

Florets
Twin City Garden Club
May 2025



Announcements

Meeting: 1 pm Tuesday May 20, 2025 at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2101 S. Prospect, Champaign

Program: Champaign County Forest Preserves

Presenter: Jennifer Wick

Uncover the natural beauty of east-central Illinois with staff from the Champaign County Forest Preserve District. We'll introduce the seven forest preserves of Champaign County, highlight key points of interest, and discuss how the forest preserves benefit not just Champaign County, but also the broader region of east-central Illinois.

Horticulture Tip of the month

Refreshment break Hostesses: Martha Tinsley and Tori Corkery

Floral Arrangement: Martha Tinsley

Penny Pines jar will be present plus Plant/Seed Exchange

Business meeting:

Call to Order

President's Opening Remarks

Recording Secretary Minutes/Approval

Treasurer's Report

Corresponding Secretary Report

Standing Committee Reports

Membership	Facebook	Sunshine
Program	Website	Philanthropy
Yearbook	Social	Sunshine

Old Business: call to vote on increase in membership dues from \$20 to \$30

New Business

Adjourn

Birthdays: Mike Skreiner, 5/4; Frances Simpson, 5/9. 5/10; Donna Edwards, 5/19,
Erin Hardway, 5/23, Heather Munro, 5/24 Susie Kautzer, 5/31, Jeffrey Matlak 5/31

Membership: Welcome our two newest members:

Heather Munro	Jeffrey Matlak
2917 Susan Stone Dr	2917 Susan Stone Dr
Urbana IL 61802-7015	Urbana IL 61802-7015
309-837-5490	309-255-1471
hmunro11@gmail.com	jgmatlak@gmail.com
Birthday: May 24	Birthday: May 31

IN THE GARDEN with Groundcover plants

In an area once covered by tall grass prairie, followed by farm land, neighborhood homes now dominate with traditional street side areas being grassy and backside areas either more grass or vegetable/flower gardens. Trim cut grass lawns are attractive – no mess, but lots of fuss – mowing, weeding, fertilizing. Essentially it is groundcover, covering a large amount of what was bare ground after home construction was completed. A recent posting in Facebook highlighted the use of a grouping of groundcovers that could inspire alternative approaches.

Bad: Groundcovers can be aggressive and at many times are considered to be weeds, much like my assumptions regarding creeping Charlie which had nearly covered the whole area of my backyard upon my first years at my current location. Does have pretty lavender flowers in early spring that can belie its true nature, and therefore thought it was an okay plant. It is extremely difficult to eliminate. However, in the right place, it could be beneficial – certainly outcompetes grass (my near neighbors seem to favor that approach).



Good: creeping jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*) also called moneywort with small yellow-green leaves and may have small yellow flowers during the summer. Can be good in the right location: had tried this as a replacement for creeping Charlie and thus started in a grassy area, which did not encourage its growth – best left to start in a non-competitive area and allow to spread as it will, but not overly so.

Good: Lamium spp. for example *Lamium maculatum*. Also called spotted dead nettle, said to resemble stinging nettle, however, it carries no stingers, therefore termed “dead”. It is pretty, even without the pink, lavender or white blooms in spring and early summer. Hummingbirds will also visit if nothing else in the garden is ready. Another plus, does tolerate shady areas, able to fill in well under shrubs and full shade trees. Not so good: will form dense root mats that can outcompete some of the spring ephemeral perennials.

Good: Sweet woodruff, *Galium odoratum*, “odor” for its sweet fragrance. Very pretty with white flowers mid-spring but somewhat aggressive – one small plant can easily triple in size in one short growing season. Does do well in shady areas, claimed to be drought tolerant but does need a shower if located in an area that is partly sunny, especially from the west in the hot evenings of summer.



Good: Stonecrops, so named due to their habit of growing amongst stones. These are part of the sedum family, many of which are tall (6 or more inches). Stonecrops are shorter and do not exceed 3-4 inches. not too aggressive, though a small plant will grow enough to cover at least a square foot area in its first season. Very attractive and so many varieties with brilliant colors: Angelina (yellow), Dragon's blood (reddish), plus purple, blue and of course, green.



There are more than a few types of plants that are considered as groundcovers that are not short, instead these range in the 6-10inch range such as pachysandras and “snow on the mountain”. In addition, considering that central Illinois was dominated by tall grass prairie, the groundcovers that are native to this area are also in the taller range.

Do know that groundcovers are perennial type plants, not annuals: flowering varieties may have only brief times, but the plant itself does not wither and hibernate until the cold days of winter. Additionally, does not follow the adage of waiting a few years before “leaping”, being fast growers even in their first year: leave space for their spread. Consider placement, using the plants as “fillers” and “framers”, covering empty spaces (instead of mulching) near shrubs and shady trees and along boundary markers such as driveways and fences.

Not sure how I stumbled onto the notion of using lamiums, etc. (Midwest Gardener on WILL-TV?) but when doing a few google searches, find that this is now a highly touted approach by many state extension services including the Univ of Illinois Extension Service where info on some of the native types of groundcover for this area can be found: search Good Growing by Chris Enroth, “Designing from the ground up.”

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