

DELAWARE BOTANIC GARDENS

Winter 2024 Fiddler Crab by Sam Cashdollar

Update Report



Executive Director Sheryl Swed and President Ray Sander

As we reflect upon 2023, it was a year to build on the successes of 2022, and to further achieve our mission. DBG's 2012 aspirational mission statement has guided DBG efforts as we have been creating an **"inspirational, educational and sustainable public garden."**

Our inspiration always starts with the land, the 37 acres which have been entrusted to us to manage, preserve, and enhance. Three major efforts this past year exemplify DBG's land stewardship—the inventory of our existing 12 woodland acres; the DeDOT shoreline restoration project which added 0.30 acres and preserved 0.46 acres of existing wetlands to the shoreline that faces Pepper Creek; and the planting of the Hedgerow Garden. These environmentally sound endeavors are key to DBG's long range land stewardship.

Our mission to educate took great strides throughout 2023. Our classes, programs and tours spanned every age group. From **Cheer Center** seniors to **Bogs & Bugs** for families, from **Container and Wreath making** classes to seasonal **Piet Oudolf Meadow walks**, from **daily tours** to **specialty tours** highlighting the 12 acres of the Woodlands and the **Holly Days tour** offering a deep dive into the DBG Anderson Holly collection—every horticultural aspect of our thriving gardens were the subject of educational offerings...with lots more scheduled in 2024.

Sustainability has a dual track—horticultural sustainability and financial sustainability. We continue to expand our ability to propagate new plants from our existing stocks. This important task is significantly sustainable, both horticulturally and financially. By propagating our own plants, we extend the life cycle of the magnificent species we have in the garden and save money on the cost of replacing plants while earning revenue on the sale of these native plants. This also helps expand "bring nature home" to our visitors' gardens. Through the generous response of our partners, sponsors, supporters, and donors, we have been amazingly successful in raising \$124,000 from our annual dinner and over \$125,000 from our end of year campaign. (See names of Annual Dinner and End of Year Campaign contributors at end of newsletter.) These funds are the lifeblood of DGB's operations.

We are in awe of the incredible financial generosity of the hundreds of donations to DBG in 2023. They ranged from \$5.00 to \$100,000. When combined with the efforts of our hardworking staff and the hours dedicated by our faithful volunteers, DGB is empowered to serve the community and enhance the quality of life here in southern Delaware.

Thank You all for making 2023 our best year. Please continue your active involvement and generosity in 2024. We invite your suggestions, and we need your support.

Wishing you a healthy and gentle 2024.

Raymond Sheryl

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Emma Roggiero, Sheryl Swed, Stephen Pryce Lea And Amanda Goebel



Del Tech students

We salute Stephen Pryce Lea, Director of Horticulture & Educational Programs who designed the **Hedgerow Garden** with assistance from Carol Bason, DBG Science Advisor. They wrote the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) \$74,000 grant that funded the garden. Thank you Stephen, Carol, and DNREC!



Climate change, sea rise and resultant shore erosion is a constant challenge along DBG's 1,000-feet of Pepper Creek shoreline. This year a major **Hybrid Shore Restoration Project** was completed in December by the Department of Transportation (DelDot). This project completed over the past two years protects about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the shoreline. It creates 0.30 acres of tidal marsh wetlands and protects 0.46 acres of existing tidal wetlands on the West Woodland's Pepper Creek shoreline. This \$560,000 DelDOT mitigation project has greatly helped

preserve the DBG property. Working on this project with DelDOT were Sheryl Swed, Sam Cashdollar, Stephen Pryce Lea and Carol Bason.

This restored shore area will now be planted with about 7,000 cord grass (*Spartina*) plug plants this coming spring by a DelDot contractor. It will become a new habitat for shore wildlife. We want to thank Sarah Powell, DelDOT Project Manager and Natalie Byers, RK&K Project Manager for their work on this project.



(L to R) Natalie Byers, RK&K Project Manager, Sam Cashdollar, DBG Director of Grounds & Facilities, Sheryl Swed, DBG Executive Director, and Sarah Powell, DelDOT Project Manager

Newsletter photos by Brent Baker, Ray Bojarski, Chris Flood, Stephen Pryce Lea, and Bob Pilkington

We set a new event milestone on September 2, when the Folly Garden became the site for the **first wedding vows ceremony**. It was a wonderful sunny day for all to enjoy this very special event surrounded by nature.

Update Report



Our plans for the **Annette Pennoni Meadow Pavilion** are ongoing as we value engineer the process to fit our \$1.8 million budget. Our team has been working hard, including Pennoni Engineering, Pilottown Engineering, Lane Builders and our award-winning SEA Architects. We hope to have a contract soon and the ground-breaking in early 2024. The DBG team is Ray Sander, Sheryl Swed, Sam Cashdollar and Stephen Pryce Lea.

This year we took major steps in **strengthening our organization**. The DBG organization has completed three new initiatives to improve the training and professionalism of our staff, volunteers, and board.

First, after many months of drafting/vetting an DBG Employee Handbook was created. It included two legal reviews, the Executive Committee and Board approved this first DBG 2023 Employee Handbook in November.

This 57-page document outlines the high standards of conduct we expect of employees and volunteers at DBG. We thank all who contributed to this employee handbook, including Brent Baker who coordinated our efforts.

Second, we conducted a series of “Sensitivity Training” Classes for our staff, volunteers, and board members to ensure these high standards were fully understood. Special thanks to Carol McCloud, DBG Vice President and HR Advisor for coordinating these classes and working so hard on the Employee Handbook.

We thank Board Member Todd Fitchman, President, Envirotech for allowing his HR expert, Maggie Cullen, to conduct this important series of onsite classes.

Third, over 18 of the staff and volunteers underwent a four-hour long AED-CPR-First Aid Certification Training Class at the Dagsboro Fire Hall. This vital training allows our staff and volunteers to better handle onsite medical emergencies.





Update Report

We want to thank all who contributed to the **Peter Carter Plant Identification Fund**. In Peter's memory, we have received over \$8,000. As you recall, Peter sponsored labels for our plants, and believed we should label as many plants as possible to add to the guest experience. Thanks to the fund, new plant signs will be installed in some of the gardens this year. Peter served with distinction for 10-years on the Board before his untimely passing last summer. We miss him!

This fall DBG season featured a fast-paced schedule of special tours and classes. **DBG doubled the number of people attending our special tours and classes and educational programs revenue was up 14%**. The class and special tours' reviews have been great. While continuing the traditional major events like the Annual Dinner, we expanded the number of special tours and classes this year. Special thanks for this expanded educational program go to Stephen Pryce Lea Director of Educational Programs and his creative Education Committee.

As temperatures dropped this fall, the colder weather hit us after Thanksgiving. Now, the staff and volunteers for the first time can take a "warm break" in the **new Staff-Volunteer Center Building**. Special thanks to Sam Cashdollar, Director of Ground & Facilities, who has supervised this project and is still putting the finishing touches inside the building.



This past year we received accolades from the Brandywine Chapter of the Association of Fund-Raising Professionals (AFP). On National Philanthropy Day, November 15, they awarded DBG their FACE Award for Communication Excellence for our 2023 Newsletters. We thank the AFP and the DBG communications team.



(L to R) Bridget Curran, Ryan Revel, Craig Haggarty, Ray Sander, Jane Stokes, Diane Sherman, Judy Martin, Sam Cashdollar, Sheryl Swed, Jeremy Cole, and Michelle Garret

A big thank you to Jeremy Cole and volunteer Grant Massey, for constructing 14 new plant tables for the Hoop Houses in our recently established Staff-Volunteer Center's workshop.

It was a cool but sunny day on November 19 when we **closed the gardens** for the 2023 season. Our spirits were high because of a wonderful season, so we gave a thumbs up for a very successful 2023 season.

We look forward to our 2024 Opening on March 14!

Fall Harvest and Sea Witch Festival

As a member of the Rehoboth Beach Chamber of Commerce, DBG again celebrated the October 27-29 Sea Witch Festival. The Forest Discovery Trail added six new animal creatures designed and built by staff and volunteers from natural garden materials. The DBG Fall Harvest & Forest Discovery Trail Creatures were on display from October 19 to our November 19 closing.



Medusa by
Sam Cashdollar
Bridget Curran
Jeremy Cole



Spider by Sam Cashdollar, Bridget Curran,
Jeremy Cole



Toad by Gary and Jane Stokes



Octopus by Sam Cashdollar, Bridget Curran,
Jeremy Cole

Annual Dinner



On Thursday, September 28, the Annual Dinner raised \$124,000, including, \$85,000 in sponsorships—another fundraising success! The smiles and festive atmosphere indicated everyone was happy to be together at the Gardens. This dinner marked the 11th Anniversary of our partnership with **SoDel Concepts**. SoDel President **Scott Kammerer & Lisa Kammerer** were again the honorary co-chairs of the dinner. Scott told the guests “This is one of the best charity events in Delaware.”

We had a great turnout from the State and Sussex County Government officials including State Senator Gerald Hocker; two candidates for Delaware Governor—

Lt. Governor Bethany Hall-Long and Matt Meyer; and Todd Lawson, Sussex County Administrator. Their support is critical to our success.

Under the leadership of Executive Chef Ronnie Burkle, the SoDel staff provided excellent food, and the service was amazing. Our other partners included: Derrick Kelley and Riley Quinn of **Bin 66** for their beautiful-paired wines; **Zack McCarthy** for the specular tent; **Vince Varrassi and the 5th Avenue**, for their musical virtuosity; and **Affairs to Remember** for their special outdoor lighting. We proved that having fun, good food, and raising funds can be the perfect combination.



Vince Varrassi, Musician in Residence & 5th Avenue

See last page of this newsletter for the “thank you” to sponsors, and challenge donors. DBG thanks all who came and were involved in this DBG Annual Dinner. It is a major factor, along with our End of Year Campaign, in providing needed operational funds.



Above: Sarah Gilmore, Prosecco donor fills class for guest in honor of Peter Carter. Photo by Bob Pilkington



Left: Ray & Sheryl address guests by Chris Flood



(L to R) Ray Sander, Scott Hammerer, Sheryl Swed and Lisa Hammerer
Photo by Chris Flood



Chuck Pennoni & Joyce Sando



(L to R) Charles Zonko, Carol McCloud, Butch Perkins and Brenda Walton, seated



(L to R) Ray Sander, Sheryl Swed, greeting Emily Hocker and State Senator Gerald Hocker. Photo by Bob Pilkington



Alexis Harris & Daniel Harris

Sheryl Swed, DBG Executive Director, was the overall dinner coordinator. She said, "I want to thank everyone who helped with this wonderful dinner." She especially recognized some special dinner people who worked behind the scenes, including:

- All the sponsors and especially, Charles Zonko, Chuck Penonni, and SoDel Concepts.
- Carol Bason, Ray Bojarski, Joanne Shipley, Harry Orth and Brent Baker for their excellent work on the 2022 DBG Annual Report, which was given to all dinner participants.
- Ray Bojarski, Stephen Pryce Lea and Joanne Shipley for the DBG 2024 Calendars that were given out to participants.
- Craig Haggerty, and other volunteers for the creative "Swag Bags," given to all participants.
- Jeremy Cole and Bridget Curran for table flower arrangements.
- Sarah Gilmore for sponsoring the champagne toast.
- Angie Phinney for the table seating arrangements and name tags.
- Jane Hines for keeping track of the Challenge Pledge Cards.
- Sam Cashdollar, Jim Marshall and Michelle Garrett for giving the golf cart tours at the beginning.
- Jane Stokes, Cheryl Quirk, Jane Peters, Joyce Romans, Jane Carroll for helping guide the guests.
- And all the volunteer docents who helped make the dinner run smoothly.



(L to R) Michelle Garrett, Ronnie Burkle, SoDel Corporate Chef, and Carol McCloud, DBG Vice President



(L to R) Lisa Hastings, Sheryl Swed, DBG Executive Director, David Small, Chair, DBG Advisory Council, Ray Sander DBG President and Cindy Small



On September 20, DBG hosted 30 guests, organized by our partners at Inland Bays Garden Center.

DBG was pleased to host many special group tours during the year.

CAPITAL PROJECT

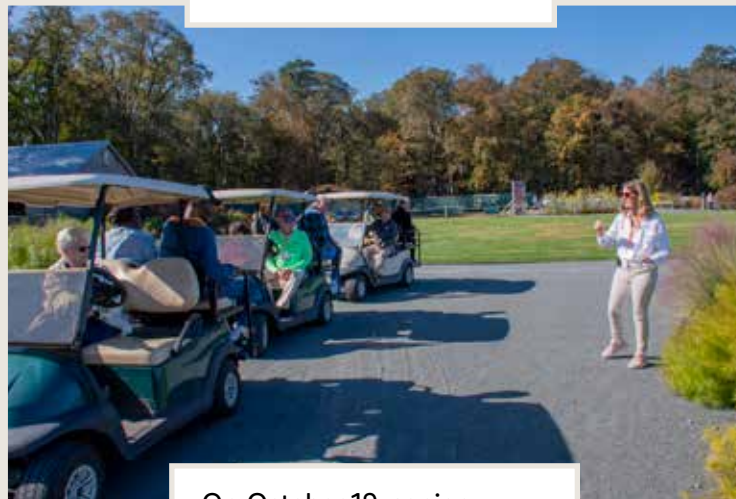


Staff-Volunteer Center Building

The 1,200 square-foot (40-feet by 30-feet) Staff-Volunteer Center building is in the final stages of outfitting. It includes 600 square feet composed of a break room, office, bathroom and another 600 square feet composed for a workshop. In addition, there are an additional 800 square feet of covered front porch and southside is a “lean-to” roofed area for golf cart storage. Sam Cashdollar is putting the finishing touches inside the building. We will have a dedication in February.



On October 12, the Red Mill Pond Group visited and received a tour by Carol McCloud.



On October 19, senior citizens from Frankford Cheer Center visited aboard a train of our golf carts, and Carol McCloud gave the tour.

DBG is a community garden, serving the Delmarva and Sussex County communities in many ways. One way is supporting “off-site” community events. We call this

“flying the DBG flag.”



On September 9, DBG had an information table at the **Bethany Beach Boardwalk Arts Festival** and a special Sea Otter Display on the beach. Thanks to volunteers and Stephen, Jeremy Cole and Bridget Curran for the construction and setting up the special Sea Otter Display. Sea Otters are seen rarely in Pepper Creek.



On **Veterans Day**, it was a clear and sunny day. The walkway from the parking lot to the Welcome Center was decorated with American Flags. DBG again provided free admission to military veterans and guests who brought food donations for the Home of the Brave Foundation in Milford. DBG collected over 600 pounds of food. (L to R) Ray Sander and Brent Baker at Food-Collection Trailer.



On October 10, DBG was a “presenting sponsor” at the **Dagsboro Night Out** and our volunteers did an excellent job. Dagsboro Mayor Brian Baull expressed the town’s appreciation to DBG. (L to R) Cheryl Quirk and Jill Simeral



On November 15, Stephen Pryce Lea gave a **DBG presentation to the Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs** in Rehoboth Beach. It was very well received.



Fall Container Class, September 21: Stephen demonstrated how to assemble a fall container and ensure it remains fresh and healthy.



Fall Gardening for Wildlife Meadow Tour, October 7 & 21: Stephen gave a tour featuring native plants essential for providing wildlife with a food source.



Introduction to Fall Bulb Planting Class, November 4: Stephen provided tips on how to get the best results from your bulbs and how to naturalize bulbs.



The Great Monarch Migration Class, September 22: Stephen explained the life cycle and long journey of the endangered East Coast Monarch Butterflies as they make their way to winter hibernation grounds in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico.

Above: Stephen in Rhyne Garden showing Monarch Chrysalis as Monarch moves away from milkweed plant. The Chrysalis is almost transparent and takes 10-14 days for the Chrysalis to emerge as a Monarch Butterfly.



Wonders of the Woodland Autumn Changes Tour, October 12: Elizabeth Rives, DBG Docent, Certified Naturalist and Tree & Shrub expert led guided tour of the forest, vernal pools, and shoreline.



Woodland Walk—Fall Fungi & Flora Guided Tour, October 30: Stephen led a walk of the Forest trails, highlighting fungi and flowers that enjoy the forest shade.



WOODLAND WALK



HAPPY HOLLY DAYS

Happy Holly Days, November 9: Stephen gave a lecture on the history of Hollies in Delaware followed by a guided tour of the Robert Anderson Holly Collection.

Wreath Making Workshop, November 9: Volunteers taught a “sold out” wreath making class on the porch of the new Staff-Volunteer Center Front Porch.



Delaware Botanic Gardens Future Woodland Attractions and Naming Rights



DBG is a non-profit, which means we work hard to attract financial support from foundations, businesses, and generous individuals who realize the added value of having a public garden in southern Delaware for the benefit of all. In 2023 the Ellice & Rosa McDonald Foundation gave DBG a gift of \$100,000 to be used for the Annette Pennoni Meadow Pavilion. We thank the McDonald foundation for their continued support.

Delaware Botanic Gardens New Features Coming Soon with Your Support!

The Shady Nook Mature tree stands, woodland asters, azaleas, and redbuds. For guests entering the woodland garden from The Folly, the Shady Nook is a serene peaceful transition.	The East Sweep This garden is unique in that the mature trees create a closed canopy whilst leaving an open understory for planting and the exhibition of grasses, sedges, ferns, and flowering perennials.	The Waterfront Junction Part shade garden with native and non-native plants. Transition zone between coastal and forested habitats. This collection features perennials, shrubs, grasses, and ferns including the stunning <i>Athyrium niponicum</i> (Japanese painted fern).	The Overlook Stunning views of Pepper Creek and the future location of the gazebo. Its plant collection will feature shoreline and woodland shrubs, perennials and vines. A quiet serene garden that offers a place to sit, reflect, and observe wildlife.	The Magnolia Grove Featuring the Magnolia collection. Understory plants include <i>Sabal minor</i> 'Emerald Isle Giant' (palmetto palm) and <i>Magnolia ashei</i> , endemic to the Florida panhandle. Guests are frequently delighted to see this tree in our collection.
The Council Ring Shade garden featuring hardscapes that highlight this collection of trees and shrubs. This garden is designed to be a secluded multipurpose meeting place.	The Pinery The Pinery celebrates native East coast conifers and special pine forest understory shrubs in perennials. The pinery reflects a Coastal Plain/Piedmont pine forest where very few natural habitats occur today.	The Observation Deck A clear view of Pepper Creek, the living shoreline, and an abundance of wildlife. The garden consists of native grasses that are an important feature of the living shoreline, and <i>Baccharis</i> (groundsel tree) which displays beautiful foliage and white blooms from late summer into fall.	The Fernery Celebrates the diversity of ferns. This woodland shade garden will feature a wide variety of ferns planted in mass to demonstrate the natural beauty of this class of plants.	The West Sweep Woodland edge featuring shade and part shade shrubs and perennials which transitions into mature tree stands. This offers an intriguing display of woodland edge plants.
The Gully A collection highlighting primitive plants specifically, ferns, moss, and clubmoss. The tunneling archway of American holly trees creates a shaded and secluded garden, one that transports you to an ancient, untouched forest.	The Woodland Entry The main entrance into the woodland gardens with a clear view through The Pinery and upland gardens. This collection features redbud cultivars and the stunning <i>Aralia</i> 'Sun King' planted alongside various grasses and ferns.	The Terrapin Garden Terrapins are an important part of estuary ecosystems. This garden will include salt tolerant shrubs, grasses, and perennials that create a suitable habitat for terrapins.	The Cypress Grove Highlights the beautiful genus <i>Taxodium</i> (cypress) with several new cultivars and species planted this past year. Planted among the <i>Taxodium</i> is <i>Iris versicolor</i> which presents beautiful blue-purple blooms in the spring.	The Rain Garden A collection of native perennials, grasses, and ferns that thrive in part shade and moist soil. This garden features a dry creek bed that funnels rainwater.
The Waterfront Garden A quarter acre of shoreline with views of Pepper Creek. This collection highlights plant communities adapted to the brackish waters of Pepper Creek and the Coastal Plains. This garden features salt tolerant grasses, shrubs, and perennials.	The Cove The border of mature trees opens into a peaceful, quiet cove of woodland grasses and ferns with a seating area. This is the perfect place to sit, reflect and observe the wildlife and wooded landscape.	The Wooded Wetland Established native trees adapted to the seasonal inundation of flooding and rainwater. This collection features understory shrubs and perennials that flower throughout the season and are specialized to this habitat.	The Glade Located between the Cypress Grove and the Wooded Wetland. A mature forest that opens into a peaceful, tranquil glade planted with woodland grasses and ferns. This garden is unique in that it is the high point between the two wetlands.	The Spring This collection features established, native understory shrubs, grasses, sedges, and ferns. As the collection grows to maturity, the shrubs will form dense patches that highlight the variety of Delmarva's native plants.
The Moss Garden The name speaks for itself! The moss garden celebrates bryophytes (mosses) and lycophytes (clubmosses, quillworts, and fern allies). The garden consists of artificial mounds covered in some of the oldest extant species of vascular and nonvascular plants.	The Vernal Pool A naturally occurring wetland and collection of host plants adapted to these conditions. A vernal pool is a small, shallow, depression in forests that hold water seasonally. This garden will highlight this ecologically important habitat and feature specialized, native flowering plants that thrive here.	The Wetland Crossing Features a bridge with views of Pepper Creek and the Wooded Wetland. The lowest part of the western woodlands is flooded periodically. This occasional flooding offers an opportunity to showcase plant species specifically adapted to these conditions.	The Grotto This collection will have special emphasis on shade loving miniature ferns, clubmosses, and bryophytes (true mosses). The unique display will feature unique lithophytes (plants that grow on rocks). The slope and aspect of this garden creates a unique viewing experience of this special collection.	The Enchanted Forest Mixed-mature tree stands located on the north western edge of the woodlands. This garden highlights native and non-native shrubs with blooms occurring throughout the season. The pathway meanders through a collection of woodland grasses and pockets of ferns.

Other features with sponsorship opportunities available include:
The Pavilion Patio, Great Hall, and trails in the East & West Woodlands.

If interested in sponsoring any of these features as a way of supporting DBG, please contact:
Sheryl J. Swed, Executive Director
Delaware Botanic Gardens, P.O. Box 1390, Ocean View, DE 19970
sherylswed@delawaregardens.org | 202-262-9856

Gift Suggestions: Consider a gift of a Garden Membership that includes unlimited free garden admission for a full year, discounts at the Gift Shop and for some programs, free Meadow seasonal tours by Stephen Pryce Lea, and early notice of special event/tours. Go to delawaregardens.org/gift-a-membership to purchase a gift membership.

Naming Rights Opportunities: Naming Rights provide funds to our operational accounts, including funding staff salaries.

Please contact Executive Director Sheryl Swed at 202-262-9856 or email sherylswed@delawaregardens.org.

To see details of these exciting naming opportunities, go to delawaregardens.org/support and scroll down to naming opportunities.

Thank You! TO OUR END OF YEAR CAMPAIGN DONORS

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Benches and Rocking Chairs Needed

We need new benches for the west woodlands' trail, and for the new loop to the west of the Restroom Facility taking you to the Restrooms and Welcome Center Area. Also, we need rocking chairs and benches for the front porch and area around the new Staff-Volunteer Center Building. Anytime is the perfect time to name a bench after someone special for a gift that will remain for many years to come. There are two types of 48 inch benches: one flat and one with arms. The benches can be inscribed with up to 33 character including spaces. Delaware Botanic Gardens will be engraved on the first line.



Go to delawaregardens.org/support and scroll down to bench and rocker donation.details.

Thanks to our Corporate Partners!



News from Amanda Goebel



Volunteer Coordinator

“The gardens have closed to the public, but the work continues even as the temperatures drop. Many hands made light work of bulb planting this year, which was completed in November. We added 21,500 bulbs in the Meadow and Folly. Garden Steward volunteers have now moved on to winter weeding, cutting back, and mulching the Folly and Meadow.”

Amanda continued, “Volunteers Jeanette Cowan and Jane Hines packed-up the remaining Gift Shop stock after a successful season. Moving to the new year, Garden Stewards will continue to control the aggressive perennials like Mountain Mint and Balloon flowers, ensuring they do not compete with less aggressive neighboring plants. We will also be planting hardy perennials, shrubs and trees.”

We invite you to make a difference by volunteering at DBG. There are lots of volunteer opportunities to help the garden grow and make new friends. We are consistently adding new Volunteers to our team. Volunteer positions include:

- **Garden Stewards**, who plant and maintain the gardens along with the staff. They also sort and prepare plants in the Hoop Houses.
- **Docents**, who greet our guests on open days, check guests in at the Welcome Center, drive golf carts for our guests, and have various hospitality tasks during special events, including off-site community events.
- We have many **administrative tasks** like making sure the gift shop is stocked, helping DBG prepare for various events, and serving on Committees, like the Education Program Committee.
- Docents and Garden Stewards on open days are stationed in the various gardens to answer questions.

We are so grateful for our dedicated volunteers who share their love of the Gardens with others. Volunteers, along with our staff, are the human backbone of our organization.

Stephen Pryce Lea has handled the Volunteer administrative-coordination tasks in 2023. In September, he began turning over some of those duties to Amanda Goebel, DBG's new Volunteer Coordinator.



DOCENTS



(L to R) Judy Martin, Cheryl Quirk, Kathy Lesperance, and Lorraine Easton in Welcome Center



Jim Marshall



Diann Sherwin in Learning Garden area with guests

GARDEN STEWARDS

Tony Broomfield gathers seeds in Meadow Meander



(L to R) Louise Dorrett and Jane Peters preparing plants for fall planting



Garden Stewards in Folly Garden



Garden Stewards in the Rhyne Garden



Jeff Johnson in Meadow Garden

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

We continue to have “in-house” training opportunities for all our volunteers. This fall Stephen gave special training for Fall Maintenance in the Piet Oudolf Meadow Garden. As mentioned before Volunteers were given “Sensitivity” Training. There was a series of “Rewilding” Classes in September for Volunteers and Staff by Holly Fluty Dempsey. Holly discussed the rewilding and the impact that global warming and tidal flooding has on our landscapes. She addressed how native plants can help mitigate the destruction of our planet.



Thank you to all the dedicated volunteers for a great 2023 season!

News from Elizabeth Rives



Tour Coordinator

“We give tours at 10 a.m. every open day. In addition we have special interest tours: Piet Oudolf Meadow Garden tours in spring, summer, and fall, Tree Identification Tours, Butterfly Tours, Holly Days Tour, and Woodland Walk—Fall Fungi & Flora Tour.”

We are blessed to have so many dedicated DBG staff and volunteers working together. If you'd like to join our team of volunteers, please go to our website (delawaregardens.org) and click on Support, Volunteer to Help, fill out the form, send and it will come directly to our volunteer coordinator.

The special tours are well received. For example, In October, Stephen Pryce Lea gave a special tour to a Chesapeake Forums Group. Two of the groups' members comments are typical: “Stunningly beautiful. I loved the horticulturalist's deep dive into lots of details.” And, “Had a wonderful time! Beautiful day and a great tour. Learned a lot. So happy to get to see the meadow in all its fall splendor. The design techniques have inspired me.”

The DBG Tour Guides include Carol McCloud, Stephen Pryce Lea, Michell Garret, Margaret Kimmel, Elizabeth Rives, Joyce Romans, and Gary Stokes. Gary will be relieving Elizabeth as Tour Coordinator in 2024.

If you are interested in a guided tour contact: Gary Stokes at gary.stokes@delawaregardens.org.



MICHELLE GARRETT



STEPHEN PRYCE LEA



GARY STOKES



ELIZABETH RIVES



CAROL MC CLOUD



MARGARET KIMMEL



Celebrating the remarkable successful 2023 season!

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our outstanding staff and volunteers who bring everything to life. This year's bulb-planting initiative saw the planting of another 21,500 bulbs throughout November, with 200,000 bulbs planted over the last three seasons.

There was so much to celebrate and explore at DBG this Fall & Winter. The gardens showcased a vibrant and cool autumn season, with each of the garden areas undergoing its transition toward the winter season. Piet

Oudolf's Meadow during the Fifth Season serves as a timely celebration of wonder and imagination, a season frequently underestimated by many.

The plant's architecture comes into clear view with shades ranging from tan to brown, boldly standing out against the wintry cloud-filled sky. The Fifth Season is truly remarkable, providing a striking contrast to the garden's summer structure.

As early fall mist fades, it gives way to a light frost that blankets the meadow with delicate ice crystals by late Fall into early Winter. The sun rises and sun sets in December are truly breathtaking.

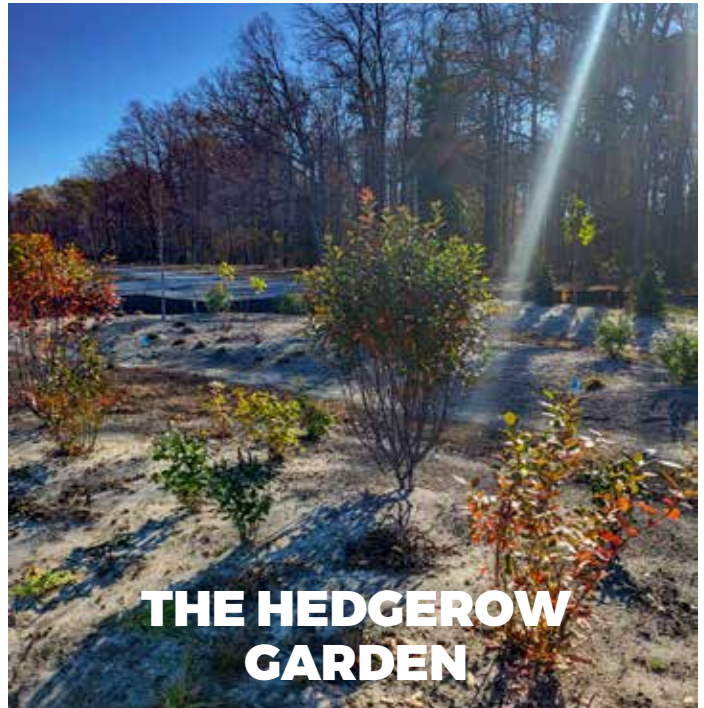
To say we have been busy this fall-winter would be an understatement. Three significant horticultural projects have been added to the excitement of our guests.



THE MONARCH MEANDER

This season the new Monarch Meander showcased an abundance of seed heads generating late season interest. The Monarch Meander, a temporary exhibit lasting 2-3 years, aims to attract and maximize pollinators through unique horticultural and agricultural displays featuring annuals, perennials, cover crops, and wildflowers. Kudos to Jeremy Cole and Bridget Curran for this exciting initiative. They have repurposed an area previously mowed to a garden designed to benefit wildlife, enhance soil conditions, and offer an extended meandering experience for our guests.

So, how have our guests responded to the Monarch Meander? Some of the comments from October are as follows: "Joyous, a wonderful meandering pathway obviously planted with passion and a love of plants, a rare chance to see crops and grasses up close—a wonderful addition," remarked landscape designer from Pennsylvania. Another guest noted, "We loved to see the birds enjoying the seed heads and butterflies feeding from the sun flowers."



THE HEDGEROW GARDEN

Situated to your right upon entering the main gate of the gardens is the new Hedgerow Garden, Phase 1 as previously described.

This project serves as a habitat and storm water conservation initiative, funded by a Delaware Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) \$74,000 in-kind match grant, with our staff, volunteers and Del Tech Interns actively engaged in its development. In the United Kingdom Hedgerows differ, used instead of fences to separate farm fields. In the U.S. hedgerows feature irregular informal shapes and widths, and serve as diverse habitats that provide food and shelter.

Our Hedgerow Garden consists of 11 hedgerows arranged in a circular pattern. Upon completion, it will feature over 750 trees, shrubs, ferns and grasses. Significantly, the roots of these plants will act as filters for rainwater as it flows toward the rain basins. Each hedgerow is uniquely named, and designed to inspire homeowners to replicate that specific hedgerow or border in their own garden areas. All plants used are native or eco-regional, emphasizing environmental importance. Additionally, it's worth noting that naming rights are available.

DBG expresses our gratitude to the Del Tech Environmental interns who played a crucial role in building Phase 1 of this garden. Approximately 12 interns dedicated their Fridays, contributing 480 hours of volunteer service as part of their coursework at the Georgetown Campus. Amanda Goebel, DBG Volunteer Coordinator, supervised the interns, while Emma Ruggiero, a Graduate Research Assistant in the Delaware Sea Grant Program, served as the Del Tech Coordinator. Looking ahead, we plan to commence planting for Phase 2 in the Hedgerow Garden next spring.

DBG Partners with the DNREC for the Delaware Kestrel Partnership

Situated just across the road from the Hedgerow Garden is a recently installed Falcon Bird Box. DNREC undertook the installation at the end of October. The Kestrel Falcon, a small bird, has become a rare sight in Delaware. Ryan Revel, DBG Board Member and Docent drew our attention to this situation and is actively monitoring the nest box.



volunteer team that included: Elizabeth Rives, Donna Buono, Michelle Garrett, Craig Haggarty, Margaret Kimmel, Cheryl Quirk, and Ryan Revel.

The top five species, comprising 72 percent of the total forest, were identified as: *ilex opaca* var. *opaca* (American Holly); *Acer rubrum* (Red Maple); *Liquidambar styraciflua* (Sweet Gum); *Prunus serotina* var. *serotina* (Black Cherry); and *Sassafras albidum* (Sassafras). These findings provide valuable insights into the composition and dominance of the wild tree population within our gardens.

In addition to wild trees, the inventory team also extended their efforts to record GPS coordinates for an additional 1,000+ trees that have been planted throughout the gardens. This comprehensive mapping not only enriches our understanding of the existing natural landscape but also contributes to the strategic planning and conservation efforts aimed at maintaining and enhancing the biodiversity of our expansive garden areas. The diligent work of the inventory team captured both wild and cultivated trees, significantly bolsters our ability to manage and preserve the rich ecological diversity within DBG.

We have plans to embark on a large-scale tree-planting initiative as well as continuing in the cut-back and clean-up of perennials and shrubs. Simultaneously, our Horticulture staff and volunteers have begun soil preparation for next year's Monarch Meander using our tractor and harrow. A winter sowing of cover crops is a proactive approach to ensure that the soils are protected from winter erosion whilst nourishing the garden soil for the upcoming season.

Propagation and seed growing are now underway in the hoop houses, seeds sown to replenish plants lost in the meadow, and build-up stock for next year's plant sales. This strategic effort ensures not only the restoration of the meadow garden's design but also provides plants for new garden areas.

Congratulations to everyone on a fantastic 2023 season! The collective hard work invested in making substantial garden improvements, ensures there will be new garden experiences awaiting everyone to enjoy in the coming year.

Well done!



An essential role happening behind the scenes is ensuring we precisely understand our current natural assets, providing a baseline for enhancing future woodland conservation efforts. Of this is our ongoing tree data collection initiative, which has been in progress for several years.

On October 8, 2023, the Volunteer Woodlands Inventory Team completed a comprehensive assessment of DBG's 12-acres of wild trees, shrubs and vines, collectively referred to as "woody" plants. Over a three-year period, the team faced various challenges, including heat, humidity, cold weather, ticks, yellow-jackets, poison ivy and thickets of thorns and spiny leaves. They diligently recorded the botanic name, common name, life-form type, diameter, GPS coordinates, height and condition for over 4,000 specimens. This inventory will serve as a vital management tool to formulate a plan for advancing our conservation efforts. We extend our gratitude to the

Party in the Garden

DBG is proud and happy to report that the "Back to the Garden" Dinner Party raised **over \$122,000** for operations.

DELAWARE BOTANIC GARDENS
ANNUAL DINNER
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

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Sam Cashdollar, Director of Grounds & Facilities
Jeremy Cole, Horticulturist
Bridget Curran, Horticulture Assistant
Amanda Goebel, Volunteer Coordinator
Jane Hines, Financial Manager
Angie Phinney, Membership Manager
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