

Florets
Twin City Garden Club
April 2023



Announcements

Spring Luncheon Tuesday April 18 at 12 noon

Manzella's Italian Patio, 115 South First, Champaign

Join us for food, friendship and 2023-24 Club Officer Installation

Memorial Service for Donna Wagner: Saturday, April 22

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Visitation 11-noon;

Service at noon, followed by lunch.

All are welcome to attend.

Membership: Welcome our newest member: Donica Halcom, please add her contact info to your yearbook:

113C W. Tomaras Ave. Savoy IL 61874

217-259-2151

donicahalcom@gmail.com

April birthdays: Lisa Sur, 4/3; Cheryl Weber, 4/8; Dottie Frye, 4/17; Donica Halcom, 4/17

GET READY! TCGC annual plant sale Saturday May 6 8 a – 12 noon

Need pots? Contact Tori at corkery@illinois.edu

Need help digging? Contact Nicole this coming week, would like to have all those dug up by Sat, April 29th reservationfor5@gmail.com

Plan on bringing plants to the church on Thursday, the 4th or Friday, the 5th

Can leave them at the front portico. (Don't have to meet up with anyone)

For all who will be at the plant sale, plan on wearing the club t-shirt. If you need one (or an extra), contact Nicole now and she will bring them to the luncheon on Tuesday.

To help carry items sold at the sale, please save any small shallow boxes and used plastic bags. Just bring them directly to the sale on Saturday

Mark your calendar

District IV Annual Meeting

Monday, May 22, 2023

Country Cottage Farm, 627 County Rd 2800 N, Fisher 61843

The District IV Annual meeting will include a short business meeting and program, along with garden tours and catered lunch. More information will be coming soon!

Local wildflower walks

Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve in Mahomet: Saturday, April 15 9a

an easy (~1 hour) walk along the Rayburn-Purnell Trail. Event is free, but advance registration is required. Register at <https://mckinleycu.org/green-team-events/>

Meet in the parking lot outside of the Museum of the Grand Prairie, 950 N. Lombard St., Mahomet, IL

Busey Woods Wildflower Walk: Monday, April 17, 5-6:30pm

Meet at the Anita Purves Nature Center. Registration not required.

More local plant sales (see also the list from last month's Florets)

Allerton Park 10th Annual Plant Sale Fundraiser

May 5-7 in the Main Parking Lot

annuals, veggies, perennials, natives, arranged hanging baskets, Allerton Bluebells (limited supply) and more. More details at <https://allerton.illinois.edu/events/online-plant-sale/>

Sola Gratia Annual Spring Plant Sale

2200 S. Philo Rd, Urbana

Fri May 12-Sun May 21, 9a-5p daily

Urbana vegetable and herb starts grown in our own greenhouses plus annual and perennial flowers, ground covers, and grasses, and hanging baskets from Country Arbors.

IN THE GARDEN waiting for the leap

As green shoots poke up, anticipation grows as well. Daylilies are starting, where are the hosta shoots or irises or milkweeds? -- they will follow. Even slower to appear are the summer perennials – the rudbeckias, coneflowers and asters. But then, where are the newer additions made the previous year?

Just like pollinators we are attracted to bright colorful flowers, and thus we end up at the local garden store filled with glorious blooming plants, or we peruse the catalogs arriving by mail/email and again are presented with beautiful pictures of the final, finished product. Perhaps some better alternatives are available such as local area plant sales with locally grown specimens. There are negatives/positives with any of these and success or failure to thrive can occur with any of these choices.

Don't forget the background check: beautiful blooms, but is the plant a hardy perennial for zone 5. Note that there are many suggestions that the plant hardiness zones are tending to shift due to changing climate conditions. At this point, personally have had more failures with some types of plants that claim zone 5, especially hyssops. Advice from UI extension specialist, Ryan Pankau is that hardy at zone 4 is the best bet.

Notes are always made to light and water requirements, but less emphasis on soil types. Central Illinois is a prime location for rich organic soils in most locations, but with many exceptions, including many of our own home areas which may have been scraped clean of its topsoil prior to house construction. As our gardens have grown, many of us have certainly used mulching and composting to amend the soil. Attention does need to be heeded for many plants that are listed as native perennials, not all of these require loamy soil and will grow well in clay-type and rocky soils, such as penstemons, spiderworts and milkweeds. Also note there are numerous hybrid forms of many native plants which may not have the same growth characteristics as the prairie native forms.

For plants that are potted, loosen the plant from the pot evaluating the root system and potting medium. Good roots will be white and firm, remove any decayed or mushy roots. If the plant is encircled in a mass of roots (i.e., pot-bound) trim some of these roots away. For those who may order online and receive bare root plants, follow the provider's directions, plus check out an excellent source of info at <https://nativeplantherald.prairienursery.com/> and use the search option to locate transplant bare root plants which includes good illustrations from bulb to taproot.

Mark the location and mark it well, too easy for plastic or wooden markers to get lost, especially during a spring cleanup. Usually did a thorough fall clean-up in my garden, but now, waiting until spring, do find those dry stalks are good markers. Also note bloom times: spring perennials will emerge early, bloom, fade and some even vanish until the next year. Summer and fall perennials can be slow at emergence. If plantlets pop up that don't resemble a true dandelion or other obnoxious weed, leave it alone.

And there are those types that propagate by seed or runners, popping up in various places such as these Great Blue Lobelias (*L. siphilitica*) which actually vanished after their first year, but somehow managed to proliferate in their "third" year. Patience sometimes is rewarded.ⁱ

ⁱ Note: Both Great Blue and the Cardinal Lobelia will be available from the Grand Prairie Friends Plant Sale this year.

