean Dana](#)



You can say this issue of Sproutings is "for the birds".... and it is! We are devoting this issue to birds and backyard wildlife.

Please be sure to scroll down to the bottom for information on Beautification awards, Spring Soirée, our WEBSITE and pictures from our January meeting!



Artwork of one of Madonna's crows, by Madonna!

Corvid in Winter

By Madonna Hitchcock

I've always been fascinated by crows. Winter is the best time to see my Corvid friends -- the family of crows that sit high in my backyard poplars, black silhouettes against gray skies.

Usually a murder of seven, but this fall reduced to five as one big old bird was slowed by a wounded foot and another disappeared without apparent cause. Perhaps the coyote that passes regularly through my yard got them both.

Usually, my crows are alert to any danger, raising a ruckus when a hawk nears, then using their numbers and tenacity to drive the predator out. One time, as I worked in the garden, they became agitated, crying loudly, repeatedly and all at once. I looked up from weeding and, only 10 feet away, the coyote appeared over the crest of the garden ridge. He froze and I froze, he stared and I stared, and then he nonchalantly continued his silent amble to Dugan Pond Lane. The crows' racket rang until the bony ribs slid through a neighbor's hedge. I like to think my friends were warning me, a service in exchange for the many peanuts, crumbs and withered grapes left occasionally on the stone wall for their feasting.

Crows are smart, known to raise the water with pebbles in Aesop's jug, and taught to earn pellets by cleaning cigarette butts from Indonesian streets. I know my crow friends recognize me, and even follow me around the yard, back to front, perching then like acrobats on the wires above Old Harbor.

I have seen video of another crow landing, with rush of wings and feathers, on its benefactor's chest for a snuggle. Thank god my birds are more aloof, or I would be petrified. My crows respect my space and I, theirs. Simply, I call them, and they caw back, each asserting our presence and acknowledging the other's right to be.



February Is National Bird Feeding Month:

Spread your giving wings this February and give to your backyard birds! As we all know, birds have it tough in the winter months. They have families to feed and our natural resources aren't always enough. This is where you can "chirp in" and keep your feeders full and give a hand out to our flying friends. The month was created by *National Day* with the hopes to educate the public on the seasonal journeys of birds, and for all of us to provide some help to our feathered friends in the height of winter when it is needed the most. So, show your appreciation to keep the birds singing and "put some food on their proverbial plates"!

Birds also need water and shelter. *See links provided below:*

There are many bird bath de-icers on the market. I purchased mine at Agway in Chatham and come the colder months, we drag our bird bath up on the deck and plug in the de-icer so the birds always can find un-frozen water! Remember to change the water often (another reason it's on my deck!)

Lots of links this month to help our birds and wildlife! [Choose which ones interest you!](#)

[Wildlife on Cape Cod](#) *from Cape Wildlife Center*

[Nuisance Wildlife?](#) *An article From Cape Wildlife Center*

"Don't destroy my home and then ask why I wander into yours."

[Shrubs for attracting Birds](#) *from Proven Winners*

[Nine Steps to Better Bird Habitat](#) *from Prairie Nursery*

[Tips for attracting birds this winter](#) *from Gardening Know How*

[Wild Bird Feeding - How To Attract Birds In The Garden](#) *from Gardening Know How*

[Gardening for Wildlife: 10 Ideas for a Wildlife Garden](#) *from Garden Design*

[Native Plants for Wildlife](#) *from Welcome Wildlife*

[Native Shrubs for Wildlife Food](#) *from Mass.gov*

Here's a fun way to participate in the "Great Backyard Bird Count" from February 17th - February 20th. See link below for more information on how you can participate.

[The Great Backyard Bird Count](#) *from audubon.org*



Biodiversity in Earth's Wildlife, Global and Local by Liz Scheld

Biodiversity is a keystone to the earth's sustainability. By definition, **Biodiversity** is the variety of life in the world or in a particular ecosystem. Read more for *recent global news & information for local action* to support **Biodiversity**.

[3 Types of Biodiversity: Overview and Importance](#)

In December 2022, the **UN Convention of Biodiversity (CBD)** was held in Montreal. **COP 15** focused on the ongoing decline of biodiversity. It's estimated that about one million species are at risk of extinction. Loss of Biodiversity (which impacts food and water supplies) is due to factors, such as loss of habitat, pollution, invasive species, exploitation of species, and global warming. Delegates made an ambitious goal: to protect 30 percent of the planet, land and ocean, by 2030. This plan is called **30X30**.

The New York Times ran an opinion article by Robert B. Semple Jr. on 1/1/23. He calls our situation "an emergency," and offers recommendations. [Saving Nature Starts Here](#).

[Best Practice in Delivering the 30x30 Target | TNC](#)

[3 ways the US is taking action to protect biodiversity | Stories | WWF \(worldwildlife.org\)](#)

[Nations Adopt Historic New Agent for Nature | The Pew Charitable Trusts \(pewtrusts.org\)](#)

Locally, can individuals help reverse loss of Biodiversity? Simple changes to backyards and town gardens have a big collective impact! Find *Attracting Birds, Butterflies and other Wildlife* by NWF David Mizejewski at EPL or at bookstores. Learn ways to improve landscapes and draw wildlife to your gardens. Outlines on Food, Water, Cover & Places to Raise Young target 4 major areas. This readable book provides native plants lists, photos, and projects to make gardens more environmentally friendly, pairing blooms with wildlife. NWF **Wildlife Habitat Garden certification** guidelines are included to aid planning. Today sustainable practices are seen in Botanical Gardens and other well-designed landscapes. By using such methods in our Town Gardens and backyards, we can help restore *natural habitats that support wildlife* and help our ecosystem, too.



To feed your birds, nothing but the best! See link below from *Garden Gate*

[The best birdseed for your feeders](#)

We occasionally offer a recipe from one of our members....well, here's a recipe for Homemade Bird Seed from Donna!

Basic Recipe For Homemade Bird Seed

- 1 Cup of Black Oil Sunflower Seeds
- 1 Cup of Chopped Plain Peanuts
- 1/2 Cup of Striped Sunflowers
- 1/2 Cup of Cracked Corn
- 1/8 Cup of Dried Fruit (i.e. raisins)



[Birds favorite food](#) from *Through the Wildwood*. After opening the link to the left, scroll down to 'Step One' on the link for a list of specific birds favorite food and list of example birds you might want to attract to your backyard.



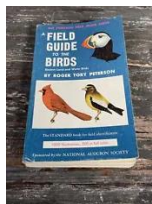
An excerpt from a piece written by Kristin Andres of APCC:

The seeds of native plants are an important food source for birds. Goldfinches gorge themselves on seeds of evening primrose and seeds still held in dead blossoms of black-eyed Susan. Robins will be cleaning off the red berries of the native winterberry holly later this winter. Juniper berries (technically cones) will feed flocks of cedar waxwings and bluebirds. Birds are nourished by the seeds and the fruit. The seeds contained within the fruit will be distributed to ensure there will be more of these plants somewhere that will continue to sustain bird generations to come.

What seeds do you have in your yard? If they are native species, don't deadhead and toss. Instead, leave them to self-sow, leave them for hungry birds, and for winter garden interest. There's life in those seeds!

FEBRUARY - Bird of the Month is the Parrot *from Bird Houses & Baths*

If you were born in February, yours is the bird of the free spirit. Never dull or predictable, you are renowned for your ability to look beyond the mundane. Creative writing, art or music are woven throughout your personality. Your friends and loved ones are constantly inspired by your unique character and sparkling zest for life. You don't want the spotlight, but you definitely turn heads! *Who shares a February birthday with you?*



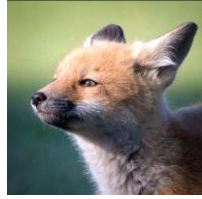
Do you all remember this Audubon Field Guide? This one is from 1947, but you can now download a free App on your iphone - just search Audubon Bird Guide.

Watch & Listen to the video below to see if you recognize birds' songs! (OK, I guess we won't see or hear many penguins or flamingos in our backyards or nearby ponds, but you should recognize most of the others and it's fun to hear what songs they each sing!) Link: [Sights and Sounds of some of our backyard birds](#)

Cape Cod Wildlife:



American Oystercatcher



Fox pup



Baby sea turtle



Tufted duck



Beautiful hawk in South Yarmouth
12/11/22



Cape Cod Raccoon



Cape Cod Bat



North American River Otter



Cape Cod Coyote

Some backyard birds of Cape Cod: Choose from various links below



[Birding on South Beach, Chatham](https://capecodbirds.org/) from capecodbirds.org

[Migratory Birds of Cape Cod](https://capecodxplore.com/) from [Capecodxplore.com](https://capecodxplore.com/)

[Cape Cod Birds](https://CapeLawyer.com) from CapeLawyer.com



Bluebird Trails & Boxes nearby *from Cape Cod Bird Club*



Bette Hahner's solution to the squirrels - "Slinky" squirrel baffle - she said it works great!

Slinky used another way: *See how the slinky works:* [Slinky Squirrel!!](#) Funny video but frustrating for the squirrel!!! (skip any ads).

Cape Cod birds in the winter:



White-throated sparrow



Dark-eyed Junco



Snowy Owl

This concludes our Birds & Backyard Wildlife issue of Sproutings, but read on.....

For those feeling housebound this month - Things to do in February:

[February walk at Coast Guard Beach](#) *from Mass Audubon*

[Best spots on Cape Cod for Winter sunrise](#) *from capecodchamber.org*

[Best Cape Cod Winter Sunsets](#)

[Favorite Cape Cod Lighthouses](#) *Have you seen them all? Great for a winter drive!*

[Arts on the Cape](#) *from Cotuit Center for the Arts*

[For grandchildren visiting during February vacation](#) *from thorntonburgess.org*

[Seasonal Programs offered at CBI](#) *includes afternoon teas!*

[Winter Film Festival](#) *from Friends of Cape Cod National Seashore (scroll link to Feb films)*

[The Great Backyard Bird Count](#) - *Repeat of link mentioned previously from audubon.org*

BEAUTIFICATION AWARDS: We have re-activated this committee and Madonna Hitchcock will be heading it up. This will be an award given to a Chatham homeowner for exceptional gardens and to recognize and show appreciation for their hard work. If you are interested in being a part of this fun committee, email link: [Madonna Hitchcock](#)

PARIS SPRING SOIRÉE: May 5th at Madonna Hitchcock's. \$25.00 pp including food and beverages. Members & guests invited. Please email Marilyn if you can help with this fun event! More info to follow. email link: [Marilyn Sink](#)

Welcome to two of our newest members!



Photo by Jen Stello

Danielle James & Lucia Quinn

Keep on reading.....

Our January Horticulture table that partnered with our speaker,
Donelle Denery on Vegetable Gardening. Horticulture Table: Beth Taylor



Linda Smith with Horticulture table presenter, Beth Taylor & the table displays Photos by Jen Stello

Centerpieces by Marilyn Sink for our January meeting, to echo our January speaker



Photos by Jen Stello

Our website! Now that you are viewing Sproutings on our website, please take the time to “look around” our website! Co-Publicity chair, Catherine Gryska Purcell (aka CPG) has been doing a wonderful job adding pictures, updating information and adding to our Resource tab. Please take advantage of the links under the Resource tab - information on Natives, Hydrangeas, Pollinator Pathway, Chatham Conservation Foundation, book recommendations, etc. Under other tabs, there are great pictures of all of our Town Gardens and wonderful “scenes” at the top of each tab. It’s a lovely website and I hope you take the time to explore it all! If you saw a link in a previous issue of Sproutings and want to refer back to it, it just might be in our Resources tab!

If you have read any garden or conservation-related books or useful links that you think our members may also enjoy, please email Catherine and she might be able to add it on our website!

When it comes time to renew your membership in the Club, the renewal application is up on our website and if you know of someone that wants to join our club, the application for new membership is on the website as well. The applications for our Scholarship and Grant are there for anyone you know who would like to apply - the monies you all help raise at our events fund both.

Please take advantage and use all of the helpful tools & information on our website! Suggestions are welcome!

Link to our website: [Our website](#) Catherine’s email: [Catherine Purcell Gryska](#)