

August 2023

South Schuylkill Garden Club

Third Tuesday of the Month at 6:30 PM

First United Church of Christ, Schuylkill Haven

www.southschuylkillgardenclub.com

www.facebook.com/soschuylkillgardenclub.com



Cultivating the Community Newsletter

Weather Folklore for August

If the first week in August is unusually warm, the coming winter will be snowy and long. If a cold August follows a hot July, it foretells a winter hard and dry.

[24th] Thunderstorms after St. Bartholomew are mostly violent.

When it rains in August, it rains honey and wine.

If you count the August fogs, you can tell how many snowfalls you may have during the winter season.

At our July 18 meeting, Linda Bollinger shared her talents with the club and assisted others in designing dried, pressed flowers into a lovely design for greeting cards.

The Master of It All - Linda



Look who Nancy found designing at the workshop





Kaye shared her finished floral design using a photo frame.

July 31-Aug 5 Schuylkill County Fair

Show your support for the Fair and don't forget to visit the Horticulture and Craft Buildings to see the exhibits entered by fellow club members.

August 15, 2023

Program: "Native Butterflies of Schuylkill County"

Under the watchful eye of **Ann Sandherr**, butterfly environments are recreated for your view and study. Ann will discuss all stages – egg, chrysalis, caterpillar and adult stages of a butterfly's life. Observe these life stages in her terrariums.

Refreshments: Barbara Malewski, Kim Morgan, Joyce Carlin, Wendy Delp, Mary Ann Hoffman-Krammes

District II/III News - Jane Kruse

- District Raffle tickets have arrived (6 tickets for \$5 or 1 ticket for \$1). Please see Carol Haldeman to purchase tickets no later than August Meeting.
- **Carol also has the information on how to register for the district meeting.** Registrations need to be in by August 28, 2023. It appears that several club members are interested in going.

Sept 11	District Annual Meeting Lights to Remember, Flowers of Hope Host: Wyomissing GC	Double Tree by Hilton 701 Penn Street, Reading Have license plate # at registration table for free parking.	Beverly Bowman 610-698-6123
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Other Notes:

Jams and Jellies – The tree fruits are abundant this year for making made into jams and jellies. Time to cook up a batch of jam or jelly for selling at **Sch. Haven Borough Day** which is **September 30th**.

Sweet Arrow Lake Restoration Celebration

has been moved to **October 15, 2023**, to coincide with other activities going on at the lake. More information to come.

Grandma's Tips for Gardeners

We started a new column, "**Grandma's Tips for Gardener's**", and are looking for those gardening tips that may have been passed on to you or a gardening tip that you have found works for you. You are invited to share your tips for successful gardening.

- Place moth balls in your flower beds to keep the rabbits from eating your flowers. - Grandma Stump.
- To get rid of slugs, place hollowed-out orange rinds upside-down in the garden. The next morning, collect the rinds. They're usually full of slugs and snails. It's a quick, easy and safe solution.
- After picking up black walnuts or husking them, use a cut green tomato to remove the stains from your hands.
- When harvesting broccoli heads, cut the stalks at an angle to prevent the remaining stalk from filling with water and decomposing. The side shoots can then produce better broccoli.
- Keep bugs from your rose plants by planting chives around them. It looks pretty, plus you can clip some of the chives for use in salads.
- Hang a hummingbird feeder above your rose bushes to keep aphids away.
- Spring bulbs can be planted in areas that are typically shaded by deciduous trees.
- Do not over fertilize inpatients or they will only produce leaves. If this happens, just wait. In time they should start blooming again.
- Wrap strips of newspaper around the roots of cabbages before planting. This prevents cutworms from getting at the plant.
- When gathering seeds, always take them from the largest, healthiest blooms. Leave the flower on the plant until it is completely faded, and the seed head is dead. Then remove the head and place it on a paper plate to dry. Shake out the seeds into a bag and store them in a cool dry place.

- When planting carrot seeds, put the seeds in a row but do not cover with dirt. Instead, walk down the row. That presses the seeds into the soil just enough.

WATER YOUR PLANTS AT NIGHT IN THE SUMMER

- If you water your garden at the peak of the sun's heat in summer, your plants will likely become dehydrated. Our grandparents knew that the best time to water the garden during the hotter months is at night. This gives plants enough time to absorb the water before the sun rises again in the morning, while the lower humidity at night reduces the risk of disease.

ADD CRUSHED EGGSHELLS TO YOUR SOIL

- Just like banana skins, eggshells harbor a surprising quantity of nutrients, including calcium, that can benefit your garden. Grind your rinsed eggshells down finely and sprinkle the fragments onto the soil. A layer of shell is also said to help deter many pests and moderate the soil's acidity, resulting in happy and healthy crops.

HOW MUCH WATER?

- Most in-ground garden plants grow best with 1 to 2 inches of water per week. If not enough rain falls, water deeply once a week instead of lightly each day. Frequent, shallow watering only moistens the top of the soil and encourages the plant's roots to move there instead of growing deeper.

DON'T BUY SEEDS, CREATE YOUR OWN

- Did you know that you can grow a plant from a single seed? Every fruit and vegetable we eat starts life this way, and everything from an avocado pit to seeds found inside a pumpkin can be replanted. For the most part, scrape a handful of seed from the chosen vegetable, soak in water, then rinse and allow to dry for a week before storing in an airtight container.

FEED BANANA PEELS TO TOMATO AND PEPPER PLANTS

- Potassium-rich banana peels are excellent for plants like tomatoes and peppers. Simply bury them in the soil near your plants where they will release nutrients as they break down. Or make banana tea for your crops by adding banana peels to a jar and covering them with water. Let it brew for a week and serve directly on the root-soil.

DON'T DISCARD YOUR COFFEE GROUNDS

- You may recall your grandad tipping his cold coffee over the plants - and with good reason. Coffee contains beneficial nutrients, such as phosphorus, potassium, nitrogen and magnesium. Coffee grounds can also improve drainage and water retention in the soil, plus they're said to attract earthworms too. Don't layer too much coffee grounds into beds, as it could lead to mold growth.

NATIVE SPECIES OF PLANTS

- Native species of plants are often better adapted to growing in your region than plants from other places in the world. They also are better for local pollinators that evolved with them. If you want to grow plants to support pollinators, avoid newer cultivars with double flowers because all the extra petals make it harder for insects to reach the nectar and pollen.

How to Conserve Water

So, last month prior to the rains, I was thinking we were in for a drought this year. That led me to come up with a list of how you conserve water. Then the rain came and came and came. *That brought the weeds.* I divert from the topic, now back to conserving water.

Please send your water conserving list to kamorgan11@gmail.com and let's see how we can help each other.

Conserve Water:

- I conserve some water by emptying my dehumidifiers and water plants both inside and outside the home with that water.
- I use a rain barrel to collect water runoff.
- Bricks in the tank of the toilet
- _____



Grow a fall veggie garden

In midsummer, do you long for the crisp texture of homegrown lettuce? You don't have to wait until next spring to have it! Get your cool-weather crops started in late summer, and you can have a second harvest in fall.

Growing cool-weather crops in autumn is easy. Clear an area of your veggie patch of any previous crops and weeds, then gently loosen the soil and mix in balanced fertilizer to replace what your first crops used. Then plant your seeds or seedlings. Because you're planting in summer, the soil may still be a bit warm for some plants. In that case, shade the soil with a layer of mulch over the seeds, and be sure to water well.

Seven late-season crops

There are lots of options when it comes to late-season crops. Below are seven favorites; check with your local extension agency for more.

Beets Sow beets around August 1 to give roots time to get large enough (from 1 to 1 1/2 in. in diameter). If you just want greens, plant as late as September 1. Survives into the high 20's.

Broccoli Direct-sow seeds until mid-July, or transplant seedlings through August for a crop that lasts almost until Thanksgiving.

Carrots Sow seeds between mid-July and mid-August for a fall-to-winter harvest. The carrots will keep in the garden until you're ready to use them.

Leaf Lettuce Leaf lettuce seeds should be sowed in mid-to late August. Leaf lettuce is tolerant of a light frost, and won't "bolt" (go to seed), as it does in the summer.

Spinach Sow spinach seeds in mid-to late August or early September. It's a fast grower and very cold hardy - it can even withstand a hard frost.

Radishes Sow seeds August 1 – September 1. Harvest until soil freezes.

Cabbage Plant 6-8 weeks before first frost. Cold tolerant crops like cabbage tend to improve in flavor after exposure to light frosts. Survives down to 20°.

Don't forget the flowers



Vegetables aren't the only great fall crop. Autumn is also time for fantastic cut flowers. Unsure of how to put it all together?

Follow the container formula of **spike-filler-trailer**. Start with a few long-stemmed or spiky blooms for the middle or back, then fill out the arrangement with shorter, showy flowers. Finally, add a few pieces of foliage to the mix or let some blooms arc out and over the vase's edge for a trailing effect.

Garden Sweet Garden