Greenfield Garden Club Newsletter

May 2026 Vol. 34, no. 5

President's Musings ~ *Laura Schlaikjer*

Spring is really here! Nurseries are opening up and people are eager to purchase plants and put them in the ground. Houseplants are begging to go outside for the summer. If your plants—annuals or houseplants—are tender, make sure you keep an eye on the weather and are prepared to cover them up if needed. You can't rule out a late frost. We are visiting Sugarloaf Gardens this month, with Dan Ziomek as our guide. It's a continuation of his annual meeting talk about planting for the birds, and he will give us the low-down on the plants mentioned on his hand-out back in February. Bring your questions! We've been thinking about making a t-shirt for the club. Are you feeling artistic? Have some ideas? Know a local artist we should talk to? Let me know! Enjoy this season of new birth and remember, "old gardeners never die, they just spade away and then throw in the trowel. —Laura

GRANTS AWARDED 2026

ORGANIZATION	PROJECT TITLE	COST
Greenfield Public Library	Launching GPL'S Seed Library	$500.00
Greenfield Elementary Schools	Starting Small to Bring Gardens to our Three Elementary Schools	$137.00
Mohawk Trail Regional School	Front Entrance Garden & Pollinator Gardens	$464.00
Buckland Elementary School	Bloomfest (looking for volunteers this year)	$0.00
Sanderson Academy	Seeds to Make a Garden Grow	$133.38
New Leyden Woods Resident Services	New Leyden Woods Community Garden Project	$319.96
Four Rivers Charter School	Annual and Perennial Garden	$300.00
Wheeler Memorial Library	Plant a Seed, Read: 2026 Pollinator Garden Revitalization	$294
		TOTAL = $2,148.34

Treasurer's Report

Balance as of Mar 14, 2026..... $7,300.81
Income $285.19
(Dues $285. and Interest .19)
Expenses $1,265.00
(3 separate grant payments)

Balance as of April 15, 2026.....$6,321.00

All financial matters and membership dues should be directed to Greenfield Garden Club: c/o Becky George, 91 Smith St #212, Greenfield MA 01301

Questions? greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 1 - Flower Moon

May 12, 4:30 p.m. - Steering Committee Meeting

May 21, 5:30 p.m. - Private tour with Dan Ziomek, Sugarloaf Gardens. Plants to attract birds.

June 7 - Visit to Laughing Dog Farm, once part of the Renaissance commune.

June 20 - **SAVE THE DATE!** Greenfield Garden Tour
(rain date 6/21)

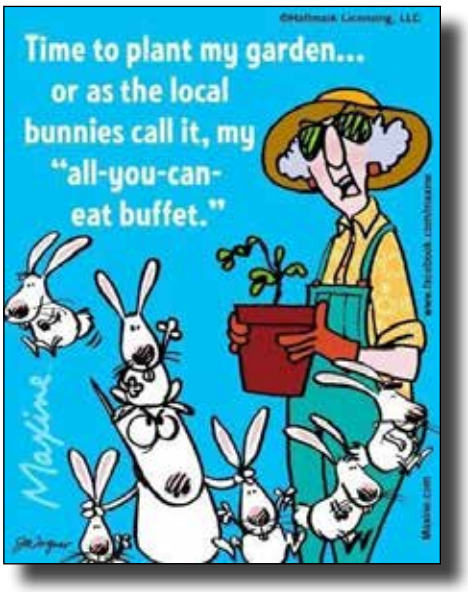
July 16, 5:30 p.m. - Visit Dayna Veach in N. Orange. She breeds natives and her partner grows daylilies.

"Nature does not hurry, but everything is accomplished."
~ Lao Tz

June newsletter DEADLINE:
Saturday, May 25
greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com

Officers 2026:

President/Newsletter/FB/Website:
Laura Schlaikjer
Vice President:
Marsha Stone
Treasurer:
Becky George
Recording Secretary:
Jane Alexander
Corresponding Secretary:
Nicki Shipman
At Large Member/s:
Eva Carrier
Celt Grant
Leslie Schaler



Margaret Roach's excellent
Monthly Garden Chores

Margaret's recent podcasts:

Resilient Plants of the High Line

Succession Sowing Strategies

Growing potatoes organically

What we can learn from 'outsider animals,'

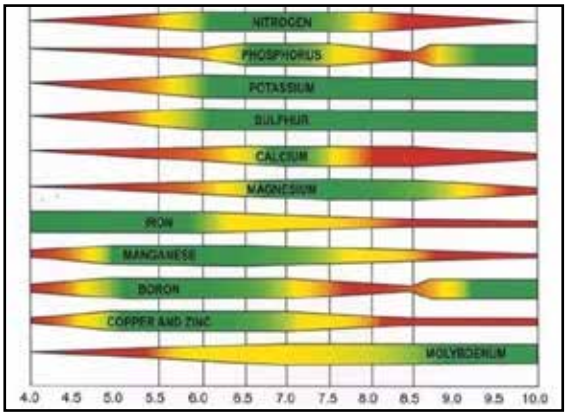
The straight talk on cultivars

Local Items of Interest

Greenfield Public Library
Now has Soil Health Test Kits

The kit includes directions, general guidance, and physical materials to complete soil health assessments. The kit and guide are meant to be universally applicable, from vegetable farmers to community gardeners, from pasture managers to turf managers. Adapt considerations and interpretations as needed.

Soil Health Testing Kit Guidebook
UMass Extension



Greenfield's 16th Annual Bee Fest
Saturday, May 16, 2026, 9 am to 4 pm

Each spring, Greenfield Bee Fest celebrates Lorenzo Langstroth, the "Father of Modern Beekeeping," with fun and learning for all ages highlighting the vital role of the honeybee in sustaining our environment.

"This year is the Sweet Sixteenth year for the Greenfield Bee Fest, and things will be absolutely BUZZING - with more artsy educational fun, more celebration, more vendors, and even a SPECIAL GUEST musical appearance from MISTER G"

Climate-Smart Gardening to Reduce Plant Invasions and Support Resilient Ecosystems

May 7, 7:00 pm
Charlemont Federated Church
Buckland, MA

FREE

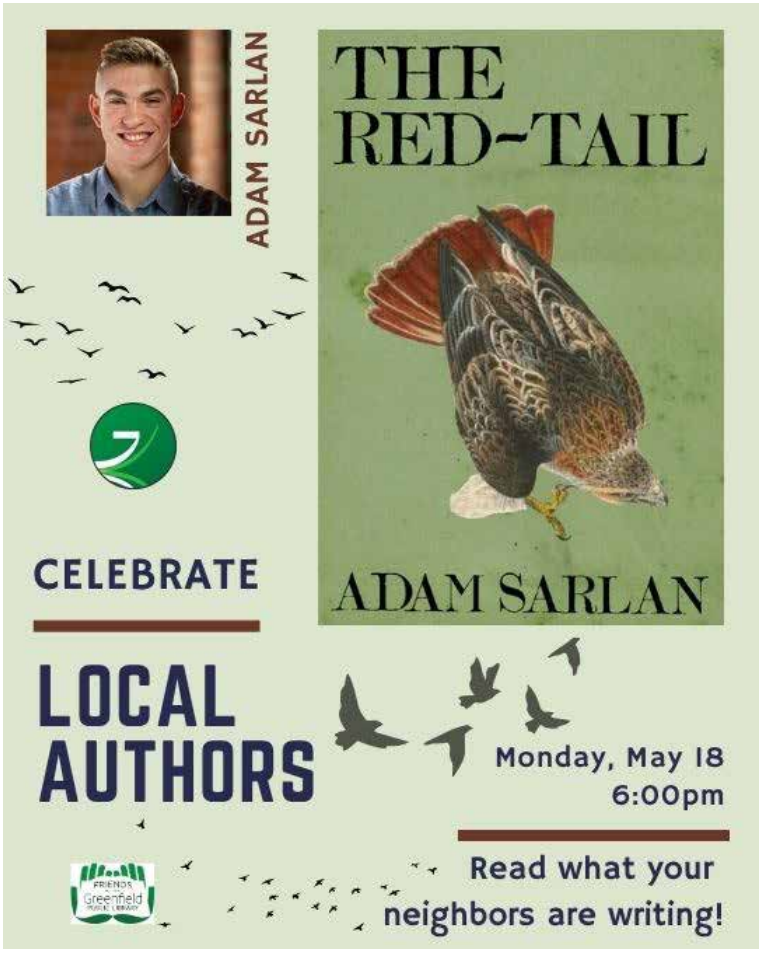
Bethany Bradley, Ph.D.
Professor of Biogeography and Ecology at UMass, Leader of the Northeast Regional Invasives Species and Climate Change Management Network

She will be discussing and answering questions on how climate-smart gardening can reduce plant invasions and support resilient ecosystems. She promotes an alternative, native plant gardening system which can potentially improve the tenacity of native species over those invasive ones.

Learn more on facebook
or at Charlemont Forum

Dr. Bradley was just elected Fellow of Ecological Society of America

(The Recorder posted the wrong dates.)
Register at greeninggreenfieldma.org



New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill

Massachusetts Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society Show & Sale

Saturday, May 16, 2026

Show: 12–5 p.m.

Sale: 10 a.m.–5 p.m. (while supplies last)

Guided Flower Show Tour: 12:30–1 p.m.

Sunday, May 17, 2026

Show & Sale: 10 a.m.–4 p.m. (while supplies last)

Guided Flower Show Tour: 11:30 a.m.–12 p.m.

Lecture: "Rhododendron Hybridizing Results: What Works, What Doesn't, What's in Demand" | 2-3 p.m.

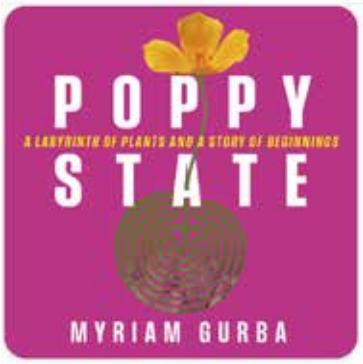
From May 8–10, the Berkshire Botanical Garden invites visitors to a weekend-long celebration of plants, play and community as the 49th Annual Plants-and-Answers Plant Sale overlaps with the second annual SpringFest on Saturday, May 9. Together, they promise a vibrant, family-friendly welcome to the growing season.

The Garden Conservancy

ROOTING THE SOUL WEBINAR

TUESDAY, MAY 05, 2026, 2 PM - 3 PM

"Rooting the Soul" will discuss a psycho-spiritual illness prominent in Latin America: susto. (In the West, susto loosely parallels post-traumatic stress disorder.) Susto is often treated using plant medicines and other earth-based materials. Myriam Gurba will discuss the ways that susto has manifested in her life and how it shaped the writing of *Poppy State: A Labyrinth of Plants and a Story of Beginnings.* She will also discuss how transforming her relationship to land and rekindling her relationship to Indigenous nations helped to repair her experience of susto. California native plants and animals will be central to this conversation. Native lands occupied by the settler colonial state of Mexico will also be part of this conversation. Program participants will be encouraged to engage in personal storytelling.



Garden Conservancy Open Days

SATURDAY, JUNE 13

Culver's Garden, Florence, MA
10am–4pm

Stone Hill, Plainfield, MA
10-4pm

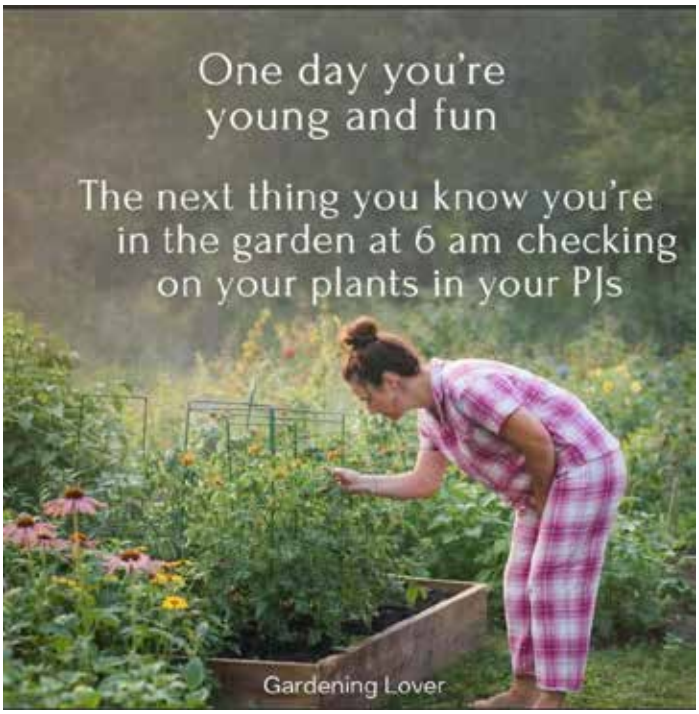
Also Carol Pope's Garden, Amherst
10am–1pm, 1pm–5pm

O'Brien Nursery
Granby, CT

Open Days for MAY and JUNE

May 1, 2 & 3 – Bishop's Hat, Horny Goat Weed, it's Epimedium Bloom Time
May 8, 9 & 10 – Hundreds of Japanese Maples for Great Spring & Fall Color
May 15, 16 & 17 – Rhododendron, Check our website; Many Special Selections
May 22, 23, 24 & 25 – Enkianthus - Great Flowers & Even Better Fall Color
May 29, 30 & 31 – Don't miss our Itoh Peonies in Flower

June 5, 6 & 7 – Cool, Floating Foliage of our expanded Cercis selections!
June 12, 13 & 14 – Exotic Arisaema, Japanese & Chinese Species
June 19, 20, & 21 – Did you see how that Hosta has Grown? Hostas, at their Best!
June 26, 27 & 28 – Japanese Stewartia, A Spectacular Four-Season Tree



Grow Native massachusetts

Every garden matters ~ Every landscape counts®

Free Online events:

Explore the Nighttime World of Caterpillars & Moths May 20 | 7:00pm

Screening of "The Little Things That Run the World" June 10 | 7:00pm

CELEBRATING 125 YEARS

Native Plant Trust

2026 Plant List

Nasami Farm Opens 5/2

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026

Daffodil & Tulip Festival

Naumkeag | Stockbridge

REGISTER →

Thursday-Sunday through 5/10

Lilac Sunday

May 10, 2026

10:00am–3:00pm

Experience the springtime bloom of our renowned collection of over 400 lilacs. Visit for tours with Arboretum experts, hands-on children's programming, chalk art, and more. Picnicking in the Arboretum landscape is permitted on this day only.

Located primarily on the edge of Bussey Hill Road in the heart of the landscape, the lilac collection at the Arnold Arboretum is among the premier collections of these plants in North America. Of the thousands of flowering plants in the Arboretum (many of which can also be enjoyed at this time), only the lilac is singled out each year for a daylong celebration.

Pack a picnic and make your way to the lilac collection on Bussey Hill Road.

floret

"Lilacs are one of the most nostalgic flowers of all time and their scent has the ability to bring back such powerful memories. If you've ever given someone a handful of freshly picked lilacs, you've probably experienced this for yourself. Almost instantly, the recipient will start reliving childhood memories, often tied to their grandmother, a great aunt, or someone special from the past."

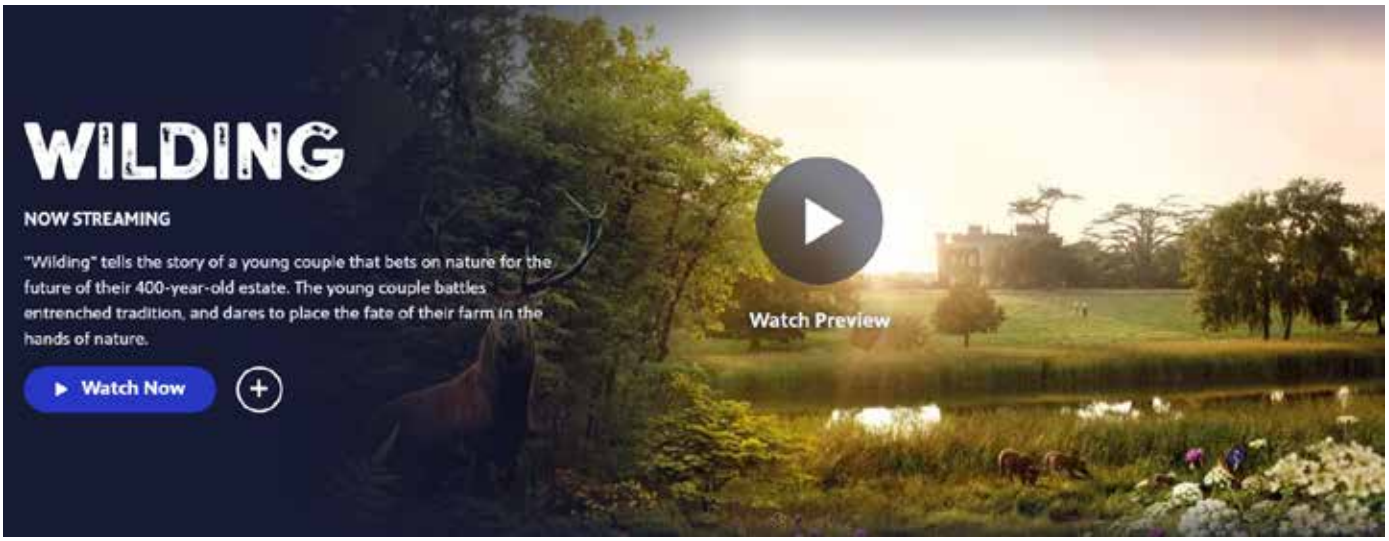
FLORET STUDIO TOUR: LILACS

When we were documenting some of the lilacs for the Floret Library, we filmed a little tour of all the varieties in bloom on the farm. This video walks through each variety and what I love most about them.

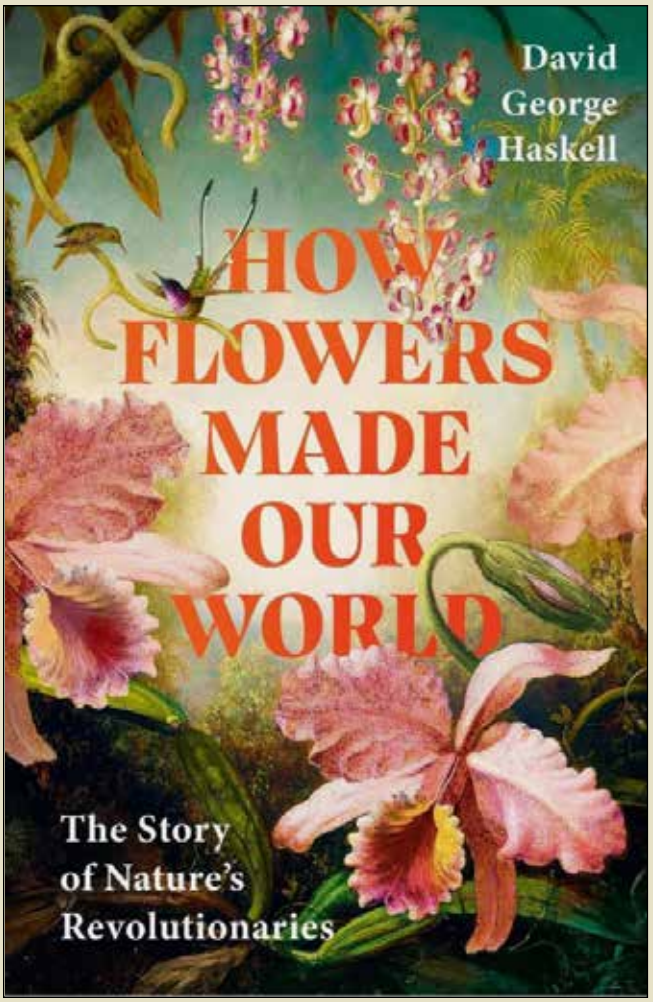
FLORET LIBRARY LILAC COLLECTION

I've been collecting as many rare lilac varieties as I possibly can and currently have more than 140 different cultivars growing here on the farm. As plants mature enough to start flowering, their blooms are documented for the Floret Library.

FREE WITH PBS PASSPORT



BOOK CORNER

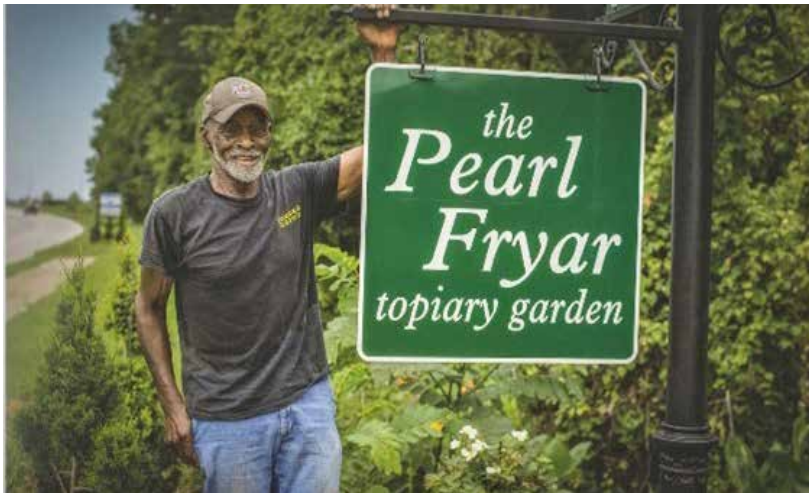


We live on a floral planet, yet flowers don't get the credit they deserve. We admire them for their aesthetics, not their power. In this exquisite exploration of the role flowers played in creating the world we know today, David George Haskell observes, smells, and studies flowers such as magnolias, orchids, and roses, as well as fascinating but less celebrated flowers such as seagrasses and tea to show us what we've been missing.

Flowers are beautiful revolutionaries. When they evolved, they remade the natural world: Gorgeous petals and alluring aromas transformed former enemies into cooperative partners. Flowers reinvented plant sexuality and motherhood, bringing male and female together in the same flower and amply provisioning seeds and fruits, innovations that also feed legions of animals, ourselves included. Through radical genetic flexibility, flowers turned past environmental upheavals into opportunities for renewal. This inventiveness allowed them to build and sustain rainforests, savannahs, prairies, and even ocean shores. **Read more**

***New York Times* review**

Interview with the author



Pearl Fryar, the Picasso of Plants, passed away at the age of 86 on April 4, 2026. He was a self-taught topiary artist whose home in Bishopville, SC has become a mecca for both garden and art enthusiasts alike. Some of you may recall that the club showed the 2006 documentary made about him ("A Man Named Pearl") and some of us went to an event where he demonstrated his art - I believe it was at The Mount in the Berkshires. Pearl was a true visionary, a horticulturalist with an amazing talent. Many of his trees and shrubs came from the discard heap at the local nursery. As a black man, folks didn't want to sell a house to him fearing his property would not keep up appearances with his white neighbors. It was his dream to win the award for Yard of the Month, given by the local garden club. By all intents and purposes, he did much more than that. He also wanted you to feel differently when you were in his garden. He wanted you to feel Love, Peace and Goodwill, and to take that feeling back with you out into the world.

Pearl Fryar Topiary Garden

Enjoy this National Geographic YouTube video about Pearl from 11 years ago: See What This Man Can Create From a Bush | National Geographic

The Garden Conservancy has a remembrance of Pearl: Open Days | The Garden Conservancy | The Garden Conservancy

Listen to Scott Simon of NEPM talk with Pearl's friend, topiary artist Michael Gibson, about Pearl: Remembering South Carolina's topiary artist Pearl Fryar, who died this month at 86 : NPR

You may be able to see the entire documentary here (with ads, of course!): A Man Named Pearl

New York Times article

Live each day as if it were your last, and garden as though you will live forever. ~Author Unknown

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

The vendors below have agreed to provide the listed discounts for members who show their membership card when making a purchase. We appreciate their support! Please respect their offers by remembering these generous discounts are for club members only, and only when your card is presented.

Baystate Perennial Farm
36 State Road (Route 5/10), Whately
10% off regular priced plants

Chapley Gardens
397 Greenfield Road (Route 5/10), Deerfield
10% off regular priced plants and pond supplies

Floral Affairs
324 Deerfield St, Greenfield
10% off anything in the store

Greenfield Farmers' Cooperative (Agway)
269 High Street, Greenfield
10% anything garden-related

LaSalle Florists
23 LaSalle Drive (Route 5/10), Whately
10% off regular priced plants

Mill River Farm Market
Road/corner 116 & Rtes 5/10, S. Deerfield
10% off plants in spring and fall

Nettlepoint Farm
138 Highland Ave
Greenfield, MA 01301
10% off on online orders with the code GFGARDEN

O'Brien Nurserymen
40 Wells Road, Granby, CT
10% off plants

Patten Hill Flower Farm
135 Reynolds Rd, Shelburne Falls
10% off workshops taught by owner Barb Parry

Shelburne Farm and Garden
355 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne
10% off anything garden-related

Silver Garden Daylilies
23 Picket Lane, Greenfield
10% off daylilies

Warm Colors Apiary
2 South Mill River Road, South Deerfield
10% off

Conway Natives
351 South Shirkshire Road, Conway
10% off plants and consultations

Any vendors interested in offering our club member-gardeners a discount, please contact one of the club's officers listed on page 3. Thank you!!

As always, please show your member card when purchasing from our vendors and thank them for their generosity in partnering with the GGC.

Background image by rawpixel.com on Freepik