



# The Fauna in the Flora

## By Virginia Hallman

In October, entertaining and knowledgeable Peter Alden enlightened us regarding how invasive, alien plants are wreaking havoc in their adoptive environments due to vigorous, unchecked growth patterns. These plants are frequently spread by unsuspecting innocents including deer, birds, garden enthusiasts, and state officials, to name a few. To say the least, it's a tangled and not well understood dilemma.

What follows is a story about my own encounter with such intricacies. In September I was watering a large planter of geraniums and spearmint. I rather absently noted yellow and

black bees of various kinds darting in and out of the plants as I circled around. One the "bees" caught my eye by an unusual movement (for a bee). A closer look, some quick photos, and a few clicks of the PC mouse ([www.whatsthatbug.com](http://www.whatsthatbug.com) is recommended for would-be entomologists) re-

vealed that the "bee" was a long-horned beetle known as a Locust Borer. Its coloration resembles a yellowjacket wasp. **Continued p.2**



Locust Borer (*Megacyllene robiniae*)

## November 6 Oh, England!

Coming straight to us from across the pond (well, by way of Byfield) Ann Upington will be taking us on a virtual tour of some of England's most beautiful gardens, and she will tempt us with descriptions of the tours she leads through the fabled gardens of England. Her stories may lead some of the travelers among us to consider planning a trip of our own to Merrie Olde. Do you have a friend who is interested in gardens? A travelling companion?

After the presentation let's talk about whether or not some of our members would be interested in further discussions about planning a tour in Britain.

Hospitality will be provided by chairs **Clover Nally** and **Liz Scheld** with **Julia Arsenault**, **Lisa Arsenault**, **Amy Friend**, **Kathy Krajcski**, and **Rosemarie McCobb**.



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On every stem, on every leaf ... and at the root of everything that grew, was a professional specialist in the shape of grub, caterpillar, aphid, or other expert, whose business it was to devour that particular part.

~~Oliver Wendell Holmes

## Conservation **Fauna in the Flora** (Continued from page 1)

A few more mouse clicks informed me that adult and larval stages of this insect tunnel into black locust trees. An infestation of them can fell a young or stressed tree. I remembered then that a stand of black locusts less than a block away had looked a little sickly this spring... BAD BUG! I found remedies combating the insect on several state university extension websites.

Alas, I clicked one time too many and discovered that the black locust, which is deemed beneficial by many who plant them—for its wood (makes excellent fence posts) or to fertilize poor soil due to its legume qualities that enrich soil with nitrogen—is, by others, deemed harmful as an invasive exotic...BAD TREE! (This tree is native to the Ozarks and the southern Appalachians ONLY and considered exotic everywhere else in the country and in Europe, to which it has spread.) So maybe the industrious *Megacyllene robiniae* that I observed carefully sipping every bit of nectar out of every single small mint blossom is actually a... GOOD BUG!

Lest you think it's as simple as a coin toss at this point, I'll mention that the September 9<sup>th</sup> *New York Times* carried an article titled "Friendly Invaders." Two research scientists featured in this article have concluded that our attitudes about exotic species is "too simplistic." They posit that while some "exotic" invasions are devastating, often they're not, and that in fact their introduction may promote the evolution of new diversity. I'll leave you to ponder all this with two quotes from this article:

(1) "It is estimated that humans move 7,000 species a day," and (2) "Many crops [in the U.S.] are pollinated by honeybees originally introduced from Europe."



Black Locust in Winter

## Conservation **Maudslay Italianate Gardens**

Maudslay State Park has always been a wonderful place to walk, picnic, meet your friends, and snowshoe. Now, there's an even better reason to go: they have restored a portion of their formal gardens which have been in ruins for many years. In the Italianate garden, the fountain has been replaced, the brickwork repaired, and the formal beds restored. They received the cost of a new fountain from a single donor, and a group of volunteers and park personnel has completed the plumbing for it, and the installation of a discretely placed solar panel to run the new fountain. The box-bordered formal beds are planted out in dinner-plate dahlias, white phlox, and roses.

If you go to visit, park in the regular lot, then cross the street and head left, entering to the left of the great iron gates. Walk up the lane and go right past the gazebo to get to the gardens.

Further restoration is planned, with the next target the replacement of the wrought iron gates that bookended

the garden (and would certainly help keep the deer out of the yew!)



If you would like to help, you can send a donation to MSPA Garden Committee, Curzon Mill Road, Newburyport, MA 01950

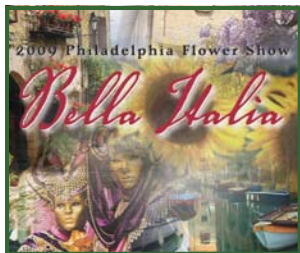




# Events

**Holiday Party** **Claire Flaherty** has offered her lovely home at 10 Dole Place in West Newbury for our annual Holiday Party. Thank you Claire, and also a BIG thank you to **Trish Robinson** for also offering her home for the party.

The New England Flower Show has been cancelled this year in Boston as they reorganize the show. The Merrimack Valley Triple A has arranged a trip to the **Phila-**



**delphia Flower Show** from **Saturday Feb 28 to March 2** as an alternative. President **Linda Schaeffer** will post the information on the EVENT board at our next meeting. If anyone is interested in going they should contact Merrimack Valley Triple A. Susan Schumacher is the Tour Manager.

## Wreath Making

Which night is better for our annual workshop to create the wreaths which will decorate our town for the holidays?



## Saturday Nov 29 or Tuesday, Dec 2?

Be ready to raise your hand at the November meeting!

Linda and board are on the loose—looking for someone to coordinate our **Spring Garden Tour** for members. **Jan Vynorius** has already volunteered her fabulous garden; who's next?

**Art In Bloom at the MFA** It's time to throw your hat in the ring! It's a fun, hair-raising, exhilarating, charitable event. Details at the November meeting.

## Club News and Member News

# Plant Sales & Garden Tours

## Prize-winning arrangement by Pat Finley at the Topsfield Fair

Hi All,

This is a picture of my design that I placed in the 2008 Topsfield Fair. I won Second place in the first design period. The design class was "Farmers Market" which was a design using vegetables. It was well received and I had fun doing the design. I also with my husband were host and hostess for the flower show on the first Saturday in the afternoon. We did this in The West Newbury Garden Club's time slot. It was fun to hear everyone's comments.



Thanks for the club's support.

~~ **Pat Finley**

## Ask Peony

# November, cont. from p.4



proper place indoors, never outdoors where they will rust over the winter. [Right, Peony. Whom are you married to?]

\*Order seed catalogs now for garden planning in January. For variety, consider companies that specialize in old and rare varieties or wild flowers.

\*Bring out the bird feeders and stock them with bird seed for the birds. Remember to provide fresh water for them too.

\*African violets do well when potted in rather small pots. A good general rule is to use a pot one-third the diameter of the plant. Encourage African violets to bloom by giving them plenty of light. They can be in a south window during dark winter months. They bloom beautifully under fluorescent lights. You might cut off a leaf with a long stem and put the stem in water in a demitasse cup or such. I know that there are other ways, but this works for rooting for me.

\*Bring in geraniums and take off dead branches and leaves. Place in a window and water when it occurs to you. In spring, give the whole plant a good haircut about a month before going outside again.



**WNGC**

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*Gardens for beauty,  
learning, and sharing*

The West Newbury Garden Club was founded in 1936 to encourage and cultivate an interest in gardening, to aid in protecting and conserving our natural resources, to further the study of horticulture and flower arranging, and to promote civic beauty. For more information, please contact President Linda Schaeffer at 978 363-5251 or at linda-schaeffer@verizon.net



**Board Meeting at Town Offices**  
**November 13, 2008 at 7:00pm**



## Ask Peony November

Dear Peony,

I'm so-o bored... (yawn); in the waning sunshine of October, I view my rotting mums, the dead peonies, desiccated rose hips and sigh deeply. November is so dreary. Help me, Peony. How shall I liven up this coming month in the garden?

Yawning Again

Dear Bore,

All right, you complainer, so November is cold, wet, nasty. Get going, you lazy gardener! There is a lot to do before frost sets in. Here are a few suggestions for your dreary days.

Cheerfully Yours,

*Peony*

\*After chrysanthemums have stopped blooming, cut stems back close to the ground and dispose of stems and all dropped and dried leaves and branches.

\*Reduce peony botrytis blight and hollyhock rust by removing and disposing of all old stems this fall. This

will reduce carryover of diseases during the winter.

\*Clean up rose beds. All diseased leaves must be raked up and disposed.

\*Inspect trees and shrubs for bagworm capsules. Remove and destroy them. It reduces next year's pest population.

\*After the ground freezes, mulch small fruit plants such as strawberries with one inch of straw or leaves. Keep mulch in place with rocks or small branches.

\*Dig up and store tender bulbs in a dark, dry place.

Tools:

\*Clean, oil and store garden tools. Clean power tools of all plant material and dirt. Replace worn spark plugs, oil all necessary parts, and sharpen blades. Store all tools in their

