



ARLINGTON GARDEN CLUB

The Perennial

January 2026

Issue 5

ArlingtonGarden.org

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President's Message

Greetings my fellow gardeners,

Happy New Year! Lately I've been thinking of how I came to join the Arlington Garden Club. I'd read a small notice in the (dearly departed) Arlington Advocate about an evening meeting of the Club, and since I worked full-time and longed to learn more about gardening, I was happy to see that there was an evening meeting. (For at least nine years the Club ran both daytime and evening meetings.) But, I was scared. Scared that I'd be the only total novice in the middle of experience, knowledgeable gardeners. Nevertheless, I worked up my courage and turned up for the meeting in what is now Arlington's Community Center.

Probably eight people were sitting around a table, and the topic that night was exchanging ideas about members' garden designs. Graph paper and pencils were available, and the meeting was a pleasant exchange of ideas. Whew! It wasn't so scary after all. I could hold my own by just looking at and listening to others talk amicably about their garden ideas. (I had none of my own.) I started becoming a regular attendee at evening meetings. At a Grow Native Cambridge (now Grow Native Mass.) meeting a few months later, I ran into Evening Program Coordinator Sally Naish, who asked in passing if I'd be interested in taking over her role for the evening meetings. I said, yes. Little did I know that "yes" meant I would become a Board member! And here I still am.



What was your introduction to the Arlington Garden Club?
Would you be willing to write something for The Perennial?
I look forward to hearing others' stories.

Emily Snyder, President

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2026

The Roots of Gumption: A small Biz from the Ground Up

Ingrid Gallagher



Ingrid has had a lifetime curiosity about plants, especially their uses as food and medicine. Inspired by the old-time drug store soda fountains which served health-promoting tonics, she founded Gumption Elixir in 2021. She brews time-honored roots and herbs into delicious, distinctively modern beverage syrups. There are currently eight original flavors. Join us for this unique story and a chance to sample her products.

The meeting begins at 10:30 am at St. John's Church, corner of Pleasant St. and Lombard Rd., Arlington. *Reminder: This month is a "brown bag" lunch meeting. Bring your own. Coffee, teas and desserts will be provided.*

Upcoming February Meeting

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026

Looking Ahead to Spring Cleanup for Healthy Soil and Tips for Happy Hydrangeas

Jessica Zander

Jessica is a gardener, coach and consultant based in the Boston area. In 2022 she launched her business "[You Can Do IT Gardening](#)" which helps people feel more confident tackling their own gardens. Jessica is known for her no-nonsense encouraging style. She has over 900,000 followers on TikTok, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube.



REPORTS FROM THE COMMITTEES

Environment

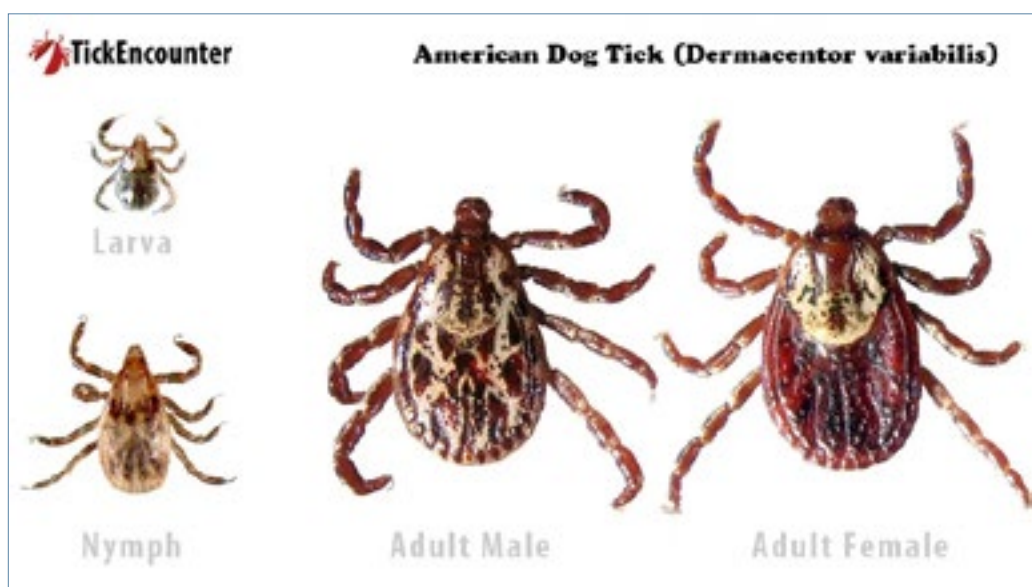
Lolly Bennett, chair

In December's AGC Board meeting, the Board voted to approve a pilot program proposed by Environment committee members Myra Schwartz, Pam Carpenter and Karen MacKinnon to change the way the AGC awards money to the seven elementary schools. In addition to administrative changes, the change would include middle and high schools and increase the total award amount from \$700 to \$1,500. More details to come at our next meeting.



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Maria Bartlett, chair of Environmental Awareness for the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts wrote an article called **YIKES: Mosquitos and Ticks!** While it's not quite spring, this is a good opportunity to refresh what you can do to reduce the hazards of mosquitoes and ticks.



From TickEncounter, University of Rhode Island

MORE EVENTS OF INTEREST

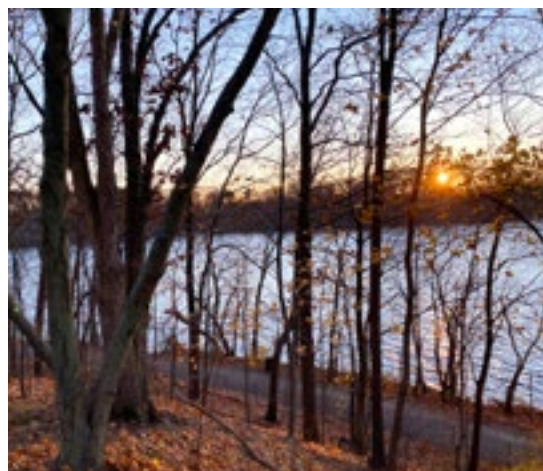
THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 10:15-11:30 AM

Fresh Pond Nature Walk

Cambridge Public Library Nature Club

Collins Branch Library, 64 Aberdeen Ave, Cambridge

Fresh Pond Reservation has a new ranger, Amanda Garms. Like earlier rangers, she'll be leading monthly walks to observe changes in the environment. The walk is not on a paved path; expect some uneven terrain, hills, and roots, so consider yak-traks or hiking poles (yes, in Cambridge!). Meet at the library courtyard; dress for the weather. [Register here](#). (If you miss this one, check the link for the next one.)



TUESDAY JANUARY 27, 7-8:15 PM, ONLINE

What You Choose to Plant Can Help Massachusetts' Rare Bees . . . Or Not

Grow Native Massachusetts



Sam Droege explains why native bees are so picky about which flowers they visit: many of the least common bees are specialists and to help conserve them we can simply plant more of their pollen bearing plants. He is a wildlife biologist at the USGS Bee Lab in Laurel MD, and involved in lots of critter science. This is the monthly presentation of the Massachusetts Pollinator Network. Free. [Register here](#)

A common eastern bumble bee (*Bombus impatiens*) hovers near American senna (*Senna hebecarpa*) at the USGS Native Bee Monitoring and Inventory Lab, Laurel, Maryland. Photo: Chris Linder

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 12-1:30

Fearless, Sleepless, Deathless

Hunnewell Lecture Hall, Arnold Arboretum

Maria Pinto leads mushroom hunts at the Arboretum. She'll talk about her new book, *Fearless, Sleepless, Deathless: What Fungi Taught Me about Nourishment, Poison, Ecology, Hidden Histories, Zombies, and Black Survival*. She weaves together memoir, mycology, and cultural history to illuminate the deep and surprising ways fungi connect with human life. To her, they are not just biological wonders but tools of survival, subversion, and spiritual sustenance—especially for those living at the margins. Sounds interesting and a bit creepy? Free. [Register here](#)

MORE EVENTS OF INTEREST

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 7-8.30, PM ONLINE

From Wasteland to Wonder: Easy Ways We Can Help Heal Earth in the Suburban Landscape

Grow Native Massachusetts

We know this: many current landscape management practices are creating an ecological wasteland. But Basil Camu suggests many ways we can work with natural systems instead of against them: plant saplings, save mature trees, create pocket forests, and replace our lawns with Piedmont prairies. His Project Pando is a model for community-based efforts that gather native seeds, raise them into trees, and give them away for free.

Free. [register here](#). This is the first in the 2026 Grow Native Massachusetts series of Evenings with Experts. Three more to come, on March 11, April 16, May 20, online and in person.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1-2 PM, ONLINE

Building a Pollinator Haven at Home: Tips & Lessons Learned

The Xerces Society



Two staff members at the Xerces Society, Jennifer Hopwood and Rachel Dunham, describe the many small steps we can take to build our own pollinator havens, from sourcing the right plants to creating habitat for overwintering. And, usefully, they also describe the lessons they've learned

Free, [register here](#)

Event listings courtesy of Helen Snively, member, Somerville Garden Club

For the cat lovers among us.



Courtesy of Agnes Parise

