

Annual Report Conservation Committee 2017-2018

The Conservation Committee produced monthly reports of various publications appearing on the Internet chronologically during the period. Near the end of the year, these reports were published with the help of Elizabeth (Taddie) Dawson into the Weeders website, complete with links and pictures, organized by topic. Thanks so much, Taddie! Also available under the Conservation tab are links to the Garden Club of America's pages on National Affairs Legislation and Conservation including GCA's nine position papers on National Legislation. Now, a member can connect directly to these sites from the Conservation link on the Weeders website. Thanks again to Taddie. We are also working on detailing the videos and books available on the subject which can be reviewed on the web page and ordered by request to the Conservation Chair.

Always a highlight of the year, the Conservation -NAL conference in Washington DC in late February early March did not disappoint. Speakers ranged from the always delightful and informative Professor Douglas Tallamy, entomologist at the University of Delaware. and author of the well known book: "Bringing Nature Home", and Elaine Chao, Secretary of the Transportation with the current administration, and former Secretary of Labour under George W. Bush.who discussed the need for innovation and private investment in transportation to protect the public. Also, Henry M. Paulson (former Treasury Secretary under George W. Bush) and his wife Wendy Paulson of the Bobolink Foundation in Chicago Illinois presented their urgent message concerning the threat of Climate Change, which they witness as birders. C-Change made their case for the second year in a row detailing the serious statistics and pictures that confirm the reality of Global warming and its threat to human and all other life.

But, however small, We are mighty! We are part of the forces endeavoring to push our titanic human race and life as we know it back from the cliff in our efforts. Part of the solution lies in reducing our carbon dioxide foot print. To that end, we also hosted an evening meeting in which Janice Kelsey discussed her non-profit organization Solar-CITIES (found on the Internet & a Facebook.) They use bacteria grown from the waste materials of living creatures, ourselves included, to produce biogas and fertilizer. They are helping people learn to nourish plants while lowering their carbon footprint by generating energy: heat for cooking, as well as other energy needs, such as refrigeration and small engines, all from waste materials that are generated in the home and farm and increasingly from towns. This technology is used in China and now available to municipalities and farms in this country. Janice and her colleague, Jodi Spragins along with Dr. Thomas H. Colhane have shown that with all of us to can do this on a limited basis with simple items that can be purchased at hardware stores. Janice already uses biogas regularly and I am working to set up our grill to use it rather than propane. I use their fertilizer. It is comparatively odorless and because it is produced in an anaerobic environment the ancient threats of bacteria and viruses are not a threat. Brilliant!

Other efforts we are starting that I hope all of you might want to join is "Green Bridges". This is an initiative started by the Herb Society of America, that I am spearheading within the Philadelphia Unit of the Society. It is an effort to provide a pathway for all pollinators and birds across the continent so that they can successfully move and reproduce. The application is on the Conservation link under the April 2018 issue. And, I have some copies with me today. By joining this group you will:

- A) Be acknowledged by the Herb Society as a member of this group.
- B) Receive a certificate suitable for framing beside your desk or wherever!
- C) Information on rare species in your area.

Annual Report Conservation Committee 2017-2018

D) There's a Facebook page dedicated to GreenBridges. A suggestion to those who do not wish to support the site. Try using a pseudonym and use it on an e-mail address not connected to yourself so you can access the information within. I know Lots of people who don't post, but look...

Finally, in the May 2018 issue of Conservation in the News I published an e-mail from Lindsay Leisenring, our Zone V Conservation and NAL chair, about a great new effort by Jackie Nuñez, in California. It's called "The Last Plastic Straw". info@thelastplasticSraw.org I have, with me, calling card sized notes to hand to vendors who offer you straws. As you refuse their offer, give them a card! I have planned to give each of you 3 cards until they run out. Try it and see if it doesn't produce a smile from the sales person. I found it did at WAWA. The URL also connects you to a page in which a vendor can sign up to either only offer straws on demand or completely stop offering them entirely. Another brilliant, strong idea! Kudos Jackie Nunez!

By the way, you can also get stainless steel collapsible straws that fold up to a size that can hang on your keyring, in your purse or hook onto the belt loops of your pants. George has ordered them for our family on www.Kickstarter.com, as stocking stuffers since they won't be available on that site until November. They cost about \$25.00 per straw, pipe cleaner and container, or you can go onto Amazon and see a large variety of similar eco-friendly straw products. My only caveat is don't throw them out! Keep in mind how terrible it is to think of a plastic straw up your nose as a poor sea turtle most famously suffered! OUCH! Make it metal and OUCH OUCH! Get an available cleaner and put them in the dish washer or get bamboo biodegradable ones which are also sold on Amazon. Or better yet don't use one if you don't need too. I have only used bamboo in the summer as smoothies I buy don't pour out easily. I take my chances with my own drinks with narrow tops on the containers.

Respectfully Submitted,

Martha Edwards
Chair Conservation and NAL Committee