

Academy Garden Club Thymes

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMY GARDEN CLUB OF LENOX

JUNE 11, 2019

*“Parting is such sweet sorrow that I shall say
goodnight till it be morrow.”*

William Shakespeare



Forget-me-not meaning: A connection that lasts through time.

Dear Ladies,

Thank you to everyone at the Academy Garden Club. It has been an incredible experience being your president. What a great Club. You are such a phenomenal group of women who took this novice under your wings and guided me in the right direction. My term as president was made easy with all your support. You have warmed my heart and I am so grateful. Thank you.

Last meeting with Lisa and Flavio, owners of No. 6 Depot Roastery and Café in West Stockbridge, explained their coffee business with grace and enthusiasm. Lisa Landry gave a stimulating talk on coffee explaining the difference between washed and dried. Flavio Lichtenthal passed out shots of both for everyone to experience. He compared it to wine tasting...letting the taste permeate your senses. Everyone who attended was quite impressed with their operation.

Nominating Committee, Theresa Michney, Colette Lemanski and Anne Gannon, will do the honors and present the new slate of officers for the 2019/2020 term. Once announced the membership will take a vote.

For the June 11th meeting, remember that we have changed the food type from appetizers and desserts to a main dish for members who are not on the Dessert Committee. Those that signed-up for the Dessert Committee are Ginny Akabane, Jan Chague, Nancy Cowhig, Joan Hajduk, Abigail McKee, Theresa Michney, Jen Picard, and Carol Way.

Don't forget to bring your own place setting: plate, bowl, silverware and napkins.

Get ready, the Paper Bag Auction is on again for the June meeting. Theresa has come up with some great prizes. Don't forget to bring some money to purchase one ticket for \$1 or six tickets for \$5. You could be a winner!

On June 12, 2019, we will take a road trip to Bridge of Flowers, Shelbourne Falls, MA. Dianne Romeo will have more information at the meeting.

This is the third year of the Garden and Flower Show on Saturday, August 24, and Sunday, August 25. The theme will be Music in the Hills, Garden and Flower Show. The Division 1, Design Classes are Enchanted Fairy Gardens, Whimsical Wreaths, On the Lawn at Tanglewood and Magical Melodies of Summer. The Division 2, Horticulture Classes (Amateurs only) are Vegetables, Herbs, Cut Specimens, Container/Houseplants and Native Flowers. Anyone interested in participating in the Design or Horticulture may contact Dianne Romeo at 413.822.1447.

Looking forward to seeing everyone on Tuesday, June 11th, at Berkshire Botanical Gardens, renovated Center House at 6:00 PM.

Sincerely,

Jan Chague, AGC President

“Flowers leave some of their fragrance in the hand that bestows them”.

Chinese proverb,
With Family and Friends, Simple Pleasures of the Garden by Susannah Seton

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HORTICULTURAL COLUMN

By Harriet Wetstone

I was standing on my deck the other day when a humming bird swooped by and away, leaving me to wonder what she was after given the deck had nothing to offer, only young sugar snaps, mint and kale. So I started wondering how to make hummingbirds happy, and for that matter, what other birds sip nectar and what flowers will attract the nectar sippers.



Nectar is a sweet, nutritious energy-rich liquid produced by some flowers to attract pollinators, be they birds, insects or bats. Nectar is mostly water and sugar with trace amounts of proteins, carbs, salts and amino acids. The sugar content ranges from three to eighty percent depending on the type of flower, but also the quality of the soil in which the flower grows. Flowers also differ in how quickly they can regenerate nectar, from a few minutes to several hours. Temperature, soil moisture, and plant age are also factors. All birds have high metabolic rates, but the hummingbird needs to drink half its weight in sugar daily! I didn't know that hummingbirds also eat many small insects and spiders. It turns out that most birds will enjoy a quick sugar charge; however hummingbirds are the largest family of nectivores.

Flower color is important in attracting pollinators, bright reds and purples attract hummingbirds, but even more important, the shape of the flower is critical. For example, humming birds with their long narrow beaks need deep throated, tubular flowers. It used to be thought that hummingbirds had tongues that absorbed nectar, like a sponge, but micro photography has allowed us to know that hummingbirds actually curl their tongue into a straw shape, using their tongues like little micro pumps which flick in and out of the nectar. I was surprised to learn that woodpeckers are like hummingbirds in that they too can stick out their tongues.

Native flowers are said to be preferred for hummingbird gardens, as they are familiar to the birds, and because they are more likely to thrive with minimum care. Bright colors, of course, tubular blooms, plentiful nectar, but also little or no scent is better because that means there is less competition with bees. Hummingbirds do not have a keen sense of smell. Flowers that have a long bloom time, and a diversity of flower, allows for reliable food source over time, hopefully throughout spring summer and fall. I was surprised at the length of the 'best for hummingbirds' lists which include bee balm, butterfly bush, cannas, cardinal flower, coneflowers, columbines, coral bells, fuchsia, hollyhocks, lupines, petunias, salvia, zinnias. Hummingbirds also love water, especially if it is moving.

Hummingbirds build amazing cup like nests (it's the females who do it all) with the edges curled in to protect the little ones from being tipped out in wind. They are decorated with moss or lichen for camouflage, and always in a much protected place; for example, in a dense thorny bush, safe from predators. Safety is so important that the nest can be up to a half mile away from food source!

Thanks to www.thespruce.com,
www.zmescience.com,
www.nationalgeographic.com,
www.hummingbirdguide.com!!

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