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## President Message

### Greetings,

Summer has come to a close and its bounty and blooms are fading. We have tilled the soil, planted, tended and watched our gardens flourish during the summer months. It has been a time to revel in what we have sowed. As Mother Nature transitions into fall, we bid adieu to the warm weather, but as gardeners, we can always look forward to the rewards of summers to come.

The Garden Club of New Jersey 96th Annual Meeting held on June 8 was a success. After a two-year hiatus, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was wonderful to see so many GCNJ members and guests, in-person, at the Bridgewater Marriott.

All required business was conducted including the installation of officers by Central Atlantic Region former Alternate Director, Angela

Raitano. Awards and scholarships were presented to recipients (GCNJ Scholarship Recipients above). Numerous vendors lined the corridor of the hotel selling a wide variety of items from plants to clothing and jewelry.





The afternoon program was presented by floral designer, Valerie McLaughlin (to the left), who created nine beautiful designs that were raffled off to the delight of those who were fortunate enough to take one home. I want to extend my sincere thanks to the entire Annual Meeting Committee for its hard work in making this important GCNJ event successful. The three winners of the President's Project grant were also announced at the Annual Meeting. Each of the three clubs received \$1000 for a project that focuses on the planting of native trees. The projects they submitted for award consideration will serve to plant and preserve trees in their communities. Congratulations to the All Seasons

Garden Club, the Haddonfield Garden Club and the Little Silver Garden Club. Three additional \$1000 grants will be awarded at the 2023 Annual Meeting.

I attended the National Garden Clubs Convention in Orlando, Florida from May 16-21 to represent GCNJ. I had the opportunity to connect with presidents from other states and reconnect with friends that I have not seen since the last NGC Convention in 2019. Our own Mary Warshauer was at the helm as NGC President and, as always, did an outstanding job as the leader of our national organization.

It has been my pleasure to attend several local garden club events and District Meetings during the past few months. The most enjoyable part of my position as GCNJ President is the opportunity to meet garden club members throughout our state whether it be at a regular meeting or a special event. Should an invitation arrive, I will do my best to attend.

Warm Regards,  
Cecelia Millea  
GCNJ President  
[cmillea@msn.com](mailto:cmillea@msn.com)



"Plant a tree, invest in the future."





## Pictures from the GCNJ Annual Meeting

### Recipients of the President's Project Grant



All Seasons Garden Club



Little Silver Garden Club



Haddonfield Garden Club

### Presidential Citation Recipients



Jane Bianco



Jean Pollock



Patricia Polunas



Ruth Korn



Joan Cichalski

And More.....







## TREES AND CLIMATE CHANGE



Trees have been planted, loved, logged, used! As students we learned about photosynthesis, and the way trees and green plants absorb what we exhale - carbon dioxide, while plants and trees produce oxygen so that life on our planet may survive. Poets such as Joyce Kilmer expressed in the poem, called "Trees"....."I think that I shall never see A poem as lovely as a tree....".

During the 20th Century, we realized that our industrialized society, although seemingly moving the world population along faster and faster, and with more accuracy than before, was actually detrimental to the natural order of life on our planet. The effect of pollution, carbon emissions, pesticides, herbicides, and other pollutants that factories released into the atmosphere, was alarming. In 1962, Rachel Carson warned us about what we were doing in her book, "The Silent Spring." As far back as 1807, naturalist Alexander Humboldt expressed concern about plant species and changing climate in his essay on the Geography of Plants. While we were being warned, scientists were beginning to realize our lifestyles were causing problems. Society, for the most part, went along with industrial strength garden remedies advertised by big corporations as a cure-all for our garden woes. Toxic trash was buried, and polluted materials were dumped into the ocean.

Issues facing us today in the 21st Century are not new to our planet. Climate change and its effect on the environment, on civilizations and life on earth has been around for 650,000 years. "The Earth has experienced seven cycles of glacial advance and retreat," according to the Utah State University.edu Forestry Extension.

Almost 15,000 years ago, the annual mean temperature increased as much as 10 degrees centigrade in 10 years. Large and repeated climate swings occurred during the last ice age. The planet has always experienced cooling, warming, floods, and droughts, along with inherent changes in plant, sea, and animal life. Our ancestors learned how to survive severe climate change. The hunter-gatherers of the United Kingdom adapted to a cold front that lasted a century.

Climate has been mostly stable since the last ice age that occurred over 11,000 years ago. This ushered in the Holocene Climate Era we have today. History tells us that the Mayan civilization experienced overpopulation that strained their natural resources, creating a drought that ruined their crops and drinking water. The Akkadian Empire (Iraq, Syria, and Southeast Turkey) experienced a 300-year drought, changing their agricultural land to dust. This was, of course, all part of the changing climate.

Viking settlers of Greenland were affected by climate change too when temperatures dropped, reducing agricultural products, affecting livestock, and limiting food supply. The Vikings turned toward the sea as a

source of food as a result, since Greenland became too difficult to support life. Hence the island colony was abandoned.

In our current time, scientific awareness has evidenced that our gas emissions are once again creating a change in climate. The trapped gases (nitrous oxide, water vapor, methane, and carbon dioxide) have created a “greenhouse effect.” Greenhouse gases are now rising at such an alarming rate that the planet is warming way too fast.

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy’s Elective Order 89, directs “NJDEP (New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection) to create a plan to guide the state’s response to climate change.” This report is updated every two years. New Jersey is warming faster than the rest of the Northeast with more intense and longer heat periods. The world needs a global bio-plan according to scientist and author of “To Speak for the Trees”, Diana Beresford Kroger. Trees, both in our state and throughout the country and world are at risk. Many are being lost, not only because the climate is changing, but because the difference in growing patterns affect the relationship between the tree and disease caused by exotic insects and invasive plants. The West Coast is a prime example of what this has done to its trees.

Plants and trees have been studied and found to communicate, perceive, transmit information through seedlings and soil, sending messages to one another fostering or hindering growth rate. (University of British Columbia Forestry). There is a circle of life within the roots and underground network of trees and plants.

Trees have always helped us. We need to help trees continue to help our planet. Scientists believe maintaining world forests by thinning and restoring where logged or lost, is the solution. Other scientists believe we should plant trees, even as individual homeowners, perhaps one tree every six years. Some scientists believe there is absolutely nothing we can do; that climate change will prevail. Remaining vigilant and hopeful is what we should all be doing. Practicing good ecological habits, using less chemicals, plastics, thinking about restructuring our transportation systems, and more should be on our check lists as gardeners and as inhabitants of this planet.

New “climate smart” trees are being hybridized to take future heat. Autumn Blaze, Freeman Maple, White Oak, River Birch, Ginkgo, American Smoke tree, Serviceberry, and Sweet Bay Magnolia are natives that should be on our planting to do list.

Planting trees reduces our own carbon footprints that will potentially save energy. Trees and vegetation lower surface and air temperatures, as much as 9 degrees Fahrenheit, by providing shade and evapotranspiration. Planting trees for shade can reduce cooling costs by 30% in summer and 20-50% in the winter. Trees reduce energy demand while controlling wind and snow deposition. Trees define a property, and on a personal level, often bring memories of home to mind.

Try to keep updated with events; write to state legislators; become involved in community ecological foundations and native tree societies. In education, a curriculum about trees and plant life must be considered critical for our students, so become involved in your child’s school system. Encouraging all about the importance of trees is a must if we want to save our planet and have a good life!

Patricia Polunas  
Scholarship Chair  
[scholarshipgcnj@gmail.com](mailto:scholarshipgcnj@gmail.com)



### **Leadership Conference for Club Presidents**

The GCNJ will hold a virtual Leadership Conference for all club presidents on Thursday, October 20, 2022 at 10 am. GCNJ President, Cecelia Millea, and several committee chairmen will be speaking and providing information that is valuable to new and seasoned presidents. Please go to the GCNJ website to register for the conference or you can register here:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcvdO2upjloGNGw9Cu8P9RYN0srRgMHBVvp>. Each registrant will be emailed a

Zoom invitation and an agenda prior to October 20<sup>th</sup>. There will be a question and answer session after the speakers have completed their presentations. Please register with your name, club, and email address and plan to join us for this informational virtual event.



# Upcoming Events



## Environmental school

- Course 1- **Sep 22 - Sep 23, 2022** Derby, CT (Zoom)
- Course 2 - **Oct 18 - Oct 26, 2022** Washington, DC (NCA) (Zoom: Tuesday & Wednesday Evenings only)
- Course 3 - **Jan 10 - Jan 18, 2023** Washington, DC (NCA) (Zoom: Tuesday & Wednesday Evenings only)
- Course 4 - **Mar 20 - Mar 24, 2023** St. Louis, MO (Zoom - Evenings only)

## Flower Show School

- Course 4 - **Apr 15 - Apr 20, 2023** East Brunswick, NJ (FSP via Zoom 4/15, Other Subjects 4/19-20)

## Gardening School

- Course 3 - **Nov 15 - Nov 16, 2022** National Sponsored (Zoom)

## Landscape Design

- Course 4 - **Oct 26 - Oct 28, 2022** Waltham, MA (Zoom)

**September 30, 2022** – Four Copies of Yearbooks due. Please contact the awards chair Peggy Morrissey at [peggymorrissey67@yahoo.com](mailto:peggymorrissey67@yahoo.com)

**October 12-13, 2022** - GCNJ Symposium. HOLIDAY INN OF EAST WINDSOR, 399 Monmouth Street, East Windsor, New Jersey 08520 Telephone: 609-448-7000. Forms are located on the GCNJ Website at <https://www.gardenclubofnewjersey.org/forms/>

**October 20, 2022** – GCNJ Leadership Conference (See page 8 for more information)

**November 2-3, 2022** - CARSGC Fall Conference will be at the Seven Springs Mountain Resort in PA. For more information go to <https://www.car-sgc.org/conference> or any questions about the conference to GCFP President Sheila Croushore (814) 233-6769.

**December 3, 2022** - The Rake and Hoe Garden Club of Westfield NJ is holding their signature "Deck the Halls" House Tour again this year. The event will take place on Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10 am to 4 pm. See Club News for additional details. Tickets will be \$40. For ticket information, see [www.rakeandhoegc.org](http://www.rakeandhoegc.org).

**December 8, 2022** - The members of the Garden Club of Long Beach Island are excited to announce their 55th Annual Holiday Tour of Homes! Stay tuned for more information by checking our website at: <https://thegardencluboflbi.com/events/house-tour/>

## From the Awards Desk

Kudos to the following clubs and their members as recipients of the Garden State of New Jersey Awards for 2021-22.

In a year of such uncertainty, our Clubs continued to serve their members and communities. BRAVO!!!



### **The GCNJ Club award recipients are as follows:**

#### **The Garden Club of Essex Fells:**

- CAR-SGC, First Place, Large Club for Publicity Press Book
- Lillian C. Koelsch Trophy

#### **The Garden Club of Montclair:**

- National Award of Recognition for the website.
- Hanover Garden Club Trophy
- GCNJ Special Award/Large Club

#### **Maplewood Garden Club:**

- Doris L. Cavanaugh Membership Award for Highest Increase in Membership - more than 50

#### **Garden Club of Mountain Lakes:**

- Medford Lakes Garden Club Silver Trophy for a Native Garden

#### **Snufftown Garden Club:**

- Florence S. McNeil Membership Award for Highest Increase in Membership - less than 50

#### **Country Garden Club:**

- The Holly Club of Sea Girt Trophy

#### **Bridgewater Garden Club:**

- The Edison Garden Club Trophy

#### **Washington Valley Garden Club, Inc.:**

- Demarest Garden Club Yearbook Award/Small Club

**The Garden Club of Long Valley:**

- Ringwood Garden Club Trophy
- The Katherine Cutler Junior Gardeners Garden Club of the Year Silver Trophy

**Neshanic Garden Club:**

- CAR-SGC, Second Place, Medium Club for Publicity Press Book
- East Orange Silver Trophy

**Belvidere Garden Club:**

- CAR-SGC, First Place, Small Club, Civic Development/Improvement Award
- The Ruth B. Somerville Silver Trophy
- The Marguerite & Vincent T. Mulligan Garden Therapy Award
- Clara Hunter Garden Therapy Perpetual Trophy
- GCNJ Special Award/Small Club

**Warren Garden Club:**

- Basking Ridge Garden Club Trophy
- Pines Lake Garden Club Trophy
- The Community Garden Club of Hunterdon County Silver Trophy
- GCNJ Special Award/Medium Club

**Rake & Hoe Garden Club of Westfield:**

- Junior Garden Club Award Certificate of Merit

**The Basking Ridge Garden Club, Inc:**

- Bernardsville Garden Club Trophy

**Terra Nova Garden Club:**

- National Garden Club, Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster Contest,
  - o First Place: Navath Mandale
  - o Honorable Mention: Aradhya Patch
  - o Honorable Mention: Victoria Ferrerirp
  - o Honorable Mention: Abhiram Bavisetti

**Moorestown Garden Club:**

- CAR-SGC, First Place, Large Club, Civic Development/Improvement Award
- The Myra Brooks Garden Therapy Trophy
- The Thomas Turner Cooke Memorial Award



**Garden Club of Fair Haven:**

- CAR-SGC, First Place, Medium Club Publicity Press Book Garden

**Club of Spring Lake:**

- CAR-SGC, The Violet S. Thoron Award

**The Garden Club of Long Beach Island:**

- The Jane S. R. Bersch Trophy
- The Violet M. Bennett Environmental Trophy

**Navesink Garden Club:**

- The Woodbridge Garden Trophy
- Demarest Garden Club Yearbook Award/Medium Club

**Seaweeder's Garden Club of Bay Head & Mantoloking:**

- CAR-SGC, First Place, Large Club Environmental Concern Award
- Garden Club of New Jersey Award for a Continuing Project
- Demarest Garden Club Yearbook Award/ Large Club

**Garden Club of New Jersey and Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs:**

- GCNJ Perennial Bloom and CAR-SGC Golden Perennial Bloom Award to Diane Nelson, Rockaway Valley Garden Club

**The Garden Club of New Jersey, 2021-23 President's Project:**

- All Seasons Garden Club
- Haddonfield Garden Club
- Little Silver Garden Club

**2022 Presidential Citations:**

- Jane Bianco: Terra Nova Garden Club
- Jean Pollock: Moorestown Garden Club
- Joan Cichalski: Little Silver Garden Club
- Ruth Korn: R.F.D. Garden Club
- Patricia Polunas: Bayberry Garden Club of Brielle

**Again congratulations to all!**

Peggy Morrissey

Awards Chair

[peggymorrissey67@yahoo.com](mailto:peggymorrissey67@yahoo.com)

## Club News

### Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden GC



The Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden GC features two Pollinator Exhibits at the 2022 Warren County Fair.

Thousands of children and adults learned about pollinators and “what to plant for pollinators” as they viewed two exhibits displayed by The Karen Nash Memorial Butterfly Garden GC and KNMBG Youth Gardeners of Memorial School. The exhibits were featured in the Home and Garden Building at the 2022 Warren County Fair between July 30 and Aug. 6.

Diana Dove, Environmental Youth Chair, [Dianadove13@gmail.com](mailto:Dianadove13@gmail.com)

### Garden Club of Toms River



The Garden Club of Toms River held a very successful plant sale at Winding River Park Pavilion on Route 37W and Hospital Drive across from the Community Medical Center. Annuals, perennials, tomatoes, herbs and succulents were available for purchase. The perennial plants and succulents were home grown, and the flowers, tomatoes, and herbs were grown from seed using the winter sowing method. Gardening gift baskets, seed bombs, and monarch butterfly seed packets were also sold.

The Garden Club of Toms River is proud to announce that we received a \$1,000 Plant America Grant from the National Garden Club, Inc, for further beautification, gardening, and landscaping at the Blue Star Memorial Marker site we established in 2016 and maintain with the help of the Township of Toms River. The

site is located at the entrance to Winding River Park, Route 37 West, and Hospital Drive across from the Community Medical Center.

The Garden Club of Toms River will be celebrating their 70th Anniversary in November. The Club was founded in 1948 with a mission to stimulate an interest and knowledge of gardening in the community. The celebration will include a special luncheon with a guest speaker.

For more information regarding the Blue Star Memorial or the Plant America Grant, please contact Diane at [dianeamai@gmail.com](mailto:dianeamai@gmail.com).

### **Rake and Hoe Garden Club**



Even as the Rake and Hoe Club began plans for its important December fundraiser, its members closed out the 2021-2022 year with a burst of activity. April saw a soap-felting workshop, a plant exchange, and a field trip to Grounds for Sculpture. The club also welcomed two new members.

May saw the Community Program Committee creating mini-arrangements for Mobile Meals, as well as Mother's Day flowering plants for the children of Jardine Academy. While the Community Gardens Committee cleaned up the North Avenue Train Station, the Horticulture Committee led a Secret Gardens Tour and a field trip to Chanticleer. The Deck the Halls House Tour on December 3d promises to provide an active start to the new year.

December 3, 2022 - The Rake and Hoe Garden Club of Westfield NJ is holding their signature "Deck the Halls" House Tour again this year. The event will take place on Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 10 am to 4 pm. Three private homes will be decorated for the holiday season, and the club will present their signature boutique of handmade items. Tickets will be \$40. For ticket information, see [www.rakeandhoe.org](http://www.rakeandhoe.org).

### **Garden Club of Fair Haven**



May was a busy month for Juniors' Committee of The Garden Club of Fair Haven that brought great smiles and creativity to each Girl Scout, Brownie and Daisy (Troops 60100, 60178, 60143, 60533, 60609). We helped all of them earn their outdoor art badge. We worked on activities from Mother's Day potted flowers, faces, crowns, arm bands, and butterflies, all made from fresh flowers, greens, and twigs from members' gardens.



# CRAWFORD'S CORNER

## Autumn Crocus: A Fresh Floral Display for the Fall!

Crocus are typically considered a 'bulb' or geophyte for spring, displaying white, orange, purple, violet or blue flowers from late February into April. However, those are merely the forms that appear most prominently in stores and in Gardens. The blooming sequence throughout their native range actually begins at the onset of the cooler, moister weather of autumn and continues into spring. To confuse the issue further, many plants that are commonly called Autumn Crocus are actually not even a *Crocus*! Regardless, they all provide some much-needed color for the autumn garden.

Crocus are members of the Iridaceae or Iris Family and consist of over 90 species. They are native to regions of Southern Europe and Northern Africa, east to Western China where summers are hot and soils are gravelly and well-drained. Not surprisingly, plants prefer to grow during the moister fall, winter and spring months and become dormant during the hot and dry periods of summer. *Crocus* species actually 'over-summer' through a modified stem structure called a corm, which appears very similar to a bulb. Corms allow the plant to hibernate during these inhospitable hot and dry months. During autumn, with the return of cooler and moister conditions, the corms awaken, developing roots and eventually flowers and foliage.

The genus name of *Crocus* was penned in 1753 by the Swedish botanist, physician and zoologist Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778). The name directly originates from the Greek *krokos*, meaning Saffron. However, the lineage of the word dates back over 3,000 years to the ancient Indian language of Sanskrit and the word *Kunkumam*. Once again, it refers to Saffron, highlighting the length of time this plant has



been cultivated. Although *Crocus* may refer to Saffron, only one species, *Crocus sativus* provides the red carpels that imbue the somewhat bitter, hay-like taste to cuisine. *Crocus sativus* is a very attractive October blooming species with 1½" wide, lilac purple tepals with brush-strokes of dark purple veining, appearing along the length of the tepals (pictured above). As is true of all *Crocus*, the flowers are composed of an outer ring of three sepals that are actually modified leaves and an inner ring of three petals – since both the sepals and petals appear virtually identical, they are called tepals. These tepals contrast very nicely with the bright orange stigmas and styles, which when dried is the source of Saffron. The stigma is the portion of a flower that receives the pollen

while the style is the 'stem' that connects the stigma to the hidden ovary. The three styles are dramatically long, often projecting well beyond the petals, leaving the stigma dangling in the air. Much shorter and located within the flower are the three yellow, pollen-baring anthers. Interestingly, the anthers of Saffron Crocus lack viable pollen since the plants are tetraploids, with the normal number of eight chromosomes tripled to 24. As such, they are unable to undergo the processes of meiosis, resulting in sterile flowers without a seed set. The species epithet of *Sativus* is from the Latin meaning cultivated. Since it is unable to produce seed, this plant has been asexually propagated and cultivated from the small offsets of the corms (called cormels), for well over 3,500 years! It is currently believed that this plant was a mutation from *Crocus cartwrightianus*, which is native to the isle of Crete and is possibly the original home of Saffron Crocus!

Since it takes well over 150,000 styles of 50,000 flowers to yield a pound of saffron, this may not be a plant that you wish to grow as an herb! Plants require well-drained and sun-drenched locations to flower best, with the corms lifted and replanted every 4-5 years in order to keep the young corms and cormels vigorously growing. Typical to Crocus in general, flowers close at night and often remain closed on cloudy and rainy



days in an attempt to protect the reproductive organs! As flowering fades, slender, grass-like foliage appears from the base of the plant and grows to 8-12" tall (pictured above in December). It remains evergreen through the winter before going dormant come May.

Another much underused Crocus for fall is *Crocus speciosus*, commonly called Bieberstein's Crocus (pictured below). Native to Turkey, the Caucasus, Northern Iran and Crimea, this plant requires far



less effort to grow than its cousin! Its common name stems from its author, Friedrich August Marschall von Bieberstein (1768-1826), who worked as a secretary and aide-de-camp to the Russian General Count Kochovoski. His military excursions allowed him to study plants throughout the Caucasus and Crimea, resulting in a 2-volume book entitled *Flora Taurico-caucasica*. The first volume, published in 1808 provides the currently accepted description of



*Crocus speciosus*. The species epithet is from the Latin, meaning beautiful, and that very aptly describes the blossoms. The flowers open from mid-October until the heavy frosts of November. Blossoms are 2" across when fully opened, with the outside color of the tepals typically a light blue, although the color can range from near white to a rich, dark blue. The inner color of the tepals feature a very light blue base that gradually grows increasingly darker near the tips. Both the inside and outside of the flower are laced with dark blue veins (as seen above). The flowers are adorned by a well-branched orange style. Unlike Saffron Crocus, the foliage does not emerge until spring when the slender, grass-like foliage appears in late March through mid-May. Since the foliage only grows to 6-8" tall, it blends well with turf and makes a fun addition for plugging into lawns (as seen to the right) or mixed with various woodland sedges. If in a lawn area, avoid cutting the grass until the second or third week of May. In its native areas, Bieberstein's Crocus typically grows at the edge of woodlands or in lightly shaded woodland openings in association with Rhododendrons and Beech Trees.



Another group of plants called Autumn Crocus (that should not be confused with the two aforementioned species) is the genus of *Colchicum*. The two are incredibly different, with the flower of *Colchicum* typically much larger and the plant far more toxic. The genus name actually stems from its geographic domain. Colchis was an ancient civilization along the Black Sea that existed from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC – a region that is currently part of present-day Georgia. Since it was a region rich in various species of this genus, Carl Linnaeus thought it only fitting to name it after this ancient civilization in 1753.

*Colchicum* is a member of the Colchicaceae or Colchicum family, with over 160 species. The species are native to western Asia, Europe and along the eastern regions of Africa extending to South Africa!

*Colchicum* is also poisonous due to high concentrations of colchicine that prevents cell meiosis. By



coincidence in Greek mythology, Colchis was also the home of the sorceress Medea, who was known for her deadly potions! The luxuriant, rich green foliage of *Colchicum* appears in spring from large corms, typically growing to 16-18" tall, only to look equally as dreadful as the foliage yellows



into dormancy come June (as seen above). In September through October, the flowers emerge naked, that is without any foliage, which has led to one of the other common names of Naked Lady.



*Colchicum* flowers are also composed of tepals, but they are typically much larger, with flowers often reaching 3-5" in diameter.

One of my favorite species is *Colchicum cilicicum*, which is native to the margins of forests, rocky slopes and stream banks in Turkey, Syria and Lebanon. It was named in 1882 by the Swiss botanist, mathematician and explorer Pierre Edmond Bossier (1810-

1885) as *Colchicum x byzantinum* var. *cilicicum*. It was the German botanist Carl Lebrecht Udo Dammer (1860-1920) who validly published the name in 1898 under the more simplified name of *Colchicum cilicicum* (pictured above). The species epithet honors *Cilicia*, a Roman province that is recognized today as the southern coast of Turkey. The flowers appear in mid to late September and have a slightly checkered appearance on close inspection, with tiny rectangles of light pink and rosy violet appearing on either side of a white mid-rib. There are 6 prominent yellow anthers and 3 less conspicuous white styles and stigmas protruding from the center of the flower, with each corm producing up to 25 flowers!

Species of *Colchicum* are often challenging to grow since the large, luxuriant foliage of spring requires a lot of space, only to decline and vanish in late June and July, leaving gaping holes in the garden fabric. The flowers benefit from stretching through a low groundcover, since the foliage of the groundcover helps to support the flowers and helps fill in the gaps remaining once the foliage fades. *Colchicum autumnale* 'Alba' (pictured to the right) sports attractive, yet smaller white flowers in late September and early October. It also sports more slender foliage that allows it to blend better into the



Garden. The corms of *Colchicum* are typically quite large, measuring 3-4" long and 2 inches in diameter, although those of *Colchicum autumnale* 'Alba' are smaller.

Another great selection for late September interest is *Colchicum autumnale* '**Pleniflorum**', as pictured below. It features numerous additional pink petals, providing attractive 'double flowers' up to 5" in diameter with orange anthers. Adding confusion to the trade is another double form named 'Waterlily'. Waterlily also features additional petals and is equally garden worthy, typically blooming slightly later with darker lavender flowers.

If the coms are purchased in August or September, they can be placed on a windowsill, where they will bloom without any soil! Following the bloom, they should be planted 4-6" deep in average to seasonally moist soils, in full sun or filtered shade. They are not impacted by Juglone from Black Walnuts and have proven to expand considerably over a 30-year period into a substantial mass.



For the gardener who is ever frustrated with ensuring the correct name is connected to the proper plant, the term Autumn Crocus can prove challenging when two different genera share the same common name. However, all Autumn Crocus, whether a true *Crocus* or a *Colchicum* provide what the garden needs most come September and October – a fresh display of blooms to give the Garden a 'pick-me-up' before winding down for winter. Personally, I can live with that!

Bruce Crawford

Manager of Horticulture, Morris County Park Commission

[bcrawford@morrisparks.net](mailto:bcrawford@morrisparks.net)



## YOUTH CORNER



### YOUTH GARDEN CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS 2022-2023 YOUTH CLUB REGISTRATION

May 15 through September 30 is the registration period for Youth Garden Clubs. Youth Club Registration Fee: \$20 Annual Fee per Youth Club payable to GCNJ with note in memo naming the youth club. Please include the completed Youth Club Registration Form. To get the form, go to [www.gardenclubofnewjersey/youth](http://www.gardenclubofnewjersey/youth) and click on "Youth Club Annual Registration. Print the Youth Club Registration form and mail the completed form with the \$20 Youth Club fee to Sue Berdahl. Her contact info is on the registration form.

#### 2022-2023 YOUTH CONTESTS REMINDER:

- 1) NGC Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl Poster Contests
- 2) NGC Poetry Contest
- 3) NGC Sculpture Contest
- 4) CAR High School Essay Contest

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: January 20 to Peggy Morrissey, GCNJ Awards Chair**

**Volunteers are needed to judge the youth contest entries and forward the winners to the next level, either regional or national. Please help us recognize our youth!**

#### Is there interest in a "ZOOM YOUTH LEADERS MEETING" in 2022 - 2023?

Please email Diana Dove at [dianadove13@gmail.com](mailto:dianadove13@gmail.com) with suggested times that would be convenient for you. Please suggest youth topics and questions that should be part of the agenda. Should we offer a seasonal Youth Zoom Meeting or just once a year?

Indicate all choices that fit your schedule:

October or November?

Morning, afternoon, or evening?

Weekday? Saturday, or Sunday?

This would be an opportunity for Youth Leaders to share ideas and make suggestions of things that have worked well. Each Youth Club should talk about their youth activities and ask questions about working with youth.

Diana Dove  
GCNJ Youth Chair  
[dianadove13@gmail.com](mailto:dianadove13@gmail.com)  
(908) 763-9648



## BLUE STAR NEWS

### **More Blue Star Memorial Markers are coming to our state!!**



Soon Gloucester County will join the New Jersey locations displaying a Blue Star Marker! Even more exciting, the first Gold Star Memorial Marker will also be installed at the same Gloucester site: The Gloucester County Veterans Memorial Cemetery!

Thanks to the teamwork of the Greater Woodbury Garden Club, the Gloucester County Veterans Advisory Council, and the Gloucester County Certified Gardeners, these two markers will be installed in the fall of this year.

Plans are also underway to bring a second Blue Star Marker to Sussex County, at another veterans site: the Northern New Jersey Veterans Memorial Cemetery. The Snufftown Garden Club took the lead on this one and working with NJ Department of Transportation and the Garden Club of NJ, they are hoping to have both a Blue Star and a Gold Star Marker in place before the end of the year. This will be Sussex County's second marker, as a beautiful marker was installed and dedicated this past April at the Sussex County Fairgrounds in Augusta.

Next up on our agenda will be to bring a marker to our last "unmarked" county: Hudson. We hope to work with the committees of the Liberty State Park site to locate our marker there, in clear view of the Statue of Liberty.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the hard work of many people on the local and state level. The strong support of the NJ Department of Transportation's Landscape Division, led by Lois Johann, has been vitally instrumental to our accomplishments these last several years. Lois and her crew visit all potential sites; advise the local clubs and GCNJ; develop site plans and landscaping; and accomplish the installation of the markers and the plantings. They also visit established markers and

advise the GCNJ and local clubs if the sites need refurbishing, maintenance, etc. Often Lois and her crew will step in to work on established sites and bring them a fresh look. The funding received from the NJDOT has been vital to many of our smaller clubs who want to support the Blue Star Program but struggle with the costs of the markers. We in New Jersey are fortunate to have this incredible partnership with this often-overlooked part of our state government.

Sincere thanks to all the local garden clubs who participate in the Blue Star program and to the NJ DOT for their ongoing support. There is no better way to honor those who have served, are serving, and will serve our country.

Joan Cichalski,  
Chairman of GCNJ Blue Star Committee  
[jjcichalski@comcast.net](mailto:jjcichalski@comcast.net)

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### ***Information for the next issue:***

***October 30 is the deadline for articles for the Winter News Leaf as well as listings of upcoming club events and online ads.***

Send articles and upcoming events to Karen Eardley at [k.eardley@live.com](mailto:k.eardley@live.com)



Go to GCNJ website at [www.gardenclubofnewjersey.org](http://www.gardenclubofnewjersey.org) for more information or check out Facebook for some informative posts:  
[Garden Club of New Jersey - Home | Facebook](#)

**Happy Fall and Stay Safe!**