



Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska

Newsletter ~ February 2025

P.O. Box 240563
Anchorage, AK
99524

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

Message from the Presidents

Welcome to February! Many of us choose this month to fly south to find warmer temps and make spring appear faster upon our return. While spring is officially forty days away, Alaska's spring adds roughly 60+ days to that number.

It's when our friends and family who live outside begin to tease us with how wonderful their weather is, and which trees or flowers are blooming. Many of those same folks experienced an unusual snowstorm recently where surf boards were turned into sleds for the children and adults who were out enjoying the snow – many for the first time.

Meanwhile, Alaska saw spring temperatures and the wildest wind storms we've ever seen. Folks reported bulbs coming up and new grass popping up against buildings. Someone even saw a dandelion start to bloom! Luckily, snow fell just before the frigid temperatures returned. That got us outside to shovel extra snow onto our perennial beds. It's anyone's guess how the perennials handled this winter... but we're hoping for the best.

It's time to finalize our seed orders and start planting! A reminder that if you're planting marigolds for our April community project at the Midtown Mall to please let us know you're sowing and growing by emailing akwildflowers@gmail.com. It's a joyous day when we can play in the dirt!

Christie & Kellie



Happy Valentine's Day!

What's Growing Now

Our February monthly meeting presentation was on “**Challenges and Rewards of Alaska Container Gardening**” by **John Horstkoetter**. John has been experimenting and perfecting the Container Gardening game in our northern Oasis. John is responsible for making and maintaining the Hope Center’s Downtown Soup Kitchen Rooftop Garden. They serve over 600 meals daily there. He shared quite a few tips for success in types of containers, soil, and plants.

John prefers to purchase and use individual essential elements for precise NPK needs. Instead of general fertilizers such as 20-20-20, he recommends purchasing Blood Meal 12-0-0 (N=Nitrogen) for promoting leaf growth, fruit quality, and reducing diseases; Bone Meal 3-15-0 (P=Phosphorus) which encourages flowering, fruiting, and ripening; Langbeinite 0-0-22 (K=Potassium) that enhances overall growth and regulates root and top growth. Get ready to fill those deck rails with some food and flowers this year!



Special wildflowers that bloomed this month

Barbara Baker, Billye Goff, Sharon Hennem, Kat Karabelnikoff, Annita Magee, and Judy Pendleton

February birth month flowers are **violets & primroses**. Traditionally, the coldest and darkest month of the Alaskan year, February’s birth flowers are among the brightest, bringing joy, hope, and beauty to our hearts. Both flowers are early bloomers in springtime and are welcomed as signs of winter’s end.



The violet, or viola, symbolizes loyalty, modesty, remembrance, and everlasting love. Different colors have different symbolisms, with yellow standing for joy and optimism—surely needed in the middle of winter. Used for hundreds of years for medicinal purposes and flavoring food, as well as for beauty, violets have a special place in our hearts. There are eight species of violas native to Alaska.

The Primrose, or primula, is symbolic of love, innocence, youth, hope and new beginnings. Often, the primroses are the very first flowers to bloom in cooler climates. Often associated with the fairy realm, primulas were thought to ward off evil spirits and to bring good luck. Although toxic to dogs, cats and horses, primroses have long been used for both medicine and food for humans, With over 450 species available in a myriad of colors and shapes, primroses are beloved of gardeners worldwide.



Happy Birthday to you!

Club Business

Grants - The deadline for Grant consideration has passed with no applications received. We have had numerous applicants in the last few years, so this came as a bit of a surprise. Please be sure to talk up the WGCA Grant Program to any potentially interested parties for 2026!

January 2025 Treasurer Reports

Nuvison Federal Credit Union

Business Savings	\$7,588.37
Business Checking	\$5,037.94
CD - 12 month (matures 7/30/25) 3.34%	\$5,315.24
Balance 1/31/25	\$17,941.55

Morgan Stanley Balance 1/31/25 **\$53,628.94**

Total Assets 1/31/25 **\$71,570.49**



Upcoming Meetings, Projects, & Workshops

February 15 – Time to plant Marigold seeds for the Children’s Marigold Giveaway at the Midtown Mall Spring Garden Show taking place on April 19. PLEASE let us know if you are sowing & growing by sending an email to akwildflowers@gmail.com so we know how many plants are coming. The seeds need to be planted now to be in bloom in time for the Marigold Giveaway on April 19. You can find some EZPZ tips on page 14 in your 2025 Yearbook. This is an important service event for our club, as it introduces youngsters to the excitement of growing their own plants—hopefully leading to developing a new gardener!



**"IN EVERY
GARDENER
THERE IS A
CHILD WHO
BELIEVES IN
THE SEED
FAIRY."**

~robert brault

March 13 – “Crafting Round Tables” Presenters: WGCA members 10-11:30am at Central Lutheran Church. Kathy Liska will demonstrate making Teacup Bird Feeders and making Pressed Flower Cards, learned from Verna Pratt many years ago. Participants are asked to bring their own cup & saucer for this project. If you have any fabulous ideas for future hands-on workshops, please share them with us at akwildflowers@gmail.com



April 10 – “Anchorage Gardens from Concept to Reality” Presenter: Clarie Kaufman 10-11:30am at Central Lutheran Church. Claire is a favorite speaker, as she enjoys gardening so much, and has a humble and humorous approach to speaking about it. Claire will take us from design to execution in the development of various gardens around Anchorage.

April 19 – Children’s Marigold Giveaway. Volunteers are needed throughout the day to make this fun event a success for all. 9am to 4pm at the Midtown Mall Spring Garden Show. Come help brighten children’s days by assisting them in planting their very own marigold. This garden show is always full of excited people getting ready to start getting their hands into the soil for another season. We will offer some plants and limited craft items for sale as well as assisting children in planting their very own marigold, so a crew of helpers is crucial for success. If you have items you would like to offer for sale, please let us know at akwildflowers@gmail.com to reserve some of the limited table space. A Signup Genius will be emailed closer to this event for members to volunteer for shifts.



Announcements

This is a very important announcement having to do with our annual plant sale!

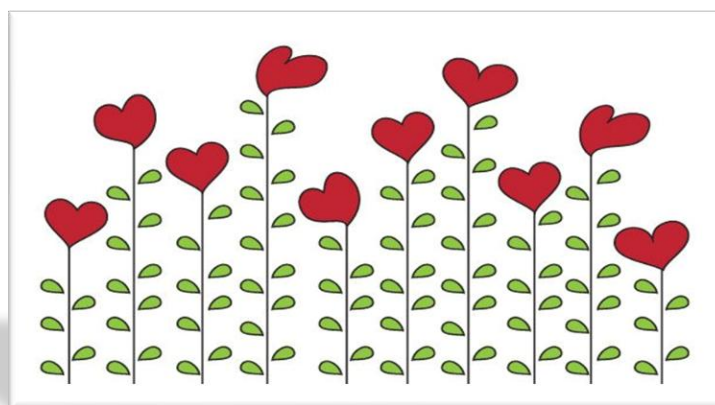
We initially thought to conduct our plant sale on June 7, but have **decided to move the sale to May 31**. Traditionally we have conducted our sale on the Saturday after Memorial Day, unless the holiday comes so early as to make plants still tiny and so we have moved it. The Saturday after Memorial Day is when the Anchorage Garden Club and the Mat-Su Master Gardeners also have their sale, so we have decided to align with them again so folks can have a grand shopping day. The announcement in the Yearbook reflect the old date, so please be sure to correct it in the yearbook and your calendars.

We have also received confirmation that our plant sale can once again be held at the old DMV building on the corner of Benson and Spenard. It is such an ideal location; we are thrilled that the building is still available.

After careful consideration, the Board of Directors has decided to cancel the Craft Corner for our plant sale. Sales have tapered off for the last two years, and it does not seem worthwhile to set up and staff a tent for at best tepid sales. We will try a new idea by featuring an area to sell any excess gardening supplies that others may need or want. So come spring, make sure to keep an eye out when you open your gardening shed and see what you no longer need or use that another gardener might be thrilled to have.

For our annual garden tours July 10 , we are looking for two or three gardens that would be willing to allow us to tour their grounds. The gardens do not need to be pristine, but need to be of interest to other gardeners. If you have techniques you can show, or unusual garden art, or plants, please consider allowing your fellow club members to share in your successes.

At the end of 2026, we will need to elect a new Board of Directors. If you remember, last year we moved to two year terms for Board members. If you would be willing to share the responsibility of continuing our fun and interesting club, please let any of our current Board members know. We will mentor you for this year and your first year in office, so there is no reason to be nervous. Please help share the oversight of the club by volunteering to carry the legacy on. Discuss the duties and responsibilities with current Board members to see details of the jobs.



In the Garden – A few different types of Primrose Plants

Primula Cortusoides

Primula cortusoides grows in hardiness zones 4 through 8. In spring and summer magenta flowers emerge. Grows well with mostly sun - shade and even moisture water. Does well in rich and well-drained soil.

Plants from the Primula Family, or [Primroses](#), are famous perennials known for their bright flowers that grow in various shapes and colors. Primroses are staples in cottage gardens as they can grow in various conditions.



Primula Denticulata

The Drumstick Primrose is an attractive perennial that grows in hardiness zones 2 through 8. It grows rounded flower heads with several flat flowers in shades of purple, blue, lilac, white or pink that have golden eyes in the center. Primroses love partial shade and can be grown in patios, flower beds, and containers.



Primula Auricula

This prolific flower grows in hardiness zones 3 through 8. Also known as Adrian Primrose, the rosettes of leaves support clusters of rich purple flowers that feature lighter petal tips and a creamy center.



Primula Elatior

The Oxlip Primrose grows in hardiness zones 4 through 8 and is a gardeners' favorite, especially in shady gardens. The soft yellow flowers bloom from mid-spring until early summer and feature dark centers, emitting a soft and pleasant fragrance. These flowers are perfect for a woodland garden or other naturalized areas. The stems reach a maximum height of 12 inches.



Look for these beauties at local garden club plant sales!

Information from Garden Lovers Club. Click link at top of page for more good info.