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Volume 19, Number 2
September 2026

Shore Home & Garden
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Reset and calm down your busy September

Recently, we celebrated the first day of school, and as I welcomed a brand-new group of second graders into my classroom, I greeted everyone with a cheerful, "Happy New Year!"

I know, I know. The calendar says September, not January.

But as a teacher, the beginning of a new school year has always felt a lot like the start of a new year to me.

There are new faces, new schedules and new routines.

The slower, less-structured days of summer give way to alarm clocks, packed lunches, practices, homework and calendars that suddenly seem a whole lot fuller.

I'm already feeling tired but in a good way. I did something productive.

Sweet Simplicity



By Kristine George

Do I miss being able to stay up, sleep in and stay in my pajamas with my favorite basset hound in my lap?

Of course. But in many ways, the reset is just what I need.

September gives us a chance to settle back into routines, take

a look at what is — and isn't — working in our everyday lives, and make a few small changes before the hectic holiday season sneaks up on us.

And unlike January, when we sometimes feel pressure to make big resolutions and completely reinvent ourselves, a September reset can be much simpler. The cooler temperatures don't hurt, either!

So before fall gets into full swing, I'm hitting the reset button in a few areas of my own life.

Here are seven simple September resets that might make your days a little easier, too.

Reset Your Calendar

September has a funny way of going from zero to 60. School starts, sports and ac- (PAGE 48)

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A wide range of crops do well when planted in late summer for fall harvest.

It's time to review fall gardening

Many people think that the end of summer is the time that the gardening season starts to wind down.

The reality is landscape plants, lawns and vegetables do grow and thrive this time of year.

I mention this because fall is really the best time for planting, transplanting and gardening in general.

The many benefits of fall gardening include, a decline in the insect pest activity, a drop in air temperatures while the soil stays warm from the summer sun for good root development. Many common lawn and garden weeds tend to slow down or disappear when fall arrives.

Because of fall's cooler air temperatures and predictable precipitation, plants are able to grow stronger with minimal stress.

Ken-Do Attitude



By Ken Morgan

We also seem to have additional rainfall, which provides abundant moisture for plants.

That moisture allows for more available nutrients to be absorbed by the plant, which result in thriving and healthier plants.

Late August and into early September is the ideal time to transition from the summer vegetable growing season.

Prepare your garden by removing all harvested plants and debris, check your garden soil pH, provide some new organic matter or compost, and get your seeds or transplants in the ground.

Be sure to provide some nutrients like Espoma's Gardentone, and a liquid starter fertilizer to help jumpstart any newly planted seeds and transplants.

A wide range of crops do well when planted in late summer for fall harvest.

Leafy greens, lettuce, Swiss chard, arugula, spinach, broccoli, brussels sprouts, kale and cau- (PAGE 46)

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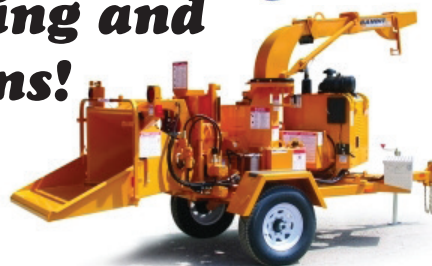
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Hostas feature colorful leaves, various sizes

Hostas are wonderful herbaceous perennials that thrive in morning sun and dappled shade.

They prefer moist, slightly acidic, organically rich, well-drained soils.

Once established, they can tolerate dry shade for short periods of time.

Like most herbaceous perennials, the foliage dies back during the cold winter months, but new leaves emerge as soon as temperatures begin to warm in the spring.

The colorful leaves form mounding clumps as they emerge from the soil.

A hosta's range greatly in size, from dwarf cultivars that grow less than 4 inches tall to miniature cultivars that reach 4–6 inches tall, medium cultivars that grow 6–10

Gardening Tips



By Ginny Rosenkranz

inches tall, large cultivars that reach 18–28 inches tall, and giant cultivars that can grow more than 28 inches tall.

Dwarf and miniature hosta thrive in small gardens and are excellent for borders, edging, and rock gardens.

Small and medium-sized hosta

make excellent ground covers, while large and giant hosta add depth, texture, and dramatic foliage to the shade garden.

Each cultivar can have distinctly colored leaves, including green, blue, gold, medio-variegated foliage with dark margins and lighter centers, or marginally variegated foliage with light margins surrounding darker centers.

The leaves also vary in shape and may be heart-shaped, rounded, narrow and oval with a pointed tip, or broadly oval.

Leaf margins can be smooth or wavy, while the texture may be waxy, smooth, glossy, or heavily textured.

All Hosta leaves have parallel veins, which can also vary in color from green and yellow (PAGE 14)

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Barberry shrubs produce many berries that birds and wildlife eat then distribute.

(Photo courtesy L.J. Mehrhoff)

Be on lookout for invasive ornamentals and sterile varieties

Story by Anahí Espíndola

When it comes to landscaping, a huge decision-making point is what we find visually pleasing — and often what pleases us visually ends up being something we are not very used to seeing, meaning that we pick plants that seem more exotic to us so we can marvel at their surprising (to us) beauty.

This is all good and nice but the problem appears when we realize that many of those plants appear exotic to us because they are exotic to the region we live in!

This means that if we select them to plant in our landscapes, we are actually adding to our

environment species that are not necessarily native to where we live — which can have pretty drastic consequences.

I want to talk about a potential solution that has fairly recently been proposed to the use of such plants: sterile varieties.

Not all exotic plants will have negative effects on our environment, but some of them do.

Those that do are considered invasive species, and they can create a lot of trouble in our local ecosystems.

Invasive plants tend to grow faster than other native plants, often overrunning the spaces they grow in, spreading very quickly, and eventually “choking” or out-

competing local species, which end up dying out and/or becoming unable to survive in the presence of the invasive plant.

Some good examples of this behavior of invasive plants in Maryland are the Chinese and Japanese Wisteria vines and the English Ivy, all of which effectively cover trees and can eventually choke and pull them down to their death.

In Maryland, this issue has been recognized not just by ecologists, but also by lawmakers, who have started to regulate the selling of specific species to properly support the protection (and recovery) of our local plant communities.

Among the most recent additions to these regulations are the

ban on selling several bamboo species, English Ivy, exotic Wisterias, and several very invasive grasses (among other species).

You can check the most up-to-date list of these species at the Maryland Department of Agriculture by visiting <https://mda.maryland.gov/>.

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources also hosts a website with a lot of information about exotic species (plants and others): <https://dnr.maryland.gov/Invasives/Pages/Invasive-Description.aspx>

Ideally, if we do not want to harm local habitats, the best decision is to refrain from planting invasive species, because they are really hard to properly control and prevent their spread, especially when there is bird-mediated fruit dispersal or stolon-mediated dispersal.

An alternative, however, is the selection of varieties that are unable to spread because they are sterile or do not have proper structures to do so.

These are varieties that exist for some ornamentals/exotics, and that are in some cases exempted from the regulations that I was mentioning above.

A number of examples are non-invasive bamboo varieties, some Berberis cultivars such as “Lemon Glow” and “Crimson Cutie” and even some almost-sterile Buddleja cultivars including “Flutterby,” “Lo and Behold” varieties developed by several university programs.

A note on some of these cultivars is that although some of them are labeled “sterile,” they may or may not be fully sterile.

Some of them have indeed been shown to, in some cases, produce some fertile offspring although way fewer than their fertile counterparts.

Generally, when considering exotic ornamentals for our green spaces, it is worth making it a practice of first informing ourselves about their potential for invasiveness.

Then, if the potential is there, another good practice is to look for potential alternatives (Do we really need to plant that specific plant? Are there less-harmful varieties? Are there native alternatives that can be planted instead?)

To make these decisions, a good tool to consider is the NC Extension Gardener toolkit, at https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/find_a_plant/, where species and

varieties are listed and can be filtered out by (among other traits) their potential for invasiveness/weediness.

The Maryland Invasive Species Council has also put together a list of species that have invasiveness potential (independently of regulations) and are thus of concern.

A new tool from the University of Maryland Extension Maryland Native Plants Project can help you search and filter for native plants, so you can potentially choose a native plant which will suit your needs and benefit our eco-system: Maryland Native Plant Finder tool, available at <https://mdnativeplants.umd.edu/>. 🐸

(Editor's note: Anahí Espíndola is an associate professor of entomology at the University of Maryland, College Park.)



In the Eastern United States, English Ivy can effectively take over a forested area.

(Photo courtesy Chris Evans, University of Illinois, bugwood.org)



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(FROM PAGE 10)

to reddish purple.

Some popular cultivars include “Blue Mouse Ears,” a small Hosta that grows only about 8 inches tall and 19 inches wide.



It has blue green, slightly cupped, rounded leaves and produces pale purple flowers.

“Blue Cadet” is a medium-sized Hosta with rounded, heart-shaped blue-green to dark green leaves and lavender flowers.

“Bressingham Blue” has large blue foliage with a waxy coating on oval-shaped leaves that taper to a sharp point, along with fragrant white, bell-shaped flowers.

“Gold Standard” has large oval leaves that taper to a sharp point, with dark green edges surrounding yellow-gold centers.

It produces fragrant, pale lavender flowers on stems that can reach 30 inches tall.

“Patriot” has dark green leaves surrounded by an extra-wide creamy yellow margin that matures to pure white.

It also produces light lavender flowers on stems approximately 30 inches tall.

“Wide Brim” is a medium-sized Hosta with broad, oval, dark green, quilted leaves surrounded by wide, irregular, creamy white margins that may sometimes have a yellow tint.

Its flowers are pale lavender.

During the summer, hosta provide even more color when their fragrant, bell-shaped flowers emerge.

Flower colors can range from white to lavender and purple.

When in bloom, hosta can attract hummingbirds, butterflies, native bees, and other pollinators.

Although many gardeners, including myself, are not happy when it happens, both deer and rabbits are also attracted to the colorful foliage as a source of food.

Despite this challenge, the tremendous variety of leaf colors, sizes, shapes, and textures makes hosta an outstanding addition to almost any shade garden.

(Editor’s Note: Ginny Rosenkranz is a commercial horticulture specialist with the University of Maryland Extension.)

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America's first-time home buyers feel ready (The facts say otherwise)

Story, photo by StatePoint

A new homebuying quiz reveals a stark disconnect: most aspiring first-time buyers believe they're ready to buy a home, but fundamental knowledge gaps suggest otherwise.

Consider a typical would-be buyer.

She's saved for years, tracks listings daily, knows her pre-

ferred neighborhoods, and has consumed endless checklists and videos about buying a home. She feels prepared.

Then she takes a 12-question home-buying quiz and gets only three answers right.

Her experience is far from unique.

A recent Wells Fargo survey conducted by Ipsos found that nearly 70 percent of prospective

first-time homebuyers believe they understand the process.

Yet roughly three-quarters couldn't correctly answer even half the questions.

Out of more than 2,000 respondents, only one answered all 12 correctly.

The results point to a troubling confidence gap where mistakes can be especially costly. Buying a home is a long-term financial



commitment that shapes a household's future for decades.

Overestimating knowledge increases the risk of delays, higher costs, and unnecessary financial strain.

The quiz was conducted March 5–13, testing foundational concepts affecting affordability and competitiveness, such as when to apply for a mortgage, how closing costs work, down payment strategies, and structuring offers.

The findings suggest many first-time buyers lack understanding of the most consequential steps.

Only 25 percent knew the correct timing to apply for a mort-

gage, an error that can derail transactions before the home search begins.

Nearly 90 percent misunderstood closing costs, leaving buyers vulnerable to large, last-minute expenses that could reach tens of thousands of dollars.

More than 75 percent believed a larger down payment is always better, overlooking strategies that could preserve savings or improve financial flexibility.

Even more striking, 88% were unclear about the very first steps in the process.

Four in five would make serious offer mistakes, including revealing their maximum pre-approval amount to sellers — instantly weakening their negotiating position.

For many respondents, realizing they had the process backward — house first, financing later — served as a wake-up call.

“These results should be a wake-up call for everyone in the industry,” said Rulon Washington, Customer Growth Segments executive at Wells Fargo Home Lending. “We’re seeing confident, motivated buyers entering one of the most significant financial decisions of their lives with critical blind spots.”

Where buyers get information may explain the disconnect.

Most relied on friends, family, real estate websites, and search engines.

Only about one-third consulted lenders or financial professionals, the experts best positioned to provide personalized guidance.

Younger buyers were especially likely to turn to social media influencers, viral videos and AI

tools, while older buyers leaned on banks and advisors.

The risk isn’t curiosity, it’s oversimplification.

Short-form content often strips away crucial nuance, glossing over differences in credit profiles, debt levels, local markets, and long-term trade-offs.

These gaps have real consequences, and the cost isn’t just measured in dollars, it’s measured in financial stress, missed opportunities and dreams deferred.

Misunderstanding closing costs can cause deals to collapse.

Poor timing on mortgage applications can push buyers out of competitive markets. Misjudging down-payment strategies can drain emergency savings or lock borrowers into avoidable costs for the life of a loan.

Small mistakes can compound into years of preventable financial stress.

There is, however, a bright spot. Nearly two-thirds of quiz-takers said the experience made them feel more informed or more aware of what they need to learn.

Many said it prompted them to slow down, seek professional guidance, or reset expectations — short-term pauses preventing long-term regret.

The Wells Fargo Home Lending Quiz is available online.

Visit the Wells Fargo Mortgage Learning and Education Center to learn more.

As the 2026 homebuying season accelerates, the takeaway is clear: confidence alone isn’t enough.

Knowledge — and knowing your blind spots — may be the most valuable down payment of all. 🏠

Annual Doggie Dip Day scheduled for Sept. 7

EASTON — The George Murphy Community Pool will host its annual Doggie Dip Day on Sept. 7 from 6-8 p.m.

The public is invited to celebrate the end of summer with their pups for one last hurrah before the pool closes for the season.

Gates will be open just for the dogs — two hours of splashing, playing, and tail-wagging fun.

The fee is \$5 per dog, and the facility will be open for small dogs (up to 30 pounds) at 6 p.m., and for large dogs (heavier than 30 pounds) at 7 p.m.

Important information to remember are:

- All dogs must be current on vaccinations;
- The event is limited to well-behaved, socialized dogs only;
- Owners (must be at least 18



years old) must accompany their dogs at all times.

- No more than two dogs per human;
- Life jackets are encouraged for all dogs;
- Humans are welcome to attend, but no swimming for people;

• Dogs must wear a collar with proper identification at all times; and

• Talbot County Parks and Recreation and Coastline Pool employees reserve the right to ask patrons to leave if these rules are not followed.



Tribute to Frederick Douglass set for Sept. 12

EASTON — “Bear Me Into Freedom” is a tribute to Talbot County native son, Frederick Douglass, made more poignant during America’s Semiquincentennial.

Douglass dedicated his life to promoting the ideals of the Declaration of Independence — that all men are created equal and have the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. His fiery oratory and compelling prose advanced American towards the fulfillment of its founding ideals.

“Bear Me Into Freedom” is a 60-minute immersive experience,

a video installation portraying the odyssey of Douglass from his birth and enslavement in the Eastern Shore’s Talbot County to his life’s work championing abolition, emancipation, and equal rights, and his triumphal return to the county as an elder statesman having become one of the most consequential figures of the 19th century.

It tells his story using his words.

The imagery is the actual places those words describe. The soundscape is the county’s wildlife.

The images open across the flat horizons of Maryland’s Eastern

Shore, where water and land trade places, the sky carries more weight than the earth beneath it.

It was there, in bondage, that Douglass first learned the meaning of freedom, and from that ground that his lifelong call for justice would rise. The installation’s canvas is wider than a standard movie screen, three times wider than a standard TV, to evoke the unique character of the Eastern Shore

For more information, or to sign up, contact the Talbot Historical Society at 410-822-0773 or e-mail kaylaw@talbothistory.org.





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More Americans are homesteading (They just don't call it that)

Making, growing, and preserving food at home has moved from niche hobby to ordinary household habit, according to new Curion Poll Pulse research, but consumers largely don't see themselves as part of any movement while doing it.

In recent Curion Poll Pulse research covering up to 15,385 U.S. respondents, nearly 84 percent of consumers report doing at least one home-based food or household production activity, and 69.2 percent say activities like gardening, cooking from scratch, or making things at home are either a core part of their weekly routine (43.9 percent) or a regular hobby (25.3 percent).

Yet just 7.3 percent say a self-sufficient lifestyle is a core part of how they live.

Making food from scratch leads by a wide margin at 72.1 percent, followed by growing herbs, vegetables, or fruit (47.3 percent) and making household or food items such as sauces, bread, and yogurt (46.1 percent).

More than a third — 37.7 percent — preserve or store food by freezing, fermenting or canning.

Only 16.1 percent report doing none of these.

The activities cluster rather than stand alone, according to the poll, with consumers commonly reporting several at once — suggesting a connected approach to managing food at home rather than a collection of separate pastimes.

Asked why they take on these



activities, 65 percent of consumers cite improving health — controlling ingredients, eating fewer processed foods, and knowing where their food comes from.

Saving money follows at 53 percent, and 49 percent point to improved well-being, including reduced stress, a sense of accomplishment, and time spent with family.

Control over what they consume or use is cited by 37 percent, sustainability and reducing waste by 27 percent, and family or lifestyle changes by 26 percent.

The pattern points to a single organizing idea: people are seeking greater control over what enters their homes — over ingredients, over spending, and over how food gets made.

A habit, not an identity

The gap between behavior and self-perception is the study's most striking result.

While 43.9 percent of consumers say these activities are part of their

weekly routine, only 7.3 percent identify a self-sufficient lifestyle as core to how they live. Another 21.0 percent identify very strongly and 31.7 percent moderately, while 25.9 percent identify only slightly and 14.1 percent not at all.

"The behavior is mainstream, the identity isn't," said Inga Verbicka, director of strategic insights at Curion. "People are baking their own bread and freezing their own produce, and if you asked them whether they're homesteaders, most would say no. They'd say they're just cooking dinner. That's not a movement — it's a habit, and habits are far more durable than movements."

Poll results pointed to structural pressures rather than inspiration. Health or wellness changes, personal or family, are cited by 40.7 percent as a life change that moved them toward home-based activity, and financial pressure and cost of living by 39.1 percent. Changes in work style are cited by 22.9 percent

Consumers Are Taking Food Control Home

Homesteading behaviors are a clear signal that consumers want more control over what they eat, how food is made, and where brands fit.



Nearly 7 in 10 consumers say home-based food activities are either part of their weekly routine or a regular hobby.

Gardening, cooking from scratch, preserving food, or making food at home.

43.9% weekly routine + 25.3% regular hobby

What Consumers Say They Want

Health, savings, and well-being point to the same commercial signal: more control at home.

65%

Improving health

- Control ingredients
- Eat fewer processed foods
- Know where food comes from

53%

Saving money

- Grow more at home
- Cook more meals from scratch
- Reduce food waste

49%

Improving well-being

- Reduce stress
- Feel accomplished
- Connect with family

The Common Thread

Health control. Budget control. Ingredient control. Family food control.



The Behavior System

These behaviors connect across the same home food cycle: prepare more, use more, and rely less on fully finished solutions.

Q. Which of the following activities are you currently doing at home? Select all that apply.



Grow

Herbs, vegetables, fruit

Cook

Scratch meals, baking, DIY meals

Preserve

Freezing, fermenting, canning, storing

Waste Less

Use more of what comes into the home

Gain Control

More involvement in everyday food decisions

Three Signals Beneath the Data

SIGNAL 01

Trust is tied to food decisions

65% cite health. The research ties health to ingredient control, fewer processed foods, and knowing where food comes from.

- Make ingredient lists easier to understand.
- Show processing choices plainly.
- Give consumers proof they can use.

SIGNAL 02

Consumers are doing more themselves

72.1% make food from scratch. Another 46.3% make DIY food items and 37.7% preserve or store food.

- Finished product is not the only source of value.
- Consumers are putting more effort into food at home.
- Brands can support the process instead of replacing it.

SIGNAL 03

Accomplishment carries value

49% cite improved well-being, including stress reduction, family time, and feeling accomplished.

- The output is tangible: meals, bread, produce, preserved foods.
- The payoff comes from doing the work successfully.
- Products can help make that success easier to repeat.

Control is becoming part of the value proposition

Consumers are deciding what to make themselves, what to buy ready-made, and where brands can help them succeed at home.

THE NEW CONSUMER QUESTION

What do I want to make myself?

Where do I need help?

Transparent ingredients

Scratch-cooking support

Preservation and storage formats

Low-waste packaging

Simple prep shortcuts

Confidence-building instructions

Value that stretches budgets

Products that feel useful at home

curion

Source: Curion Poll Pulse Research, July 2026. Sample size varies by question. Research includes homesteading motivation, frequency, activity, and lifestyle identification questions.

and becoming a parent or expanding a family by 22.7 percent.

Social media and online inspiration rank near the bottom of the reasons consumers give, at 13.3 percent.

And 26.1 percent say no major life change prompted the shift at all — pointing to an established orientation rather than a reaction to circumstance.

In analyzing the results, Verbicka

said a behavior this widespread, this routine, and this disconnected from any trend cycle warrants a different kind of attention than a passing consumer fad.

“This wasn’t created by a content cycle, so it won’t be retired by one,” adds Verbicka. “When nearly half of these consumers tell you the payoff is well-being — less stress, time with family, the feeling of having pulled it off — they’re not ask-

ing anyone to take the work away. They’re telling you the work is part of the point.

“Brands that read this as consumers opting out are going to miss what’s actually happening — which is consumers deciding, deliberately, what they want to make themselves and where they still want help. Knowing which side of that line your product sits on is the work worth doing right now.”



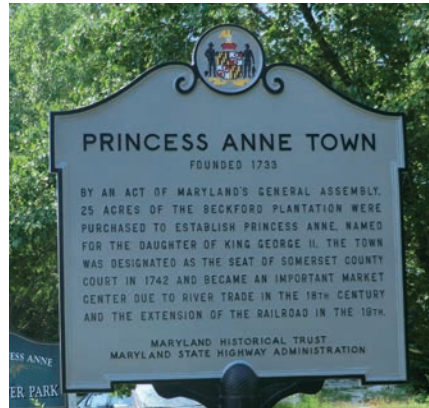
What's behind the name?

Princess Anne offers a significant nod to royalty

(Editor's note: When it comes to historical significance, Maryland's Eastern Shore can stand with just about any other area of the United States. It's carried through today in the names given to towns, rivers, streets and creeks, but more than 200 years later, their origins may not be so widely known. Drawing from "Discover Why It's Called ...," a 1990 booklet by John Dexter Nilsson, here is one of those stories.)

England's Queen Anne had 17 children 12 who died shortly after birth and the others quite young.

Upon her death in 1714, succession passed from the Stuarts to the Hanoverians, with George I ruling



1714-27 and George II (1727-60). George II had three sons and five daughters, one of whom was a princess named Anne, and she married Prince William of Orange in 1734.

For early settlers, the head of navigation on a river was almost always site of a town, transfer point

from boats to land transportation.

The village at the head of the Manokin River was Princess Anne, laid out in 1733, and was named for the princess. It's main street was named Prince William Street for her husband.

It became the county seat in 1742 when Worcester County was split off and the old courthouse at Dwindling Creek was too far away from the center of the new county area.

Princess Anne still retains its Colonial-era atmosphere, with several early buildings, one private cottage built in 1705, another, the Washington Hotel and built in 1744, is still in use. ➡



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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service describes monarchs as one of North America's most recognizable migratory species. Eastern monarchs can travel nearly 3,000 miles between their northern breeding grounds and their wintering sites in Mexico.

Monarch Migration

Nature's extraordinary journey needs our help

Story by Sean Clougherty

Few sights in nature are more remarkable than a Monarch butterfly riding the autumn winds southward, traveling hundreds or even thousands of miles toward a destination it has never seen before.

Every year, millions of monarchs participate in one of North America's most extraordinary migrations. The eastern population travels from breeding grounds across the United States and southern Canada to overwinter-

ing forests in central Mexico. A smaller western population migrates to coastal California. The journey is remarkable not only for its distance, but because no single monarch completes the entire annual cycle. Instead, several generations carry the migration forward.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service describes monarchs as one of North America's most recognizable migratory species. Eastern monarchs can travel nearly 3,000 miles between their northern breeding grounds and their wintering sites in Mexico. The butter-

flies that make the fall journey are known as the "migratory generation" and can live for as long as eight or nine months—far longer than the two to six weeks typical of other generations.

A migration passed from generation to generation

The monarch's annual cycle begins in late winter and spring when butterflies leave their Mexican wintering grounds and begin moving north. They lay eggs on milkweed along the way, and those eggs develop into caterpillars and then adult butterflies.

The new generations continue northward, eventually reaching the northern United States and southern Canada. During late summer and fall, the process reverses. The special migratory generation emerges and begins the long trip south.

What makes the migration especially fascinating is that the butterflies arriving in Mexico have never made the journey before. Yet they somehow navigate to the same general overwintering region used by generations before them.

In Mexico, monarchs gather by the millions in high-elevation oyamel fir forests. Scientists monitor their abundance by measuring the amount of forest occupied by overwintering colonies rather than attempting to count individual butterflies. That measurement provides a useful indicator of the population's overall health.

A dramatic decline

For as staggering an achievement it is for monarchs to complete the migration, the species' decline in numbers is equally and conversely monumental.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, an estimated 380 million eastern monarchs made the journey to Mexico in the mid-1990s. Today, the eastern population is estimated to have declined by about 80 percent. The western population has fared even worse, declining by more than 95 percent since the 1980s.

Another way of seeing the decline is through the amount of forest occupied by monarchs in Mexico. The long-term trend since then has been downward, despite substantial year-to-year fluctuations.

There is, however, some encour-



Monarchs depend on relatively small areas of forest in Mexico and California where they can survive the winter.

aging news.

During the 2025-26 winter season, monarchs occupied approximately 7.24 acres of forest in Mexico, a 64 percent increase from the 4.42 acres recorded the previous winter. The increase followed a nearly 100 percent increase the year before.

That is welcome news—but it should not be confused with a recovery. A few good years do not erase decades of decline. The population remains far below historical levels. For comparison, WWF and its partners reported that nearly 45 acres of forest were

occupied by monarch colonies during the winter of 1995-96.

The recent increase demonstrates something important, however: Monarch populations can respond positively when weather and habitat conditions improve.

What is threatening the migration?

There is not one single threat to the monarch butterfly. It is the cumulative effect of changes occurring across thousands of miles of migration and breeding habitat.

Loss of milkweed is one of the
September 2026 • Shore Home & Garden

biggest problems. Monarch caterpillars can eat only milkweed. Adult butterflies feed on nectar from many kinds of flowering plants, but without milkweed there is nowhere for monarchs to lay their eggs and no food for their caterpillars.

The loss of milkweed and flowering habitat has occurred through development, changes in land management, intensive agriculture, herbicide use and the removal of vegetation along roadsides and other open spaces. The Xerces Society notes that the widespread adoption of herbicide-resistant crops contributed to significant milkweed loss in agricultural areas.

Pesticides are another concern. Insecticides can directly kill monarchs and other beneficial insects. Herbicides can eliminate milkweed and flowering plants that monarchs need. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service identifies pesticide exposure as one of the significant threats facing the species.

Drought can reduce milkweed and nectar plants. Severe storms can kill migrating butterflies. Unusual temperatures can disrupt the timing of plant growth and flowering. Conditions in the Mexican overwintering forests can also affect survival. WWF reported that favorable weather, including less severe drought along portions of the migration route, helped contribute to the 2025 population increase.

Loss and degradation of overwintering habitat also matter. Monarchs depend on relatively small areas of forest in Mexico and California where they can



survive the winter. Illegal logging, fires, drought and other forms of forest degradation can damage those sites. The 2024-25 survey in Mexico found that 6.30 acres of forest had been degraded, with illegal logging accounting for the largest share of the documented damage.

What can gardeners do to help?

The good news is that helping monarchs does not require owning hundreds of acres.

A backyard, farm, schoolyard, church property, park or roadside can become part of the monarch's migration corridor.

The most important step is to plant native milkweed. Because monarch caterpillars depend exclusively on milkweed, providing the right species in appropriate locations can create breeding habitat where none previously existed.

But milkweed alone isn't enough. Adult monarchs need nectar throughout the growing season. Planting a variety of native flowers that bloom from spring through fall provides food during migration and breeding. The Xerces Society specifically recommends a combination of

native milkweed and nectar-producing plants.

Gardeners can also:

- Choose native plants rather than relying exclusively on ornamental plants.
- Leave some areas of a property unmowed during periods when monarchs and other pollinators are using them.
- Avoid removing milkweed simply because it is sometimes considered a weed.
- Provide flowering plants from spring through fall rather than having a garden that blooms for only a few weeks.
- Participate in monarch and pollinator monitoring programs so scientists can better understand population changes.

Just like the millions of butterflies forming an unequalled spectacle of nature every year, doing their part to keep the species' life cycle turning and turning, keeping monarch migration moving in the right direction will take millions of small efforts to create something much larger — a continent-wide network of habitat giving the monarch a better chance to complete one of nature's greatest journeys. 🦋

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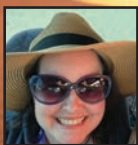
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How to test your lawn for grubs and what to do if you find them

Story by Jessica Damiano
Photo courtesy Associated Press

What does it mean when brown patches show up in a perfectly healthy lawn? The truth is, it could be anything from drought to dog urine, fungal diseases, pests or too much fertilizer.

But many homeowners automatically blame grubs.

The problem with this is that it's often not the case, and even if grubs are present, small populations are not problematic.

Treatment should only be applied after confirming a true grub infestation.

Fortunately, there's a simple way to check, but action must be taken during a specific window of time to be effective. And that time is nigh.

How to know whether grubs are the culprit

Grubs are the early life forms of beetles, including European chafers, and Asiatic, Japanese and Oriental beetles.

They live close to the surface under lawns and other plants, where they feed on roots, disconnecting the roots from the plants'



top growth.

Confirming their presence is easy: Dig up a 3- to 4-inch-deep (7.6 to 10 centimeters), 12-inch-square (930 square centimeters) section of symptomatic lawn that partially overlaps the border of healthy grass.

If there are grubs in the lawn,

the whitish, brown-headed, half-inch to 1-inch-long (1 to 2.5 centimeters) beetle larvae, which resemble shrimp, will be visible either on the underlying soil or on the underside of the sod-like square you removed.

They're generally curled into the shape of the letter C.



If there are grubs in the lawn, the whitish, brown-headed, half-inch to 1-inch-long (1 to 2.5 centimeters) beetle larvae, which resemble shrimp, will be visible either on the underlying soil or on the underside of the sod-like square you removed. They're generally curled into the shape of the letter C.

Fewer than 10 grubs per square foot of soil is normal and does not indicate an infestation, so you should not take any action. Instead, seek out other potential causes.

***If grubs are the problem,
what's the solution?***

Treatment against grubs should

only be applied if there are 10 or more of the insects present under the section of turf that you removed.

Heavily infested lawn sections will easily roll up like a carpet when you attempt to remove them, their roots severed by the feeding insects.

Because grubs are most vulnerable to pest-control measures when they are young, those measures will only be effective if applied in late summer.

Milky spore powder is a natural product that targets only Japanese beetle grubs.

Unfortunately, it's not always easy to discern between the species.

If you are certain your grubs are the Japanese variety, you can give it a try, but success rates are mixed, with better outcomes reported in warmer regions.

Beneficial nematodes are microscopic, non-segmented worms that attack soil-dwelling insects, including all types of grubs.

They're a more universal approach, with higher success rates.

They, too, are natural, as they already exist in the soil; you would just be adding more.

The nematodes work by infecting grubs with a bacterium that can kill them in as little as 48 hours.

There are a number nematode species available, so read package labels and look for the *Heterorhabditis bacteriophora* (Hb) strain, which specifically targets grubs.

To optimize effectiveness, water the soil well before applying either treatment.

Avoid using chemical treatments, which can be toxic to earthworms, honeybees and other pollinators, pets and wildlife.

Some are even toxic to humans.



(Editor's note: Jessica Damiano writes weekly gardening columns for the AP and publishes the award-winning Weekly Dirt Newsletter.)



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Indoor Craft & Yard Sale set for Denton

DENTON — The Indoor Craft & Yard Sale to benefit the Caroline County 4-H Program will be held on Saturday, Oct. 24 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Caroline County 4-H Park, located at 8230 Detour Road (off Route 16).

All vendors Are welcome: Crafters, Direct Sale consultants (which will be kept to one consultant per venue), household items, furniture, jewelry, antiques, horse tack, tools, pet items and more!!

Food will be available for sale at the event. The building is handicap accessible.

Cost is \$15 per table. Set up will be on Friday, October 23rd from 6-8pm or Saturday, Oct. 24 from 6-7am.

Early deadline to ensure a space will be Oct. 2.

Proceeds from sale of table spaces will benefit the Caroline County 4-H Programs — including scholarships, club needs, leadership and service learning activities.

For more information or to reserve a space, call Joanne Wooters at 410-479-0565 or e-mail caroco4h-craftshow@gmail.com. 



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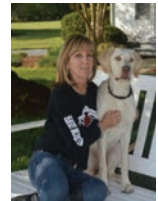


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By Ron Ketter

Carolina Wren

(Editor's note: Ron Ketter is a member of the Talbot Bird Club and a Maryland Ornithological Society board member.)

Carolina Wrens are common backyard birds that can be found year around on the Eastern Shore. Their range covers most of the eastern United States.

They are small birds, only about 5 inches long. They are reddish-brown above, buffy-orange below, with white on their chin and throat. A white stripe extends from above their eye to their nape. They have a dark, slender, decurved bill. Both sexes are similar.

Sometimes they are difficult to see as they creep through vegetation while searching for food. Other times, Carolina Wrens are quite energetic, hopping around as they perch on a branch or patio furniture with tails cocked, singing loudly.

Carolina Wrens more than compensate for their diminutive size through boisterous song. The song is notable for both volume and frequency.

Only the male sings. The song is



often described as a loud “teakettle, teakettle, teakettle.” In one study, a captive male repeated its song close to 3,000 times in a single day!

Males and females may form pair bonds anytime during the year. Once formed, they pair for life, staying on their territory throughout the year to forage and breed.

The male builds several rudimentary nests and leaves it up to the female to choose the best one. Once the female selects the nest, the pair finishes the nest together.

Various materials are used, including dried grass, pine needles, dead

leaves, bark strips, snakeskin, and even bits of paper, plastic, or string. A typical nest is shaped as a dome with a side entrance.

Carolina Wrens are quite resourceful in selecting places to build nests. They are often found inside flowerpots, hanging planters, or mailboxes, under propane tank lids, and even in boots or pockets of coats left outside or in sheds.

Once the nest is finished, the female lays from three to seven eggs. Only the female incubates. The male visits her frequently, often bringing food.



Carolina Wrens are quite resourceful in selecting places to build nests. They are often found inside flowerpots, hanging planters, or mailboxes, under propane tank lids, and even in boots or pockets of coats left outside or in sheds.

(Photo by Ron Ketter)

After about two weeks, the eggs hatch. The female eats the eggshell, providing her an important source of calcium. The female continues to stay on the nest, brooding the young to keep them warm for the next several days. During this time, the male brings food to the nest, giving it to the female who then feeds it to the young.

After around four days, the young are large enough and have sufficient feather coverage to keep warm without the female needing to brood them. The female joins her mate in bringing food to the

nest. During the next week to 10 days, both sexes participate equally in feeding their babies.

Nestlings are fed a variety of insects, including butterfly and moth larva, spiders, crickets, grasshoppers, and beetles.

When it comes time for the young to fledge, parents visit the nest without food to encourage the young to leave the nest. The young depart by hopping out of the nest or taking very short flights of no more than a few feet at a time.

They are particularly vulnerable during this time, so they tend to

find shelter in bushes or brush piles to stay safe from predators.

Parents continue to feed young out of the nest for another three to four weeks. Parental duties are equally divided between the male and female, unless the pair is starting another clutch. If that occurs, the male continues to feed the fledglings while the female starts to incubate the next set of eggs.

While Carolina Wrens do not migrate, they show sensitivity to cold weather. At night or during very cold days, they will seek refuge in nest boxes or in brush piles sheltered from the wind.

While Carolina Wrens' diet consists mostly of insects, it is supplemented with small amounts of plant matter, such as berries and seeds from bayberry, sweetgum, and poison ivy.

They will also visit feeders containing suet, seeds, or peanuts during the winter months.

The Carolina Wren population has increased over the last half century. They seem to adapt well to most human activity, including benefitting from backyard feeders and artificial nestboxes that help them through the winter.

You can take several steps to attract Carolina Wrens to your backyard. Put up a nestbox or, if you have one, leave it up during the winter to serve as a place they can roost to stay warm. Construct a brush pile on your property.

Reduce the use of insecticides to make sure they have plenty of insects as a food source. And put up a feeder with suet, peanuts, or seeds.

By taking these steps, and with a little luck, you may be greeted by the cheerful song of the Carolina Wren.



How Enlightening!

Remember, Mum's the word

- The name *Chrysanthemum* comes from the Greek words “khrusos,” meaning gold and “anthemom,” meaning flower.

- As an indoor houseplant, it can help remove *toxins* from the air.

- Chrysanthemum is considered the birth flower for *November*.

- Chrysanthemum tea is a popular *drink* in China. Not only is it tasty, it also has many health benefits.

- *Blooms* can be as small as 1 centimeter or as large as 25 centimeters.

- In *Australia*, it is traditionally given to mothers for Mother's Day.

- In 1966, the chrysanthemum was chosen as the official flower of *Chicago*.

- *Pyrethrum* is used as a natural insecticide.

- In some European countries, the chrysanthemum is considered the flower of *death* and is typically used in funerals and on graves.

(Information courtesy <https://funflowerfacts.wordpress.com>)

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liflower. Root vegetables like carrots, beets, radishes, turnips and even greens like kale and collards do well planted from seed in the fall. Selected herbs like basil, Thai basil, parsley, dill, cilantro, chives and thyme do well planted in the fall. Beside this core list of reliable fall vegetable crops other considerations also include cabbage, bok choy, garlic, kohlrabi, onions and sugar snap peas.

Many of these crops can be harvested throughout the fall and depending on the frost well into winter.

I can remember some of the sweetest most flavorful broccoli I have even eaten was harvested on New Year's Eve. So whether you are first time gardener or a long-time pro, here are a few tips to help your vegetable garden transition from summer into fall.

1. Pick the right spot. Choose a location that gets at least 6 to 8 hours of sunlight daily. As mentioned earlier, be sure to refresh beds with compost or organic matter after cleaning our spent summer plants.

2. Timing matters, be sure to plant early as planting seeds to late will not allow for the plants to mature before cold sets in. According to the *Old Farmers Almanac*, chances of frost can begin around the middle of October, with the fall frost date happening around November second to the seventh. Consider frost covers to help extend the growing season and protect plants from a freeze.

3. If sowing seeds, be sure to keep them consistently moist. Newly planted seeds need steady moisture to not only germinate, but help them grow and thrive.

4. If needed be sure to thin out seedlings that could crowd roots and can limit growth.

September is spring bulb planting time. They are easy to plant, require a minimum of care, and will reward you with beautiful displays of color in the spring.

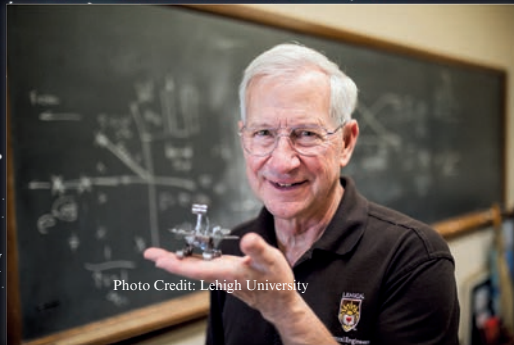
Good drainage is essential for all spring bulbs, so select a location with no standing water. Bulbs are heavy feeders, especially of phosphorus and potash.

We suggest using an organic fertilizer such as Bulb-tone or Bonemeal, both of which are excellent slow release form of phosphorous and will result in a bigger flower bloom, with more intense color.

When planting be sure that each hole is three times as deep as the bulb is tall, and apply one tablespoon of fertilizer in each hole, before covering the hole with soil. Be sure to apply water to the area as needed unsure proper rooting before the ground freezes. Happy Gardening! 🌱

(Editor's Note: Ken Morgan is the owner of Robin's Nest Floral and Garden Center in Easton, Md.)

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(FROM PAGE 6)

tivities return, appointments pile up, and before we know it, October is staring us in the face.

Take a few minutes to look beyond this week and see what the next month or two holds.

Add the things you already know about — appointments, birthdays, school events, practices, days off and other commitments. I find that simply knowing what's coming makes life feel a little less chaotic.

Sweet Simplicity Hack: Take a photo or screenshot of any paper schedules you receive and add important dates to your phone immediately. That permission slip sitting on the counter isn't nearly as helpful as a reminder that pops up when you actually need it.

Reset Your Meals

After a summer of vacations, cookouts, eating on the go and plenty of "What do you want for dinner?" conversations,

September is a great time to simplify weeknight meals. Instead of searching for new recipes every week, make a list of 10 or so easy dinners your family already likes.

Tacos, spaghetti, breakfast for dinner, grilled cheese and soup — it doesn't have to be exciting. It just has to get everyone fed!

Sweet Simplicity Hack: Before grocery shopping, plan meals around what you already have in your freezer and pantry. You'll save money, waste less food and probably discover a few things you forgot you bought. Some of my friends like to do a "No Spend September" and you can absolutely combine that freezer purge with your own challenge — you will appreciate that savings when it comes time for Christmas shopping!

Reset One Cluttered Space

Notice I said "one." September

Instead of searching for new recipes every week, make a list of 10 or so easy dinners your family already likes. It doesn't have to be exciting. It just has to get everyone fed!

does not require a whole-house organizing project!

Choose the spot that causes you the most frustration every day.

Maybe it's the kitchen counter where everything lands, the entryway overflowing with shoes, your bathroom cabinet or even your car.

Set a timer for 20 or 30 minutes and tackle just that space.

Sometimes one small area that's functioning better makes the whole house feel a little more manageable.

Sweet Simplicity Hack: Set a timer for 20 minutes and grab an empty laundry basket. Anything that belongs somewhere else goes into the basket. When your timer goes off, walk through the house and put those items away.

Reset Your Morning

You don't need a 5 a.m. wake-up call, meditation session and color-coded morning checklist to make mornings run more smoothly.



Thank goodness — the night owl in me runs strong!

Instead, think about the one thing that repeatedly causes stress. Are you looking for keys?

Making lunches at the last minute? Searching for something to wear?

Running back inside for the water bottle someone forgot?

Fix that one thing.

Sweet Simplicity Hack: Do a five-minute "tomorrow prep" before bed. Check the weather and calendar, put anything that needs to leave the house by the door and make sure you know what you're wearing. Five minutes at night can save 15 frantic ones in the morning. For me, having my breakfast and lunch prepped makes such a difference in whether I walk into school relaxed and ready to face the day — or roll into that parking lot on three wheels, playing catch up all day!

Reset Your Spending

Summer can be expensive. Vaca-

tions, day trips, eating out and back-to-school shopping all add up, making September a perfect time for a little financial reset.

This doesn't have to mean a strict no-spend month. Simply pay attention again.

Look through your subscriptions, check recent spending and decide where you can pull back for a few weeks.

Sweet Simplicity Hack: Try a "use what we have" week. Shop your pantry, freezer and bathroom cabinets before buying more. It's amazing how many meals — and how much shampoo — we already own.

Reset Your Evening

A calmer morning often starts the night before.

I'm not suggesting spending an hour cleaning the house every evening.

In fact, I'd suggest the opposite. Give yourself 10 minutes.

Clear the kitchen counter. Load the dishwasher. Put away whatever has accumulated in the main living area.

Check tomorrow's calendar and plug in the devices everyone will need.

Then stop.

Sweet Simplicity Hack: Set a ten-minute timer and involve everyone who lives in the house. You'd be surprised how much a family can accomplish when everyone knows they're only cleaning until the timer goes off.

Reset Something Just for You

Not every reset needs to make us more organized or productive.

Think about something that makes you feel more like yourself that may have gotten pushed aside during the busyness of summer.

Maybe it's reading before bed, taking an evening walk, working on a hobby, calling a friend,

sitting outside with your morning coffee or simply going to bed a little earlier.

Put one of those things back into your routine.

September may feel like a new year, but that doesn't mean we need a whole new version of ourselves.

Sometimes the best reset is simply figuring out what makes life work a little better — and making room for more of it.

Because before we know it, the holidays will be here.

And if a few simple September resets can help us head into that busy season feeling a little more organized, a little less rushed and a little more present, I'd say that's a pretty sweet way to start the "new year." ➡

(Editor's Note: Kristine George is a freelance journalist who resides in Easton.)

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Antique Discovery 'Road Trip,' Part 2

Preston Historical Society, Preston, Md.

(Editor's note: DeeDee Wood is the owner of Black Cat Curiosities, an online antiques research and sales venue.)

As you pull into the quaint, picturesque town of Preston, Md., you will see an impressive house on Main Street, the Wilson/Noble House, the oldest house in Preston, built in 1850.

It is also the Preston Historical Society, where I recently caught up with Karen Coleman Gibbons-Neff, Donations Director, for a tour and discussion of all things historical and antique.

The society property is not only a house museum, but has a 1980 addition built in the back, housing many local artifacts and historical treasures, as well as several outside buildings, including a small chapel, a local farm creamery building and equipment/farm "waterman" building. The grounds here are

Antique Discovery



By DeeDee Wood

stately, with mature pecan trees dropping early fall nuts, a wrought-iron surround on the porch of the home from days gone by, grinding wheels from the local Linchester Mill, and beautiful landscaping. Inside are artifacts and history of the people of Preston and surrounding areas.

The large museum addition on the back of the home fits nicely into a step up into a home tour. In the addition, you will find displays on

local school artifacts, a counter and pharmacy items from a local establishment, tomato/canning industry artifacts and information, Preston 151 Line Trucking, a display on the historic African American town of Jonestown, military displays, pine derby box racing and so much more.

There are many antiques to consider in both areas of the addition and home, as well as the outside waterman building. Visitors can consider farm machinery, watermen tools, old toys, furniture, local relics of all sorts and hundreds of other objects, which include an old safe, rare photos, business antiques, signs and more.

The museum is well organized and contains interesting tid-bits from a by-gone era, such as a display on Sallie Dean and her infamous story from Harmony from the late 1800s, a display on Jean Patchett, a famous 1940s-50s model and glamorous icon, born in Preston, and more information about local businesses, homes and local flavors.

There was a Friendship Quilt displayed in the hall, from 1936. Gibbons-Neff was excited about this item. "It was made by the ladies of Hog Creek, Maryland. My grandmother and my aunts have their names on this quilt. They grew up here," local pride obvious in her voice.

The museum has a lot of local pride. Within the 1850 portion house museum, there are several oil paintings adorned on walls, painted by one of the original dwellers of



There's a schoolhouse display in the museum. The Preston Historical Society is located at 167 Main St. and open the last two Saturdays of each month.

the home, a M. E. Noble. There are period pieces of furniture, a spinning wheel from the local town of Choptank, Local Preston Fire Department antiques and equipment, an upstairs with child antiques and a bedroom with historic beds, and many antique items displayed in proper fashion for a home of this era. "The house is set up to look like a house from the 19th century," Karen explained.

The Preston Historical Society is located at 167 Main St. in Preston and open the last 2 Saturdays of the month, from 10am-2pm and closed from December-March. They have a Halloween Haunted porch on Halloween night for trick-or-treaters, a Veteran's celebration in November, a Santa's Workshop at the end of November and more. For more information, see their website at www.prestonhistoricalsociety.com. 🐾



Karen Coleman Gibbons-Neff stands in front of her family's heirloom quilt.

(Photos courtesy DeeDee Wood)

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The key to success is in the details

(Editor's note: Deborah Walker is the author of "An Eastern Shore Special: Recipes from the Heart." She has written about food and recipes for 15 years, She resides in Ocean City.)

Individualism is a theory where political, economic and social independence of an individual are based on a person's interest, initiative, and action.

This philosophy of distinction emulsifies into areas of authenticity. Imagine a world where conventionalism prevails and uniqueness does not exist.

Cooking is no exception. Personal preference, level of skill, and creativity blend to form the perfect bite. That being said, how often do we serve barbecued chicken?

This American tradition evolved from Caribbean and Southern pit traditions and has continued to become a favorite style of preparation among home cooks and culinary competitions.

Barbecue sauces and styles are

Food For Thought



By Deborah Walker

Secret Ingredient: 'Diversity.'

"A garden's beauty never lies in one flower."

— **Matshona Dhliwayo**

numerous, and the possibilities are endless. So how does one stand out? What makes their sauce exceptional? And how can your presentation go beyond predictability?

The concept of singularity seems simple but in actuality it may be more complex than one thinks. The

key to success is the details.

May I go one step further, and suggest that the smaller the specifics, the more important it is and allows one to surpass the boundaries of tradition and conformity. Thinking out of the box is the salt and pepper of gastronomy.

The chemistry of barbecue sauce relies on a careful balance of acidity, sweetness, and thickeners.

Each one has their specific purpose and together forms a lip-smacking topper that excites the palette and has the senses drooling for more.

The trinity of sweet, salty, and spicy is classic and hard to beat.

When plating food, think of your plate as a blank canvass. Every item has purpose and even empty spaces are a conscious decision.

A chef is not only a cook but also an artist.

That brings us to the subject of Frenching chicken legs or more commonly known as making chicken lollipops.

Blackberry Barbecued Chicken Lollipops

Frenching Chicken Legs

1. Remove the outer edge and core of the pineapple. Grill both sides. Set aside.

Blackberry Barbecue Sauce

- 3 cups fresh blackberries
- 5 chipotle peppers from a can of Chipotle peppers in Adobe sauce
- 1/3 cup chopped yellow onion
- Half-cup apple cider vinegar
- Half-cup packed dark brown sugar
- Third-cup molasses
- 3/4-cup ketchup
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

- 1 tablespoon Chinese hot oil
- 1 tablespoon liquid smoke
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- kosher salt and ground pepper to taste

1. Combine all of the ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth.
2. Simmer the ingredients until it thickens.
3. Strain through a metal sieve.

Grilling

1. Spray the grill racks with cooking spray.

2. Heat grill to medium-high.

3. Grill the chicken legs until they are two-thirds done.

4. Using a pastry brush, apply a heavy coat of blackberry barbecue sauce to both sides of the chicken legs. Make sure the entire leg is coated with sauce.

5. Allow chicken to get a good sear on both sides.

6. Just before serving, apply one more coat of blackberry barbecue sauce to both sides.

7. Add a light dusting of kosher salt, freshly ground black pepper, and a few fresh blackberries as a garnish.



Frenching a chicken leg means the cutting and scraping the meat, skin, and tendons away from the bottom bone to make it clean and neat. You will need a sharp paring knife and kitchen scissors.

Using your paring knife, slice all the way around the narrow end of the drumstick to cut through the skin and meat down to the bone.

Place a paper towel on the main part of the chicken leg, push the bulk of the chicken away from the base of the knuckle bone.

Snip away any connective tissue

and hanging tendons. Make sure you pull out the thin splinter-like bone if it runs alongside of the main bone.

Cut off the small upper knuckle and scrape the exposed bone so it looks white and neat.

If you have never done this before, you might want to watch a video of this process. Once you do it, it is easy, and makes for a much nicer and refined way of presenting chicken legs.

If you are a fan of barbecue, consider blackberry barbecue chicken

lollipops. Blackberries are in season and are a fresh foundation for the sauce.

It is proper to pick up barbecued chicken legs with your fingers. Chicken lollipops are fun and even more finger friendly which is always a good thing.

Trust me, your guests will appreciate the extra effort.

Company is coming and barbecue is on the menu, consider blackberry barbecued chicken lollipops. “Wow” will be the theme with every bite. Enjoy! 🍴

Now we're cooking!

|| Flavor Meets Function ||



Rainbow Tuna Bowls

How Busy Families Can Balance Time, Taste and Nutrition

FEATURE IMPACT

In those precious few minutes between waking up and heading out the door or arriving home from school pickup, the pantry is a common destination. Seeking a grab-and-go lunch, sending your student off with a bite of protein or searching for an afternoon snack can leave you scanning the shelves for a go-to solution.

With snackers increasingly mindful about what they put in their bodies, you're not alone if you're looking for a snacking shakeup – in fact, in a recent survey conducted by Bumble Bee Seafoods and FleishmanHillard's TRUE Global Intelligence, 50% of Americans agreed it's hard to find snacks that meet all their needs. According to the survey, people are looking for foods that offer:

- “Bang for their buck” (78%)
- Affordability (61%)
- Protein packed (51%)
- Meet specific dietary goals (48%)
- Easy to eat on the go (35%)

Among all factors, however, 70% said great taste is most important, proving flavor remains the single biggest driver of snacking decisions.

In response to demand for powerhouse snacks that do it all while tasting amazing, Bumble Bee Snackers easy-open, single-serve cans are shaking up snack time with a variety of bold flavors that are perfect for any time, place, budget or craving.

The various unique flavors can be eaten right from the can and are perfect for snacking occasions, from zesty Lemon Pepper to bold and

savory Hickory Smoke, tastebud-tingling Sweet Heat, spicy Thai Chili and nostalgic Tuna Salad while traditionalists can opt for classic Chunk Light Tuna.

“Snacking has evolved,” said Dana Kowal, senior director brand marketing and corporate affairs at Bumble Bee Seafoods. “People want it all: bold flavor, real protein and grab-and-go simplicity – and they want it at a price that makes sense.”

The 3-ounce cans are premixed and can be enjoyed straight from the can, paired with crackers or veggies, or tossed in salads, sandwiches or wraps. To turn them into quick, family-friendly dinners or make-ahead lunches, consider these adorably colorful and crave-worthy Rainbow Tuna Bowls balanced with sweet mango, creamy avocado, crisp radish and spicy tuna.

For a perfect addition to your game day spread, these Bang Bang Tuna Sliders are spicy, creamy, crunchy and easier to make than they look with just a few ingredients and fun flavor. Tuna is topped with a layer of coleslaw and spicy mayo to solve those afternoon hunger pangs whether you're in the office or enjoying the comforts of home.

When dinnertime calls for a busy-season meal that's light yet filling, Garden Farro Tuna Salad is a must-save recipe to add to your rotation. It's bright, herbaceous and offers easy experimentation – simply swap similar ingredients based on what's fresh and in-season or make it all your own with your family's favorite produce.

To find more snacking solutions that are packed with flavor while saving time and money, visit BumbleBee.com.

Rainbow Tuna Bowls

Servings: 2

- 2 cups cooked sushi rice
- 2 radishes, sliced
- 1 can Bumble Bee Snackers Sweet Heat Tuna
- 1 mango, cubed
- 3 tablespoons shelled edamame
- 1 avocado, sliced
- 1/4 cup shredded red cabbage
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced scallion
- furikake, for serving
- Sriracha, for serving

In two shallow bowls, layer rice on bottom then evenly divide radish, tuna, mango, edamame, avocado, cabbage and scallion. Sprinkle with furikake and Sriracha.



Bang Bang Tuna Sliders

Garden Farro Tuna Salad

Servings: 4

- 2 quarts salted water
- 1 cup pearly farro
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (1 lemon)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, basil or mint
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 can Bumble Bee Snackers Tuna Salad
- 6 small radishes or 1 cucumber, sliced
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 cup roasted hazelnuts
- freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- crumbled feta or goat cheese, for serving (optional)

In medium pot over high heat, bring water to boil. Add farro, reduce heat and simmer uncovered until tender, 20-30 minutes. Drain; do not rinse.

In large bowl, whisk oil, lemon juice, herbs, honey and salt. Stir in cooked farro to evenly coat; set aside or refrigerate to cool.

Once farro is chilled or at room temperature, fold in tuna, radish or cucumber and tomato. Sprinkle with nuts and black pepper, to taste. Serve with cheese, if desired.

Bang Bang Tuna Sliders

Servings: 2

- 8 ounces tri-color shredded cabbage (coleslaw mix)
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice (1 lime)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 cup mayo
- 2 tablespoons sweet Thai chili sauce

- 1 can Bumble Bee Snackers Thai Chili Tuna, included whole chili minced and reserved
- 4 slider buns

In small bowl, mix cabbage, lime juice, oil and salt.

In another small bowl, mix mayo, chili sauce and minced chili from tuna can.

On bottom of each bun, evenly divide layer of coleslaw followed by tuna. Drizzle sauce over top, to taste. Cap with top bun and serve.



Garden Farro Tuna Salad

Ebenezer Theater to host 'Book Talk'

EASTON — Though Claire McCardell has largely been erased from history, much of what we wear traces back to the ingenious, rebellious mind of this Maryland-born fashion designer.

The inventor of ballet flats, spaghetti straps, and mix-and-match separates, she built an empire at a time when women rarely made the upper echelons of business.

Elizabeth Evitts Dickinson brings McCardell's story back in to the light in writing that is relentlessly compelling, reaching well beyond the interests of fashion.

The Ebenezer Theater will host a

"Book Talk," featuring author Dickinson on Sept. 13 at 2 p.m. There is no admission fee.

"In the hands of Dickinson, this is more than just the biography of a fashion revolutionary," writes the *New York Times*: "It is a story of the fight for women's identity and, incidentally, the birth of an American industry."

Dickinson will offer a presentation on McCardell before joining Shore Lit Founder/Director Kerry Folan in conversation about the book.

Copies of "Claire McCardell: The

Designer Who Set Women Free" will be available for sale on site via Flying Cloud Books. A book signing will follow the talk.

Registration is required and can be accessed by visiting shorelit.org.

The program is presented in partnership with Shore Lit, Flying Cloud Booksellers, and the Talbot Historical Society.

For questions about accessibility, contact Kerry Folan at easternshorelit@gmail.com.

Register by visiting <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1994071503546>.



Oxford Community Center calender of events

- Sept. 5, 8:30 a.m., "Cars & Coffee" at the OCC. Sponsored by Prestige Auto Vault, Eat Sprout & Doc's Sunset Grille. Come enjoy the incredible array of automobiles! Weather dependent. Free, coffee and nibbles provided. All are welcome. Save the date: Wednesday, Oct. 7 for the 'Brandywine Valley Tour' — a fall twist on the road rally! Daily drivers welcome.

- Sept. 10, 5:00 p.m., "Dining in Colonial Maryland," a 250th program. Cookbook author and historian Joyce M. White will be speaking about historic foodways and material culture. The talk includes a buffet of food from the time prepared by Momma Maria's. In partnership with the Oxford Museum. Tickets are \$10 per person, cash bar with historic cordials. All are welcome. RSVP at oxfordcc.org.

- Sept. 17, 5:30 p.m., "Constitution Day" with Judge Davis. The Oxford Community Center presents its second annual program to

celebrate Constitution and Citizenship Day, the federally designated day that celebrates the signing of the Constitution in 1787. The program will address the meaning of the Rule of Law and its relationship to the Constitution. The speaker is the Honorable Andre Davis, the former city solicitor for Baltimore and a former federal judge serving on both the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and the United States District Court for Maryland. There is no charge for the event, which includes a cash bar and nibbles. All are welcome. RSVP online at oxfordcc.org. Citizenship Day Special: Scottish Highland Creamery is donating 10 percent of ice cream sales to the OCC. Grab your scoops before or after the event!

- Sept. 25, 5:30 p.m., "Aerospace Talk" with astronaut Terry J. Hart. Come meet the astronaut who rode in the 1984 "Challenger" Space Shuttle! The progress made in the

past 100 years of aerospace engineering has been nothing short of spectacular. Hart brings this history to life and shares many personal stories from his career in aviation and space flight. Tickets are \$10 per person. Cash bar and nibbles. All are welcome. RSVP at oxfordcc.org.

- Sept. 30, 3 p.m., OCC Classic Cinema Club and the Oxford Museum Presents "1776," a historical Musical Drama starring William Daniels, Howard da Silva, Donald Madden, John Cullem, Ken Howard, and Blythe Danner. The film is a fictionalized account of the event leading up to the signing of the Declaration of Independence in the summer of 1776. The film starts at 3 p.m., with an introduction by the committee chairs and a Q&A after the film. Partnership with the Oxford Museum. Popcorn and water are provided. You're welcome to bring your own snacks. No charge. All are welcome. RSVP online at oxfordcc.org.



The image shows two white service vans for Total Home Performance. The left van is labeled 'Crawl Space Encapsulation' and the right van is labeled 'Insulation Company'. Both vans have the company logo and contact information. Two gold banners with blue text are overlaid on the image, each reading 'BEST OF coastal STYLE 2025' and 'CRAWL SPACE ENCAPSULATION' or 'INSULATION COMPANY'. A green starburst graphic in the top right corner says 'FREE ESTIMATES'. The background shows a house and a clear blue sky.

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