



The Fairfield Garden Club Presents

Home Sweet Home

BACK TO NATURE

A GCA Flower Show • May 1 - 2, 2026

Fairfield University Bookstore

1499 Post Road, Second Floor Fairfield, CT

• Free and Open to the Public •

The Fairfield Garden Club



Member of The Garden Club of America

Presents

Home Sweet Home
Back to Nature

A GCA Flower Show

May 1- 2, 2026

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1499 Post Road, Second Floor
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Open to the public

May 1 ~ 10 AM - 3 PM
May 2 ~ 10 AM - 2 PM
Admission Free of Charge

PREFACE

As we embrace "back-to-nature" activities in our garden clubs today, we follow in the footsteps of Mabel Osgood Wright, whose movement helped shape America's environmental consciousness at the turn of the 20th century. Wright was a pioneering conservationist - founding the Audubon Society of Connecticut, serving as a leader in the National Audubon Society, and establishing the Birdcraft Sanctuary in Fairfield, Connecticut, a landmark model for wildlife and habitat preservation across the country. Her work in conservation and environmental education truly helped shape the landscape of American ecological awareness. The Birdcraft Sanctuary she established was ahead of its time, providing a space where wildlife could thrive and people could connect with nature - a vision that remains deeply relevant today.

Beyond her environmental leadership, Wright was a prolific author, publishing twenty-seven works of fiction and non-fiction. She contributed significantly to *Bird-Lore* magazine (now *Audubon*) as an associate editor for over a decade and excelled as a landscape photographer. In 1915, she founded the Fairfield Garden Club with twenty-five charter members, creating a legacy that endures today. The club's 150+ members remain inspired by her vision as part of the Garden Club of America, a nationwide organization encompassing 200 clubs and approximately 18,000 members. It's inspiring to see how the Fairfield Garden Club continues her legacy, fostering community and environmental stewardship.

We honor Mabel Osgood Wright in our *Home Sweet Home* Flower Show Schedule with her timely quotes from *The Friendship of Nature: A New England Chronicle of Birds and Flowers*, originally published in 1894. Honoring her in this way is such a fitting tribute. Her words, rooted in a deep appreciation for the natural world, remind us to slow down and cherish the beauty around us.



The purpose of The Garden Club of America is to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening; to share the advantage of association by means of educational meetings, conferences, correspondence and publications; and to restore, improve and protect the quality of the environment through educational programs and action in the fields of conservation and civic improvement.

The purpose of a flower show is threefold: to set standards of artistic and horticultural excellence; to broaden knowledge of horticulture, floral design, conservation, photography and other related areas; and to share the beauty of a show with fellow club members and with the public.

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TIMETABLE FOR EXHIBITORS

- April 29, 2025** Horticulture - One-year ownership deadline for Par Class
- October 1, 2025** Registration opens for all divisions
- October 29, 2025** Horticulture - Six-month ownership deadline
- February 1, 2026** Floral Design, Photography, Botanical Arts and Needle Arts - registration deadline
- Horticulture – 3 month ownership deadline
- March 1, 2026** Photography - submission delivery deadline
- March 15, 2026** Needle Arts - submission delivery deadline
- March 24, 2026** Horticulture - Advanced registration deadline for classes 29-32
- March 30, 2026** Botanical Arts - submission delivery deadline
- April 1, 2026** Horticulture - Four-week ownership deadline
- April 5, 2026** Photography, Botanical Arts and Needle Arts passed
- April 29, 2026**
- 2 PM - 4 PM** Horticulture entries accepted and passed (optional)
- April 30, 2026**
- 7:45 AM - 9:45 AM** Floral Design and Horticulture entries accepted and passed
- 9:45 AM** Entries completed
- 10:15 AM** Judges briefing
- 10:45 AM** Judging begins
- 1:30 PM** Flower Show Evaluation and Judges Luncheon
- 6 PM - 8 PM** Show Preview and Cocktail Reception
- May 1, 2026**
- 9 AM - 10 AM** Refreshing and maintenance of exhibits
- 10 AM - 3 PM** Show open to the public
- May 2, 2026**
- 9 AM - 10 AM** Refreshing and maintenance of exhibits
- 10 AM - 2 PM** Show open to the public
- 2 PM** Show closes
- 2:15 PM - 3 PM** All entries must be removed

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EDUCATION INFORMATION

Inspired by Mabel Osgood Wright, “Home Sweet Home, Back to Nature” hopes to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, fostering an appreciation of nature’s beauty. In our Division V educational exhibit “Our Healing Gardens” we use our farmhouse garden to understand the medicinal qualities and healing benefits inherent in plant life.

GCA RULES

1. Please carefully read and follow GCA Flower Show Rules, General Information, and Division Guidelines. All rules as stated in *The Garden Club of America Flower Show and Judging Guide (FS & JG)*, 2025 edition, shall apply.
2. All plant material must be correctly identified with the botanical and common names, if possible. Accepted references for nomenclature are:
 - a. Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Finder at <https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/plantfinder/plantfindersearch.aspx>
 - b. Royal Horticultural Society - Find a Plant at <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/search-Form>
 - c. GCA Flower Show Committee - [Botanical Nomenclature](#)
3. The Garden Club of America expects all exhibitors to be aware of the need to promote the conservation of endangered and threatened plants. Plants collected in the wild and listed by *Connecticut* as rare may not be exhibited in any flower show sponsored by a GCA club. Cultivated plant material listed by *Connecticut* as rare may be exhibited if accompanied by a typed card stating that it has not been collected from the wild or that it was collected out-of-state and giving information concerning its cultural requirements and propagation methods. Lists of endangered plant material will be available before the show, during passing from the division chairs and online by searching *Connecticut's* list of rare plants.
4. Plant material showing evidence of insects or disease must be removed immediately from the exhibition area. This rule will be enforced during the show, when the problem is identified.
5. Use of the following items is not permitted in Floral Design, Horticulture, Botanical Arts, Education Divisions and Specialty Classes: locally endangered or invasive plants, diseased plant material, artificial plant material, live animals of any kind, taxidermy, or anything from or produced by an animal including natural birds' nests, feathers of any kind, bones, coral, hooves, horns, fur, hair (except wool), and shells (sea, turtle, egg, etc.) The Photography Division is exempt from this rule, but all photographs must show respect for the natural world and be taken in an ethically responsible way. Information on invasive plants is available online by searching for *Connecticut's* list of invasive plants.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Entries are open to all GCA club members, including provisionals, and professionals in their disciplines, except as noted in the schedule.
2. All designs must be the original work of the exhibitor(s). Although techniques and components may be inspired by other designs, the application of the techniques and components must create an original design that is distinct from the inspiration.
3. Registration is required for all classes, with the exception of those in the Horticulture Division that are weather-dependent (cut specimens, etc.). Exempt classes: Horticulture classes 1-28.
4. Links for registration forms are provided within the schedule. Classes will be filled in the order registration forms are received according to the email date and time.
5. Entering a show constitutes permission to use images of the exhibitor's work in all GCA channels of communication.
6. While The Garden Club of America, Fairfield Garden Club, and Fairfield University Bookstore will exercise due caution in safeguarding exhibits, responsibility for damage, loss, or personal injury cannot be assumed.
7. Any clarification or change in the rules, as originally stated in the schedule, shall be communicated promptly in writing by the division chairs to all exhibitors in the class and, at the show, to the judges and the passing committee.
8. An entry card must accompany each entry. Entry cards will be available at the show and upon request from the registration or division chairs in advance of the show. The information on the entry card must be completed in black waterproof medium. If a sample or key card is displayed with the entry, writing "See Key Card" or "See Sample Card" in lieu of listing plant material on the entry card is acceptable.
9. ***The passing committee must pass each entry before the exhibitor(s) may leave the show area.*** The passing committee reserves the right to refuse any entry that does not conform to the rules of the schedule. The exhibitor has the option of correcting the entry if time permits. If not corrected, the entry cannot be judged but may remain in place, marked "For Exhibit Only" with a brief, constructively worded statement explaining why it was not judged. Judges may not disqualify any entry passed by the passing committee unless insect infestation or disease is evident.
10. Once an entry is passed, the exhibitor(s) must leave the show floor immediately. The only exception will be flower show committee members who have entered and been passed according to the timetable. An exhibitor may not touch a passed entry until after judging and then only to carry out necessary maintenance.
11. Only participating judges and clerks will be allowed on the show floor during

judging. The flower show and division chairs should remain nearby but off the show floor until needed.

12. Containers and accessories should be inconspicuously labeled with the exhibitor's name.
13. For this show, a novice is an exhibitor who has never won first place or GCA Special Award in the division entered at a GCA, GCA Major, sanctioned non-GCA or sanctioned non-GCA Major flower show. An exhibitor who has won first place or a Special Award in a division is still a novice in the other divisions. The exhibitor must be exhibiting alone to be eligible for the GCA Novice Award or the Sandra Baylor Novice Floral Design Award. Novice award eligibility is marked on the entry card and confirmed at passing.
14. A statement of intent, if required by the class, must be submitted at the time of passing. The statement must be no more than 25 words, typed or printed in black waterproof medium on a 4" x 6" white unlined card or on an entry card, if space allows.
15. All Judges' decisions are final.
16. All exhibits must remain in place and in show condition until fifteen minutes after the show's closing.



Floral Design

DIVISION ONE

“Here are solid colors, hues, veinings, tracings, and varied casts of expression, harlequin, sober, coquettish, as if continual hybridization had placed human intelligence in them.”

Mabel Osgood Wright, 1894
*The Friendship of Nature: A New England
Chronicle of Birds and Flowers*

DIVISION I

Floral Design Guidelines

1. Please carefully read and follow the GCA Rules, General Information, and Timetable for Exhibitors.
2. Registration opens October 1, 2025. Advance registration is required by February 1, 2026.
3. An exhibitor is permitted only one entry per class but may enter two classes.
4. The exhibitor(s) under whose name(s) the entry has been registered must create and complete the design. All participants must be listed on the entry card. Only listed exhibitors and show personnel may be on the show floor at the time of entry.
5. No more than two exhibitors may execute a design unless otherwise stated in the schedule.
6. If forced to withdraw, an exhibitor must notify the division chair and class consultant and find a substitute unless there is a waiting list for the class.
7. Designs may be executed off-site and brought to the show completed.
8. All entries must include fresh and/or dried plant material. Fresh plant material must be in water or conditioned in such a way as to remain in pristine form. Rooted plant material is allowed provided no soil is attached. An entry is expected to be maintained in show condition.
9. Mechanics should not be visible unless they are an integral part of the design.
10. Anything not prohibited in the GCA Rules, Floral Design Division Guidelines, or individual class descriptions is permitted.
11. Although permitted, the use of cut fruits and vegetables is discouraged and should be undertaken only with proper treatment to prevent spoilage and insect contamination.
12. Accessories are permitted unless otherwise stated in the class description.
13. Pedestals may not be moved. Tops of pedestals may not be enlarged or draped. Floral Designs have no height restrictions.
14. Questions regarding class requirements may be directed to the class consultant and/or division chair.
15. Judging will be based on the principles of design (balance, contrast, dominance, proportion, rhythm, and scale) and the elements of design (light, space, line, form, color, texture, pattern, and size). Creativity, distinction, conformance to and interpretation of the class and schedule are also considered.

16. Scale of points by which the classes are to be judged: (as per *FS & JG Book 4: Judging at Flower Shows, 2025 edition*).

Scale of points for Classes 1, 3, 4

Design	35
Creativity	20
Interpretation	20
Distinction	15
Conformance	<u>10</u>
Total	100

Scale of points for Class 2

Floral design	25
Overall design	20
Color and textural harmony	15
Conformance	15
Interpretation	15
Distinction	<u>10</u>
Total	100

Class 4**Grandma's Attic****4 Entries: Register [HERE](#)**

A design staged in a niche, 13-1/2" wide x 80" tall with an opening 12-1/2" wide x 15" tall x 12" deep, painted BM Pilgrim Haze. The bottom of the niche opening is 50" from the floor. Viewed and judged from the front. Niche will be lit with cool LED lighting. Paint sample, photograph of the niche, and lighting information will be sent following registration.

Class Consultants: Suzy Dale, suzy@suzydale.com or Cammie Liberty, Cammieliberty@gmail.com



Horticulture

DIVISION TWO

“Here in New England, we have no calendar of Nature, no rigid law of season, or of growth. The climate, a caprice, a wholly eerie thing, sets tradition at defiance and forces our poets to contradict each other. The flower which one declares the harbinger of spring may be a lazy vanguard in another year . . . ”

Mabel Osgood Wright, 1894
*The Friendship of Nature: A New England
Chronicle of Birds and Flowers*

DIVISION II

Horticulture Guidelines

1. Please carefully read and follow the GCA Rules, General Information, and Timetable for Exhibitors.
2. Registration opens for classes 29, 30, 31 and 32 on October 1, 2025. Advanced registration is required by March 24, 2026.
3. Classes 1–28 to be displayed in the exhibitor’s appropriately-sized clear glass container. The committee will provide wedging materials for all cut specimens.
4. An exhibitor may submit two entries per class in classes 1–28 provided each is a different species or cultivar.
5. Entries must have been owned and grown by the exhibitor for a minimum of three months unless otherwise stated in the schedule.
6. Entries eligible for the **Catherine Beattie Medal** and/or the **Clarissa Willemsen Horticulture Propagation Award** must have been in the possession of the exhibitor for at least six months and may not have won the award previously. Eligibility will be marked on the entry card and confirmed at passing.
7. All rooted entries propagated by the exhibitor must be identified with details of the method and relevant date(s) on an accompanying propagation card to be eligible for the **Clarissa Willemsen Horticulture Propagation Award**.
8. Mats, stands, saucers, and unobtrusive stakes, ties, etc., are allowed.
9. Classes may be subdivided and entries moved and/or reclassified at the discretion of the show committee and/or the judges.
10. Containers are measured at the diameter or the diagonal of the widest point on the inside of the rim at the soil line.
11. One key card (diagram or plant list) is required when multiple species or cultivars are exhibited in the same container and/or propagation information is applicable. Key card must be a 4" x 6" white unlined card completed in black waterproof medium. A 5" x 8" photograph with identifying numbers may be used.
12. Container-grown plants must be exhibited in containers that are clean, unobtrusive, and compatible with the exhibit. Disguised double potting and top dressing is permitted; top dressing must not float when watered.

13. After registration, a dot with the entry number on it should be affixed to the container to ensure the entry card, if separated from the exhibit container during staging, can be returned to the proper entry before judging.
14. The committee will water the exhibits if instructed to do so in writing. Notify the division chair at the time of entry with written instructions for watering.
15. Questions regarding class requirements may be directed to the class consultant and/or the division chair.
16. The scale of points by which the classes are to be judged: (as per the FS & JG Book 4, July 2025 edition).

Scale of Points for Section B – Container Grown Plants, Class 29 -

Compatibility of Plant Material	40
Design and Arrangement	35
Condition	15
Color	<u>10</u>
Total	100

Scale of Points for Section B – Container Grown Plants, Class 31 -

Cultural Perfection	50
Design and Distinction	25
Grooming	15
Maturity	<u>10</u>
Total	100

Scale of Points for Section B – Container Grown Plants, Class 32 -

Cultural Perfection	40
Design	30
Diversity of Collection	20
Key Card	<u>10</u>
Total	100

DIVISION II

Horticulture Classes

“Here in New England, we have no calendar of Nature, no rigid law of season, or of growth. The climate, a caprice, a wholly eerie thing, sets tradition at defiance and forces our poets to contradict each other. The flower which one declares the harbinger of spring may be a lazy vanguard in another year. . .”

Mabel Osgood Wright

Section A - CUT SPECIMENS

CLASSES 1 - 28

One stem, spike, spray or branch from the exhibitor’s garden not to exceed 30" in length from the lip of the container to the tip of the stem. Any foliage must be attached to the stem. No foliage may be underwater. To be displayed in the exhibitor’s appropriately-sized clear, glass container. Water and wedging material will be provided by the committee.

A DOORYARD GARDEN

Flowering Perennials and Biennials

Classes 1 - 6

A perennial is a plant that lives for more than two growing seasons; in Horticulture, usually applied to non-woody plants. A biennial is a plant that completes its lifespan in two growing seasons. Most biennial plants produce foliage the first year and flower the second year.

1. *Aquilegia*, columbine
2. *Lamprocapnos*, (formerly, *Dicentra*) bleeding heart
3. *Helleborus*, hellebore
4. *Phlox*, phlox
5. *Primula*, primrose
6. Other

Perennials Grown Primarily for Foliage

Classes 7 – 9

7. *Athyrium* - lady fern, japanese painted fern
8. *Hosta* - hosta
9. Other

THE GARDEN PATH

Flowering Bulbs, Corms, Rhizomes and Tubers

Classes 10 - 15

A bulb is a modified, underground stem, with a short, thick stem and fleshy scale leaves or leaf bases. A corm is a bulb-like, swollen underground stem which is typically very short, flattened, and surmounted by a group of usually fleshy, non-green, scale-like leaves. A rhizome is a thick, horizontal stem (under or above the ground) which forms roots, stores food, and sends up leaves and flowering stalks.

10. *Hyacinthus*, hyacinth
11. *Iris germanica*, bearded iris
12. *Narcissus*, daffodil
13. *Polygonatum*, solomon's seal
14. *Tulipa*, tulip
15. Other

BEYOND THE GATE

Woody Shrubs and Trees in Flower

Classes 16 - 28

One stem or branch. Must be in flower. Any foliage must be attached to the stem.

16. *Benthamidia* (formerly *Cornus*), dogwood
17. *Cercis*, redbud
18. *Chaenomeles*, flowering quince
19. *Daphne*, fragrant daphne
20. *Magnolia*, magnolia
21. *Malus*, apple, crabapple
22. *Pieris*, andromeda
23. *Prunus*, plum, cherry, peach, pear
24. *Rhododendron* (deciduous), azalea
25. *Rhododendron* (evergreen), rhododendron
26. *Syringa*, lilac
27. *Viburnum*, viburnum
28. Other

Class Consultant: Sherry Greer, 203-260-4946, sherryannegreer@gmail.com

Section B - CONTAINER-GROWN PLANTS

Classes 29 - 31

THE KITCHEN WINDOW

A Window Box of Edible Herbs and Flowers

Class 29 - 4 Entries: Registration Required [HERE](#)

A collection of at least five different species or cultivars of edible herbs and flowers planted in a green, 5.75" high x 18" wide x 7.5" deep window box with saucer. The window box will be supplied by the committee. Box to be displayed in a windowsill 25-7/8" from the floor and viewed and judged from the front. The width of the box with plant material must not exceed 22". There is no height restriction. Entries must have been owned and grown for a minimum of four weeks. A 4" x 6" white, unlined Key Card, listing the botanical and common names of the plant material in waterproof ink is required. A 5" x 7" photograph with identifying numbers may be used.

Scale of Points:

Compatibility of Plant Material	40
Design and Arrangement	35
Condition	15
Color	<u>10</u>
Total	100

Class Consultant: Nan Nelson, 203-218-1355, inthesea53@gmail.com

ON THE TERRACE

Trained Plants

Class 30 – 31

Class 30 - 6 Entries: Registration Required [HERE](#)

Class 31 - 6 Entries: Registration Required [HERE](#)

Rooted plants owned and trained by the exhibitor for at least six months. Container not to exceed 8" in diameter. Top dressing and unobtrusive stakes are allowed.

30. **Standard Topiary** – Single rooted plant with one straight stem with crown of growth at the top in the exhibitor's container of choice. Plants will be displayed on a table approximately 30" high. Viewed and judged from three sides.

31. **Topiary on a Wire Frame** – Single rooted plant trained on a wire frame in a classically shaped form (for example: spiral, pyramid, sphere, obelisk) and displayed in the exhibitor’s terra cotta container. Plants will be displayed on a table approximately 30" high. Viewed and judged from three sides.

Scale of Points:

Cultural Perfection	50
Design and Distinction	25
Grooming	15
Maturity	<u>10</u>
Total	100

Topiary Class Consultant: Carol Osgood, 203-913-4737, carol.p.osgood@gmail.com

Section C - OTHER CLASSES

CLASS 32 - 35

PICNIC BY THE BROOK

An Arrangement of Cuttings from the Garden

Class 32 - 6 Entries: Registration Required [HERE](#)

A presentation of cuttings from a minimum of five different species or cultivars, arranged in a basket made of natural materials. Exhibits may be prepared by more than one person provided all plant material is grown in the exhibitors’ gardens. The entry will be exhibited on a pedestal painted BM Pilgrim Haze that is 40" high with a 14" square top. The entry may not exceed 14" from the center of the pedestal on all sides. A white, unlined key card (4" x 6"), listing the botanical and common names of the plant material, written in waterproof ink is required.

Scale of Points:

Cultural Perfection	40
Design	30
Diversity of Collection	20
Key Card	<u>10</u>
Total	100

Class Consultant: Sherry Greer, (203) 260-4946, sherryannegreer@gmail.com

PICTURE PERFECT

PAR

Class 33 - 35

An exhibit of exceptional horticultural merit, which does not qualify for entry elsewhere in the Horticulture Division. Exhibits in the Par class must have been owned and grown by the exhibitor for a minimum of one year. Plants will be displayed on a table approximately 30" from the floor and viewed from three sides. Containers may not exceed 12" in diameter. No cut specimens, orchids or hanging baskets are permitted.

33. Owned under three years

34. Owned over three years

35. Previous Blue Ribbon winners in a GCA Flower Show PAR class

Class Consultant: Sherry Greer, 203-260-4946, sherryannegreer@gmail.com



Photography

DIVISION THREE

“Nature, when undisturbed, is never monotonous, you know. Even when using green, the most frequent color on her palette, she throws in contrasting tints by way of expression, and you will seldom see two sides of the same hue, and the leaf stem frequently gives a good dash of bronze or purple.”

Mabel Osgood Wright, 1894
*The Friendship of Nature: A New England
Chronicle of Birds and Flowers*

DIVISION III

Photography Guidelines

1. Please carefully read and follow the GCA Rules, General Information, and Timetable for Exhibitors.
2. An exhibitor is permitted only one entry in the photography division.
3. Registration opens October 1, 2025. Links for registration forms are provided within the schedule. Classes will be filled in the order registration forms are received, according to the email date and time. Registration closes February 1, 2026.
4. Photographs must be received no later than March 1, 2026. Your registration will be confirmed, and receipt of your photograph will be acknowledged. For information, contact Renee Hughes homesweethomefgc@gmail.com, (917-621-6617). Send photographs to Renee Hughes, 2440 Redding Road, Fairfield, CT 06824.
5. If forced to withdraw, an exhibitor must notify the division chair and class consultant and find a substitute unless there is a waiting list for the class.
6. Photography entries are limited to subjects consistent with The Garden Club of America's interest, including horticulture, floral design, gardens, landscapes, conservation, the environment, historic preservation, civic improvement, and the natural world.
7. No identifiable minor children may be included in photographs.
8. Plant material is required in all photographs.
9. A title/statement of intent is not required.
10. Each photograph may only be entered in one show at a time. A photograph previously entered in any GCA, GCA Major, sanctioned non-GCA, or sanctioned non-GCA Major flower show, or *Focus* online contest cannot be re-entered, even with minor edits or reprinting.
11. An image posted in the *Focus* Gallery or published in *Focus* may not be entered in any show.
12. A photograph previously entered in a Club flower show may be entered into a GCA Major flower show unless that photograph was posted in the *Focus* Gallery or published in an issue of *Focus*.
13. Photographs not selected as finalists through juried judging may be entered in another show.
14. The exhibitor must have created all of the visual elements of the composition. Inclusion of third party or stock images and use of AI image generators is strictly prohibited. An exhibitor is, however, permitted to use non-representational, commercial textures and overlays.
15. All editing, including, but not limited to: lighting, color and clarity adjustments; adding and removing visual elements; combining and blending imagery; image distortion, etc., must be the work of the exhibitor.

16. Matting, mounting, and printing may be done professionally.
17. Photographs must be mounted on black single-layer foam core cut to the exact size of the image and may not be over-matted. The overall dimension of the entry must not exceed 50" in total perimeter measurement. The surface finish is the choice of the exhibitor. Glass and framing are not permitted.
18. All photographs must be two-dimensional and printed on paper. All post-production work must be completed before the photograph is printed.
19. Photographs will be hung on a black background.
20. Each entry must have the submission form affixed to the back of the photograph mounting with the class entered, exhibitor's name, garden club, zone, email, address, phone number, and novice status. The top of the photograph must be indicated. A second loose copy of the submission form should be mailed with the entry.
21. The division chair will provide an entry card to be staged with each photograph.
22. All entries will be passed by two members of the show's Photography Committee or the Photography judging program to verify that class specifications have been met. If a photograph is not passed, the exhibitor will be notified and allowed, if time permits, to send a replacement photograph.
23. Questions regarding class requirements may be directed to the class consultant and/or division chair.
24. Information on entering photographs, including mailing instructions, can be found on the GCA Photography Committee page.
25. If the photograph is to be returned, the exhibitor must provide a self-addressed return label, return postage, and packing material/container. If a return envelope and postage are not included, it will be assumed that the photograph will not be returned.
26. Eligible winning images may be submitted to the *Focus* Gallery.
27. Scale of points by which classes are to be judged (as per *FS & JG Book 4: Judging at Flower Shows, 2025 edition.*)

Creativity	25
Composition	25
Technical skill	20
Interpretation	20
Distinction	<u>10</u>
Total	100

DIVISION III

Photography Classes

“Nature, when undisturbed, is never monotonous, you know. Even when using green, the most frequent color on her palette, she throws in contrasting tints by way of expression, and you will seldom see two sides of a leaf of the same hue, and the leaf stem frequently gives a good dash of bronze or purple.”

Mabel Osgood Wright

Class 1 A Moment in Time

4 Entries - Register [HERE](#)

Color

A still life that captures the quiet elegance of everyday beauty. Plant material required.

Still life:

1. **Composed:** an intentional arrangement by the photographer of a variety of objects to convey a visual story or to explore broader compositional concepts such as color, form, light, or shadow.
2. **Found:** a collection or grouping of objects that were primarily arranged by another person or animal (e.g., a cairn, a nest, etc.) and later discovered by the photographer that convey a visual story or to explore broader compositional concepts such as color, form, light, or shadow.
3. **Study:** a single object or a small group of similar objects intentionally arranged by the photographer that convey a visual story or to explore broader compositional concepts such as color, form, light or shadow.
4. **Flat lay:** a photograph depicting an intentional arrangement by the photographer of various objects laid out on or otherwise attached to a flat surface. The objects are photographed with the camera’s sensor plane directly parallel with the surface on which the objects are arranged. Typically, a flat lay is taken from a top-down, bottom-up, or similar parallel plane presentation. Lighting is usually direct and head-on, which eliminates cast shadows of the objects, minimizes depth, and creates a sense of one-dimensional flatness. (see Still life and Scanography).
5. **Scanography:** (See Scanography)

(FS& JG Book 5: Glossary of Terms, July 2025 edition)

Class 2 Beyond the Garden Gate - Novice 4 Entries - Register [HERE](#)

Color

A color landscape of an outdoor place of comfort. Plant material required.

*Landscape: a view of scenery of any kind from wilderness vistas to urban cityscapes, land, or sea. The primary subject is the scenery, and it must dominate although the image may contain secondary elements such as people, animals, or objects. City elements predominate in cityscapes; the sea predominates in seascapes.
(FS & JG Book 5: Glossary of Terms, July 2025 edition)*

Class 3 Hidden Wonders 4 Entries - Register [HERE](#)

Color

A color close-up of a flower, pollinator, or other hidden wonders found in your garden. Plant material required.

*Close Up: a photograph depicting a close and detailed view of the main focal point. The subject typically, but not always, fills a significant part of the frame. See Macro.
(FS & JG Book 5: Glossary of Terms, July 2025 edition)*

Class 4 Home's Embrace 4 Entries - Register [HERE](#)

Monochrome

A structural or decorative architectural element, either interior or exterior, that contributes to the warmth, comfort and character of a home. Plant material required.

*Monochrome: an image is considered monochrome only if it is entirely shades of white, gray, and black; or shades of white, gray, or black with an additional toning throughout the photograph of ONE color (e.g. sepia, red, blue, etc.).
(FS & JG, Book 5: Glossary of Terms, July 2025 edition)*

Division III Class Consultants:

Patty Carpenter

homesweethomefgc@gmail.com

Renee Hughes

homesweethomefgc@gmail.com

Laila Tiefenthaler

homesweethomefgc@gmail.com

Note: Photography has a separate Photograph Entry Form, in addition to the Registration Form. The Photography Entry Form should be attached to the back mounting of the photograph at the time of submission.

▲ TOP ▲ **PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSION FORM** ▲ TOP ▲

This form must be copied and affixed to the back of the photograph mounting when entry is mailed or submitted.

Photograph Delivery Deadline: March 1, 2026

Please complete one submission form per photograph. Affix the form to the back of the mounting.

Send photograph to: Renee Hughes, 2440 Redding Road, Southport, CT 06824

Suggested: Also send a jpg file between 1-5 MB to homesweethomefgc@gmail.com by entry deadline date.

Class Entered:

Name:

Garden Club and Zone:

Email:

Address:

Tel:

Identifiable Plant Material (required):

Title or brief statement (optional):

Novice? Yes/No

A novice is an exhibitor who has never won first place or GCA Special Award in Photography at a GCA, GCA Major, sanctioned non-GCA, or sanctioned non-GCA Major flower show. If your novice status changes before the date of this show, please notify the division chair or class consultant.

Requesting the photograph returned? YES/NO

If the photograph is to be returned, the exhibitor must provide a self-addressed return label, return postage/prepaid shipping label, and packing material/container.



Botanical Arts

DIVISION FOUR

*“There is so much to see, so much to learn, and
so little time between the first consciousness
of the eye and its closing.”*

Mabel Osgood Wright, 1894
*The Friendship of Nature: A New England
Chronicle of Birds and Flowers*

DIVISION IV

Botanical Arts Guidelines

1. Please carefully read and follow the GCA Rules, General Information, and Timetable for Exhibitors.
2. Registration opens October 1, 2025. Registration closes February 1, 2026.
3. An exhibitor is permitted only one entry.
4. The exhibitor(s) under whose name(s) the entry has been registered must create and complete the design. All participants must be listed on the entry card. All handiwork must be executed by the exhibitor(s).
5. No more than two exhibitors may execute a Botanical Arts entry.
6. If forced to withdraw, the exhibitor must notify the division chair and the class consultant and find a substitute unless there is a waiting list for the class.
7. All plant material must be dried. This includes flowers, foliage, seeds, pods, nuts (in or out of shells), vegetables, twigs, vines, reeds, etc. While not officially part of the plant kingdom, algae, dried fungi including mushrooms, lichens, etc. are permitted. Only plant material, fungi, algae, mechanics and surface treatments (paint, nail polish, varnish, wax, etc.) are permitted. Use of artificial or locally endangered or invasive plant material is not permitted.
8. Entries must be assembled, carved, or shaped from plant material by the exhibitor. Manufactured figural forms as base material are not permitted. Any plant material may be cut, incised or shaped to enhance artistic effect.
9. Non-plant material (e.g., cardboard, metal, twine, string, cording, etc.) may be used only for construction and must not be visible except to knot or string plant material resembling pearls or gemstones in jewelry classes. The knots must be only minimally visible and not dominate the design. Stands, bases, hangers, etc., used as staging do not need to be covered.
10. Only natural plant material as existing or caused by nature may be visible in the design, except natural raffia, rattan, and skeletonized leaves. Items such as couscous, pasta, tapioca, milled wood, balsa wood, toothpicks, loose glitter, etc., are not permitted.
11. Gemstones must be made from plant material and/or plant by-products of resin or sap. Gemstones may not be made from epoxy, lacquer, glue, or nail polish.
12. Scenes, flowers, figures, etc., should be created with plant material rather than decorative painting. Painting techniques such as shading, veining, marbelizing, etc., are permitted.

13. Anything not prohibited in the GCA Rules, Botanical Arts Division Guidelines, or individual class descriptions is permitted.
14. For a brooch class, a pin on the back is not necessary as it may interfere with the staging.
15. A 5" x 8" white, unlined sample card must accompany each entry. Exhibitors are to affix a small, untreated sample of all plant material to the sample card and indicate its placement on the entry. Plant material must be properly identified with botanical and common names.
16. All entries must be received no later than March 30, 2026. Send or hand deliver entries to Peggy Moore, 33 Old Academy Road, Fairfield, CT 06824. For information contact pmoorebydesign@gmail.com, 203-556-3977. If an exhibit is to be returned, the exhibitor must provide a self-addressed return label, return postage, and packing material/container.
17. All entries will be passed by two members of either the Botanical Arts Committee and/or the Botanical Arts judging program to verify class specifications have been met. If an entry is not passed, and if time permits, the exhibitor will be notified and may be allowed to have the entry returned for correction.
18. The committee will be responsible for installation of the exhibits unless otherwise stated in the schedule. Each exhibit will be handled with the utmost care. Please include a photograph that shows the preferred placement of the finished entry without any stabilizing packaging (such as pins, clamps, etc.), along with any specific handling and display instructions.
19. If an exhibit has won first place or a GCA Special Award in a GCA, GCA Major, sanctioned non-GCA, or sanctioned non-GCA Major flower show, it may not be entered into competition again. An exhibit which has been previously entered and did not place first or win a GCA Special Award may be entered again if the piece is significantly altered.
20. A statement of intent is not permitted. A title of seven words or less may be written on the entry card.
21. Scale of points by which the classes are to be judged: (as per *FS & JG Book 4: Judging at Flower Shows, 2025 edition*).

Design	35
Craftsmanship	30
Creativity	15
Interpretation	10
Distinction	<u>10</u>
Total	100

DIVISION IV

Botanical Arts Classes

“There is so much to see, so much to learn, and so little time between the first consciousness of the eye and its closing.”

Mabel Osgood Wright

BOTANICAL JEWELRY

Botanical Jewelry: a design created entirely from dried plant material and made to resemble wearable jewelry in both size and function. Plant material may be treated. Mechanics or structural base material may not be visible.

Class 1 Nature’s Habitat

4 Entries - Register [HERE](#)

A brooch showing a pollinator in its habitat, displayed on a black velvet ramp stand 2" high x 4.75" wide x 8" deep on a 42" high shelf, painted black. Entry may not exceed the size of the mount. Mount will be provided upon registration. Viewed and judged from three sides and above.

Class Consultant: Peggy Moore, 203-556-3977, pmoorebydesign@gmail.com

BOTANICAL EMBELLISHMENT

Botanical Embellishment: a man-made object enhanced with dried plant material. Plant material may be treated.

Class 2 Honey, I’m Home!

4 Entries - Register [HERE](#)

A six-sided Mason Bee House, 4" deep x 8" wide x 8" high, to be completely embellished. Entry will be hung from a black wrought iron hook standing at 48" high. Viewed and judged from all sides and above. Mason Bee House and photo of staging will be supplied by the committee upon registration.

Class Consultant: Peggy Moore, 203-556-3977, pmoorebydesign@gmail.com



Education

DIVISION FIVE

“Come into the garden. The wind blows sharply from the North, where the snow still lies, and the clouds hang low, yet it is May-day, and a catbird is singing in the arbour. It is a much-trodden path in a long-discovered country, but each one discovers anew when he first sees it for himself.”

Mabel Osgood Wright, 1894
*The Friendship of Nature: A New England
Chronicle of Birds and Flowers*

DIVISION V

Education Guidelines

1. Please carefully read and follow the GCA Rules, General Information, and the Timetable for Exhibitors.
2. Education exhibits may be executed by any invited person(s), organization or business wishing to communicate information relevant to the educational message of the flower show.
3. Include a statement of intent (50 words or less) for each Education Exhibit.
4. Scale of points by which Education Exhibits are to be judged: (as per *FS & JG Book 4: Judging at Flower Shows, 2025 edition*).

Educational value	60
Staging	20
Creativity and distinction	<u>20</u>
Total	100

DIVISION V
Education Exhibit

“Come into the garden. The wind blows sharply from the north, where the snow still lies, and the clouds hang low, yet it is May-day and a catbird is singing in the arbour. It is a much-trodden path in a long-discovered country, but each one discovers anew when he first sees it for himself.”

Mabel Osgood Wright

**“HOME SWEET HOME” AT OGDEN HOUSE:
OUR HEALING GARDENS**

Statement of intent:

At the Ogden House property, the site of a 1750 farmhouse, the Fairfield Garden Club tends gardens that heal both body and soul. Our medicinal plants provide physical remedies, while simply visiting this landscape revives our spirits. Learn how the Ogden House landscape offers a restorative home.



Needle Arts

SPECIALTY CLASS

*“Go into the garden now;
do not delay!”*

Mabel Osgood Wright, 1894
*The Friendship of Nature: A New England
Chronicle of Birds and Flowers*

SPECIALTY CLASS

Needle Arts Guidelines

1. Please carefully read and follow the GCA rules, General Information, and the Timetable for Exhibitors.
2. An exhibitor is permitted only one entry per class.
3. No more than two exhibitors may execute a Needle Arts entry. All participants must be listed on the entry card. All handiwork must be executed by the exhibitor(s).
4. If forced to withdraw, the exhibitor must notify the division chair and find a substitute unless there is a waiting list for the class.
5. Needle Arts entries in Class 1 must be the exhibitor's own design. In Class 2 the design may be the exhibitor's own or designed by another and stitched by the exhibitor(s).
6. Needle Arts entries do not need to contain plant material. There are no thread requirements. Beading is allowed. Needlework must be delivered in its finished state and may have been professionally cleaned and blocked by the exhibitor.
7. All needle work designs must be at least 16 square inches in size and may have either a rectangular or square shape. The committee will mat and hang the entries.
8. Signature or initials are not permitted on the artwork.
9. A statement of intent is required for all classes. The statement must be 25 words or less, printed or typed on a 4" x 6" white unlined card. A statement of intent offers an explanation of the exhibitor's creation or pertinent information. It must be submitted at the time of passing.
10. All fibers, beads, and ribbons used in the Needle Arts designs must be displayed and identified with the Manufacturer's Name/Color/Number, if available, and printed or typed on a white unlined 4" x 6" card. More than one card may be used if needed.
11. Registration opens **October 1, 2025**.
12. Needle Arts entries must be received by **March 15, 2026**. Mail or hand deliver entries to Laura Ely, 660 Eleven O'clock Road, Fairfield, CT 06824, 203-913-5374.
13. If an exhibit is to be returned, the exhibitor must provide a self-addressed return label, return postage, and packing material/container.

14. The committee will be responsible for installation of the exhibits. Each exhibit will be handled with the utmost care. Indicate in writing, and include with the exhibit, any special instructions for handling and display.
15. No exhibit previously entered in a GCA, GCA Major, sanctioned non-GCA, or sanctioned-non-GCA Major Flower Show may be entered in competition again.
16. Advanced registration is required by February 1, 2026.
17. Questions regarding class requirements may be directed to the Division Chairs or Class Consultants by email.
18. Scale of points by which the classes are to be judged: (as per *FS & JG Book 4: Judging at Flower Shows, 2025 edition*).

Color and Design	30
Workmanship	30
General Appearance	25
Materials	<u>15</u>
Total	100



The Garden Club of America
Flower Show Awards

*“Standing in the sunlight, we listen and hesitate;
the wind whispers as it passes and
brings alluring messages.”*

Mabel Osgood Wright, 1894
*The Friendship of Nature: A New England
Chronicle of Birds and Flowers*

GCA FLOWER SHOW AWARDS

The GCA flower show awards described below are approved and will be presented if merited.

Division I, Floral Design

Best in Show Floral Design is selected from first-place winners in the division.

The **Dorothy Vietor Munger Award** may be awarded to members of GCA clubs in competitive Floral Design classes at a GCA flower show. It is offered in recognition of creative work of outstanding beauty using predominantly fresh plant material. The design must have placed first, second, or third. Challenge class entries are not eligible. The award is not a substitute for Best in Show and will be given at the discretion of the judges.

The **Harriet DeWaele Puckett Creativity Award** may be awarded to members of GCA clubs or non-members in recognition of a uniquely skillful and creative response to an imaginative schedule in Floral Design. It will be given for an innovative and interpretive entry, which, although it abides by the principles of good design, goes beyond traditional period arrangement to whatever art form the exhibitor(s) chooses. The design must have placed first, second, or third. An entry in any challenge class is not eligible to receive this award. The award is not a substitute for Best in Show and will be given at the discretion of the judges.

The **Sandra Baylor Novice Floral Design Award** may be given at a GCA flower show to an exhibitor who is a member of a GCA club and who has never won first place or GCA Special Award in the Floral Design Division of a GCA, GCA Major, sanctioned non-GCA, or sanctioned non-GCA Major flower show. It shall be awarded to an individual novice exhibitor for a unique and skillful response to the schedule. The entry must have placed first, second, or third. An entry in a challenge class is not eligible for this award.

Division II, Horticulture

Best in Show Horticulture is selected from first-place winners in the division.

The **Catherine Beattie Medal** may be awarded for a horticulture entry distinguished by its vibrancy, prime condition, and perfection of grooming. The exhibitor must have owned and grown the exhibit for at least six months. The medal may be awarded for a single plant, collection of plants, container garden, or cut specimen, but only if there is an exhibit worthy of the honor. It may be awarded to members of GCA clubs only; individual, joint, and club entries are eligible. The entry must have placed first, second, or third. The award should not be considered as a substitute for Best in Show. The medal may not be awarded to the same exhibit more than once; however, the offspring of a Beattie winner are eligible to receive the award.

The **Clarissa Willemsen Horticulture Propagation Award** may be awarded for a

horticulture entry distinguished by its prime condition, flawless grooming and difficulty of propagation. The entry must have been propagated and grown by the exhibitor for at least six months. This award may be given for a single rooted plant or a collection of rooted plants. Cut specimens are not eligible. The dates and method of propagation must be recorded on an accompanying propagation card. It may be awarded to GCA club members, GCA clubs, non-members, or other organizations. The entry must have placed first, second, or third. The award may not be given to the same exhibit more than once.

The **Rosie Jones Horticulture Award** may be presented to a horticulture entry of exceptional visual appeal that reflects the spirit of growing with joy and enthusiasm and inspires others to propagate, grow, show and share horticulture. An exhibit that has been propagated by the exhibitor will be given special consideration but propagation is not a requirement. Perfection, while always desirable, is not a primary criterion. This award celebrates the ineffable joy inherent in the beauty and pursuit of horticulture. It may be awarded to GCA club members, GCA clubs, non-members, or other organizations. The entry must have placed first, second, or third.

The **GCA Novice Award in Horticulture** may be awarded for an outstanding exhibit to a member of a GCA club who has never won first place or GCA Special Award in the Horticulture Division in a GCA, GCA Major, sanctioned non-GCA, or sanctioned non-GCA Major flower show. The entry must have placed first, second, or third.

Division III, Photography

Best in Show Photography is selected from first place winners in the division.

The **Photography Creativity Award** may be awarded at a GCA flower show to a member of a GCA club in recognition of creative and technical excellence in response to the theme of the schedule. The entry must have placed first, second, or third.

The **GCA Novice Award in Photography** may be awarded for an outstanding exhibit to a member of a GCA club who has never won first place or GCA Special Award in the Photography Division in a GCA, GCA Major, sanctioned non-GCA, or sanctioned non-GCA Major flower show. The entry must have placed first, second, or third.

Division IV, Botanical Arts

Best in Show Botanical Arts is selected from first place winners in the division.

The **Botanical Arts Creativity Award** may be awarded at a GCA flower show to a member of a GCA club for excellent craftsmanship and creative response to the theme of the schedule. The entry must have placed first, second, or third.

The **GCA Novice Award in Botanical Arts** may be awarded for an outstanding exhibit to a member of a GCA club who has never won first place or GCA Special Award in the Botanical Arts Division in a GCA, GCA Major, sanctioned non-GCA, or sanctioned non-GCA Major flower show. The entry must have placed first, second, or third.

Division V, Education

The **Ann Lyon Crammond Award** may be presented at a GCA flower shows to an outstanding educational exhibit which best educates the public about gardens. Any educational exhibit which increases the appreciation of any aspect of plants, gardens, or landscape design may be considered for this award. It may be awarded to GCA club members, member clubs, non-members or other organizations.

The **Marion Thompson Fuller Brown Conservation Award** may be presented for an outstanding conservation exhibit at a GCA flower show. The award recognizes an exhibit of exceptional educational and visual merit, which increases knowledge and awareness of the environment. The exhibit should emphasize environmental concerns and may demonstrate conservation practices. Plant material may or may not be used and, when appropriate, must be clearly identified. Protected material may be included if such materials are identified as protected and not collected in the wild. It may be awarded to GCA clubs, club members, non-members or other organizations.

Overall (Divisions I - V)

Judges' Commendation(s) may be given to an entry, class, section, special exhibit or other aspect of the show that is of exceptional merit.

Award of Appreciation may be given to an exhibitor or group for participation and/or to recognize exhibits that do not qualify for GCA special awards. The award may also be given to non-judged classes.

DIRECTIONS TO THE FLOWER SHOW

Address: 1499 Post Road, Fairfield, CT

[Click Here for Apple Maps GPS Directions](#)

From Points North via I-95 South:

- Take **I-95 South** toward New York City
- Take **Exit 22** for **North Benson Road**
- At the end of the ramp, turn **left onto North Benson Road**.
- Follow for about **0.25 miles**, then turn **right onto Post Road (U.S. 1)**.
- Drive approximately 0.7 miles
- The **Fairfield University Bookstore** will be on your **left** at **1499 Post Road**

Parking: Before reaching the bookstore, turn **left onto Reef Road**, then take your **first right onto Sherman Street**. The **parking garage entrance** will be on your **right**, directly behind the bookstore. Use the **ramp to the second story** for parking and direct entry to the Flower Show.

From Points South via I-95 North (Exit 21 – Mill Plain Road):

- Take **I-95 North** toward New Haven
- Take **Exit 21** for **Mill Plain Road**
- At the end of the ramp, turn **right** onto **Mill Plain Road**
- Continue for about 0.25 miles, then turn **left onto Post Road (U.S. 1)**
- Drive approximately 0.3 miles.
- The Fairfield University Bookstore will be on your **right** at **1499 Post Road**.

Parking: Continue past the bookstore on Post Road, turn **right onto Reef Road**, then take your **first right onto Sherman Street**. The **parking garage entrance** will be on your **right**, directly behind the bookstore. Use the **ramp to the second story** for parking and direct entry to the Flower Show.