Get Outside and Give Back: Newmarket Roadside Cleanup

Spring is the perfect time to freshen up more than just your home. Join your neighbors for the **Newmarket Roadside Cleanup** on **Sunday, April 26** and help make our community a little cleaner and a lot brighter.
Stop by the **Newmarket Public Library between 9–11am** to pick up bags, a road assignment, and instructions — then complete your section by end of day. No sign-up required, just show up ready to pitch in!
Rain date: Sunday, May 3 Questions? Contact Toni Weinstein at toniweinstein@gmail.com.



Save the Date- Sunday, June 14th 250th Unity Tree Mosaic Mural Now in Progress

The Arts, Culture & Tourism Commission is thrilled to announce the creation of a magnificent 650-piece mosaic mural on Main Street, just opposite. This new mural installation will extend the Art Corridor, which the Commission initiated at the Artist Among Us Pocket Park in 2023. The Unity Tree mural was made possible by the generous support of an art-loving resident. As a result, community members of all ages have been actively participating in painting 4-inch tiles at open events held at various locations, including the Sunrise Sunset Center, Library, High School, and most recently, the Unplugged event last weekend. If you're interested in having a tile in our new mural, join us for our upcoming painting date: April 13 at 6 pm at the Newmarket Historical Society. The completed mural will be unveiled on Sunday, June 14th, in celebration of America's 250th anniversary. This is a fantastic opportunity for families to come together and celebrate our country and community. The event is organized in partnership with the Newmarket 250/300 Committee. Stay tuned for more details. Until then, mark your calendars and save the date!

SPRING STINKS!

The cheerful chirps and tweets of songbirds, the first woodpeckers pecking at larvae, and the scent of wet dirt under melting snow all signal the arrival of spring. The scientific name for the smell of rain, petrichor, is a combination of soil bacteria and plant oil residues hitting porous surfaces as rain splatters on the ground. While the scents of early spring flowers may not be as strong as those of later blooms, the sight of early color in the yard or garden evokes the scents of roses and lilacs. Skunks are on the move, and their distinctive scent can be detected in the night air. On roadsides, pathways, or trails on town conservation properties, you might encounter a more peculiar scent—stink! Slow down and look low to see the first evidence of skunk cabbage, a fascinating plant with the name symplocarpus foetidus, derived from Greek and Latin words meaning "connection" and "stink." This plant grows in wet matted leaves or in slow-running brooks, lining the forest bottom as the snow recedes and sunlight filters through the trees. Once you see it, you can't miss it.

In this phase, you'll see maroon or maroon and chartreuse speckled thick arched shapes with tiny grey-green leaves sprouting. Before the leaves grow larger, you'll see the plant's bloom or fruit, resembling a cream-colored pinecone or a familiar houseplant. Skunk cabbage, Peace Lilies, and Jack-in-the-Pulpit are all in the Arum family.

This plant has remarkable features. Its scent lures pollinators, and its large, bright green leaves with visible veins grow throughout the summer and autumn. It's a hardy plant that grows by rhizomes and seed dispersal. Even with snow, it generates heat and melts snow in a circle around its sprouts.

Skunk cabbage may be camouflaged as it emerges in areas with debris like cans and bottles. It plays a role in the environment by attracting flies and other bugs and providing shade to other ground growth. It's not edible due to its bitter taste and mild burning sensation. Indigenous people used it as a medicine to reduce coughs and move phlegm.

Studying skunk cabbage reveals information about related plants like the Peace Lily and other thermogenic plants that generate heat to attract pollinators. The Corpse Flower, native to Indonesian rainforests, raises its temperature to disperse the stench of rotting carrion, attracting beetles and flies for pollination. While the Corpse Flower is unique to rainforests, North America has its own thermogenic plant, the paw paw, which generates heat and volatile chemicals to lure pollinators and produce more fruit. Unlike skunk cabbage, which sprouts through snow in late winter and early spring, paw paw plants use heat to attract pollinators.

We hope you'll enjoy the sounds of birds, spring buds, and early blooms. Now that you know what to sniff for, visit a colony of skunk cabbage and note its location. Visit year after year to



In a matter of days, the skunk cabbage will show a bit more of an opening where you'll see the cream colored pinecone shaped tight collection of tiny flowers, luring in flies and other small insects. As it leafs out, brushing up against the leaves releases the reason it's named the way it is! Get out, traipse in wet wooded areas or even along roadsides lining forests, and see these interesting plants for yourselves!