

## Looking Forward to 2025 Garden Season

This season we are happy to welcome 12 new gardeners. All have attended our garden orientation and are ready to plant! One new gardener will be testing our “mobility bed” completed in 2024. It is basically a higher raised bed to assist people with back issues.

We have planned an Environmental series for our 2025 community education programs. All are free and open to the public. The first is May 17<sup>th</sup>. See details on page 3 .



*New gardeners  
Phil Harvey, Mary Ann Christmas and Patricia Swindell*

We are thrilled to receive a \$15,000 grant from Christiana Cares. See details on page 2.

As we continue to grow while working on becoming a sustainable organization we have made changes to our Steering Committee. Ray Fratella, who has been our liaison with the city of Lewes, will become our Chair. We added a new committee, Native Plant Restoration. Dr. Patrick Gaffney, retired UD biologist, is the chair. See details on page 4.

At the end of the 2024 season the Outreach Committee streamlined our donations. This year our partner, Teach a Person to Fish Society, will sort, cook, and donate! We have built two additional beds for donations, bringing our total to 4. Gardeners and volunteers plant, weed, and harvest!

We added a second shed in 2024. In 2025 we expect it to be fully utilized. We will also be moving and upgrading our compost area. We have already begun improving our community meeting area.

We're excited to continue educating the public about the importance of pollinators. Cindy Porter, Master Gardener and Lewes Community Garden volunteer, has worked hard planning and creating our pollinator garden. Stop by to visit.

Individual donations have always been a significant help to the garden. We thank you for your continued support. Any donation, large or small, is welcomed and will be used to pay for materials, tools, and equipment to enable the garden to expand and keep up with the increasing demand for organic gardening. If you are interested in donating to the garden, please visit the garden website at [lewescommunitygarden.org/donate](https://lewescommunitygarden.org/donate).

## Christiana Cares Grant

We are excited to announce that Lewes Community Garden was awarded a grant from Christiana Health Care Community Grant Program, locally known as: "Christiana Cares". Their community investment grants are awarded to local groups, programs, and nonprofits that contribute and support community health improvement.

The Garden's \$15,000 grant from Christiana Cares will enable us to:

- Increase our produce donations to local food banks and community nonprofits.
- Expand our community education programming.
- Begin native plant restoration and demonstration gardens on site.
- Expand our Outreach to reach more people experiencing food insecurity.
- Increase the number of garden beds, and improve our infrastructure, without raising our rental rates for gardeners.

Since receiving the grant in February we've been busy! We've added additional garden beds and have set aside more beds for growing produce strictly for donation. We are reaching out to local community groups, schools, and churches in the hopes of decreasing food insecurity locally. We have announced our 2025 community education program, an environmental series with three speakers. All are free and open to the public.



*Thanksgiving 2024 donations*

We welcome your help in meeting these goals. If you would like to join us, either as a community partner or as a Garden volunteer, please contact us at [lewescommunitygarden@gmail.com](mailto:lewescommunitygarden@gmail.com), or call Perrin Smith at 302-381-4779.

## 2025 Environmental Education Programs

### Rewild Delmarva - Holly Dempsey

May 17<sup>th</sup> - 9:30 AM

Are native plants different? Why the concern about pollinators? How can we practice sustainable gardening and landscaping? Holly Fluty Dempsey, founder of ReWild DELMARVA, will lead an interactive talk to explore our past and present relationship with nature and the ecological landscape movement that is spreading rapidly in our area and across North America. ReWild DELMARVA is based at the Island Bays Garden Center and supports Homegrown National Parks, started by UD Professor Doug Tallamy.



Holly is a Delaware Master Naturalist, a Pollinator Steward with the North America Pollinator Partnership, a Delaware Tree Steward, and on the Board of Directors for the Delaware Botanic Gardens.

### Invasive Plants & Habitat Management - Gregg Woolston

August 16<sup>th</sup> - 9:30 AM

Invasive species pose a threat to our ecosystems. Plant biodiversity is important for our wellbeing. How can we make a difference in our own lawns and gardens by choosing landscape plants that provide an ecological function?



Gregg is a Master Naturalist and coordinates the DE Master Naturalist program at the Rehoboth Art League. He serves on the board of the Delaware Invasive Species Council and is a lead patron at the Gateway Garden for Lewes in Bloom. Gregg is a gardener at Lewes Community Garden where he works on the Native Plant Restoration Committee.

### Lose the Lawn / Pocket Meadows - Sussex Master Gardeners

October 18 - 9:30 AM

Turf grass makes up more than 40 million acres in the USA, providing little value to the ecosystem. Care and management of turf grass is expensive and time consuming. Studies show that bees, birds, and other pollinators continue to decline due to loss of habitat, use of pesticides, etc. Increasing habitat using native plants is critical to stop this decline. Sussex County Master Gardeners will review and provide examples of steps homeowners can take to reduce turf grass, add beauty and interest to yards and gardens while helping the pollinators we depend upon.



Free - open to the public -366 Park Road in Lewes  
Bring a chair and water!

Building a stronger, greener community!



## Native Plant Restoration Committee



The garden added a new committee - Native Plant Restoration - in 2025. Dr. Patrick Gaffney, retired UD biologist, will be the chair. The Native Plant Restoration Committee will work to restore and maintain the landscape outside the fenced-in area enclosing the garden beds. The committee's plans include replacing invasive plants with natives, protecting existing native trees and shrubs, and developing demonstration areas to showcase native plant options for community homes and gardens.

The LCG has recently become a Local Organizing Partner with the Delaware Master Naturalist Program allowing our garden to serve as a site for Master Naturalist trainees to engage in education and outreach, service projects, and citizen science. Participation in the activities of the committee will be open to LCG members and volunteers as well as Delaware Master Naturalist trainees.

More information about the DE Master Naturalist Program can be found here:

[Master Naturalist Program | Cooperative Extension | University of Delaware](#)

## Outreach is Expanding!

The Lewes Community Garden Outreach Committee is looking forward to expanding its Harvest Donations in 2025 with the support from the Christiana Cares grant.

First up will be an additional 4 x 16 bed where all the produce will be grown for donation. This will be in addition to the original 4 x 16 bed and any extra produce gardeners donate. The Harvest Donation team collects the produce weekly and transports it to Teach a Person to Fish (TPTF) - [The Teach a Person to Fish Society – Sustainability Powered by Community](#) and other nonprofits where it is used in meal preparation or given directly to families in need. The Outreach Committee has many other ideas of ways to partner with local groups. Watch for an update in our fall newsletter.



*Teresa Ripley from TPTF*

Lewes Community Garden is always looking for individuals/families that would like to have a garden bed but cannot afford the \$75 fee. If you or your organization know an individual or family, please email the garden at [lewescommunitygarden@gmail.com](mailto:lewescommunitygarden@gmail.com). If you would like to help by volunteering with the Harvest Donation program, just let us know.

## Special Thanks

A big thank you to Grizzly's for their yearly donation of topsoil. This helps us fill our new beds! Ryan Whibley, one of the owners, also owns a landscape company, Garden Creations and Care. He can be contacted at [Gccdelaware@gmail.com](mailto:Gccdelaware@gmail.com).



## Lewes Garden Tour

Lewes Community Garden is happy to be a stop on the 2025 Lewes Garden Tour! This year the tour will be held on June 21<sup>st</sup> from 10 AM to 4 PM. Check [2025 Lewes Garden Tour | Lewes Chamber of Commerce](#) for more details as they become available.



Thank you for your donations and support!  
Lewes Community Gardeners Fund  
PO Box 436  
Lewes, Delaware 19958 or  
[Greater Lewes Foundation LCG Fund](#)

Email - [LewesCommunityGarden@gmail.com](mailto:LewesCommunityGarden@gmail.com)

Website - [Lewes Community Garden – Building a Stronger & Greener Community](#)



Building a stronger, greener community!