



Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska

Newsletter ~ March 2023

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Messages from the Presidents

Getting through March is a lot like working on a Wednesday. Halfway to our weekend/summer planting and it can't come fast enough! Longer days and sunny skies have a way of awakening us. Our March plans include:

- M** = Making plans for the upcoming season
- A** = Anxiously waiting for the snow to melt
- R** = Reading ALL the garden blogs
- C** = Counting seeds, pots, and places to put it all
- H** = Hoping spring comes early!

Did you happen to catch the auroral display last week? They danced across the starry night leaving those of us watching astounded and awe-struck in disbelief! It was a show like none other! Best of all it started at 8:45 and continued through the early morning as we watched them on our way to work! Definitely one we'll remember for many years! Hopefully you were able to catch it as well.

Kellie & Christie

We ♥ March
'cause
Spring is "almost" in the air!



What's Growing Now

Julie Riley, Anchorage's beloved CES Horticulture Agent for many years, graced us with a presentation about the many insects surrounding us. "**Riley's Believe It or Not; Alaskan Insects**" focused on interesting facts and foibles of "bugs" around us in Alaska. Julie developed this all-encompassing interest just a bit before her retirement, and the subject has proven deeper and more fascinating the more she gets into it. As always, Julie is informative and entertaining, and it was a joy to hear her presentation. Below is a list of publications which Julie recommends for learning more about the bugs in our own backyards and beyond!



Alaska BUG BOOKS

Collet, D. 2006. **Insects of South-Central Alaska**. Kenai Watershed Forum.

Slowik, Jozef and Alexandria Wenninger. 2023 revised edition. **Beneficial Arthropods of Alaska: Natural Enemies**. Identification and habits of dozens of insects and spiders UAF Cooperative Extension Service.

https://cespubs.uaf.edu/publications/?cat=* &pt=* &s=Beneficial%20Insects%20and%20Spiders%20of...

Haberski, A., Woller, D.A., and Sikes, D.S. 2021. **Orthoptera of Alaska: A photographic key, new records, and synonymy of *Melanoplus gordonae***. Canadian Journal of Arthropod Identification 44:1-51. <https://doi.org/10.3752/cjai.2021.44>

Hudson, J., Armstrong, R.H. 2010. **Dragonflies of Alaska**, Second Edition. 56 pages, Nature Alaska. *Also available online as a free PDF!*
<https://www.naturebob.com/information-about-nature-alaska/>

Hudson, J., Kathy Hocker & Robert Armstrong. 2012. **Aquatic Insects in Alaska**. 144 pages, Nature Alaska. *Free PDF* at <https://www.naturebob.com/books-available-bob-armstrong>

Kenelm W. Philip (Posthumous) and Clifford D. Ferris. 2015. **Butterflies of Alaska, A Field Guide**. *Free PDF from Alaska Entomological Society* at <http://www.akentsoc.org/documents/field-guide-to-alaska-butterflies>

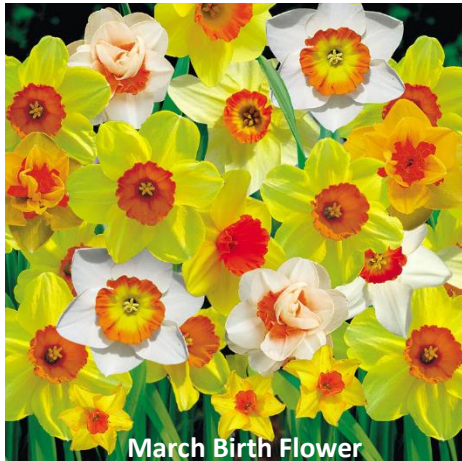
Butterflies and Moths: Ken Philip's fantastic collection of Butterflies and Moths in Alaska, <https://kenphilipcollection.alaska.edu/category/collection/>

Rykken, J. 2022. **Bumble Bees of Alaska: A Field Guide to Identification & Natural History**. *Free PDF* from the National Park Service at <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/alaska-bees.htm>

Williams, Paul, Robbin Thorp, Leif Richardson & Sheila Colla. 2014. **Bumble Bees of North America**. Also available as an eBook, 208 pages. Princeton University Press.

Droege, S. 2015. The Very Handy Manual: **How to Catch and Identify Bees and Manage a Collection**. *Free PDF:* <https://www.usgs.gov/media/files/how-catch-and-identify-bees-and-manage-a-collection>

Special Wildflowers that bloomed this month



Ruth Bauman, Ken Blaylock, Gail Heineman, Maurine Loopstra (100), and Susan Miller

Daffodils and Cherry Blossoms are the official March birth flowers. The flowers themselves are beautiful and so are their special meanings!

The daffodil symbolizes new beginnings, rebirth, and the arrival of spring. Additionally, it represents love, forgiveness, memory, and inspiration.

As a member of the Narcissus family, the daffodil is attached to the Greek myth of Narcissus, who fell in love with his own reflection in a pond. Who could help

being in love with this little bright sun that brings hope and new life with spring? The national flower of Wales, the daffodil has also been adopted by the American Cancer Society as a symbol of hope for a cure.

Cherry blossoms represent beauty and new beginnings. In Victorian England, cherry blossoms served to remind people to live life to the fullest, cherishing each precious day, as life is fleeting and should be enjoyed to the best of one's ability.



An Extra Special Birthday!



It's not an ordinary feat for someone to turn 100 years old! With a heart made of gold and a century's worth of wisdom and experiences, this only proves that you are, indeed, an extraordinary woman, worthy of all the praise that is given to you. Maurine's strategy for a long, healthy life: "Keep moving and surround yourself with wonderful people. Keep active and keep active minds around you!"

Happy Birthday Maurine!



Club Business

2023 WGCA Grants have been awarded to the following groups. Well deserved!

Eagle River Christian School - To develop/amend their soil and to get more seeds and plants for their garden. They are educating the children and families, developing a sense of community, and enlisting much volunteer involvement. **\$650**

Girl Scouts of Alaska - To rehabilitate their ADA path from the lodge to the lake at Camp Singing Hills in Chugiak. The girls will research what hardy native and endemic plants they should use for the border and for beauty. **\$500**

February 2023 Treasurer Reports

NuVision Credit Union

Business Savings	\$7,504.84
Business Checking	\$3,479.01
CD - 12 month	\$5,035.36

Balance 2/28/23 **\$16,019.21**

Morgan Stanley Balance 2/28/23 **\$42,835.32**

Total Assets 2/28/23 **\$58,854.53**



A note of thanks from Becky Myrvold, Head Gardener of the Alaska State Fair, for the donation from WGCA for hanging baskets.



March 1, 23
Dear Wildflower Garden Club of AK,
Thank you my fellow gardeners,
lovers of beauty and total plant
geeks! I 100% appreciate and
thank you for donating funds so
we may continue to plant hanging
baskets at the Fair. My heart
rejoices that you value these
colorful beings brightening the
grounds.
In gratitude
Becky & her green babies

Announcements

Anchorage Master Gardeners Association has announced their Spring 2023 Conference on the Easter weekend of Friday and Saturday, April 7 & 8. Registration information is available at: <https://www.alaskamastergardeners.org/conference.html>

Upcoming Meetings, Projects, & Workshops

Thursday, March 16th and Saturday, March 18th

Tulip Bulb Forcing Workshops

Workshops will be held at 11am at the **Alaska Wholesale Flower Market at 7437 Old Seward Highway**. Click the Signup Genius below, <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0E4CAAAD2BA6FD0-tulip> to register for this fun get together!

As of this writing there are almost half the spots open on the 18th. Cost is \$10/person. A tall vase will be used 5X8. They are available at \$11 each, if needed.



Thursday, April 13th at 10:00am

'Growing Arctic Garlic' Presented by Deb Blaylock



Deb has been growing Alaska-hardy garlic for many years and knows the best varieties and proper care. She will share the secrets of her successes and hopefully, we can all start our own crops! The meeting will be held in person at the Central Lutheran Church and on Zoom for those who are unable to join in the group setting. We will send out the Zoom link a few days before the meeting.

Saturday, April 22nd 9am-5pm

Children's Marigold Giveaway at the Midtown Mall Garden Fair

Volunteers are needed to help plant with the kids, answer questions about the WGCA, and help with member sales. A Signup Genius request will be emailed soon. Be sure to wear your Wildflower name badge and apron.



NO MATTER HOW LONG THE WINTER,
SPRING IS SURE TO FOLLOW!

Member's Corner

Cindy Walker has attended the Northwest Flower and Garden Show in Seattle seven times over the years. Like many Alaskans it gives her a first view into the eagerly awaited gardening season. The show is the second largest Flower and Garden show in the US, behind Philadelphia's. The show's presenters and vendors are continually astonished at how many Alaskans make the trip. Early-bird tickets are available for discounted prices and slightly discounted hotels can be arranged through the show's website.

Cindy attends for two days now, although the show lasts for five days. She likes to look at the schedule ahead of time, decide which presentations she would like to attend, and then peruse the vendors in between. This year, she made sure to attend both presentations by our friend Ginger Hudson, presently curator of the Jensen-Olsen arboretum in Juneau. Cindy is especially fond of the garden art vendors, and goes for the first two days of the show to have the opportunity to snag the best artwork. More and more, plant vendors are selling specimens that are hardy even in our climate (not all) and she was especially pleased to see a very large houseplant seller there this year.

There are lavish garden displays and judged specimen gardens to dazzle the eyes and to give new ideas, and the garden books section is mind-boggling in its completeness. Attendees can avail themselves of jewelry, household goods, artworks, and trade show items at the many vendors. Cindy suggests bringing large sealable bags and rubber bands to pack purchased plants and small items in. Bring an oversized suitcase to be able to pack treasures in for the trip home. FedEx has a booth in the building to assist in shipping home larger items. An event well worth attending!



10' Succulent Heart & Art Glass - Photos by Cindy Walker



Garden Display – Photo by Debbie Ryan



A Magnificent Aurora Borealis Show ~ February 26 & 27, 2023
Photos by Christie Holshouser



Do you have something you would like to contribute to the monthly Newsletter?

The purpose of the **Member's Corner** section is to inspire and encourage each other. Photos, gardening hacks, recipes, articles on a plant that you grow or want to know more about, something you think would be of interest to us, are all welcome.

The deadline for submitting items for our newsletter is the 1st of each month.

Send to Kathy Liska at akliska@aol.com or Paul Marmora at pmarmora@aol.com

HAPPY St. Patrick's *DAY*



**May you have all the happiness and luck that life can hold,
and at the end of your rainbows may you find a pot of gold!**

