



Bethesda Community

GARDEN CLUB

"One Hundred and One Years of Brightening Lives and Landscapes"

www.bethesdacommunitygardenclub.org

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**It's never too early to
prepare for the Plant
Sale! See more informa-
tion on page 2.**

Photo by Dawn Landsman

The 11th Street Bridge Park Project

Eight years ago, 11th Street Bridge Park Project Director Scott Kratz spoke to this club about a D.C. plan to build a pedestrian walkway on the old 11th Street bridge span that no longer transported vehicles. January's speaker is **Laticia Taylor**, the Communications Manager for the Project. She's going to update us with the latest news about the Park. Don't miss the opportunity to learn about a project that will benefit a community lucky enough to have development that is incorporating changes the residents had a hand in identifying. It can be done! Come and find out how they did it.

Some background....

Scott Kratz joined the effort in 2011 and over the next few years held more than 1000 meetings seeking residents' views on how they envisioned the project. Aware of New York City's experience with the High Line where its surrounding neighborhood gentrified and prices for housing soared, Scott and his team worked with local residents to protect them from just such an outcome. The result was the creation of the Douglass Community Land Trust, which has 230 units of community-owned affordable housing and a goal of 1000 more units in the next years.

The Project has been developing over the last 14 years and recently received a grant that will enable it to complete construction by (hopefully) 2027. Among the areas proposed for the span, whose dimensions equal the length of about 3 football fields, are a central plaza, a café and community room, a large play space, a hammock forest, and a picnic garden as well as a large lawn.

The Anacostia Watershed Society, to which the club also contributes, will support an Environmental Education Center, a kayaking/canoe launch for school kids, and an urban farm.

Environmental Concerns

A Snowy Spell

Barbara Collier

It doesn't seem long ago that we were wondering whatever happened to winter. Ha! The joke's on us. Not only have we had a significant snow for the first time in what seems like ages, but the cold is such that it's still out there. The scope of a gardener's activities is accordingly reduced.

Enter the usual indoor options. Not being a big house plant person, I turn to garden books, winter sowing (just got my seeds after an unfortunate delay

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when my first order was lost in the mail), some more or less idle catalog gazing, and contemplating outdoor plans.

Before the holidays and the weather put a stop to such things, I was just putting into effect one of those plans. Having written last month about the anti-invasive work that I was doing before everything froze, my mind (and eyes) began to dwell on the unwelcome presence of *Arum italicum*, which is so much easier to see in winter than at any other time. The stuff is spreading like crazy in my neighborhood, and I have to recognize that even if I diligently dig it and prevent it from forming berries, it will come in from any number of sources via the birds—rather like all those ivy and porcelain berry seedlings that show up after you think you’ve eliminated their parents in your own space. Then you recognize that if you dig a clump of *A. italicum* of any size, it will probably come back from the tiny corms that you just can’t get. So your job continues.

The trouble is that you can wait a long time for the right conditions to dig this stuff up, and it’s happily growing in the meantime. So I began cutting every leaf of *A. italicum* I could find. Yes, it will come back. Yes, more will come in. But if I do routine sweeps regularly, it will weaken it. (Right? Right?) Add this to the list of Sisyphean garden tasks that we just have to keep doing.

When the snow is gone (and when I detect the leaves coming back) I need to mark the more hidden places where some of the clumps insinuated themselves, so that even in the glory of spring and summer I can find and attack them. I’m thinking of pushing tough springy sticks into the ground, photographing them, and creating an album of “weeds to watch out for” (or maybe “barbarians at the gates”).

Speaking of pushing sticks into the ground, I have a lot of *Cornus sericea* cuttings that were sitting in arrangements of greenery. Now that those arrangements are ready to become compost, I’ve started to go around the yard shoving the cuttings into the ground here and there. My theory is that the slowly melting snow might help



Arum italicum. Grrr.

encourage them to root. I tried something like this last year with *C. sericea*, and a few seemed to survive the summer. Now to see which ones actually leaf out come spring!

Plant Sale News

Please mark your calendar for our annual Plant Sale:

When: Thursday, May 15, from 9 to noon.

Where: Farm Women’s Market in downtown Bethesda.

More information about the sale and how you might help will be in upcoming newsletters, at our meetings and through email blasts.

Plant Sale committee

Elaine Hope, *co-chair*

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