



Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska

May/June 2021 Newsletter

P.O. Box 240563
Anchorage, Alaska
99524

FB: Wildflower Garden Club
akwildflowers@gmail.com
www.wildflowergardenclub.org

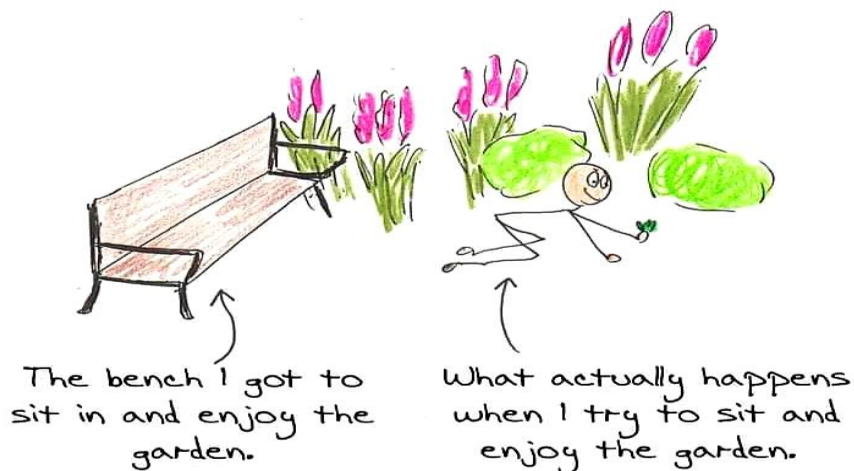
Messages from the Presidents

My goodness what a packed month or so it has been! Within just about three weeks, we had four major events. This on top of the fact that it was planting season, has kept the calendar incredibly full! Mind you, I enjoy it loads more than shoveling snow, and seeing things grow, green up, and bloom brings me great joy and (sort of) compensates for the aching back and knees—sort of. I am proud to be a part of such a great group of folks. This fall, we will be able to meet in person again, so that is one thing that will make the fall and winter super special!

Paul

I always thought it was March that came in like a lion, but it seems to me that May was the month this year. After weeks of below normal and below freezing temperatures, Mother Nature finally shook off her cold and brought us some beautiful weather to allow for plants to be taken out of the greenhouse and let the bees and butterflies do their thing. What a whirlwind it has been for many of us. With so many gardening events going on it can be difficult to choose which to attend and still allow for time to get our hands dirty in our own gardens. Now into June and I am feeling behind the eight-ball as usual but will accept whatever I get done as an accomplishment. I am of mind now to not be a slave to my yard and enjoy it for what it is... except for the Dandelions which I pull every day. Is it just me or does it seem like there are a lot more this year? I look forward to seeing many of you at some of our upcoming summer events that we have planned which start this Thursday, June 17th at the Alaska Botanical Garden Tour with Pat Ryan. This is going to be an opportunity to see some behind the scenes areas of ABG so you will not want to miss out!

Kathy



Joseph Tjehonievich

What's Growing On

What a busy May/June it has been! We had the finish of the tomato and hanging flower basket fundraiser, which were quite successful. The last two flower baskets were sold at the plant sale on June 5th. A great success for the club, thanks to the efforts of Cindy and Kathy.



May 13th saw 8 people volunteer at the Alaska Botanical Garden (ABG) to participate in our service project of maintaining the Verna Pratt Wildflower Trail. The initial clean-up is always the most intense and it all went very well. We talked with Will Criner, the Gardens & Facilities Manager, about



additional plants being donated to fill in the open patches with groupings of wildflowers and he was quite enthusiastic. Please contact Kathy or Paul if you have AK wildflowers you are willing to donate or sell for the Trail update.

May 20th saw a group of around a dozen volunteers from local garden clubs show up at the native plant garden at the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center (AWCC). We cleaned up winter detritus and placed the plant identification signs for many of the plants that were installed last year. There are a few that were not evident, but we are hopeful that they were just delayed by the late spring.



May 22nd brought the delayed Spring Garden Show at the Midtown Mall. 5 club members volunteered to staff the booth with Kathy, where this year we had pre-planted marigolds for the kids, some marigolds for sale, along with Verna's books, a collection of lovely face masks featuring our forget-me-nots and lady bugs, designed and put together by Sally, Ruth, Barbara, and Billye. Tobi also offered for sale her gorgeous glass dish flowers which brightened up our area. The Wildflower Garden Club display was enhanced by a truly inspired banner that doubles as a table cover, appliqued and sewn together by Billye, Sally, Barbara B. and Barbara C.



June 5th was our club plant sale. It was our first time not held at Old Harbor Rd in many years. We were able to hold the sale at the old DMV building on Benson, thanks to the generosity of the building owners. It was centrally located, had a very large parking lot that held not only the plants, but had enormous amounts of parking for shoppers. The trick was having to get the tables set up and the plants displayed before the sale opened at 9am. A truly phenomenal team of volunteers gathered at 7am and blasted through the place, setting and covering tables, erecting tents, placing the thousands of plants, putting up signs, and setting out crafts. We were done with 15 minutes to spare. Within the first two hours, we sold almost half the plants that had been brought! Obviously, the customers were starved for local plant sales-the atmosphere was festival-like. We had the best plant sale returns that we have had in a number of years. Many thanks to the dedicated team who brought it all off!



Special wildflowers that bloomed in May and June

A belated “Happy Birthday” to WGCA members that celebrated birthdays in May!

Deb Blaylock, Janet Hartmann, Kathy Liska, Liz Rockwell, Cindy Walker & Mary Moline

FLOWER OF THE MONTH



By sheer popularity, the lily of the valley is the flower of the month most commonly associated with May birthdays. It was first chosen by the Victorians to represent the month because they appreciated its delicate scent and curving stems and associated it with vitality and peace. People born in May are considered to be humble and virtuous, and the white bell-shaped flowers of this plant send that message loud and clear to anyone viewing the blooms. Since this flower does not emerge from the ground until all the threats of frost and snow are over, it's also considered a sign that happiness is here to stay

instead of remaining just a fleeting glimpse of joy in the distance. Watch out when keeping lily of the valley plants or blooms in the home because they are toxic to both pets and humans.

“Happy Birthday” to WGCA members that celebrate birthdays in June!

Mary Britton and Eli Fleischer

FLOWER OF THE MONTH



The birth flower for June is roses. They are widely popular and used on almost all occasions. Roses are associated with passion; however, each color has a different meaning. **Red** roses symbolize burning and passionate love and are commonly given as gifts for Valentine's Day and anniversaries. **Pink** roses are associated with admiration and are often given as gifts for graduations and birthdays. **White** roses are a fitting way to honor a friend or loved one in recognition of a new beginning or a farewell. The pure white color conveys respect, pays homage to new starts and

expresses hope for the future. **Yellow** roses are considered the perfect way to toast friends, lift spirits and send a general wish for well-being. Because of the long association with the sun and its life-giving warmth, yellow is the age-old color for warm feelings of friendship and optimism.

Summer Events Calendar

June 17 – ABG “Walk and Talk” – **WGCA Members & Family Only** – 10am-12pm

July 15 – Summer Garden Tours – **Open to the Public** – 10am-1pm

July 29 – AWCC Field Trip – **Local Garden Club Members Only** – 11am-1pm

August 25 & 26 Sept 1 & 2 – Alaska State Fair Crop & Flowers **Volunteer Opportunity**

September 6 – Labor Day

Dirt tired: a condition that occurs after spending all day in the garden!

Announcements

Plans are afoot at ABG to bring about the pandemic-delayed dedication of the **Verna Pratt Wildflower Trail**. No details have been made known, but we are assured we will be involved when decisions have been made.

We have a “**Walk and Talk**” tour scheduled at the **Alaska Botanical Garden** with Educational Coordinator Pat Ryan on **June 17th from 10am to noon**. This event is for club members and family only. ABG has graciously offered our tour for the reduced cost of \$8/person. **For WGCA Members and their family only.**

Looking ahead to July, we have **local garden tours** scheduled for **July 15th from 10am-1pm** starting at the **Harvest of Hope Memorial Garden with Master Gardener Don Bladow, located at 1847 W. Northern Lights Boulevard**, and finishing at the **Centennial Rose Garden on the Park Strip with Horticulturist Debbie Hinchey, located at N Street between 9th & 10th Avenues**, followed by a bring-a-bag lunch on the grass. **Public welcome!**

July 29th from 11am-1pm we have a field trip planned to the **AWCC, located at Mile 79 Seward Highway in Portage**, to see the native plant garden as well as tour the facility, The cost for this tour will be discounted to \$10/person. A bring-a-bag lunch will be after this tour as well. **For Local Garden Club Members.**

Club Business

May 2021 Treasurer's Report

Denali Federal Credit Union - OLD ACCT	
Business Savings APYO .10%	1991.85
Business Checking	54.03
Balances 4/30/21	\$2,045.88*
Denali Federal Credit Union - NEW ACCT	
Business Savings APYO .10%	5.00
Business Checking	4,713.88
Balances 4/30/21	\$4,718.88*
*OLD & NEW ACCTS COMBINED	
Total Balances 4/30/21	\$6,764.76
Morgan Stanley Balances 4/30/21	\$57,120.15
Total Assets 4/30/21	\$63,884.91

June 2021 Treasurer's Report

Denali Federal Credit Union	
Business Savings APYO .10%	6996.96*
Business Checking	2531.65*
Balances 5/31/21	\$9,528.61
<i>*Transfer from old savings to savings</i>	<i>\$1991.88</i>
<i>*Transfer from old checking to new checking</i>	<i>\$1034.03</i>
<i>*Transfer from checking to savings</i>	<i>\$5000.00</i>
Morgan Stanley Balances 5/31/21	\$57,435.17
Total Assets 5/31/21	\$66,963.78

Committee Chairs Still 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 only the board members to handle these items. We will be forced to shut down some of these committees until they are filled.**

Wildflower of the Month

Ranunculus eschscholtzii, Mountain Buttercup
Family: Buttercup, Crowfoot / Ranunculaceae

Buttercup is a type of herbaceous plant that belongs to the Ranunculaceae family. There are nearly 2000 species of buttercups that mostly inhabit northern hemisphere. Buttercups are usually found in cold and temperate regions.

Ranunculus eschscholtzii is a species of buttercup known by the common name Mountain buttercup. It is native to much of western North America from Arctic northwestern Canada and Alaska to California east through the Rocky Mountain states. In Alaska it will be found growing in mountain meadows, talus slopes, and subalpine forests along streambanks throughout Southeastern, Southcentral, and the Aleutian chain. It is a perennial herb producing one or more erect stems usually about 5 inches but can be from 2-9 inches tall, growing in small, scattered patches or can grow more densely in wet areas.

The lower deeply incised basal leaves have somewhat rounded blades each divided into a few lobes and borne on long petioles. Any upper leaves are smaller and not borne on petioles. The herbage is hairless and sometimes waxy in texture.

Buttercups have lustrous flowers thanks to special layer of reflective cells that are located beneath the superficial cells of the petals. The flowers usually have 5-8 overlapping oval or rounded shiny yellow petals up to 1/2" long each around a central nectary with many stamens and pistils. The fruit is an achene (dry and small fruits that contain only one seed), borne in a cluster of 17 or more. Buttercups can be propagated via parts of the root and bulb or via seed. Blooms in late May and June.

Interesting info about Buttercups:

Because of the shape of Ranunculus flowers, bees do not pollinate them very well, but the bees do leave an abundance of pollen on the glossy petals. Dew and rain slide off the slick, shiny surface carrying the pollen to the stigmas below to fertilize them.



Buttercups can be easily recognized by their shiny petals. They also possess nectariferous spot, or pool of nectar, on the bottom part of the petals. This structure is used to attract insects and to facilitate pollination. Nectariferous spot is unique feature, characteristic only for the buttercups, it cannot be found in other yellow plants. So if you find a small yellow blossom and you're not sure it's a buttercup, look for its "secret" pool of nectar.

How very interesting the ways of plants are!

Submitted by Kathy Liska



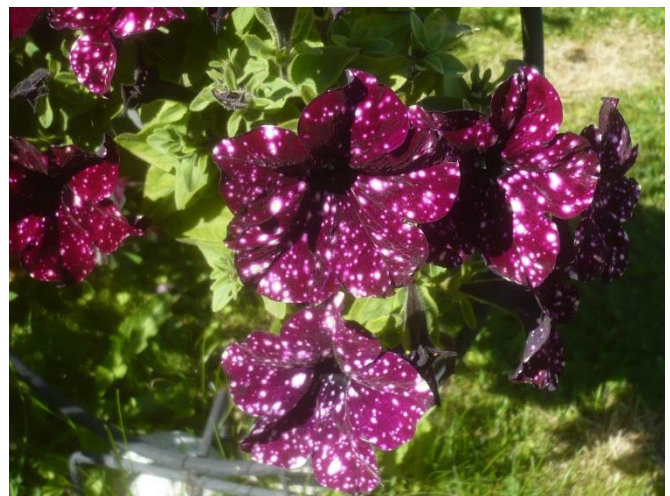
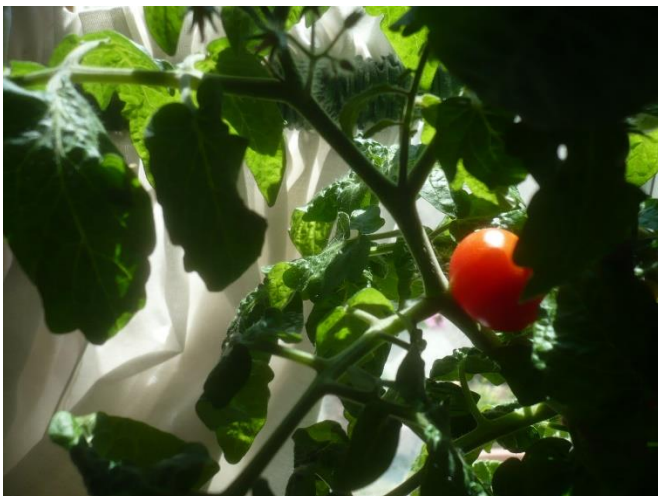
Members Corner / Around the Garden...



Canadian Swallowtail
Butterfly &
Bumblebee filling up
on pollen in the yard
of Kathy Liska



Red Avens, Starry Night Petunia,
and Micro Tomato
the gardens of
Alis Schmitt



More Members Corner / Around the Garden...



From the gardens of Cindy Walker these blooming beauties!
Geum borisii, Fritillaria meleagris,
Fritillaria michallovskyi, Alliums & Geum triflorum 'Prairie Smoke'



Do you have something else you would like to share in the Newsletter such as recipes, garden ideas or info? This is also the perfect time to begin sharing your summer gardens, Alaska wildlife & adventure pictures for our November meeting slide show! Please submit your photos to Kathy at akliska@aol.com

2021 Alaska State Fair "Seeing is Believing" Volunteer Opportunity



Volunteers needed to be part of the largest garden exhibit in Alaska.

Entry & Judging days at the Alaska State Fair's Crops & Flowers Departments are a fun atmosphere to meet new people & catch up with old friends. It is a great opportunity to learn something new and to share your own gardening experiences with others.

~ **Entry Clerks** ~

Wednesdays, August 25 & September 1

Three shifts available 12-5 PM, 3-8 PM and 5-9 PM

Help Exhibitors fill out entry forms correctly, explain the use of the Exhibitor Guide, assist with verbal direction on preparation of submissions for judging, and placement of entries in the display area.

~ **Judges Clerks** ~

Thursdays, August 26 & September 2 from 8 AM-Noon

Record winning results, set up and place ribbons for the final display.

~ **Extra Hands Needed** ~

Tuesdays, August 31 from 10AM-2PM & September 7 from 9 AM-1PM

Looking for a handful or two of volunteers to help with 1st Entry take down, 2nd Entry set up, ribbon sorting, and final shut down of department for the season.

No experience necessary. On the job training will be provided.

For more information contact Kathy Liska – Horticulture Supervisor
(907) 337-2196 hm / (907) 301-0317 cell or email akliska@aol.com

Volunteers make it happen!