

## **Conservation Committee**

**By Sarah Johnson, Chair**

**The Conservation Committee oversees the Hadwen House as well as The Saltmarsh Center. The chair of the committee attends the NAL meeting in Washington D.C annually in March along with members from every other GCA club in the U. S. The Chair is also responsible for organizing a speaker for the Conservation Lecture in mid August each year. Paulette Boling oversees the Saltmarsh Center and Peg Condon oversees the Hadwen House Garden.**

This year I went to the NAL meeting in D.C in February this was my fifth time going to this event although the last time was more than ten years ago with my GCA club in California. The Event covers three days and is packed with dynamic women from all over the country. I was part of the Zone 1 group which covers clubs in MA, NH, VT, RI, and ME. The 2024 NAL meeting was from March 17-20 at the Washington Georgetown Marriott Hotel . There were two full days of speakers, one an educational day where we had speakers from different environmental groups speak to us about current issues and legislation pending approval in Congress, the second day was spent on Capital Hill where we visited with out local legislators in Congress then heard from a number of congresspeople in a convention in an assembly format. All in all it is a wonderful opportunity to see first hand what is the GCA's most important role nationally.

I am attaching Paulette Bolings report on the Saltmarsh Garden.

### **Saltmarsh Coastal-resilient Native Plant Garden, report, 2024**

**By Paulette Boling**

In mid-April I asked Adam Lockley, gardener for the Saltmarsh Center, to add organic compost and mulch from Toscana to the garden.

On Monday, April 29, 2024 I met with Kelly Omand, botanist at the Nantucket Conservation Foundation, to assess the garden and advise.

A few of us met on Thursday mornings at 8 in the late spring and early summer to remove beach grass that had moved into the interior of the garden from the perimeter. Beach grass is helpful at the perimeter to stabilize the soil, especially when winter storms happen. We also continued to dig out the invasive vine called Black swallow-wort. We removed plants that had moved into the beach grass perimeter, removed grass-leaved goldenrod that had infiltrated other plants, and added some new potted natives from Surfing Hydrangea Nursery.

Members who helped – Maryann Wasik, Beth Davies, Liz Sheppard, Ruth Plandowski, Lynn Boyajian, Robin Youngman, Dottie Gennaro, Connie Ciggaran, Christine Dean, Paulette Boling, with additional help from Provisionals Jessica Katchen, Kate Roberts, Sarah Johnson and Kathy Droz

Our budget was for \$2500 but costs came to just under \$1500. Of that amount

\$700 was for the compost and mulch in the spring and \$750+ was for plants from Surfing Hydrangea.

This was the third season for the garden, and it really came into its own. It is now filled with native plants, and it attracted positive feedback from passersby, Julie Jordin and Merrill McClusky, who helped us with the first seasons, and from visiting zone co-chairs Libby Moore and Peggy Mayfield, among others.

The Education Exhibit at the Green Thumb Show in mid-July at the Sconset Casino featured the garden and publicized it. The goal of the exhibit was to demonstrate the Saltmarsh Senior Center Garden's advantages by defining a Coastal-resilient garden, explaining the benefits of this kind of garden to the environment, and demonstrating our process in creating the garden. The exhibit won the Ann Lyon Crammond Education award from the GCA judges.

We are in the process of documenting the garden with the Remain Nantucket sponsored website called Nantucket footprints.

#### **Saltmarsh Garden Plant List, 2024**

##### **Small tree/large shrub -**

*Prunus maritima* – Beach plum

##### **Shrubs -**

*Ilex glabra* – Inkberry

*Clethra alnifolia* - Summersweet

*Comptonia peregrina* – Sweet fern

##### **Perennials-**

*Euthamia graminifolia* – Grass-leaved goldenrod - yellow flowers in fall

*Solidago sempervirens* – Seaside goldenrod, - tall, broad leaves, self-seeded

*Asclepias tuberosa* – Butterfly milkweed - orange flower, dry conditions

*Asclepias syriaca* - Common milkweed - pink flowered

*Pyncnanthemum muticum* - Broad-leaved mountain mint, deters rabbits

*Eutrochium dubium* - Coastal plain Joe Pye weed - pink flowers

*Monarda fistulosa* – Wild bee balm - lavender flowers

*Silphium perfoliatum* – Cup plant - tall, narrow, yellow flowers

*Symphotrichum novae-angliae* – New England aster – purple flower

*Eupatorium perfoliatum* – Boneset - white flower

*Hibiscus moscheutos* – Swamp rose mallow - damp conditions, large pink blooms in late summer

*Helenium autumnale* – Sneezeweed – fall-blooming, yellow flowers

**Grasses-**

*Schizachyrium scoparium* – Little bluestem – spikey and bluish

*Eragrostis spectabilis* – Purple love grass – low, fine purplish seeds

*Bouteloua curtipendula* – Side oats grama - low, small seed-heavy spike

*Ammophila breviligulata* – American beach grass – along the perimeter for stability

