



“ Connect with Nature - Connect with Others ”

KEY DATES

Meetings are held the Third Thursday of the Month (Mar-Dec) at the Gibson Island Club

May 21

Field Trip to Willow Oak Flower and Herb Farm, Severn MD
See page 3



June 18

Bee talk by our beekeeper Kevin Vasquez



Dear Garden Club members,

We have a great start to 2026 with a terrific turn-out for our Yankee Swap and our Turtle talk this week by Jeff Popp. Your enthusiasm for all gardening topics including environmental issues, flower shows, daffodils, bees, birds and native plants is contagious! Your willingness to help and to show up for our workdays and our speakers is a tribute to the commitment and dedication you have for Gibson Island Garden Club. Thank you!

Looking ahead we have some great programs in the coming months -in May we visit Willow Oak Farm and Nursery and in June we have a field trip to the beehives for a talk by our beekeeper.

Please save the date for our Centennial luncheon on July 23! As a Garden Club we have a wonderful history to celebrate! If you would like to help with the history, the flowers, and the organization of this great event just let me know.

Enjoy this beautiful spring on Gibson Island – every day something new is blooming! Take a stroll down the nature trail and enjoy the spring ephemerals!

Looking forward to seeing you soon!

With warmest regards,

Neva



GIGC News 2026



GARDEN THERAPY 9:30 Pasadena Senior Center

Thursday, April 28 Tuesday, September 22

Tuesday, May 19 Tuesday, November 24

Tuesday, July 21 **ejohnson760@gmail.com**

NATURE TRAIL Work Dates are on the last Tuesday of each month, from 9:00 - 11:00 am

April 28 August 25

May 26 September 29

June 30 October 27

July 28 **suzannegwhitney@gmail.com**

MEMBERSHIP Welcome to new member *Jaquai Schwab*, sponsored by Nina Tracey and Sims Hagan

We read letters in support of Alden Firth Eyring (Sponsors Suzanne Whitney and Bev Rogers) and Julia Hubrich (Sponsors Janice Waltjen and Hetty Tegen); **they will be voted on in our next meeting.**

The Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland



97th Annual Meeting April 2026 Registration

Turf Valley Resort, Ellicott City, 8am - 2:pm



Our program for the FGCMMD Annual Meeting on April 28, 2026 will be titled "Night Sounds of Mountain Maryland," presented by **Kevin Dodge**, Professor and Director of the Natural Resources and Wildlife Technology program at Garrett College in far western Maryland.

GIGC Programs 2026



✓ **March 19** - Yankee Swap and Potluck lunch

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



✓ **April 16** - 10:00 Business Meeting,
11:00 Turtle Program presented by Jeff Popp, Lunch in the Rotunda



8109 Telegraph Rd
Severn, MD 21144

May 21 - Field Trip to Willow Oak Flower and Herb Farm, Severn MD. We will carpool to Willow Oak and put together Herb Baskets with owner Heather Carr. After our workshop we will have a catered lunch at the farm provided by Ken's kitchen.



June 18 - Business meeting at 10:00, then ride down by golf cart or car to our beehives for a presentation by our beekeeper, Kevin Vasquez. Following his talk - Lunch at Gibson Island Club.

July 23 - Centennial Luncheon - 100 years of Stewardship of Gibson Island! **1926-2026** - this event is not to be missed!

August 13 - Environmental Dinner 6pm
Speaker TBD



September 17 - Field trip to Garden Club members' gardens

Thursday, October 15 - 19th Century Medicinal Herb Garden

GIGC Programs 2026



MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!



October 15 - 19th Century Medicinal Herb Garden

Greg Susla, a retired pharmacist, will review the critical aspects of how plant-based medicines were used throughout history.

He will discuss the current investigations into the role plant-based medicines may have in modern medicine. The presentation also reviews restoration of the Pry House Medicinal Garden located on the Antietam National Battlefield in Keedysville, MD.

November 19 - Design demonstration and Holiday tabletop workshop lead by our Garden Club member Lisa Lawrence.

December 2 - Holiday Decorating of the Club

Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs Spring 2026



CAR Review download

<https://static-gcs.edit.site/users-files/jdj5jdewjdfhufoxwmdwtknovmfxq0tr/CAR-Review-Spring-2026.pdf>

This year, our nation is celebrating its 250th birthday and I encourage all members to participate by planting a patriotic theme of red, white and blue in support of the National Garden Clubs PLANT AMERICA project. Let's celebrate our nation's heritage by planning gardens that reflect the country's patriotism. Your local Blue Star and Gold Star Memorials are perfect locations to plant red, white and blue.

Beverly Kazickas,
CAR-SGC Region Director 2025-2027



Jeff Popp - *Creating a Turtle-Friendly Gibson Island*



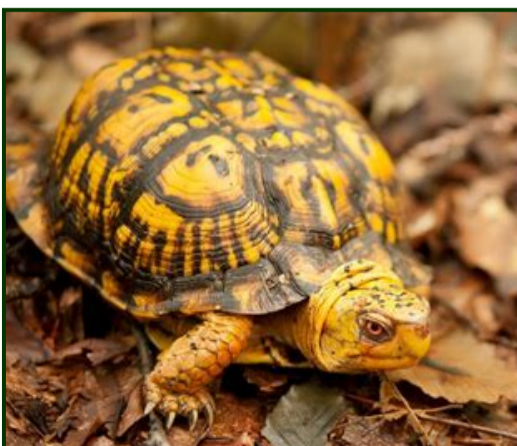
Jeff Popp is a wildlife ecologist with a strong focus on reptiles and amphibians, especially Maryland's state reptile, the diamondback terrapin, along with other native turtle species. His talk covered turtle biology, conservation challenges (like habitat loss, road mortality, and development impacts), rescue/relocation efforts, habitat restoration, and

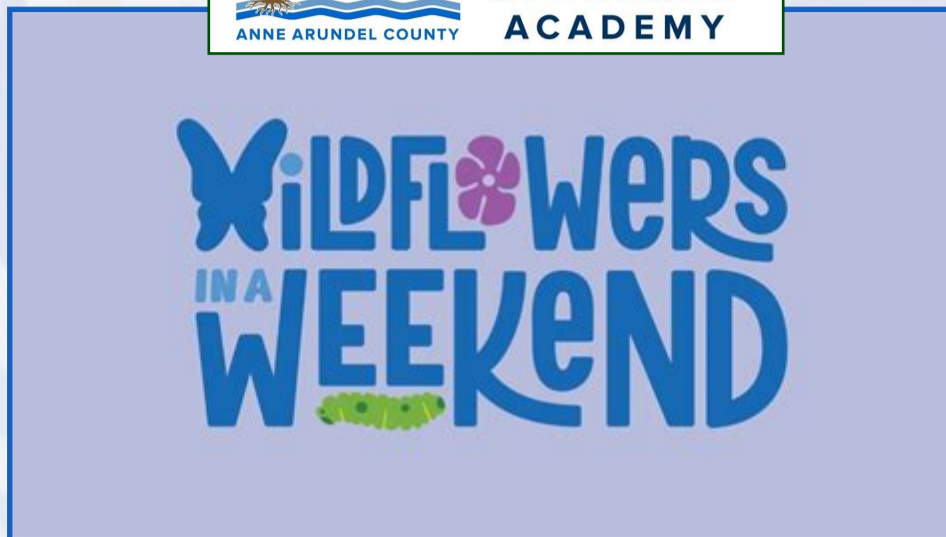
community actions to support healthy turtle populations. We enjoyed listening to Jeff again, as he spoke to us in October 2023.

Jeff's passion for wildlife developed early, both from exploring the outdoors with friends and family, and when his parents brought home a Fowler's toad as his first pet. Jeff grew up in Baltimore, MD and studied Biology, with a concentration in Ecology, at Towson University.

He is currently the Director of Restoration, and leads WSA's innovative restoration programs including RePlant Anne Arundel/Annapolis, RePollinate Anne Arundel, and Stormwater Success, to improve the health of the county's communities, green-spaces, and waterways.

Jeff has also served as Co-Director of the Terrapin Institute since 2003 where he continues to apply his passion for wildlife, especially his favorite group of animals - reptiles and amphibians!





WILDFLOWERS IN A WEEKEND NATIVE PLANT KITS

In Spring 2024, we launched our first native plant kit: **Wildflowers in a Weekend**. These kits are intended to help people easily plant a native Wildflower garden, with no expertise or experience required! Wildflower kits are offered in two options - a kit with plants for full sun *or* for shade.

Each kit contains:

- 18 quart-sized native plants
- Planting and maintenance instructions
- A giant biodegradable plant placement template (optional)
- Plant information cards
- And more!



To order a kit, you must:

- Live in Anne Arundel County (including the City of Annapolis)
- Own or have permission to plant on the property
- Have a 6x5 ft area to plant that gets appropriate sun:
 - **Option 1:** Fun in the Sun (6+ hours of full sun each day)
 - **Option 2:** Made in the Shade (4 or less hours of sun each day)

Stay updated on Wildflower in a Weekend announcements by signing up for our newsletter, if you aren't already subscribed to our communications.

<https://aawsa.org/newsletter>

WSA's [Plant Native Plants](#) page can help you figure out what to plant where, where to purchase plants, and more.

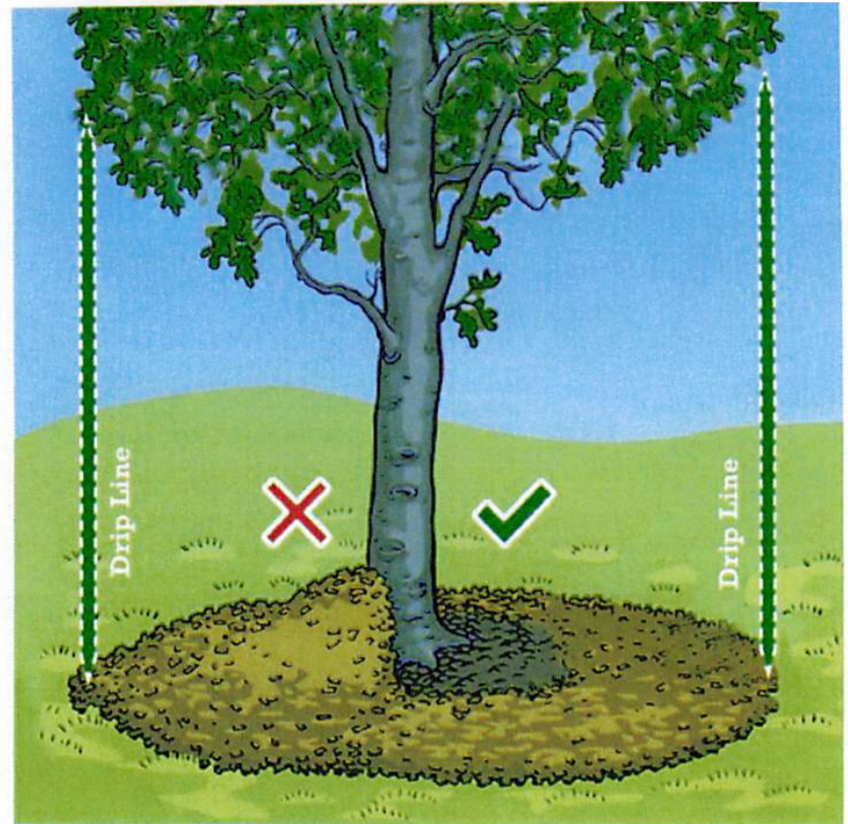
Mulch the Right Way!

There's more to mulch than you think.

Mulch is a staple tool in the garden, but is often misapplied, causing tree and plant problems.

HOW TO MULCH

- **Mulch out, not up.** Start mulching several inches from the trunk. Allow the root flare to show just above ground level. Spread mulch in a layer no more than 4 inches deep, going out to the drip line which is the edge of the tree canopy.
- **Back off from the trunk.** If mulch is piled up near the trunk, it can cause insect and disease problems. Keep the trunk dry.
- **Create a mulch “donut”, not a mulch “volcano”.**
- Use **organic, not dyed materials**, such as leaves, wood chips, or bark pieces. Organic mulch provides nutrients as it decomposes.
- **Mulch helps** control weeds, retain water and provides a buffer from heat and cold temperatures. Mulch also helps prevent lawn mower or weed-whacker damage.
- You can mulch any time of year. For maximum benefits, mulch in spring when the weather is favorable. Nurseries have March Mulch Madness sales and many types of mulch to choose from during the spring. Avoid dyed mulch.



Hazards of Incorrect Mulching

Improper mulching can inadvertently cause health problems for your plants and trees.

Moisture or Air Barriers
Too much mulch can make it hard for air to reach roots. It can both keep the soil too wet or too dry.

Root Rot
Too much mulch against the trunk of a tree can lead to root decay and other insect and disease problems.

Too Much Heat
As mulch decomposes, it generates heat which causes stress for plants.

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

MASTER
GARDENER



CONTACT INFORMATION:

Mulch Matters Campaign
UMD Extension Anne Arundel
97 Dairy Lane
Gambells, MD 21054
410.222.3900
mulchannearundel@gmail.com
www.extension.umd.edu

University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class.

Eastern Screech-owl



*I*n the summer of 2024 we installed a nest box for Eastern screech owls made by Duncraft about 15 feet up a tulip poplar tree in our front yard on Broadwater Way. In mid February 2025, a small 9 inch rufous colored screech-owl began visiting the box. My granddaughters, Eliza and Gracie, named him Hooty. In mid March Mrs. Hooty arrived. Screech owls mate for life and often return to a previous nest. We could see Mrs. Hooty from our dining room window around dusk every day sitting in the opening of the box. We watched every day through April and May and at the beginning of June 2 owlets appeared in the opening of the nest box. A few days later, they fledged. We cleaned out the box over the summer and this year Mr. Hooty arrived on schedule in mid February. Mrs. Hooty has also arrived and hopefully we will have more owlets this year.

-Robin Ambler

Eastern Screech-Owl

Megascops asio

At a Glance

This robin-sized nightbird is common over much of the east, including in city parks and shady suburbs, where many human residents are unaware they have an owl for a neighbor. The owl spends the day roosting in holes or in dense cover, becoming active at dusk. Despite the name, screech-owls do not screech; the voice of this species features whinnies and soft trills.

Habitat

Woodlands, farm groves, shade trees. Generally favors deciduous or mixes woods, but may be found in any habitat having some open ground and some large trees, from forest to isolated groves to suburban yards. May be absent from some areas because of lack of dead snags with suitable nesting holes.

- **EGGS** - 4-5, sometimes 2-8. White. Incubation is mostly by female, averages about 26 days. Male brings food to female during incubation.
- **YOUNG** -Both parents bring food for young. Adults may bring back small, wormlike Blind Snakes and release them in nest, where the snakes burrow in debris in bottom of cavity, feeding on insects there, perhaps helping protect the young from parasites. Young leave the nest about 4 weeks after hatching, are fed by parents for some time thereafter.
- **FEEDING BEHAVIOR** -Forages at dusk and at night. Hunts mostly by watching from a perch and then swooping down to take prey from the ground or from foliage. Also catches flying insects in the air. Can locate prey by sound as well as by sight.
- **DIET** -Mostly large insects and small rodents. Wide variation in diet. Eats many beetles, moths, crickets, other large insects. Catches mice and other rodents, shrews, sometimes bats; also some small birds, lizards, frogs, spiders, earthworms, crayfish, many other small creatures. Some catch many small fish.
- **NESTING** -Courtship displays of male include bowing, raising wings, clicking bill. Male brings food to female. Mated pairs preen each other's feathers, call in duet. Nest site is in cavity in tree, including natural hollows and abandoned woodpecker holes; will also use artificial nest boxes. Usually 10-30' above ground, can be 5-80' up.

<https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/eastern-screech-owl>





THAT WISE OLD OWL

A wise old Owl
Sat on an oak.
The more he saw,
The less he spoke.
The less he spoke,
The more he heard.
Why can't we be
Like that wise old bird?

The Birds will be coming!

Saturday, May 9, 2026
Gibson Island Spring Bird Count



In Spring, over 3 billion birds will migrate to the U.S. and Canada for breeding.

Migratory birds begin to return to their breeding grounds in May from locations as far south as Central and South America. Some species will stay in Maryland all summer to nest; others are passing through on their way to breeding grounds farther north. Maryland is under the Atlantic migration flyway, so we have quite a lot of migrating birds in our community, including orioles, warblers, swallows, and more!

Sponsored by Maryland Ornithological Society and the **Conservation Committee of Gibson Island Corporation**



Welcome to the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage

Mount Clare & Southwest Baltimore

The Mount Clare Baltimore Tour will take place on Saturday, May 30, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., rain or shine. This self-guided special event features access to exclusive properties that are open only on the day of the tour.

[Buy Tour & Lunch Tickets](#)

Tickets? [Click Here](#)



About the Mount Clare Baltimore

Centered around the Mount Clare Museum, this tour explores one of Baltimore's most significant historic sites and the stories that shaped America's early industrial growth. Built in the mid-18th century, Mount Clare was the centerpiece of "Georgia," an industrial plantation where iron, brick, and flour production fueled the rise of Baltimore as a major port and manufacturing hub. The manor reflects both the elegance of colonial life and the harsh realities of enslavement that sustained it. Visitors will explore exhibits and grounds that reveal nearly three centuries of change, from the Revolutionary era and Civil War to Baltimore's emergence as an industrial powerhouse. This Maryland House and Garden Tour offers a deeper look at how Mount Clare and its surrounding neighborhood helped define the city's identity and legacy.

<https://www.mhgp.org/>



Spring's Gentle Call

“

April whispers to the dormant seed,
Urging growth, fulfilling need.
With every dawn, the world feels vast,
Echoing tales of springs long past.

Streams glisten under azure skies,
As butterflies begin their rise.
The grass ripples, a sea of green,
A sight serene, as ever seen.

In April's heart, spring's tales are spun,
Of battles lost and victories won.
For every creature, big or small,
April's spring has a call for all.

-Autor unknown