

George Landis Arboretum Newsletter

Volume 14 • Number 2

Spring 1995

SPRINGTIME DELIGHTS

1995 Rare Plant and Perennial Sale

Spring is always heralded at the George Landis Arboretum by our Annual Rare Plant and Perennial Sales. In 1994, for the first time we combined these two sales into a two-day weekend affair. We offered free horticultural lectures, advice on plants, and refreshments to reinvigorate weary shoppers.

This Horticultural Festival was so successful and well received that the same schedule will be followed this year. The sale will begin promptly at 11:00 am. Hours for the Sale will be 11:00 am - 3:00pm Saturday and Sunday.

Short lectures will be offered in the Arboretum Meeting House by some of the Arboretum's most knowledgeable volunteers. Pam Yourno, garden designer and horticulturist will begin the days programs with a discussion of TLC for Perennials. Pam has been a mainstay of the VanLoveland Perennial Garden Restoration project and has continued to be an integral part of the continuing care and development of this popular garden area.

Beginning at noon Pamela Rowling, Arboretum Director will explain how to plant trees, shrubs and vines and how to provide for their aftercare to ensure gardening success.

At 1:00 p.m. Doroyth Clark, well known to Arboretum members as the Greenhouse Keeper, Horticulturist and lover of tiny, tiny plants (alpinists), will provide direction and insight into the world of Rock Gardening.

We are pleased to be able to offer a number of highly desirable and hard to locate items, reasonably priced. A plant which has always been much in demand,

and short in supply is *Daphne cneorum* (Rose Garland Daphne). This is an outstanding woody groundcover with intense fragrant deep pink flowers. Unusual conifers and desirable flowering trees and shrubs will also be available.

Our major Clematis supplier, Steffen's Nursery, has made available to us a number of rare and choice *Clematis* selections. In addition to *Clematis* 'Betty Corning', we will be offering 10 different named varieties including both single and double lowering climbing types and herbaceous varieties, Prince Charles, Veronica's Choice, Proteus, Warsaw Nike, Perle d' Azur to name a few.

A wide selection of herbaceous perennial plants from seed, division of Arboretum specimens and from outside sources will be offered. Various *Polemonium*, *Echinacea*, *Aster* and special Lilies selected and grown by Janet Vinyard will be available as well as other special plants too numerous to mention.

The selection of plants suitable for the Rock and Trough garden is testimony to Doroyth Clark's hard work and infectious enthusiasm for these hard to find plants. *Gentiana*, *Tanacetum*, *Cerastium*, *Townsendia*, *Alyssum* are among the many genera to be found at this year's sale.

The Acorn Shop is fully stocked with all new inventory to fulfill your gardening needs and inspire your imagination. You are invited to visit during the Sale.

Volunteers, trustees and staff have been planning and planting and are sure that this will be a great event!

Tom Burbine: A Special Friend

In February, the Arboretum and the people of the Greater Capital District and beyond lost a very special friend, Tom Burbine.

We at the Arboretum remember Tom as a lover of life and as a man whose every action reflected his lifelong commitment to education and public service. His love of the George Landis Arboretum and his belief in its educational mission was evidenced in his enthusiastic participation in all aspects of the Arboretum. As a Trustee he was a member of the Education, Horticulture and the Buildings and Grounds Committees, serving as the chairman of the latter. An immensely popular speaker, at any lecture or program he delivered we were sure to have a full house. His column which addressed problems sent in by our readers was an invaluable asset, contributing to the quality and scope of our Newsletter. He loved participating in volunteer workdays. Trimming trees and shrubs, planting, staking and fussing over our collections was Tom's idea of a really good time!

Outside of his Arboretum commitments, Tom worked as a more than full time extension agent for the Montgomery County office of Cornell Cooperative Extension. For more than 25 years he helped and inspired people in their gardening endeavors. Expanding his scope further, he daily reached into his treasure trove of horticultural knowledge and New England wit and wisdom to minister

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At The Garden

Director's Report

Pamela H. Rowling

The George Landis Arboretum Newsletter

is published quarterly for members of the Arboretum. The GLA's mission is to provide natural history and horticultural education through programs and through its plant collections.

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The seasons just won't commit themselves this year. Winter was cold, but not so cold as prior years, and certainly devoid of the snowfall of 93. Spring has been slow in coming on here at the Arboretum and the plants accordingly are holding back. Many of the minor bulbs bloomed in the first warmish blast of March, but since then virtually nothing. The seasons normal progression of minor bulbs, fritillarias, daffodils and tulips which lead up to the blooming of the flowering shrubs and trees like an orchestral arrangement reaching a crescendo has been stalled. When the air and ground finally do warm up I anticipate a great bursting forth of bloom.

Unlike the season, the volunteers, trustees and staff have shown great commitment. This winter I experienced some fairly serious health problems which kept me out of work for over a month. Volunteers and trustees rallied together to provide help for Mary (our only other winter staff member) and kept us on track with our various planning activities and ongoing projects. I extend my greatest appreciation to everyone who helped during this difficult time and to all who showed such understanding for any delays and difficulties.

A flurry of activity is the main characteristic of spring at the Arboretum. Volunteers are busy seven days a week preparing for the upcoming Plant Sale in May. Regina is stocking the Acorn Shop for its season opening. Education Programs and displays are being finalized and begun. Off site displays are being organized. School groups are being booked for on site classes at the end of their school year and the beginning of our gardening season. We are in the midst of our Annual Membership Drive which seeks to increase our membership to 1,000 members this year!

We have received funding from the State of New York Department of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation under the Natural Heritage Trust Program (ZBGA) to support personnel to assist on our Collections Survey Project as well as

to oversee the production and implementation of new directional and informational signs, labels and brochures at the Arboretum. These funds, fortunately, were part of NY State's 1994 Budget and so although delayed were not taken back.

The Spring Benefit at the Desmond Inn was a tremendous success! Everyone appeared to thoroughly enjoy Gary Koller's presentation. Special thanks to event chairmen Phyllis Rosenblum and Frank Gilmore; to all of the businesses and individuals who contributed items to the auction and to the volunteers who worked the event and kept things running so smoothly.

We are looking forward to another stellar year at the Arboretum full of fun and learning, come join us.

Top off your visit with a stroll through our unique shop!

Nature gifts for all.



Now Open
Saturday 10 - 5
Sunday 12 - 5

Weekdays by chance or appointment.

Special Notices:

The abbreviated format of this issue of the Newsletter is primarily due to recent staffing shortages (see At the Garden). Subsequent issues will return to their normal size and scope. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we get back on track.

There have been a number of inquiries regarding the new quarterly membership renewal system. The wording on the renewal form has caused confusion. Each renewal is for a **full year membership**. Renewal notices however are grouped now by quarter in which one's membership expires to allow us to use bulk mail rates. This represents a great savings to the Arboretum. Our apologies for any confusion this ambiguous wording may have caused.

This Native Plant

Sonja Javarone

Willows

Salix species

Willows have an attitude, a demeanor, a bearing which brings forth the spirit of Huck Finn, a sense of adventure, a bit of danger, and the need to explore. If we retain our child eyes, we see looming mop-headed trees with leaning trunks, perfect for climbing; branchlets that break easily, the requisite for creative games and play objects; and an earth-based lair, beneath the canopy, a natural room of dramatic dimensions. Or perhaps, we delight in search of pussy willow in a shrubby thicket. Whatever our age or focus, the willows, genus *Salix*, add another dimension to our environment.

Of all the genera of trees in North America, *Salix* has the greatest number of species. The willows are a taxonomists nightmare. Many species are very similar. One species may vary greatly in form, a tree in one habitat or a shrub in another. Species freely hybridize. Several trips to the same plant may be necessary for identification, one to examine the catkins in the spring and later to observe the mature leaves. About 300 willows are found worldwide, except Australia. 100 species are native to North America, 40 of which are trees, the others being shrubs, dwarfs or alpiners.

Salix species have been evident since the age of dinosaurs, 70-135 million years ago. Fossil evidence shows a widespread distribution of dwarf willows. As time moved on, hybridization and species development have been increased by flooding, glaciers, high winds, and man-made disturbances. Many hybrids are fertile and cross with pure species or other hybrids. Hybrids often show increased vigor and superior qualities. The speedy growth, hardiness, ease of propagation, and adaptability make willow popular for park plantings, difficult areas, and wetland rehabilitation.



Salix nigra

Charles Edward Faxon From

"Manual of the Trees of North America" by Charles Sprague Sargent Houton Mifflin & Co., 1906

The willows, genus *Salix*, have alternate leaves with stipules, male and female flowers (catkins) on separate trees, and buds covered by a single scale. The male catkins erupt into clouds of pollen covered stamens and are generally considered more attractive than the pistils of the female catkins. The willows are mostly insect pollinated. The catkins produce a nectar which attracts bees at a time of the year when bees have few other resources. The silky-haired seeds are distributed by the wind. Seeds germinate within 2 to 3 days. All in all, willows manage sexual reproduction quite well.

The opportunistic willows, however, do not rely on sexual reproduction alone. The twigs are irregularly jointed near the base and break off easily. Twigs readily take root and start new plants. Some species form thickets from underground stolons, much the same technique used by strawberry plants. This is natural cloning with each new plant having the same genetic qualities as the parent plant.

Do you have a headache or aching joints? Most cultures, worldwide, discovered the tonic value of willowbark tea. Willow bark contains salicin, a precursor of aspirin. Leaves were used for

wound dressings. In areas lacking other firewood, willow is a clean burning fuel. The wood can be used for charcoal, gun powder and wood-pulp. The bark also contains tannin. The Ojibwas cured moosehides over willow fire. Willow provides food for cattle, deer, rabbits, and birds. The bark was also a source of string for rope making. Worldwide, the willow has and is being used for basket making. The Plains Indians smoked a mixture of shaved willow bark and buffalo fat, called kinnikinnick, in their ritual pipes. Early spring growth, the diameter of your thumb was used to make willow whistles. A concoction of boiled leaves and twigs mixed with wine supposedly had merit as a dandruff shampoo. Hunters use willow thickets for duck blinds.

Our only North American willow of commercial value is the black willow, *Salix nigra*, probably the largest willow in the world. It is flexible and holds nails without splitting, ideal for boxes, crates, wickerwork, waterwheels, boat keels, and baskets. This giant is invaluable as levee reinforcement along the Mississippi River. As an ornamental, it is an elegant species adaptable to many habitats.

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The peach leaf willow, *S. amygdaloides*, is an attractive tree with pleasing foliage. It is recognized mostly as a stream bank tree along watercourses in the Midwest.

The Bebb willow, *S. bebbiana*, is a wide-ranging and variable tree with many varieties. It is distributed from Alaska to Arizona and east to the Atlantic Coast. *S. b.* var. *luxurians*, for example is restricted to the Gaspé Peninsula in Quebec.

The shining willow, *S. lucida*, a shrub or small tree, has outstanding foliage and has been imported into Europe.

The sandbar willow, *S. interior*, is a stoloniferous shrub which stabilizes dunes and sandbars, a true ecological pioneer. It has strikingly long leaves and varnished branches.

The pussy willow, *S. discolor*, has lovely red branchlets, a glaucous undersurface to the leaves and striking male catkins.

The autumn willow, *S. serissima*, is a lovely large shrub, having glossy leaves and branchlets, adapted to acid boggy conditions.

The arctic willow, *S. arctica*, is a dwarf species with a circumpolar distribution. *S. a.* var. *petraea*, native to the Rockies, is favored for rock garden cultivation.

The hoary willow, *S. candida*, is a very ornamental species with striking young foliage. It is adapted to calcareous swamps.

The prairie willow, *S. humilis*, out of character for most willows, is adapted to dry sandy plains and pine barrens. It is a nice ornamental shrub with a pleasing arching habit, attractive young leaves, and good autumn color.

The bearberry willow, *S. uva-ursi*, is a dwarf alpine of Greenland, Canada, and the mountains of New England and New York State. It is a unique ornamental in well-drained rocky sites.

Some imports from Europe and Asia have become naturalized and include basket willow, *S. viminalis*; bay-leaves willow, *S. pentandra*; white or golden willow, *S. alba* and varieties; crack willow, *S. fragilis*; purple willow, *S. purpurea*; and weeping willow, *S. babylonica*.

The willows, rich in species, diverse in habitat preference, and ancient in origins, upon close examination reveal dynamic and vital memberships in evolving environments. They truly are an adventure worthy of exploration.

"Rivers....are the natural highways of all nations....conducting (the traveler) through the most interesting scenery....where the animal and vegetable kingdoms attain their greatest perfection."

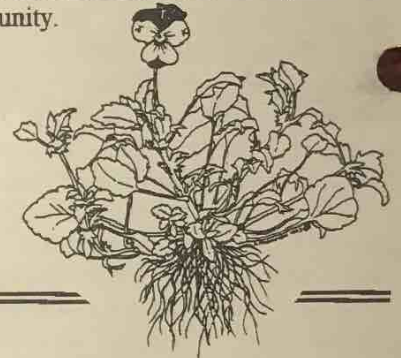
Henry David Thoreau

Along those rivers, the willows grow reminding us of more peaceful times when man and nature intertwined.

A Special Friend
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to his listeners on WGY's Garden Talk program.

If immortality is that part of us which never dies but lives on in the people whose lives we have touched, then Tom Burbine's place is assured. He will live on in the hearts and minds of so many here at the Arboretum and throughout our community.



George Landis Arboretum
Lape Road
Esperance, NY 12066

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Calendar

Programs appropriate for youth and family are marked (YF).

May

- 7 - Sun-Moon Party 4:00 p.m. - Star Party at night (YF)
- 13 & 14 - Rare Plant & Perennial Sale
- 14 - Mother's Day Wildflower Walk (YF)
- 19 & 20 - Star Party 9:30 p.m. (YF)
- 20 - Woodcock Walk (YF)
- 20 - Spring Guided Birdwalk & Slide Presentation
- 21 - Annual Arboretum Birdwalk
- 27 - Spring Photo Workshop

June

- 1 - Botanical Illustration/Pen & Ink (and 5 consecutive Thursdays)
- 3 - Propagation from Cuttings
- 10 - Pond Workshop
- 10 - Firefly Frolic (YF)
- 17 - Conifer Walk
- 18 - Lifestyles of the Frogs & Salamanders (YF)
- 24 - The Victorian Garden

July

- 8 - Arthropod Squad (YF)
- 8 - Trough Workshop
- 13 - Botanical Art: Watercolor (and 5 consecutive Thursdays)
- 15 - Starting an Herb Garden & 2nd Annual Herb Luncheon
- 22 - Aquatic Adventure (YF)
- 22 - The Art of Sogetsu
- 21 & 22 - Star Party 9:30 p.m. (YF)
- 29 - Landscape Renovation

* **Preregister** by calling the Arboretum. Class sizes are limited, so register as soon as possible to ensure your spot. If you would like more information on any of the programs call (518) 875-6935.



George Landis Arboretum

P.O. Box 186 Lape Road Esperance, NY 12066 (518) 875-6935

1995 Classes & Events May - July

Saturday Series

The Birds of Spring

Join Chris Keefer, birding columnist for the Sunday Gazette and WGY talk show personality, for a walk around the Arboretum to identify our resident birds. Part II is a slide presentation, "Birds of New York". **Meeting House**
May 20 Members \$3
 Noon - 2 pm Non-Members \$5

Annual Arboretum Birdwalk

Each year John Bousman & Ralph Coulson lead these 2 walks. The varied terrain here offers many habitats for birds, & usually 40 plus species can be found. A fun event, no expertise needed. Field glasses & ID guide helpful. **Lower Parking Area**
May 21 Members \$3
 2 walks: 7 am & 10 am Nonmembers \$5

Spring Photo Workshop

This popular event is open to aspiring photographers of all levels of expertise and with any kind of equipment. Frank Knight, photographer and educator for DEC, returns to teach this class. **Lower Parking Area**
May 27 Members \$10
 8 am - Noon Nonmembers \$15
 (Preregister*)

Propagation from Cuttings

Learn the reasoning behind and techniques for propagating plants from cuttings. Topics include types, rooting, and treatment of softwood cuttings to ensure success. Students will be able to try their newly learned skills during this class.

June 3 **Greenhouse**
 10 am - Noon Members \$3
 (Preregister*) Nonmembers \$5

Pond Workshop - A three part workshop

10 am "Maintaining your Home Pond" with Fran & Herman Finkbeiner.
11 am "Siting, Constructing & Landscaping a Garden Pond" with Andrew Koehn from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County.
1 pm "Plants for the Water Garden" with Andrew Koehn.

Don't forget your picnic lunch!

June 10 **Meeting House**
 10 am - 2 pm Members \$10
 (Preregister*) Nonmembers \$15

Conifer Walk

Join John Abbuhl, Arboretum Trustee and conifer collector, for a leisurely tour of the Arboretum plantings. **Meeting House**
June 17 Members \$3
 10 am - Noon Nonmembers \$5

The Victorian Garden

Dr. John Heimke, of Russell Sage College, will introduce you to the Victorian style of gardening and the plants that were favorites of our Victorian forbears. **Meeting House**
June 24 Members \$3
 10 am - Noon Nonmembers \$5

Trough Workshop Roy Clark & Pamela Rowling will show you how to make a weather proof container to display alpiners or other plants. This is a "hands on" workshop & participants will take home a finished trough! Participants should bring lunch.

July 8 **Greenhouse**
 10 am - 2 pm Members \$10
 (Preregister*) Non-Members \$15

Starting a Herb Garden

Join Mary Ellen Wilcox, owner of SouthRidge Treasures Herb Shop, for a slide presentation & Lecture. The lecture will be followed by our 2nd Annual "Herb Luncheon" prepared by volunteers.

July 15 **Meeting House**
 10 am - Noon Members \$10
 (Preregister*) Nonmembers \$15

The Art of Sogetsu

This Workshop, given by Kaye Vosburgh, will introduce the student to the traditional art of Japanese flower arranging of the Sogetsu school. Kaye is well known in the Capital District as a flower show judge and teacher.

Meeting House
July 22 Members \$5
 10 am - Noon Non-Members \$7
 (Preregister*) (fee includes cost for materials)

Landscape Renovation - Have you recently moved into a new home or just tired of the same old landscape? Join Ken Carnes, Cornell Cooperative Extension Agent of Voorheesville, and learn how to renovate your existing landscape.

Meeting House
July 29 Members \$3
 10 am - Noon Nonmember \$5

Rare Plant & Perennial Sale

Saturday & Sunday • May 13 & 14 • 11 am to 3pm

On Saturday only, FREE MINI - LECTURES at the Meeting House

- **10 am - TLC for Perennial Plants** - given by Pamela Yourno, who has been a mainstay of the Arboretum perennial garden. Pamela will discuss how to plant and maintain perennials.
- **12 Noon - How to Plant Trees & Shrubs** with Pamela Rowling Arboretum Director. Pamela will cover basic techniques needed to properly plant new trees, shrubs & vines & provide recommendations for aftercare to ensure success.
- **1 pm - Introduction to Alpine Gardening** Join Doroyth "Roy" Clark as she explains this style of gardening, particularly suited to rocky land and/or small spaces. It can be done by anyone whether you have a cliff face or a flower pot.

Snacks and hot & cold beverages will be available.

Come for an enjoyable, educational day and find some special treasures for your garden!

Drawing From Nature



Viburnum trilobum

Botanical Illustration/Pen & Ink 4

Heather Thompson will teach botanical illustration using pen & ink as a medium. A list of materials needed will be forwarded upon registration. Students are encouraged to bring a picnic supper. **Meet in Library Thursday, June 1 and 5 consecutive Thursdays through July 6** 6:00 p.m. Series Cost Members \$40 (Preregister*) Nonmembers \$45

Botanical Art: Watercolor

Watercolor is the traditional medium for botanicals. Anne Jaster will lead the class in an exploration of watercolor techniques using specimens from the Arboretum as models. Students of all levels of experience are welcome. Please bring a picnic supper. Material list available upon registration.

Thursday, July 13 & 5 consecutive Thursdays through August 17 6:00 pm Series cost Members \$40 (Preregister*) Nonmember \$45

For Youth & Families

All programs are given by George Steele, Arboretum Science Educator and will begin at the Arboretum Meeting House.

Mother's Day Wildflower Walk

Celebrate Mother's Day with family and friends on a easy walk around the woodlot trail looking for spring wildflowers.

Sunday, May 14 2:00 p.m.
Free of charge and sponsored by Patti's Flower Shoppe & Greenhouse

Woodcock Walk The woodcock is a small shore bird that has adapted to the upland fields. Their mating flights on spring evenings are an interesting spectacle of nature. Join us as we search the old fields of the Arboretum and try to sneak up on these small game birds.

Saturday, May 20 7:30 p.m.
Free of charge sponsored by Best Western of Cobleskill

Firefly Frolic

One sure sign of summer is the evening display of the lightening bug. It's really a beetle even though we call them fireflies and lightning bugs. We'll spend the evening looking for, capturing and learning more about these amazing insects.

Saturday, June 10 8:00 p.m.
Free of charge sponsored by Best Western INN of Cobleskill

Lifestyles of the Frogs, Toads and Salamanders

The amphibians have many interesting adaptations for their unique way of life including built-in underwater goggles and traction pads on their webbed feet. Find out more in this high interest workshop.

Sunday, June 18 2:00 p.m.
Free of charge sponsored by The Village Ice Cream Parlor in Esperance

Arthropod Squad

The creepy, crawly world of arthropods. There are more arthropods than in any other group of animals. Most of these are insects, but arthropods also include spiders, centipedes, millipedes and crustaceans. We'll will explore the fields and woods of the Arboretum.

Saturday, July 8 2:00 p.m.
Free of charge

Aquatic Adventure

Explore the pond plant and animal community. Food chains in the pond create drama for the observer. Learn more about the species interacting in the aquatic environment.

Saturday, July 22 2:00 p.m.
Free of charge sponsored by Central National Bank, Canajoharie

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are a precious resource of the Arboretum. They donate their time indoors and out, in groups or individually, on a regular or special event basis and have fun doing it. Join this valuable group of friends in any of the following volunteer opportunities. Please call Pam or Mary at the Arboretum for more information or to find a project that suits you.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Hospitality: Plan, prepare, serve refreshments for special events.

Membership: Assist with membership activities, staff booth at major events.

Office Assistant: Assist with general office duties, mailings, filing, typing on a regular or as needed basis.

Newsletter: Remember that this is *your* Newsletter, and we invite you to be a part of its evolution. If you'd like to write on botanical or gardening subjects, a book review, feature article or have an idea for an article of interest to you, please contact the Newsletter editor and have a chat.

Artwork: If you'd like to do plant illustration, spot illustration, signs, posters, etc. we'd like to talk to you. We're always in the market for "clip art" for our publications.

Publicity: Assist with promotion of events and programs via the newsletter, brochures and flyers. Help distribute promotional materials.



Bloom List Person: Work on a team to keep the Arboretum's weekly bloom list up to date.

Gardeners: Maintain the many planted areas at the Arboretum. Involves weeding, raking, pruning, transplanting, deer protection, mulching, fertilization, etc.

Greenhouse: Assisting with seeding, potting, general propagation.

Signs and Labels: Help with maintenance of signage throughout the Arboretum including field observation and needs assessment and actual construction of signs.

Curatorial Assistant: Help with mapping, plant collection inventories and plant label verifications.

IN THE PUBLIC EYE

Acorn Shop Personnel: Staffing Acorn shop weekdays for special groups or weekends during regular weekend hours.

Tour Guides: trained guides are needed to lead walks through the collections for school children, seniors and various other groups. Learning to be a trail guide is a fun way to learn about the collections yourself!

Educator: Do you possess a special horticultural or botanical skill or knowledge which you would like to share with others? Consider being a program presenter as part of our Arboretum educational program series.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special Public Events: Assist with distribution of handouts, greeting the public and answering questions at our off site displays at many regional shows and fairs.

Spring Benefit: Help needed for registration, setup and take down, raffle sales etc.

Rare Plant and Perennial Sale: Pot, move, arrange, label and price plants. Assist in writing receipts, cashier, parking and assisting buyers.

Fall Festival: Learn to dry and preserve flowers and produce arrangements for sale at the fall festival, assist in all phases of arranging, pricing, hosting of two day fall special horticultural extravaganza.

Educational Assistants: assist with programs for children and adults.



Volunteer Workdays

This is an opportunity for volunteers to get together for a fun social and productive day! Workdays run from 9 am - 3 pm and have a focus on a particular project or area. Bring a bag lunch, refreshments will be provided

May 6 - Spring Cleaning - Outdoors of Course!
Also final preparation for Spring Plant Sale.

June 10 - Mulching and More!

August 19 - Pruning and Shrub Cleanup

September 16 - Weeding, Pruning & Potting

October 7 - Putting the Gardens to Bed.

Everyone is invited - no special skills are needed!