



Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska

Newsletter ~ October 2025

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Message from the Presidents

The rain has finally stopped and for a few days the sun has been shining – and just in time for us to complete our yard chores and put the gardens to bed. Fall clean-up always seems so rushed! Hurry, hurry... frost is in the forecast, or worse yet, snow! Hurry, hurry... have we done all we needed to do? When all the work is completed it's a huge sigh of relief!

Thankfully, the temperatures this fall have been above average. We can enjoy the rest of the season and take one more stroll around the gardens to reflect on what worked for us and what didn't. Time to update the garden journals as we won't remember when next spring comes around!

It was great to see everyone at the September meeting. The Zoom worked and only dropped the internet once, but we were able to bring it back online quickly with minimal fuss. We thought it was a bit strange that no one was online... At the time, we thought it was because folks forgot about the meeting. HOWEVER, apologies are in order. Only AFTER the meeting did we realize that we did not include the link with the meeting invite. We're sincerely sorry. October's meeting will be offered via Zoom – and this time we'll include the link. But don't forget – no Zoom link in November and December when we throw our "Friendsgiving" craft workshop/potluck and holiday party. We hope to see you all there!

Christie & Kellie



What's Growing Now

At our September 11th monthly meeting, Landscape Horticulturist and fellow member Debbie Hinchey gave an informative presentation on pruning in our yards. She covered what time of year is best, how to choose which limbs to cut, and how to plan for the future (To prune or not to prune? Now that is the question). She also passed out examples to help us better understand the key concepts of her presentation. We'd like to say "Thank You" again to Debbie for sharing her extensive knowledge with the club!



At our October 9th meeting, Paul Marmora taught us about mounting orchids on cork bark. Most orchids in the world are epiphytic, so this is a much more natural way for them to grow. It is quite a simple process, as he demonstrated a few times during his presentation.

Alaska has the most endemic (native) orchids of any other state, but they are all terrestrial. Many of us have struggled to keep our orchids alive and to get them to re-bloom. Paul addressed a number of items to help us be more successful.



Crowberry
(Moss Berry)
Empetrum nigrum



High-Bush Cranberry
(Moose Berry)
Viburnum edule



Low-Bush Cranberry
(Lingonberry) & Lichen
Vaccinium vitis-idaea

Special wildflowers that bloomed this month

Cindy Calzada, Joyce Goodell, Donna Kellar, John Horstkoetter, Paul Marmora, Madge Oswald, Tim Pack, Fran Pekar, Erika Wolter, and Kathy Zins

Marigolds and cosmos are the birth flowers for October. Both of these popular flowers are easy to grow and provide color in the garden until the first frost of the fall. Their rich history and long-held symbolism make marigolds and cosmos plants meaningful in so many ways.



Native to the Americas, from the southwestern United States to well into South America, marigolds, a member of the *Asteraceae* family, and more specifically the *Tagetes* genus, have three main types: French, African (or American), and signet, which appear in orange, yellow, red, and bicolor, as well as other combinations. (Pot marigolds, native to southern Europe and a member of the *Calendula* genus, are not true marigolds.)

Marigolds not only provide consistent color throughout the growing season, but their distinctive smell can repel pests, making them great companion plants. They attract butterflies and songbirds, as well as beneficial insects such as ladybugs, hoverflies, and parasitic wasps. Often wider than they are tall, marigold plants can grow up to 2 feet tall, although some varieties, including African marigolds, will grow taller.

These flowers have been linked to the symbolism of optimism and prosperity, cheer and joy, love and strong emotions, wealth and success.



Cosmos bloom in a number of colors, from orange, red, and yellow to pink, purple, and white. Native to Mexico, the annual flowers are daisy-like and sit atop long, thin stems that can grow up to 6 feet tall. The colorful petals radiate from a yellow center.

A member of the daisy family, *Asteraceae*, cosmos make a great addition to flower gardens and have naturalized along roadsides and in fields across many parts of the United States.

The genus name comes from the Greek word *kosmos*. The flowers have long symbolized order, harmony, and balance. Others believe it is a sign of peace, love, joy, and innocence.

The plant can grow in hot, dry conditions and provides blooms from early summer to the first frost. Cosmos do best with at least a half-day of direct sunlight. Some varieties will need staking as they grow tall during the summer months.

Overwatering can lead to fewer flowers, so keep a watchful eye on the water you provide your plants. Deadhead spent flowers to encourage re-blooming.

Club Business

November Board of Directors Election

Slate of Nominees for the 2026/2027 Board of Directors, Voting Procedures, and Election Timelines were emailed to all members on October 9, 2025.

- Nominations from the floor will be open Thursday, October 9th through Thursday, October 23rd. Prior permission is required from potential candidates before nominating.
- The Slate of Board Members returning and/or nominated, will be presented at the November 13th general meeting, and sent electronically by email to all current members.
- Electronic Voting for the Board of Directors will begin Friday, November 14th through Friday, November 21st at 5pm. More information via email will be coming soon!
- Results will be announced via email on Monday, November 24.



NOV 14th-21st

Currently the slate is as follows:

President: Christie Holshouser

Vice President: OPEN

Secretary: Mary Britton

Treasurer: Cindy Walker

Member at Large: Judy Pendleton

Member at Large: Alis Schmitt

September 2025 Treasurer Reports

Nuvision Federal Credit Union

Business Savings	\$7,999.13
Business Checking	\$7,735.41
CD - 9 month (matures 5/1/26) 5.37%	\$5,046.20
Balance 9/20/25	\$20,780.74

Morgan Stanley Balance 9/30/25 **\$57,597.05**

Total Funds 9/30/25 **\$78,377.79**



Upcoming Meetings, Projects, & Workshops

November 13 – 11am-1pm at Central Lutheran Church

“Friendsgiving Potluck” and Food Drive with a few holiday crafts to do!

Members & Family Only Activity

December 4 – 10am-12pm at Dimond Greenhouses 10am-12pm

Fresh Holiday Wreath (\$35) or Centerpiece (\$25) Workshop with Darryl Leiser

Members & Family Only Activity

December 11 – 11am-1pm at Central Lutheran Church

All Appetizers Holiday Party – Please bring a dish to share and your festive cheer.

Experience the magic of the holidays with your garden friends, tasty food, and fun.

If you would like to participate in our spirited gift exchange, bring a wrapped, garden related gift costing no more than \$20.

Members & Family Only Activity

Announcements

NEW ~ Meeting time change to 10:30am coming in January 2026!

WGCA 2026 Grants application period is open!

Please share this opportunity with those you know who may be interested in applying. Information and the application can be found using the following link to our website. [The Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska - Our Grants Program](#)

The goal of the **Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska (WGCA) Grants Program** is to encourage botanical education by funding scholarly studies, scientific research projects, or work in the areas of Horticulture, Floriculture, Landscape Design, Forestry, Botany, Agronomy, Plant Pathology and/or allied subjects.

Individuals, Schools and Non-Profit entities engaged in work in the above listed fields may apply for grant funding until the **deadline of January 31, 2026**.

Organizations must have 501(c)(3) status.

All applicants must be based in the state of Alaska.

The total amount to be awarded each year is determined by the WGCA Executive Committee. The minimum request considered will be \$200, the maximum \$1,000. The number of awards will vary dependent upon the number of applications received, the amount of money requested and the total amount to be awarded.

Heartfelt Farewell

Wishing the best to longtime member **Gina Docherty** and her husband as they begin a new life chapter with a big move to New Zealand. The Alaska gardening community will surely miss her and the beautiful plants she shared with so many. Thank you for the memories, laughs, and friendship. We will miss you!



Membership Renewal

It is the time of year to think about renewing your club membership for the upcoming year 2026. **Remember, to be included in the coming yearbook's list of members, you will need to send in an online or printed application and pay your dues by December 1st.**

You can access the membership form from www.wildflowergardenclub.org under the membership tab. To mail a renewal, print a copy of the form and send it in with a check.

The annual membership cost is \$20 for an individual with an additional \$15 for each immediate family member (only one yearbook will be shared in a family membership).

You can also fill in the form online and pay electronically. **An additional cost of \$1 per member registration** will be applied to cover the processing fees of the credit card company.

Thank you for your continued support of the Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska!

Member's Corner – Care for your tools during the winter

By following these steps, you can help ensure your tools are ready for the next gardening season:

Clean: Thoroughly clean all tools to remove dirt, debris, and rust. Use a coarse metal brush, sandpaper, or mixture of sand and oil for cleaning.

Disinfect: Use a solution of one part bleach to nine part water or household disinfectants to prevent plant diseases.

Sharpen: Ensure tools are sharp. Use a file or sharpening stone to sharpen edges of shovels, pruners, and hoes.

Oil: Apply linseed oil to wooden handles and other parts to prevent rust.

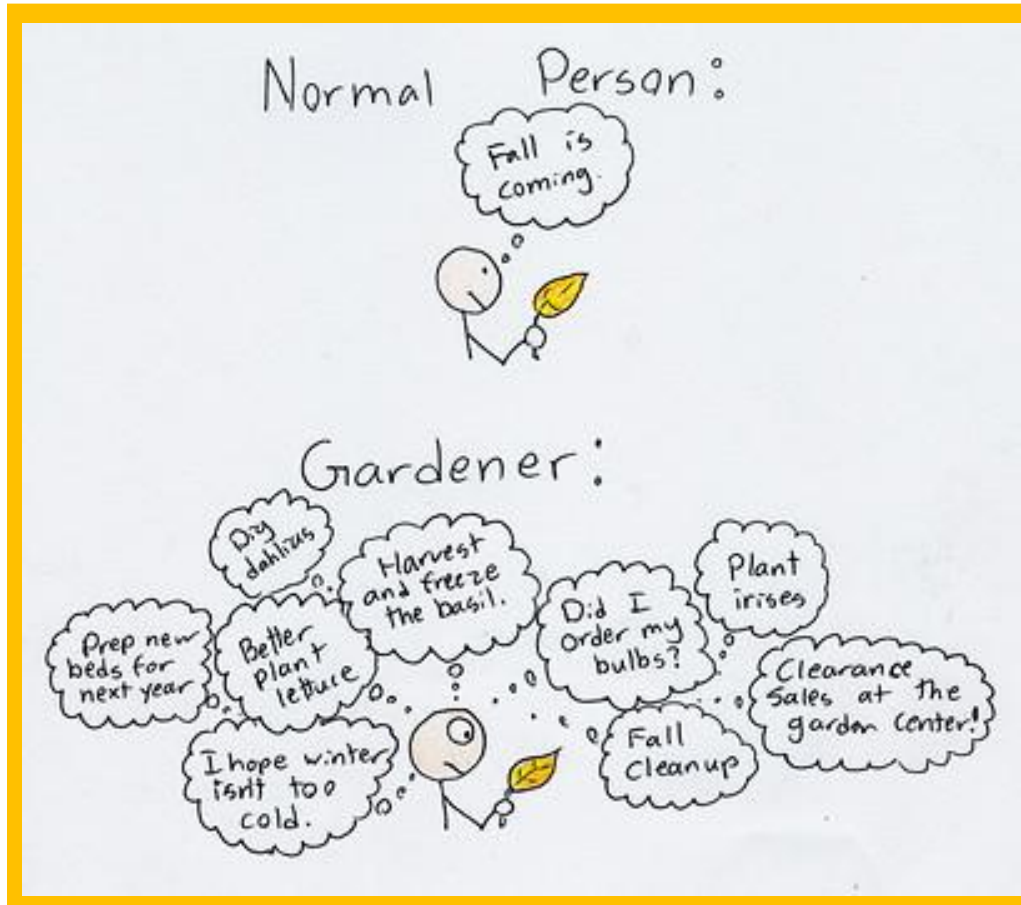
Store Properly: Apply a rust-inhibiting coating to metal parts and store in a dry, warm place. The type of oil you use for your sandy mixture depends on what you have available. Mineral oil, linseed oil, and WD-40 are great options. You'll want to use construction rather than play sand for this hack, because it needs to be coarse enough to scrape dirt off. You can use any container or leftover planter that's big enough to fit your tools. Fill it most of the way with sand and pour in enough oil to wet the mixture. Then stick your garden tools into the container with the metal ends submerged.



Leave them there all winter, and they'll look just as good as when you left them!

Wildflower's Motto... Show, Share and Tell!

The purpose of the Member's Corner section is to inspire and encourage each other. Submit items: horticulture articles, garden ideas, photos, recipes, etc. for our newsletter by the last day of each month. Send to Kathy Liska at akliska@aol.com or Paul Marmora at pmarmora@aol.com



“Fall has always been my favorite season.

The time when everything bursts with its last beauty,
as if nature had been saving up all year for the grand finale.”

Lauren DeStefano

