

Quail's Tales



www.HillandDalegc.org

Hill and Dale is a member of Michigan Garden Clubs and National Garden Clubs

May 2009

President's preface

Let's talk about grubs and how to control them in our lawns. They hibernate in winter, but they are getting ready to come up in late spring to nosh on grass roots for a few weeks so they can grow from grub to adult Japanese beetle or June bug. We have to fix the soil in our lawns to make those roots grow deeper, like using a mulching mower to chop leaves and let them get buried in your grass. They say used coffee grounds will improve your soil. I'm working on acquiring some fritillaria bulbs to plant in the fall. I've heard this works!

Hurry up, Spring. We are patiently waiting for you.

—Peggy Dapkus

May 14 meeting

Winning the award for the longest title for a program this season, Carol Czechowski, member of the Beatrix Potter Society and Herb Society of America, will speak on "Fairies Are Active Now—Learn What Is Needed for the Small Things That Reside in Our Garden." Given their size and delicacy, fairies are often overlooked—if not just stomped on. This is your chance to learn more about helping them survive, and even thrive.

Proposed slate of officers for the coming year includes: President, Sally Ouellette; vice president/program chair, Lisa Steinkopf; secretary, Ann McMinn; and treasurer, Angela Paul. There were no nominations from the floor at the April meeting. Voting will take place at the May meeting with installation at the 50th anniversary party June 11. We'll also be firming up assignments for the perennial plant sale, Proven Survivors! Please bring information on the plants you'll be providing for the plant sale

We had a good turnout and really enjoyed the District meeting in Livonia and got to sit together



Angela, Katie, Ann, Chris, Nancy, Carol, Gretchen, Marge, Flo, Peggy, Sandy and Marcia



Proven Survivors! perennial plant sale May 16

Take one more look around the garden for those stalwart survivors of another Michigan winter. Pot 'em up and bring them to the barn next to the visitor center at Heritage Park on Friday after noon. If you haven't already signed up for classification and pricing on Friday or sales on Saturday, please see Kathy Heckman or Mar Sclawy to choose an assignment. Saturday morning usually requires a lot of salesfolk. So, let them know what plants you plan to bring, and as much information about them as you can provide: name, sun/shade, bloom time, color, height, etc. We hope to have a fact sheet to provide to purchasers to help them find the right place in their gardens for their new plants.

Please provide stakes or some other identifier (masking tape on the pot works OK) with the name of the plant. When it comes to identifying plants, we're good, but we're not psychic.

If you find you're inundated with freely seeded annuals, do bring them along too. They're also survivors of that nasty winter.

If you don't see your name on the assignment sheet below and you haven't offered a good explanation for not being able to help out, please see Kathy Heckman or Mar Sclawy at the meeting and sign up.

Sale assignments:

Friday noon to 3: Kathy Postema, Ann McMinn, Kathy Heckman, Shirley Perkins, Carol Smith, Gretchen Pugsley, Mar Sclawy

Friday 3 to done: Sally Ouellette, Peggy Dapkus, Nancy Adams

Saturday 9 to noon: Kathy Heckman, Flo Holzknacht, Mar Sclawy, Jeannine Gundle, Katie Wemyss, Angela Paul

Saturday noon to 2 and clean up: Sandy Cusack, Peggy Dapkus, Kathy Heckman

Congratulations to us!

Hill and Dale made lots of news at the District 1 meeting in April. Under the direction of Nancy Adams, the yearbook won first place; we received honorable mentions for Garden Therapy (Amy Langdon), the new sletter (Sally Ouellette and Mar Sclawy), the website (David Henry), and photography (Flo). We received a member award of honor and a Gold Seal Club of Distinction. Thanks to the generous support of the entire club (for which she says, thanks so much), Mar Sclawy received a life membership in MGC for her work for the club, the district and the community.

Special thanks to Flo Holzknacht, who assembled all the entries that led to all the awards.



Mar took the opportunity to tell everyone about our "Proven Survivors" as she accepted her Life membership



Sherry Sanelli did a great Design program

3 items From Katie

1. Coupons I received a note from the gal in Iowa that they have many coupons to sort through and don't need any more right now. Thanks for the ones you contributed

2. Plants for our sale

We will dig plants at Ruth Trombley's on Monday, 11th at 10:00 a.m.

3. Heritage Gardens

We have a new plan - Sandy will guide workers on Wednesday evenings (6:00) and Katie on Thursday mornings (9:00) You can help at either one or both. We checked over the gardens and are anxious to get started. Hope the weather co-operates! There is a momma duck on a nest in some Lilies. We hope to not upset her too much. Sandy and Katie

April meeting minutes

Meeting opened and printed minutes were approved

Treasurers report was read

Nominating: The committee presented the slate of officers for approval and vote. President: Sally Ouellette, Vice President: Lisa Steinkopf, Treasurer: Angela Paul, Secretary: Ann McMinn. Carol Smith made a motion to accept the slate as presented. Seconded by Flo Holzknect. The motion passed.

District I Spring meeting will be held on April 28th, The price for the entire day is \$22.00. Please give your check to Carol Smith if you wish to attend

Plant Sale: Mar would like to have a list of the plants you will be bringing in advance of the sale date. She also asks that you provide information on the growing habits and needs of each plant you are donating. Be sure to bring plants on Friday May 15th so they can be sorted and priced.

Anniversary Party: Gretchen and Carol are working hard on our 50th anniversary party. If you have addresses of former members that you think would like to attend please give them that information.

New Business: The Farmington Arts Council will be holding their annual Arts Festival. They have asked for a \$25.00 donation to help with expenses. A motion was made by Chris and seconded by Flo to do this. Motion passed. They also asked if we would be participating this year. Nancy Adams will ask Angela if she is willing to work with her on this project.

Willow Greenhouse will be opening on May 1st and will offer a discount to our members. Located at 7839 Curtis Rd., Northville 248-437-7219

Meeting closed at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted Chis Sechler

Coming up

June 2 – 3: 78th annual state convention of Michigan Garden Clubs, sponsored by District III. See the March – May issue of the MGC newsletter or visit www.michigangardenclubs.org for a registration form. President for 2009 – 2011, Lynn Dinvald will be installed. Other activities include workshops in photography, orchids, raptors, succulent gardens, contrived flowers; and tours of Kalamazoo. Hotel reservations should have been made by May 8, but you can always ask.

June 7—Native Plant Festival, Paint Creek Cider Mill, Rochester, Michigan
10 am – 3 pm. Join the Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy, Oakland Township Parks & Recreation and the Headwaters Cluster partners in a celebration of native plants. Learn about our regional native plant growers, buy plants for your spring planting, and explore the use of native plants in habitats large and small. For more information, contact Heather at hhuffstutler@sixriversrlc.org or 248.601.2816 x460.

June 10—Whole Foods Community Support Day. Shop at any of its Oakland County stores (Rochester, Troy and West Bloomfield) and Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy will receive 5% of net sales.

June 11: Hill and Dale's 50th anniversary celebration with installation of new officers. All past presidents are invited to attend.

June 13—19 Annual Ann Arbor Garden Walk. Gardens include:
A country estate on 3+ acres with formal and informal garden rooms accented with stone, an extravagant, tropical paradise with pond and waterfall surrounding a large lanai, a small urban garden in a European setting, and an artist's studio and retreat using the garden as a showcase. Admission is \$12. Tickets will be sold after May 15 at downtown Home & Garden, Matthaei Botanical Gardens, Dixboro General Store and Nicola's books.

July 26: Belleville Area Garden Walk, sponsored by the Fred C. Fischer Library, 11 to 4. Tickets are \$8 in advance. Brochures will be available at the May meeting.

Horticulture

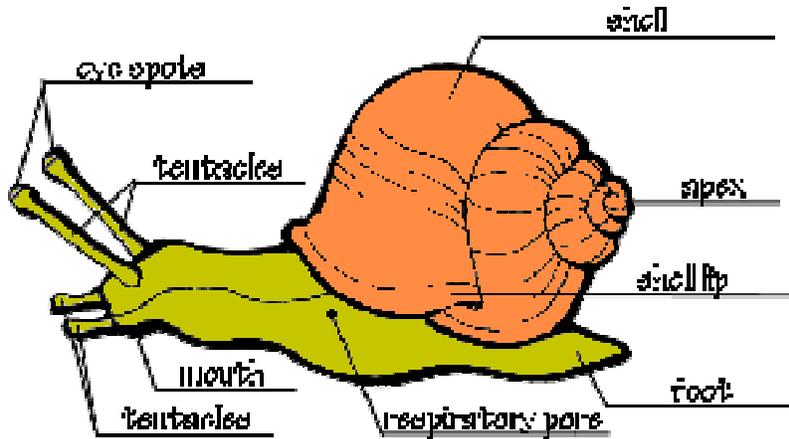
SNAILS

I recently bought two betta fish and have one on my desk at work with "lucky bamboo" in it and one at home with some water plants. While at the pet store I saw a tank full of snails. I loved them and bought two for each betta fish tank. They keep the algae down and are cute. They actually move quite quickly, contrary to popular belief. I have cute little snail figurines in the garden. Okay, I LIKE snails. Yet, on my hostas, not so much. I think those are more often slugs, which aren't cute because they don't have the shell.

So, some information about these adorable little things. The class of Gastropoda (the snails and slugs) is second only to insects in terms of total number of species. They can be found in a wide range of environments from ditches, deserts, and the abyssal depths of the sea. The snails in my fish tanks are marine snails and have gills. The ones we all hate are terrestrial snails and breathe with lungs. Snails move by gliding along on their muscular foot which is lubricated with mucus. The mucus helps with locomotion and also protects the snail from sharp objects and could actually move along the edge of a razor and not be injured. Its shell is made of calcium carbonate and their shells form a logarithmic spiral. The snail needs calcium in their diets to make strong shells. Most snails bear one or two pairs of tentacles on their heads. In most land snails, the eyes are carried on the upper set and the lower set are their olfactory organs and they are retractable. Snails hibernate in the winter. Yes, they must be killed in our gardens to have beautiful hostas and so we put down the slug bait to lure them in and kill them. For some reason, I don't feel too bad about that, probably because I hate holes in my hostas. But if you think they are cute like I do, consider adding some to your fish tank at home and enjoy them where they are not eating your plants.

Happy May!!!
Lisa

Snail Anatomy



Consider the Snail by [R. Wayne Edwards](#) 1996

Where he goes he leaves a trail.
When he goes where he shouldn't be,
His trail is there for all to see.
Our life is like the little snail,
Where we go we leave a trail.
The things we do and the things we say,
Are the trail we leave from day to day.



Critter spotting

At LAST! The annual goose homestead disputes have been resolved and peace reigns (kinda) once more on the marsh. For well over a week the normally collegial geese were at each other, necks outstretched, honks at max decibels as they fought over (I'm guessing at this) prime nesting territory. While we have far more geese than we'd like (0 is what we'd like), there's no need to turn the marsh into a tenement, geese living in each other's laps, so to speak. But there they were arguing over some choice range of cattails that looked just like the rest of the shore to the untrained human eye. Apparently the urge to nest somewhere overtook the urge to find just-the-right spot to do it.

For years Canada geese Standish and Clarissa had a nest across from the end of our dock. Clarissa sat dutifully on the nest and Standish stood manfully on the dock, keeping watch and delivering goose doodles at a steady rate. Apparently the nest was still there, lost in the cattails as a steady stream of various sized water fowl gave it a try this spring. The ducks came—and went. A swan couple gave it a couple minutes—and passed. A goose couple seemed to like it. The male ushered her into the nest and seemed quite pleased that he'd found one that was in move-in condition. She, on the other hand, kept making a dash upstream whenever his back was turned. He'd herd her back and—off she'd go at the first opportunity. They moved on—separately or together I didn't notice.

Even an egret tried it out. All wrong. That was plain from how plainly the egret stood out along the edge of the water. We're all for love, but we really hope that the nest remains vacant for the breeding season.

Meanwhile, inside the house, Tootsie the Wonder Dog surprised us once again. Planning on my excellent Easter coconut cake for Hill and Dale's April meeting, I baked it before we went to dinner, planning to frost it when we got home. Home again, I marched smartly to the kitchen to get that frosting underway—and stepped on a cake rack. A cake rack, on the floor, surrounded by a few cake crumbs cemented to the floor with dog drool.

Toots is not a tall dog. Stretching, she can barely get a paw on the edge of the counter. That was enough to snag a cake layer left far too close to the counter edge. What a blessing, cake raining from the sky. She paid—big time—the next day. We're sure she learned nothing from the experience and will continue to seek out goodies to fall upon her.

Sally Ouellette also had a problem with a pet, or maybe it's with son Andrew, who has unusual pets. Sally came home from dinner out recently and called the pug puppy to go outside. Well, let her tell it: I noticed a strange smell as I walked in the door—kinda like wet dirt or worms. I let out the dog, turned around and saw a snake wiggling on the floor. Actually it wasn't a snake; it was Andrew's needle nosed gar (a skinny eel-like fish). It had jumped out of the fish tank through a hole where a filter should have been. I had to keep the puppy from getting it while I figured out how to pick it up. It is 8 or 9 inches long and I didn't want to actually touch it. There was a small plastic bag nearby so I used that to pick it up. I duct taped the hole and it seemed to be swimming around ok, but the room still smelled of worms or wet dirt or whatever.

There are critters everywhere.

--Mar Sclawy © 2009



What a good program at the District Meeting !!!!