



### *President's Message.....Carol Sevelowitz*

Hello Avid Gardeners and welcome back to a new season of TAG Talk, your best resource for all things Avid Gardeners Club! We're hoping that this will be the start of an exciting year of speakers, trips and activities. Because of the resurgence of Covid cases nationwide and particularly in South Carolina (and especially among the unvaccinated) we will need to take some precautions, but plan to forge ahead with most of our planned programs.

Beginning on September 17, at 9:30am, our first meeting will take place at Spring Lake Pavilion and will feature Tammy Blank, a Lowcountry Master Gardener and the HHI Plant Clinic Coordinator for the Clemson Cooperative Extension. She will talk about the challenges of gardening in the Lowcountry. This would be a great time to invite your neighbors, especially new ones who are unfamiliar with the special nature of gardening here. We are requesting everyone be masked, vaccinated, and maintain social distancing. Additionally, we will not be serving refreshments at this meeting. If desired, feel free to bring your own drink.

Also planned for this meeting will be an introduction by Olivia Ford to some ideas for our projected Flower Show in April. She'll be on hand at each meeting to bring ideas and examples so everyone will be comfortable with participation by the time Spring rolls around. Other programs this year will include Fall flower arrangements, creating bird friendly backyards, short trips to Savannah and Okatie, and a special Holiday Celebration luncheon.

Mostly this year, despite the challenges, we hope to be able to "get our hands in the dirt, heads in the sun and our hearts with nature." We sincerely hope you'll be joining in the fun.

Carol Sevelowitz

## Birding.....Dick Phillips

I know it's hard to believe, but there is actually hope that the co-vid virus may be easing up a bit. That said, when we still have 4000+ infections around us and neighboring states every day, it's difficult to think the virus is going away any time soon. For us Avid Gardeners, though, the bright side to this viral problem is that most everyone has much more time every day/week/month to work in their own yards and gardens, and this is certainly an every day observation on Hilton Head Island!

A side benefit of these beautiful gardens are the number and varieties of birds we see every day around our homes. For example, we have 3 Ruby Throat Hummingbirds that have been coming to a feeder attached to the house in the back yard for the past couple of years. What makes this even more interesting is that for the second year in a row was the arrival on September 8 of a male Baltimore Oriole, which is about the same time last year a male Baltimore Oriole arrived! Since his arrival, 2 female Orioles have also arrived, and the 3 of these Orioles spend most of the day going back and forth from azalea bushes to the hummingbird feeder. This feeder has 4 ports for the hummers to insert their very long, very narrow beaks to sip the nectar in the feeder.

A year ago this month I noticed a few Baltimore Orioles coming to the feeder, but since each sipping port has a "bee guard" on it to keep the bees out, it also keeps out any of the larger birds, such as an Oriole, that might come to the feeder. I found that if I take the "bee guard" off of one of the 4 feeding ports, the Orioles will go to that port and sip the nectar through the larger port opening, and the Hummers will still come to the feeder going to the ports with the "bee guards" on them. Overall, it's a very interesting thing to see, i.e., Hummingbirds sharing their feeder with a few Baltimore Orioles. This will go on until about April when the orioles will head north for the summer.

If you haven't tried it, "birding" on Hilton Head Island is a lot of fun, and you will see not only some very interesting birds, but also interesting bird behavior such as we are experiencing with our Hummers and Orioles!!

Dick Phillips,  
Past President

## Modifications to Program Schedule in Yearbook

- ♦ **December 10** The Fundraising committee sadly is announcing that the “Holiday Home Tour” scheduled for this date is **cancelled**.  
  
However, please **Save the Date**. Plans are in the works for a replacement “program.” Details to follow
- ♦ **November 18** field trip rescheduled due to the high cost of chartering a bus for the trip to Columbia.
- ♦ **November 19, Friday** The field trip to the Governor’s Mansion has been substituted with a trip to **Wormsloe State Historic Site** in Savannah, GA. Car pooling from the Plantation House. Details to follow.

After missing two summers of **Lunch and Learn** classes due to Covid, the Low-country Master Gardener Association is very pleased to announce a fall class this year! Beginning the first Saturday in September, and continuing until the last Saturday in November, the park at the Port Royal Farmers’ Market will again host a series of classes, lectures and workshops about gardening in this unique climate.

### 2021 Lunch and Learn Schedule Noon at Heritage Park – Port Royal Farmers’ Market Under the Live Oak Tree!

September 4	Jay Weidner	Plant Now, Divide Later and other fall Chores.
September 11	Laura Lee Rose	Xeriscaping is not just Cactus.
September 18	Martha Jamison	Care and Feeding of Orchids
September 25	Victoria Bergesen	Terrarium Mini-Gardens
October 2	Kimberly McFann	Natural Pest Management
October 9	Wendy Hilty	Designing with Perennials
October 16	Dorothy Williamson	Worms, a Gardener’s Best Friend
October 23	Kathleen Grewenig	Glorious Irises
October 30	George Cannon	Camellias-A Southern Heritage Plant
November 6	Jay Wiedner	Putting Your Plant Children to Bed
November 13	Ned Rahn	Citrus for the Lowcountry
November 20	Sandra Educate	Bulbs for Beaufort
November 27	Panel	Keeping it Growing!

## PLANT IT PINK



Our Plant it Pink garden on the grounds of Hilton Head Hospital continues to flourish. The pentas, which had to be replaced in the spring, are especially beautiful as are dwarf rubella and knock-out roses.

Thanks to TAG members Louise Gorny, Jane Johnson, Joyce Prange, Sally Price, Helen Rizzo, Sandy Stern, and myself who tend to the watering and care of our Plant it Pink garden.

Sharon Jaunsem  
Plant It Pink, Chair



**COASTAL  
DISCOVERY  
MUSEUM**

Experience The  
Lowcountry Up Close

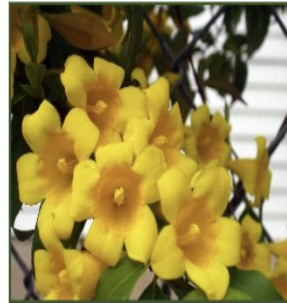
# Native Plant Sale

**Saturday, September 18 from 10 am - 1 pm**

The Coastal Discovery Museum will have a variety of native plants to cover diverse landscaping needs, from vines to blooming bushes to butterfly friendly landscaping.

Native plants are adapted to the local environment and require little or no care at all.

Native plants are also used by local wildlife and are great to attract local pollinators.



**Join us for this unique event! The sale will accept cash and checks only.**

**We anticipate a big crowd, please wear a mask.**

**SAVE THE DATES** for our annual holiday neighborhood Sign decorating!!

Wednesday, **November 17**, 2021 9am - noon  
(pick up your decorations)

Wednesday, **January 5**, 2022 9am - noon  
(return your decorations)

More info to come.





## Grousing About a Grumpy Gardener



“Crape Murder.” Hmm. I’m told it was Steve Bender, the Grumpy Gardener of Southern Living Magazine, who coined that phrase and he undoubtedly thought it was catchy and clever. Well, it was. Kind of. But overuse has made it really annoying, and it’s just wrong, wrong, wrong!

Whatever your feelings about the appearance of a murdered Crape Myrtle tree, the truth is *it does not weaken or harm the tree*. Much less murder it. The practice is actually called “Pollarding,” and that technique has been in use for centuries.

Look it up. Pollarding is usually started on young trees. This process keeps the tree in a partially juvenile state; thus they can often attain an age much greater than a ‘maiden’ tree. There exist today stands of pollards dating from the Victorian age and even much earlier.

Farmers pollarded their trees to harvest the new growth for silage for their animals, to burn for fuel, to make implements, for barns and pens, and for fences. Rather than cut down the tree and end its usefulness, they had a sustainable resource that would last for decades.

We don’t cut back our Crape Myrtles for such useful purposes. We do it because this tree flowers on new growth, and pollarding not only keeps the tree a manageable size, it encourages a fuller canopy and larger flowers. This is why the practice was started in the first place. Not just to annoy the sensibilities of elitists.

Or, sometimes because the tree just grew too big for its allotted space. Who among us hasn’t had that happen with a tree or shrub and are now committed to a lifetime of pruning? Who can cast *that* first stone?



Other than the misconception that pollarding hurts the tree, the main complaint is simply that pollarded Crape Myrtle trees don’t look natural when not in leaf. We don’t hear those same people complaining about ‘Loropetalum Murder,’ when these perfectly lovely fountain shaped and flower producing shrubs are regularly hedge-trimmed into rigid, flowerless boxes or blobs. And does pruning shrubs into animal and other weird shapes everlook natural?

Gardens, by their very definition, are *not* natural. Gardens are all man made. Well, except for Eden . . .

A noted Carolina nursery and plantsman even complained in his newsletter that while waterboarding was illegal, Crape Murderers got off scot-free. When I called him on what I thought was an inappropriate comment, he retorted that it was “an unhealthy practice that weakened the tree” and he wanted it stopped. Even professionals don’t do their homework. That same nurseryman even compared topping Crape Myrtles to beheading by terrorists. Insensitive? Inappropriate? Ya’ think?

The phrase ‘Crape Murder’ has spawned many vicious websites and blogs, calling the practice stupid, bizarre, ugly, dumb, a hideous crime, a massacre, a felony, sadomasochistic, butchering and worse. They’re talking about pruning a tree, for heaven’s sake! *Really!?* I was appalled that writers who call themselves gardeners and professionals could be so nasty and vituperative about someone else’s landscape choice. Like my fellow columnist, Will Balk, they could have simply expressed their *opinion* that it is unnecessary or unattractive (my opinion about most topiaries). And he didn’t refer to the practice as Crape Murder, either. Thank you, Will. Personally, I kind of like the weeping look of a pollarded Crape Myrtle tree in flower.

Gardening, like almost everything else, goes through phases. In the late 1990’s, Sago Palms became so popular that you saw them everywhere down here. Years later, when they got to be 10 or 15 feet wide and people couldn’t get around them to put their car in the garage, they were scratching their heads wondering what to do about them. Most settled for ‘limbing’ them up; leaving them, you guessed it, unnatural. No one accused them of Sago Slaying.

But we learn.

You don’t see much new pollarding now. I think that phase is over. Probably the main reason for the decline in pollarding is that the choice of Crape Myrtles has expanded so dramatically that we can now choose a tree that naturally fits the site rather than pollarding one which has grown too large.

But I do wish that that annoying phrase, ‘Crape Murder,’ would be erased from our lexicon. Most people mean to use it merely as a descriptive, not judgmental, phrase, without any malice intended. But it *is* pejorative and just using it makes them judgmental. The bottom line is that your garden is *your* garden, and it’s nobody’s business how you tend it.

Vincent van Gogh loved pollards. It was the subject of many of his paintings and sketches. The artist admired the beauty of pollarded trees’ solitary figures and stated that “One should draw a pollard tree as if it were a living being.”

So to the people who continue to castigate the pollarder with that cutesy epithet, I remind you: beauty is, after all, in the eye of the beholder and most importantly, *it’s not your tree!*

*Reprinted with permission, Sandra Educate, Lowcountry Weekly*

## Healthy Eating.....Anna Broecker

### NO BAKE ENERGY BITES

1 cup old-fashioned oats  
2/3 cup toasted shredded coconut (sweetened or unsweetened)  
1/2 cup creamy peanut butter  
1/2 cup ground flaxseed  
1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips (or vegan chocolate chips)  
1/3 cup honey  
1 tablespoon chia seeds (optional)  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract



### INSTRUCTIONS

Stir all ingredients together in a large mixing bowl until thoroughly combined. Cover the mixing bowl and chill in the refrigerator for 1-2 hours, or until the mixture is chilled. (This will help the mixture stick together more easily.)

Roll mixture into 1-inch balls. and can flatten if desired..

Then enjoy immediately or refrigerate in a sealed container for up to 1 week, or freeze for up to 3 months.



# CALLING ALL GARDENERS AND GARDEN CLUBS AND FARMS

It's time to work on your soil for your Fall, Winter, and Spring gardens, turf, and farms.

**Clemson University's "PLANT PROBLEM CLINIC" is now open for business.**

Hours are every Wednesday, 9:30am-Noon.

359 Hwy 278, Hilton Head Island

Location: in the Beaufort County Office Building

at the East side of Hwy 278 at the traffic signal of Hwy 278 & Beechwood Drive.

(across from the Fire Station and close to First Presbyterian Church)

The Plant Clinic is staffed with Master Gardener volunteers, graduates of Clemson University's Agriculture Department Extension Service.

Before you start your digging and planting find out what your soil needs for the beautiful plants that you picture in your imagination.

Get your soil tested, pH, nutrients, nutrient exchange ability

Test results are \$6.00 (check) if received by email, \$7.00 (check) if received by USPS.

Bring 1-2 cup dry soil samples in baggies or jars, labeled with the location of their extraction from your yard of garden.

Ask questions of the MG staff about suitability of plant materials to your site.

Ask questions about problems with existing plants.... bring samples and/or photos of their siting.

Get help researching problems and or care, Season by Season.

Bring your Mask.

Thanks to COVID it's been a lonely gardening season ..... come now and revive your natural gardening sociability. We've been lonesome.

Pass on the "OPEN" sign to your neighbors and garden clubs please.

*Tammie Blank* , Plant Clinic Coordinator



The author of this "article" will be our speaker at September's meeting



**MEMBERS CELEBRATING  
BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH**

<i>Nadine Korosi</i>	
<i>Nina McGlade</i>	<i>Sep 2</i>
<i>Peg McCann</i>	<i>Sep 5</i>
<i>Claudia Hawn</i>	<i>Sep 8</i>
<i>Nancy Renner</i>	<i>Sep 8</i>
<i>Jane Johnson</i>	<i>Sep 25</i>

### Corrections for Membership Directory:

- ⇒ Ann Clayton: 18 Timber Lane, 843-540-7707, gran-anny43x@gmail.com
- ⇒ Helen Hinds: only 1 “l” in Helen hhihelen@gmail.com
- ⇒ Pat Rapp: missing “p” phrapp@roadrunner.com
- ⇒ Rosemary Kratz: rosemaryaokratz@gmail.com
- ⇒ Olivia Ford: fordLarryolivia@hargray.com
- ⇒ Vicky McMillan: vicky.mcmillan@gmail.com
- ⇒ Nadine Korosi: nakorosi7@aol.com (Honorary member)



*Coming in October*

Margie Fox of Garden Gate Living in Bluffton  
will demonstrate Fall centerpieces

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

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**“God made rainy days so gardeners could get housework done” (unknown)**