

Conservation Watch

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What's Inside This Issue

<i>Topics:</i>	<i>Page:</i>
A Tribute to Lady Bird	1
Are You Going Green Yet?	2
Are Our Children At Risk?	3
“Hotter Times Ahead” – New Jersey Climate Change Conference	4
Environmental Scholars Available for Club Programs	5
Is Your Mailbox a Junk Mail Graveyard?	5
In Memoriam – Marjorie S. Arundel	6
What's Hot – Book Reviews	7

A Tribute to Lady Bird

Claudia Alta Taylor (Lady Bird) Johnson passed away recently at the age of 94. Besides being First Lady during her husband's Presidency, she was perhaps best known as an ardent conservationist. While living in the White House she enlisted the aid of friends to plant thousands of tulips and daffodils, many of which still delight Capital visitors. The Highway Beautification Act of 1965 was the result of a hard-fought national campaign for beautifying our highway system. She was the force behind the LBJ Memorial Grove on the Potomac in Washington and many hiking and biking trails in Texas, most notably the trail in central Austin surrounding the newly-named Lady Bird Lake. She was a member of the National Park Service's Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments. Lady Bird also established the Texas Highway Beautification Awards and presented her own personal checks to the winners for 20 years. She was the co-author, with horticulturalist Carlton Lees, of the beautiful book Wildflowers Across America, which is still available. In 1999 she was presented with the Native Plant Conservation Initiative Lifetime Achievement Award.

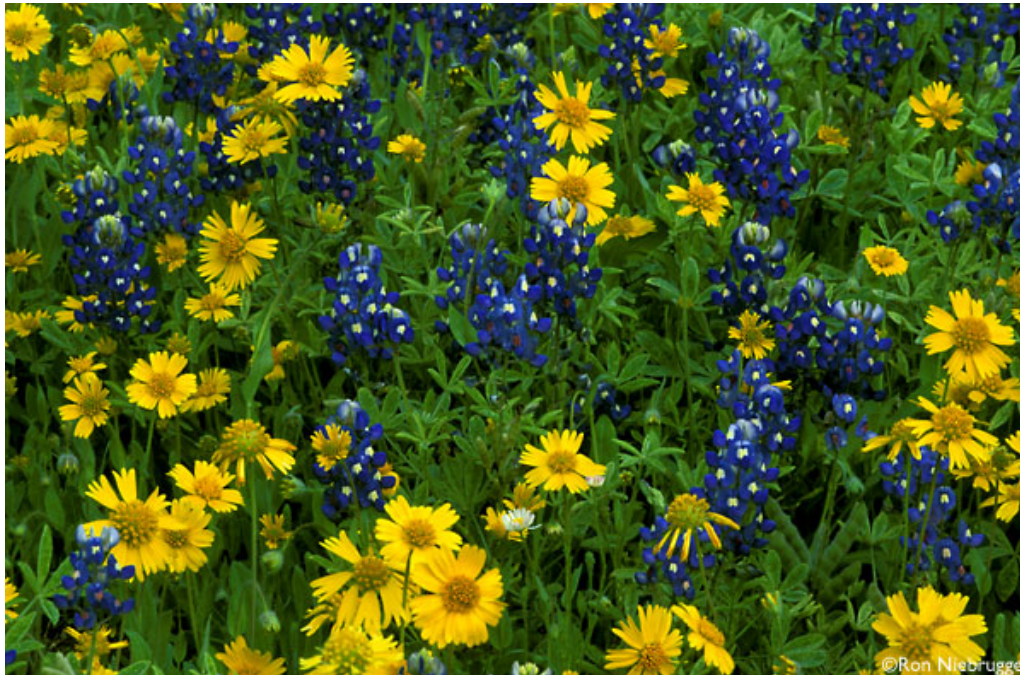


Former First Lady Lady Bird Johnson plants a cherry tree at the Tidal Basin in our capital during Cherry Blossom Festival in April, '65.
(LBJ Library photo)

A fervent believer in the power of native plants and natural landscapes to create local identity, Lady Bird Johnson was far ahead of her time, espousing a new concept that has since gained widespread acceptance. Her crowning achievement in the field of conservation was the National Wildflower Research Center founded in 1982 on her 70th birthday. This is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to the preservation and re-establishment of native plants in natural and planned landscapes. Lady bird donated land and money to establish the Center. In 1997 the Center was renamed the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in honor of her 85th birthday. The type of work that the Center does includes land restoration, fire ecology, native green roofs, seed banks, removal of invasive plants, sustainable sites and conservation development with local flora and fauna. As Mrs. Johnson said herself at the time of the founding of the Center, "I'm optimistic that the world of native plants will not only survive, but will thrive for environmental and economic reasons, and for the reasons of the heart. Beauty in nature nourishes us, and brings joy to the human spirit; it also is one of the deep needs of people everywhere."
[For more information, go to: www.wildflower.org.]

Claire Caudill
GCA Conservation Chair

Elva Busch
Santa Fe Garden Club (Zone XII)



Texas Bluebonnets and Coreopsis

Are You Going Green Yet?

Everyone is going green and there are some wonderful websites with interesting and helpful information. Here are two of them worth checking out:

- Biodegradablestore.com
Check this one for a complete line of eco-friendly products including plates, bowls

And food containers, even Biobag Dog Waste bags! The items are made from a variety of corn products, sugar cane, and recycled paper. Many of these products are compostable.

- Climatecounts.org
This site keeps a scorecard on a large list of well known businesses and their impact on global warming. The scorecard has ratings to help consumers support those companies that are making an effort to reduce their impact on climate change. For example, Nike, Starbucks and Microsoft get top ratings but Apple, Amazon.com and Burger King are at the bottom. The list is easily downloadable and fits in a wallet.

*Kathy Gillespie
Pasadena Garden Club (Zone XII)
GCA Conservation Committee
Vice-Chair, Forests/Redwoods*

Are Our Children At Risk?

New York Garden Club Addresses Environmental Threats to Children's Health



Working with Grassroots, a non-profit organization that strives to bridge the gap between scientific research and the public's knowledge of their environment, the North Country Garden Club of Long Island, New York produced a pamphlet showing the link between common environmental exposures and our children's health.

Because of children's play habits and hand-to-mouth behavior, they can be exposed to dangerous toxins both inside and outside the home. Relative to their weight, children breathe more air, drink more water and eat more food than adults, thus increasing their vulnerability. Immature organs make it more difficult to detoxify poisons. Their pamphlet not only points out these hazards, but makes recommendations on how to change one's habits.

Besides sharing the pamphlet with their members and GCA, the garden club has launched a communication campaign to educate the public including schools, libraries, children's organizations, elected officials, pediatricians, and family magazines.

To receive a free on-line copy of the entire pamphlet, contact Patsy Randolph by e-mail at: prandolph@rauchfoundation.org. Wonderful educational tools such as this pamphlet are great outreach projects for our communities.

*Carol Large
Conservation Co-Chair
North Country Garden Club of Long Island
(Zone III)*

*Patsy Randolph
Zone III Conservation/NAL Rep. 05-07
Conservation Co-Chair, NCGC of LI*

“Hotter Times Ahead” – New Jersey Climate Change Conference

The twelve New Jersey (Zone IV) Garden Club of America clubs have been working this past year on a program called “**Hotter Times Ahead.**” In partnership with Environmental Defense and sponsored by the Princeton Environmental Institute, the clubs have scheduled the conference for **November 1, 2007** at Princeton University.

The purpose of the conference is to provide current information on the science of global warming, including existing, new, and emerging technologies and solutions to stabilize mounting greenhouse gas emissions. The conference will focus on the impact of climate change on New Jersey with particular reference to the roles of state and local governments, businesses, communities and individuals to achieve a sustainable environment.

Speaking at the conference will be Dr. Stephen Pacala, Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Princeton University and Director of the Princeton Environmental Institute. His area of interest is forests and the global carbon cycle. Following the afternoon meeting there will be a dinner at which attendees will hear Keynote Speaker Dr. Thomas Lovejoy, President of the H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics and the Environment. He is the founder of the public television series “Nature” and has written five books on environmental issues. Dr. Lovejoy will present a global view of climate change and outline what everyone should do to reverse the present trend.



Dr. Stephen Pacala



Dr. Thomas Lovejoy

All of the zone clubs are sponsors and have committed volunteers to help with the conference. The New Jersey Committee of GCA has approved a grant to support the Conference. Led by Chairman Penny Thomas, volunteers have busily designed, contacted, planned, mapped and addressed the details of presenting a major conference.

For more information or an invitation, contact Sherry Cutting at 201-384-0204. The charge for the afternoon conference is \$35. There is ample room, but attendees must register. Space at the evening reception and dinner (\$85 per person) is limited. Reservations will be filled in the order that checks are received. Register and come to this exciting conference!

Penny Thomas
NAL Vice-Chair, Climate Change

Linda Seelbach
Conservation/NAL Zone IV Representative

Maureen Ogden
NAL Committee, Vice-Chair for Energy Sources

Environmental Scholars Available for Club Programs

Those who participated in the selection process of the 2007 Summer Environmental Studies Scholarship winners learned how the GCA Scholarship Committee and the GCA Conservation Committee relate as well as how GCA supports conservation initiatives in the field. A sampling of research topics from the winners of the Summer Environmental Scholarships includes permaculture in the Pacific Northwest; a vertebrate monitoring plan for the Hudson Valley; national park resource management in the State of Washington; protecting endangered species in New Jersey's park systems; historical investigation of the Appalachian Trail; and habitat loss of the cutthroat trout on the Colorado River.

The scholarship winners would make good conservation speakers for club programs and clubs could benefit from learning how our scholarship recipients are helping conserve and restore the environment. For example, Kevi Mace, the winner of the 2007 GCA Summer Scholarship in Field Botany, funded by the Piscataqua Garden Club of Maine, will be the speaker for the Middletown, CT Garden Club in September of this year. Kevi participated in a field botany research project at the Connecticut 2007 BioBlitz. She will offer a first-hand look at findings regarding endangered plants and invasive species in central Connecticut.

If you are interested in booking one of the scholarship recipients, it is easy to contact the scholarship zone representative for phone numbers and e-mail addresses. GCA Scholarship winners live and work all over the United States. Check the June-July *GCA Bulletin* to see if one of them is doing research near your club. He or she might be available to present a conservation program.

Laney Bank
Vice-Chairman, GCA Summer Environmental Studies Scholarship
Scholarship Committee

Is Your Mailbox a Junk Mail Graveyard?

Did you know that the average American gets 1 ½ personal letters each week and 10.8 pieces of junk mail during that same time period? Our mailboxes are filled with unwanted mail which we sort through when we're looking for those personal letters, invitations, and our tax refunds. Junk mail uses up valuable natural resources such as trees, water, and energy. How much waste is there? Every American receives about 560 pieces of junk mail each year. Annually, 100 million trees are used to make junk mail. Americans waste about 8 hours yearly dealing with junk mail.

Point, click and put to rest credit card offers and catalog clutter once and for all. Here are some ways to reduce your junk mail.

DirectMail.com – free and quick way to get your name off commercial mailing lists.

Go to “National Do Not Mail List.”

OptOutPrescreen.com – opt out of pre-approved credit cards and insurance offers.

(You can also call 1-888-5-OPTOUT.)

[Native Forest Network’s Guide](#) – 5 easy steps to stop junk mail.

And don’t forget to put all that junk mail in your recycling bin!

[Source: idealbite.com]

Jennifer Fain

Zone XII Conservation/NAL Representative

In Memoriam

MARJORIE S. ARUNDEL

International Conservation Leader

Marjorie Sale Arundel, 104, an internationally renowned conservation leader and horticulturist, died peacefully in her sleep on December 18, 2006, at her home near Warrenton, Virginia. Her environmental crusades ranged from saving tropical rain forests to protecting the natural beauty of the Virginia countryside. A noted gardener, her work with the World Wildlife Fund and The Garden Club of America resulted in widespread cooperation among nations to stem trade practices that threaten native tulips and other flowers dug from the wild. In March of 2000, Prince Bernhard of The Netherlands presented her with The Order of the Golden Ark, one of the highest international conservation awards, for her “inspirational, catalytic work for nature conservation, both nationally and internationally.”

In the last half of the 20th century Mrs. Arundel took on tough new American environmental issues, such as energy policy, pesticide abuse and the protection of forests. “Mrs. Arundel has been instrumental in preserving and enhancing the beauty of the Virginia countryside,” said U.S. Senator John Warner (R-VA).

Kathryn Fuller, President of the World Wildlife Fund, called Mrs. Arundel “an inspiration to all of us who have been fortunate enough to work with her.” She noted that Mrs. Arundel was instrumental in getting the Dutch bulb industry to adopt an unprecedented bulb-labeling agreement and in encouraging a pilot project in cultivation (rather than digging) of bulbs in Turkish villages.

Mrs. Arundel’s paintings and drawings reflect an exceptional artistic talent which was also evident in the gardens she designed and built at her family’s home, Wildcat Mountain Farm, where she lived for more than 50 years. Each detail of her medieval herb garden, Bible garden, and an outstanding collection of old roses was guided by



careful research. Her library contained a rare collection of books about ancient herbals and other gardening subjects. In the 1960's, she and her husband, Russell M. Arundel, donated much of their land to The Nature Conservancy, which preserves it today as a natural area.

Mrs. Arundel received wide-ranging national and international awards for her achievements, including the prestigious 1996 Garden Club of America Medal of Honor for outstanding contribution to horticulture. Other awards include the Garden Club of Virginia's deLacy Gray Memorial Award for Conservation (1991); the World Wildlife Fund Award of Honor; the Garden Club of America Achievement Medal (1985); the 1995 Stewardship of the Land Award from the Virginia Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects; and the American Horticultural Society Award for Communicator of the Year (1991). In her 1996 award acceptance talk to the Garden Club of America, she said, "We cannot with impunity take for granted this lovely, watered, temperate, pristine earth and its life forms . . . as we revolve around the sun in the 200-degree below zero void of space, safely clasped so far in this mantle of life-giving atmosphere. What an exciting ride!"

Mrs. Arundel leaves two children: her son, Virginia newspaper publisher Arthur Arundel of *The Plains*; and a daughter, Jocelyn A. Sladen of Warrenton; along with eight grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. Jocelyn is carrying on her mother's torch in conservation quite nobly. She was presented the deLacy Gray Memorial Medal for Conservation this past spring at the Garden Club of Virginia's annual meeting.

*Ellen Soyars
Warrenton Garden Club (Zone VII)
Zone VII Conservation Rep. 05-07*

What's Hot

Here are some additions for your bedside reading table.



Over the Mountains: An Aerial View of Geology
by Michael Collier. Published by Mikaya Press.

Collier uses aerial photography and his geologic background to focus on the beauty and geological history of America's mountain ranges. The images in this book, taken from his 52 year old Cessna 180, capture the power and majesty of the Earth. This stunning publication contains large format color photographs of the major mountain ranges in the US, illuminating the geological processes that created them. It includes concise text, diagrams and captions to explain to the reader the geologic story behind the photos.

Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Garbage by Heather Rogers.
Published by Published New Press.

This book is part expose of the history of how we deal with trash and part social commentary about garbage. The author traces the connection between modern industrial production, our consumer culture, and America's disposable lifestyle. [This is also a 2002 documentary film

of the same name.]

Here are some interesting facts revealed in this book.

- The U.S. is the planet's number one producer of trash.
- The average American discards about 7 pounds of trash daily (that's over 2550 pounds a year!).
- The U.S. has 5% of the world's population and we consume 30% of the planet's resources and churn out 30% of the world's waste.
- About 80% of U.S. products are used once and then thrown away.
- And, shockingly, 95% of all plastic, 2/3 of glass containers, and 50% of aluminum beverage cans never get recycled. They are burned or buried.



Marian Hill

The Gardener's Guide to Global Warming: Challenges and Solutions
produced by the National Wildlife Federation.

THIS HANDBOOK IS AVAILABLE FREE ON THE NWF WEBSITE.

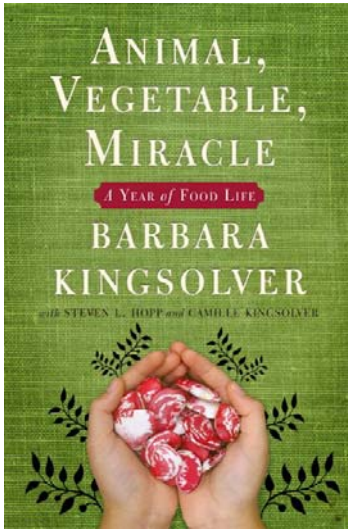
<http://www.nwf.org/gardenersguide/>

This beautiful 36 page pamphlet is available to each of us. It discusses the impacts of global warming and what we can do in our homes and backyards to lessen the impact and combat the threat of global warming. The handbook is beautifully illustrated and has many informative charts. It includes a foreword by GCA's own Marian Hill, former Conservation Chair and current member of the Executive Committee.

Here is a segment of the forward:



"There is a saying that the flapping of a single butterfly's wings can be felt around the world. It is also true that the cessation of that flutter is felt. . . . It is incumbent upon each of us to find ways to be involved in improving the balance of life on earth. The science of climate warming is clear; we must act now, and we also must be prepared for a sustained, intense effort over many future decades. And finally, we must embark on this journey hopeful for success, not fearful of failure."
Marian Hill



Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life
by Barbara Kingsolver. Published by HarperCollins.

The bestselling author goes local, moving her family to a farm and producing most of her own food. This book will open your eyes to the truth that you are what you eat. It also makes a case for putting the kitchen back at the center of family life and local farming at the center of the American diet. Here's an excerpt from the book: "As the U.S. population made an unprecedented mad dash for the Sun Belt, one carload of us paddled against the tide, heading for the Promised Land where water falls from the sky and green stuff grows all around. We were about to begin the adventure of realigning our lives with our food chain. Naturally, our first stop was to buy junk food and fossil fuel."

Correction

In the Spring, 2007 issue in the tribute to Marion Thompson Fuller Brown, the name of one of the founders of Scenic America was incorrectly listed. Instead of Barbara Sanderson, it should have included **Barbara Sandford** of the Roadside Council of New Jersey. Barbara is a Sustaining Member of the Plainfield Garden Club (Zone IV). The Barbara Sandford Conservation Award given by the Plainfield club was established in her honor and she is twice a recipient of this award.

Conservation Watch

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Conservation Watch, a publication of The Garden Club of America, is produced by the GCA Conservation Committee. We hope you like the new format. Readers' ideas, contributions, and suggestions are needed and welcome. Letters to the Editor may be e-mailed, faxed, or mailed to the Editor and will be published as space permits.

Elva Busch, Editor