

# PLANT AMERICA, FEED AMERICA



One of the 2023-2025 administration President's projects is a campaign to help feed the hungry across America. Called ***Plant America-Feed America*** the project will encourage every NGC member to participate in one of several ways to help fight food insecurity.

Fighting chronic hunger in America is an ongoing problem. According to latest statistics from the U.S.

Department of Agriculture, 33.8 million people in America are food insecure – 5 million of them are children. Whether it's due to inflation, the after effects of the long-running Covid virus, or a financial issue, more and more families are showing up at food banks to ask for help. Even our elderly population on a fixed income suffer from a lack of nutritious food.

How can you help? If you grow your own vegetable garden, fruit or other food items, we encourage you to donate some of this bounty to a local food bank or any other organization that helps fight food insecurity. If you don't have your own garden, then how about volunteering at a local community garden where food is donated. This could be a town-sponsored garden, a school garden, a church garden, or any garden that supports feeding the hungry. Not only will you feel better about being part of the solution of fighting food insecurity, but it's a chance to promote gardening to those around you!

During the 2023-2025 term, we will be keeping a running total of how much fresh fruit, herbs, produce, etc. is being donated by our members. We want to spotlight how the NGC is making a difference across America! Just fill out the **PLANT AMERICA-FEED AMERICA DONATION FORM**, and then submit it electronically. The form is short and the directions are easy to follow. Some members may donate on a more frequent basis, while others may donate once or twice in a season. **Every donation counts!!** So, let's get growing as we continue to ***PLANT AMERICA*** and ***FEED AMERICA*** too! If you have any questions, **contact Project Chairman Suzanne Bushnell**.



## PLANT AMERICA- Wildlife Habitat Certification Program Gardening for Wildlife

As garden club members we should be aiming to practice sustainability in our personal landscapes. Habitats are being lost to development and we can hold the key to preserving them for future generations. As development pushes natural habitats further and further back, we can encourage wildlife to co-exist with us in our own landscapes. Biodiversity is a

key to successful wildlife habitat. You get to choose the wildlife you want to encourage. It may be only birds, small mammals, and insects. You can provide food, water, cover and places for animals and insects to raise their young. Work to reduce areas of lawn. Make conscious choices when choosing plants for your garden. Look for plants that are native and keep away from invasive species. Good plant choices provide fruit and seeds for native wildlife. Native trees make good choices. Keep a clean water source such as a small fountain or birdbath, or if you have enough property, build a pond. Provide a wood pile or leave a dead tree. Check the NGC website for the application and get YOUR GARDEN registered as a National Garden Club Certified Wildlife Habitat. You will receive a certificate and may purchase a plaque to display in your garden. I am looking forward to seeing these plaques in member gardens across the United States.

**Apply to Register Your Garden** - Have your garden registered as a National Garden Club Certified Wildlife Habitat! Once approved, you will have the option to purchase the NGC signage to display in your garden.

For questions regarding the PLANT AMERICA- Wildlife Habitat Certification Program

**Barbara Campbell- Wildlife Habitat Certification Chairman**

## PLANT AMERICA- Plant for Pollinators

National Garden Clubs President Brenda Moore wants to encourage NGC members to make our gardens more than just beautiful. That's why she created the National Garden Clubs Pollinator Garden Certification program. Our gardens can support birds, bees and other insects, and this program provides the incentive to take additional steps to make sure we're providing all the components to help pollinators thrive.

We've created a checklist to make sure you have everything you need to support pollinators:

- Food sources

- Water Source

- Areas to raise young

You probably already have several plants that provide pollen and nectar. But could you add a few native plants that are perhaps a better source of food? Could you add a shrub that has berries for wintertime nutrition? You don't have to install a pond, but what about a birdbath? Consider adding a heater for fresh water in the winter. Many of us have birdhouses in our gardens, but if not, a small, inconspicuous log or brush pile can provide a safe place for insects to nest.

In addition to providing food, water, and shelter, think about your gardening practices and what you can do better to support pollinators. Naturalists are encouraging us to "leave the leaves" in the fall for insects that overwinter in leaves, and to wait until spring for garden clean up since some insect larvae stay in hollow stems until spring.

We all want to do what we can to support pollinators—their lives depend on us. By making a few tweaks to our gardens we can make them feel right at home!

**Apply to Register Your Garden** - Have your yard recognized as a National Garden Clubs Certified Pollinator Garden! Once approved, you will have the option to order an NGC Certified Pollinator Garden Yard Sign!



For questions regarding the PLANT AMERICA- Plant for Pollinators project, please contact: [\*\*Virginia Schmidt, Plant for Pollinators Chairman\*\*](#)