

March 2025 News

President's Message

Spring! I think that we'd all agree that this spring is more meaningful than ever. Spring represents new beginnings, growth, and renewal, mirroring the awakening after winter. To see the first forsythia and redbud always lifts my spirits, and when the first ephemerals emerge, well, that is pure delight!

Both Pearson's Falls and the Depot Garden are experiencing renewal but in different ways. I hope you enjoy reading about club members' work in both areas – places that bring each of us joy and delight. It will be a while before we can enjoy Pearson's Falls again, but the Depot Garden awaits your visit.

Beth Rounds.

Upcoming Events

Spring Tours and Talks - Member Only

Back by popular demand are a variety of tours and talks. The program team is excited about these tours, which provide members with opportunities to be inspired, to learn, and to enjoy other's company.

Thursday, April 10, Gentling Garden, Asheville Meet at 9:15 am for a 10:30 am tour

The Gentling's garden in Asheville is a private "Eden" located on a mountainside slope, featuring a variety of plants, natural springs, and seating areas. Read more at https://wncmagazine.com/feature/lush_life.

Those planning to go should meet at the Food Lion Plaza in Columbus at 9:15 am to carpool. **RSVP to Bob Rossier** at <u>bobrossier@outlook.com</u>. Also let him know if you are willing to be a carpool driver. Bring a drink and snack; if members would like to stop for lunch after the tour, we will make that happen.

Wednesday, April 16, at 1:00 pm A Tryon Garden in Godshaw Hill Neighborhood

Visit a garden close to home! Caroline and Wade Young are offering TGC members an opportunity to visit their beautiful garden, featuring one of the most noteworthy magnolias in the Carolinas. This garden is located on the Whitney Extension in the Godshaw Hill neighborhood, Tryon.

RSVP to Barb Oklesen at b.oklesen@gmail.com.

Monday, April 21, 11:00 am – 1:30 pm Garden Tour and Artist Talk

Meet Corrie Woods, a fellow TGC member and native plant gardening expert, in the Tryon Depot Garden for a tour of our local gem. Building on what club members have accomplished in the past, Corrie and her team have been working hard to enhance the garden with keystone native plants and shrubs, adding over 15 new varieties this spring. Corrie will share her vast gardening knowledge about native plants and answer your questions on what works and what doesn't in shade and sun. Bring a bagged lunch and a soft drink of your choice; a delicious cookie from Valhalla Bakery will be provided.

Following lunch, the group will walk over to 80SIX Gallery on Trade Street to meet Melanie Morrett, an award-winning printmaker, who enjoys creating one-of-a-kind Monotype prints with ink, rollers, plexiglass plates, paper, and an etching press. She passionately searches for hidden treasures in nature. She recently foraged in the Depot Garden and will use her harvest in her work. She hopes to reveal often overlooked unique shapes, rhythms, and beauty. She will also share her inspirations for a few other pieces, tell how they were created, and give attendees time for questions and answers. RSVP to Beth Rounds at bethrounds@gmail.com.

Saturday, May 31, 11:00 pm The Blooming Farm, Tryon, NC

Join Madison Geer and Dr. Lili Corbus at their historic Tryon home. In 2022, the couple bought the home, including 8.5 acres, and began the house renovation. In addition, they created a half acre growing space for organic vegetables.

The house was built in 1870 with a Walcott and Merriweather addition in 1940. At one time, it was a Sorghum farm. Madison's passion is growing vegetables and doing woodworking in his shop. Lili Corbus has a doctorate in Art History. She's been experimenting with new vegetable recipes, making tinctures, and pressing flowers.

More information about this tour will be shared closer to the date.

ANNUAL MEETING- New location

On Wednesday, May 21, at noon, the Tryon Garden Club will gather for the annual meeting and luncheon at the Greenlife Inn, Lynn, NC (next to the Lynn Post Office on Hwy 108W). Come reconnect with club members and hear a Pearson's Falls update.

Club Business

Financials: This organization is blessed! Because of Tryon Garden Club's progressive previous leaders, the club and Pearson's Falls and Glen will recover from Tropical Storm Helene's damage. The Recovery Team is trying hard to be good stewards of the Glen and the club's resources. There is money to support our employees and start the recovery process. There will need to be a capital campaign for the new trails.

The Depot Garden - Tryon's Jewel

Corrie Woods and Beth Rounds, the new co-managers of the Depot Garden, like to think of it as a living, breathing gift to the community. On any given day a surprising number of folks stroll the garden, walk and wander with their dogs, or sit for a spell in the garden's shade and quiet. Over the years, many dedicated volunteers have stepped in to manage and/or contribute to the garden's upkeep and add their ideas for enhancements that include an irrigation system,



Depot Garden early March Bloodroot All Depot Garden photos by Corrie Woods

pathway lighting, benches, and a pollinator garden, the official Monarch Waystation.

Jane Herman, our most recent garden leader and board member, oversaw the addition of many new native plant species. Where possible, she substituted a native for an exotic. On the parking lot entry trellis, an exotic variety of climbing hydrangea was replaced with coral honeysuckle, bare ground is

now growing patches of green and gold, and the new trellis on Pacolet Street will be graced with crossvine.

For 2025, Beth and Corrie are committed to continuing to steer our beloved garden more and more toward native plants and pollinators. Their first big native plant push happened on Friday and Saturday, March 14-15. Many thanks to the seven TGC members who pitched in, helped with the garden cleanup, deadheaded, and planted over 20 new varieties. The plants were sourced from Carolina Native Nursery, BB Barns, Raymonds, and members' gardens.

The list of new to the garden species is long but here are a few highlights. The garden's first pawpaw (another will be added soon) is in the ground. There



First the obtaining, loading, and unloading, then the hole digging, augmenting, and hard labor.



Before & After Top: Nandina hedge Bottom: New Inkberry hedge

provided green and gold groundcover.
Other groundcovers/low-growing perennials include creeping phlox, mouse-eared coreopsis, self-heal, and Pennsylvania sedge. New shrubs include a buttonbush, hummingbird clethra, cinnamon bark clethra, Virginia sweetspire, low-growing chokeberry, and low-growing sumac.

The attack on invasives continues. The nandina hedge along the walkway was replaced with inkberries. A patch of liriope was traded for Pennsylvania sedge and penstemon. Vinca is out and Christmas fern and coral bells are in. The hellebore bed has been dug up and the plants have been given away. You ask, "Why did we dig the hellebores?" While hellebores are a garden favorite for many,

are new patches of partridgeberry from Sam and Eva Pratt. Beth, Corrie, and Loti Woods' gardens they have no native pollinators and have an overall negative impact on biodiversity. This bed will be planted with a mixture of native perennial and low-growing shrubs.

The plan is to tuck many new native perennials into both the pollinator and shade gardens. This should expand the buffet for visiting native bee species, butterflies, and birds.

The Depot Garden is alive with signs of spring. Stop by, sit a while, or wander through, and look for the new native additions.

Note: Most of the species that have been added to the Depot Garden are considered keystone plants, meaning those with the highest wildlife value for our area!

If you are striving to go native in your yard, one helpful resource is

https://www.gardeningforlifeproject.org/habitatscapingin-the-carolina-foothills. Corrie is creating an everexpanding list of keystone plants specifically suitable for our area; the list can be found on the Gardening For Life Project website www.gardeningforlifeproject.org.



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What's Happening? Restoration!

Rae Ann Wessel reports that rebuilding is progressing at Pearson's Falls. Major debris removal of fallen trees and rubble on the lower trails has wrapped up. Andy and Janice, with the help of harty volunteers, have cleaned up and mulched Elizabeth Webster Way. Slight trail adjustments have had to be made to improve it and make it more accessible.

Beginning in April, trail repair, reestablishment, and debris cleanup on both sides of Colt Creek will continue, with help from Long Cane Trails. This is being done in preparation for establishing a new trail needed to reach the upper falls.





It takes leverage and muscles to relocate rocks that the rushing water moved easily. Andy (right) and Janice Fishman (left) at work at Pearson's Falls.

Photo by Keva Creative

Road conditions along U.S. Route 176 remain a major limitation. The segment from Tryon northwest remains closed and the segment from Saluda southeast is reduced to 1 lane with serious undermining of the roadbed.

There will be a more comprehensive update at the May annual meeting.

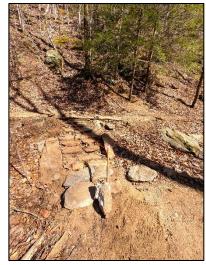
Andy Ruff reports that good progress is being made by the volunteer crew, Janice Fishman, and himself. They have been removing debris, fixing steps, putting in fence posts, and improving the trails. Thank you to John Swenson, Will Kallberg, and Jack Kallberg for their help.

Be assured that the wildflowers are plentiful and beautiful again this year. Just because the team is

working hard, they haven't been too busy to miss seeing and talking to club members and visitors.

To the Left: Wildflowers blooming the third week of March: Clockwise: Trillium cuneatum, Oconee Bells, Cutleaf toothwort, & Trout Lily.

Right: Progress being made on the Pearson's Falls trails. Photos by Andy Ruff



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Historical Tidbit

SAVE Pearson's Falls!

In July of 1931, Donald Peattie, a world-known botanist who had grown up roaming the hills of what today we call Pearson's Falls and Glen, wrote to then president of the Tryon Garden Club, Mrs. Hester, supporting the club's effort to save the falls and surrounding area for future generations. Here is a part of Donald's letter from France:

"I have just heard that you are in a movement afoot for the preservation of "Pearson's Falls" at Melrose, from the sawmill. When I thought of the possibility that those trees were going to be mashed into pulp paper and match sticks, that in place of that true American and Southern cathedral, there was going to be a wilderness of stumps where living, breathing beings that it has taken centuries to create had stood, I was certainly horrified. I have, of course, a very particular bias—a prejudice I admit, a prejudice in favor of the conservation for the public of unique beauty spots. There are thousands and thousands of acres of flat lands, of uninteresting mountain plateaus and domes that can still serve as logwood. Why must they go sawing up Pearson's Falls when there is only one Pearson's Falls?

"This is not hyperbole on my part. My long training as a botanist, specializing as I did on the flora of Western North Carolina, leaves me in the position to know that the vegetation of Pearson's Falls is unique. Many plants are found there of the greatest rarity; you can comb North Carolina, the entire South in vain, to find their duplicates. One is unknown elsewhere in the world. It has, that tiny glen, a flora of some two hundred and forty flowering plants and ferns and trees – not to mention, of course, the mosses and hepatics, the fungi, the lichens, and a very fascinating little group of algae which have colonized the waterfall itself. I am not specialist in these lower groups, but I took samples of mosses, algae, fungi, etc., back with me to Harvard in 1922 and was told by those who know that some of them are extremely rare and all were interesting.

"Returning to the question of the number of species of plants at Pearson's Falls, some two hundred and forty or fifty flowering plants may seem a modest number, but the very small size of the area on which they are all crowded is what is astonishing to me. As you know I spent five years combing every acre of Polk County, collecting plants; there is no spot of the size to compare with it in the county. I have also seen the meadows of the high Alps, the flowery shores of the Riviera and would not trade them for Pearson's Falls.

"I wish that I could furnish a list of the fungi, algae, useful soil bacteria, mosses, hepatics, and lichens growing at Pearson's Falls. It would be many closely written pages long. Somebody ought to be assigned to draw up a list of the animals, I have seen some very queer aquatic animals living right in the falls, which I was never able to identity, and on several occasions, I have heard and seen birds unknown to me which I followed for hours with my glasses without ever being able to locate them exactly. A skilled ornithologist would soon make a splendid list of the birds, I'm sure and a zoologist could undoubtedly produce remarkable results if the other animals were catalogued. The butterfly life of Polk County is almost unique in the state, as was shown some years ago in an article in the Journal of Elisa Mitchell Scientific Society and by work of Dr. Fiske of the Smithsonian Institute in the last century in Polk County. I should expect Pearson's Falls to excel in butterflies, and though it is many years since I studied entomology under the great Dr. Wheeler of Bussey Institute (Harvard U. Grad. School of Applied Biology 1908-1936), I recollect a collection of Pearson's Falls beetles I began that was astonishing in its variety.

"The specimens are all deposited in the herbarium of the University of North Carolina, and like gold in the Federal Reserve stand there as vouchers for the truth of my statements. Pearson's Falls was also the object of a special ecological study reported in "Rhodora," the Journal of the New England Botanical Club.

"What is to become of it—death and destruction, and all eternity to regret a mistake in—or a State Park preserving a tiny but perfect fragment of North Carolina wildlife useful to the public as a recreation ground and educational ground, handy to the public by reason of its presence directly on the Asheville Road, and only a quarter mile from the railway station of Melrose?"

Tryon Garden Club Eased into Spring

After winter's February flurry and canceled meeting, the club celebrated the sunny warm day, Wednesday, March 19, with an ice cream social. There were three kinds of ice cream with strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, nuts, and candies for toppings. This led to interesting conversations, an informative general meeting, and an informative lecture by Steve D. Pettis from the NC Cooperative Extension, Hendersonville County. He spoke on spring gardening in our area.





Left: Beth bringing the group to order and explaining the upcoming garden tours (see pages 1-2. for details). **Middle**: Corrie explains the Growing for Life Project Plant Sale (see page 11 for details). **Right**: Rae Ann describes what is happening with Pearson's Falls recovery and trail building (see page 4 for details).



Steve D. Pettis from the NC Cooperative Extension, Hendersonville County, covered: plants flowering now; what and when to fertilize; how to plant a tree with informative examples of what not to do; What to prune and when (it's too late this year to prune most shade and fruit trees. And, please, don't top trees.). He quickly talked about gardening in small spaces and container gardens. He likes old metal containers for planters. He touched on environmentally friendly landscapes and how

how to do it. He suggested reducing lawn area, avoiding pesticides, using native plants, and switching to electric tools. When asked about eradicating invasives, he said that they are like a cancer that must be treated with chemotherapy. For gardeners who had been doing it for a long time, it was an interesting, informative refresher course. For new gardeners, it was helpful without making gardening seem like a burden.

Nice job, Steve!

Exploring with Jim Welch

Rudy Mancke, Oct. 21, 1945 – Nov. 7, 2023

For the second time, the program I would share with the Tryon Garden Club had to be postponed due to storm-related issues. The talk is now planned for fall 2025. I am looking

forward to sharing my adventures with Rudy, as we visited and documented many of the top natural

areas of the world.

Rudy was my friend, teacher, and guide for twenty-five years during our production of the public television series *NatureScene*. More than that, he was like a younger brother to me and was one of the greatest naturalists our state and country have known.

One of the most important days in my life was the day I met him in the parking lot at the South Carolina Educational Television programming building in Columbia. It was the summer of 1976, and I was returning from lunch. A man was holding a dead animal. I introduced myself. The man was Rudy Mancke, who said that he was the Director of Natural History at the new SC State Museum. The animal was a mink that had been killed on the highway. Rudy planned to skin it and cure the skin for his collection. I invited him to be a call-in guest on my TV show and talk about his work as a naturalist and at the museum. This program segment was a major

hit with viewers; there were dozens of viewer-phonedin questions. Rudy became a favorite guest on many SC PBS productions.

In 1985, Rudy left the SC State Museum to become the Director of Natural History for SCETV. He and I began our national series, *NatureScene*, which was viewed on some 200 public television stations. We televised programs from all fifty United States states,

from Nova
Scotia,
Jasper, and
Banff; Selva
Verde Rain
Forest and
the
Guanacaste
Dry Forest
in Costa
Rica;

Siberia's
Lake Baikal,
Pushkin, and St.
Petersburg in
Russia; and Chrnobyl and Kiev in
Ukraine.

Every show had special moments; my future TGC program will include my favor-

ite stories and pictures with face-to-face meetings with bison, black bears, and grizzlies, an adventure with a western diamondback, and dozens more encounters with wildlife.

Clockwise - Top: Rudy with his ever-present butterfly net during a visit to Whidbey Island, Washington. The bridge in the background connects the island to Washington State's mainland. It is named the Deception Pass Bridge.

Right: Rudy and Jim at Medicine Lake in Jasper National Park, Canada. The blue-green waters of the shallow lake disappear in fall and winter when the water drains through the limestone sinkholes. **Bottom:** Rudy and Jim on location during their 25 years of producing *NatureScene*. **Left:** Allen Sharpe, the producer, cameraman, and editor of *NatureScene* with Jim and Rudy, at Pyramid Lake on the Paiute Tribe's Reservation near Reno, Nevada.

Photos: Allen Sharpe

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Invasive Plant to Eradicate

Japanese Honeysuckle, Lonicera japonica.

Japanese honeysuckle is an invasive, problematic plant that is a part of the southern landscape. *Alternatives should be considered*. It outcompetes its native cousin the coral honeysuckle, which is easily distinguished by its red, pink, yellow, or coral blooms.

Other common names include: Chinese Honeysuckle, gold-and-silver

honeysuckle, and Hall's prolific.

This plant has medium-severity poison characteristics. Nonetheless, the flowers are consumable and valued for their sweet-tasting nectar.

Japanese honeysuckle is a woody, deciduous, or semievergreen vine in the honeysuckle family. It is native to Asia and has naturalized in the United States, where it is considered highly invasive.

It can be a twining, climbing vine, or prostrate and trailing groundcover, spreading both by rhizomes and above-ground runners, as well as wide dispersal of the seeds by birds and small mammals that eat the berries. It is a rampant grower that can reach 16 to 29 feet high and 3 to 6 feet wide. It will grow over plants and smother them. It can displace native species by outcompeting plants for light, space, water, and nutrients. Remove Japanese honeysuckle where possible and keep it away from landscape plants.

Identification hints:

- It flowers in late spring to fall and is very fragrant, like sweet vanilla. The flowers are doubletongued, opening white and fading to yellow.
- It has dark green foliage.
- The first leaves of the season are lobed; later leaves are unlobed.
- The bark is light brown and peels in long strips.
- The fall fruit is black, spherical, and ½-½16 inch in diameter, containing a few seeds.

Information: https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/lonicerajaponica

NC Native Plant for Your Garden

Green and Gold, Chrysogonum virginianum

Commonly called goldenstar, it is a rhizomatous, lowgrowing perennial that typically forms a foliage mat 3-4 inches tall, spreading to 18 inches wide or more. It is native to woodland areas from Pennsylvania to Florida and Louisiana. Star-shaped, daisy-like, bright yellow flowers (to 1.5 inches diameter) on stems originating in the leaf axils, bloom spring to fall in cool summer



rounded, slightly notched, yellow petals and a center tuft of yellow disk flowers. Leaves grow to 3 inches long and are ovate, toothed, and bright green.

Green and gold is easily grown in average, medium moisture, well-drained soils in part shade to full shade. Prefers moist, acidic, organically rich soils in sundappled part shade. Tolerates full sun only if grown in consistently moist soils. Spreads by rhizomes to form an attractive ground cover but is easily controlled. Photo taken from the internet.

Remove spent flower stems for best ground cover appearance. Easily grown from seed and may self-seed in the garden.

Green and gold is used as a ground cover for woodland gardens, native plant gardens, or naturalized areas.

There are no serious insect or disease problems. However, it may be susceptibility to mildew. *Information*: www.missouribotanicalgarden.org

News You Can Use

Post-Helene: Be on the Lookout for Invasive Plants!

Invasive plants are already a source of concern for many gardeners. In North Carolina, over 80 invasive plants are significant or severe threats to native vegetation. Unfortunately, in the wake of Helene, we expect a surge in their numbers.

Invasive plants can aggressively grow across large areas, crowding out existing plants by depriving them of sunlight, water, space, and/or nutrients.



English ivy covering clearing

How did Helene likely increase invasive plant populations?

Helene's flooding and high winds may both facilitate the spread of invasive plants.



Western NC field - Post Helene

 Flood waters can transport invasives considerable distances.

- Wind gusts facilitate wider dispersal of invasive plant seeds, which are more abundant and may germinate more easily than seeds of non-invasive plants. In addition, Helene left wide swaths of land devoid of trees and other vegetation.
- Invasive plants can quickly take over disturbed areas and adapt to a range of habitats.
- Seeds of many invasives are viable for years; areas devoid of plants provide places for them to repopulate.

What can gardeners do to discourage invasive plants?

First, if your property was hard-hit by Helene, avoid leaving bare ground. Restoring your landscape will take time and if replanting this year is not an option, consider a thick layer of mulch or a cover crop to protect your soil and deter invasive plants.

If you plan to replant this spring, avoid introducing invasives (yes, some nurseries still sell them!). Ideally, choose native species well-adapted to our region. You can search for native plants, suitable for the mountains of North Carolina, by using the North Carolina Extension Gardener Plant Toolbox. You can use the Plant Toolbox to find a plant that meets specific site requirements or that performs a specific function.

Second, plant identification is key!

- Familiarize yourself with common invasives.
- Scout your property in early spring and then monitor it regularly throughout the summer.

Third, when you spot an invasive plant in your garden, act quickly!

- Established invasives are much more difficult to eradicate.
- Try to remove invasives at an early stage.
- Mechanical means are often sufficient: pulling, digging, cutting back, and/or mowing.
- For larger areas, chemical treatment may be necessary.

It is easy to be discouraged by the discovery of invasive plants on your property, especially on top of the many other post-Helene chores required of gardeners. Remember that by doing your best to control them, you are helping protect native plants and facilitating biodiversity in your landscape.

Information from an article written by Melissa Himelein, Extension Master Gardener Buncombe Co. Volunteer, January 30, 2025

Natural Dyes for Easter Eggs

Many plants that grow wild or that you cultivate can be used to create natural, beautiful colors to transform white eggs. The recipe is simple and the colors you'll create are subtle, pretty, and safe.

Dyes that grow locally:

- Violet flowers very pale purple
- Beet juice deep pink
- Beet greens pale blue
- Purple cabbage blue
- Carrots pale orange
- Yellow onions deeper orange
- Spinach pale green
- Blueberries blue to purple
- From the spice cabinet:
 Turmeric -vibrant yellow
 Turmeric combined with purple cabbage green.
 Green tea pale yellow

Red wine - deep red.

Dyeing eggs naturally can be done in a couple of different ways.

- Put the plant material in a mug and add two teaspoons of white vinegar. Fill the mug with boiling water and let the egg soak in the mixture. Hint: The longer it stays in (at least two hours), the deeper the color will be.
- Boil the plant material in water for several minutes before soaking the eggs in the mixture. The result is more intense color in less time.

Simply dye single eggs one color, or you can play around with patterns using these common household items:

- Wrap an egg in rubber bands before soaking in the dye.
- Soak an egg in dye that reaches only halfway. Once done and dried, soak the other end in another dye to get a half-and-half egg.

- Drip candle wax on the egg. Once hardened, soak the egg. Peel off the wax once the egg is dyed and dry.
- Cut old pantyhose into three-inch (7.5 cm.) sections. Put the egg inside the hose with a flower, leaf, or piece of fern. Tie the ends of the hose to secure the plant on the egg. Soak in the dye. When you remove the hose and flower you will get a tie-dye pattern.

Some of these natural Easter egg dyes can get a little messy, especially those with turmeric and blueberries. These can be rinsed after coming out of the dye and before being left to dry.

Read more at Gardening Know How: Natural Easter Egg Dyes: How To Grow Your Own Easter Egg Dyes https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/projects/natural-easter-egg-dyes.htm

2025 Gardening for Life is hosting its Spring Native Plant Sale

This event is dedicated to promoting the use of native plants in sustainable gardening and furthering the



GFLP
NATIVE
PLANT
SALE

Habitatscape with native plants to support pollinators and wildlife!

efforts to restore biodiversity in our region.

The event is **Friday, March 28, from 3-7 p.m.**, at the Harmon Field Outdoor Gym, 117 Harmon Field Road, Tryon, NC, rain or shine. Customers are encouraged to use **cash** as not all vendors can accept credit cards. It's always a great idea to bring cardboard boxes to help transport plants home.

Attendees will be able to purchase everything from perennial seedlings to small trees, with all plants being native to our region.

The vendor list includes some of our area's finest growers. Included are Saturnia Farms, Blue Oak Horticulture, Flower Moon Nursery, Milkweed Meadows, Tanager Plants, Sorrell's Lawncare and Nursery, Natural Selections Nursery, and Bells Creek Wildflower Farm.

Quote of the month:

"Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience."

Ralph Waldo Emerson