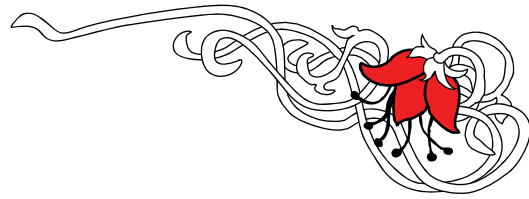


Anchorage



Volume 15, Issue 6

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ANCHORAGE NEWSLETTER June 2013



A Nickel's Worth from President LaFleur

Wow! What fabulous weather. I've been saying all week that it's times like this that make those long dark days of winter forgettable.

After starting seedlings the end of January, I am more than anxious to get planting. But, like the plants, I need to ease into the season (sun), too - you know, 'harden off'. After raking mulch off the perennials on numerous garden beds I care for as a landscaper, I could barely move the next day. My arms felt like jelly - aching jelly, no less. I believe 'moderation in the moment' is going to be my theme this summer.

I was disheartened to see several perennials succumb to our difficult winter but also pleased to see the Iris pseudacorus & bearded iris show healthy foliage at my Muldoon home garden. I'm also excited about the ten yellow Louisiana iris (their state wild flower) AMGA member Connie Hebert sent me. Plus, while wandering around in Costco's I bought some Louisiana Iris 'Black Gamecock' and 'Silent Wood'. I didn't know there was so much variety, when it comes to iris that will live in South Central, did you?

Last year at the Alaska State Fair, I saw the coolest looking broccoli called "Romanesco" (which looks more like cauliflower than broccoli) and got a couple packets to try. The seed produced and soon I had 100 seedlings to pot up. I just can't throw any away. I've been sharing my wealth.

We lost a couple trees in last year's storm so I replanted a small apple tree where the lilac used to be. The tree is small and had a root ball that needed untangling before planting. It is a lot easier to plant a tree when you have washed roots and you have a better success rate on survival when you do as well. Buy a bare root tree and plant one today. Don't plant too deep... must have the flare on the bottom - don't let them look like straight telephone poles and if they are in soil when you do plant them - error on the side of too shallow planting than too deep, please. Someone commented to me about them never living long enough to see the small whip of an apple tree produce fruit but I reminded them that the planting of trees is for our future generations to benefit from. It's our gift to them.

If you have been following along on the GOOGLE Group,

(and you must if you haven't been) you may be like me and inspired to try growing asparagus. Purple asparagus, no less. MG Cheryl Chapman found some "Purple Passion" asparagus stems in bundles of ten and brought us over a couple bundles to try. I plan to put them on the south side of my greenhouse near the windows in hopes they will thrive and produce some tender asparagus stems later in the summer. Anyone else trying asparagus this year?

Continued on page 5

AMGA Treasurer's Report

Balances 3/31/2013

Checking S-88	2919.23
Savings S-19	15151.07
CD-112.1 (ABG)	3363.14
CD-126 (Education)	3014.76
	<hr/>
	\$24448.20

Revenue:	
Interest	3.11
Membership	980.00
	<hr/>
	\$983.11

Expense:	
Education (AMG) computer	822.98
Hospitality	12.19
Newsletter	264.08
Website	1000.00
	<hr/>
	\$2099.25

Balances 4/30/2013

Checking S-88	1799.98
Savings S-1	15154.18
CD- (ABG)	3363.14
CD-(Education)	3014.76
	<hr/>
	\$23332.06



May 20th AMGA Meeting Report: Bill Campbell, "The Potato Man" By Pat Anderson

Bill is eager, enthusiastic and extremely knowledgeable about potatoes and how to grow them in Alaska. He has been a potato expert for a long time, and is an Agronomist II at the Plant Material Center in Palmer. Agronomy is the science and technology of producing and using plants for food, fuel, fiber and reclamation. He was sent to Egypt through Win-Rock International, the Farmer to Farmer program, to teach them how we plant and produce potatoes here in the US. Unfortunately he got an Arabic interpreter who couldn't speak much English.

The Egyptians had 120 acres of potatoes planted in long straight rows in desert sand that was 6 miles from the Nile River. Two diesel generators pump salty water from the canal to the ditch between the rows, and created a drip irrigation system. He taught them to fertilize on top of the mounds and provided additional helpful suggestions. They do have brown-rot in the soil. The labor is cheap there, and they have diggers or modified backhoes and about 80 people picking. Africa and Asia lead the rest of the world in potato productions

Pictures of huge pigeon houses located in Egypt's Delta showed how the Egyptians get their fertilizer for their potato crops - from pigeon poop!

Pyramids were located just down the street from where he was staying, so he went visiting dressed as an Arab on a camel. He was impressed with the Egyptians knowledge learned from the hieroglyphics.

Bill made it clear that potatoes are an amazing plant. Potato certification began in 1913, and most problems come from seed. Bill confessed that certification is not a silver bullet, and he must rely on visual, backed with laboratory diagnosis, designed for industrial agriculture. 90% of potatoes are used for processing, chips, Tater Tots, French fries, etc. The rest are sold to people. He explained that GMO is good, because it avoids the use of pesticides. For your garden, use certified seed potatoes to plant.

Potatoes are tubers that have nodes or "eyes" from which the new growth begins. Potatoes are "compressed stems". The new stems growing from each "eye" are called sprouts which gives rise to the new plant. Each sprout sets 2 or 3 stems, and acts as individual plants fighting for nutrients and water. You can plant only the sprouts, but you'll get 40% less, and the potatoes will be smaller. Bill says "Anywhere a leaf hits a stem, they'll grow". Keep the potatoes in the cool-dark before planting.

When planting potatoes, don't plant gushy ones. They can have disease, and the bacteria can live for years on tools or in soil if not de-contaminated. Wash tools off with Clorox and water, and do not throw any potatoes that have any kind of blight, bacteria or disease into your compost. Gather the diseased plants w/soil, put in plastic bags and place in the garbage. Alaska potatoes can get Late Blight. Certification keeps the viruses out. Bill explained with pictures, other potato problems such as bacterial ring-rot, white mold, scab, early blight, leaf-rollers, and others. Watch your plants for unhealthy leaves, and/or stem drop, or other deformities.

The Plant Management Network (www.plantmanagement-

[network.org](http://www.plantmanagement-network.org)) was started in '95, and is a good one. 30% to 40% of the local potato market comes from Alaska grown potatoes.

For his potatoes, Bill uses 10-20-20 fertilizer broadcast on the ground, and then worked in once, at the beginning of the growing season. This is about 30 grams per plant. He adds no minerals and says to water one inch per week. If you use a sprinkler system, measure the water. To plant, 2-1/2 oz. of seed-potato piece is what is used commercially. They dust with a powder mixture fungicide, calcium hydroxide before planting, but Bill doesn't.

You can place potatoes in salt water - low density potatoes float and are good for boiling. High densities sink, and are better for baking and French fries.

People enjoy many types of potatoes, and many different sizes and shapes: big, little, early yield, and some with funny shapes. Bill delighted his audience of 63 MGs with the way he explained truths about potatoes. It was apparent why he has been named "The Potato Man".

Master Gardeners can purchase an excellent source of certified seed potatoes from MG Greg and Kathy Kalal. Kathy donated 50 cents per pound from the sale of their certified seed potatoes to the AMGA the night of the meeting.

The evening ended with the door prizes. Generous donors gave a butterfly kite, a garden Soxx, and a book. A watering bulb was from Kathleen Douglass, video tapes from Mary Shier, yard art from Journey Home. To honor Arbor Day, Rosemary and William Borchardt donated \$150.00 gift certificate from their business, the Arthur Campbell nursery. Mari Wood was the welcome deliverer.

A special highlight of the Monday evening meeting was an introduction of our new Urban Forrester, Maria D'Agostino. Maria, from San Francisco, is excited about her new position, and looks forward to working in Alaska for the betterment of Alaska forests.

Winter Injury on Plants

©Cloud Mountain Farm Center 6906 Goodwin Rd.

Everson, WA 98248 www.cloudmountainfarmcenter.org

Sometimes the winters can be rough for plants in the Pacific Northwest. Even while winter still continues, it can be apparent that there has been winter damage - broken and bent branches, brown or blackened leaves, splitting bark, falling flower buds. What causes plants to be damaged some winters and not others? What can the gardener do with these damaged plants? How can you prevent damage in coming winters?

What causes winter damage?

Weather influences include:

- Lower than normal temperatures
- Large temperature swings, such as a very mild fall followed by sudden deep freezes
- Time of year of severe cold, before the plants are hardened off or ready for cold in the fall, or in the spring after they have broken dormancy
- Drying winds
- Bright sunny days during cold spells

Continued on page 7

Creating the Elusive Low Maintenance Garden

By Brenda Adams

Everyone wants a low maintenance garden. Who would want one that is nearly impossible to maintain? Yet how many of us find ourselves trying to manage the latter rather than the former? Sadly, the answer is too many. So, how can you avoid this frustrating result when your goal is to create something beautiful and enjoyable? Here are some suggestions.



Low maintenance starts with the design. Consider how much time you want to spend maintaining a garden. A certain amount is fun, but at some point it becomes an unwelcome chore. Be honest with yourself here because this may be the most important decision you make. Create a garden that will allow you to care for it easily within your time constraints. The simplest way to do this is to design a small garden since every part of maintenance will be reduced with a smaller garden. It is so much more satisfying to have a small, exquisite garden than a large, out-of-control one.

Select well-behaved plants. Many freely shared plants are thugs that propagate wildly creating management headaches. Choose plants that will stay where you plant them, not travel rapidly throughout your garden. I suggest you look for clumping rather than running grasses, sterile hybrids rather than seed-generating open-pollinators, fibrous or fleshy root systems rather than rhizomatous ones.

Focus on plants that are long-lived, rarely need dividing to maintain vigor, and need no deadheading or staking. For example, if you like tall plants, consider *Aconitum napellus* rather than *Delphinium* for deep indigo spires. Other tall selections that will stay upright without assistance even on a windy site include *Filipendula rubra venusta*, *Ligularia 'The Rocket'*, *Calamagrostis acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'*, and *Iris sibirica 'Caesar's Brother'*. Many plants will bloom throughout the season without deadheading. Some examples are *Nepeta 'Walker's Low'*, most *Astrantia*, and *Euphorbia*. Some, like *Paeonia* and *Meconopsis* are long-lived and need not be divided to remain healthy.

Learn about the horticultural needs of a plant before you buy it. Assure yourself its requirements and your garden environment are well-matched. Consider the pH level, moisture level and fertility of your soil as well as sun and wind exposure. Siting plants where their needs are well met will result in vigorous and healthy plants that won't need coddling.

As you design your garden beds, lay out your plant selections proportionally. That is, leave enough space for each plant to grow to its expected mature size in place. Taking care with this on the front end may well eliminate tons of transplanting in the future. If the garden

feels somewhat sparse at first fill in the spaces with annuals and bulbs until your herbaceous perennials and woody ornamentals mature.

Before you plant, prepare your soil. Eliminating weeds at the outset will make long term management of your garden a breeze. Test your soil, amend it, turn or till it to improve aeration, and sculpt the soil into the shape you want. Cover it with 6-8 layers of newspaper and a layer of road-grade geotextile material (Typhac), and then hold it all in place with landscape staples, rocks or lumber. Now for the hard part. Wait a year. Yes, wait a year. Time and darkness will passively eliminate nearly all your weeds. Then, after you remove the fabric and newspaper, take care as you plant to disturb the soil as little as possible so you don't bring a new batch of weed seeds to the surface.

Protect your garden from unwanted plant intruders. If you are carving a garden area out of a wild, natural space, protect both your garden and the surrounding flora with a buffer zone. An easy way to do this begins again with newspaper and geotextile material. Use these to create a permanent border between your garden and the wild area behind it. To conceal this you can cover it with the same kind of mulch you use in the garden. The foliage of the native plants will spill onto the buffer strip softening the line between the two areas. If your garden will abut turf grass, install a five inch deep edging between the grass and the garden using professional grade edging and connectors. Stake it securely into place leaving about three quarters of an inch of the edging above ground to prevent the grasses from "jumping" over it.

Among the many practical bits of wisdom Ben Franklin shared in his *Poor Richard's Almanac* is, "A stitch in time saves nine." Applied to a garden, this wisdom is multiplied a hundred fold. Never, ever allow a weed go to seed or get established or you will be battling hundreds of new ones next season. Weed your garden, early, often and also late in the season. Keep a simple task simple. One of the tricks a wise gardener taught me many years ago is to "hide" a trowel in every garden bed. That way, as you admire your garden but spot a weed, you have the proper tool at hand to get it and its root out immediately. You won't have to make a mental note to come back to remove it or be tempted to give it a yank with your fingers and miss part of the root.

Finally, always remember to take pleasure in your garden. Design a spot for a bench or chair. While you're working in the garden, take a break and a seat. The more you actively revel in the beauty of what you've created, the less burdensome the maintenance will be.

Brenda is the author of There's a Moose in My Garden, Designing Gardens in Alaska and the Far North, due to be released in August, 2013 by the University of Alaska Press.

www.gardenbybrenda.com

www.facebook.com/theresamooseinmygarden

Tomato Blossom End Rot - Facts & Control

Karl Foord - Extension Educator, Horticulture

In anticipation of spring tomatoes, please consider your tomato systems and avoid one of the scourges of gardening - tomato blossom end rot.

Symptoms of blossom end rot



Water soaked areas at the blossom end of the fruit usually appear when the fruits are one third to one half full size (Photo 1). This enlarges and darkens as the fruit matures.

These large sunken lesions dry out, flatten and become black and leathery. Typically the

first fruit are most severely affected, and later developing fruit can be unaffected.

Causes and the role of calcium

Blossom end rot is a "physiological disorder" induced by a localized calcium deficiency in the fruit. The incidence of the disorder is usually not due to a lack of calcium in the soil, but rather due to factors affecting the uptake and translocation of calcium.



On a cellular level calcium is a critical component of cell walls (a structural nutrient). So when calcium is limiting cell walls cannot form properly and rapidly growing parts of the plant suffer breakdown. As a structural component calcium once incorporated into a cell wall is not mobile

within the plant.

At the plant level, the end of the fruit is an area of rapid growth and has a high need for calcium as do other rapid growth areas like meristems. If 90% of the calcium that a mature fruit contains is already in the fruit by the time it is $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter then the critical time for calcium uptake is early in the development of the fruit.

Soil calcium and plant uptake

Calcium uptake is associated with water uptake. Thus anything that interferes with water uptake can create calcium deficiencies. Dry or wet soils interfere with water uptake in different ways but both can lead to calcium problems. The strongest sink for calcium is actively transpiring leaves because they are actively pulling water. Other plant structures are not transpiring near the degree that leaves are and thus function as poorer calcium sinks. A waxy cuticle develops on the fruit when it is $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter which reduces transpiration and thus weakens the fruit as a calcium sink.

The fruit is competing with leaf tissue for calcium so a higher fruit to leaf ratio reduces the relative strength of the leaf as a calcium sink allowing more calcium to be allocated to growing fruits. This adds to the logic recommending pruning of tomato sucker shoots.

Control of Blossom End Rot

Maintain even and adequate soil moisture; mulch aids in this process. Avoid poorly drained and cool soils. Avoid over-fertilizing with nitrogen which creates excessive vegetation. Avoid ammonium based fertilizers as ammonia inhibits uptake of calcium. Use nitrate as the main source of N in fertilizers. Choose cultivars that have fewer tendencies to demonstrate blossom end rot. Use soil test data to maintain proper nutrition and optimum pH in the 6 - 6.5 range.

Foliar applications of calcium

There seems to be disagreement about the effectiveness of foliar applications of calcium. The logic on the ineffective side is that calcium is immobile in the plant and will not translocate to the fruit from material sprayed on the leaves. The response is to spray on the fruit. However, a waxy cuticle develops on the fruit when it is $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter which reduces transpiration and perhaps direct absorption of sprayed calcium. Often blossom end rot decreases as the season progresses. This could be due to weather effects, warmer soils, or a slowing of vegetative growth all of which would make it appear that early applications of calcium have been effective.

Perhaps foliar sprays applied on plants prior to the first cluster of fruit or directly on small fruit can be used to supplement calcium. Calcium nitrate and chelated calcium are the safest sources of calcium to be applied as a spray. However spray applications of calcium are no substitute for proper nutrition and water management.

If calcium is best allocated by the plants xylem water conduction system, then keeping this system functioning optimally is the best course of action.

Editors note: This article was developed from a presentation created by Dr. Carl Rosen and Michelle Grabowski and delivered by Dr. Carl Rosen at the Upper Midwest Regional Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference.

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Source: <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/efans/ygnews/2013/02/tomato-blossom-end-rot---facts.html>

February 1, 2013

A Snowy Spenard Farmer's Market Display



Alpine Strawberry, Snow Peas, Iceberg Lettuce, Snow Crystals' Alyssum, and a book on Snow Mold - appropriate choices for a snowy opening day at the Spenard Farmer's Market, May 18th!

Photo by Julie Riley.



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News By Rosemary Kimball

We actually had our first warm day on May 24! It did feel good. It was appreciated big time because of the winter that wouldn't end and the spring that would never come. Never mind that it was 10 days late at my "green sheen" indicator at Solid Rock Bible Camp half way from Sterling to Soldotna. Next warmth indicator is where the dandelions bloom. After that, the lupine is the next indicator. But just two warm days in a row renews one's faith in Alaska for the summer.

The trouble with things melting is what comes out of the snow. I found a blue tarp on the lawn! Coming back from Margaret Simon's house in Nikiski, Kathy Wartinbee burst out in laughter. Someone was using blue tarps as a fence. Well why not? It's easier to string than wire.

Margaret was the most optimistic before the warm days:

"The tomato blossoms were happening because of my tap, tap, tapping to aid pollination. (I know that to be true as I snitched a ripe tomato...with permission of course).

The soil temps are running 49 to 50 degrees so planting this Memorial Weekend is out the window. Instead I've been enjoying cleaning up areas that I never get to this time of year and setting out the yard ornamentation in a relaxed mode. One must look for the positive. All my starts got moved to the side deck for the hardening off process. I'm optimistic it will not freeze tonight or tomorrow night or the next night....

Bird sounds are abundant. The swallows are here (and so are the mosquitos--saw my first one today); robins, juncos, white crown sparrow, and pine siskins. The lake has enough open water around the edge that we've seen mallards, golden eyes and mergansers. I've heard the loons but have yet to see them."

She's right about the bird noises. Here in Sterling it seems that we have more robins than usual and the varied thrushes are doing their thing but I haven't heard the other three thrushes we used to have. Lots of warblers though and that's nice. And for two years I haven't heard our wood frogs that we used to have in the duck pond.

A week before our first warm day Kathy wrote: "Burr! The Good News is it didn't snow this week and one of the zucchinis in the greenhouse has a tiny zucchini on it. The other news is the greenhouse is full of plants that want to be planted outside. Anyone have an idea if that will happen this summer? Other good news is that Fritz Creek Garden is open at its new location".

Something I noticed is that the Homer nursery is also doing some very interesting annuals. So if you're coming down this way, it's worth the stop just to look around.

It's at the top of the hill, on the left before you go into Homer.

At the same time Don, our local curmudgeon, wrote, "Too cold to transplant outside, greenhouse and house are overrun with plants. I guess I'll have a talk with Mr. Jim Beam and not worry about it".

That is one of the things that's happening to greenhouses with this weather...nobody is in the mood to buy, much less plant, and they have to warehouse plants which were becoming root bound.

Mark and I and two ride-alongs did the Valley Stomp on the cold 10th of May. Gray Owl in Palmer is the first stop always now. They have a variegated basil with really good flavor and grows like a small shrub and is a really nice plant. Another place that is going to be a regular is Perennial Gardens Nursery in Birchwood. Walking into their greenhouse is a big blast of color. Their artichokes are cheaper than anyone else's. What I liked was the sign saying to leave their lady bugs there. After coming home from a nursery down here with a white fly infestation, it was hard to remain honest.

My neighbor Mark's three figs dropped off and there went snackies.

Kudos to the crew that put together the wonderful new web site for the Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage. I sent the link out to my friends Outside because it is really neat!

P.S. By May 26, down here on the peninsula, the green sheen is here. Life is good.

A Nickel's Worth....cont. from page 1

Won't be long now and we will be enjoying garden tours. I'm looking forward to the tree tour at UAA on June 17th. MG Catherine Shenk and MG Pat Leary will lead a group around to see the huge variety of trees that will grow in our climate. My favorite are the Ussurian Pear tree near the Business Building and the Fir tree called Arizonica that is near the Health Building... oh yeah, the pin oak tree, too. Be sure to watch for updates in your email boxes on our upcoming tours. We have opportunities for more gardens to tour, too. If you would like to share yours, get a hold of Board Members Amy Olmstead and/or Barbara Baker as soon as you can, please. I'll look forward to seeing you and your garden this summer.

Yahoo... summer's here and I am so happy!





Bird Chatter

-- Greg Kalal is looking for the MGs who ordered 'Russian Banana' seed potatoes from him.

-- A memorial service for MG Pat DeRoche will be held at Russian Jack Chalet on Thursday, June 27 from 5 - 7 p.m. Pat passed away in January.

-- MGs Christine & Trent Sexton are moving to Tennessee after selling jams and jellies during the Seward Mt. Marathon Race weekend. Sniffle.

-- The Alaska Botanical Garden now has paved pathways making ABG Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible.

-- Jeff Lowenfel's new book, **Teaming with Nutrients**, is a winner and includes a fabulous chapter on organic soil amendments. Signed copies are available at ABG.

-- AMGA members chuckled when Maria D'Agostino told how during her interview for the municipal forester position she was asked how she would handle 5,000 down trees and residents wanting to help with their chain-saws.

-- Julie Riley and Annie Nevaldine are headed to Iceland to see if the rumors are true, 'Was Alaska lupine seed really used in the country for revegetation?' They'll be back June 20 with the answer.

Anchorage Senior Activity Center Plant Sale

The Anchorage Senior Activity Center is having a plant sale June 8th from 10-5. What we sell directly benefits the center. Donations of mostly perennials are most welcome. Pricing will happen on Friday June 7th at 1:00. We have lots of rocks for paths and stepping stones and small elevation changes. Most are one man rocks and round but there is a large variety of shapes and sizes. Come pick out your favorites and make a donation to the center. Minimum price is \$2.00.

Bonnie Tisler, MG

Gardening Help Wanted

I own two properties in Anchorage and am looking for someone to do some gardening this spring and summer. I would like someone to help me do some plantings and maintenance for a number of days each month. My budget is limited. I am looking for referrals and suggestions as well.

Michele - 351-2004

Pioneer Home Volunteers Needed

The AMGA maintains the garden beds in front of the Pioneer Home. Jane Baldwin & Camille Williams have been diligently gathering plants & preparing the soil. To volunteer for a week of deadheading & watering, please contact Lynne Opstad: LOpstad@gci.net Remember, you won't work alone - there are always 2 people signed up for the week.

Pollinating Without Bees

By Marylynn L. Kostick

Like many Alaskans, I start my first seeds in February/ March and am ready to plant as the snow melts away come May. This year, however, on May 18th I found myself (and garden beds) in 9.5 inches of snow and have yet to see a bee dancing outside let alone around my plants as they acclimate in the afternoon sun. What to do with cucumbers, zucchini, and others presenting their vibrant yellow flowers and rich orange pollen?

Flowering plants require that pollination occur for the plant that is pollinated to fertilize and reproduce. The pollen, produced by the anther of a flower's stamen, is the male gametophyte that is transferred to the female gametophyte, located in the ovule of the female's stigma. This is pollination. Successful fertilization requires that both male and female gametophytes coalesce. For some plants the efforts of this process is lessened as a flower will have both pollen-containing stamen and ovule-containing stigma. For others, a vector of some flavor is required. This is where my journey began.

There are many methods of pollinating our plants without the aid of the faithful insects and birds and passing mammals and wind. Hormone sprays that encourage cytokinesis (cell division), pollinating wands that vibrate their way about flowers, paintbrushes that bring out the artist in the newly discovered "worker bee", Q-tips and beyond! Never before did I consider pollinating the plants myself, but when forced to face the cold white facts, I passed on the pricier methods and took to the paintbrush and the stamens themselves.

For effective pollination I needed to (1) identify the male and the female flowers of the plant. This was relatively easy - the female was already bearing the start of the fruits while the male was not. Using the paintbrush, my next task was to (2) obtain pollen from the stamen of the male flower. Affirmation of this step was obvious with pollen from the zucchini - the cucumber's pollen was not so willing to show itself on the brush's bristles. Nonetheless, (3) transferring the pollen to the stigma was done by lightly touching it with the pollinated brush.



As a mini-experiment with the cucumbers, I tried a second method of removing the entire male flower, folding back its petals exposing the stamen, and coalescing stamen and stigma. I am very happy to say that out of the dozen potential cucumbers and handful of zucchini I attempted to pollinate my first time I had a 100 percent response

rate! To educate myself on the pollination's alacrity to affect the potential fruit I left one of each, cucumber and zucchini females, without pollen. Within a week a marked difference between the pollinated and non-pollinated (see picture; right and left, respectively) was observed. Greater respect for the birds and the bees and a more intimate relationship with my cucumber and zucchini developed after this endeavor. Bring on the bees!

Winter Injury on Plants...cont. from page 2

The plant itself

- Hardiness of the plant (genetically determined)
- How well the plant is established
- Condition of the plant; dormant, partly dormant, stressed

Types of winter damage

- Branch and flower bud damage may occur when the plant is not fully dormant or just not hardy enough to withstand the temperatures.
- Sun scald of leaves on some evergreens may occur when there is bright sunny weather combined with severe or extended cold. The leaves heat up during the day and then rapidly freeze at night, rupturing cell walls in the leaf and killing it. Often this happens on the south side of the plant. Snow cover can make this worse by reflecting more light during the day.
- Windburn damages leaves when they lose water and cannot replace it because the ground is too cold or frozen. This damage is usually seen on the side of the plant exposed to the wind. Exposure to sun can add to the problem through sun scald.
- Sun scald or frost splitting of bark is much like leaf scald, where the bark warms during the day and freezes at night, causing splitting. When there is no snow cover, the splitting may occur at the crown of the plants, killing the roots.
- Roots in above ground containers [or heaving soils] may be frozen and killed; often plants' roots are less hardy than their tops.
- Branches and limbs may be broken by heavy snowfalls or ice storms.

Caring for Winter Injured Plants

- Is it still alive? Before removing a damaged plant, check to see if it is still alive. You can scrape the bark with your fingernail or a small knife. If the branch is green or white under the bark, the plant is still alive. You may have to check several places on the plant to find live wood; often the outer branches may be more damaged.
- Wait until new growth begins on live wood to do anything for damaged plants.
 - Prune back to healthy wood, cutting out only the damaged wood.
 - Water and fertilize the plant during the growing season, making sure it is not further stressed.
 - Mulch to maintain soil moisture.

To avoid winter injury in the future:

- Choose plants that are appropriate for your soil and climate conditions.
- Keep plants healthy.
- Plant broadleaf evergreen plants in areas that get winter shade and are wind protected.
- Wrap trunks of young trees with light colored tree wrap in the fall.
- Do not fertilize, prune, or water heavily late in the season to avoid stimulating lush growth that will not go dormant easily.
- Apply a loose, organic mulch around plants.
- Move plants in containers into unheated shelters.
- Insulate pots that cannot be moved by wrapping them in insulating materials, or burying them in soil or sawdust.

Gardening has many pitfalls, and winter damage is one of them. The best preparation is having healthy, well sited, non-stressed plants. Even then, the most experienced gardener will occasionally lose plants due to unusual weather.

Garden Event Calendar

Saturday, June 1st

**Wildflower Garden Club Plant Sale: 9am-4pm, 7435 Old Harbor Ave.

**Mat-Su Master Gardeners Plant Sale

**Anchorage garden club: Plant Sale, 9am - 5pm

**Festival of Flowers: This fun-filled festival features live music, VIP wine tasting, wine garden, photo booth, art fair, master gardeners, garden tours and flower power gardening sale! - 11am - 6 pm, Town Square, Anchorage

June 2nd - 8th

National Garden Week

Monday, June 3rd

Mat-Su Master Gardener Meeting: 7pm Library Planter, Palmer Library

Tuesday, June 4th

Central Peninsula Garden Club on Tuesday, June 4th, 7 pm at the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Bldg., on Kalifornsky Beach Road between Soldotna and Kenai. Free and open to the public, there will be refreshments. Program Paradise on Earth: the beautiful Flowers of Kashmir. Chris Chadwell, Freelance Lecturer, Himalayan Consultant and owner of Chadwell Seeds. Contact: Marion Nelson, 907 283 4632 or mmkn@ptialaska.net

Wednesday, June 5th

Mat-Su Master Gardeners: Demo Plot Planting

Thursday, June 6th

Alaska Wildflower Garden Club: Field trip to Arctic Valley

Friday, June 7th

**Alaska Botanical Garden: First Friday, featured artist Elise Rose. 5:30-7:30pm

**Program Paradise on Earth: the beautiful Flowers of Kashmir. Chris Chadwell, Freelance Lecturer, Himalayan Consultant and owner of Chadwell Seeds. 7 pm at the Islands and Oceans building in Homer. Contact: Teena Garay, garay@acsalaska.net

Saturday, June 8th

Alaska Rock Garden Society: Garden Tour

Saturday, June 15th

Chris Chadwell will be presenting Paradise on Earth: the beautiful flowers of Kashmir. Free and open to the public 2pm at St. John's Lutheran Church, Palmer

*For a more complete calendar, visit our web page:
alaskamastergardeners.org*

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

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AMGA

P.O. Box 221403

Anchorage, AK 99522-1403

If you have questions or want to make address or email corrections, please contact Jane Baldwin at:
jbaldwin@alaska.net

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:
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MG Julie Jorgenson gets into the spirit of things for the May 18th opening day at Spenard Farmers Market. See second photo on page 4.

Photo by Julie Riley.

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