

Florets
Twin City Garden Club
February 2024

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meeting: 1 pm Tuesday February 20 2024

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2101 S. Prospect, Champaign

Program: Spring Beauties: Vernal Wildflowers of Central Illinois

Presenter: James Ellis

After a long winter, many people anxiously await the new growth of spring. Please join us to learn about common spring wildflowers found in the region, how to identify them, and where to find them. Jamie Ellis is the natural areas coordinator for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Trained in botany, plant ecology, and natural resource management at the University of Illinois and the University of Michigan, he has published articles on prairie ecology, conservation, and management for both academic and general audiences. He is a long-time member and volunteer with Grand Prairie Friends, a natural areas conservation organization and land trust based in east-central Illinois.

Flower Show 101 (from Tori Corkery) We will discuss the flower show committee positions and ask people to sign up one or more of the positions. Complete job descriptions of the positions will be provided.

Refreshment break

Hostesses: Kathy Marren and Tori Corkery

Floral arrangement by: Tori Corkery

Penny Pines Jar will be present

Membership: Reminder, dues for the coming year are payable to the Treasurer, Tori Corkery

Birthdays: Kathy Guido, 2/19; Patty Stoffel, 2/21; Vida Mazzocco, 2/26

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	

Unfinished Business

Adjourn

Local Events of Interest:

Central Illinois Orchid Society Show and Sale

Saturday March 2 2024 at Hessel Park Christian Reformed Church, 700 W. Kirby, Champaign

Champaign County Master Gardener and Horticulture Program

Online event: "Top trial plants 2024 and before" Monday March 18th, 12 p

Registration required, reserve at: <https://extension.illinois.edu/events/2024-03-18-top-trial-plants>

Plus, GET READY FOR Put these on your calendar !

Twin City Garden Club Annual Plant Sale

Saturday May 4 2024 8a-12 noon, parking lot of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Twin City Garden Club Flower Show

"As Time Goes By" (an NGC Small Standard Flower Show)

Saturday June 29 2024 Fellowship Hall Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

The show schedule will be distributed at our meeting in March.

Major note of interest for those submitting specimens in the horticultural division:

A cut specimen from the garden plant is made for submission. The plant itself must have been in possession for at least 90 days before the show. If the plant was acquired after March 31 2024 it would not be eligible for display in this year's show. The 90-day rule also holds for the house plants. For the arboreal submissions, the possession rule is for at least 6 months.

IN THE GARDEN WITH THE THREE SISTERS by Cheryl Weber

Did you know corn, beans, and squash are called the “**Three Sisters**”? Many Native American tribes planted this trio together because they thrive like three inseparable sisters. This is companion planting at its best, with three plants growing symbiotically to deter weeds and pests, enrich the soil, and support each other. Instead of today’s single rows of a single vegetable, this method of interplanting introduced biodiversity, which does many things—from attracting pollinators to making the land richer.

Each of the sisters contributes something to the planting. Together, the sisters provide a balanced diet from a single planting.

As older sisters often do, the corn offers the beans necessary support.

- The pole beans, the giving sister, pull nitrogen from the air and bring it to the soil to benefit all three.
- As the beans grow through the tangle of squash vines and wind their way up the cornstalks into the sunlight, they hold the sisters close together.
- The large leaves of the sprawling squash protect the threesome by creating living mulch that shades the soil, keeping it cool and moist and preventing weeds.
- The prickly squash leaves also keep away raccoons and other pests, which don’t like to step on them.

Together, the three sisters provide both sustainable soil fertility as well as a healthy diet. Perfection!

Companion gardening is another way to carry on the “Three Sisters” gardening philosophy. Many believe that certain plant combinations have extraordinary (even mysterious) powers to help each other grow. Scientific study of the process, called companion planting, has confirmed that some combinations have real benefits unique to those pairings.

Companions help each other grow and use garden space efficiently. Some couplings also prevent pest problems. Plants can repel harmful organisms or lure the bad bugs away from more delicate species.

Examples of combinations plants that do way better, together:

Roses and Garlic Gardeners have been planting [garlic](#) with roses for eons since the bulbs can help to repel rose pests. Garlic chives are probably just as repellent, and their small purple or white flowers in late spring look great with rose flowers and foliage.

Marigolds and Melons Certain marigold varieties control nematodes in the roots of melon without using chemical treatments.

Tomatoes and Cabbage [Tomatoes](#) repel diamondback moth larvae, which can chew large holes in cabbage leaves.

Cucumbers and Nasturtiums The nasturtium's vining stems make them a great companion rambling among your growing cucumbers and squash plants, suggests Sally Jean Cunningham, master gardener and author of [Great Garden Companions](#). Nasturtiums reputedly repel cucumber beetles, but they can also serve as a habitat for predatory insects like spiders and ground beetles.

Cabbage and Dill "Dill is a great companion for cabbage family plants, such as [broccoli](#) and brussels sprouts," Cunningham says. The cabbages support the floppy dill, while the dill attracts the helpful wasps that control [cabbage worms](#) and other pests.

Lettuce and Tall Flowers Nicotiana (flowering tobacco) and [cleome \(spider flower\)](#) give lettuce the light shade it grows best in.

Radishes and Spinach Planting radishes among your [spinach](#) will draw leafminers away from the [healthy greens](#). The damage the leafminers do to radish leaves doesn't prevent the radishes from growing nicely underground.

Potatoes and Sweet Alyssum The sweet alyssum has tiny flowers that attract delicate beneficial insects, such as predatory wasps. Plant sweet alyssum alongside bushy crops like [potatoes](#), or let it spread to form a living ground cover under arching plants like broccoli. Bonus: The alyssum's sweet fragrance will scent your garden all summer long.

Cauliflower and Dwarf Zinnias The nectar from the dwarf [zinnias](#) lures ladybugs and other predators that help protect [cauliflower](#).

Collards and Catnip Studies have found that planting catnip alongside collards reduces flea-beetle damage on the collards. The fragrant plant [may also help repel mosquitoes](#).

For more on this subject and a beautiful insight into the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers, be sure to read **Braiding Sweetgrass** by botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer.

"As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Kimmerer, a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, brings these lenses of knowledge together to show that the awakening of a wider ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings are we capable of understanding the generosity of the earth, and learning to give our own gifts in return." ---from Good Reads review.