



GCFP District VI Newsletter

1st Quarter, 2021



Seedlings

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Director's Corner Janice Davis, District VI Director

2021 is upon us and I am optimistic that it will be an improvement over 2020. The past year has been a challenge with so many changes that have impacted our lives in dramatic ways. Personally, not being able to meet with family and friends has been devastating.

In March to brighten and lift our spirits my sister, niece and I started exchanging text messages each morning. There is however a requirement for texting. Each text is to contain a picture of something discovered in our gardens or nature.

This was an easy task in spring, summer and fall but with the advent of winter it has become a significant challenge. My snow scenes have been sent from Pennsylvania to the warmer climate of Tennessee on more than one occasion. Please indulge me and permit me to share two of my nature finds.

Before the snow fell, I discovered **Needle Ice**. Needle Ice forms when soil temperature is above 32 degrees and the air temperature is below freezing. Water seeping through the soil solidifies into ice at the surface. The water is drawn from the soil through capillary action creating ribbons of ice. (Photo below)

Temperature and winds also affect plants. The Rhododendron's thick green leaves droop and cling to the stems (known as thermonastic leaf movement) when the cold winds blow. (Photo below)

The search for a new photo everyday has opened my eyes to the beauty and wonder of nature that goes unnoticed in every season. The next time you are out and about take a minute and look for the unusual. You will be surprised and pleased with what you find. Take a quick picture with your cellphone. That photo will lift your spirits when you feel down.

I am looking forward to visiting with your clubs this year. Please let me know if I can help you in any way. Anxious to meet you and learn from you! Willing to Zoom! Enjoy your winter outings!

2021 District Calendar

March, 2021—District VI Meeting (ZOOM)
April 18-21—GCFP Convention, Zooming into Spring," (ZOOM)
June 7-8--GCFP Board Meeting Wyndham, Boalsburg, PA
Sept. 7—District VI Annual Meeting, Patton GC hosting
Oct. 11-12-- GCFP Board Meeting Wyndham, Boalsburg, PA

Articles, events and happenings concerning District VI may be submitted to:
Mary Lou Colussy at
lalou46@aol.com
Next Seedlings — May 1, 2021



CLUB ACTIVITIES

BEDFORD'S NEW OFFICERS

Bedford Garden Club

Officers for the Bedford GC for 2021-2 include: Judy Jackson—President; Judy Custer—Vice President; Denise Wright—Secretary; Pat Greenland remains as Treasurer. The club members got together and decorated the Bedford County Courthouse this past Christmas holiday. The committee was headed by BGC member Micki McCann.

“Blair Garden Club Initiative”



This year, Blair Garden Club developed a new club program called “Blair Garden Club Initiative” which is a grant for a garden project within our community. One grant was awarded to the Providence Presbyterian Community Garden located on Broad Ave.

Their mission is to feed the hungry by providing a place where families can grow vegetables. This garden touches lives in a very positive way. Not only do members of the church utilize one of the 46 raised bed growing plots but they are also able to share their bounty in the “Share Box” for neighborhood residents to enjoy. Additionally, there are several handicap accessible garden plots that make gardening more available. Flower beds were also added for a warm welcoming feeling.

Nancy Woome is the manager at the community garden and does a remarkable job. Blair Garden Club was honored to choose this program and grant the \$300.00 to help with very worthwhile project.

Blair Garden Club



The second recipient of the Blair Garden Initiative was Family Services Inc. located on Broad Ave. in Altoona. The club granted them \$500.00 to hire a company to trim hedges, repair a brick border around their signage, and mulch around the entire front of the agency. Bulbs and perennials were also added to the landscape.

Family Services Inc. provides services to victims of crime, counseling, residential homes for adults with intellectual disabilities, shelters for homeless individuals and families, teen center and shelter along with the administrative duties to support these programs. Last year alone, FSI provided services to over 3,700 people in Blair County.

Programs like this are vital to a community and Blair Garden Club was privileged to help make their front entrance more welcoming for those they serve.

CLUB ACTIVITIES

Blair Garden Club

Christmastime at Blair Mansion

Decorating for the holidays at Baker mansion.



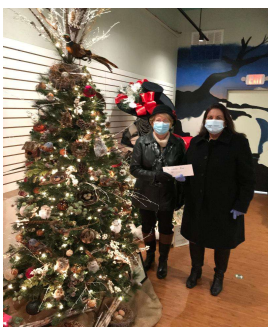
Christmas Under the Sea at the Altoona Public Library

Blair Garden Club decorated the tree at the Altoona Public Library. The theme this year was "Christmas Under the Sea."



Garden Club of Johnstown

Gallery on Gazebo Winner



The photo on left shows Darlene Wissinger, president of GCJ and Aurora Gilmour accepting a first prize \$100 check for our decorated Christmas tree which the GCJ entered in the Gallery on Gazebo Festival of Trees Contest in Johnstown in December.

Twelve trees were entered by many our groups and individuals and voted on by the public and virtually. Needless to say, we were thrilled to win first prize for our tree. *"Nature"- and endless prospect of magic and wonder* was the theme chosen by the committee of: Chairwoman Aurora Gilmour, Cozette Hupkovich, Gloria LaMonaca, Helen Melnik and Darlene Wissinger. We decorated the tree with many of nature's beautiful treasures - birds, nests, feathers, seed pods, pine cones, dried fruits, berries and branches and natural ornaments. We had fun participating in this first-time event, sharing decorating ideas, and hopefully piquing interest in memberships.

A big thank you to District VI Garden Club members and friends who voted for our tree.

CLUB ACTIVITIES

May Mart -- May 21-22, 2021

Mark your calendars for Indiana Garden Club's 2021 May Mart - Garden & Vendor Expo! The 45th May Mart is Friday, May 21 from 9 AM to 7 PM and Saturday, May 22 from 10 AM to 4 PM.

This popular event is held at the White Township Sports Complex, 497 East Pike, Indiana, PA 15701.

All the money raised at May Mart goes into scholarships, donations and beautifying the community. Our vendors offer a wide selection of annuals, perennials, herbs and shrubs as well as crafts and handmade items and food. Pick up a beautiful plant at our Orphan's Court.

Spread the word! Tell your friends and neighbors! Bring a friend and enjoy all the festivities!

**Indiana
Garden
Club**

Lighted Wire Balls Demo



The Indiana Garden Club took advantage of every outdoor setting we could find in order to meet this past year. We are blessed in Indiana County to have a wonderful County Park system and our club made the best of it by meeting there and at the White Twp. Recreation center.

In November we actually were able to have an indoor meeting where the club learned how to make lighted wire balls by Deb Stumpf for Christmas or as summer additions to our gardens. We are hoping to have a more normal schedule of events in 2021.

Congratulations to Our New Flower Show Judges



Congratulations are in order for two members of the Indiana Garden Club who passed the final hurdles to become Accredited NGC Flower Show Judges. Margie Bucci and Deb Stumpf learned in November that they had passed the NGC Flower Show Handbook Test given in October. Now the girls are looking forward to some Flower Shows to judge.

CLUB ACTIVITIES

Evergreen Garden Club

Evergreen 2021 at a Glance

By Marcy Cunkelman, Evergreen GC President

The Evergreen Garden Club had their first zoom meeting on Monday, January 25th, 2021. Not a full club participating, but enough to get the year in order for meetings and activities. Mariann McGee purchased the zoom program, so we can use as a club. She was the moderator of the meeting. Several people used their phone including one from Florida. So, this may prove to be a great way to attend a meeting and still be present "in person."

The new slate of officers was voted on by zoom and email for those who could not attend the meeting. The slate was unanimously accepted. New officers are Marcy Cunkelman, President; Lisa Pittman, Vice President; Mariann McGee, Secretary and Carol Miller as Club Treasurer. The end of term will be December 2022.

The club will follow pandemic guidelines for all meetings. Face masks will be worn at all times with the 6+feet safe distancing. Depending on the inside meeting guidelines, the club will meet at the Trinity United Methodist Church, 4th Street, Indiana, PA. If the meetings need to be cancelled there will be zoom meetings. February, March, April, October and November are planned inside. May thru September will be held outside at our gardens and other community places to be held on the 3rd Monday of the month beginning at 12:30 pm with refreshments (if permitted) and program at 1:00 pm with business meeting afterward. All are welcome to attend.

Tinsel Time's tentative date will be Thursday, December 2nd, 2021 at the Rustic Lodge, Indiana, PA. The Theme will be *Scents of Christmas*, featuring gingerbread houses for centerpieces and cinnamon ornaments for favors. Last year's Tinsel Time was cancelled and has put a damper on the club's donations for this year. Tinsel Time is our only fundraiser and the budget is very tight as a result.

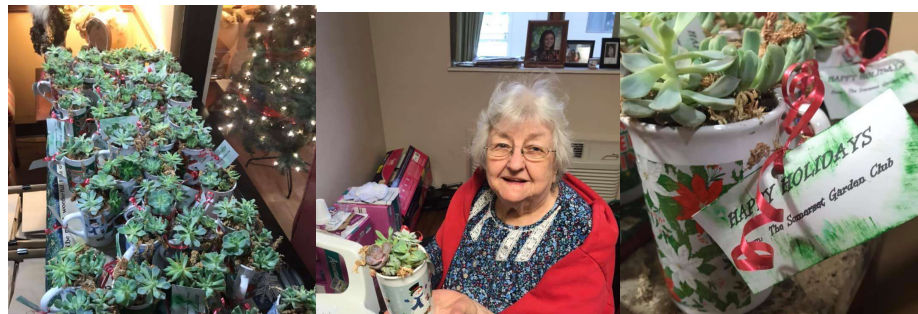
If anyone is interested in contributing to a one-time scholarship in memory of Ruth Berry, you can help by sending a donation to Evergreen GC, Marcy Cunkelman, 292 Swisco Road, Clarksburg, PA 15725-8727. She was a long-time member of the GCFP and both Evergreen and Indiana GC. She will be missed by all.

Evergreen has joined the ranks of others using technology with computers and phones. Some members found out their computers may be too old to handle this. We will work out the best we can to include everyone. Secretary Mariann McGee will send out minutes to all and snail mail to members without computers. 2021 is on its way. Let's hope for a much better year and safety for all members.

Somerset Garden Club

Christmas Mugs for Personal Care Residents

A wonderful effort by a Somerset Garden Club member (and soon to be GCFP President), Sheila Croushore. Sheila certainly brought smiles to many faces when she delivered 43 of the beautifully decorated mugs to The Patriot, and another 48 to Siemons Lakeview Manor, both of which are located in Somerset.



CLUB ACTIVITIES

Uptown Cleanup

We were sorry to see all the beautiful blooms uptown come to an end, but sadly it's that time of year. Somerset Garden Club members and volunteers spent a couple of days cleaning out the planters and lamppost hayracks, as well as various areas throughout town which had been featured with outstanding floral displays this year.

Uptown had blossomed throughout the summer and the town received many compliments. Areas such as the County Courthouse, the public library, the Welcome sign, the turnpike entrance/exit, and the planters in the Diamond were just some of the areas that had looked lovely all spring and summer long!

Special thanks must go to the Somerset Borough employees for their hard work in ensuring that the plants stayed well hydrated throughout the summer, as well as to those Club members who helped to weed the plant containers and flower beds to keep them looking beautiful all season.

Of course, a huge thank you must also go to the Somerset County Tourism Grant Program as it was this program that was instrumental in making it all possible this year, thanks to a generous grant.

**Somerset
Garden Club**



Committee chair Judy Rach



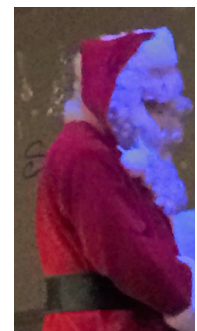
Vonnie Baldiswieler, Linda Troll, and Nerita Brant showing off some of the "crop" from the sweet potato vines.

A special thank you to Nerita Brant, *Seedlings* Proofreader Extraordinaire

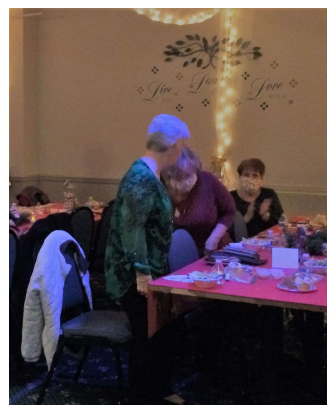
CLUB ACTIVITIES

Patton Garden Club Annual Christmas Tea

The Patton Garden Club met on November 23, 2020 for their annual Christmas Tea. This year it was decided to have a meal in lieu of a tea for the event. The venue was at Cambrian Hills in Hastings. It was undecided until the last minute whether this event would even take place, but the members and guests that attended felt they wanted to get together after all the turmoil that we endured this year. Even Santa put in an appearance. Thanks to Sandy Owens and her committee for all the fabulous decorations and gifts and for the special time that we all experienced. And a special thanks to Ed from the Patton Pharmacy for the extra special favors for all the attendees.



**Patton
Garden
Club**



Club Activities

Getting Together Via Zoom

Weeders and Seeders Garden Club of Ligonier first Zoom meeting took place on November 17, 2020. It was for Members only. We decided to have another Zoom meeting in December and perhaps a few more throughout the winter instead of waiting till March when our normal meetings resume after the holidays.



**Weeders
and
Seeders**

A sweater sleeve pumpkin workshop was presented during the Zoom meeting.



Seed Swap and Winter Sowing Program

The Weeders and Seeders Garden Club of Ligonier’s members enjoyed a Seed Swap and Winter Sowing program at their October meeting.

For weeks preceding the program, seven of the club members harvested and processed annual and native perennial seeds from their gardens and the surrounding Ligonier gardens. The seeds from 65 different plants were packaged up and displayed on tables before the meeting with an accompanying photo and instructions for planting. All of the members were able to browse the outside tables and select what they wanted to take. The wind, early sunset, and social distancing all provided challenges but at least it wasn’t raining!

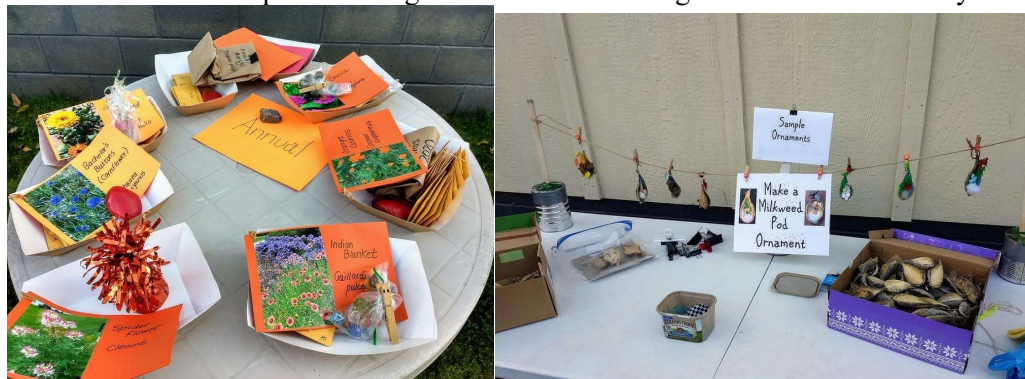
**Weeders
and
Seeders**



Patti Schildkamp presented a short demonstration on the winter sowing technique done in milkjugs for those members unfamiliar with this method.

In addition to the seed swap and winter sowing demonstration, Judy Ridgway provided a craft using dried milkweed pods to make a Christmas tree ornament.

Delicious cranberry muffins and other refreshments, including warm apple cider, were also served. It was a special ending to our outside meetings in this difficult 2020 year.



Philadelphia Flower Show Blooms Next Summer “Habitat: Nature’s Masterpiece,” June 5 - 13

THE FLOWER SHOW

Gazebo at FDR Park with Flowers

In a year like no other, thinking outside the box has become the norm – whether it’s finding new ways to work, attend school, or socialize, we have all experienced something new within our daily lives due to COVID-19. So how did PHS determine a new way for a 193-year-old show to be re-imagined?

The famed PHS Philadelphia Flower Show will take place as an outdoor show in June 2021!

“Habitat: Nature’s Masterpiece” will welcome visitors next June 5 through 13, on the beautifully landscaped and centrally located historic grounds of FDR Park in South Philadelphia. A living showcase of a natural habitat at its best, the park grounds will offer visitors a day of open-air beauty, nature, and inspiration while taking advantage of its new outdoor environment to promote safety and social distancing.

A Gem of a Setting

The expanded Flower Show will cover 15 acres (45% more space than last year!), allowing for a safe, socially distanced presentation of the nation’s most looked-to gardening and floral attraction. The natural beauty of this outdoor setting will be at its peak during the Show’s June dates and is blue-ribbon worthy, with ornamental grasses and majestic old trees decorating the terrain. The quaint gazebo on the Olmstead Overlook facing Meadow Lake is the perfect spot to admire the park’s beauty and wildlife. And the June timing will enable Show designers to work with an increased diversity of flowers and plants.

It’s a Natural

With the theme of “Habitat,” next year’s Show will embody the symbiotic relationship between beautiful, natural landscapes and diverse flora and fauna. Habitats are vital for sustaining life, and FDR Park is a perfect illustration of this year’s Show theme. Due to extensive development in urban areas like Philadelphia, rare settings like FDR Park situated in a large city are becoming more and more important for sustaining native environments.

“We are thrilled to be able to celebrate the outdoors and offer joy and beauty after a year that has been marked by so many challenges. This experience is a wonderful example of the enduring and combined power of green space, plants, and gardeners to create impact and inspiration,” says Sam Lemheney, PHS Chief of Show & Events.

What’s in a District?

Visitors will enjoy an entirely new experience next June, with the design of three distinct “Districts” being created on the Flower Show grounds that showcase the best of a particular horticultural theme. These themed areas will include: The Plant District, featuring the best of the best in plants and plant care; The Design District, showcasing gardens designed by acclaimed designers for pure inspiration and joy; and The Garden District, where guests will learn how to put it all together with hands-on, horticulture practice. Each district will feature entertainment, shopping, food and beverages, in addition to breathtaking displays and interactive exhibits.

Historic Architecture

A registered historical district, FDR Park was designed by the Olmsted Brothers, the firm of Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. and John Charles Olmsted, in the early 20th century. The Olmsted Brothers created a picturesque park with curving roads and paths, a series of tidal lakes, and an expanse of fields, each subtly separated for specific activities. The park’s famed gazebo was built in 1914, followed by the stone boathouse in 1916. In 1926, the nation’s Sesquicentennial Exposition was held at the Park, and the American Swedish Historical Museum, an architecturally significant structure, was built for this public event. In 2000, FDR Park was added to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places to preserve its significant character, interest, and value as part of the development, heritage, and cultural characteristics of the city of Philadelphia.

IN MEMORIA

Rebecca Ickes

Garden Club of Johnstown members were saddened to learn Becky Ickes an honorary member of GCJ passed away on January 5, 2021. Becky had been a member since 1979, had served as president of GCJ in 2005-06, was a life member of both the PA and National Garden Clubs. She was also an accredited Flower Show judge, a member of the Herb Society of America and the American Horticultural Society. She was also an elementary school teacher at Conemaugh Township Area Schools for 33 years. Becky will be missed and remembered by many of our members. Donations in Becky's memory may be sent to Trinity Presbyterian Church, 268 Hostetler Road, Johnstown, PA 15904.

Ruth Berry

Also, this month we learned that long-time NGC, GCFP, Evergreen Garden Club and Indiana Garden Club, and former District VI Director, Ruth Berry passed away. She will be sadly missed by all her gardening friends.

Ruth Helen Berry, 86, of Indiana, PA, passed away on Friday, January 8, 2021, in her home, surrounded by her family. She was born June 9, 1934, in Herne, Germany as Ruth Helene Scislowski, but the family name was later changed to Enger. Growing up in Germany during World War II, her childhood was full of many hardships.

She came to America alone, as an orphan about 17 years old, and worked in eastern Pennsylvania as a maid and nanny, as well as at a factory. She sent money home to relatives who were caring for her younger brothers so the boys would not be sent to an orphanage.

Ruth met her husband of 60 years, Richard Emerson Berry Sr., at a community dance at a church in Easton. She was a devoted mother to their five children and enjoyed spending time with her five grandchildren.

She was a garden club life member at the state, regional, and national levels and was a district director.

At the state level, she was an intermediate youth chairman and member of the mentor committee for the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania (GCFP). She also enjoyed having the chance to serve as a proofreader for the *Keystone Gardener*, the GCFP's state publication.

She especially loved going to Garden Club conventions. Because of an amazing friend who was her roommate for the trips, she was able to attend them even after her health and ability to walk declined from Parkinson's disease.

In 2007, she was selected as one of five Indiana County Notable Women by the American Association of University Women in Indiana, PA.

Memorial donations may be made toward a bench to be placed in the arboretum at IUP near the Heritage Garden, honoring her along with her husband. These donations can be made to "Foundation for IUP" and marked "in memory of Ruth Berry for the arboretum" c/o Foundation for IUP, G-1 Sutton Hall, 1011 South Drive, Indiana, PA 15705 (or contact Tonya Patterson at 724-357-4835 for help making a gift online).

Memorial donations may also be made to the "Indiana Garden Club" c/o Indiana Garden Club, P.O. Box. 1447, Indiana, PA 15701; or the "Evergreen Garden Club" c/o of Marcy Cunkelman, 292 Swisco Rd., Clarksburg, PA 15725.

Patz Lowery

The gardening community also loss another shining light, on Jan 11, 2021. Patz Ross Lowery, 87, of Hollidaysburg, passed away Monday at UPMC Altoona. She was born in Camden, NJ. She married Ralph Ross in 1950, he preceded her in death in 2004. Surviving are four daughters: Jean Garber and husband Jan of Washington Boro, Denise Ross in CA, Susan Shenk and husband Chris in NC, and Stacey Parris of Hollidaysburg; a son, Stephen Ross and wife Pam of Duncansville; many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Patz worked at Dave's Dream, Sylvania Electric, SKF, and Mercy Hospital. Thereafter, she assisted her daughter, Stacey, in her shop, "Stuff Unique Antiques." Patz joined Spade & Trowel Garden Club in 1977, and served in many capacities. She became a Nationally Accredited Flower Show Judge in 2004. She was a member of Blair Garden Club, where she was a past President, Pittsburgh Area Judges Council, Designers Guild of Greensburg Garden Center, Sogetsu Study Group of Pittsburgh, Creative Flower Arrangers of the Americas. She was an avid reader and enjoyed playing Scrabble, flower arranging, interior design, and art projects. A private memorial service will be held at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, please make memorials to the Blair Garden Club c/o Treasurer: 2102 17th Ave., Altoona, PA 16601.

15 Deer-Resistant Plants

By John Van Etten

Source: <https://www.finegardening.com>

Perennials and annuals



1. Angelonias (*Angelonia angustifolia* cvs.), annual. Photo: Jennifer Benner



2. Basket of gold (*Aurinia saxatilis*), Zones 4–8. Photo: gardentrek



3. Bleeding hearts (*Dicentra spectabilis*), Zones 3–9. Photo: Jennifer Benner



4. Globe amaranth (*Gomphrena globosa*), annual. Photo: Michelle Gervais



5. Lamb's ear (*Stachys byzantina*), Zones 4–8. Photo: Michelle Gervais



6. Lantanas (*Lantana* spp. and cvs.), annual. Photo: Melissa Lucas

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15 Deer-Resistant Plants

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7. Lily-of-the-valley (*Convallaria majalis*),
Zones 2-7. *Photo: Michelle Gervais*



10. Spider flowers (*Cleome hassleriana* cvs.),
annual. *Photo: Carl E. Lewis*



8. Russian sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*),
Zones 6-9. *Photo: Michelle Gervais*

Trees and shrubs



11. Beautybush (*Kolkwitzia amabilis*),
Zones 5-9. *Photo: Steve Aitken*



9. Snapdragons (*Antirrhinum majus* cvs.),
annual. *Photo: Melissa Lucas*



12. Chaste trees (*Vitex* spp. and cvs.),
Zones 6-9. *Photo: Bill Johnson*

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15 Deer-Resistant Plants

Continued from previous page



13. Daphnes (*Daphne* × *burkwoodii* cvs.), Zones 5–8. Photo: Stephanie Fagan



14. Shadbushes (*Amelanchier* spp. and cvs.), Zones 4–9. Photo: Jennifer Benner



15. Spireas (*Spiraea* spp. and cvs.), Zones 4–9. Photo: courtesy of Bailey Nurseries

Monarda – Perennial Plant, How to Grow



Named after a sixteenth-century Spanish physician and botanist, Nicholas Monardes (*Labiatae*). A small genus of annual and perennial herbs from North America, with fragrant leaves and flowers, related to *Salvia*. The leaves are nettle-like and the flowers have a spiky appearance and are clustered together in whorls: the color ranges from white through pink, mauve and purple to red.

Species cultivated

M. didyma, bee balm, Oswego tea, 2-3 feet, scarlet flowers, sometimes in twin whorls, late summer; cultivators include ‘Adam’, 2-4 feet, cerise;

‘Beauty of Cobham’, purple leaves, pink flowers; ‘Cambridge Scarlet’, crimson-scarlet;

‘Croftway Pink’, soft pink; ‘Dark Ponticum’, dark lilac; ‘Melissa’, soft pink; ‘Pale Ponticum’, lavender;

‘Pillar Box’, bright red; ‘Sunset’, 4 feet, purple-red. *M. fistulosa*, wild bergamot, 4-5 feet, purple flowers, summer, not as showy as *M. didyma*; var. *violacea* (*Violacea superba*), deep violet-purple. *M. menthaefolia*, similar to *M. fistulosa*, with mint-like foliage.

Cultivation Any ordinary garden soil will suit these plants but there must be plenty of moisture and good drainage. They will grow in sun or partial shade. They can be planted in the autumn or spring and need top-dressing. Propagation is by division in February or March, or they can be raised from seed sown out of doors in a semi-shaded position in spring or in boxes placed in the greenhouse or cold frame in March. Seeds germinate easily, but the plants will need roguing and any drab colored varieties discarded.

Plants for Pathways

These durable creeping perennials discourage weeds and soften the look of a walkway

By Marty Wingate

Source: Fine Gardening.com



My garden beds are jam-packed with plants at eye level, overhead, and down low. Just when I thought I had maxed out my space, I discovered an untapped location right under my feet. Garden paths are often edged by ground covers, but why stop there? Adding plants to these normally lifeless voids can soften the look of brick and stepping-stone paths, while providing a natural weed and erosion suppressant. To choose the right plants for paths, consider each plant's foot-traffic tolerance. Some ground covers don't mind being stepped on, while others resent it. After all, even turf grass, our ubiquitous plant underfoot, can become worn out with heavy use. So it's important to go for plants that meet your path's light, water, and soil requirements as well as its traffic level. That said, here are several ground covers I grow that will take a moderate to heavy amount of foot traffic (daily), and some that are valuable on the sidelines or in occasionally traveled areas (a few times a week).



Woolly thyme likes to stretch its flat branches out over sidewalks and stairs. It is useful in softening the lines described by hardscaping materials like brick and concrete.

These are the most forgiving

Ornamental thymes (*Thymus* spp. and cvs.) are probably one of the most forgiving groups of plants when it comes to foot traffic. Woolly thyme (*T. pseudolanuginosus*, USDA Hardiness Zones 5–9), a 1-inch to 3-inch-tall ground cover, is good for use in a walkway since it grows flat. Its minute gray leaves really are woolly, or pubescent, and give the plant an all-over soft and fuzzy appearance. In mid- to late June, pale mauve flowers top woolly thyme like frosting smeared casually on a cupcake. However, the blossoms do attract bees. Gardeners who are wary of those nectar-loving insects may want to site these plants with caution.

Like other thymes, woolly thyme is fairly easy to care for. It requires very little water once it has become established, and as for cutting it back, just an annual haircut tidies it up and promotes fuller growth. Give it full sun and well-drained soil and it won't disappoint you. Another top-notch plant that stands up to regular foot traffic is an unusual evergreen called brass buttons (*Leptinella squalida*, syn. *Cotula squalida*, Zones 4–7). A native of New Zealand, this plant grows to 2 inches high and forms a creeping weed-proof mat. Its foliage looks like tiny, delicate fern fronds. The hybrid 'Platt's Black' (*L. squalida* 'Platt's Black', Zones 4–7) has bronze leaves with a decidedly dark midrib. Both plants like part shade and prefer regular water during dry periods.



Brass buttons is an excellent ground cover that requires minimal weeding. Plants will form a tight carpet of green in just a year.

Because brass buttons is a creeping plant, it's a good idea to consider where you do and don't want it to creep. Blocking its route with a hard-paving material at least 2 inches thick will keep it in check. Still, brass buttons is no thug in the colonizing department, and I don't find it a nuisance where it has jumped beyond the boundaries I've set.

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Plants for Pathways

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Blue star creeper (*Pratia pedunculata*, syn. *Lobelia pedunculata*, Zones 5–7) is another popular plant that stands up to heavy foot traffic. When it's in bloom in early summer, its pale-blue blossoms make you feel as if you're walking on clouds. It reaches only about a halfinch tall but will spread indefinitely. So be sure to set boundaries for this ground cover as well. It takes full sun or light shade—more shade if it's in a really hot spot—and prefers a well-drained soil. Since blue star creeper is a semi-evergreen ground cover, it will lose its leaves in areas with low winter temperatures.



Don't be bashful about stepping on blue star creeper. This plant is good at handling regular foot traffic and also looks great filling in between stepping-stones.

Choices for where you tread lightly



Plant *Acaena* 'Blue Haze' in areas of your garden that you visit seasonally. It does not like to be stepped on often, so the author places it where she needs to do only periodic weeding.

Many plants will take light footfalls or occasional treading, which makes them ideal for alongside paths, between large stepping-stones, or in areas where you may need to walk only for seasonal gardening maintenance. One such plant is *Acaena* 'Blue Haze' (syn. *A. 'Pewter'*, Zones 7–9). This ground cover forms a beautiful 4-inch-tall mound that will spread to 3 feet before you know it. Its compound leaves have a lovely blue-gray cast, and its insignificant flowers are followed by small, dark-red, burrlike fruits. 'Blue Haze' looks best cascading beside concrete steps in full sun and fast-draining soil. It cares little about summer water. Another ground cover that takes light foot traffic is 'Kewensis' wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei* 'Kewensis', Zones 5–9).

This Asian evergreen plant doesn't mind sun or shade and prefers well-drained soil. It features 4-inch-tall waves of tiny glossy-green leaves and spreads to about 2 feet wide. I have my 'Kewensis' planted along a retaining wall, where I step only occasionally when I make a foray into the border for a weeding session.



You can alternate ground covers to give a planting some variation. Blue star creeper and baby's tears provide a lovely green border around stepping stones.

My favorite tread-lightly plant is beach strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*, Zones 5–9) because of its ease of cultivation. A native erosion-suppressing ground cover along the west coast of North and South America, it can reach 4 inches tall in sun and—more valuable to me—in shade, even with dry summer soil. It has small white flowers in late spring followed by sweet strawberries in mid-summer, although I've yet to see my plants set fruit. I have beach strawberry planted along a path of hazelnut shells in my garden, where it has conveniently hopped its way underfoot. It does not mind occasional footfalls and is polite to neighboring plants. These are just a few of the intriguing ground covers that can provide another dimension to the garden. Have fun experimenting with every square inch of your garden by placing these low-growing creepers in paths and walkways. You'll soon find that the pleasure of gardening can be realized even underfoot.



Sometimes plants underfoot are volunteers. Beach strawberry has happily migrated to a mulched path in the author's garden, where its glossy evergreen leaves and red stems are a vision of perfection.

(Continues on following page)

Plants for Pathways (Continues from previous page)



'Kewensis' wintercreeper has wonderful tiny leaves that add a nice texture underfoot. It grows in a mounding form but has a remarkable way of shooting upward if it encounters a vertical surface.

30 Foot-friendly Plants

It may seem unusual to step on plants, but there are a number of ground covers readily available at nurseries that do well under occasional footfalls. Although I do not grow all of these plants in my garden, I've seen many of them flourishing elsewhere.

For moderate to heavy foot traffic

Blue star creeper (*Pratia pedunculata*, syn. *Lobelia pedunculata*) 5–7
 Brass buttons (*Leptinella squalida* and cvs., syn. *Cotula squalida*) 4–7
 Creeping Jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia* and cvs.) 4–8
 Creeping speedwell (*Veronica repens* and cvs.) 5–9
 'Doone Valley' thyme (*Thymus* 'Doone Valley') 6–9
 Labrador violet (*Viola labradorica*) 2–8
 Mazus (*Mazus reptans* and cvs.) 5–8
 Miniature moneywort (*Lysimachia japonica* 'Minutissima') 6–9
 Mother-of-thyme (*Thymus serpyllum* and cvs.) 4–9
 Prostrate speedwell (*Veronica prostrata* and cvs.) 5–8
 Pussy toes (*Antennaria dioica* and cvs.) 5–9
 Siberian barren strawberry (*Waldsteinia ternata*) 3–8
 Spring cinquefoil (*Potentilla neumanniana* and cvs., syn. *P. verna*) 5–8
 Turkish veronica (*Veronica liwanensis*) 4–9
 Woolly thyme (*Thymus pseudolanuginosus*) 5–9

For light foot traffic

Alpine lady's mantle (*Alchemilla alpina*) 3–8
 Baby's tears (*Soleirolia soleirolii* and cvs.) 10–11
 Beach strawberry (*Fragaria chiloensis*) 5–9
 'Blue Haze' acaena (*Acaena* 'Blue Haze', syn. *A. 'Pewter'*) 7–9
 Carpet bugleweed (*Ajuga reptans* and cvs.) 3–9
 Corsican mint (*Mentha requienii*) 6–9
 Dwarf mondo grass (*Ophiopogon japonicus* cvs.) 7–10
 Dwarf wallflower (*Erysimum kotschyianum*) 6–8
 Goldenstar (*Chrysogonum virginianum* and cvs.) 5–8
 Irish moss (*Sagina subulata*) 4–7
 'Kewensis' wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei* 'Kewensis') 5–9
 Lady's mantle (*Alchemilla ellenbeckii*) 6–8
 Roman chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*) 6–9
 Serbian bellflower (*Campanula poscharskyana* and cvs.) 4–7
 Snow-in-summer (*Cerastium tomentosum*) 3–7

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Register in advance for this meeting

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Feb 1, 2021 01:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

MGC Lunch & Learn Tech Series: Zoom 'Meeting' Administrator Training for NGC & MGC Education Courses

Description

This 90-minute training session with live Q&A will review the Zoom Administrator Portal and how to manage your Zoom account. Topics include deployment, account, user and group management, "Polling" used for testing, Breakout Rooms. Approved devices include desktop, laptop, ipad, and tablet devices. Smartphones not permitted for these workshops. Please Note: After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Requires Zoom client application be installed on your equipment to register. Goto www.zoom.us and download.

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Feb 15, 2021 12:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

MGC Lunch & Learn Tech Series: Zoom 'Meeting' Administrator Training for Special Events

Description

This 90-minute training session with live Q&A will review the Zoom Administrator Portal and how to manage your Zoom account and manage different types of events such as, district meetings, board and committee meetings, and conference or convention events. Topics include deployment, account, user and group management, "Polling" used for testing, Breakout Rooms. Approved devices for this session include: MAC/Windows desktop, laptop, ipad, and tablet devices. Smartphones not permitted for these sessions. Requires Zoom client application be installed on your equipment to register. Goto www.zoom.us and download

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Feb 22, 2021 12:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

MGC Lunch & Learn Tech Series: Combine Zoom Education + Fundraising to Benefit your Club/District Event including PayPal + Facebook + Virtual Marketplace

Description

This 90-minute training session with live Q&A will review the Zoom Administrator Portal and how to integrate your Zoom event linking Paypal for payment and linking Facebook to live stream events, holding a virtual marketplace with Breakout Rooms and auction events. Please Note: After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Requires Zoom client application be installed on your equipment to register. Goto www.zoom.us and download.

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://migardenclubs-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcrfu-sjktE93D8e3maNOPo5XoJWgv1SCt>