



TAG TALK

February 2022

President's Message.....Carol Sevelowitz

Well, I'm no groundhog, but it seems to me that ole' Puxatawney Phil was right-on this year. Yesterday I lit the fireplace and spent a good part of the day burrowed under a blanket on the couch (hmmm, maybe I AM a groundhog). The cold spells we've been having have seemed to come more often and last longer than in years past, or maybe it's just me getting older?

But, as they say, "hope springs eternal" and never so much as in the garden. I've noticed that my hydrangeas have lots of buds, there's an occasional open azalea on my bushes, and even my severely freeze damaged gingers have new bright green shoots coming out of the ground. I looked up the long range forecast for our area and it looks like we're headed for a warming trend! ☺

So, I'm really looking forward to our meeting this Friday when Mike from Wild Birds Unlimited comes to tell us how to attract birds and other wild-life to our yards (although my dog Bodie and I could do without all the squirrels!) And the two pots of pansies and violas at my front door are nothing if not optimistic that Spring is right around the corner. So stuff it Phil the groundhog! I'm headed outside ☺

February Meeting
Spring Lake Pavilion

Creating a Bird Friendly Backyard

- Learn the basics of creating a songbird friendly backyard through the use of native plants, bird feeders, water sources and nesting boxes.

SAVE THE DATE

May 13, 2022
Officers' Installation Luncheon



Please note the date change. Originally scheduled for the third Friday of the month (May 20). It has been rescheduled for the second Friday of the month, May 13.

Birding.....Dick Phillips

As warmer weather approaches, multitudes of migrant birds are on track for arrival in North America. Among them are one of everyone's favorite avian gems, hummingbirds! The spring arrival, or year-round presence of hummingbirds in yards, varies across the country but current studies point out some new potential challenges to migrating hummingbirds, such as changing bloom times of nectar plants and an earlier arrival of spring on their wintering and breeding grounds.

Over most of the eastern two-thirds of North America, from central Canada southward, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird reigns supreme. Predominantly a neotropical migrant, it winters from southern Mexico to Costa Rica. Each spring, this species arrives in significant numbers along the Gulf Coast by early March, easing northward over the next couple of months until arriving in northern states by late April or early May. Migrating males usually arrive a week or so before females at any given location. However, climate change is affecting the migration of Ruby throats. As conditions warm on the wintering grounds, data indicate that they leave their winter homes earlier on their way to the Gulf Coast. It's interesting that it also appears that hummingbirds then hang around in the Gulf Coast for longer than normal, perhaps to recuperate from their trip across the Gulf of Mexico.



Migrating hummingbirds start to visit flowering plants and nectar feeders in March and usually stick around through May. To have resources ready for northward migrants in regions where hummingbirds are absent in the winter, it's best to put nectar out by early March in the Southeast, like Hilton Head Island, and by late April for those who live in the Northeast.

The Southeastern coast, from Cape Hatteras southward to Florida, and especially around the Gulf Coast, is different from the rest of the eastern United States. Here hummingbirds are likely to be present year-round, with both higher diversity and greater numbers of birds present in winter. As such, supplying nectar sources and insect-laden gardens is appropriate year-round in these regions. In coastal Texas and Louisiana, hummingbirds may visit feeders in the late winter and early spring.

It's interesting that there is a fairly large number of different kinds of hummingbirds, which is one of the things that makes them so interesting. The other is their sheer size, which is about the length of a finger. Their capability to stay fixed in one place in the air by simply flapping their wings at a tremendous speeds makes the hummer one of the most interesting birds on earth!!

Horticulture.....Ann Clayton

I suspect we will all be itching to get out in the garden, get our hands in the soil and connect with Nature. However, when cleaning up the beds don't be too anxious to remove all your mulch you have put around your tender plants for protection. It's very tempting on a 60 + degree day to do just that. Remember the last official frost date for this area is around MARCH 15th, so be careful not to expose delicate perennials to the elements, Night-time temperature can dip quite low and always bear in mind the wind chill factor if you live near the water. Instead use your energy planting new seeds. Nasturtiums, calendulas (pot marigolds) to name a few, work very well in full sun or partially shaded locations. They will germinate even if the soil is cool, plants will be larger, by giving them a head start.

I'm afraid the cold nights haven't been too kind to us this Winter. I have numerous Ty Plants. This is the first year I'm looking at very sad droopy leaves, instead of their usual bright pink and dark mauve leaves !! I have read I shouldn't cut them back till March. I must admit I did cut a few of the stalks down and found they were green inside and still looked healthy , so I have put them into fresh potting soil, and am hopeful for new roots to propagate.

Wait till March to begin removing your deceased and injured limbs from trees and bushes. A little tidying every day whilst it is cool, is fun and saves you work in the heat of the sun. Don't forget to gather fallen camellia blooms and destroy them to help prevent camellia petal blight, a disease that causes the petal to turn brown.

SAGO PALM (Cycads revolute) If your palm is showing brown dead leaflets in the top centre of the plant, it is suffering from manganese deficiency. Add a 1/4 to 1/2 a cup of manganese sulfate to your general fertilizer application. The damaged leaves will not improve, but the next growth will be healthy.

Tip to stop the squirrels from chewing your plants. Squirrels love to dig in flower pots burying nuts. Sprinkle with black pepper on the dirt around the plants. I've heard the little sweethearts won't come back !! Sorry squirrels. We really do like you !!!!

HAPPY GARDENING !!!!!

Healthy Eating.....Anna Broecker

FENNEL ROASTED FALL VEGETABLES WITH PEARL COUSCOUS

- 2 parsnips
- 3 carrots
- 1 bulb of fennel
- 1 small red onion
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil (I use only 2 tbsp)
- 1 teaspoon white pepper, or less (I use 1/2 tsp)



Preheat oven to 300

Cut parsnips, carrots, fennel and onion into bite size pieces

Transfer all the vegetables to a large bowl. Toss with olive oil, white pepper, and garlic cloves

Arrange the vegetables on a large, rimmed baking sheet and cover with foil. Bake for 30 minutes

Remove the foil, stir the vegetables, then return to the oven.

Turn the heat to 450 and let the vegetables cook for another 10 minutes, or until tender and browned.

Add 1 cup pearl couscous to 1 1/4 cup boiling water, bring back to a boil, cover and simmer for 8 minutes. Drain.

SAUCE: 4 tbsp honey, 1 tbsp olive oil, 2 tbsp cider vinegar, and 1 tsp salt

Whisk together ingredients. Add roasted vegetables to the couscous and drizzle honey mixture over. Serve warm

THE BEAUFORT COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS
presents



*Singing
in the
Rain*

An NGC
Standard Flower Show

Wednesday, April 20, 2022
9 am to 5 pm
Tabby Place
913 Port Republic St.
Beaufort, SC 29902

*Free and open
to the public*



**MEMBERS CELEBRATING
BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH**

Olivia Ford Feb 13

Deborah Meeks Feb 12

Helen Rizzo Feb 8

Pam Schofield Feb 8

Carol Sevelowitz Feb 25

Happy belated January birthdays:

Fran Hughes Jan 2

Mary Ann Snyder Jan 10

If you would like to have your birthdate listed in TAG Talk, please send us the date.

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

<p>Christine Thumm thumms@aol.com 843-415-6809</p>		<p>Carol Sevelowitz sevelcss@gmail.com 843-715-2248</p>
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A perennial is a plant that would have come back year after year if it had survived.”