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## Next Meeting - March 7<sup>th</sup> - 6:30 pm - Annex Building

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### *The Amazing Journey of Bringing Plants to Market* - By Alison Reyes



Our March meeting will feature Angela Treadwell-Palmer, Founder and Co-Owner of Plants Nouveau LLC, a company that specializes in marketing new plants to the nursery industry. Angela's career path has covered every aspect of gardening and garden design with a special emphasis on native plants. She directed the Native Plants Landscape Conference at Millersville University for 14 years and has traveled around the world to remote gardens seeking out new and interesting native plants. Since 2004, Plants Nouveau has grown to more than 45 breeders and 380 new plant introductions. Angela's presentation will cover the introduction of new plants; how they are bred, selected, named, and marketed to new customers. Join us for a fun and informative evening!

***Friendly reminder to all members to sign up for a plant sale committee! There are many committees to choose from including sun, shade, shrubs, bake sale, set-up, clean-up, holding area and check out. The native committee already has quite a few volunteers. Sign-up sheets will be on a table near the entrance during our March meeting.***

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### *February Meeting* - By Alison Reyes



Our February meeting featured WNGC member Carol Decker, naturalist, and native plant aficionado. Carol described in detail why native plants matter and how to incorporate them into every landscape. Since most of the land in MA is privately owned, homeowners and corporations must do their part to maintain natural habitats that conserve biodiversity. Planting natives supports our birds and pollinators which are in serious decline. This can be accomplished by planting natives in place of lawns which in turn will increase our population of birds, bees, bats, butterflies, moths, and beetles.

Strategies can also be employed to remove invasive plants which have been intentionally or accidentally brought to our communities from other parts of the world. Common West Newbury invasives include Japanese Knotweed, Asiatic Bittersweet, and Black Swallow wort. They can be hazardous to our ecosystem as they can quickly choke out native plant populations and drastically decrease the population of pollinators.

Fortunately, there is a long list of natives that can be added to our landscapes that can support this initiative! Native to West Newbury include Maples, Birches, Hickory, Oaks, Conifers, Buttonbush, Witch Hazel, Elderberry, Swamp Rose, Spicebush, Flowering Raspberry, Nannyberry, Chokeberry, and many more! Of course, there are so many beautiful, native perennials we can add to our gardens, many of which will be available for purchase at our annual garden club sale on May 18. A full list of Zone 6B natives can be viewed here: [Hardy Native Plants: Choosing Native Plants For Zone 6 Gardens | Gardening Know How](#).

As Doug Tallamy so eloquently states, "In the past, we have asked one thing of our gardens: that they be pretty. Now they must support life, sequester carbon, feed pollinators, and manage water."

## ***Champion Trees of West Newbury*** - By Lori Boudrow

The town of W. Newbury has two State Champion trees, both situated on WNGC members' property. The first tree certified by Mass. DCR as the State Champion BLACK OAK (*Quercus Velutina*) is located on the property of Barbara and Peter Haack, 102 Main St. The age and size of this tree make it both significant and remarkable. This tree started its life when Massachusetts was still a colony and was likely growing among other very large, colonial-era trees well before the Revolutionary War. Standing on a steep hillside that could not be farmed, this tree survived the many historical eras of the West Newbury landscape, from deep forest in the 1700's to pasturing in the 1800's, and the subsequent heavy agricultural eras of the 1800's and 1900's. While no historical information about the tree is known, the Haack house located below this tree is thought to date from the mid-1700's (no official date is available).



**Stats:**

Height (ft.) 105.50 99  
Circumference (in.) 207.50 228  
Spread (ft.) 77.25 77  
Estimated Age 290 yrs. (1730)

The 2nd Champion Tree is located at 241 Middle St., the property of Carrie and Rod Hometh, a GREEN ASH (*Fraxinus Pennsylvania*). This Green Ash is quite significant and remarkable. This tree is located on the historic West Newbury Road, and directly across from a very early farmhouse. About 50 feet from this Green Ash, there was a large barn foundation that has been dismantled. This suggests that the tree stood in the front yard of the original farmstead and, for reasons unknown, was never cut down like so many other trees during West Newbury's agricultural past. Perhaps its size and prominent location made it remarkable enough to avoid the axe. The age of this Green Ash is estimated to be 198-204 years old, which means that it began to grow right around the time that West Newbury was chartered as a town (1819).

Emerald Ash Borer has destroyed many, if not most, of the Green Ash trees in West Newbury, this tree is very unusual in that it has survived this infestation thus far. The owners have taken extraordinary care of the tree, including trunk injections, tree pruning as needed, brush clearing around the base, and fertilization treatments to maintain health and vigor of the tree. The Hometh family has placed great value on keeping the tree healthy and deserve recognition for their efforts to save the largest Green Ash in the state.



**Stats:**

Height (ft.) 74 68  
Circumference (in.) 156 160  
Spread (ft.) 74 78.5  
Estimated Age: 198-200 yrs. (1825)

For more information on WN significant trees:

<https://www.wnewbury.org/tree-committee/pages/roster-significant-remarkable-trees>

## **Garden Committee Spotlight: Hills House Herb Garden** - By Alexis Katkevich



The Hills House Herb Garden, located at 407 Main Street in West Newbury, provides a glimpse into how we can bring the past to life through gardening. Andrea Caswell, chair since September 2023, cares for the garden with fellow members Debra Caminiti, Carrie Crowley, Lisa Forbush-Umholtz, Barbara Merrill, and Heidi O'Connor.

Andrea shares that after the garden was founded in 1966, the WNGC club received a certificate of recognition for distinguished service from the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, followed in 1975 by an Award of Merit (Northern District) for its care and presentation of the herb garden.

The William Hills House was built in 1780, and the herb garden is nestled between the home's kitchen entrance and a cobbler's shed, complete with historic tools and shoes. Nearby, a stone water trough from 1882, now split in two, is used for seasonal plantings, pumpkins, or winter greenery. The garden is modeled after one established at Plimoth Patuxet Living History Museum. Arranged in a traditional goosefoot design, Andrea explains that it contains "culinary, aromatic, and medicinal herbs, highlighting the importance of these many varieties of plants to early settlers."

In summer, a "dramatic" tarragon plant towers along the edge, and former chair Carrie Crowley shares that it is one of the oldest herbs in the garden. Pink yarrow, yellow feverfew, and French lavender add bursts of color. Andrea mentions that WNGC members are invited to gather clippings of fresh herbs, including the fabulous tarragon, mint, chives, oregano, basil, sage, rosemary, and thyme.

Working with the garden includes common challenges like controlling weeds and fast growers such as chives and mint. Andrea explains, however, that "working with different herbs in a changing climate" is a more pressing challenge. "Some years certain plants thrive, while others suffer from drought and need to be nurtured, as in our home gardens," she notes. The Hills House committee keeps in mind that planting choices may need to change with the climate.

Andrea, who joined the WNGC to learn more about gardening, has deep gratitude for former chair Carrie's support and the members who commit year-round to ensuring the garden's success. "I've learned that gardens create continuity and connection. Gardens evolve, as people do, and can teach us about change and the seasons of life."

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## **Jumping Worms** – By Carrie Hometh



After consideration and research on the jumping worm's situation, the WN Plant Sale will continue with members donating plants from home and we will continue the Digging Committee. While it is too early to transplant, we ask that you do something in preparation for the Sale. Go into your gardens and see if there is any evidence of the granular like dirt that is left by the worms. If there is, we'll be sending out details on how to manage the repotting of these plants. You will not see the worms at this time of year. They have left behind worm eggs that are extremely difficult to see. To learn more, visit:

<https://extension.unh.edu/resource/plant-sales-and-jumping-worms>

**Native Plants** - By Chris Gerzon



Hairy Beardtongue  
Plant Height: 1-2 feet  
Spreads: 1 foot  
Bloom Time: May, June  
Bloom Color: Lavender  
Deer Resistant  
Full Sun to Part Shade

A versatile native for garden and landscape, this plant is tough and adaptable to a range of well-drained soils, in full sun and partial shade. It does well in average clay or any medium garden soil. In early summer, airy clusters of delicate tubular flowers appear on the top half of the plant in various shades of lavender. The leaves turn a beautiful red in the fall.



Native Bergamot  
Plant Height: 2-5 feet  
Spreads: 2-3 feet  
Bloom Time: July-September  
Bloom Color: Lavender  
Full Sun

Bergamot is a well-known and highly adaptable native plant that thrives in all but the wettest soils. The fragrant lavender flowers are a popular nectar source for pollinators and attract a wide variety of bees and butterflies. Hummingbirds may also visit. The distinctly aromatic leaves are commonly used to make tea, and the button seed heads are popular in dried floral arrangements.



New England Aster  
Plant Height: 1-4 feet  
Spreads: 2-3 feet  
Bloom Time: August-October  
Bloom Color: lavender, pink, purple  
Full Sun

Magnificent in bloom, New England Aster lights up the late season landscape with bunches of purple flowers. The bloom color can be violet, purple, lavender, or shades of pink. The flowers are an important source of nectar for late season pollinators, especially Monarchs as they stock up for their fall migration to Mexico. This deer resistant native prefers moist, rich soils, but is easily grown in a broad range of conditions, thriving in full sun or light shade in all but the driest soils.

## **Member Showcase – Maureen Harris**



### **How long have you been a member of the club?**

Since 2018, 6 years

### **What town do you live in?**

We moved from Georgetown, MA to West Newbury in 2016 after I retired.

### **What committee/s are you on?**

I am the Vice President in charge of programming for the Garden Club. I also chair the Bake Sale at the annual Plant Sale and coordinate our float in the Memorial Day Parade. In addition, I'm on the Yearbook committee and Executive Board.

### **What do you like about gardening?**

I love the serenity of being outside in the garden.

### **What do you like about the garden club?**

I have met the most wonderful people in the Garden Club. I've also learned so much about gardening, especially about native plants, and pollinators.

### **Do you have a favorite plant in your garden?**

I'm looking forward to adding some native plants to my garden and watching the butterflies, bees and birds enjoy them.

### **What is/was your profession?**

I worked for the Boston Public Schools for 40 years as a Spanish Bilingual teacher, Principal, and Director of Extended Learning Services. It was an incredibly rewarding career.

### **What do you like to do besides garden?**

I love to cook, especially during the summer when we have so much wonderful produce in our gardens and farm stands around us.

### **What have you learned about gardening?**

I have learned so much from both presenters and fellow gardeners. I especially love the garden visits during the summer when we get to see the most spectacular gardens of our own members.

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## **Remembering Joan Colby**

The club recently learned of the passing of longtime member, Joan Colby. Joan passed away in October of 2023 and had been a member since 1963, 60 years! Club member, Dianne Faulkner shares, "Joan is remembered as a beautiful woman whose talent for designing amazing floral pieces which could be admired on the front door of her lovely home on Main Street, West Newbury throughout every season. She was an integral part of the WNGC in years past and will be fondly remembered."

**Contact us!**

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WNGC is a member of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts. Read their quarterly newsletter *Mayflower* for articles, announcements, events and workshops.

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**Stay Connected to WNGC**

Note: WNGC Board meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month at Board members' homes.  
Please contact Lori Boudrow if you wish to attend.