



Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska

Newsletter ~ July/August 2023

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Message from the Presidents

The sun is shining and temps have been delightful these past few days, a much-welcomed change. We're glad the record-breaking cold streak is over! Our weather is a hot topic of discussion – from our non-stop rain last fall, our snowy winter, cold spring with plants that just seemed to stand still and not grow, more rain and finally some sun! It's amazing how the plants grew once the sun appeared.

Local garden club tours are a highlight for us all. We find it inspiring to visit other gardens and see fellow gardeners' creativity at work. The Wildflower Club's tour in July toured gardens in Eagle River with the highlight being the Lighthouse Gardens by Susan Brusehaber and the delightful picnic at Kellie's house afterwards. If you didn't make it this year, you'll definitely want to make sure you put it on your calendar for 2024.

August means change of seasons and the imminent start of the Alaska State Fair! We're excited to see the bounty of veggies and flowers. The energy level and excitement of gardeners is contagious if you visit the displays. Will they be different this year due to our crazy weather? Will we break any records? We're about to find out! September will find us all back together for meetings.

Until then, let's hope to have a long and warm fall ahead of us. After all, the fireweed is only just starting to bloom.

Christie & Kellie

A Welcome to our Newest Members!

Debbie Hinchey & Thais Thomas



Announcements

Alaska State Fair – “Beyond the Mountains” – August 18 to September 4

(Closed Tuesdays & Wednesdays)

Crops and Flowers Entries – Wednesdays, August 23 & August 30 – Noon to 9pm

Exhibitor Guide links

[Crops - Alaska State Fair](#)

[Flower - Alaska State Fair](#)

What's Growing Now

July 20 was the date of the WGCA Garden tours. Members toured gardens in Eagle River this year, visiting a **Forgotten Garden** at the entrance to Eagle River, as well as the nearby **Blue Star Marker**, honoring those in the military.



The next stop was at the incredible **Lighthouse Garden**, which Susan Brushaber and her family have been developing for the past 50 years. Garden after garden, ponds, and Eagle River itself are all featured in the landscaping, with magnificent artifacts and items of whimsy scattered throughout the scenery.





We were able to take a tour of the gardens at the **Eagle River Christian School**, recipient of the Wildflower grant this year, to see how they have progressed and to hear what their future plans are for continual development. It is exciting to see children passionate about their gardening.



The day ended at the home of Stan and Co-President Kellie Staples with a potluck lunch where Stan showed off his grilling skills, and a time of fellowship. It was a lovely afternoon.



Visit the Wildflower Facebook page, Instagram page, or our website to view all photos from the Garden Tour and Flower Bouquet Workshop!

On July 26, Dennis and Annie Ronsse once again generously opened their gardens to club members and others to tour, and pick flowers and put together two arrangements to take home. Paul Marmora gave a short demo, and the groups were allowed to select and either prune or request flowers for their designs. Paul was available to give tidbits of advice and everyone left very satisfied with the lovely arrangements they made, having perhaps learned a bit in the process too. Many thanks to Annie for all the hard work she and her assistant Rudy provided to set the sessions up.



Annie Ronsse, her friend,
& Paul Marmora



Alice Sears



Bruce Welkovich &
Alison McCarrey



Mary Britton



Eli Fleischer

Special Wildflowers that bloomed this month and last

Paul Chan, Julie Ginder, Tobi Harvey, Robin Hill, Joey Jigliotti, Shirley Luedke, Beverly Luedke-Chan, and Alis Schmitt (JULY)



Larkspur & Water Lilies are the birth flowers of July. Larkspur is a symbol of positivity, loving bonds, sincerity, and dedication. It is also used to describe youth and lightheartedness. A lovely presence in the garden or floral design, the plant (as well as its cousins Delphinium and Monkshood) is quite poisonous if ingested. In history, the flowers were used to protect from and ward off evil, and in ancient Greece it was used to treat open wounds. Native Americans used the flowers for dyes and as an insect repellent.

Water Lilies represent innocence and purity. Most water lilies open by day and close in the evening, while there are a few that are night blooming. The different colors have different meanings: white-purity, innocence, and chastity; pink – joy and friendship; red – passion and romance; blue – calm and wisdom; yellow – energy and new beginnings.



Patricia Holloway, David MacLeod, Shirley Ryan, and Thais Thomas (AUGUST)



Gladiola and Poppy are the birth flowers of August. Bright and colorful. Gladiolus make excellent cut flowers, and they bring joy to behold as the summer winds its way towards autumn. They are both tied to remembrance. Named Gladius for the Latin word for sword due to the sword-like appearance of its leaves, the gladiolus is symbolic of strength, victory, healing, honor, and love. It is also associated with moral character and intelligence. The flowers are said to symbolize infatuation, love at first sight and faithfulness. Each color is said to represent different aspects of love, friendship, and beauty.

The poppy has long been used for remembrance, especially of loved ones or those who have fallen in battle. Due to the soporific nature of some poppies, they have also been associated with sleep, peace, death, and resurrection. The ancient Greeks associated poppies with the gods of sleep (Hypnos), death (Thanatos), and dreams (Morpheus). In European cemeteries after World War I, the disturbed ground awoke long-dormant seeds, and inspired poet John McCrae to write his poem, "In Flanders' Field." In 1920, the poppy became the official flower of the American Legion.



Club Business

HELP NEEDED! - In search of someone with an eye for detail and Excel experience to take over the **Membership Chair** position in 2024. Contact Kathy Liska at 907-301-0317 or akliska@aol.com for more information.

July Treasurer Reports

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Nuvison Credit Union | |
| Business Savings | \$7,508.00 |
| Business Checking | \$6,670.32 |
| CD - 12 month | \$5,055.36 |
| Balance 7/31/23 | \$19,233.68 |
| | |
| Morgan Stanley Balance 7/31/23 | \$46,270.16 |
| | |
| Total Assets 7/31/23 | \$65,503.84 |

Upcoming Meetings, Projects, & Workshops

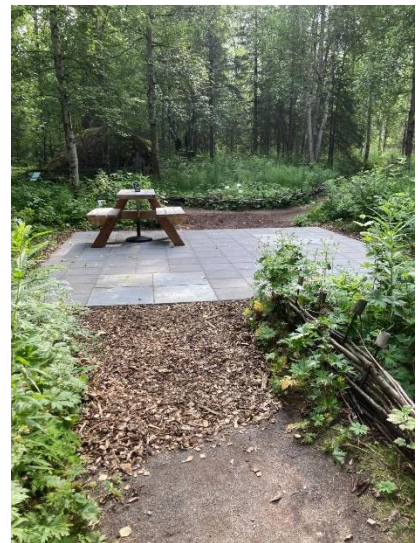
September 14 at 10am in person at Central Lutheran Church and online with Zoom.

Will Criner - "Dividing & Propagating Perennials"

Alaska Botanical Garden Horticulturist & Facilities Manager, he take us through the skills, tools, and science needed and best suited for perennial plant division during the fall season.

Message from Rachael Shedd, Volunteer Coordinator at ABG – Service Project

In case you weren't aware, the pavers have (finally!) been installed on the Wildflower Trail and they're looking great! The ABG crew have also made some nice progress on increasing signage on the trail, as well as building a dedicated garden bed around Verna's sign. Will Criner & Mike Monterusso were invited to rescue some plants from Verna's old garden to add to the garden bed. If you haven't been out in a while, come by to check out the progress and join us in trail maintenance for the remainder of the season. WGCA members and other volunteers meet on **Wednesdays from 10am-Noon**. For the next few weeks, the focus will be on sprucing up the wattle fence, so we'd love some extra hands!



Alaska Botanical Garden Volunteer Signup Genius Link

[General Volunteer Notifications: 2023 Horticulture Volunteer Opportunities \(signupgenius.com\)](https://www.signupgenius.com)

Member's Corner

Shared by Sally Byrne-Flores with fellow members at the Summer Garden Tours 2023

From 'Cooking Alaskan' by Alaskans - 1983 edition

Submitted by Gordon R Nelson, Palmer AK, Smokehouse – Bear Mountain Meats

Beaver Creek Rhubarb Upside-Down Cake

5 cups rhubarb, cut into half-inch pieces

1 cup sugar

2 packages (3oz each) strawberry flavored gelatin

2 cups miniature marshmallows or large ones,
quartered

1 package (13 oz) yellow or white cake mix prepared
according to instruction on box



- Grease a 9 x 13 x 2 inch (22 x 32 x 5 cm) baking pan.
- Spread the rhubarb over the bottom of the pan and sprinkle sugar over it.
- Now Sprinkle the strawberry gelatin, right from the package, over the sugar and rhubarb. Then scatter the marshmallows over that.
- Prepare the cake mix according to the instructions on the box and pour it over the layers in the pan.
- Bake at 350° F (175° c) for 55 minutes.
- Cool and serve with whipped cream.

Wildflower Cookbook?

Did you always enjoy those small cookbooks compiled by groups or churches? They always had some pretty good recipes in them. We think it would be really fun to put one together from the Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska. We will need about 50 or more recipes for it to be worth people's while to get it. It sounds like a super fun idea to work on together. We are looking for appetizers, soups, salads, main courses, fish, desserts, and gluten free, vegetarian, and vegan—something for everyone! Please think about it and gather two or three recipes you would like to share and send them to Kathy Liska (akliska@aol.com) or Paul Marmora (pmarmora@aol.com) to start the collection building.

