



The Thymes



The Cumberland County Master Gardener's Monthly Newsletter

July 2026

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, MARGO CARROLL

Hello Cumberland County Master Gardeners,

What an exciting time to be part of the Cumberland County Master Gardeners! First, congratulations to everyone on being awarded the **Search for Excellence Award in the Education Program category** for our **Classes in the Garden** program. This award is a wonderful recognition of the time, talent, teamwork, and dedication so many of you have put into educating and serving our community. Thank you to everyone who taught, planned, promoted, set up, cleaned up, greeted guests, answered questions, and helped make Classes in the Garden such a success.



I also hope you will take time to get out to the **Plateau Discovery Garden** to see the wonderful **“Bears” art installation**. It is a fun and creative addition to the garden, and a great reason to invite friends and family to visit. Be sure to also take part in the **September Auction**, where you will have a chance to bid on one of the bears and take home a very special piece of this project.

Looking ahead, we will need volunteers for the **Fall Gardeners Festival on August 25th**. This is another great opportunity for us to share gardening education, welcome the community, and support the Plateau Discovery Garden. Please consider helping where you can—many hands make these events successful and enjoyable for everyone.

Board nominations are also now being taken. If you have been thinking about getting more involved, this is your chance. Our organization continues to grow and thrive because members are willing to step forward, share ideas, and help lead. Whether you are new or have been with us for years, your voice and energy matter.

So here is our current **“Help Wanted”** list for anyone interested in becoming more involved:

- **CCMG President** — Carla Lund has been nominated
- **Fall Gardeners Festival Volunteer Coordinator** — Susan Stoneburg has volunteered--thank you!
- **Spring Flower, Lawn & Garden Festival “Ringmaster” / Event Operations Coordinator** — Margo still needs two assistants
- **Spring Flower, Lawn & Garden Festival Volunteer Coordinator** — Susan Stoneburg has volunteered--thank you!
- **Rain Barrel Program Coordinator** — Sue Weber has volunteered--thank you!
- **Grant Research & Funding Coordinator** — needed
- **Search for Excellence Award Coordinator** — needed
- **Website Design, Updates & Management Assistance** — needed
- **Media, Promotion & Educational Materials Design Team** — needed
- **Community Outreach & Partnership Coordinators** — needed

Our next **Membership Meeting** will be **July 7th at 1:00 p.m. at the Country Store**. You're always welcome to bring cookies or snacks if you'd like.

The next **Board Meeting** will be **July 21st at 1:00 p.m. at the Country Store**.

As we move through the heart of summer, I hope you are enjoying your gardens, finding a little shade, and taking pride in all that we are accomplishing together. Thank you for all you do for CCMG, the Plateau Discovery Garden, and our community. Please continue to "like" and "share" all our CCMG and Plateau Discovery Garden social media posts.

Happy gardening,

Margo Carroll



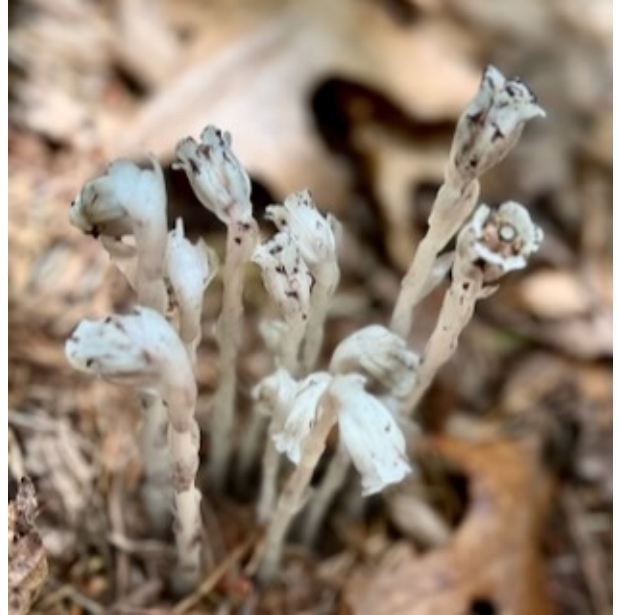
Ghost Pipe or Indian Pipe

By Barbara Moore

I wanted to share with you another discovery we made here in my neighborhood, the wildflower, Indian Pipe. Again, a plant I did not know anything about. So, for those of you who share my ignorance, we will learn together.



Indian Pipe also known as ghost pipe, is an herbaceous perennial wildflower that can be found widely in the U.S.;



however, it is not commonly encountered. It ranges in height from 4-12 inches tall. The entire plant is a translucent white, sometimes a pale pinkish-white and commonly has black flecks. The stem bears a single flower which is urn shaped. When emerging from the ground, the flower points downward. As the anthers and stigma mature, the flower spreads almost perpendicular to the stem. The fruit is a capsule and as that capsule matures, it becomes in line with the stem. When it ripens, the seed is released through slits that open from the tip to the base of the capsule. As the ghost pipe lacks chlorophyll, it is white in appearance and can survive in shaded areas. It usually grows in small clusters. Below the ground, its roots join with fungi that are connected to the tree roots of mostly oak and beech trees. There the plant indirectly takes nourishment from the tree and through the fungi, digests the decaying material found in the soil of that cool moist shaded area. It rarely survives transplanting due to that complicated method of obtaining nourishment. Bumble bees pollinate the ghost pipe getting the nectar and pollen. Once pollinated, the plant develops egg shaped capsules that are about 1/2 inch long that contain small seeds. Peak bloom time is early summer and flowers for 1-2 weeks.

Ghost pipe is used for neuropathy pain and to manage anxiety, nervous conditions, panic attacks and PTSD. When ready, the plant is soaked in alcohol for several weeks where it will turn a dark purple color. A standard dose is 1-3 drops diluted in water, juice or tea to mask the alcohol and potential bitter taste. It is not a daily preventative supplement but used strictly for acute flare ups.

This year I have learned to look around our neighborhood and be aware of might be found there.

Why Daylilies?

By Susan Partch

Most - if not all - of you have heard me beg for help with the daylilies. Almost all my time at PDG is spent in the daylilies: weeding, deadheading, pulling scapes. I try to get out twice a week at least 3 weeks a month for 4 hours each trip tho I do take off Dec and Jan unless they're warm. Why? Daylilies aren't even a favorite flower of mine.



It started my first year as a Master Gardener. Workdays are usually set for mornings and I'm not a morning person so I was hesitant and a bit lost when I showed up one summer afternoon wanting to help but not knowing what to do. I ran into Nancy Christopherson and she suggested a task I could do and told me about the tool shed and how things worked. I came back other days and Shalena gave me an area to weed but as it was a mixed bed I wasn't sure what was weed and what wasn't. I didn't feel very helpful.

One day I walked around looking at the gardens and discovered the big daylily bed. I asked if I could work in that; I knew what daylilies looked like and would feel confident weeding there. I also discovered Nancy spent hours daily in those beds and she encouraged me even though I felt I wasn't making much of a dent on my occasional days there. She also introduced me to deadheading and scape pulling.

Then my oldest sister died. She was a daylily enthusiast with large beds of daylilies. She had been trying to create a tall dark red thick stemmed one. Now when I worked in the PDG beds it was kind of in memory of her and I started noticing colors and differences. I came more often.

Then Nancy's chronic condition and covid meant Nancy couldn't work in the gardens any more. I was the only one regularly working the daylilies. The weeds quickly got way ahead of me so I started my twice a week routine and began begging for help. By then I had sort of gotten attached to the daylily beds; coupling that with my stubborn "Im not going to give up on these and let it all go neglected" I persisted. I know the beds will probably never again be weed free or ever deadheaded every morning but I do my best to deal with the worst weeds so the beds at least look decent from a distance.

Since then many other Master Gardeners have weeded in the daylily plot, but we couldn't keep up with weeds, deadheading and scapes. My faithful weeding buddy Laura now has aged out and needs to put limits on the number of hours she can weed. Use of herbicides by staff members may provide a solution. Time will tell. I discovered that my old wheelhoe does a great job on the

edges. So maybe we can be a little optimistic. Still, the daylilies need more people and soon they will need a dedicated someone to take over because my knees are telling me I can't do this many more years.

But even when I can't work them I will come each June to look at them. I've struggled to keep them looking at least semi-tended so long I now feel a bit possessive of them. That's why.

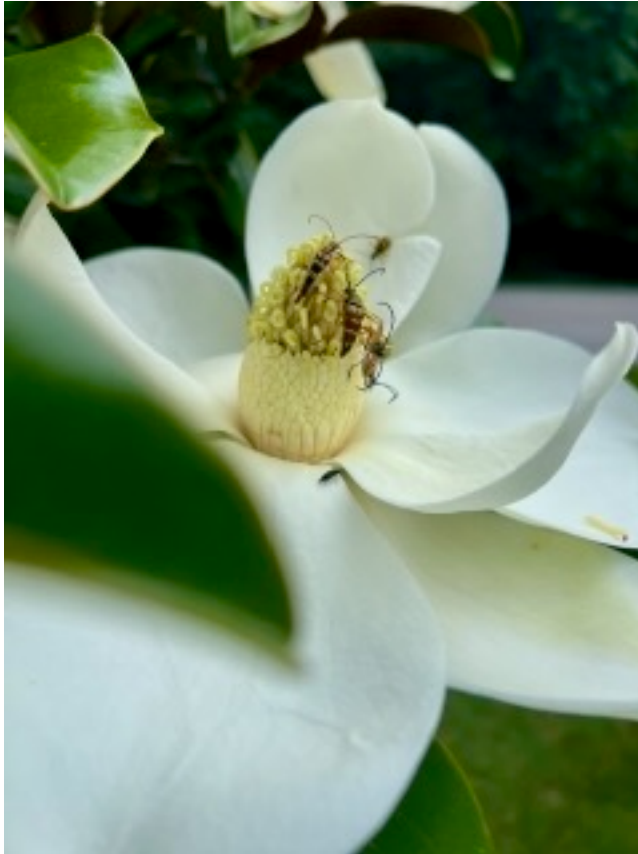


Ancient Pollinators

by Jan Pitzer

Landscape scouting necessitates a curious gardener's close observations, which often leads to valuable horticultural edification. Scouting rounds lately revealed an encouraging increase in pollinators, including bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. In addition, strange, unfamiliar insects discovered the Bracken Brown magnolia blossoms. Their presence instantly sparked curiosity: friend or foe? When in doubt, pick up a phone. Ai's response to a typed description didn't ring

true, so I snapped a photo for an insect ID app (Seek, by iNaturalist) and voila! The yellow-horned longhorn beetle matched 100%.



The yellow-horned longhorn beetle is a medium-sized, early season beetle, found east of the Great Plains. Larvae feed on dead and decaying wood. Adults are found from May to July on flowers in and around deciduous forests. Adults are 3/8" to 9/16" in length, elongate, slender, and strongly tapered to the rear. Oddly, they don't have long horns. They're yellow or brownish yellow with black markings and feed on the nectar and pollen of a variety of flowers.

Magnolias, spicebush, and paw paws, which belong to some of the oldest lineages of flowers on Earth, are so old that they're pollinated by beetles. Beetles and magnolias

co-existed with dinosaurs! Given this ancient setting, the pollinators we're most familiar with, butterflies and bees, had not yet evolved. Beetles were the primary insect pollinators for the time, and so they became the de facto agents for the magnolia's survival. This relationship also explains the magnolia's thick, leathery petals. Beetles can't hover to collect nectar, and their movements are clumsy and at times, rough. Known as "mess and soil" pollinators, they leave holes in petals, bits of plant matter and frass (waste) behind them. The beetle's method of pollinating, though not as sophisticated as that of bees or butterflies, has stood the test of time, at least for our beautiful magnolias.

Sources: mymodernmet.com, minnisotaseasons.com, The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

A family of foxes took up residence at the PDG this spring. Kathy Limp captured this scene and titled it: **Kits not Kids in the KinderGarden**



Editor's Note

from

Jan Pitzer & Laura Riester

This publication is not responsible for errors and omissions.
Please send newsletter additions before the end of the month to:
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