

Connecticut Horticultural Society

NEWSLETTER

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The Meaning of Green

by Jody Morgan, writer and CT Hort member

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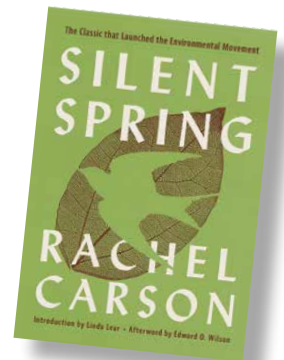
"Wearing the Green" is a March tradition you don't need to claim Irish ancestry to enjoy. Since the patron saint of the Emerald Isle died on March 17, 462 AD, the word green has acquired many shades of meaning beyond referring to a color on the spectrum occurring between blue and yellow. Synonyms include verdant, young, gullible, unripe, unseasoned, sickly, and freshly killed. Published in 1969, my unabridged edition of the Random House Dictionary of the English Language doesn't offer "environmentally beneficial" as a definition for green. When did "green" become commonly used to indicate something good for our planet?

In *The World According to Color: A Cultural History*, James Fox remarks: "Before 1970, few people knew what environmentalism was, let alone identified it with a color. Now, however, 'green' is a keyword of our times ... connected to a package of attitudes and activities that includes ethical eating, organic produce, recycling, renewable energy, pollution, deforestation, climate change, wildlife protection, and sustainable development. None of these things is literally green, but their metaphorical greenness is understood all over the world. "

Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, released in 1962, became a casting call for people around the world to accept leading roles in safeguarding the earth. Long-term effects of the widely used pesticide DDT were proving research promising the chemical was not a biohazard was inadequately completed. Bald eagles

were laying eggs with shells so thin they cracked when adult birds sat on them. In 1963, according to the American Eagle Foundation, there were only 417 nesting pairs of bald eagles in the lower 48 states. Since the US banned the use of DDT in 1972, the iconic avian symbol of our nation has rebounded. A count completed in December 2020 published by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in May 2021 estimated the population to be 316,700 individual bald eagles with 71,406 nesting pairs.

On April 22, 1970, about 20 million participants across the United States addressed environmental issues during the first Earth Day celebration. In a special broadcast, CBS news anchorman Walter Cronkite called the event "a day dedicated to enlisting all citizens of a bountiful country in a common cause of saving life from the deadly biproducts of that bounty." Not to be outdone, ABC News titled their report: "Earth Day: An SOS for Survival." Even politicians recognized the need to act, establishing the Environmental Protection Agency on December 2nd.



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to a longtime member
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Membership Dues:	
Individual.....	\$60
Family	\$80
Senior Individual (65+).....	\$55
Senior Family (65+).....	\$75
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Organizations	\$80

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Leadership Letter

Dear CT Hort Family,

Happy March! What an epic saga of snowflakes and shovels! I don't know about you, but I've been wondering if our garden tools might just serve better as sleds this month. At least the winter wonderland has given us a good excuse to cozy up indoors with gardening books and plan for the warmer days ahead.

Speaking of planning, let me share a little story from my own garden. Last March, I decided to experiment with a small plot dedicated entirely to heirloom tomatoes. Surprisingly, I don't eat tomatoes—I think I just wanted to test my green thumb. As usual, I got overly ambitious, and despite the overwhelming amount of rain last year, I ended up with more plants than I could manage. But that spring taught me two important lessons: always check your spacing, and never underestimate the power of sharing. The bounty was more plentiful than expected, so I got to share the harvest with my neighbors—not to mention, it sparked some great conversations about gardening techniques. I can't wait to recreate that magic this year!

Your participation not only enriches your own gardening experience but also strengthens our communities. Let's come together to share our challenges, successes, and a few laughs as we delve into everything horticultural.

Here's to warmer days ahead, less snow, and the promise of new growth!

Wishing you all a productive and joyful month,

Ashley Stewart
Executive Director

Thank you to our generous business members and supporters!



Hollister House Garden



White Flower Farm

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Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut

Greater Bridgeport Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc.

The Garden Barn Nursery

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Dan Bernarcik

Gardening in Overtime: Getting the Most out of Your Late Season Display with Dan Bernarcik

Thursday, March 20 • 7 pm

Zoom only. Members will receive the link to the program via email the Sunday before.

Fundamentally we all want the same thing...more! More plants, more choices, and more options to extend our gardening season. Dan will share with you ways that he extends the season on both sides at Chanticleer, both fall and spring. Plant suggestions, design tips, and techniques for how to make your late season garden sing.

Dan Bernarcik has worked at Chanticleer for almost 30 years and currently oversees their Courtyard Gardens

featuring tropical, subtropical, and tender perennials for seasonal display. He judges for the Philadelphia Flower Show and has worked on extended assignments at Lotusland, Long Vue House, and Ayrli's Garden. A former Regional Director of the Garden Writers Association, he has written for many publications, including *Fine Gardening*, *Horticulture*, and *Martha Stewart Living*.



COMING UP

Our next three speakers will be on both Zoom and in person at the Free Center, 725 Main Street, Middletown, CT



Thurs., April 24 at 7pm
Oh! What I didn't plant
with Nancy DuBrule-Clemente



Thurs., May 15 ay 7pm
Crevice Gardening: Even more than it's cracked up to be
with Panayoti Kelaidis



June 26 at 7pm
Designing for Habitat: From Back Yards to Byways
with C. Colston Burrell



CT Hort Past President Cheryl Marino and Executive Director Ashley Stewart attended the UConn Foundation's 2025 Annual Scholarship Celebration at the Bristol Events Center on Feb. 25, where the two met students, donors and past alumni. CT Hort has been giving \$8,000 annually to scholarship students for almost 60 years!

The Meaning of Green

from page 1

Although many other groups already were targeting a variety of issues, the emergence of Greenpeace is often credited with making "green" a globally recognized reference. Now one of the world's largest environmental organizations, Greenpeace was launched when a small Vancouver group called Don't Make a Wave planned to prevent a nuclear test at Amchitka Island in the Aleutians by sailing a boat to the site. Protesters believed a tsunami triggered by the test would occur along with other undesirable results. "Leaving one of those heady first meetings, Irving Stowe flashed the peace sign—as was his custom—and said 'Peace'. On that occasion, the usually quiet Canadian ecologist Bill Darnell made the off-hand reply, 'Let's make that a green peace.' "(Greenpeace.org) They planned to sail a boat to the island to prevent the test. On February 15, 1970, the Vancouver Sun ran a story outlining Don't Make a Wave's plan to "sail on the Greenpeace". The Associated Press picked up the story, alerting readers across the United States to the existence of the vessel. The Greenpeace movement gained momentum despite the failure of its maiden voyage.

The association of everything green with health and renewal dates, however, from the dawn of human existence. Many different cultures believed the life sustaining properties of plants extended to all things green. In ancient Egypt, for example, the word for green "wadj" also meant to flourish. In Symbol &

type precisely to better navigate the chlorophyll around them. This additional photoreceptor granted our ancestors abilities denied to most other mammals: it enabled them to spot ripe red fruits against a backdrop of green foliage, and to distinguish different leaves from each other—young from old, nutritious from poisonous. Our specific version of trichromacy means that in normal daylight conditions our eyes are most sensitive to light at a wavelength of 555 nanometers: a lime-like hue that hovers just on the threshold between green and yellow. It's surely no coincidence that this is the point at which most mature leaves are best differentiated."



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Despite how deeply ingrained our visceral love of their verdant color may be, lawns are the antithesis of environmentally beneficial. Unfortunately, cultural conventions make having a negative response to expanses of turf grass groomed like putting greens difficult even for individuals aware of the ecological deserts they create.

In "Manufactured Wonder of Lawns Closely Tied to Fossil Fuels," (May 1, 2021) Frank Carini notes: "The EPA has estimated that lawn care produces 13 billion pounds of toxic pollutants annually." In "Your Yard Is a Stealthy Fossil Fuel Guzzler—Give It a Climate Makeover" (March 22, 2019), Janet Marinelli explains: Synthetic fertilizers are extremely energy intensive to manufacture—for every ton of nitrogen made, four to six tons of carbon typically end up in the atmosphere."

“Protecting wildlife and biodiversity is something that everybody should be concerned with. Once we save birds, we're going to save a lot of other species that we share the earth with.”

Magic in Egyptian Art, R. H. Wilkinson notes that "to do 'green things' was a euphemism for positive, life-producing behavior in contrast to 'red things' which symbolized evil." Osiris, the god of the underworld and agriculture, was depicted as green, extending the symbolism of the color to resurrection as well as growth and life. Burials of the elite contained green stones and artifacts meant to serve in the afterlife. The oldest Mesoamerican civilizations likewise attributed regenerative power to everything green. Fox notes: "Indigenous Americans also deposited jade and other green stones into the graves of their loved ones, because they too believed green generated life."

Fox explains that humans evolved with a remarkable ability to distinguish all the myriad shades of green. he writes: "It is quite possible that primate eyes developed their third, long-wave, cone

Doug Tallamy writes in *Nature's Best Hope*: "In the United States, lawn irrigation consumes on average of more than 8 billion gallons of water daily; in fact, lawn watering accounts for 30 percent of all water used during the summer in the East and up to 60 percent in the West. ... What's more, maintaining our lawns in their prestigious weed-free states has become quite a toxic undertaking. All this matters: 40 percent of the chemicals used by the lawn-care industry are banned in other countries because they are carcinogens." Tallamy adds: "According to the Environmental Protection Agency, 40-60 percent of fertilizer applied to lawns ends up in surface and groundwater, where it kills aquatic organisms and contaminates drinking water."

Birds are in greater danger than ever before. The National Park Service notes: "In 2019, a landmark report showed that

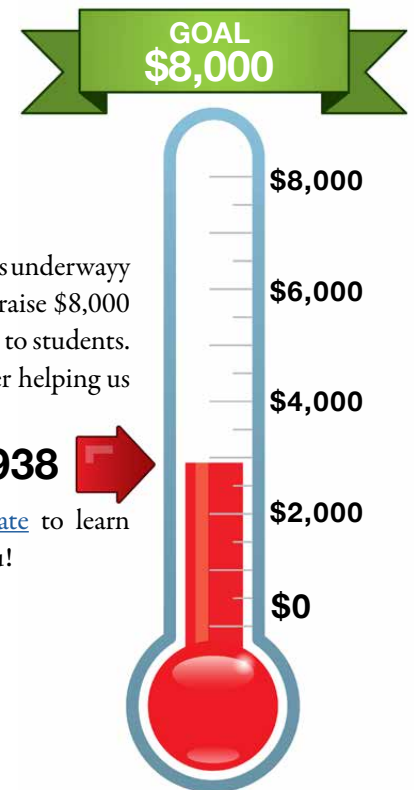
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America's birds are in crisis—2.9 billion birds have been lost in the United States and Canada since 1970." The National Park service joined 32 leading science and conservation organizations in preparing the 2022 U.S. State of the Birds Report, which concludes that more than half of U.S. bird species are in decline. Margo Rosenbaum quotes Peter Mara, a 2022 State of the Birds science committee member and director of the Earth Commons at Georgetown University Institute for Environment and Sustainability (Audubon Magazine, October 12, 2022): "Protecting wildlife and biodiversity is something that everybody should be concerned with. Once we save birds, we're going to save a lot of other species that we share the earth with."

Today, overuse of "green" to advertise anything supposed to be beneficial to the environment or human health has so diluted its meaning that it's a pale shade of the colorful call to action envisioned by environmentalists in 1970. Is it time to find a fresh phrase to inspire upcoming generations? 🗑️



2024-2025 Scholarship Fund



The 2024-2025 season is underway and so has our goal to raise \$8,000 to provide scholarships to students. We hope you'll consider helping us reach that goal!

\$2,938 →

Go to cthort.org/donate to learn how to give. Thank you!

CT Hort grant program is underway! 🌱

Applications for the CT Cares grant program are being accepted through April 15. Go to <https://forms.gle/qwFNmrfhLYnqY1FH9> to apply.

The program expands the Society's efforts to educate our great state on the importance of plants and our precious environment.

When reviewing applications, the committee gives priority to projects that support the educational mission of our organization, and the project must take place in Connecticut.

Two rounds of grants are awarded for a total of \$5,000 each year; the maximum amount per grant is \$500.

Applications will be accepted from Feb. 15 – April 15, with grants awarded on May 1.

If you would like to support our efforts with a monetary donation, please visit <https://cthort.org/support/other-ways-to-give/> to donate. You will be able to choose 'Scholarship Fund' or 'Community Grants' as the destination for your donation. Thank you for your support.



Horticultural Happenings & Announcements

Note: Happenings are listed on a space-available basis. To submit an event, send details to news@cthort.org.

Please format the announcement to resemble the entries below. Deadline for the April issue is March 14.

Tues., March 4, 11:45am—Garden Club of Woodbridge presents "Revamp and Renew: A Planning Strategy for the Already Established Garden," First Church of Christ, 5 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge. Marsha Ackerman. Marsha is the owner of Second Bloom Design in Woodbridge. Open to the public with a \$5 guest fee. Contact Mary Jane for more info at wpurcell@snet.net.

Tues., March 4, 12:30pm—The Garden Club of Hartford presents "Tree Roots and Soil: Interactions Underground!" with Peter Del Tredici, Park Street@The Lyric branch of Hartford Public Library, at 630 Park Street, Hartford. Peter Del Tredici is an American botanist and author. He is a former senior research scientist at Arboretum for 35 years. He was appointed curator of the Lara Anderson Bonsai Collection in 1982, among other things. His lecture will be on "The Radicle Underground;" about the growth and development of tree root systems and their symbiotic associations with soil microbes. Admission is free, but register by calling Katy Sargent by calling 860-463-1667 or emailing katy.n.sargent@gmail.com.

Wed., March 5, 8am-4:30pm—Connecticut Association of Wetland Scientists (CAWS) 2025 Annual Meeting, Aqua Turf Club, 556 Mulberry Street, Southington. Wetland and soil scientists, ecologists, designers, and other land use specialists, government officials, municipal commission members, and environmental advocates are welcome to join the daylong meeting featuring information from the National Coastal Resilience Fund and Long Island Sound Futures Fund, CT DEEP and CT DOT program updates, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Primer, Restoration of the Hammock River Wildlife Management Area, Climate Impacts in Connecticut and Adaptation Solutions, and more. Cost is \$60-\$130. Register at <https://caws.wufoo.com/forms/2025-caws-annual-meeting-membership/>

Tues., March 11, 6-7pm—Meeting of the Bartlett Horticulture Club, Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens, 151 Brookdale Road, Stamford. The club will play Plant Jeopardy and compete for plant prizes. The goal of the club is to create a place of community where you can learn something, meet new people, and practice your plant skills

in a casual environment. Free admission. Register at <https://www.bartlettarboretum.org/bartlett-horticulture-club>

Sat., March 15, 9am-1pm—Elizabeth Park's Annual Bulb & Plant Sale, Elizabeth Park, 1561 Asylum Ave., West Hartford. The sale will take place in the historic Sweetland-Patricelli Greenhouse Complex in Elizabeth Park. Visitors are asked to bring their own trays, boxes, or carts to carry away their plant purchases.

The sale will take place in the historic Sweetland-Patricelli Greenhouse Complex in Elizabeth Park. Free admission. <https://elizabethparkct.org/event/bulb-plant-sale>

Tues., March 18, 3-4pm—Olmsted Network hosts "Conversations With Olmsted: What Ever Happened to Parks for All People?," a virtual program. Public spaces are under attack today, viewed as building sites where access can be limited to those with money and power. This talk will examine distressing trends across the country and explore what can be done to ensure that park land is viewed as an essential public amenity. Tickets are free, but please register at <https://olmsted.org/events/conversations-with-olmsted-what-ever-happened-to-parks-for-all-people>

Fri., March 28, 6pm, 7pm, 8pm or 9pm—Graveyard Shift Ghost Tours at The Mark Twain House, 351 Farmington Avenue, Hartford. The Mark Twain House has been featured on Syfy Channel's Ghost Hunters and the Biography Channel's My Ghost Story, NPR's Where We Live, and the West London Witch Podcast. On these tours participants will hear about these investigations -- and learn about Mark Twain's own interest in the supernatural. Tickets start at \$23. Register at <https://marktwainhouse.org/event/graveyard-shift-tour/>

Sat., March 29, 1:30-4pm—The Avon Garden Club presents "Spring into Garden Season," Avon Public Library, 281 Country Club Rd., Avon. Ask questions of established, gardeners, meet local representatives from area non-profits, and stay for Margery Winters' discussion, "Seeing Red (or Why Friends Don't Let Friends Plant Burning Bush)," at 3pm. Margery is from the Simsbury Land Trust and Roaring Brook Nature Center. Free admission. Questions? Email MRGNJ3@AOL.COM.

Visit cthort.org for the MOST CURRENT listings and links.



A special tribute to Juana Flagg

In a nutshell, Juana Flagg is remarkable. At nearly 102, she is CT Hort's longest-standing member! She joined CT Hort in 1977 and in the 1990s, was the Awards Committee Chairperson. We were thrilled to honor Ms. Flagg with a certificate of appreciation.

Clockwise, from left: Nancy D'Oench, an award-winning flower arranger and garden writer, and longtime member of the Garden Club of America and the Middletown GC, and Bonnie Penders, former CT Hort Office Admin, member of the Old Saybrook GC, and gardener at the Old Saybrook Historical Society's Heritage Gardens present a certificate of appreciation to Juana Flagg.



GARDENS AND TEMPLES OF JAPAN with C. Colston Burrell – Main Tour and Post Tour November 5–23, 2025

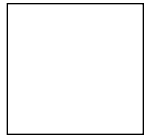
Join Garden and Nature Tours with C. Colston Burrell, local guide Maurice Horn and Friendship Tours in Japan to begin exploring the history, culture, cuisine, and iconic gardens of Tokyo, Gotemba, Hakone and Kyoto.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Visit four storied cities: Tokyo, Kamakura, Gotemba, and Kyoto
- Learn about the art of Japanese gardening from a master in the East Gardens of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo
- In Tokyo, tour Koishikawa Korakuen, Hamarikyū Garden, and Meiji Jingu
- Peruse art and explore history in Tokyo's Nezu Museum and the Hakone Museum of Art and Moss Garden
- Weave through the streets of Ginza
- Tour three botanical gardens
- Behold the Great Buddha of Kamakura
- Enjoy the autumn colors on a scenic drive to view Mt. Fuji
- Walk in the footsteps of history through 10 temple gardens
- Enjoy four sumptuous dinners



Call 860-243-1630 or go to <https://www.friendshiptours.net/tours/gardens-of-japan> for more information.



Dated Material 🌿 *Please Rush*

CT Hort Calendar at a Glance

Tuesday, March 4 – Board of Directors
Remote Meeting, 7 pm

Friday, March 14 – Deadline for the
April Newsletter

Thurs., March 20 – Speaker presentation:
*Gardening in Overtime:
Getting the Most out of
Your Late Season
Display* with
Dan Bernarcik,
7 pm (Zoom only)

Go to CTHort.org for information on these
and all other meetings and programs.

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Best display at the CT Flower Show? Ladd's Garden Center

Congratulations to Ladd's Garden Center, based in South Windham, CT, for winning Best in Show at the Connecticut Flower & Garden Show last month. The displays, as always, were beautiful and creative designed. Our judges—Tom Christopher, Diane Erling, and Elizabeth Morin—had the job of picking a winner.

This year, it was Ladd's Garden Center's display that stood out. It was a landscape that featured a miniature fairyland, alive with all the signs of spring—blooming flowers, little streams, tiny shrubs and other wonders of nature.

Every year, CT Hort picks a display at the show that offers educational value, horticultural interest, topnotch design, effective use of plant material and inspiration to a home gardener.

Pictured: Kimberly Ladd accepts the Best Display plaque from CT Hort Board Member Diane Erling.