



Ringwood Garden Club Newsletter

March 2026

President's Message

Countdown to Spring...

I'm sure we are all eagerly welcoming the glorious sunshine warming the air, garden centers soon to be filled with new plants to add to our gardens, and the trees and perennials beginning to bloom. After a winter glistening with snow, spring is truly something to celebrate!

The first day of Spring 2026 arrives on Friday, March 20, 2026, at 10:46 a.m. EDT — hip, hip, hooray!

*Our **February meeting** was a wonderful success, with many members participating in a plant swap. Those who attended went home with some fantastic new plants to enjoy in their homes and gardens.*

*Looking ahead, our **March General Meeting** will be held on **Tuesday, March 24 at 6:00 PM**. This month, we are pleased to open the program to our library community. We hope you can join us as our guest speaker, **Rashmi Dhenke, Master Gardener**, presents an engaging and informative program titled **"Tick Talk."***

Enjoy this delightful tease of seasonal weather as we begin shedding winter sweaters for garden tools, gloves, and sunhats.

Wishing everyone a joyful remainder of March as we watch nature — and our gardens — come to life.

Best of health to all,

Pam



1973-2023



March Meeting: Tuesday, March 24 at 6PM in the Ringwood Public Library.

Program: The Tick Talk

Presenter: Rashmi Dhenke, MG

Rashmi Dhenke will discuss the types of ticks in New Jersey and the impact on humans.

Rashmi Dhenke holds a Bachelor and Master degree in Zoology with specialization in genetics.

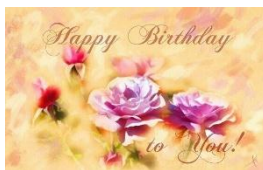
Rashmi has worked with plant tissue, cell injection and molecular biology.

Sweet/savory: Karen Eskholme-McNierney

Beverages: Barbara Sanford

Florals: Anet Mandarano

*****Note:** If for some reason you are unable to provide refreshments or table floral design, please help in reaching out to a member to switch with their month for hospitality. Thank you!



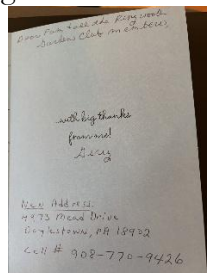
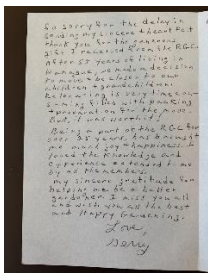
A very happy birthday to Barbara Sanford on March 2nd !



Happy St. Patrick's Day to All!

“For each petal on the shamrock, this brings a wish your way: Good health, good luck, and happiness for today and every day.”

As you know Gerry Manzi and her husband, John moved this January to Pennsylvania. Here is a lovely card that Gerry sent which also has her new address and phone number . I am sure she would enjoy staying connected with her dear friends of the garden club.



Yearly Dues

Annual Garden Club Dues Reminder

It's that time of year to submit your **Annual Ringwood Garden Club Dues**.

Annual Dues are \$35 per member

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Additional Request – Holiday Open House Silent Auction

This year, we are also requesting support for our **Holiday Open House Silent Auction Basket**. Each year, the Ringwood Garden Club proudly contributes a beautifully themed basket—designed by **Christel DeSimone and Karen Vieth**, along with the help of several club members—to the **New Jersey Botanical Gardens Holiday Fundraiser**. The Gardens are always grateful for our continued participation and generosity.

To support this effort, we are collecting **\$5 per member**. These funds will be used to purchase items for the auction basket.

Payment Options

- You may combine both contributions for a total of **\$40** (\$35 dues + \$5 auction basket).
- If you have already paid your annual dues, you may submit the **\$5 auction basket contribution separately**.

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How to Submit Payment

Mail checks to:

Carol Wrede
377 Conklingtown Road
Ringwood, NJ 07456

- **Or hand in your payment at our March meeting.**
Please make checks payable to: **Ringwood Garden Club**.

How Your Dues Support the Club

Members often ask how annual dues are used. Your \$35 dues help fund:

- Guest speakers and educational programs
- Supplies for decorating **Skylands Manor Holiday Open House**

- Library and community gardening projects
- Community service and volunteer outreach initiatives

In addition, the Ringwood Garden Club maintains membership in the **Garden Club of New Jersey**. Each member receives the **GCNJ newsletter** via email, keeping you connected to statewide gardening activities and resources.

Your dues are a valuable investment in an enriching, educational, and community-focused year. Thank you for your continued support of the Ringwood Garden Club.



Newsletter Photos

Gardens will soon be blooming... Take a picture and share it with the club!

Each month it is nice to show pictures taken by our members. If you have any digital photos to share you can email or text them to Pam. Need some ideas? Our members have shared photos of flowers, plants, displays, centerpieces from their home or travels.

From snow covered branches to sunny skies with 64 degree temperatures on 3/10/26 morning, it's a joy to see a Magnolia tree first sign of spring and purple crocus popping up to welcome you and make you smile!



Spring is happening , at Renate's home a siting of hellebore's, snowdrops and a blooming of a Witch Hazel Tree.





Member Information Updates

The club is requesting you inform us if there are any changes with your current information for the annual Yearbook and the GCNJ Membership. If you have a Cell Phone number, you wish to be contacted with, please provide us this information. Cell/text is a quick and effortless way to communicate as needed and equally important to send out alerts related to the club.

Any questions please reach out to Carol Wrede, Membership Chair: 201-341-7588 or email: wredekc@aol.com

EVERY GARDEN (CLUB) NEEDS SUNSHINE!

If any of you know of a club member who has become ill, lost a loved one, or needs our aid, please contact our Sunshine Chairperson, Karen Vieth, cell: 973-800-4933 or email: karenavieth@icloud.com. This will enable Karen to take the appropriate steps to let our members know their fellow club members care and are thinking of them.

Home, Gardening and Living info and more:



Many Thanks to Renate Gudat for providing helpful articles that you can all enjoy!

Smitten by March Stamina

Bruce Crawford

On many occasions I have considered myself fortunate to not be a plant, especially during March! With weather that can quickly change from balmy to bitterly cold and snowy, March can be challenging!

This is especially true for herbaceous plants with elegant evergreen foliage, such as *Saxifraga stolonifera*. Commonly known as Strawberry Begonia, it is hard to believe its delicate foliage has the stamina to endure the wrath of March, but endure it does!

If you are not familiar with this native of China, Japan, and Korea, it is not surprising – *Saxifraga stolonifera* is more frequently sold as a houseplant than a hardy perennial! A member of its own family or Saxifragaceae, *Saxifraga* is a large genus with roughly 470 species found throughout the northern hemisphere. The genus was named and described in 1753 by the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778), although he credited the French botanist Joseph Pitton De Tournefort (1656-1708) for creating the name. The name was crafted from the Latin *Saxum* or Rock and *Frangere* for

to break, inspired by the penchant for members of this genus to inhabit rocky terrain where they seem to Morris County Park Commission By Bruce Crawford Horticultural Manager Smitten by March Stamina shatter rocks.

It is thought the plant was first obtained and brought back to the Netherlands by Dutch Traders in the early to mid-18th Century, where the plant was invalidly described in 1775 by the Dutch botanist Nicolaas Meerburgh (1734-1714). Somehow, the plant was shared with the English Botanist and Entomologist William Curtis (1746-1790), who properly described the plant a year earlier in 1774. The species name of stolonifera describes how the plant spreads by short horizontal stems called stolons. The red stolons bear a small plantlet at the tip that ultimately takes root and allows the colony to expand. The rounded foliage loosely resembles that of a Begonia and, combined with the similar ability of strawberries to protective Anthocyanins. spread via stolons, the common name of Strawberry Begonia came to be known!

The foliage of Begonia is certainly attractive, yet I find that of this Saxifrage to be even more beguiling! The 1-4" diameter leaves are arranged in rosettes, appearing on 2-8" long petioles or leaf stems. The upper leaf surface is light green with showy, silvery white veins radiating outward from the base. The leaf margins are often blushed red while the undersides of the leaf are a rich, deep red. Further enhancing the display are short silvery hairs along the petioles, as well as over the upper and lower leaf surfaces that reduce moisture loss. As the temperatures drop during fall, the upper leaf surface usually develops a red blush from the buildup of

Although the plants rarely produce seeds, the 1-1½" long flowers still provide an attractive airy touch. Anywhere from several to 60 white flowers float 12-18" above the plants on loose, open panicles from late April through June. The flowers consist of five petals with the lower two petals roughly four times longer and wider than the overarching three, often reaching up to ¾" in length. They always remind me of the dangling mustache of Yosemite Sam! The upper three petals are nearly ¼" in length and can be pure white or blushed pink with thin red lines radiating outward from the petals' central axis.

Despite the complexity and beauty of the flower, Strawberry Begonia has simple growing needs. It will happily grow in a north facing rock garden or a wooded glade where the stolons allow the plants to reach around two feet in diameter. Soils should be well-drained with the pH ranging between 6-8. Plants are hardy in zones 6-9 and should you live in colder locations, the plants make wonderful houseplants! For stunning selections, consider 'Maroon Beauty' with its red foliage marked with silvery-white and green veins or 'Tricolor' for its green, pink, and white foliage! I first saw this plant growing on the north side of a home in the rain shadow of the roof soffits above and I was instantly smitten. I was even more amazed when I learned it was initially an overgrown houseplant! No doubt, you too will become smitten by this March stalwart!

Editor's Note: Bruce Crawford is a lover of plants since birth, is the Manager of Horticulture for the Morris County Parks Commission, and a Past President of the Garden State Gardens Consortium.

Area events you may have interest in attending:

The Women Gardeners of Ridgewood present
A Luncheon, Talk & Book Signing with Frances Palmer author of *Life With Flowers*
Saturday, April 18, 2026
Westside Presbyterian Church
6 South Monroe Street, Ridgewood

Prepare to be educated, enlightened and inspired by speaker Frances Palmer, author of "Life With Flowers".

She is a multi-talented and renowned potter, passionate gardener, exquisite flower arranger, and an accomplished photographer.

Frances will share her extensive, personal knowledge about growing flowers, planting tips and thoughtful reflections on art, gardening and the creative process -- a masterclass for flower lovers!

Join us on Saturday, April 18th at Westside Presbyterian Church,
6 South Monroe Street, Ridgewood
Doors open at 11:30 am for shopping for vintage jewelry & seasonal plants
Seated, catered luncheon served at noon
Advance tickets \$50, \$55 at the door

Reservations recommended as seating is limited
Purchase tickets online at www.womengardenersofridgewood.com
or at Backyard Living in Ridgewood

Visit us: <https://www.womengardenersofridgewood.com/gardenersday2026>

Humor and wisdom

