



## *TAG TALK*

*January 2016*

### President's Message .....Dick Phillips

After several months of unusually nice (and warm) weather, the last couple of nights on HHI have been close to the freezing mark, so winter may finally be arriving. Looking around the yard, though, it's hard to think that way when I see many blooms still on the camelias, hibiscus, lantana, roses, geraniums, tibouchina, brugmansia, xiora, periwinkle, butterfly weed and the "angel's fishing rod" (*Dierama Latifolium*), which normally blooms in the spring, but is in full bloom right now. Also, the crotons, coleus and copper plant are still in full color, so like I said, it's hard to realize this is "winter".

Also very unusual in our yard in '15 was twice finding monarch butterfly caterpillars on the butterfly weed, the most recent sighting being in mid-December when the temps were around 80. We've never seen these caterpillars in our yard before, so this was pretty exciting! At that same time, we had a dozen or so monarch butterflies flying around in the backyard, rather than flying cross continent like they should have been doing!

With the upcoming TAG Flower Show (April 8, 9 and 10), I really want to encourage everyone, but particularly our newest members, to "get involved" in entering your own plants and specimens, and become a part of the various sections, activities and functions it takes to make the whole thing happen. This is where you get to know your fellow TAG members, and these "experts" will help you become an expert as well.

Finally, a huge "thank you" to Mary Ann Snyder for once again (about 7 straight years now?) heading up the activity to get all the neighborhood signs in HHP decorated for the holidays, and to the many, many TAG members who made this happen – the signs looked spectacular and your efforts are greatly appreciated by the whole plantation!

Best wishes to every TAG member and your families for a safe, healthy and prosperous 2016!!

"Little flower, but if I could understand what you are, root and all in all, I should know what God and man is." Alfred Lord Tennyson 1809-1892

*Meeting: Friday, January 15*

*Spring Lake Pavilion 9:30 am*

*The Fragrant Path*

*Sandra Educate will explore the impact of fragrance in our lives*

*Hostesses: Suzy Baldwin, Nadine Korosi, Mary Kay Hoffman, Sarah Jebo*

## *Birding.....MaryJane Major*

The annual Christmas bird count took place December 15. Here are some preliminary statistics shared by Carol Clemens.

**Field Birders:** 12 teams for a total of 48 participants who spent 30 hours and covered 26.75 miles!

**Feeder Watchers/Home birders:** 30 people who spent 41 hours counting  
Note: We had 10 field birders who also did feeder counts, but they are only counted as field birders so they are not double counted. However, their feeder time is included in this time summary.

**We had a grand total of: 78 birders who spent a total of 71 hours counting! We saw 80 species and 1850 birds!** For the curious, this beats last year's data of 67 birders, 66.25 hours, and 1579 birds. In 2014 we did see 82 species compared to this year's 80, though.

Here are some Field Birder highlights:

**Group 1:** Pine Island/Dolphin Head/Bluff: immature Bald Eagle, two red-throated loons The biggest challenge was just getting onto Pine Island because of the breach and erosion. While we did get our feet wet, it was worth it!

**Group 2:** Skull Creek area: two Baltimore Orioles, which required a Rare Bird form that was very well documented by Alan B., the team leader. Also saw both an osprey and immature Bald Eagle.

**Group 3:** Spring Lake area and the Whooping Crane Conservancy: This group always does a fine job on a rather large area. They saw a large number of Chipping Sparrows and six Black Vultures.

**Group 4:** Dolphin Head Golf Course: two American Goldfinch, and lots of crows

**Group 5:** Country Club of Hilton Head: large flock of 20 Ibis, hooded Mergansers, Pied-Billed Grebes

**Group 6:** Bear Creek Golf Course: This two man team spotted many eastern bluebirds, song sparrows, and some House Finches.

**Group 7:** POA Lagoon and Farm Plots: This dedicated group even returned late in the afternoon to count the 44 roosting Ibis in the trees along the edge of the lagoon. They also found the most Yellow rump warblers!

**Group 8:** Hickory Forest Beach/Lagoons: This group struck it rich on water birds finding 28 cormorants, 30 willets, 33 Marbled Godwits and 119 Dunlin. They took it seriously when reporting the locations of their wood stork, osprey, and eagle by providing latitude and longitude!

**Group 9:** Cypress Lagoon (by back gate) and Cypress Conservancy: Highlights included many hooded mergansers and white Ibis.

**Group 10:** Crooked Pond: This group saw a wide variety of birds including cormorants, Great Blue Heron, Belted Kingfisher, and lots of Yellow-rumped warblers.

**Group 11:** The Cypress residence: This special group is new this year. Led by Miriam W, she gathered several ladies who live in the Cypress. They spent two hours on a golf cart birding the area. Birds included Carolina Wrens, White Ibis, American crows, and two Coopers hawks.

**Group 12:** Oyster Reef Golf Course: This team found Eastern Bluebirds, lots of crows.

**Home Birder/Feeder Watchers:** We were delighted to have a young birder as a home birder this year! One 12-year old went to his Grandma's house after school to help count. It is refreshing to find youngsters interested in nature and birds! While I know he was our youngest birder, I won't ask who our oldest one is.....but the age range has to be over 70 years!

**Some home/feeder watcher highlights:** 10 red-bellied woodpeckers, lots of Carolina Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, Carolina Wrens, House Finch, Coopers Hawks, Mourning Doves, and Northern Cardinals. I was lucky enough to have the Painted Bunting (Female) show up at my feeder on count day and I was able to get a photo for documentation.

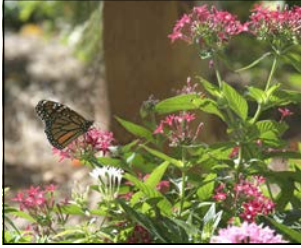
We also had two residents on Ribaut whose task was to monitor the Eagle nest there. They spotted the two eagles perched and also later saw one going into the nest. They were able to observe the two for a good half hour by the nest. We were so happy to be able to document this on count day!

An impressive number of birds overall.



## *Conservation.....Vicky McMillan*

### ***Monarch butterfly sightings***



So far we've enjoyed an unusually warm winter this year, accompanied by unexpected sightings of Monarch butterflies. I saw the occasional Monarch flitting over my (still blooming) butterfly garden from late November into early January, and I've received many similar reports from other gardeners. Dick Phillips even had a dozen or so Monarch caterpillars on his tropical milkweed plants in early December.

These observations support findings from ongoing studies at Folly Beach, SC, suggesting that Monarchs migrating along the East coast are a special subset of the much larger group of migrants east of the Rockies heading towards overwintering roosts in Mexico. Actually most, if not all, coastal migrants probably *don't* go to Mexico. Some may "sink" down into South Florida, joining resident Monarch populations there. Others may fly further southward, perhaps to the Caribbean. Still others linger in the Lowcountry, including Folly Beach and, apparently, Hilton Head Island. Many questions remain about these coastal Monarchs, including how many of these butterflies actually persist and survive here throughout the winter.

*If you observe any monarchs, please note where and when and report the information to Vicky (Vicky.mcmillan@gmail.com)*



### **Recycle, Please**



**Please save your GREEN bottles.** We are in need of green bottles for the flower show. The 16.9 oz Perrier water bottles and larger wine bottles (usually white wine or perhaps olive oil) would be ideal for horticulture specimens. You can drop your bottles off at Dede Bethke's house (30 Flagship Lane) or bring them to the meeting Friday.

## Flower Show Update

The Flower Show Boutique needs craft items. If you have a suggestion or are interested in making a craft, please contact Carol Sevelowitz at [sevelcss@gmail.com](mailto:sevelcss@gmail.com)

Have you signed up yet for a floral design entry in the upcoming flower show? For more information see Dede Bethke at our next meeting or email her at [dbethke@hargray.com](mailto:dbethke@hargray.com)



### Council news

Arbor day was held December 4, 2015 at the Shelter Cove Veterans Memorial Park sponsored by the Island Beautification Association and the HHI Council of Garden Clubs. A redbud tree, donated by the Green Thumb Nursery was planted along with a Southern Red Cedar in honor of Bety Jukofsky. The children from the HHI Elementary School for the Creative Arts who were in attendance presented participants with drawings they made representing Arbor Day.

### Public Safety Tip

A new 911 program has been launched nationwide to get information to dispatchers quicker. First responders can access critical medical information before they even arrive. To create a profile for your household visit:

**[www.smart911.com](http://www.smart911.com)**

Thanks to Sandy Stern for sharing this important information



# TAG Design Workshops

“Plant New Ideas-Let’s Blossom Together”

**Rationale:** Why are we having design workshops?  
 To educate members on floral design  
 To provide an outlet for creative expression  
 To study the Elements and Principals of Design  
 To stimulate an interest in flower arranging for the home and for entries in our Flower Shows

**3 Dates: January 22, February 26, March 24.**

## Format: Workshop class #1

To be held at the home of Olivia Ford, 6 Ribaut Dr.

At 10:00 AM

Sign-up at the general meeting or call Olivia Ford(785-7144) or Nadine Korosi (689-5156)

Cost \$10.00 for flowers and supplies (oasis)

12 students maximum

## Class #1

Answer Questions on Table Designs

Discuss the Design Principal of Balance-Symmetrical and Asymmetrical

Show examples of Designs

Make a **Creative Line Design**

## What to Bring:

Small, circular oasis holder (call if you need to buy one)

Scissors or clippers and tape measure

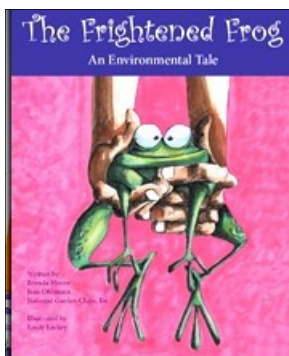
Small green plants to cover oasis

Optional: a container to hold your Design

## Junior Gardeners

Cold weather keeps us searching for interesting program for our Jr. Gardeners. One program we choose to work on was offered by the Youth Division of the South Carolina Garden Club. The contest was to write poems about the fate of frogs. We worked on poems in the month of December. With offering the contests, GCSC provided factual information about frogs along with a delightfully illustrated book "The Frightened Frog ". One whole class and the Junior Gardeners wrote poems. From them we selected 3 really great poem and sent them in. We won't hear about the winners until April. However, our poems are WINNERS in our eyes!

We are planning to share those poems with our members one day in February. The school now has a Parisian Café, designed especially for the children who are presenting some of their work. More information to follow. Nadine and Sandy



You will have to order this book from the NGC at [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org). You will find it under President's Projects. The cost is \$10.00 per copy

Did you know that all issues of TAG Talk from 2015 can now be found on The Avid Gardeners website?

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

Members only password: tag1987



## THANK YOU FOR DECORATING DECEMBER 2015

I would like to thank my committee members, Louise Gorny, Sandy Harris and Carol Wenk for all the hard work they did in helping me with this year's planning and setting up holiday sign decorations. I would also like to thank the **many** members of The Avid Gardeners for their cooperation and work assembling their decorations for their assigned neighborhood signs and removing them at the appropriate time.

A special thanks to all of those who helped with decorating the front and back gates, the small Cypress Tree and the Surrey. It was a special treat to see the Surrey all lit up and Mr. and Mrs. Klaus looking so jolly!

Without all of your efforts our Plantation would not have had that special added sparkle for the Holidays.

Mary Ann Snyder



## Becoming a Master Gardener

If you would like to:

- Learn more about plants, pests, landscaping and gardening
- Participate in an intensive, practical horticultural training program
- Share your knowledge with others in your community
- Commit to both the training and the volunteer service

The Clemson Extension Master Gardener Program could be for you! [Contact Laura Lee Rose](#) at [lrose@clemson.edu](mailto:lrose@clemson.edu) to learn more about the CEMG Program and to apply for admission.



## January's Healthy Recipe from Anna Broecker

### CASHEW CHOCOLATE MOUSSE PIE



- 1 cup raw cashews
- 1 12.3 oz package firm silken tofu
- 3/4 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips (preferably dairy free non GMO)
- 1/3 cup pure maple syrup or to taste
- 1 prepared 9 inch pie crust (Pastry Crust or Graham Cracker)

Place the cashews in a small heat-proof bowl. Pour 1 cup boiling water over them; cover and let stand for 30 to 60 minutes, then pour off the water

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F

Place the cashews in a food processor and process until they begin to hold together like butter. Add the tofu and process until completely smooth. Transfer to a small saucepan and add the chocolate chips. Cook over medium low heat, stirring often, until the chocolate chips have melted. Stir in the maple syrup.

Pour the mixture into the crust and bake for 30 minutes, or until the top of the filling feels fairly firm to touch. Allow the pie to cool completely, then refrigerate for at least an hour, preferably two, before serving.

Description: "1 9 inch pie, 6 to 8 servings"



Check out page 4 of the 2016 Winter Edition of "The Fertilizer" ---the Quarterly newsletter from the West Low Country District News. The Avid Gardeners presentation of the Life of Rosemary is prominently featured.

go to **[www.gardenclubofsc.org](http://www.gardenclubofsc.org)**

- Under Districts, Select West Low Country
- Then select "The Fertilizer" (current issue)



*Save the Date*

*Flower Show*

*April 8, 9, 10, 2016*



*Coming in February*

All About Daylilies  
The speaker will be Jan Joiner  
of Joiner Daylily Gardens in Pembroke, Georgia

February 19 9:30 am Spring Lake Pavilion

Hostesses: Mary Jane Major, Edie Ward, Carol Wenk

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Deadline for submitting articles for this newsletter is the second Friday of the month.