NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

This is the first Landscape Design Edition of Scatter Info As We Bloom and Grow and I hope you will find it both informative and enjoyable. In a recent article that appeared in the 2013 fall issue of Garden News, Dr. Wilf Nicholls, Director of The State Botanical Garden of Georgia, aptly defined “landscape” and addressed the dilemma of a changing concept of landscape – manicured vs. natural. His article also served to illustrate the interconnectedness of landscape design and other disciplines such as horticulture, conservation, and environmental. Dr. Nichols has graciously allowed this editor to reprint the major portion of his article to launch the Landscape Design Edition of Scatter Info As We Bloom and Grow.

Jane Hersey, Landscape Design Editor

Goldfinches and Luna Moths and Monarchs, OH MY!

Wilf Nicholls, Director – The State Botanical Garden of Georgia

To the gardener, landscape is deliberately created; land that has been “scaped” or sculpted if you will for aesthetic effect. And the verb “to landscape” is the activity of adorning or improving an area through contouring and planting of flowers, shrubs, or trees. Improving an area – now there’s a loaded term! That went through my mind a few Sundays ago when I was strolling in the Flower Garden.
The gardens were still quiet as I passed the splendid bed of celosia, dark-leaved chili peppers and zinnias that make up the All-America Selections bed. Massed cheek-by-jowl, they made for a bold mosaic of color fronted by pelargoniums and edged by coneflowers left and floss flower right.

A few yards further on it was a very different story. Here was the pocket prairie replete with more coneflower, but also bee balm, black-eyed Susan, partridge pea and others growing higgledy-piggledy; some in bud, some in flower, some gone to seed; some a little crispy and well past their prime while others (probably goldenrods) heading up with youthful vigor. Nothing was dead-headed, staked or trimmed, it was just a random (and to some, unkempt) mass of native Georgia flowers. Before I could take another step the place exploded with brilliant yellow fluttering as a family of American goldfinches rose from between the plants.

Twittering they alighted on some mock oranges and crepe myrtles up the slope and, while they looked resplendent up there, I know they were far less than impressed with me down here.

And as soon as I was down by the grass bed they dove back down amongst the coneflowers to resume feeding. I couldn't help smiling, here were a few seconds of private joy; a fleeting moment of action, of beauty and of landscape as a dynamic, contributing part of ecology. Sure there were flowers but there was so much more.

It brought to mind the whole question of landscape and what should we as a botanical do in terms of landscaping. Should we plant the tried, tested and true? Why yes! Or should we ‘push the envelope’ and do a few things that will make some visitors scratch their heads and say “what’s up with that?” Well, yes to that too.

An example of “what’s up with that?” is the Rain Garden along the roadside below the new Horticulture Complex. It’s actually the catchment area for all the rain (and there’s been a lot this year) that falls on the gravel and asphalt area of the Nursery. Sometimes there’s standing water down there, but it’s always damp and supporting a luxuriant growth of native species like hibiscus, rudbeckia, queen-of-the-meadow and, soon to bloom that towering ironweed (Vernonia) that looks like deep purple asters on steroids! All season long the area has been a feeding nectaring and home site for native butterflies, bees, birds and, I expect, the odd deer. Unkempt? An untidy bunch of weeds you say? Or is it a dynamic microcosm of piedmont nature full of bugs and critters that find less interest in more manicured plantings?
As a garden our job is to educate, to inspire and to connect people to plants. We take pride in honoring our horticultural heritage, in showing fascinating plants from around the world and the plants we’ve used in medicine and kitchens. But our conservation work and advocacy for Georgia’s natural heritage also behooves us to encourage diversity and maybe to push the envelope regarding what we as a society consider landscape. I suppose it comes down to a simple question, is the color green good enough or should our backyards, our road sides, our parks be habitat?

I think there’s room for both and next time you are in the Garden spend some time walking on the wild side. Visit our native grass bed or bee pasture. You may be surprised and delighted with what you see! And maybe, just maybe, you’ll incorporate some new ideas into your garden.

LEST WE FORGET – Objectives of the Landscape Design Study Program:

- Develop a greater sense of appreciation, pride, and knowledge about our private and public gardens.
- Become better educated to make changes in our surroundings so that they will be more beautiful, useful, convenient, ecologically sound, and easily maintained.
- Stimulate interest in all phases of landscape design, including community planning that will affect all of our lives.
- Develop a contingent of qualified Landscape Design Consultants to serve in such decision-making areas of public life as providing leadership, educational programs, scholarships, awards, and promoting better landscape design.
LANDSCAPE DESIGN CONSULTANTS COUNCIL

2013-2015 OFFICERS: Installation of officers was held June 6 at the Federated Garden Clubs Garden Center in Macon. GCG President Suzanne Wheeler installed the 2013-2015 officers for Environmental Studies, Gardening Study, and Landscape Design Councils. The officers for Landscape Design are: President – Jane Hersey, Vice President – Judy Kirkland, Treasurer – Johnnie Berry, and Secretary – Frances Ambrose. Thanks go to Naomi Gerson for providing a delicious luncheon that was enjoyed by all!

Membership in the Landscape Design Consultants Council: Open to both Accredited Landscape Design Consultants and also to those with a Provisional status achieved after successfully completing two NGC-accredited Landscape Design courses. Dues of $14 for the term 2013-2015 should be sent to Johnnie Berry, 287 Fennel Way SW, Atlanta 30331.

2013 FALL TRI-REFRESHER

The Landscape Design Council sponsored a Tri-Refresher held in Augusta on October 4-5. Judy Kirkland, Vice President of Landscape Design Council, served as Chairman of this event. Judy is a new consultant having finished the Landscape Design School in 2012. Kudos to Judy for her fantastic planning and organization which was key to the huge success of this event. There were 43 attendees despite several other major events being held at the same time in different areas of the state.

Highlights of the Tri-Refresher included:

--- Lecture and slide show presented by Jenks Farmer – horticulturist, nursery owner, author, garden curator, and garden designer
--- Dinner Speaker Tonya Bonitatibus – water conservation activist and Development Director for Savannah Riverkeeper
--- Tour of Columbia County Recycling facility
--- Boat tour on the Augusta Canal – designated as part of a National Heritage Area by the U.S. Congress in 1996
--- Visit to the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area Discovery Center at Enterprise Mill which was developed by the Augusta Canal Authority in partnership with the National Park Service
--- Tour of the 7 gardens featured on the Augusta Council of Garden Clubs Peek-A-Boo Fall Tour of Gardens – two of the gardens were designed by Jenks Farmer the featured lecturer for the Tri-Refresher
As a result of growing up on a family maintained self-reliant, food-producing farm Jenks Farmer realized from an early age that plants had intentional purposes. Fascinated by the myth and romance of plants, Jenks turned his appreciation into a lifelong career. He studied Horticulture at Clemson University and received a master’s degree in Public Garden Management and Forestry from The University of Washington. Jenks was the founding horticulturist and garden designer for South Carolina’s Moore Farms Botanic Garden in Lake City, as well as founding curator of Riverbanks Botanical Garden in Columbia. After 25 years of experience, as a garden curator and designer, he also runs a mail order nursery business. Owner and operator of a family run organic field nursery specializing in Crinum, Jenks has managed the transition of the farm from typical chemical based to earth friendly practices because, “it’s the right thing to do for us, for children, for the life in the earth.”

**DEEP ROOTED WISDOM** – Jenks Farmer’s new book on gardening in environmentally sustainable ways will be released in March 2014 by Timber Press. “Gardening used to be a simple and sincere part of life. It was done to feed the body and soul, and it was a part of caring for the earth. It’s changed drastically, becoming a style competition, a shopping experience, and contributing to pollution and resource waste.” Building on old school lessons, Jenks Farmer weaves stories of wise gardeners with the most modern science and artful design toward gardening and living more gently for the earth and ourselves. Felder Rushing, one of America’s most respected gardeners says “Don’t just pick this up as a gardening guide; as you pick this man’s amazed brain and read between the lines for glimpses of his wry humor...feel his loving heart as well.” Definitely a **MUST HAVE** book. Go to [www.jenksfarmer.com](http://www.jenksfarmer.com) for more information about Jenks.