

TWIGS

The Garden Club of Greater Lansing



Member of: Michigan Garden Clubs Inc. District 2B,
National Garden Club Central Region,
National Garden Club Inc.

Volume 12 #3

EDITOR: Joan Lenhard

September 2023

Distribution: Reba Torongo

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

The day of our Tea was a brisk day with the wind blowing and dampness in the air from previous rains. The Delhi Veteran Memorial Gardens were in spectacular color.

Members showed up bringing many goodies for all of us to share. The Pink Flamingo theme was well developed. The music and singing were wonderful. It was a nice time in a garden of beauty.

The Tea Team did a great job organizing everything from theme to food. We had a great variety and everyone enjoyed themselves. By the time we finished the tea and cleaned up the sun was out in force warming everything up. If you did not make it to this event, take some time to visit these gardens. They truly are inspirational. Thanks Team.

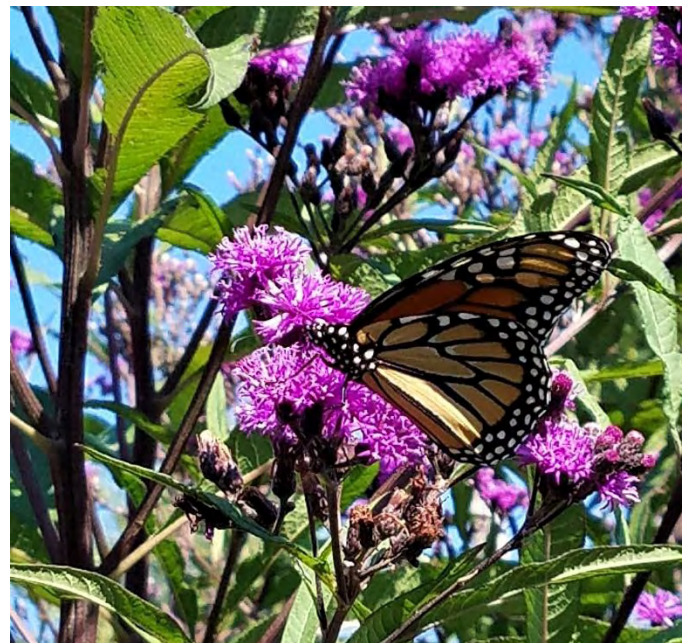
AUGUST MEETINGS

The Garden Club books are in. Distribution has taken place at Scott Garden, The Tea and soon the Greens market mtg. I will have the books at the Sept meeting and our board meeting. If you want to arrange to have the book prior to that please email me and I will work with you on arrangements.

The Greens Market meeting was rescheduled to Mon Aug 21 at the church at 9:30. An action plan is being developed to help with this year's project.

Our club will put together a basket maybe two small ones for the Oct D2B mtg. We are looking for small items for the basket. Please bring items to the Sept mtg. Ann L is putting the basket together.

Board meeting is Mon 28th at 9:30 at the church. All members are welcome.



(Ironweed with Monarch)

HORTICULTURE

Vernonia gigantea, - Ironweed

It was one of the first District 2B garden club meetings that I attended, when I found this very

large plant called Ironweed. It was approximately 10 – 12 ft tall. After the meeting and luncheon, we were encouraged to walk the grounds, visit the shop and ask questions. I remarked to the owner of the place about this plant. I noticed the stalks, the bold purple flowers and of course its height. When I was told it is Ironweed, I became very cautious. The last thing I wanted was a weed in the yard. I asked about it being invasive? How often do you need to thin it out? Is it an aggressive grower?

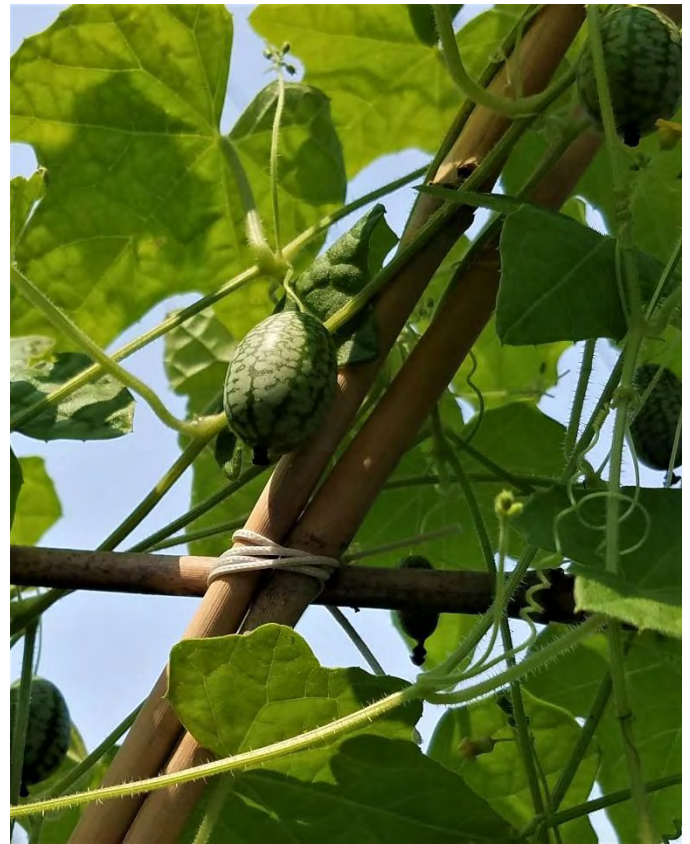
My use for the plant was twofold. First, I wanted to hide the pole of wires that are placed in the right of way in between my yard and the neighbor's yard. Second, I was looking at the length and sturdiness of the stalks and thought I could use these for fencing and trellising.



(Trellising with Ironweed and Miscanthus stalks)

After much discussion he offered to dig the plant and divide a few clumps for myself and another garden club member. I was really quite excited.

Fast forward a few years. I did not plant it where my original thought was of hiding the wires because of fencing. So, I plopped the clump into the ground closer to the house to bring color, height and shape to the front half of the backyard. I had recently lost a row of lilacs and wanted something in that area. The first two years the plant grew maybe 5-6 ft tall. By the 3rd year it was easily 8-10 ft tall. Now it grows 10 ft or more a year.



(Cucamelon on the trellis)

Each year as it grows, I am amazed at how fast the shoots come up. I notice the shoots about 6 inches in height and in a week the plant is easily 2-3 ft tall. By the end of second to third week, I have a plant that has grown to 5-7 ft. In 3-4 weeks, I have a full-grown plant. This varies some based-on weather conditions and water. But over the years I can look at it one day and it is small. The next day you can see its growth.

I love this plant for lots of reasons. It is a huge attractor for butterflies. I can have up to 5 butterflies flitting around. When the Monarchs land it is such a beautiful clash of complimentary colors. Nature at its best. The hummingbirds visit often. The bees are buzzing all around. I also love to harvest the stalks. The stalks are like small bamboo rods. I use them for trellising in the vegetable garden. I like how the plant takes on the shape of a vase, similar to a tree shape, narrow at the bottom but expansive on the top. I have not supported the growth at the top with any tie backs.

For care on this plant, I cut off the seedheads so it limits the spread of seedlings. I have not had any

problem. Later in the season I cut the stalks, let them dry and over winter in the garage or overhang on the garage. In the spring when planting my veggie garden, I use the stalks for fencing / trellising.

In addition to using these stalks, I have picked up the canes of *Miscanthus giganteus* from a neighbor. I use these too in the trellising process. The trellises support everything that grows on them from pickles, squash, beans and tomatoes. I have thought to use the stalks to make a fence. I will have to collect quite a few stalks for that to happen.

This multi-purpose plant has served me well over the years. I continue to look forward to its beautiful color, shape and its impact on supporting all winged creatures. The stalks allow me to be creative in the spring and have fun trellising. Joan Lenhard

(Content Redacted)

Greens Market

Planning meeting is Mon 21st at 9:30 at the church.

BOARD MTG

Monday Aug 28th @ 9:30 @ the church.

CLUB MTG

Sept 11th @ 5:00 pm @ the church. This is a Salad & Sandwich Dinner. Our speaker is Shane Perdue from Vets Ace Hardware in north Lansing. He will present on tool care.

Meeting is 5-5:45, dinner 5:45-6:30, speaker 6:45-7:45. Marge is dinner chair, committee is Carol, M., Carol O., and Mary S. Please communicate with Marge on the meal. Members should bring a sandwich, dinner ware. Chair of the Day is Joan. Centerpieces for tables will come from the Design team. Remember to be early if you are on the Hospitality team. Ann Schoals will be in touch. Please check last years book and soon this year's book.

MEMBER UPDATES

Long time member Marjorie Melville passed away. Marjorie had been an active member for many years. Marjorie continued to receive the newsletter over the past few years.

Renee McMillen had knee surgery and is still recuperating. She is still experiencing some pain and discomfort but hopes to return to action in Sept at the board mtg.

SCOTT SUNKEN GARDEN

This garden continues to thrive with different colors and lots of pollinators every week! Even the roses continue to bloom and vie for space with the giant hostas. Russian Sage is extra prolific along with butterfly bushes that are hiding thistle. What a display of purple!



(Scott Sunken Garden – coming in for a landing)

Most Fridays from 9-10 there is an energetic group of volunteers. We accomplish and learn so much from each other. Right now, the focus is trimming and dividing plants, and of course occasional weeding. There is something for everyone! Join us!



(Scott Sunken Garden Japanese Anemone/Windflower)

BASKETS FOR MGC D2B FALL MTG

We will put together a basket or two for the D2B Fall mtg. You may have a nice item to donate or find something while looking at estate or garage sales. Bring your item to the Sept. mtg

EDUCATION & CONFERENCE

D2B Fall meeting, Wed., Oct 4 at St Jude's in DeWitt. Check the District 2B website for details. Bring your check book to register in Sept. Cost is \$30.00 per person. This includes continental breakfast, lunch and speakers. Plan to spend a full day (8:30-3:30). These meetings are fun, interactive and a great opportunity to meet people in the district in other clubs. You learn about each other's club activities. Let's have **FUN**.

At this meeting a few minutes will be spent talking about the upcoming Landscape School. A team is

pulling together the details. This will be local so I hope we have a good registration for the school.

MGC Flower Show School, Course 1 Oct 5-6-7, 2023 in Ann Arbor, Zion Lutheran Church Piper Hall— Lower Level, 1501 W. Liberty Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103. Check the MGC website for details.



(Scott Sunken Garden – the butterfly has landed)

UPCOMING FLOWER SHOWS

Sept 9 & 10 – at Meijer Gardens & Sculptures held by Kent GC, West Michigan Floral Arrangers Guild & District 4 – open to anyone.

October 24 - Holiday Workshop held by Michigan Association of Accredited Judges at Trinity Church in Lansing – open to anyone. Check 2B website for details.

December 9 – Holly Jolly Youth Flower Show held by 2B Designers in Okemos. Open to anyone-check 2B website for details.

February 24 & 25, 2024 – Lansing Orchid Society Orchid Show at MSU. Check 2B website for details.