

# *The Perennial*



2014-2015

Issue 7: March

Website:  
[ArlingtonGarden.org](http://ArlingtonGarden.org)

With warmer and lengthening days, the snow has begun a gradual melt and I can see the first tiny shoots of my tulips and daffodils, the red maple across from my house has burst forth with red buds and I can smell the good earth. I'm more than ready to start working in the garden but will need patience until the soil is ready and I can see what's survived not only all the snow but all the little rodents whose trails are emerging as the snow melts.

## Upcoming Programs:

Evening Meeting – March 26 – 7:00pm  
Masonic Temple

Robbins Library Gardening Resources – Andrea Nicolay, Assistant Director, Robbins Library  
While still waiting for New England's spring to burst forth, take a break to discover all the gardening gems just inside our very own first-class resource: The Robbins Library!



Daytime meeting – April 8 - 10:30  
St. John's Episcopal Church

Create Naturalistic and Elegant  
Arrangements with Spring Flowers –

Barbara Popolow, Owner, Derby Farm  
Flowers and Gardens, Arlington

Join us for a fun morning as Barbara wows us with amazing arrangements that will help us get in the mood for spring.

## *Spotlight on Garden Club Activities*

Each month we will be highlighting one of the civic development sites or programs that the club sponsors. This month we are highlighting *The Spy Pond Rain Garden*, currently managed by Emily Snyder.

Five years ago the Club applied for and received a grant to develop a rain garden in town. So what's a rain garden? It's a planted depression that allows rainwater runoff from impervious urban areas, like roofs, driveways, parking lots and compacted lawn areas, the opportunity to be absorbed. This reduces rain runoff by allowing storm water to soak into the ground, as opposed to flowing into storm drains and/or causing erosion, water pollution and flooding. Rain gardens should be designed for specific soils and climates; they can cut down on the amount of pollution reaching water bodies such as streams and ponds by up to 30%.

Native plants are recommended for rain gardens because they are more tolerant of local climate, soil, and water conditions; have deep and variable root systems for enhanced water infiltration and drought tolerance; habitat value and diversity for local ecological communities; and overall sustainability once established. The plants — a selection of drought-tolerant wetland edge vegetation, such as wildflowers, sedges, ferns, shrubs and small trees — soak up excess water flowing into the rain garden. Water filters through soil layers before entering the groundwater system. Plant root systems enhance infiltration, maintain or even augment soil permeability, provide moisture redistribution, and sustain diverse microbial populations involved in biofiltration. Also, through the process of transpiration, rain garden plants return water vapor to the atmosphere.



In the fall of 2011, after receiving a small development grant, the club was instrumental in planning and planting the Spy Pond Rain Garden, which resides next to the park's playground. Designed by club members Sally Naish and Corinna Vanderspeck, the rain garden adds color and structure to a former patch of lawn and is one of the public gardens the club manages.

I took over garden-keeping from Sally Naish and am now seeking someone to take over from me. I still want to be involved – I love the space!- but am ready to hand over the trowel to another member now. Okay, so this is what the garden looked like a few weeks ago...



But, have no fear, it *will* flourish once again with our continued stewardship.

Please contact me if you - or a couple of you - would consider taking over as Rain Garden-keeper/s.  
Thank you! Emily Snyder  
<ells.ells@verizon.net>

### Articles Welcomed:

If you have photos or articles you'd like to share about Garden Club events or programs that would interest our members, please forward them to Jan Ford at [ford.jd@gmail.com](mailto:ford.jd@gmail.com)

### Invasives Corner:

This month's invasive species is Goutweed, also known as Bishop's Weed or Snow on the Mountain; scientific name: *Aegopodium podagraria*. Originally from Eurasia, it was introduced as a shade-loving ground cover by early European settlers. It was well established by the mid 1800's. It is extremely aggressive and spreads by underground rhizomes, forming dense, impenetrable patches that displace native plants and greatly reduce ground layer diversity. It also inhibits the establishment of native tree seedlings. It easily escapes from cultivated gardens. Pulling the plant often leaves small pieces of rhizomes, each of which forms a new plant. If you do pull the plants out, be sure to place them in trash bags not compost where they can form new plants. Frequent mowing or cutting to prevent flowering and photosynthesizing, followed by covering may deprive the plant of the energy necessary to grow. Herbicides are a less desirable option. Aggressive monitoring is necessary to prevent its return. Some possible native



substitutes for shady areas are Canadian Wild Ginger (*Asarum canadense*) or Bunchberry (*Cornus canadense*).



Bishop's Weed or  
Goutweed in flower



Snow-on-the -Mountain or  
Variegated Goutweed



Bunchberry



Canadian Wild Ginger

### Open Board Positions:

A nominating committee is being formed and is seeking members. There will be several Board positions open this year including Recording Secretary, Civic Development Chair and Garden Therapy Chair. Please consider serving the club in one of these capacities or in others that will be opening up.

### Gardening Tips from UMass Extension

As tempting as it may be in the next few weeks, avoid working soggy soils which have not drained from frost and rainfall. Cultivating or turning over soggy garden soil can destroy structure and result in clodding and poor aeration. Take a handful of soil and squeeze it. If it crumbles easily with a little pressure, it is ready to work.

Soil testing is an excellent way to determine the correct amounts and types of fertilizer to use in our gardens. For information on testing visit the website at <http://soiltest.umass.edu>

### *Programs of Interest:*

#### Arlington Community Education

A workshop on the basics of pruning woody plants will be held on Saturday, 4/18 from 9:00 to 11:00 am. Several members have expressed an interest in learning more about this topic and this is a great opportunity. There are several other offerings including organic gardening, floral design and composting, among others. For more information and to register contact them at the following link: <http://arlingtoncommunityed.org>

Historic Gardens Conference & Garden Tour. Preservation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century on Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup>. Five speakers are included in the registration fee of \$25.00 and an optional lunch is available. More information is available in the winter Mayflower (the newsletter of the GFCM, available at their website) or via the following link:

<http://gfcml.org/Meetings/HistoricPreservationConferenceTour.as>

Rot and Roll: The Art and Science of Composting – a compost-centric event taking place at the DPW parking lot on Thursday, May 7 from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. Charlotte Milan, recycling coordinator for the DPW is looking for volunteers to help out at this event.



*“No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn.”*  
Hal Borland, author and journalist