



# Cross Pollination

October 2008

## Coordinator's Corner

### The Times they are a-Changin'

The advent of autumn invites us to reflect on the triumphs and tragedies of our gardens. What plants need replacing? What gaps need filling? What new plants should be introduced to the garden? But the change of seasons is not the only factor inviting us to rethink our gardens. I notice a change in the types of choices for my garden. Where once I would jump at a chance to introduce yet another exotic to test the boundaries of my zone 6A garden, I am now more inclined to reflect on what native species would fit in. The pragmatic is replacing the glamorous. A change in values has precipitated this change of choices. Native plants attract the insects and birds that I long to glimpse in my garden. A book review by Ben Porchuk in the RBG publication NOW@THEGARDENS really drove the point home:

Clematis (native to many parts of the world, but not North America) in its homeland supports 40 species of herbivores (mainly insects) and in North America it supports one species of insect. The beautiful non-native butterfly bush attracts a dozen local moths and butterflies, but they can only get their sugar fix from the nectar of this plant, not use it for rearing their caterpillars. Without the surrounding native plants, your butterfly bush would have no visitors.

My garden is more than a collection of plants. I want it to be a sanctuary for wildlife too. This is why I am very much looking forward to Patty's presentation next Wednesday on native plants. It's time for a change!

*Claudette Sims*



## 2008 MG meetings at 7:30 p.m

Please bring something for the draw table and change to buy tickets - \$2.00 each or 3 for \$5.00

- October 1            Rooms 3 & 4 (MG Certification Exam - Study Group meet at 6:45 p.m.)
- November 5        Rooms 3 & 4
- December 3        Rooms 3 & 4

- Zone 5 Technical Update - Norfolk County Master Gardeners; Saturday, October 25, 2008
- Chrysanthemum Show, Gage Park; October 24 to November 2

## Solutions to padding a gardener's knees taken from Janet Macunovich's newsletter

For knee pads that stay in place without falling down, and which do not have connecting straps that bind in back of the knees try the padded-knee pants sold as GreenKnees by Denman Company. You can patch them and wear them to garden.

Buy the knee pad inserts as a separate item. Carhartt carries an insert pad called Soft Knees, which some find works best at double strength. Place two pads in each knee pocket. The padding remains in place, even during laundering.

It's not an inexpensive solution but our knees are worth it. The pants are about \$50 and pads are \$13 a pair. You can order them on-line at [www.carhartt.com](http://www.carhartt.com). However, the pants come only in men's sizes (expressed in waist- and inseam inches such as 30-30). Women who need to try on men's jeans to make that translation, check around for a work clothes store or hardware/farm supply outlet near you that carries Carhartt.

Skillers and Lee Valley also carry pants. Kits are available for adding knee pad pockets to one's own favorite pants, from the manufacturer of the Soft Knees pads.

For more information try these links:

<http://www.carhartt.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/ProductDisplay?catalogId=10101&storeId=10051&productId=32068&langId=-1>

<http://www.skillers.com/cgi-bin/store/store.cgi?&shop=skillers&L=eng&Category=polycotton>

<http://www.leevalley.com/garden/page.aspx?c=&cat=2,42407&p=55646>

[www.softknees.com](http://www.softknees.com), (or phone 888-4kneepad for a catalog)

*A professional gardener and educator since 1984, Janet Macunovich designs, plants and tends gardens through her business, Perennial Favorites. She teaches and writes about gardening at schools, conferences, in her books, this weekly column, the monthly Michigan Gardener and other publications. To learn more, email [JMaxGarden@aol.com](mailto:JMaxGarden@aol.com) and ask for What's Coming Up,*