



# Quail's Tales

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

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

April 2013

## President's preface

FINALLY! Spring has sprung. My crocuses are blooming. How pretty and perky they look, poking up through the leftover leaves of last autumn. "Cultivation and harvesting of crocus was first documented in the Mediterranean, notably on the island of Crete. Frescos showing them are extant at the Knossos site on Crete." They have travelled a long way to my garden beds. But, oh what a welcome sight they are. Soon, I will work in the beds and clean out the debris from last year. There's nothing like working in the garden—it's a spiritual experience to get your hands and feet in the soil. Brings you closer to God or at least it feels that way. Oh, what fun gardens are!

—Kathleen Postema



## April 11 meeting

With perennials finally sticking their noses above soil level, it's time to start planning for butterflies. Brenda Dziedzic, well known for her butterfly expertise, will discuss how to attract *Lepidoptera* (which include butterflies' night flying cousins, the moths) to the garden.

Now's the time to plan for those visitors and the meeting is the place to learn how to make those plans. Hospitality will be provided by Joanne Bryngelson, Katie Wemyss and Angela Paul



## March 14 minutes

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. with our program. Speaker was Roger Sutherland. He spoke on securing maple syrup from the various trees that produce the sap. He and his family have been drawing maple syrup since 1966. He was very knowledgeable and interesting.

Hospitality for the evening was provided by Peggy Dapkus and Kathleen Postema. There were 16 members present.

President Postema called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30. The minutes of the Feb.14 meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer Angela Paul presented the Treasure's report which was approved.

Peggy Dapkus presented and pinned our new member, Diane Dunn.

Angela Paul discussed the district meeting being held April 17, at the Crystal Gardens in Southgate, Mi. Currently she has three people signed up. See Angela with your check for \$25.

Hospitality for April will be provided by Joanne Bryngelson, Katie Wemyss and Angela Paul. The program will be "Attracting Butterflies to Your Garden." The presenter is Brenda Dzedzic known for her interesting programs.

Before adjourning we had a brief discussion about club membership, members' involvement and ways to try and resolve our current need for both. We talked about being more visible in the community with more advertisement and perhaps attending the summer farmers market regularly with drawings for potted plants or other gardening gifts. We will continue this discussion next month.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15.

--Joanne Bryngelson, secretary

## Oops

We failed to note last month that the tables created for the February meeting program were designed by Amy Langdon, Sally Ouellette, Katie Wemyss, and Nancy Adams.

## Officer nominations for 2013-2014

Election of new officers will be held at the May meeting. Nominated so far are:

President—Mar Sclawy

Vice President and Program Chair—Nancy Adams

Secretary—Joanne Bryngelson

Treasurer—Angela Paul.

Any other member who wishes to run for office is encouraged to seek nomination at the April meeting. As noted in the March meeting minutes, member involvement must increase if the club is to continue.

## Plant gala's coming, it's coming, it is—May 18

We're just a tad over a month away from the plant gala—with hardly a perennial in sight. Keep an eye out and a trowel handy to start digging as soon as those rascals

appear. And please remember to sign up at the April meeting to help out on Friday and/or Saturday (May 17-18)

Mar has pots in all sizes so lack of pots will not be accepted as an excuse for not providing your extras to the event. Anyone who has plants, but not the enthusiasm for digging them up, please call a club pal and ask for a little help. We're gonna have to work together to get this gala going in such a late spring.

### *Working Together to Grow Together*

Michigan Garden Clubs holds its 82<sup>nd</sup> annual convention in Holland, MI, on May 29-31. Registration form appears in the spring issue of Thru the Garden Gate, and is reprinted at the end of this newsletter or found online .

### *Evenings in the Garden 2013*

MSU Extension in Oakland County and Tollgate Garden Volunteers announce their educational workshops for the year. Classes and dates:

May 7: Organic Vegetable Gardening, presented by Gary Heilig

June 6: Indoor Pest Control, presented by Gretchen Voyle

June 13: Garden Design: An Exercise in Personal Expression, presented by Robert Schutzki

July 15: Wonderful Native Grasses and Wildflowers, presented by Vern Stevens

July 29: Conifers for Michigan Landscapes, presented by Bert Cregg

August 6: All About Chickens, presented by Sharon Bergman

August 20: Shade Gardening, a Practical Approach, presented by Janet Macunovich

September 12: Native Shrubs and Trees, presented by Mary Wilson.

All classes will meet from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at MSU Tollgate Education Center, 28115 Meadowbrook Road, Novi 48377. Registration fees are \$20 per class per person. More information available online, and all registrations must be made online at <http://events.anr.msu.edu/2013Eveningsinthegarden>. No registrations at the door.

For more information call Linda at 248.858.0887 or email her at [smithlin@oakgov.com](mailto:smithlin@oakgov.com).



### *Horticulture*

**Saturday, April 27, 2013, 10:00am-12:00n: *Clematis Pruning Workshop*** Long perceived as “difficult” or “temperamental”, Clematis are actually proven performers that can give years of

gardening delight. Join us for a hands-on workshop to learn about the care and culture of these garden gems and specific pruning techniques and concerns for various species and hybrids. Bring your favorite (by-pass) pruners and a chair. \$10 pre-paid/nonrefundable registration includes one hour of instruction, an hour of supervised hands-on experience, refreshments and a comprehensive hand-out. Pre-enrollment required, including your name and contact information in case of inclement weather. Limited enrollment. Two hours of education for Master Gardeners. *Contact Cheryl at [cenglish@blackcatpottery.com](mailto:cenglish@blackcatpottery.com) for additional information. Register at [www.blackcatpottery.com](http://www.blackcatpottery.com).* Don't forget to read Cheryl's article on Clematis in the April 2013 issue of *Michigan Gardener Magazine!*

**Coming Soon! June 1 and August 17, 2013 (Saturday), 10:00am-2:00pm: *Annual Spring/Summer Garden Tours.*** Designed as a educational space, Cheryl's garden includes over 50 Clematis, representing over 10 species as well as large-flowering hybrids, and over 200 species of native plants, ranging from Spring ephemerals to large trees. Take advantage of this opportunity to become acquainted with some of the lesser-known small-flowering species Clematis varieties and the beauties of our native flora. We also feature local garden art, live music and refreshments, as well as at least one hands-on workshop. (There is a charge for the workshops. The rest of the event is free and open to the public.). *Contact Cheryl at [cenglish@blackcatpottery.com](mailto:cenglish@blackcatpottery.com) for additional information. Register for the workshops at [www.blackcatpottery.com](http://www.blackcatpottery.com). **Call or e-mail to book a private garden tour or presentation for your group!*** All events at 3903 Grayton St., Detroit, MI 48224-4003

Contact: (313) 885-3385/(m) (313) 690-3385/(e) [cenglish@blackcatpottery.com](mailto:cenglish@blackcatpottery.com)



### *Critter spotting—Spring signs*

As Kathleen noted in her preface, it really is acting like spring out there—at last. The ice is off the lake and canal (though not before a rogue pontoon boat broke loose from its mooring and floated as far into the lake as it could go before running into ice remnants). Now the ice is gone, and so is the boat. I was hoping to see that rescue.

While the ice was still on half the lake, the diving ducks stopped by on their way north. While they lingered for weeks in the fall, this time they barely touched down before they were heading out again.

Other swimmers are out there now. The noisy black duck is back, so eager to keep other birds from eating any of neighbor Ron's prodigal pile of bird seed that he gets none himself. The other critters just skip in for a nip while he's herding others off "his" food supply.



Wood ducks come this time of year, but there are no hollow trees for their preferred nests. They don't stay.

The Canada goose posse is already plotting its mission to reduce the next generation as much as possible. They report that last year they removed 34 eggs from seven nests and later removed 24 geese to other locales. That's a lot of geese we won't see in the neighborhood. No humans seem to mind. There are still a lot of leftover goose doodles from last year in our yard. We can't catch 'em all.

Ring neck ducks are back for of visit.

But we don't know what to make of some new visitors: white faced ducks (or coots or mergansers) with white bills and green feathers on each side of their heads. Brown bodies, solid or mottled, and black tail feathers with some white accents. They're about the size of a mallard. Can't find 'em in my book of *Birds of North America*. Any thoughts?

On the groundhog front we had a moment of hope a couple weeks ago when a fat critter went skittering across the melting canal ice, headed for the marsh. He's a big one, I thought. Maybe he'll break through. If he had, I'm sure he would have sunk like a rock. He was already well fed for an animal that's supposed to hibernate all winter. Alas, he made it. Now the hope is that with the ice gone, he'll be stuck in the marsh, unless he can cadge a ride to the mainland on the back of one of the deer that live out there.

One critter that didn't make it is the marsh's mink. We didn't know that we had a mink till the lake associations noted it in their goose count news. And yet, there it was, quite dead—and not from natural causes—in neighbor Dan's backyard. Naturally the dogs discovered the body first. It took me a minute to figure out what enchanting aroma was luring Roxie into rolling around in the grass. Well, it was one of those aromas more attractive to dogs than to people. Minks have a musky odor, one of Roxie's favorites. Sort of like a delicate skunk. The fur was lovely, dark and lustrous. Dan is hoping the turkey buzzards notice before he has to attend to the funeral rites himself.

--Mar Sclawy