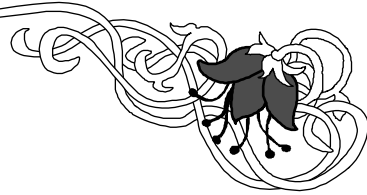


Anchorage Chapter



Volume 5, Issue 6

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER May 2003

From the President by Mary Shier

Can you believe the beautiful *warm* sunny weather we had a few days ago? What a delight. I ventured out and discovered crocus blooming and nubbins of other spring bulbs poking up through the soil. It really turned on my Spring gardening enthusiasm. I felt inclined to clean up the flower beds that I had left with 'winter interest'. This actually took me longer than I had expected - too much 'winter interest'. Clearing away, I noticed new growth making its appearance in various spots and I patted myself on the back for getting the job done ahead of time so as not be snipping the heads of the new shoots which sometimes happens.

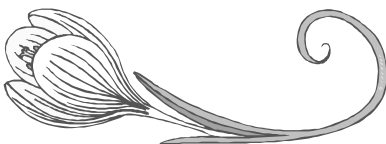
I decided to chuck the winter discards in the 'back 40' rather than compost it for some odd reason. I hauled it out thru the soft ground in the back, started dumping and looked up. There, looking quizzically at me, was a young moose not far away. 'Hi there, Mr. Moose, stay right where you are as I have nothing of interest for you', I said, as I hurried with my mission. I noticed after a few seconds, thankfully, that he continued on with his attempt at stripping bark from some chunks of wood piled up by the neighbor's boat, which was still sitting and waiting out the winter season. 'Oh well, Mr. Moose, you do your thing and I'll do mine', I thought, as I finished up and headed back to the yard. I'd already spent a couple of hours tidying up, so I figured I'd clean up the rest the next day - I called it quits for the duration.

Well, I never! What in the world possessed a snow fall the next morning? It totally blew my clean up plans for the day. Who wants to work in the yard in chilly weather and wet snow on the ground? Not me! Drat. Now I had to re-think the day's plan and revamp the line up. I really wanted to work at cleaning up the remaining plants in the yard.

I could start more seeds in the greenhouse or transplant those seedlings that are getting a bit large for their containers. Hummmm, the greenhouse is warm, I'd be out of the chilly air, listening to the radio, talking to the plants Yep, I'll get a cup of tea and head out there. What could be better on a day like today than to enjoy associating with plants?

There was much accomplished in the greenhouse, I'm pleased to say. Looking around, I noticed some tomato plants developing flower buds already.....oh, yes! My transplanting done and a few more seeds started brought me up to date with my chores. Amazing how a person can fall behind already at this time of year. Maybe I have too many seeds on my list to start! I did run out of tea, however. You know, I think an electric pot for heating water should be the next 'must have' for my greenhouse.

It is good exercise, though, walking back and forth to the house for tea or whatever. Hey, a pleasant surprise has greeted me upon exiting the greenhouse: the snow left from earlier in the day has melted. A little more moisture has entered the ground and we're still showing a bit of color.



In the yard or greenhouse, Spring really is here. Yahoo!!



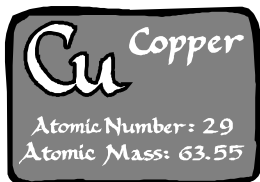
Moss in your Garden Presentation at April AMGA Meeting

If we learned one thing from this class, it was that Fran Flint loves her moss! She encouraged a large audience of master gardeners to do the same. The power point presentation Fran and her friend put together featured beautiful photos of her garden and moss growing in the wild. The talk also featured information on types of moss and where it is found locally. Several places where Fran recommended viewing natural moss gardens were at Alyeska by the hotel, at Portage, past the tunnel, and just about anywhere in the world. Fran's photos displayed how moss can be incorporated into your garden to give it a more aged, natural look. Fran's passion for growing moss in the garden was refreshing - just what we needed to start the gardening season!

Susan Miller was the lucky winner of a gardening towel and some pomegranite soap.

**Don't miss the last AMGA
presentation of the season -**

**May 19, 7 p.m.
at the CES classroom**



Copper in the Garden - featuring David Deitz (Allen Deitz' brother) demonstrating utilitarian and artful uses of this material.

AMGA Directories should be available at the next meeting.

Revised Edition of the AMGA Garden Journal is now available. The Cooperative Extension Office will have copies for sale. The price is \$15.



Grant Opportunity for MG Training

The James W. Matthew Extension Volunteer Leadership Development Fund was established by Dr. Matthews when he retired as Director of the Cooperative Extension Service in 1987. It is intended to be used by Extension volunteers interested in building their leadership credentials. Dana Klinkhart was a recently successful applicant and received \$350 for web page design training. Gina Docherty received an award also to attend computer training a few years back.

The next application due date is June 1 for projects that will occur July - December. It is suggested that candidates mail or fax their applications no later than May 25. The application has been revised and is available at Cooperative Extension Service offices or by contacting Michele Hébert in Fairbanks at ffmah@uaf.edu.

WANTED: Delphinium Defoliators!

In trying to learn more about the delphinium defoliator's life cycle, IPM Technician Michael Rasy has discovered that the specimens in the Cooperative Extension Service's collection are mislabeled. Instead of squashing the caterpillar's you find this spring, please collect them in a jar, give them a few delphinium leaves to eat and bring the jar to the Anchorage CES office. Michael will rear them out so that the adults can be properly identified and added to collections at the Cooperative Extension Service and at the UAF Museum.. If you have questions, please give Michael a call at 786-6309.

APRIL NEWSLETTER CORRECTION:

Watershed Steward Class Dates

The dates for the upcoming Watershed Stewardship class have been changed. The correct dates are June 3, 5, 10, & 12, sameplace, same time. Any questions, please call Terri Lomax at 786-6329.



What Gardeners are Growing in 2003

Dana Klinkhart, Master Gardener—Wreaths of lettuce with different colors and textures

Chuck Lewis, P & M Garden Services—Ornamental Millet 'Purple Majesty'

Perennial Plant Association—Hosta 'Remember Me' (proceeds go to benefit breast cancer research)

Meriam Karlsson, Professor of Horticulture, UAF—Raspberries in the greenhouse for early and late harvest.



Seattle gardeners seen at the Northwest Flower & Garden Show—Any plant with black flowers or foliage.

Sue Lincoln, Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator, CES—cannas in containers this year and *Sambucus racemosa* 'Sutherland Gold'

Sally Arrant, author, landscape architect and nursery owner—Primroses, what else.

Mary Jo Burns, Master Gardener—Primroses and sweet alyssum 'Snow Crystals'

Julie Riley, Horticulture Agent, CES—Toothache plant, *Spilanthes acmella*

Mary Shier, AMGA President—'Sungold' a favorite cherry tomato and a new greenhouse cucumber, 'Tasty Jade'

Susan Miller—Non-native ferns, Rex begonias and other hybrids besides the typical tuberous species.

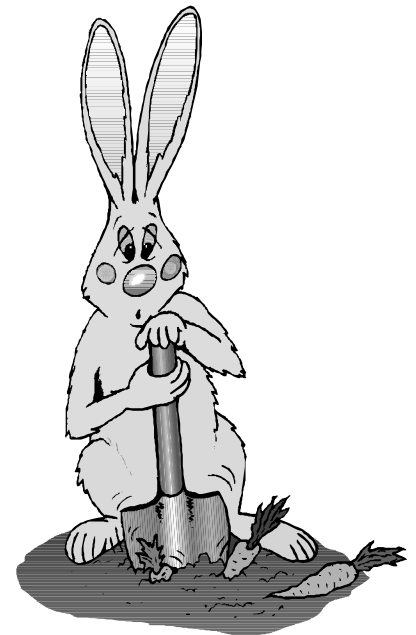
All America Selections (AAS)—Anise hyssop 'Golden Jubilee' (*Agastache*) and 'Blue Wave' petunia

Stephie Coen, author and guest speaker for the Alaska Rock Garden Society—Vertically challenged plants (i.e. short)

Lorri Abel, horticulturist and nurseryowner—Perilla 'Magilla'

Steve Schmidt, speaker on grasses at last spring's Master Gardener conference—*Calamagrostis X acutiflora* 'Avalanche'

Fran Flint, Master Gardener and guest speaker—Mosses, mosses and more mosses, with a few ferns and liverworts thrown in.





Fritillaria persica - Persian lily

Family: Liliaceae

Country of Origin: Southern Turkey and Central Iran

First recorded in England: 1596

Description: Hardy bulb with glaucous leaves and hanging bell-shaped flowers, dusky purple in late spring, May

Planting position: Light, well drained but moisture retentive soil in full sun or light shade

Propagation: Fresh seed sown in July or dry bulbs in autumn

Most Common Varieties:

-* Crown Imperial - Hardy to USDA Zones 4 to 7, grows from 24 to 40 inches tall.

*F. persica -grows from 1 to 4 feet high and is hardy from Zones 4 to 7

*F. meleagris - Grows to about 10 inches tall, hardy from Zones 4 to 7

*F. michailowski -An excellent fritillaria for the rock or trough garden is. Hardy through Zones 4 to 7, grows from 4 to 6 inches, and produces single or paired flowers of a dazzling rich purple-maroon and gold color.

*F. pallidiflora- grows to 18 inches; This fritillaria prefers a rich, peaty soil mixture that never dries out. It likes dappled afternoon shade, and is hardy from Zones 3 to 5.

Planting Tips:

Wear gloves to handle the bulbs - they contain toxic alkaloids and may cause a rash.

Plant bulbs on their sides. This will prevent bulbs from rotting in the deep clay loam.

Fritillaria Trivia

Fritillaria imperialis, or crown imperial, with crown-like tufts of foliage and nodding, nectar-laden orange to yellow flowers, is known in Farsi (the language of Iraq) as the "Tears of Mary." Christian tradition recalls that of all the flowers, only the proud crown imperial refused to bow its head during the Crucifixion. As a consequence, it has "bowed" and "wept" ever since.

Tulip Trivia

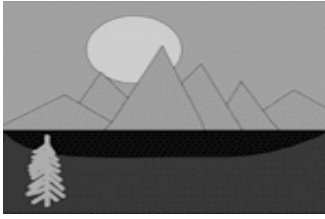
Over a thousand years ago, Tulips grew wild in Persia, and near Kabul the Great Mogul Baber counted thirty-three different species. The word tulip is thought to be a corruption of the Turkish word for turbans. Persian poets sang its praises, and their artists drew and painted it so often, that all of Europe considered the tulip to be the symbol of the Ottoman Empire.

There are people in the world who eat some varieties of tulip bulbs, and the Japanese make a flour from them. The Dutch have eaten tulip bulbs when no other food was available.

Wealthy people began to purchase tulip bulbs that were brought back from Turkey by Venetian merchants. In 1610, fashionable French ladies wore corsages of tulips, and many fabrics were decorated with tulip designs. In the seventeenth century, a small bed of tulips was valued at 15,000-20,000 francs. The bulbs became a currency, and their value was quoted like stocks and shares.

Turkey Trivia

Turkey has almost as many species of wild flowers as the rest of Europe combined; of the over 9000 species so far identified more than one third are native to the country, many found nowhere else on earth. Turkey is regarded as an important gene centre for many cultivated crops, whose wild ancestors can still be found growing in Anatolia. The defence mechanisms and disease resistance of the wild forms tend to be more highly developed than those of the cultivated plants and can be transmitted through biotechnology. The wild forms remain a fundamental reference source when developing new and improved strains. Turkey is the home of over thirty species of wild wheat, along with barley, chickpeas, lentils, apricots, figs, cherries and many types of nuts. A large number of ornamental flowers were cultivated from Turkish wild forms, including most famously the tulip but also the crocus, snowdrop, and lily.



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News by Rosemary Kimball

The winter/spring part of the year is over and we're into spring/summer phase. I didn't have the heart to tell my kids I wasn't going to visit them this March because our speaker series was too good to miss. We finished in early April with Annie Nevaldine and her Garden Art slide show. We got the presentation she gave to the NARGS. My favorite slide was the Copper Center City Hall—a brown outhouse with flowers in a pot.

The city of Soldotna has hired a gardener for the summer who comes and does nice things like cleaning up Pioneer Park after the winter. She even gets a budget to buy plants! That means that MG Barb, our park ramrod, can get a life this summer instead of transplanting zillions of the annuals that are used to fill in the beds. It also means that someone else is slugging it out down there.

I am on crutches and with a pretty purple cast for the months of April and May! I told the doc to go ahead and repair any damage in my ankle without asking what post-op would be like. Bad move this time of year. Barb came out and helped me organize the greenhouse and start seeds. My husband is pitching in this year and any time I yell "transport" he's there moving stuff around and getting potting soil. I don't remember who gave me a gardening apron with three green pockets but it is a heavily-relied on tool right now.

The snow has been gone for a long time down here in suburban Sterling in mid-April but the temperatures are remaining fairly mild. The soil temperature has even sailed up to 40° on a sunny afternoon. At least that's what I'm told as crutches don't work very well when the garden is breaking up. You can't even guess how much mud crutches can track in the house! We've heard the first migratory bird, a varied thrush known in the neighborhood as the telephone bird when we answered the phone and there was no one on the line, sounding off on the 18th of April. The Mayday tree buds are visible. Spring is in the air.

Recommended Seed Starting Book

If you do a lot of seed starting this time of year, a book you should not be without is "Seed Germination Theory and Practice" by Norman C Deno.

On the cover it says: "*Based on experiments on 145 Families, 805 genera and about 2500 species. Every species has some mechanism for delaying germination until after the seed has been dispersed. The science of seed germination is the discovery and description of such mechanisms and the development of procedures for removing them so that the seeds can germinate.*"

This book is ordered directly from the author, a professor emeritus of chemistry at Pennsylvania State University. The author's ordering address is 139 Lenor Drive State College PA 16801 I think I paid about \$20 for it and it is worth that and more.

Rosemary





Bird Chatter

MG Leonard Grau was selected Member of the Year by the Wildflower Garden Club.

According to Nordstrom's, this year's accent color is pink. Are fashionable colors also fashionable in the garden?

Debbie Hinchey would like to take advantage of our crazy winter weather and collect information on protective mulch. Did you mulch? With what and when? Do you think it made a difference in winter survival? Please send your responses to Julie Riley, afjar@uaa.alaska.edu.

Seen and heard at the March AMGA meeting: Try an IV drip infusion to keep living wreaths well-watered.

The Chicago Botanic Garden has announced its most garden-worthy *Artemisias*—*A. schmidtiana* 'Silver Mound', *A. ludoviciana* 'Valerie Finnis', *A. lactiflora* 'Guizhou', *A. absinthium* 'Lambrook Silver' and *A. alba*. 'Silver Mound', 'Valerie Finnis' and 'Guizhou' have performed well for Anchorage gardeners, too.

'Blue Wave' petunia has been designated an All America Selection for 2003. 'Purple Wave' and 'Pink Wave' are popular with petunia growers in Alaska. Will 'Blue Wave' garner a following? Is it really blue?

Black flowers/foilage are going to show up on this year's City of Flowers roster. MG Karla Kolash has been growing black mondo grass for years (and overwintering it indoors.)

"CREATIVITY" IS ALLOWING YOURSELF TO MAKE MISTAKES.
"ART" IS KNOWING WHICH ONES TO KEEP.

—SCOTT ADAMS, CARTOONIST (1957–)

Moose Fence Survey

The Alaska Dept. of Fish and Games is conducting a survey of Electric Moose fences. If you have a fence please take a few minutes to fill out the survey below and mail it back to the address provided. The form is available on the MG website: www.corecom.net/~gardener/calendar

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is considering the purchase of an electric fence for demonstration purposes. The consideration is in response to a high number of moose/garden and moose/hay conflicts. Your information, experience and other comments are greatly appreciated.

ANSWER AS MANY AS YOU CAN.

1. What length (add up all sides) is your electric fence (estimates are ok) ? ft.
 2. What are you protecting?
 - a. Garden
 - b. Hay storage
 - c. Entire yard
 - d. Food storage area
 - e. Other
 3. What was the cost of your fence (estimates ok)?
 4. What is the brand?
 5. Where did you purchase?
 6. What is the voltage of your fence?
 7. How is your fence powered?
 - a. House plug in
 - b. Solar panel
 - c. Car battery
 8. How many strands does your fence consist of?
 9. What are the approximate heights of the strands off the ground?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 10. What animal does your fence primarily target?
 - a. Moose
 - b. Bear
 - c.
 - Other _____
 11. What months do you operate your fence?
 12. Does your fence do a satisfactory job of protection?
 13. Have you had any safety concerns from neighbors about installing an electric fence?
 14. Do you have children? yes no
 15. Any other comments about your electric fence.....
- You can email or fax your survey to:

[Anchorage & vicinity residents:]
Lilly Goodman
Wildlife Education Specialist
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage Alaska 99518
phone: 907-267-2216
fax: 907-267-2433
lilly_goodman@fishgame.state.ak.us

Other Alaska locations:
Mike Taras, Wildlife Education Specialist
mike_taras@fishgame.state.ak.us
phone: 459-7230 Fax: 452-6410

[EDITOR'S NOTE: This survey can be found on on the Master Gardeners' web site in a printable format]

www.corecom.net/~gardener

Be sure to also look at the Gardening calendar for upcoming gardening events. If there is something that needs to be posted, please send the editor a note and she will get it posted - send email to: gardener@corecom.net



Volunteers Needed

Gardeners needed to weed, water and dead-head Master Gardener maintained beds at the Pioneer Home and Alaska Botanical Gardens. Sign-up for a week of care. Amount of time varies, depending on weather, time of year,,, If you work at the same time as your partner, maybe two work sessions that week. If the two of you split the visits, maybe just once that week. We have lots of spots to fill - if everyone could help, it will be easy.

Call or e-mail **Linda Klinkhart** to sign-up:
345-2672 or gek@gci.net

More Volunteers Needed

The Arctic Valley Ski Club is hosting a special Day on the Mountain on Saturday, June 21st from 12 noon to 8 PM.

They will be inviting the public to ride up the mountain on the chair lift as a Summer Solstice activity. This is the same activity as they had last June.

They are looking for persons willing to walk down the mountain (your choice of which way down) with a small group of people and tell them what the flowers are. You don't have to be an expert. It is great fun and you get to ride up for free.

Call Beverly Luedke-Chan at 345-3161.

PERENNIAL PLANT SALE

Friday, June 13, 6 to 10 pm
Saturday, June 14, 12 noon to 5 pm
4960 East Fifth Avenue (between Pine St. and Boniface)
Contact: Annie Nevaldine, 333-2100

Several prominent perennial gardeners combine forces and flowers and fun to feature fruit and ornamental trees, shrubs, orchids, bog and water condition plants, dahlias, roses, lilies, divisions from Allen Deitz's garden, other perennials, and perhaps even a few annuals. Also for sale will be garden art and supplies for the gardener. Vendors include Bud Dubay, Martha Farris, Mark Gordon, Sally Karabelnikoff, Sally Koppenberg, Susan Miller, Annie Nevaldine, and Linda Teninty.

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:

Cooperative Extension Office
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone 786-6300
Fax Line 786-6312

Gardening Calendar

May 4

Cook Inlet Bonsai Study Group: "Corkbark Elms" held at Bell's Nursery, 7653 Strawberry. Call Bell's Nursery for cost and info: 243-1020 or contact Paul Marmora for info.: 278-5926

May 7

Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP) - Recertification training for categories 2,3,4 & 14 (in conjunction with CES IPM training). Pre register @ 786-6300.

May 9, 10, 11

Alaska Rock Garden Society: Northway Mall Mother's Day Garden Show

May 17

*Anchorage Garden Club: Lobelia Basket Workshop \$45 Learn how to make a lobelia basket similar to the ones the Municipality of Anchorage does downtown. Location to be determined. 566-0539

*Alaska Botanical Garden: Plant Sale and Membership Drive. 10:00-Noon for members only. Noon - 4PM open to public.

*Alaska Rock Garden Society: PLANT SALE - Sally Karabelnikoff's, 7435 Old Harbor Road, Anchorage

May 18

Alaska Rock Garden Society: Alaska Botanical Garden rock garden clean up, 2 p.m.

May 19

*Anchorage Garden Club: Alaska Arbor Day - Children will plant trees, usually held at one of the schools at 1pm.

*AMGA meeting: *Copper in the Garden* with David Deitz (Allen Deitz' brother) 7 p.m., CES Conference Room 130, Carlton Trust Bldg., 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd.

May 24, 25, 26

Alaska Rock Garden Society: PLANT SALE - Recluse Gardens in Wasilla

June 5

Anchorage Garden Club: "Primulas" presented by Sally Arant; Pioneer Schoolhouse, lower level; located at 3rd and Eagle Streets; 7:30pm Programs are free and open to everyone.

June 7

Anchorage Garden Club: Annual Plant Sale held at 3734 W 35th Ave.; 9am to 5pm

June 28-29

Alaska Botanical Garden: 6th Annual Garden Fair; 10AM-6PM Saturday and 10AM-4PM Sunday



The Anchorage Chapter of the Alaska Master Gardeners Association welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. Contact the editor, Gina Docherty, at:

Mail: 4006 DeArmoun Road
Anchorage, AK 99516

Phone: 345-4099

Email: gardener@corecom.net

AMGA Web Site: www.corecom.net/~gardener

(The Newsletter will be on-line in living color!)



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