

September has been one of the driest months that I can remember. I am so over the satisfaction that I used to get watering plants. Watering used to feel like I was nurturing my plants and now it feels like I am just trying to prolong their passing. A few of my shrubs, that did not get regular water may not get another chance. I know that Shalena has been overwhelmed with the watering at the PDG and I am sure that all of you folks have had a similar summer. Of course, while I am sitting here writing, it is raining like crazy outside, and I realize that Mother Nature hasn't forgotten us after all.

In October, we will be nominating a slate of candidates for President, President-Elect, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary and two Directors and one Intern class representative. To keep our organization fresh, we need to add new members to the Board that can bring new ideas. If you are interested in being part of the MG Board, or know of someone else that you think would be an asset, please contact someone on the Board. Please take this opportunity to get involved and help lead MGs.

For the Meeting on October 1, we will be on our daytime schedule. The October 1st Member Meeting will begin @ 1:00 pm in the Country Store. Our speaker has not been confirmed, but we have a number of topics to discuss. Since this is a daytime meeting, we will not be having any food.

Apple Tea

Our prayers for no rain were answered so that the TEA committee's Apple Tea was successfully held on Saturday, September 14. Guests were generous with their compliments on the food, the decorations and the speaker.

Fall themed decorations focused on apples. Apples and chrysanthemums in galvanized metal containers were table centerpieces. The main centerpiece on the Tea Table was a large display of apples in greenery topped by a pineapple. The entrance had hay, cornstalks, apples in wagons and large pots of chrysanthemums. Decorations thanks to Linda, Jan and Julia.

The menu featured four savorys and multiple sweets. Special items were tea marbled deviled eggs, apple scones, apple strudel and chocolate dipped homemade biscotti. The choice of 8 different teas included an apple tea and cider was also offered. Fall colored napkins were folded in bows with apples made of gourds as napkin rings.

Our speaker was Bob Edwards from Edwards Orchard in Jamestown, TN. After brief remarks about his offerings and location Bob answered apple questions for 15

minutes. Our tour guests visited the new dragonfly habitat where Vicki May explained its creation and purpose. The craft activity was making a 3-D apple out of precut red cardstock.

The Tea netted \$692 for the Master Gardeners. Aside from ticket sales, we sold the pots of chrysanthemums decorating the entrance. We also sold some of the Fall Festival leftover chrysanthemums for PDG.

And as the last guests left, the rain came. The committee members got very “damp” as we cleared the pavilion and of course the rain stopped just as we finished up.

Tea committee: chair Carol Lorenc, Michelle Cole, Linda Engel, Connie Farley, Dagmar Grunwald, Sue Partch, Jan Pitzer, Rita Reali, and Julia Wood. Thanks to Joy Danley who helped as server.

Canada Geese



It's that time of year. First, I heard the honking. When I looked up, there they were; 3 vees of Canada geese flying over the gardens. Every year spring and fall I hear and see the migrating flocks fly over when I'm working in the daylilies. Occasionally some settle on the ponds, and I get to hear them gabbling but they don't stay long, just maybe overnight. If a pair has stayed to nest and raise their young I've never seen it.

The Canada goose appearance is well-known: a big waterbird with a long neck, large body, wide flat bill. It has a black head and neck, tan breast, and brown back with the signature white cheeks and chinstrap. The birds range in size from 30 to 40 inches long with a 50 to 65 inch wingspan; the weight range is 6 to 20 pounds. They prefer to live

and feed anywhere near water but have adapted to humans to the point of becoming pests because of their droppings, aggressive behavior and close cropping as they have spread out to lawns, parks and farm fields.

Some not so well-known facts. Canada geese tend to be smaller the further north they live, and coloring is darker in western birds. Migration patterns have shifted and shrunk due to more waste grain available for wintering over, changes in hunting pressures and weather changes. The geese tend to choose mates of the same size in a practice called “assortative mating”. A Canada goose has between 20,000 and 25,000 feathers and molts all of them every year, some gradually but the flight feathers are molted all at once in summer causing the goose to be grounded for 3 to 5 weeks. The oldest known wild goose was at least 33 years old; she was shot in 2001 and had been banded in 1969. Goslings learn to swim within one day of being born; as they get older they form groups that travel and feed together.

The Federal Migratory Bird Act of 1918 was passed to protect birds whose numbers were dropping dramatically. Canada geese were included in the list but over the years they have repopulated and adapted to environment changes so well they have become overabundant. Especially problematic are the “resident” geese that no longer migrate. Original penalties of fines, property loss and even imprisonment have now been eased and there are options for getting rid of problem geese. Liquid bird repellent or plastic mesh placed over grass can discourage them from walking on a lawn. Permits can be given to allow property owners to scare geese away, destroy eggs, relocate or possibly kill them. In some areas hunters can do a “special take” outside hunting season.

Me, not having an appealing property for geese, I just enjoy watching them fly over. Their honking and vees signal the change of seasons.

Information for this article came from "allaboutbirds.org" and "audubon.org"

Thank you for all of the contributions to this month’s Newsletter.