



# Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska

## Newsletter ~ April 2026

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### Message from the President

Endless sunny days and bright full moon nights have made us all think spring is finally in the air! Then there's the morning chilly air letting us know that cold weather isn't finished with us yet. Darn! Spring where are you?

We're all a bit anxious to get outside and play in the dirt. The big question of the month is how did our perennials do with this record cold winter? It's anyone's guess. And since we have lots of standing water, I'd bet to say our frost is a bit deep. This year was the first time I experienced -25° F at my house. And while I think most everything was protected with straw or snow, we also had wind. So be patient, don't start digging once the ground thaws, and hope for the best. Perennials sometimes try to trick us into thinking they died only to show up later!

April is our last meeting until September. We have lots planned for May through August, so keep an eye on your emails for the exact dates and additional information about our upcoming workshops. Plan to join us on April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Midtown Mall Garden Show where we'll be helping our littlest gardeners plant marigolds. Volunteers are always welcome and a SignUp Genius link has already gone out via club email. Also, if you have plants or crafts you'd like to sell, please let Kellie Staples or Barbara Baker know now.

In May we have three community service projects taking place with our cleanup on the Verna Pratt Trail May 7<sup>th</sup> (*depending on snow/ice*), cleanup of the native plant garden at the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center on May 16<sup>th</sup> (*again, depending on snow/ice*), and our annual plant sale on May 30<sup>th</sup>. Lots of volunteers needed for all three so we hope to see you there!

I look forward to seeing you and hearing all your garden stories at our summer events.

**Christie**

**"Spring will come and so will happiness. Hold on. Life will get warmer."**

**— Anita Krizzan**

## **In the Loop**

You don't want to miss our upcoming **April 9<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting on "How to Keep Alaska Trees Healthy" with Justin Sturn of Greatland Tree Service.** Justin is a certified arborist and is experienced in tree risk assessment and pesticide application. His talk will include how to grow healthy trees, how to make proper pruning cuts, why sprinklers are bad, common pests and how to spot them, how trees compartmentalize decay, and followed up with a question & answer session.



## **Special wildflowers that bloomed this month**

**Barbara Carrick, Lou Ann Clark, Helen Craig, Donna Dewhurst, Fran Flint, Rebecca Gramm, Karen Jenkins, Alice Samuelson, and Farrah Weinert**



**The April birth flowers are the Daisy and the Sweet Pea**, two blossoms rich in history, meaning, and tradition. Stemming from Old English, the daisy comes from "day's eye," referencing the daily habits of the English daisy, with its petals opening in the day and closing at night. Depending on the species, the daisy can be one of your earliest spring bloomers or among the last to appear in the fall. Native to Europe and Africa and eventually naturalized in North America, daisies belong to the aster

family (Asteraceae). This is one of the largest plant families, which also includes sunflowers and, of course, asters. Each color of daisy represents something different. White symbolizes purity and innocence; yellow mean joy and friendship; pink represents affection; and red symbolizes love and romance.

The Sweet Pea (*Lathyrus odoratus*) is part of the Fabaceae family and is related to beans and other legumes. Unlike its edible garden pea relatives, it is considered toxic to humans and animals. Native to Italy and the Mediterranean region, sweet peas are beautiful and have a sweet fragrance, often likened to oranges, honey and jasmine. Found in a wide range of colors, with hundreds of varieties having been developed over time, sweet peas are an annual that prefers full sun and well-draining, rich, organic soil. They are climbers that grow from 6 to 20 feet tall, so make sure to give them good support using a trellis, arch or fence. In the language of flowers, they symbolize blissful pleasure, good wishes, kindness, gratitude, and friendship.



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

# Club Business

The Alaska Botanical Garden Grant application for 2026 has been approved. The Board of Directors have agreed to cover the full cost of \$1800 for the rock and sand needed to build a new crevice garden at the east end of the Verna Pratt Wildflower Trail.

## March 2026 Treasurer Reports

### Nuvision Federal Credit Union

Business Savings	\$8,003.12
Business Checking	\$1,852.07
CD-9 month (matures 5/1/26) 5.37%	\$5,182.73
<b>Balance 3/31/26</b>	<b>\$15,037.92</b>

**Morgan Stanley Balance 3/31/26** **\$56,437.69**

**Total Funds 3/31/26** **\$71,475.61**



# Announcements

## Celebrate Alaska Native Plant Month!

Alaska Native Plant Month is a celebration of the importance of native plants to Alaska’s people, economy, and ecosystems. It is observed in May each year, with various activities and resources available to promote the appreciation and conservation of native plants.

In 2023, seven organizations submitted a proclamation request to Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy, asking him to establish May 2023 as Alaska Native Plant Month.

Governor Dunleavy approved the proclamation and issued it on May 1, 2023. To our knowledge, this was the first executive proclamation of its kind in Alaska celebrating native plants.



In 2024, 11 Alaska-based organizations signed the proclamation request, in 2025, 12 Alaska-based organizations signed the proclamation request, and in 2026, 16 Alaska-based organizations signed the proclamation request.

The Alaska Native Plant Society and other organization provide educational materials, event calendars, self-guided plant walks, and opportunities for planting and the care of native trees, shrubs, and flowers.

For more information contact [Native Plant of the Year – Alaska Native Plant Society](#)

## Upcoming Meetings, Projects, & Workshops

**May 7<sup>th</sup> – Verna Pratt Wildflower Trail Spring Cleanup\* – Service Project**  
**10am–12pm** at the Alaska Botanical Garden.

It would be nice to get some clean up done for the Mother's Day event at ABG. Bring your own favorite tools and gloves. \*Date dependent on snow presence.

*It is required that all volunteers, new and returning, participate in a short orientation with Stacey Shriner and Rachel Shedd to learn and/or refresh us about the procedures the garden uses for future signups and wayward wildlife known to wander to grounds. **Please use the ABG provided SignUp Genius link below to register for your orientation.** Thank you!*

### General Volunteer Notifications: Volunteer Orientation 2026 Season

**May 16<sup>th</sup> – Native Plant Garden Spring Cleanup\* – Service Project**  
**11am-1pm** at the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center in Portage.

\*Date dependent on snow presence.

**May 30<sup>th</sup> – Wildflower Garden Club Plant Sale – Community Event**

Every year, our plant sale is one of the looked-for events of the gardening season!!!

Our sale this year is scheduled for **Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup> at our favorite location; 1300 W. Benson Blvd**, the former DMV building, located on the corner of Benson and Spenard, from 9am to 3pm. Plant sales will be divided with 75% to the sellers and 25% to the club, as usual.

**We will be able to deliver our plants to the building on Friday, May 30 from 12pm to 7pm, and set up will start on Saturday at 7am. The end of the day clean-up is scheduled from 3-5pm. Sellers must pick up their leftover plants & flats by 5pm.**

Normally, the prices should be lower than the retail stores, and values are set according to the size and rarity of the species offered. Remember, this is not a garage sale, so prices should be affordable, but not dirt cheap either All plants need to be in good condition, pest-free, and well-watered (as watering facilities are not available at the facility).

**ALL PLANTS NEED A YELLOW AND WHITE TAG.** The yellow tag has the seller's initials and the price of the item, in dollar increments only, no cents. The white tag has the name of the plant. If the price or owner's initials on the tags are unreadable, the price is determined by the tag wipers and/or the amount will go to the club. **You can get tags from the club by calling or texting Paul for details (907-360-3728) on how to get some.**

We will also offer a garden tool garage sale scenario again this year. The percentages will be the same to sellers and the club. We will also have a freebie section for things of lesser value, such as pots and well-used items. Any leftover tools will be the responsibility of the person who brought them—the pots we will take care of.

All sellers are expected to work at least part of the day. **A SignUp Genius email link will be sent in mid-April.** As always, there will be a potluck for the volunteers!

**PLANT ... GROW ... BLOOM**

## Member Share

### **Sowing Seeds in Eggshells: Not Such a Great Idea**



You see this just about everywhere on the Internet: a photo of seedlings sprouting in eggshells. Usually the text that accompanies the photos promises excellent results. Often it's even recommended as a great school project. And it seems to make sense: you just punch a hole in the bottom of an eggshell (for drainage), then fill it with potting soil and add a few seeds. Water a bit and you're off to the races! Then, at planting time outdoors, all you have to do is

to crack the shell, drop the young plant into the ground and its roots will slip out through the cracks into the surrounding soil, allowing it to grow normally. It sounds like a great idea! There's just one problem: it doesn't work.

First, hen's eggs are too small for most seedlings. Tomatoes, peppers, marigolds: almost any seedling you can imagine is going to find itself growing in cramped quarters very quickly if you plant them in a hen's egg, enough so that its development will be seriously impaired. Even an extra-large egg contains less than half the sowing mix of a typical 3-inch (7.5-cm) seed pot. If you want healthy plants, you're soon going to have to remove the little babies from the eggshell leaving the root ball as intact as possible (have fun with that!) and this, at a stage when they are very young, fragile and difficult to handle, then repot them into a larger container so they can finish their development. Wouldn't it make more sense to sow your seedlings, from the start, in an appropriately sized pot?

Also, I hope that your entire family loves soft-boiled eggs, since you're going to have to eat plenty of them over the months before sowing season begins!

Of course, if you have access to larger eggs, this "eggshell technique" would work better. Turkey eggs are a bit small, but swan eggs are just about perfect. However, where to find them? And how to get them away from the angry mother swan? (dangerous and illegal!)

Moreover, the idea that cracking the shell before transplanting so that the roots will slip right through is a bit simplistic, don't you think? If the membrane that lines the shell is not thoroughly punctured in several places, the roots will still remain prisoner inside and then the plant will not be able to grow properly. So, logically, you have to remove the shell at planting time and especially the inner membrane ... that's tedious work, especially when a seedling's root ball easily slips right out of a more classic seedling container fully intact, saving you a lot of effort.

If you are looking for recycled containers in which to start your seedlings, there are plenty that are of more acceptable dimensions: yoghurt and margarine containers, milk cartons, toilet paper rolls, pots and cell packs recycled from previous gardening

experiences, [pots made from newspaper](#), etc. But eggshells ... nope. They're not really such a great idea.

Other Repurposed Containers you can choose from with good success!



**Article shared from a blog of the  
[Laidback Gardener](#) -  
[Welcome to Larry Hodgson's World](#)**

Garden writer and blogger, author of 65 gardening books, lecturer and communicator, the Laidback Gardener, Larry Hodgson, passed away in October 2022. Known for his great generosity, his thoroughness and his sense of humor, he reached several generations of amateur and professional gardeners over his 40-year career. Thanks to his son, Mathieu Hodgson,

and a team of contributors, [laidbackgardener.blog](#) will continue its mission of demystifying gardening and making it more accessible to all.

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

The purpose of the Member's Corner section is to inspire and encourage each other.

Submit items: articles, garden ideas, photos, recipes, etc. for our newsletter by the last day of each month. Send to Kathy Liska at [akliska@aol.com](mailto:akliska@aol.com) or Paul Marmora at [pmarmora@aol.com](mailto:pmarmora@aol.com)

*Celebrate and welcome the season of renewal  
with fresh starts and full hearts!*

