



Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska Newsletter ~ February 2022

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Messages from the Presidents

It's getting lighter!! It's getting lighter!! And just in time, too. February is often the month that Alaskans travel because we are bloody sick of the cold and dark. Finally, we feel the pull of spring just around the corner, planting up our seeds (especially the marigolds for the Children's Marigold Giveaway at the Midtown Mall Spring Garden Show), and searching for the melting icicles, and occasional bare patch of soil on our gardens. A little more patience is needed, of course, but the itch is starting! If only it would stop snowing... But we need to remember the spring snowfalls are called "Poor man's fertilizer" and they are doing what they are intended to do. SIGH. Just a little more time... That is the thing that is called hope, I believe. I once heard hope described as "looking forward eagerly with craning neck." I think that pretty wells sums it up while waiting for spring to pop. **Paul**

Remember, the Board of Directors is here for you. If you have any questions, comments, or ideas for future programs and workshops, we would really like to hear from you. Please feel free to contact any of us! **Kathy**



What's Growing Now

What a talented and creative group of people we have in our club! The February meeting featured **Upcycling**, the taking of old, previously-used, or no longer needed items and making them better—repurposing them for fun, for art, or use as something else. Members shared their successes, or ideas they had seen or heard about. Great ideas and the resourcefulness of folks was quite heart-warming. This was a super fun meeting,

Special wildflowers that bloomed this month

Barbara Baker, Scott Cameron, Billye Goff, Annita Magee, and Kat Karabelnikoff



The Violet is the primary birth flower for those born in February. In ancient Greece, the violet represents love and fertility. This flower served as a symbol of Aphrodite and was used as an ingredient for love potions. In herbal medicine, it is believed that Violets contain healing powers and is used to treat respiratory illnesses, skin disorders, and insomnia.

Violet is the perfect flower for February because it symbolizes faithfulness, purity, and goodness. Blue Violets symbolize faithfulness, and receiving it means that the giver offers you his or her loyalty. White violets represent purity and innocence. And yellow violets are a

symbol of goodness. It is believed that dreaming of a violet flower is a sign of good fortune. Having violet flowers around can increase focus and mindfulness. There is more than what meets the eye when it comes to this eye-catching flower.

The iris is another birth flower for February. Iris is derived from a Greek word that means 'rainbow.' Irises are popular garden plants not only for their beauty but also because of their rugged, reliable, and easy to grow characteristics. This beauty comes in a wide variety and a plethora of colors—covering almost every color of the rainbow and that's how the flower got its name. The iris is a symbol of nobility and is commonly depicted in legends and myths. It symbolizes faith, hope, wisdom, and courage.



Club Business

As covid keeps spreading again, we are going to continue with our Zoom meetings for the time being. The newest one “Stealth Omicron” is super-contagious, and wisdom dictates that we maintain our cautious progress. Do you think the taxonomists are involved in naming these variants? They come up with as many names for the virus as they do for all the plants they are updating constantly!

February 2022 Treasurer’s Report

Denali Federal Credit Union	
Business Savings APYO .10%	\$4,999.54
Business Checking	\$3,129.88
CD - 3 month	\$2,500.61
CD - 6 month	\$2,501.22
CD - 12 month	\$5,004.92
Balance 1/31/22	\$18,136.17
Morgan Stanley Balance 1/31/22	\$48,610.09
Total Assets 1/31/22	\$66,746.26



Upcoming Meetings & Workshops



March 10th – “A Virtual Tour at Jensen-Olson Arboretum – with Ginger Hudson

Alaska being as large as state as it is, many of us have not visited our capitol city of Juneau. One of the jewels of the city is the Jensen-Olson Arboretum—the decades old gardens are celebrating their 15th anniversary as an arboretum. Curator Ginger Hudson will lead us through a virtual tour of the grounds. As Ginger is starting her 2nd year as curator, she is thrilled to highlight for us the prized treasures she oversees. The garden is renowned for its primula collection. Please join us for what promises to be a spectacular visit to the gardens, trees, and grounds.

Announcements

We are looking for input for the Member's Corner in our newsletter: share pictures, tips, recipes, and successes—or learning opportunities (problems you learned from and overcame) if they are beneficial to fellow club members. Please send them to the Club Email or to Kathy Liska for inclusion in the newsletter.

On **April 16th**, the Midtown Mall Garden Fair is planned. One of our most popular **Service Projects**, we have our Marigold Giveaway to either hand out or assist children in planting their very own marigold. With this in mind, in order to have blooming plants for early April, **your marigold seeds should be planted by now**. Last year, over 100 children walked away with a prized plant!

Plant Chat

10 Tips for Growing Amaryllis Indoors from 'Garden Lovers Club'

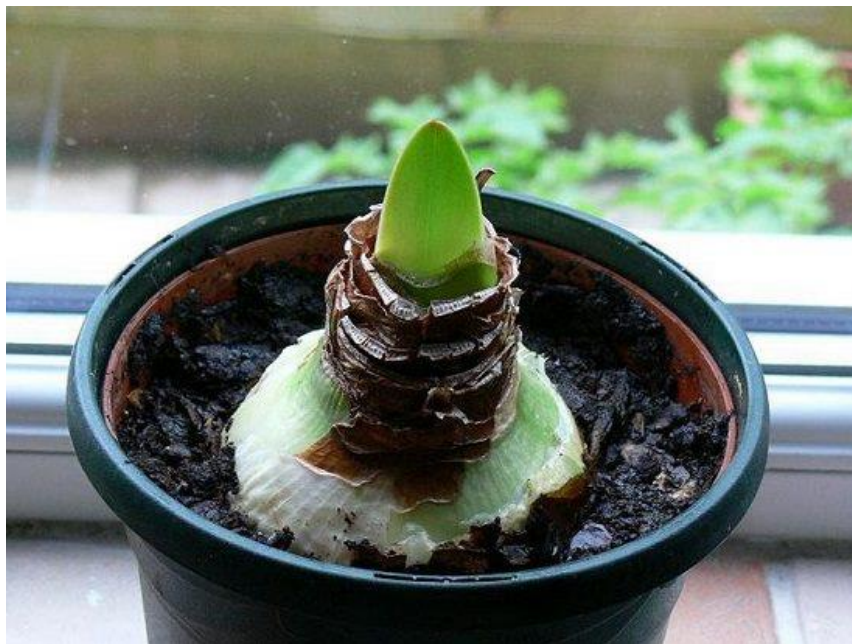
The Amaryllis flower is often associated with Holland and that area of the world, but it turns out that in 1828, a young doctor was searching for medicinal plants in Chile when he came across some very vibrant Amaryllis plants that were simply breathtaking.

Today, these plants are known for their bright colorful blooms that add a quiet comfort to family gatherings and homes around the holidays. The most common coloration is white with bright red crimson veins, though purple and pink variations can also be seen in nature.

Getting an Amaryllis to grow and bloom properly indoors can be a difficult task, but I have created this guide to give you the tips that you will need to successfully grow these plants in your home.

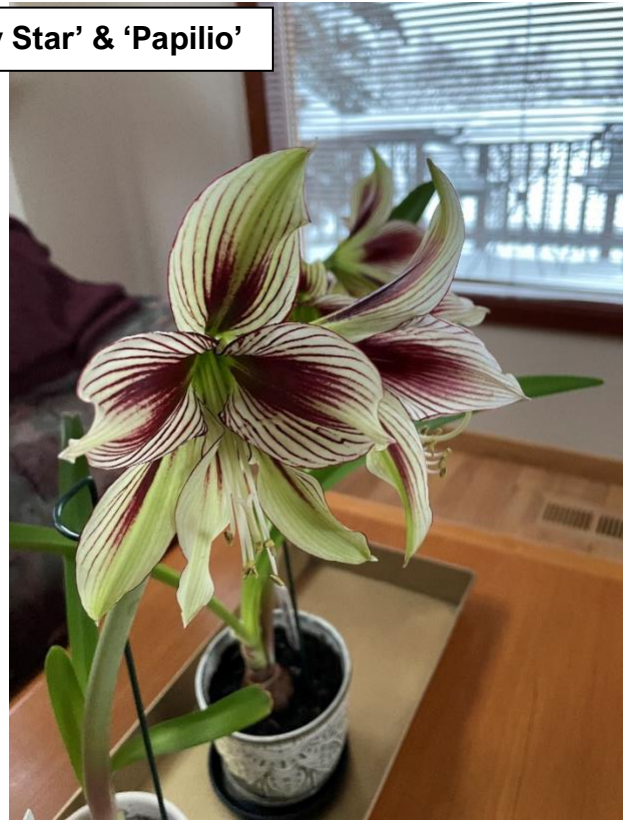
- 1.** When you plant Amaryllis, do not use an excessively large pot because the plant likes to be confined a bit. There should not be more than an inch or two of excess space between the side of the pot and the bulb. This small space will encourage a better growth cycle.
- 2.** Make sure that at least 1/3 of the bulb is sticking out of the surface of the soil. If the bulb is planted too deeply in the soil, it will stunt its growth.
- 3.** The soil in the pot should always remain moist, not sopping wet, simply moist. In addition, never pour water directly onto the bulb of the plant when you are watering it because that can cause the bulb to rot.
- 4.** Warm sunlight will promote blooms, so when it is blooming season, a south-facing window will do wonders for your plant. Once the blooms start to form, you can sustain them a bit longer by taking the plant out of direct sunlight for a period of time.
- 5.** The stalk of the Amaryllis plant tends to lean towards the sunlight as it blooms, so to make sure that it does not lean too much in one direction, you will need to turn the plant occasionally. If at any point the stalk seems a bit too unstable, try tying it to a wooden stake to give it more stability.

- 6.** Once the blooming period comes to an end, you will need to cut the stalks just above the bulb and place it in a cool dark place until you see new signs of life springing from the stem of the plant. Roots will begin to appear after two to three weeks in the dark, cool atmosphere. During this period of time, make sure that you do not water the plant more than once a week because it can damage the bulb.
- 7.** Once roots form, you can place the plant in a bright warm room. Leave it here for a period of six to eight weeks and new blooms will begin to appear. These blooms will last for at least four to six weeks.
- 8.** Amaryllis plants like rich soil, but they also like soil that drains well so creating a mix is the best option for these plants to thrive. I like a combination of manure, sand, and leaf mold, but since this is an indoor plant, some may not like the smell that this mixture brings into your living space, so a compost and grit combination is a perfect mixture as well.
- 9.** The Amaryllis plant likes warmer temperatures, so unless it is in its dormant stage before it blooms, the plant should be kept in a room with partial sun. It likes temperatures that are about 68 degrees Fahrenheit or 20 degrees Celsius, so the average room temperature in most homes should be sufficient. In addition, make sure that the plant is not positioned next to a drafty window or door because the sudden cold drafts could damage the plant.
- 10.** The larger the bulb is, the more offshoots it will produce. Do not replant the large bulbs unless they absolutely need a bigger pot because disturbing the roots of the plant is typically what causes the plant to die. An Amaryllis that lives for two years will produce baby bulblets that you can place in a pot.



Member's Corner – Amaryllis & more!!!

Cindy Walker – 'Ruby Star' & 'Papilio'



Kathy Liska – 'Glee'





**Alis Schmitt –
Amaryllis Collection**



Gail Heineman - Hyacinth



**Gina Docherty –
Dendrobium ‘Bruce Gordon’**

