



# Quail's Tales

[www.HillandDaleGardenclub.org](http://www.HillandDaleGardenclub.org)

*President's Preface*

*May, 2008*

Birds are everywhere, except at the West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve where Mar, Angela, Peggy and I went to see the blue heron rookery. Heck, the trees/nests weren't even there. Mar is contacting the naturalist to find out where the herons are nesting. Maybe next year. Nancy met us in the parking lot in time for refreshments.

In April of 2006 while on a frog and toad group listen with the Friends of the Rouge, a pair of baby owls was seen peering out of one of the nests at the rookery, either before or after the herons' use. For the second year running a mama duck is sitting on her nest in a narrow flowerbed between my garage and driveway. Walking last week we saw a quacky sight, a male mallard duck perched on top of a colonial house. Sally noted two Canada geese perched on top of different roofs exchanging honks, and she says she has the pictures to prove it.

Now on to birds of a different feather. We can put a feather in our caps, if not our nests, with awards plucked at the District I meeting. Our newsletter got a third place award for a medium sized club, the yearbook tied for first place with six other medium sized clubs, our photography entry got an honorable mention, and since so many members wanted to see Lisa receive her life membership pin we got an award for the highest percentage attendance at the MCG District I Spring 2008 meeting. Thank you everyone for doing such a fine job and thank you, Flo, for seeing that everything got submitted.

Coming up on May 31 is the perennial plant sale. Get those fingers dirty, divide and pot up while you're in the garden. And please remember to write out a tag with the name, sun/shade requirements, flower color, when it blooms, helpful hints or warnings. Make your plants attractive and saleable. Katie will have more information at the meeting.

Our meeting on May 8 will be held at Steinkopf's Nursery. See you there. –Sandy C

PS: This week a co-worker of mine saw 44 different birds at the Seven Ponds Nature Center.

*May 8 meeting \* Please note change of meeting site*

Beth Liskiewicz of Steinkopf Nursery will give an informal presentation on selecting the right plants for your patio pots, window boxes and hanging baskets. Come and learn which plants work well together and get idea for maintaining plants all season.

**NOTE: THIS PRESENTATION WILL TAKE PLACE AT STEINKOPF NURSERY AND GARDEN CENTER, 20815 Farmington Road, one block north of 8 Mile Road. Program will begin at 7:15 with business meeting to follow.**

As always, there will be refreshments, provided this month by Chris Sechler, Jan and David Henry.

## *Elections for 2008-2009*

We'll elect officers for the coming year at the business meeting. The nominating committee presented the following slate of officers: President, Peggy Dapkus; Vice President-Program Chair, Sally Ouellette; Recording Secretary, Chris Sechler; Treasurer, Carol Smith. There were no nominations from the floor at the April meeting.

### *Minutes of April 10 meeting*

Treasurer's report was read and received.

Festival of Arts. Angela Paul will set up our display. Nancy Adams will purchase the plants to be used and Sandy will tear down the display.

Web site: David Henry expects to have our web site up and running this weekend.

Plant sale. The sale will be held May 31, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We will set up Friday. Please bring your plants at 1 p.m. If that is inconvenient and you would like to come earlier, just leave your plants near the barn.

Garden therapy. Amy needs three-inch pots. Please bring them to the next meeting.

New business. Mar set up a display at the library for April.

Nancy Adams did two beautiful table arrangements and donated them to the lucky winners of a drawing. The lucky winners were Chris Sechler and Marge Gordon.

Meeting closed at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Chris Sechler, Secretary

### *Perennial plant sale May 31*

If you haven't started already, it's time to dig up and pot up those extra perennials that are overtaking the garden. Katie Wemyss and assorted anonymous (so far) volunteers will be on hand to sort and arrange plants on May 30 in the afternoon. Volunteers are also needed to work the sale on Saturday, May 31. See Katie at the May meeting to sign up to work on this sale. And bring any pots you won't be filling yourself to share with those who have more plants than pots.

### *Dues are due*

Pay Carol Smith \$25 for regular membership. National Gardener subscriptions will be given to those who sign up for 2008-2009 membership.

### *New website*

We're back on line at last. David Henry, who put us back together, says our new address is hillanddalegc.org. Take a look and be sure to let him know your thoughts on organization and suggestions. If your email address is not correct in the yearbook—or it's not in the yearbook at all—give Dave your correct address. It won't be made public.

### *Lisa's a life member*

Lisa Steinkopf received her life membership at the District 1 meeting in April. In addition to writing the Horticulture column for *Quail's Tales*, Lisa co-chaired the horticulture exhibit at the District 1 Spring Flower Show at Ford Field (with Sally Ouellette), helps us all keep our plants alive and will be helping out at the Steinkopf Nursery presentation at the May meeting.

And here is her thank you to you all:

THANK YOU!!!!

Dear garden club friends,

The honor bestowed on me at the District 1 meeting was absolutely wonderful! You are all such lovely ladies and I love every one of you! The friendships I have made here in the last 17 years are friendships I will never forget. When I first came to garden club I was a young mother with a husband who worked extremely long hours. Garden club was my one night a month I looked forward to. I couldn't wait to get together with other people who loved plants as much as me and didn't need anything from me but friendship. I've learned so many things from all of you and have many wonderful memories.

Being given a life membership by you was very touching and I feel very honored. I hope to spend many more years in Hill and Dale and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Thank-you again,  
Lisa Steinkopf

## ***Yearbook wins***

Thanks to a lot of work by Nancy Adams and Marge Gordon, and Angie, the Hill and Dale yearbook tied with some other clubs for the yearbook award at the District 1 spring meeting. Hill and Dale also was recognized for the high percentage of club members attending the district meeting.

## ***Evenings in the Garden 2008***

MSU Extension-Oakland County in cooperation with the Tollgate Garden Volunteers presents educational workshops throughout the spring and summer. Workshops are

- Native Trees and Shrubs, May 20
- Flowering Vines: Clematis and Beyond, June 30
- Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Hydrangeas, July 10
- Ten Things People Need to Know About Their Lawns, August 11
- Cooking with Herbs, August 13
- Keeping It Safe from Garden to Plate, August 27
- Lavender—How to Grow and Use, September 16.

Classes are set for MSU Tollgate Education Center, 28115 Meadowbrook Road, Novi, 48377. Classes will run from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Registration fee is \$20 per class except for Lavender class, which is \$25. To register contact Linda at 248.858.0887 or [smithlin@oakgov.com](mailto:smithlin@oakgov.com).

## ***Coming Up***

**May 8-10**—Flower Show School will be held at the Radisson Detroit-Livonia. Since the club voted to provide a year's subscription to the National Gardener for all members, this is the chance to learn about judging flower shows right near home. Sally Ouellette is providing horticulture for study and may need your assistance with **bulb blooms** and broad leaf evergreen branches.

**May 19**—77<sup>th</sup> Annual Michigan Garden Clubs State Convention

Holiday Inn, 3600 Plymouth Road, Ann Arbor. Hosted by District IIA. One day convention check made to MGC, Inc. for \$38 can be sent to

Joan Black, MGC convention co-registrar, P.O. 214, Saline, MI 48176-0214. For more information contact, Kit Gunn, convention co-registrar, 734-994-7455, [kitgunn@hotmail.com](mailto:kitgunn@hotmail.com); or Mary Pulick, convention chair, [mpgardclub@aol.com](mailto:mpgardclub@aol.com), 734-665-4703.

**May 31**—Hill and Dale's perennial plant sale, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the barn at the Heritage Park visitor center.

**June 13-14**—Livonia Garden Club presents "Bookworms," a standard flower show at the Livonia Civic Center Library atrium, 32777 Five Mile Road, Livonia.

**June 14**—Junior Gardeners at the library.

**June 19**—Comerica Bank Wellness Expo on Comerica's Livonia campus. Hill and Dale will host a table from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and from 6 to 9 p.m. Participants are wellness vendors, and we all know that there's nothing healthier than digging around in the dirt. We'll use this event to promote the club, placing contact information on the back of seed packets that we'll hand out at the event. Winnie Chrzanowski, Angela Paul, Ellie Case and Mar Sclawy all agreed to participate. Others are welcome to sign up as well. Please see Mar at the meeting to confirm your time slots.

**June 21**—Trowel and Error will head to the Belle Isle Conservatory and gardens if we can confirm that the conservatory is open.

**July 19**—Lakeshore Garden Club of Lexington will hold a garden walk. Call Marge Corby (810.878.0079) or Gerri Barber (810.327.2262) for more information

**October 7**—District 1 fall meeting.

*THE WREN IS CHIRRRUPING  
BUT IT GROWS DUSK  
JUST THE SAME.*

ISSA

As I lay awake, thinking of all the things I have to do in the day, I can't help but hear the cacophony of bird song. Sometimes it can be a bit loud at 6 a.m., but it would be a quiet, depressing world without their glad songs. Birds in the spring always seem louder or should I say, happier, as they begin to build their nests.

I love birds. I decorate my house inside and out with found nests, bird figurines and houses. So, the question we gardeners have is, what can we plant to attract more birds to our yards?

There are many shrubs and trees that we can incorporate into our landscapes to attract the birds. Of course, any evergreens are wonderful because they provide safe places to nest and hide when the hawks and cats come to call. They also provide food in the form of their seeds, and are great shelter for the birds in the winter. I always put my Christmas tree out on the patio for the winter, and put seed under it.

The birds love it. Pines, spruces, firs, hemlocks, and arborvitae are all great evergreens to plant.

Deciduous trees are also necessary, as they provide nesting places and food in the form of their seeds. Insects that live on or in the trees are tasty morsels for the birds also. Beech trees, maples, and oaks are all good examples,

but if you don't have the room for one of these large trees, try birch, black gum, willows, or serviceberry. Also sumac, hawthorns, dogwood, and crab apples.

If you have a really small yard or just want to fill in some small areas, there are plenty of shrubs for the birds also. They include junipers, cotoneaster, hollies, privet, viburnum, spicebush, and pyracantha. Of course, you want to leave some grassy areas, as the robins need it to find worms. Having large plants in the back, descending down to the lawn with shrubs and perennial plants is a pleasing arrangement and the birds will love it. Always remember to have water for your feathered friends also. They love a nice bird bath or pond to drink and take a bath in.

Take time to sit and watch and listen to the birds in your yard. It is a wonderful way to enjoy a summer's evening. The excited chatter of the wren or the haunting song of the mourning dove never fail to bring back memories of my grandma's porch on her farm house and the enjoyable evenings we spent there.

Happy gardening,  
Lisa

*Katie's Cookbook*—another installment, courtesy of Chris Sechler

**Baked Salmon with Herbs**

Prep: 20 min. Bake 35 min.

**2 ½ cups soft bread crumbs (about 5 slices)**  
**4 garlic cloves, minced**  
**2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese**  
**2 teaspoons dried parsley flakes**  
**1 teaspoon dried thyme**  
**1 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed**  
**½ teaspoon salt**  
**¼ teaspoon pepper**  
**2 tablespoons butter, melted**  
**1 3-pound salmon fillet**

Line a 15"x10"x1" baking pan with foil; coat foil with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside. In a bowl, combine the bread crumbs, garlic, Parmesan cheese, parsley, thyme, rosemary, salt and pepper. Add butter; toss to coat evenly.

Place salmon on prepared pan. Spray with nonstick cooking spray and pat with bread crumb mixture. Bake, uncovered at 350 degrees for 35 to 40 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork. Yield: 8 servings.

## *This 'n' that*

Some highlights from the District 1 April newsletter:

- Nicole Myre of North Farmington Garden Club is taking the lead in assembling a new book of speakers for our clubs. If you've enjoyed any of the speakers over the past couple years, be sure to let Nicole know (phiconat@sbcglobal.net). If you can't quite recall who that speaker was, talk to Mar, Sandy or Peggy and we'll dredge through our memories and files.
- Virginia is also asking for suggestions for fundraising. Some clubs are aces in this department and others wouldn't mind some new ideas.

### *Critter spotting*

Our lake isn't very big, but it is on the flyway for a passel of migrating water fowl each spring and fall. The diving ducks spent their usual week out on the lake in large numbers, too far away for my binoculars to identify them as anything other than those charming migrating diving ducks (though I'm sure they're not all "ducks." Fortunately a few of the more curious critters swam up the canal to be identified as wood ducks and (likely) a scaup of some sort—or maybe a coot

Bruno, the enforcer swan, seems to be back. I can't really tell swans apart, but this one really despises jet skis and has become more grouchy about them in the past few years. Now that neighbor Ron has launched his jet ski for the season, I can hear Bruno's whistling wings at dusk as he swoops in on the jet ski with a huge plop, definitely designed to scare the machine away. So far, it hasn't worked.

It's likely the buzzards did return to Hinckley, OH in March this year as we saw a few of them along the freeway entrance in Independence when we were in Ohio for a wedding last month. Pink heads gleaming in the sun, they lunched on something dead in the high grass. Technically the buzzards are turkey vultures, though they're not known for eating turkeys particularly. For a bird that's majestic in its soaring flight, it's not that great looking up close. But that featherless head is a real plus when it comes to chowing down on not-so-fresh carrion. It's a great bird to have in the neighborhood to clean up dead critters in woods and fields. They soar by my office in Troy quite frequently, and I do wonder what they're finding to eat in the middle of town.

A new flight master outside the office window is a raptor of some sort. I haven't been able to pin it down, but I hope it's a peregrine falcon and that it's nesting in the National City Bank building, about the tallest building in town. The peregrine pair, Horus and Hathor, that nested for several years in the county building in Mt. Clemens broke up this year, found new mates and are living in new places. Since the original couple produced many eggs, but no surviving chicks, birders are hoping that the new pairings will be more successful in expanding the peregrine population in the area.

Unfortunately one thing not spotted this spring: blue herons at the heron rookery in West Bloomfield—as Sandy reports above. Seems raccoons, aging trees and some big winds combined to take out the rookery. Remaining wildlife—two Canada geese and two mallards—couldn't keep us out in the wet. We repaired to the local diner for a late breakfast.

That same Cleveland trip that produced the buzzard spotting also put us up close to a bald eagle that flew in front of the car as we passed the nuclear power plant near Toledo. Al the Forester says that there are a few nesting pairs near that facility.

In our own yard, we've spotted one very chubby groundhog, a muskrat with a den across the canal, many chipmunks, athletic squirrels, red-wing blackbirds, grackles, blue jays, cardinals, finches (red and gold), sparrows, starlings, downy woodpeckers, red-bellied woodpeckers, nuthatches, doves and those enchanting little chickadees. I'm filling the feeders more frequently than I ever did in winter. A good investment, however, as the spring returnees add to the mix and the silly chipmunks manage to wedge themselves onto the narrow feeder ledge for a good sit-down feast. —Mar Sclawy ©2008

**sandy accepting awards**

**Lisa's Life Membership presentation**