



Newsletter ~ September 2024

THIS MONTHS MEETING

Social 6:30P / Meeting 7:00P

September 10, 2024 — “Backyard Bird Feeding”

Dave Williams, a retired Reading science teacher, has been birding for more than 40 years. He will share his expertise telling us how to attract a diversity of birds to your backyard, from cardinals to chickadees to downy woodpeckers. Selecting different types of seeds and feeders, ways to provide water, squirrel prevention, and more will be covered in Dave’s talk.

NEXT MONTHS

Social 6:15P / Meeting 7:00P

Members Only

Joint Meeting of 5 Clubs (host: Stoneham Garden Club)

October 17, 2024, Thursday — “Jaw Dropping, Traffic Stopping, Get Your Neighbors Talking Container Gardens”

Deborah Trickett, owner of The Captured Garden, is a certified horticulturist and landscape designer. She has worked throughout New England creating container gardens, and designing gardens for discerning gardeners. Her designs showcase uncommon plants, and her plant combinations are anything but cookie cutter.

Location: Stoneham Town Hall, 35 Central Street

HORTICULTURE & CONSERVATION

FROM ELLEN MASTROCOLA

GLOBAL WARMING AND OUR GARDENS

According to NCEI's Global Annual Temperature Outlook, there is a 22% chance that 2024 will rank as the warmest year on record and a 99% chance that it was ranked in the top five. January saw a record-high monthly global ocean surface temperature for the 10th consecutive month.

Higher average temperatures and shifting precipitation patterns are causing plants to bloom earlier, creating unpredictable growing seasons. Even warm-weather plants like tomatoes can be harmed by increased temperatures.

With such a rainy springtime, that we have experienced this year, I found that the hydrangeas in New England have never done better. Plants that have, in the past, struggled to produce blooms and were short lived, have this year boasted prolific blooming sensations that have showed their longevity and their amazing changing colors.

Here are some suggestions to help your gardens with our global warming issue:

1. Removing invasive plants from your garden and choosing an array of native alternatives can minimize the threat of invasive species expansion. Native plants help to maintain important pollinator connections and ensure food sources for wildlife; non-native plants can outcompete these important native species for habitat and food. Contact your local or state native plant society to find out what plants are native to your area.
2. There are a number of ways to reduce water consumption in your garden, which is particularly important during increased heat waves and droughts. These include mulching, installing rain barrels, adjusting your watering schedule, and using drip irrigation. Practices like mulching also provide nutrients to the soil, reducing the need for chemical fertilizers which take significant amounts of energy to produce.
3. Composting your waste can significantly reduce your contribution to carbon pollution, especially methane, a highly potent greenhouse gas. It also provides an excellent source of nutrients for your garden, again reducing the need for chemical fertilizers. Examples of sources of nutrients for your garden are coffee grinds, egg shells, vegetable scraps; instead of throwing them down the garbage disposal, consider them to not only fertilize your plants, but also helping the environment.
4. Trees can absorb and store as much as a ton of carbon pollution (CO₂) from the atmosphere. If every one of America's 85 million gardening households planted just one young shade tree in their backyard or community, those trees would absorb more than 2 million tons of CO₂ each year. Shade trees planted near your home can also reduce energy used for cooling in the summer.

If you are not completely convinced that global warming is real, perhaps you'll enjoy another perspective. After all, picture is worth a thousand words.....

