



# Quail's Tales

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

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

March 2014

## President's preface

You'll note a definite spring theme here. About time, I say. So I'll leave the rest of the issue to talk about spring—and beyond. Here I'm thanking the elvish present that Amy Adams brought to the last meeting: Hill and Dale notepads AND sharpened pencils. Gotta love those elves. We're grateful that Amy is such good pals with at least one of them. If you didn't get a notepad, speak up at the meeting. And send thanks to the elves via Amy. Also, thanks to Jan Henry for creating the Facebook page for Hill and Dale. Take a look, friend Jan and post on our new site.

—Mar Sclawy

## March 13 program—Spring ahead

As this newsletter goes to print, we're pushing our clocks ahead by an hour to begin daylight saving time, another sign of spring. But the most reliable sign is the presentation of What's New? by George Papadelis, owner of Telly's Greenhouse. George travels the flower world looking for new plants and hybrids. He'll share the best of his finds with us at the meeting. We'll start sharply at 7:30. Bring a pen and paper, in case George doesn't have a list of the stunning newcomers to hand out.

## February 13 meeting minutes

Gretchen Pugsley and Joan Angelo hosted the evening and did a beautiful Valentine's table. Angela gave the Treasurer's report.

Mar informed us that the family of our dear member Lu Eaton asked the memorials be sent to her church or to Hill and Dale. Several people, including members, sent memorials to our club.

Jan Henry spoke about the club getting involved with social media, such as Facebook, and clicking "likes" on related matters. She created a page and posted pictures of the party table on it. She also suggests we form a Facebook group with the other three clubs in Farmington.

Chris Sechler moved to sponsor a student to environmental school; Flo Holzknacht seconded. Motion passed

Chris and Katie will be on the nominating committee. We still need a member at large to complete the committee.

—Respectfully submitted, Chris Sechler, secretary

### District 1 spring meeting, April 10

*Flights of Fancy* is the theme for the District 1 spring meeting. Garden Club of Dearborn is hosting the event at O'Kelly Banquet Hall, 23663 Park Street, Dearborn, MI. District Director Sherry Sanelli has scheduled two programs: Loda Lake update for the morning and *Feathered Friends—Attracting Birds to Your Property* for the afternoon.

The Loda Lake presentation will include a virtual tour of the facility, the status of the construction project of the Pavilion and washrooms that Michigan Garden Clubs has sponsored and information on the coming ribbon cutting. Carol Brodbeck, a retired professional from Warner-Lambert and a biologist, knows her stuff and will share her tips on attracting birds to your property. Whether your interests tend to wildflower sanctuary like Loda Lake or bird sanctuary, there's a program for you.

Registration and coffee kick off the day at 9:15, lunch is at 12:15 and the program should adjourn by 2:30. Tickets are \$25. Angela will be collecting your cash or check (made payable to MGC, Inc.-District 1) at the March meeting. Or you can mail it to Angela, just so long as she receives your money in time to register us by the April 3 deadline.

### Coming up—some fast and some with lots of time to plan

**April 26: Gardening and All That Jazz**, sponsored by the Master Gardener Society of Oakland County, at Oakland Schools Conference Center, 2111 Pontiac Lake Road, Waterford, 48328. Program details were printed in the February newsletter. Early bird registration (till March 15) is \$70. Thereafter it's \$80. Registration runs till April 16. Mar has registration forms.

**May 17: Hill and Dale Plant Gala.** Once you see those little green things popping up from the thawing ground, dig 'em up, pot 'em up and plan to bring them to the gala. Usual rules: all club members must do what they can to promote the gala and work at it. Friday afternoon will be plant intake and identification. Saturday is the gala from 8 (set up), 10 opening till 2 (closing). Please work your other plans around this fun event. Mar will have more info at the April meeting.

**June 21: 'Mad Hatters' Tea Party Garden Walk.** Gardeners of Northville & Novi (aka The No-No's) will present seven exceptional gardens, four in Novi and three in Northville, 10 a.m. till 4 p.m., rain or shine. Central venue – Northville Art House. Tickets are \$10 (cash or check). More information at <http://www.gardenersnorthville-novi.org/> or

**June 21: Garden Walk & "Wild Flowers" Breakfast. 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. :**

Featuring private local gardens, plant exchange and an optional "Wild Flowers" breakfast talk served in the Crocker House Garden, 15 Union Street Mount Clemens, MI 48043 586-465-2488. Cost of Garden Walk tickets are \$20. Tickets are limited and non-refundable.

Breakfast of home-made scones, hard boiled eggs, fresh fruit and hot Three Wives Tea and orange juice includes an informative talk regarding "Old Secrets of Wildflowers and Plants" with Annick Hivert-Carthew. The additional charge for breakfast is only \$10.

### *Critter spotting—Well, not polar bears around here, but this is fun*

Picking a day to celebrate one cause or another has become a fun and popular trend — and February 27 is International Polar Bear Day!

I've ruthlessly poached and edited this long essay from a source I can no longer identify. Still it's worth a look at some of the quirky little known facts about this beloved and iconic polar bear.

**1. Polar bears have see-through fur.** Polar bear fur is transparent and holds no color. It appears white because it reflects visible light. Polar bear skin, however, is black. To humans and other creatures that see only in visible light, polar bears nearly blend in seamlessly with their snowy environment. However, reindeer have outsmarted the polar bear's tricky fur by evolving a visual system that can see in ultraviolet light, which means polar bears stand out like a sore thumb against their icy white backdrop.

Polar bears in zoos often have almost yellow or green-tinged fur. The yellowing of the fur is due to age and dirt, while the greenish color is from the algae that can grow on polar bear fur in unnaturally warm and humid environments.

**2. Polar bears do not hibernate.** Unlike many of their cousins further south, polar bears do not hibernate through the winter. A mother polar bear does use a den to give birth to and raise her cubs (typically between January and March). To accommodate this homebound period, mama polar bears do engage in hibernation-like behavior such as refraining from eating, drinking and defecating.

**3. Male polar bears can weigh the equivalent of a dozen men and be 11 feet tall.** A typical adult male polar bear weighs between 775 and 1,200 or the weight of about a half-dozen men. However, according to Polar Bear National, the biggest polar bear ever recorded was a male weighing a whopping 2,209 pounds equal to about a dozen men. By contrast, adult females typically weigh about half of the average male tipping the scales at a measly (by polar bear standards) 330 to 650 pounds.

**4. Polar Bears are very tiny when they are born.** That 2,209 pound bear mentioned above started life as a one-pounder. The mother keeps the cubs in the den until they reach about 22-33 pounds. The males take 8 -14 years to reach their adult size. Females reach full size around ages 5 and 6. The cubs nurse for about 2/12 years.

**5. Polar Bears can go days, even weeks, without eating.** To adapt to an environment where food is not always abundantly available, polar bears know how manage famine. If a polar bear is unsuccessful catching dinner for more than seven to 10 days, its metabolism will slow down until it finds its next meal. During this time they survive off of their fat reserves, which is why the fatty ringed and bearded seals are a polar bear's favorite entree. Sadly, climate change is making food harder to find and some bears are adapting by regularly cannibalizing their own kind.



**6. Polar Bears can sniff out their dinner 20 miles away.** Polar bear noses are highly attuned sensory organs that put a blood hound's sniffer to shame — when detecting the next meal, anyhow. A polar bear can track an icebound seal up to 20 miles away, and can sniff-out a seal's breathing hole in the ice more than half a mile away, even if the seal is absent. That's a tease at the Arctic Ring of Fire at the Detroit Zoo when a polar bear's lunch might just be a few feet away, yet always unattainable. Seals like it.

**7. Two-thirds of polar bears could disappear by 2050.** Thanks to human inaction on climate change, our planet continues to heat and polar sea ice continues to shrink and melt. Polar bears depend upon sea ice to hunt, and studies predict our planet will warm to the point where enough sea ice annually melts to lead to the disappearance of two-thirds of polar bears by 2050. The current decline in sea ice is already forcing polar bears to swim such long distances that they are drowning from exhaustion.

**8. Common household chemicals are being found in polar bear brains.** Again, thanks to humans, [perFluoroAlkyl Substances](#) (PFASs), [Polychlorinated biphenyl](#) (PCBs) and their precursors, which are resistant to thermal, biological and chemical degradation are [bioaccumulating in polar bears](#). PCBs were [banned](#) in the United States in 1979 due in large part to their role in cancer and as a neurotoxin. [PFASs](#) are found in coatings for textiles, paper products, carpets, upholstery as well as food packaging that are water, oil and soil repellent. These chemicals are also found in pharmaceuticals, cleaning products and fire-fighting foams. The problem with PFASs is that many of them are known or suspected neurotoxins and/or carcinogens. The good news is PFASs have not been produced in the western world since 2002 but the bad news is, China loves them and despite their ban in the west, scientists have measured a ten-fold increase in production and use since 2002.







Read more: <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/8-extraordinary-facts-about-polar-bears-for-international-polar-bear-day.html#ixzz2um3KCmmt>