



Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska October 2020 Newsletter

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Messages from the Presidents

This is the busiest time of year, I think. A lot has to be done in spring, but I do not think it is so urgent. In the fall, EVERYTHING has to be put away, pruned, dug out, and tidied before the ground freezes and the snow starts. For me, this was extra stressful, as the three spruces in my front yard had to be removed, and I had to build rock walls around the garden space, move a few smaller trees to the front yard and replace many yards of topsoil. Coupling that with all the end of year duties for the club, bylaw revisions, program development and yearbook editing, there seem to be many fewer days in the week. As much as I always rue the end of our growing season, I also look forward to being able to sit back and have less to do—at least for a month or so. Then I get edgy and want my hands in the soil again. At the moment, I am looking forward to getting everything totally done in the next week or so. I will need to hide that accomplishment from She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed, or a new list will immediately appear—this is harder to do now that she works from home a lot more.

They are worried about us being cooped up in the cold weather during the pandemic. Make sure to get fresh air still. I have even heard suggestions of keeping windows open for a cross-breeze during the winter. Here's to all of us staying safe this winter!

Paul

How is it possible that November is in just a few days? This year has sure flown by quickly! I am now settled in for the upcoming winter months with a list as long as my arm, full of projects I hope to tackle around the house and of course some fun crafty things that I have put off for years.

I have started placing orders for my favorite seed catalogs which will begin arriving in a few short months, and I my indoor light rack is set up and ready to go when the time comes.

The board has been busy thinking about and working on how to approach 2021 with so much still unknown on a day-to-day basis. We are fairly certain that our regular monthly meetings will most likely be continuing on Zoom for some time to come. I hope that more of you will give it a try and join in the fun and fellowship we have to offer. All except one of the 2021 programs have been planned, and thankfully the guest speakers are willing to do their presentations online if need be. What other choice do we have? We will do what we need to do! Stay well my friends.

Kathy



What's Growing Now?

Mike Baldwin presented an extremely interesting program on our native carnivorous plants at the **October 8th** meeting. Who knew those little plants were so intricate and yet so prevalent? This will definitely change what we look for during hikes! Many thanks to Mike for a riveting presentation.



Announcements

Kathy Liska has been working non-stop developing a slide presentation of members' photos for the **November 12th Zoom meeting, starting at 10am**. The hardest part for her was to choose which of the so many wonderful things you all have shared. Thank you so much to all who sent photos in. This promises to be a really fun meeting!

If anyone needs assistance with the Zoom program, please let us know and we can help out or have another practice meeting. Email to akwildflowers@gmail.com to ask for assistance. You do not want to miss this fun event!

We have included our new official logo on top of the newsletter, voted on and unanimously approved by the club in the beginning of October. This logo will be on most of our communications from now on, too. Thankful for Kathy Liska using her Fair contacts to get this done for us!

The November monthly meeting will also start the election time slot for the new Board of Directors for 2021 from **Thursday, November 12 to Monday, November 16 at 5pm**.

We will send out an email Ballot notification on the 12th.

There were no additional nominees, so the slate is as follows:



Co-President: Kathy Liska
Co-President: Paul Marmora
Vice President: Barbara Baker
Secretary: Barbara Carrick
Treasurer: Cindy Walker
Member at Large: Sally Byrne-Flores
Member at Large: Ruth Bauman

WGCA Grant - November 1st deadline

WGCA has Grant money to give to qualifying folks. Please tell people you know that they can look up the requirements for the grant application on the Alaska Garden Clubs website at www.alaskagardenclubs.org in the Wildflower Garden Club link. The application is due by November 1, 2020.

Holiday Wreath Workshop

We are pleased to announce that the annual make a holiday wreath or centerpiece workshop at Dimond Greenhouses will occur as scheduled on **December 3rd at 10:00am**. Darryl will once again instruct us in the art of wreath making. **The cost will be \$30** and is a **Members-only event**. We will be distanced from each other as well. We will need to know who is planning to attend, so Darryl can prepare. **Please email your interest in participating to akwildflowers@gmail.com by Nov 27th to reserve a spot.**



Membership Renewal



Remember, to be included in the next yearbook's list of members, you will need to send in the paperwork and pay your **dues by December 1st**. Your options are to print a copy of the form and send in a check, fill in the form and pay in cash at a meeting (unlikely this year), or to fill in the form online and pay electronically.

The form can be accessed at our website at www.wildflowergardenclub.org under the membership tab. There is also a copy in the club email sent out on October 4. We would like to recognize members' birthday months, so there will also be a spot on the membership form to include that information. Month—not year! If sharing birthday information is an issue for you, you may always write n/a on the spot on the form.

Pop-up Workshops

We are planning to do about 5 pop-up Workshops during the course of the 2021 year. We will have approximately a month's notice for each workshop. Keep your eyes peeled!! We are thinking about a bow/ribbon making workshop for late November. We will let you know!

Bird Houses



Stepping Stones



Club Business

The vote on approval of the proposed updates to the Constitution, Bylaws and Standing Rules was carried and adopted by unanimous vote by all who responded to the vote request. The constitution and bylaws will reflect the date of amended changes in the club records and Yearbook as October 10, 2020.

The 501(c)3 paperwork was filed electronically with the IRS on October 22, 2020 by Treasurer Cindy Walker and Co-President Kathy Liska. The cost was \$275. There is up to a 30 day wait time before we can then contact them if they have not contacted us. We anticipate that the club will be issued the 501(c)3 designation before the end of the year.

AWCC Native Garden Project update: Co-President Paul Marmora reports that all plants have been put in the ground for the year, the rebar stakes to surround the garden have arrived and have been delivered to AWCC, the Center has received information and photos to be incorporated onto the signage by the design committee, and the plant labels are currently being worked on and will be ordered soon from the manufacturer.

Committee Chairs Needed

We are in need of committee chairs for the following committees: Publicity, Social Media, Conventions, Historian, Yearbook, Grants, Programs. The chair does not have to be the Lone Ranger—a pair of you could work on these committees together! Please help—there are too many duties for just the board members to handle these items. We might be forced to shut down some of these programs.

Members of the Year

By vote at the October meeting and by email approval, the club has opted to give the honor of Members of the Year to the club Board of Directors for the efforts they have exerted this year in answer to the pandemic and the challenges it has presented. Recognized will be Co-President **Kathy Liska**, Co-President **Paul Marmora**, Vice-President **Barbara Baker**, Treasurer **Cindy Walker**, and Member-At-Large **Annita Magee**. Many thanks for all the diligent work to keep things running and constantly growing.



Wildflower of the Month

Submitted by Paul Marmora



Myosotis alpestris ssp. asiatica

Synonyms: *Myosotis asiatica*, *Myosotis alpestris*, *Myosotis sylvatica* var. *alpestris*

Common name: Alpine forget-me-not, Mountain Forget-me-not, Asian Forget-me-not

Designated the Alaska State flower in 1949, Forget-me-not is found throughout much of Alaska with the exception of the southeastern part. There is speculation that its tenacious nature and perseverance in the face of adversity reminded folks of the early settlers in Alaska. *Myosotis alpestris* is also native to the northwestern United States and provinces of Canada.

Alpine Forget-me-not prefers moist areas in alpine and sub-alpine grassy meadows and wooded slopes. It grows 6-10 inches high, with alternate, lanceolate leaves that diminish in size as they rise on the stems. Forget-me-nots are hairy on both stem and leaf undersides, with a distinction on the alpine variety of ending in small hooks to enable them to snag passing hosts to bring the seed capsules farther afield. This small hook differentiates the alpine species from other, introduced species. Some hikers have noticed mild skin irritation after brushing against these small beauties, attributed to the cystoliths (a compound of silicon dioxide and calcium carbonate) that reside in the epidural cells of the hairs).



Bloom time is
Alaska is late May

in warmer areas through August in higher, cooler elevations. The quarter inch blooms are generally an azure blue but may vary to pinks and whites, even to purple where pink and blue forms have hybridized. The flat-topped flowers are made up of five petals joined at a yellow "eye", fused below into a short tube.

The flowers appear on a cyme (a flat-topped flower cluster where the central bud opens first, and the subsequent flowers appear as terminal buds on short lateral stems). As the cyme uncurls, it is often likened to the unfurling of a scorpion's tail (one species, *M. scorpioides*, is called Scorpion weed).

The striking flowers of this genus are used around the world to commemorate events and people, both from positive and negative occurrences.



Members Corner

Submitted by Sally Byrne-Flores

Our Club Motif the Lady Beetle, commonly called a 'Ladybug' in the United States or a 'Ladybird' in Britain, is neither a 'bug' nor a 'bird'. Both bugs and birds are distinct and recognizable creatures in their respective orders.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle called beetles 'koleopteros' which refers to their hardened front wings; today the order is known as Coleoptera. And the English word beetle means 'little biter'. Coleoptera is the largest order in the animal kingdom with 40% of all insects and 30% of all animal species.

Lady Beetles belong to the family Coccinellidae which are considered predators; most species are eaters of soft bodied insects like aphids (which are bugs), insect eggs and pupae. There are about 5,000 species of them worldwide. Alaska currently has 20-25, species depending on source.

An adult Lady Beetle lives about one year. They over winter under leaf debris, branches, and rocks. In the spring they mate and lay eggs which hatch in about two weeks. A Lady Beetle may eat up to 5,000 aphids in a lifetime.

Lady Beetle symbolism is centered around positivity and happiness. Seeing a Lady Beetle portents a good omen.

In Anchorage, Lady Beetles may be purchased at nearly every garden center or feedstore in the spring. They said that most people in Alaska order their insects online.

A nice welcome to our new ladybug motif and her six-legs.

The UAF Cooperative Extension Integrated Pest Management recommend this list of beneficial insect vendors in North America. [https:// entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef125](https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef125).

