



What's Bugging You?

GCV Conservation Forum Bites Off Pesticides, Hosts National Panel of Experts and Encore Presentation by Doug Tallamy



*By Chamie Grandy Valentine, Chairman, 2012 Conservation Forum
GCV Conservation and Beautification Committee
The James River Garden Club*

Garden Club of Virginia members count numerous friendships begun upon a mutual interest in flowers. This year the Conservation and Beautification Committee will present a forum dedicated to maintaining healthy gardens as well as healthy friends: *How to Reduce Garden Pests: A Modern Gardener's Guide for Healthy Living*.

On the first of three panels, Dr. Michael Weaver, a Virginia Tech professor and director of Virginia Tech Pesticide Programs, will share the history of Virginia's pioneering efforts in pest management and pesticide safety. Liza Fleeson, Program Manager for the Office of Pesticide Services, Division of Consumer Protection at the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, will teach the safest and most effective ways to use approved pesticides. Dr. Wayne Surlis, a consultant for the pesticides industry, will share his perspective on integrating chemical and non-chemical practices to reduce toxic exposure.

The second panel will address the relationships among chemical applications, endocrine (hormone) disruptors, and cancer. Dr. Warren Porter, a zoologist from the University of Wisconsin, Dr. Amy Brown, an entomologist from the University of Maryland, and Dr. John Peterson Myers, an ornithologist and the CEO and Chief Scientist of Environmental Health Sciences in Charlottesville, will share their ongoing research. Dr. Myers also will address his current work with international chemical companies to establish the first framework for creating chemicals that do not disrupt hormones. His work and presentation inspire hope for the future.

Also on this second panel will be Dr. Christopher Weis. He is a senior advisor to Dr. Linda Birnbaum, Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences/National Toxicology Program (NIEHS/NTP) at the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Weis specializes in rapid exposure and risk evaluation, and will share the NIEHS/NTP perspective on regulating chemicals in the garden.

The third panel addresses organics and biodiversity in gardening practices. One speaker, Charles "Chip" Osborne, Jr., founder and president of Osborne Organics, LLC, has extensive professional experience in creating safe and sustainable landscapes. As one of the country's leading experts on growing sustainable, natural turf, he will speak on organic lawns, playing fields, and golf courses, as well as vegetable and flower gardens, even roses.

Back by popular demand, our final speaker is Dr. Douglas Tallamy, an entomologist at the University of Delaware. He will teach us how biodiversity reduces the need for pesticides and how to encourage biodiversity in our gardens.

With so much to discuss and learn, please plan to attend. The forum will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Jepson Alumni Center at the University of Richmond on Monday, November 12, 2012. Tickets will be available October 1 on the GCV website. 