

Charlevoix Area Garden Club

A PUBLICATION OF THE
CHARLEVOIX AREA GARDEN CLUB,
MEMBER OF
MICHIGAN GARDEN CLUBS, INC.
& NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

March 2026

www.charlevoixareagardenclub.org



President's Message

I'm not sure why, but this year February, the shortest month of the year, seemed to be going on forever. Maybe it is the hope that when March finally arrives it may bring with it a promise of warmer weather and a spring that will see the snow piles in the parking lots around town begin to melt away. I expect that this time of year for many of you it is a time to explore the seed catalogs and start the plants you will be moving out into your yards and gardens.

On an entirely different topic, your Garden Club membership contains a connection to Michigan Garden Clubs' "Constant Contact" link. This sends to your email information about the MGC Schools, MGC events and conferences. If you are not receiving these emails you can sign up to receive them by going to the Michigan Garden Club, Inc web site, select Member Resources, (upper left), log in to the member site with the password [mgcgrow](#) and select Resubscribe to Constant Contact.

Happy Gardening!

Carolyn

March Membership Meeting

Join us at 1:00 pm on Tuesday, March 10 in the Library's Community Room for our March Member Meeting. Our featured speaker will be Tom Darnton, President of the Lake Charlevoix Association. One of the primary goals of the Association is to serve as an advocate for sensible and sustainable practices for lake use and shoreline development. In 2025 they completed the revitalization of the Shoreline Greenbelt Demonstration Gardens at Sunset Park in Boyne City. Using native plants that prevent erosion and filter runoff the garden is an example of how lakeshore property owners can protect the health of Lake Charlevoix.



Cold Stratify Seeds for Spring Planting

Some seeds need winter's patience before they grow. If you've ever wondered why some seeds hesitate, it's often because they're waiting for winter. Cold stratification, exposing seeds to a period of moisture and chill, mimics winter conditions to wake the seeds from dormancy, ensuring reliable and strong seedlings.

There are several cold stratification methods. Some seeds want consistent cold and moisture before sowing; many native perennials (milkweeds, wild bergamot, butterfly weed, echinacea, yarrow, rudbeckia), as well as poppies fall here. Others can be sown directly into cold soil and let the season do the work (radish, peas, kale).

This brief video from the University of Missouri Extension <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oZBap0Fqng> explains the process of seed stratification and scarification.

Hudson Valley Seed Company has two helpful charts (below) with methods of cold stratification. You can also achieve this by winter sowing your seeds (refer to the article in our February newsletter).

HUDSON VALLEY SEED CO.

COLD STRATIFICATION *Baggie Method*

- Mist Paper Towel**
Spray damply and fold twice (1/4 the original).
- Place Seeds on Towel**
Open like a book and place seeds on one half.
- Refold & Put in Bag**
Two layers on top and two on bottom, slide into baggie.
- Label & Refrigerate**
Seal tight and let it rest for recommended period.

Helpful for light-requiring seeds, as you can easily transfer them right onto the soil surface to sprout.

For more growing tips, visit our blog at hudsonvalleyseed.com

HUDSON VALLEY SEED CO.

COLD STRATIFICATION *Ice Cube Method*

- Make Regular Ice**
Fill 2/3s of the way. Tap water will do.
- Sprinkle Seeds Over Ice**
Add a few drops of water on top of seeds to coat.
- Refreeze**
Your seeds are now fossilized in the ice.
- Plant in Cold Earth**
Press the cube with your foot until it is level with the soil.

If seeds need darkness, sprinkle soil on top of cube.

For more growing tips, visit our blog at hudsonvalleyseed.com

Charlevoix Conservation District Tree Sale

The Charlevoix Conservation District's Annual Spring Tree Sale catalog and order form are available now online. Orders are due by April 1. Tree pickup day is April 25 – from 9 am – 1 pm at the District Barn, 303 North Street, Boyne City. This is a great way to get native tree, fruit tree, and shrub seedlings at a low cost while supporting the work of the Conservation District at the same time! Any leftover inventory will be available to purchase on Monday, April 27 from 4 pm until the trees are gone.

2026 Tree Sale Catalog:

https://4ee4cc4a-6382-4028-bb0d-f103af334f7d.filesusr.com/ugd/f745f5_2395c35c2c1d4a20951f1ca447185392.pdf

Order Form:

https://4ee4cc4a-6382-4028-bb0d-f103af334f7d.filesusr.com/ugd/f745f5_17d1e34ad4d847a3b1bd2ba9fd38a148.pdf



National Garden Clubs

The NGC Path of Success: Honor someone special by purchasing an engraved paver on the 1/4 mile long “Path of Success” that will link the NGC headquarters in St. Louis to the Missouri Botanical Gardens. This project will also serve as an educational platform, showing the rich history and mission of NGC. <https://gardenclub.org/ngc-path-success>

Garden Clubs 2026 National Convention

May 4 – May 6, 2026. “Meet Me in St. Louis Where the River Bends and The Arch Reaches the Sky!”. Registration is now open for the NGC Convention in St. Louis. If you are interested in attending, register before March 31 to avoid a late fee.

<https://gardenclub.org/events/2026-convention>



Michigan Garden Clubs

The Michigan Garden Clubs will be hosting several courses around the state this spring. All CAGC members are eligible to attend. Each course requires advance registration and payment of the fee – which includes 10 hours of instruction and lunch on both days. Courses may be taken in any order (you do not need to attend Course 1 first).

Environmental School

Course 3: April 6 – 7, 2026

MSU W.K. Kellogg Biological Station, Hickory Corners, MI

The mission of the Environmental Schools is to teach environmental literacy to cherish, protect and conserve the living earth. The curriculum includes: Air Ecology, The Rain Forest, Outdoor and Indoor Pollution, Endangered Plants and Wildlife, and Environmental Ethics. There will also be a Nature Discovery field trip.

Registration deadline March 20. Use the following link for more information:

<https://migardenclubs.org/environmental-school-course-3-april-6-7-2026/>



Landscape Design School

Course 1: April 23 – 24, 2026

Boardman Nature Center, Traverse City, MI

Through Landscape Design School, students acquire the tools for making their own gardens more beautiful and easier to maintain. The curriculum includes: Principles and Elements of Landscape Design, Basics of a Site Plan, Your Ecosystem, Color in the Landscape, Developing your Garden Plan, Xeriscaping, and Designing Gardens with Native Plants.

Registration opens March 1. Use the following link for more information:

<https://migardenclubs.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/LDS-24-C1-Brochure.pdf>



Gardening School

Course 3: April 17 – 18, 2026

Harbert Community Church, Sawyer, MI

Gardening Schools provide educational information to those who are especially interested in gardening, horticulture and related subjects. The curriculum includes: Factors that Influence Plant Growth, New Plant Development and Evaluation, Container Gardening, Houseplant Basics, and Native Trees and Shrubs.

Registration deadline April 3. Use the following link for more information:

<https://migardenclubs.org/gardening-school-course-3-april-17-18-2026/>

Virtual and In-Person Events

Apple Pruning Workshop, March 21, 9 am – Noon, Little Traverse Conservancy Elizabeth B. Hoffmann Nature Preserve. Led by LTC’s Recreation, Access, and Maintenance Manager Nate Dionne, whose family has run an apple orchard business for many years, this workshop will feature demonstrations of pruning old and abandoned apple trees to increase their vigor, productivity, and appearance. Participants will then have the chance to put these principles and objectives to use on the trees found at the Elizabeth B. Hoffmann Nature Preserve, which is located 5.5 miles south of Charlevoix. Participants are invited to bring their own loppers/pole saws.



Limited quantities of tools, including pruners and pole saws, will be available for use during the hands-on portion of the workshop. To register, visit www.landtrust.org or call 231.347.0991.

Seed Starting 101, Saturday, April 25, 10 am – Noon, NCMC Health and Science Building Room 333. Do you love to garden but suffer from sticker shock when you see how much you spend on new plants each season? Do you want to have more choices and more control over what you grow? By starting your own seeds, you can dramatically increase the number and variety of plants in your garden, and you’ll save money too! This course is led by NMMGA member Monica Gruler Farrier. \$30, registration required: <https://www.ncmclifelonglearning.com/event-6488109>



CAGC Floral Design Group

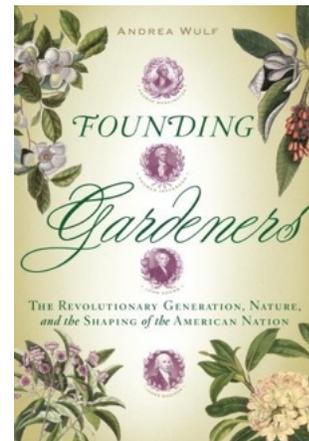
At their February workshop, the Floral Design Group created designs featuring “spatial thrust”. This is a fun group and All CAGC members (including novices) are welcome to join and learn principals of design with instruction from Marge McGoff. The next meeting of the Floral Design Group takes place on Tuesday, March 17 in the Charlevoix Public Library’s Community Room from 1 – 3pm.



CAGC Book Club

Please join us for the second meeting of our book group on **Thursday, April 2**, from 10:30 am – Noon in the Charlevoix Public Library Trustees Conference Room. We will be discussing: *Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation*, By Andrea Wulf.

For the Founding Fathers, gardening, agriculture, and botany were elemental passions: a conjoined interest as deeply ingrained in their characters as the battle for liberty and a belief in the greatness of their new nation. *Founding Gardeners* is an exploration of that obsession, telling the story of the revolutionary generation from the unique perspective of their lives as gardeners, plant hobbyists, and farmers. Acclaimed historian Andrea Wulf describes how George Washington wrote letters to his estate manager even as British warships gathered off Staten Island; how a tour of English gardens renewed Thomas Jefferson's and John Adams's faith in their fledgling nation; and why James Madison is the forgotten father of environmentalism. Through these and other stories, Wulf reveals a fresh, nuanced portrait of the men who created our nation.



This is a great read as our Nation celebrates its 250th birthday. Bring your own coffee and we will provide light snacks.

Get Ready to Do Some Pruning!

From Iowa State University Extension and Outreach



February through March is generally regarded as the best time to prune most deciduous trees. The absence of foliage at this time of year gives the individual a clear view of the tree and allows the selection and removal of appropriate branches. Also, when pruned in late winter, the walling-off or compartmentalization of wounds can begin immediately with the onset of growth in spring. Oaks are an exception. The winter months – December, January, and February – are the best time to prune oak trees. Deciduous trees can be pruned at other times of the year with little or no negative consequences (To clean up storm damage, for example). However, if possible, avoid pruning deciduous trees in spring when the trees are leafing out and in fall when the trees are dropping their leaves.

Evergreen trees, such as pine, spruce, and fir, require little pruning. Dead, broken, and diseased branches can be removed at any time of the year. Late winter is the best time to remove unwanted lower branches on evergreen trees.

Spring-flowering shrubs, such as lilac and forsythia, bloom in spring on the growth of the previous season. The plant's health or condition determines the best time to prune spring-flowering shrubs. The best time to prune healthy, well-maintained spring-flowering shrubs is immediately after flowering.

Summer-flowering shrubs, such as potentilla and Japanese spirea, bloom in summer on the current year's growth. Prune summer-flowering shrubs in late winter or early spring. The pruned shrubs will bloom in summer on the current season's growth.

Most deciduous shrubs should not be sheared into formal hedges. It destroys their natural shape, reduces the number of leaves and flowers within the shrub's canopy, and causes a proliferation of small shoots at the branch tips that will look unsightly. Do not prune deciduous shrubs in late summer. Pruning shrubs in August or early September may encourage a late flush of growth. This new growth may not harden sufficiently before the arrival of cold weather and be susceptible to winter injury.

The upper portions of modern roses, such as hybrid teas, floribundas, and grandifloras, typically have winter dieback due to exposure to low winter temperatures and extreme temperature changes. Gardeners should prune out the dead wood after the winter protection is removed.

For more information: <https://yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu/how-to/proper-time-prune-trees-and-shrubs>



CAGC Events and Community Calendar

March

- 3** **Designing Monarch Overwintering Habitat**, 2-3 pm. Stay connected with the latest monarch conservation topics by attending free monthly online webinars. The **Monarch Conservation Webinar Series** is a unique opportunity to hear from experts across various interdisciplinary fields related to monarchs, other pollinators, their habitats, and the threats and pressures that make conservation urgent. Bring your questions and get ready to discover how you can get involved in protecting monarchs. Sign up once and attend the webinars that you are interested in. <https://monarchjointventure.org/resources/monarch-webinar-series/agriculture>
- 5** **CAGC Board Meeting**, 10:00 am, Charlevoix Public Library.
- 7** **Voices of the Land: A Sand County Almanac Community Reading**, 1-4 pm, Charlevoix Conservation District, 303 North Street, Boyne City. Join other nature-enthusiasts in the community to bring Aldo Leopold's beautiful writing and important message about the land to life! Attendees will receive a free Sand County Almanac book and refreshments on the house. This workshop will be held in the district Community Room.
- 10** **CAGC Member Meeting**, 1:00 pm, Charlevoix Public Library. Tom Darnton, President of the Lake Charlevoix Association, will highlight the work they do to preserve and protect the lake and shoreline.
- 17** **CAGC Floral Design Group**, 1:00 pm, Charlevoix Public Library, Community Room.
- 20** **First Day of Spring!**
- 21** **Apple Pruning Workshop, 9 am – Noon**, Little Traverse Conservancy Elizabeth B. Hoffmann Nature Preserve – located 5.5 miles south of Charlevoix. To register, visit www.landtrust.org or call 231.347.0991.
- 21** **Nature Journaling**, 1-4 pm, Boyne Arts Center, One Water Street, Boyne City. If you've read *A Sand County Almanac*, you're familiar with Aldo Leopold's beautiful nature sketches. Even if you aren't, this workshop will help hone all of your senses and introduce new ways to observe nature around you. \$20 – all supplies included. <https://www.boynearts.org/product/nature-journaling-julie-hermann-sharon-wade-sat-march-21/NNGGWN45WSBNXYOWUPL6TEE5?cs=true&cst=custom>
- 21** **Maplefest**, Noon - 3 pm, Free, Grass River Natural Area, 6500 Alden Hwy., Bellaire. Watch sap turn into maple syrup. Staff will be available to answer your questions. Hike the trail to see where the buckets are hung and the trees area tapped. A limited supply of Grass River Maple Syrup will be available to purchase. <https://www.grassriver.org/classes-and-programs.html>
- 24** **Sights, Sounds & Science of the Migratory Monarch Colonies**, 2-3 pm, virtual. Free monthly webinar from the Monarch Joint Venture. Bring your questions and get ready to discover how you can get involved in protecting monarchs. Sign up once and attend the webinars that you are interested in. <https://monarchjointventure.org/resources/monarch-webinar-series/agriculture>

April

- 2 CAGC Book Club**, 10:30 am, Charlevoix Public Library, Trustees Conference Room. We will be discussing *Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation*, By Andrea Wulf. All CAGC members are welcome!
- 9 CAGC Board Meeting**, 10:00 am, Charlevoix Public Library.
- 14 CAGC Member Meeting**, 1:00 pm, Charlevoix Public Library. Amy Lipson, Conservation Specialist at Little Traverse Conservancy will discuss the transformation of a former golf course near Harbor Springs into the Offield Viewlands Nature Conservancy. She will discuss the work done to remove invasive species and install native plants and how this can be applied to a home garden.
- 21 CAGC Floral Design Group**, 1:00 pm, Charlevoix Public Library, Community Room.
- 22 Earth Day**
- 24 Arbor Day**
- 24 Interactive Cooking Demonstration**, NCMC Lifelong Learning, 11:30 – 1:00, NCMC Library Conference Center. Les Cheneaux Culinary School presents an interactive cooking demonstration. This \$15 course is led by Zach Schroeder, director and culinary instructor at the Les Cheneaux Culinary School in Hessel. Guests will taste how herbs, spices, aromatics and acids can directly transform different foods, and come away with practical, memorable tools to take back to their own kitchens. Perhaps this will influence your herb garden choices this year! <https://www.ncmclifelonglearning.com/event-6464529>
- 25 Seed Starting 101**, NCMC Lifelong Learning, 10 am – Noon. Do you love to garden but suffer from sticker shock when you see how much you spend on new plants each season? Do you want to have more choices and more control over what you grow? By starting your own seeds, you can dramatically increase the number and variety of plants in your garden, and you'll save money too! The \$30 course is led by Monica Gruler Farrier, Master Gardener. <https://www.ncmclifelonglearning.com/event-6488109>
- 28 Milkweed Biodiversity**, 2-3 pm, virtual. Free monthly webinar from the Monarch Joint Venture. Bring your questions and get ready to discover how you can get involved in protecting monarchs. Sign up once for the series: <https://monarchjointventure.org/resources/monarch-webinar-series/agriculture>

May

- 2 Getting Started with Cut Flowers**, NCMC Lifelong Learning, 10 am – Noon. \$30. NCMC Health and Science Building, Room 333. Presented by Monica Gruler Farrier, Master Gardener and owner of Gruler Gardens in Petoskey. <https://www.ncmclifelonglearning.com/event-6488133>
- 4-6 NGC Annual Convention**, St. Louis, MO
- 7 CAGC Board Meeting**, 10:00 am, Charlevoix Public Library.
- 12 CAGC Member Meeting**, 1:00 pm, Charlevoix Public Library. Presentation by Morgan Composting. Through their Dairy Doo line of products, they promote sustainable and organic agricultural practices.
- 19 CAGC Floral Design Group**, 1:00 pm, Charlevoix Public Library, Community Room.
- 23 CAGC Plant Sale**, Ferry Beach Park



CAGC Newsletter, Website, and Social Media

Submission deadline for the April newsletter is March 26. Email your photos, information, and articles to newsletter editor Beth Cowie at bethcowie@mac.com. You can also send information and photos for our website and social media.



Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CharlevoixAreaGardenClub/>
Instagram [@charlevoixareagardenclub](https://www.instagram.com/charlevoixareagardenclub)

