

C H A U T A U Q U A



BIRD
TREE
&
GARDEN
CLUB



What's in Bloom? (in Chautauqua right now)

During the season, **Betsy Burgeson** says the most frequent question she is asked is: "Betsy, what's that pretty (*fill in a color word here*) flower blooming in every garden?"

Well, in case you aren't lucky enough to catch Betsy in person every time you want to pose that question, we plan to help out with a regular ***What's in Bloom?*** column in the newsletter.

It's a short column this month. In April in Chautauqua, the honest answer to "What's in bloom?" is: "Not much!" In fact, Caroline Young reports that there are two inches of snow on the ground as I'm writing this (April 20).

But BTG photographer Angela James was out with her camera last week and captured these pretty Glory-of-the-Snow blooming along Massey Ave. And I'm sure by the end of the month there will be lots more in bloom.

Note: This newsletter will be **monthly in the off-season and weekly during the season**, so stay tuned for more *What's in Bloom*. And if you'd like to send in photos for identification, [please do!](#) (Include date and location on grounds if you remember them.)

- Leslie Renjilian
 - photo by Angela James
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Take a Walk Every Day with the BTG

Mondays are Lake Walks

Mondays at 6:30pm*

A **different lake expert each week** will discuss such topics as: the lake's underwater life; threatened wildlife; aquatic insects; and more. Programming is presented in partnership with the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy.

* Note: Monday July 4th will be at 4:15pm

Tuesdays are Garden Walks

Tuesdays at 4:15pm

Interested in exploring the private and public gardens along the thoroughfares of the grounds? **Horticulturist Joe McMaster** will identify the varying seasonal flora and provide in-depth descriptions and gardening tips of the annuals, perennials, and tree canopies you view along the way.

Wednesdays are Tree Walks

Wednesday at 4:15pm

Immerse yourself under the tree canopy and discover the exceptional diversity of trees with **BTG Naturalist Jack Gulvin**. With over a hundred species of trees on the grounds, you may have a first-time introduction to a Japanese umbrella pine, dawn redwood, American elm, or the historic Amelia Earhart sugar maple in the Arboretum. Jack will highlight identifying characteristics of trees based on the bark, fruit, flowers, or leaves and other distinctive aspects.

Thursdays are Bird Walks

Thursdays at 7:30am - Bird Walks

Join on early morning walk in search of birds throughout the grounds led by experts such as **Twan Leenders** from the Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy, **Ruth Lundin** from the Audubon Community Nature Center (retired), and others. Bring your binoculars or borrow ours.

and...

at 4:15pm - Purple Martin Chat *

For a peek and hands-on experience with a fascinating bird species Purple Martins, join nationally renowned expert **Jack Gulvin**. He will lower a birdhouse, pull out a nest, count and log the number of eggs, then clean and free the nests of life-threatening insects all the while sharing his knowledge on the migration, eating, and behavioral patterns of these birds. He will pass around the nest box so that you can take a close look at the young birds. * Weeks 1-4 only. After that, the martins have begun their migration south.

Fridays are Nature and Garden Walks

Fridays at 9:00am - Nature Walk

Explore the natural world that abounds on the grounds of the Institution. Based on the seasonal flora during the 9 weeks, BTG **Naturalist Jack Gulvin** will delight you with a story about a wild flower, poison, ivy, or pine cones on a tree. Every week the subject matter changes and you may hear the biological and scientific facts and details or the myths about the plants and trees he selects as you meander along the woodland areas and gardens on the grounds. His depth of knowledge as a naturalist is always astounding and a crowd pleaser. Meet on the back side (lake) of Smith Wilkes Hall.

and...

at 12:30pm - Garden Walks

Interested in exploring Chautauqua's floral gardens, rain gardens, or the Arboretum? **Supervisor of Gardens and Landscapes Betsy Burgeson** will identify the varying seasonal flora and provide in-depth descriptions and gardening tips of the annuals, perennials, and tree canopies you view along the way. You will also learn about the design and implementation of innovative ecologically and economically sound landscapes for new gardens and facilities or hear about renovation efforts to return historical gardens to their original plan.

Details will be published weekly in this newsletter, in the Chautauquan Daily and [on our website](#).

- Mary Lou Parlato, Program Chair
 - photo by Angela James of Betsy Burgeson leading a tour of the Arboretum
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The Little Free Library at Smith-Wilkes Hall

If you walked by the front of Smith Wilkes Hall this past summer you probably saw a new addition near the sidewalk: the **BTG Little Free Library**. This Little Free Library was constructed by Nick Stupiansky and donated to the Chautauqua Bird, Tree & Garden Club by Sandi and Nick Stupiansky in June, 2019. It is only up during the summer months, and is maintained by the Stupianskys. This library was physically constructed as 3 side-by-side libraries in order to house books on birds, trees, and a variety of garden topics.

The "**Little Free Library**" concept is a unique book exchange that started in 2009 in Wisconsin. A **Little Free Library** is a "take a book, return a book: free book exchange." They come in many shapes and sizes, but the most common version is a small wooden box of books. Anyone may take a book or bring a book to share.

Little Free Library is a registered nonprofit organization that inspires a love of reading, builds community, and sparks creativity by fostering neighborhood book exchanges around the world. Today, there are about 100,000 registered Little Free Libraries in 84+ countries. Over one million books are exchanged annually through Little Free Libraries. For more information on Little Free Libraries, visit www.littlefreelibrary.org.

Several other Little Free Libraries are located on the CHQ Institution grounds including one on the north side of the **Amphitheater**, one at the north end on **Hedding Avenue**, one at **Children's School**, one at the **Unitarian Universalist Denominational House**, and one at **Alumni Hall**.

The Chautauqua Bird, Tree & Garden Club Little Free Library is devoted primarily for the exchange of books related to **birds, trees, and/or gardening**.

If you have extra, or previously-read, books related to birds, trees, and/or gardening, **please consider donating them** to our BTG Little Free Library. Donations can be made at BTG-sponsored events at Smith Wilkes Hall or by contacting Nick Stupiansky at nstupiansky@gmail.com.

In 2019, the first summer it was installed, the BTG Little Free Library started with 42 books donated by the Stupianskys. A grand total of 122 books were "borrowed" during the summer. At the end of the summer, 26 books remained in the library (2 Birds, 0 Tree, 4 Landscaping, 20 Garden).

Eight people left comments in the LFL Guestbook in 2019. All comments were positive. Here are a few of the comments:

"The BTG Little Free Library is stupendous! Such care, attention to detail that went into it. . . amazing. Thank you for this gift."

"What a lovely surprise. Beautiful and full of my favorite subjects."

"A wonderful resource."

"Wow! What a fabulous Little Library. I found exactly the book for which I've been looking. Thank you for building this."

"Thank you for providing something to make Chautauqua even more special."

Hopefully, the BTG Little Free Library will serve its purpose for years to come.

- Nick Stupianski

- photo by Angela James of Sandi and Nick Stupianski in front of the tri-plex LFL that Nick built and they maintain at Smith-Wilkes Hall



Lions & Tigers & Trees, Oh My!

By Betsy Burgeson

Supervisor of Landscapes and Gardens

Okay so there aren't really Lions & Tigers in Chautauqua Institution, but I wanted a title that would catch your eye & lure you in to keep reading about what this article is truly about...TREES! Let me start by saying **I LOVE TREES** but, honestly, they have become the bane of my existence since I started working at Chautauqua. This is the time of year the phone calls and emails really pick up with questions about trees near private residences. I get so many inquiries that I have had to change my voicemail over the years extending my response time from 1 day to a week to as soon as humanly possible. Realistically, I should change it to: "if you have a question about a tree, please leave a detailed message and I will TRY to get back to you within the next year."

All kidding aside, most tree questions take a lot longer to answer than you would expect. It's not that I am not out looking at the tree in question or don't know what to do, it all comes down to answering a presumably simple question: **WHOSE TREE IS IT?** What can be done, when can it be done, by whom can it be done and perhaps most importantly WHO COVERS THE COST is determined by the answer to that one question.

As you pass through the gates of Chautauqua Institution, property lines become "blurry" and very few property owners know for sure if a tree is on Chautauqua Institution property or their own.

Determining who owns the tree is always the first step & it often takes quite a bit of research. I use the Chautauqua County GIS website as my starting point but most of the time the overlay of the property lines on the satellite images are more of an estimate and can be off by 20' or more. If I can't tell ownership from GIS, then I start sorting through old surveys that were done for past construction projects. However, if a parcel hasn't had any major construction, then there is no survey for reference. At this point I will get the good old metal detector out to see if I can locate the property markers myself and if that doesn't work...I will contact the homeowner again to see if they happen to have a survey that I could use for locating the property lines.

Once ownership is ultimately determined, and 20 new silver hairs have been added to the collection on my head, then I am able to finally answer the question. In general, here are answers to the most frequently asked questions about trees within the grounds of Chautauqua:

- If it's on CI property – pruning, removals and arborist evaluations are done in the Spring & late Fall by CI staff or a tree service hired by CI. Any needed work will be put on the schedule for the next round of maintenance which may not be for many months.
- If it's on CI property & a homeowner does not want to wait for the work to be done, they may get approval from CI to hire a tree service at their expense to perform the permitted work.
- If it's on CI property & a property owner prunes or removes the tree themselves or hires it out **WITHOUT APPROVAL** they will be fined between \$1,000 and \$10,000 depending on the tree size & severity work done.
- If it's tree **pruning/maintenance on private property**, it can be done at owner's discretion and expense.
- If it's a **removal on private property**, the property owner needs to notify CI by submitting an application for a compliance certificate to the Operations Office prior to removal. Once approved the work can be hired out at owner's expense.
- Any tree removed on private property **must** be replaced with a new tree unless the requirement is waived by CI.

All in all, what appears to be a question that should be able to be answered quickly is actually a long process. For those reading this article that have endured this modus operandi with me before, I thank you for your patience and understanding. Hopefully this gives you a little relief to know, I wasn't ignoring you, I was merely trying to find out WHOSE TREE IS IT?

If you have questions regarding trees near your property, please contact the Operations Office at (716) 357-6245 / CampOps@chq.org or me at (716) 357-6326 / bburgeson@chq.org and I promise I will get back to you as soon as I can!

- Betsy Burgeson
 - photo by Angela James
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Welcome, Bees!

This may come as a surprise, but New York is actually home to 416 species of bees (at least!), but few are as endearing as the bumble bees. Bumble bees can be found in New York from about **March until November**, with many emerging now.

If you see bees around in early spring, they are most likely to be **"gynes."** A "gyne" (from the Greek for "woman") is a reproducing female insect. In the case of bumble bees, it is this **season's queen**.

The lucky heirs to the throne mate in the fall and then hibernate underground, under dead leaves, or in dead wood over the winter. All the others bees die. The gynes emerge in the early spring to find a good nesting spot, lay their eggs, and collect pollen for their soon-to-hatch hive mates (their own children). This means that the **emerging gynes are extra hungry** and in need of nectar for themselves and pollen for their future colony. (The gynes are not called queens until they have a colony.)

Flowers in early spring and (and late fall) are crucial for bees survival, and you can help. Sadly, the bulb flowers we most associate with spring are not great sources of food for bees (ie, tulips and daffodils), while things we may regard as weeds are bee superfoods (**dandelions and clover**, especially).

So, the best thing you can do for bees (apart from planting wildflower or pollinator flower mixes) is **to simply mow less often**.

- Ginny Renjilian

- photo by Angela James of a female bumble bee (*Bombas impatiens*) on a purple coneflower



Warbler News

The excitement of **spring bird migration** is upon us! Southern states have already noticed the visitors coming through. If you want to watch the progress of **45 million birds** as they move across the U.S., be sure to click on [Cornell's fascinating BirdCast](#):

One of my favorite migratory birds to see each spring may never have left, depending on where you live. But its subdued colors over winter have probably kept it in obscurity. Before mating season, the **Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronate*)** will develop lovely yellow underwings, crown, and of course rump. The bird is otherwise streaky, in shades of brown and white. Being easy to identify and potentially a visitor to the backyard bird feeder, it is certainly a highlight of the spring migration.

If you want to attract the Yellow-rumped Warbler to your yard, be sure to provide water, shrubbery for cover, and you can try putting out peanuts, raisins, suet, and orange segments.

Next time you see a flitty, somewhat acrobatic bird dive out of the bushes after an insect, but all you can remember is a distinct flash of yellow on its rump, you have most likely witnessed the lovely yellow-rumped warbler in action! The male and female call is a sharp *chek*.

- Jennifer Francois
 - photo by Jennifer Francois
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Historical Tidbit

After two years of meeting in a tent and two more in the Methodist House, **on August 7, 1913 the Bird and Tree Club held their first public meeting in the Amphitheater.**

It was customary at that time to have prominent Chautauquans share their vision for a new Club at The Institution. Mrs R. G. Smith from the Summer School Natural History Department envisioned Chautauqua as a **bird sanctuary and the site of a renowned arboretum.** Dr Shailer Matthews, Head of Religious Matters at Chautauqua, stressed the importance of protecting all creatures on earth. Dr Arthur Bestor urged Chautauquans to support this new Club.

Within four days of the meeting the **Chautauqua Bird and Tree Club had over 200 members!**

- Janine Obee, BTG Historian. Source material: *100 Years of Beauty: A History of the Chautauqua Bird, Tree and Garden Club* by Mary Lee Talbot.

- photos from the Archives:

above: The Methodist House c. 1913. Built in 1888 and used by the Bird and Tree Club for meetings in the summers of 1911 and 1912.

below: (And totally unrelated to the BTG, but related to the Methodists, and we thought an interesting historical tidbit) A photo of the **Methodist Chapel c. 1877.** This was the first permanent building built by the new Assembly. It stood until 1889 when it was replaced by the building now called Hultquist.

