



Evergreen Garden Club

The Wild Iris

Volume 17, Issue 10 June 2004

A Word from the President...

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EGC 2003-2004 Board Members

President:

Tricia Scott

Vice Presidents:

Karla Briggs

Beth Feldkamp

Secretary:

Joan Reynolds

Treasurer:

Lori Lapp

The **Wild Iris** is a free monthly publication for members of the Evergreen Garden Club.

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month from Sept. to June at Church of the Hills, Buffalo Park Rd, Evergreen at 9:15 am. All are welcome.

For **membership** information please contact Lori Lapp at 303-838-8360 or membership@evergreengardenclub.org

Newsletter Contributions are due by the 20th of each month to Kathi Grider at 303-670-6909 or wegriders@msn.com

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Dear Members,
Hard to believe that our last meeting for this year is so soon! It seems like it was just the other day we were at the beginning of this year. As they say, "Time flies when you are having fun." I have been incredibly blessed to have such great people to work with. Beth, Karla, Lori, Joan and Louise have made this year a treat and made it all seem so easy.

Whenever something came up, we all pitched in together and made whatever had to happen-happen! I thank them for all their good work and for the way they did it with a smile and a joke usually. We are well known at British Invasion as a noisy group!

I would like to express a huge thanks to Beth, Kathi and to Melinda for all their hard work each month to get out our newsletter. Thank you!!!

Also I need to thank all the committee members doing their duties

Each person who brought food, helped put away the chairs and tables, saw something that needed to be done and did it- I thank you on behalf of each of us. All the parts that are done complete the puzzle that makes us a club.

As I said, we should all be proud of our club and what an impact we have on our community. With the plant sale coming, and next year our fund raising efforts going towards a garden tour, we are able to keep giving back to Evergreen.

Even the gardens we tend give a special place in our town for people to go to and relax, enjoy... and smell the roses!

Remember to tell all your friends about the Plant Sale on June 5th at the Grove at Hiwan. There will be some incredible plants for sale there! A special **thank you** to Melinda for generously donating her Mailbox Etc. copies for all the plant sale flyers!!

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Membership Meeting - June 8th, 2004

Peony Party at the home of John & Mary Pinder

John & Mary Pinder have spent years collecting eighty varieties of peonies and have become experts on the species. We are invited to peruse their garden while enjoying tea & cookies.

There is limited parking, so please check for meeting instructions in Tricia's President's Message pg. 2.



Garden Club News

Calendar for June 5 Evergreen Garden Club Plant Sale at the Grove at Hiwan Homestead

Please drop off your plants at June Andrews home on Wednesday, June 2 anytime after 10 a.m.
Plants will be priced on Thursday, June 3, at the Andrews home from 10 a.m. until ????
"Stragglers" and final preparations for the sale will be done on Friday, June 4.

Please bring extra cardboard or plastic flats and plastic grocery bags on the day of the sale for helping our buyers carry their goods home. And don't forget to invite your friends and neighbors!
This is going to be one fantastic plant sale!

Directions: June Andrews
29206 Histed Dr.
303-674-0365

From Safeway heading towards downtown, turn left on Ponderosa, it dead ends at top. Turn right onto Aspen Ln. short distance Histed is on your left. Gray house with blue dooror call June!

(Continued from President's Message pg.1)

Our next meeting will be at a beautiful peony garden. We will all meet at the Park and Ride in Bergen Park to carpool to the garden at 9:10 a.m. or if you wish at our second rendezvous spot, the Green Mountain Presbyterian Church in Lakewood at 9:45 a.m.

Directions:

I-70 East towards Denver

Take Exit#259 Golden /Morrison Hwy 40

At the first light after the exit go RIGHT (Towards Morrison and Red Rocks)

LEFT at Dinosaur Ridge (The Hog Back) Continue over I-70 Past the Lakewood sign

LEFT at the first light Bear Creek Blvd (Also says Alameda Parkway)

Go past Green Mountain Drive light

RIGHT at Mississippi (Also says Ohio)

RIGHT again into the parking lot of the church-Green Mountain Presbyterian Church.

At this point we will pair down to fewer cars to go to Mary and John Pinder's home
1467 Ward Street

Bring your camera; have cookies & tea... there will be so much to see. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting. Hope your garden is growing... and not just the weeds!

Tricia

P.S. Please remember your dues! If you cannot make it to our meeting please mail them into our P.O. Box 1393 before June 30th. Thanks.

Minutes of the May 11th, 2004 Meeting

Following a cleanup in the various gardens, members met at the Church of the Hills for lunch and the meeting. President Tricia Scott thanked all that were present for their hard work in the gardens. She passed around a sign up sheet for additional people to help with hospitality next year and a copy of the membership address information for everyone to verify that the information is correct for next year's yearbook.

Treasurer Lori Lapp reported that we have \$543.27 in checking and \$7851.78 in savings for a total of \$8395.05.

Secretary Joan Reynolds had received no correspondence. She thanked Kathi Grider for filling in for her last month. Joan reported that Patty Prisbey-Campbell (Bill Campbell's widow) is in need of our help to get the gardens at her home in shape. Bill had just begun teaching Patty about gardening, so her knowledge is limited. A sign up was passed around for those interested in helping her out. We had a minute or so of silence as members remembered Bill and his many contributions to our club.

Joan announced that if there was anyone else from the club interested in being on the club's Relay For Life team to contact her. Friends and family will fill out our team if no more members wish to participate.

Co-Vice President Beth Feldkamp reported that we will meet at the RTD Park and Ride for our next meeting to travel to Green Mountain to tour her cousin's beautiful peony gardens. A beautiful book on peonies has been purchased as a gift to our hostess as a thank you.

Louise Mounsey of the nominating committee reported the slate of officers was to remain the same with Tricia Scott as President, Beth Feldkamp and Karla Briggs as Co-Vice Presidents, Lori Lapp as Treasurer and Joan Reynolds as Secretary. Nominations were asked for from the floor for each position. No others were nominated or volunteered. The board was voted in by the membership. Tricia encouraged anyone interested in leading us next year to attend the board meetings, which are held the first Tuesday of each month.

Tricia thanked Beth and Kathi for their hard work on this month's Wild Iris (again). Irma Wolf reported that the Traffic Circle Garden is overrun with weeds and that the three volunteers were only able to complete about ¼ of the cleanup. They have agreed to meet again the following Tuesday. They are planning to add more pea gravel to help reduce more weeds returning and to also act as further mulching. Irma also reported that the annual Weed Pull at the Lake is scheduled for Saturday, June 12. Contact Irma if you wish to be on her team or show up at 8:30 a.m. Free t-shirts will likely be provided. She also encouraged members to be aware of attractive gardens which might be candidates for next year's Garden Tour during the growing season.

Diann Yakel is moving to Texas and the 'Mahonia' Garden at the Post Office needs a new caretaker. If anyone is interested, please contact Tricia Scott.

Our annual dues are due. Membership is \$20 for individuals, \$25 for families and \$50 for businesses. If you have not paid, please bring you check to the next meeting or mail to P.O. Box 1393, Evergreen, CO 80437. The cut off date for getting in the yearbook will be June 30. No exceptions! Lori will have membership cards at the next meeting so members can enjoy the discount at Evergreen Nursery. Those not attending will have theirs mailed to them. Members were reminded to have their cards with them and show the card before the purchases are rung up.

Evergreen Nursery does not know who is and who isn't in the club and we should be prepared to show our card or not expect a discount.

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Tricia asked anyone that has a greenhouse to please take pictures of the various stages of seeds and seedlings throughout the growing season.

As we look to next year's programs, members were asked to write any suggestions they had for programs on the cards provided at each table to help Karla and Beth know what was of interest to the membership. Lori has already begun preparing the budget for next year and requested that anyone with budget needs to please contact her. We are planning a potluck for next September's meeting and those that have pictures of their gardens or greenhouse happenings are asked to bring them to share.

June Andrews passed out maps to her house to bring plants for the plant sale. Please bring your donations on Wednesday, June 2 for pricing on June 3. The sale will be held June 5 at Hiwan Homestead in the Grove.

Mary Dickhoff (Earth Day Organizer) was visiting and passed out a great recycling guide. Violet Aandres was also visiting and announced a Garden Tour in the Pinecliff and Nederland area on July 10. For more information, call Violet at (303) 642-3356. The business portion of the meeting was adjourned.

Tricia Scott then gave a wonderful demonstration on topiary. She had an overgrown ivy, which she transformed from an unruly mess to a stunning framed topiary using only her skill, no fear of the 'manhandling' the ivy and a coat hanger. She also had two pre-prepared pots with sticks cemented into them. She added florist foam & clipped some beautiful bi-colored greens into beautiful 'balls' above the pots with the kind assistance of Lyn Gilliland helping to cut the greens. She offered tons of tips and alternative suggestions as she continued creating these unique topiaries. The membership was impressed with her skill and quick hands as she inspired us to be creative with simple materials. The topiaries were auctioned off, along with a huge vase from the arrangement that the garden club had sent to Church of the Hills. Door prizes were drawn and tired, full, and freshly inspired members adjourned until next month.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Reynolds, Secretary

Homemade Garlic Pepper Spray

Here's a recently published recipe for homemade garlic pepper spray to deter mosquitoes and other insects attracted to certain kinds of vegetation: Using gloves and protection for your eyes, blend two bulbs of garlic and two hot peppers (hotter the better) in a blender 1/2 full of water. Strain the solids and add enough water to the garlic/pepper juice to make one gallon of concentrate. Use 1/4 cup of concentrate per gallon of spray or you can cut it in half as well. But the first batch is the CONCENTRATE, not the spray. It's powerful stuff. Keep it up, and label it as you would any garden spray.

Once we become interested in the progress of the plants in our care, their development becomes a part of the rhythm of our own lives and we are refreshed by it. ~Thalassa Cruso

A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it above all it teaches entire trust. ~Gertrude Jekyll



Over The Garden Fence *By Karla Briggs*

SMOKIN' IN THE GARDEN

Some of you gentle readers may remember an article I wrote about my favorite tree the "Russian Hawthorne". I am now going to reveal my favorite perennial, the "Prairie-Smoke". Like the Hawthorne, Smokey is a plant for all seasons.

Prairie-Smoke is a perennial rhizome, native to western North America. The leaves are about eight inches long, pinnately-parted growing from a rosette. The flowering stalk is about twelve inches tall, usually has three flowers; hence the species name *Geum triflorum*. The flower buds are lavender, maroon colored and they nod up and down in the breeze. The flowers bloom white in early summer but that is not the best part of the process. Late summer the each blossom develops a plum of seeds that resemble a puff of smoke or old man's whiskers. The plums glisten in the sunlight and look bejeweled with the morning dew or rain.

I love that Smokey always has something to offer. From beginning to end of the growing season the Prairie-Smoke is interesting. The plant grows in sun and part shade with little water. I have found it to be very adaptable. I have had the best success growing Smokey on the west side of the greenhouse, shaded in the morning and bathed in sun in the afternoon.

Last fall my neighbors and I were collecting wildflowers and leaves to dry and use for dried flower pictures. It was during my search for colorful and interesting foliage that I came to declare Smokey my favorite perennial of all time. The serrated leaves were a gorgeous yellow, orange and red, with beautiful texture and nearly flawless structure.

Smokey has survived five winters and comes back stronger and bigger each spring. The plant has such character it is part of the rose family but bears no resemblance to its relatives. Visitors to the garden invariably ask about Smokey and take note to add it to their garden.

I suppose my true connection to the plant is the fact that the plums of seeds resemble my messy gardening hairstyle all blown and sticking straight up. So smoke em' if you got em', and if you don't have em' go get a Smokey for your garden.

Karla

HORTICULTURE

No-water gardens

Horticulturists giving low-moisture plantings one hosing, walking away
By Sheba R. Wheeler Denver Post Staff Writer

It's just too hard for most people to believe. Could a garden watered only once by humans truly flourish?

When the rumors started circulating last year in popular chat rooms like Boulder Garden Net about a "no-water" garden at the Colorado Springs Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, garden experts to nursery owners were blown away.

"It seemed like this really outrageous idea," said Diana Capen, co-owner of the Perennial Favorites shop in Rye, southwest of Pueblo. "It was watered once when it was planted in the beginning of the worst drought ever recorded in history, never watered again and survived? It was amazing to me."

And now Aurora horticultural specialist Jeff Tejral hopes to shake things up by replicating the zoo's no-water garden at a lower elevation and in amended soil. Tejral is planting this month in a garden bed at the Griswold Water Treatment Plant. He will water once and then walk away, hinging the garden's fate on Mother Nature's precipitation and the hardiness of some of Colorado's most common plant varieties.

Most gardeners tend to overlook the tag identifying day lilies, penstemons, purple coneflowers and other favorite species as low-moisture plants. When the sprinklers get turned on to water the bluegrass, the garden usually gets drenched as well.

Garden writer Marcia Tatroe has spent the past four months lecturing to stunned audiences across the West about her garden, planted in 1988, that gets watered only two or three times a year in midsummer.

Metro area residents, especially transplants from other moist regions, lack appreciation for native plants, thinking they are weeds, Tatroe said. Then people over water the plants they have because they can't accept the notion that some plants prefer less water. Many plants don't need the extra TLC we give, including expensive fertilizers, soil amending and gallons upon gallons of water.

"Cities have tried to educate us about smarter water use and Xeriscape plants that use less water," Tejral said. "But few have discussed if we need to water some of these plants at all. Water is a finite resource here. We have to start building that knowledge base now for what plants do best in arid conditions and what those plants need."

Tejral's plan calls for a 200-square-foot site where nothing protects the garden from wind and a hot dry sun. The clay/sand soil mixture left behind after construction of the treatment plant is so hard-packed a metal-clanging sound echoes through the air when a pick-ax hacks at it.

Fifteen plant varieties, four of each, will be planted side by side to test comparisons in plant growth. Two plants will be dug into soil amended with organic material while the other plants will be placed in unamended soil.

Tejral chose common low-moisture flowers from a list planted at the zoo's garden. All the plants and shrubs are available at local garden centers, some of which are native and others adapted to an arid region.

His list includes paprika yarrow, prairie winecups, Snow-in-Summer, fernbush, lance-leaf coreopsis, purple coneflower, little bluestem grass, Purple Mountain sun daisy, desert four o'clock, red torch lilies, creeping Colorado holly, Walker's low catmint, Missouri evening primrose, Rocky Mountain penstemons, Agastache cana (Double bubblemint) and Russian sage. Each plant will be stuck in a bucket of water to thoroughly soak the root ball. The soil will be saturated with spot watering, about 2 gallons per each plant, and a half-inch

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layer of bark and pea gravel mulch will be laid down to seal in moisture and protect against the sun. "This is the last drink these plants will get from me," Tejral said as he planted yarrow in soil moistened by a recent storm. The high-wire act these plants must carry out is tenuous. Two or three rainy months in a row could be the end of them. No rain or snow from now until July could kill them off just as well. "I'm going into this knowing that I could lose everything," Tejral said. "But think what would happen if we found just 10 varieties of plants that do a great job in these conditions. That knowledge could change the future of landscaping in Aurora and Denver." Tejral's garden should bloom in late June to early July, but the \$400 experiment could take at least one year to evaluate.

No-water gardening at Cheyenne Mountain Zoo already has proven successful for five growing seasons (spring and fall each count as a season). Still, Bob Chastain, the zoo's vice president, continues to field calls from local garden professionals accusing him of sneaking water into the garden at night. "We still have people in the industry that are angry that we are putting this (no-water) idea forward," Chastain said. "People just aren't willing to accept it yet."

The garden bed sits between two parking lots where four Hawthorn trees barely protect it from sweltering heat radiating off the asphalt. It's clear the garden is still a trial study, just a collection of plants set several inches apart so their growth can be examined and their root systems won't compete for moisture and resources. It is not the lush, densely packed gardens you'd find in most homes. But the plants flourish, blooming in bright colors. Last year, a flower cluster of a painted daisy was a 2-foot spear of white buds. A penstemon had a 2-foot-tall spike of blue flowers.

"Even we as horticulturists were shocked at how good most of it looked," said Dana Schubert, zoo horticulture curator. "Some of the plants in this garden look as they do in other parts of the zoo that is watered twice a week, including the day lilies, rabbit brush, Jupiter's beard and blackberry lily."

Ultimately, 100 varieties were hand-picked from nurseries in New Mexico, Nebraska and Colorado and planted in the garden. The garden has had an 87 percent success rate with the greatest losses occurring the first spring it was planted in 2002.

In a rural community where homeowners drain wells or haul in water for their adored gardens, Capen's no-water garden is still the talk of the town. She has lost only three species out of the 18 shrubs, perennials and ground covers she planted.

"What's exciting about the experiment is in finding those plants that will survive in our conditions and other things we can do to help them survive," Capen said. "I just found out recently that rocks placed near a plant hold moisture under them when it rains, providing a cool root run for the plants. I don't think we lost anything that had a rock next to it." Zoo staff says their success debunks two basic assumptions in horticulture: plants need supplemental water and they need water to become established.

Chastain said the notion of a year's worth of supplemental watering to establish perennials was a sacred cow. But the idea has to be examined, Chastain said, considering the amount of water that can be saved.

Zoo gardens share tips for no-H2O success

Secrets of success for waterless gardening from horticultural staff at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado Springs.

Plant early or later to allow materials to take advantage of natural rainfall and cooler temperatures. It was not uncommon for horticultural staff at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo to plant between snowfalls in March, April, October and November.

When you buy dormant plants, check with your favorite nursery or garden center to make sure it will guarantee plants that don't emerge from their winter slumber. Just remember that plants shipped from another state must be "hardened off" or they will be damaged.

Water thoroughly before and after you plant. Let the roots soak up as much water as possible. This might mean placing them in a tub of water for several hours before you plant.

Choose appropriate plants. Not every species can survive with low moisture levels. Species that have small leaves, blue or gray foliage coloration, or root structures specially designed to store water will be more successful.

Plant at the correct depth. Don't force the roots to struggle because they are too low or too high. If they are high, they will be exposed to the low-humidity air and changing air temperatures. If they are too low, they will not be able to get oxygen, especially in clay soils. Mulch to conserve moisture. Apply at least 2 inches but not more than 4 inches.

Use rocks, walls or other structures around the plants to shade the roots and trap moisture in the soil. Watch to see how plants respond to short- and long-term water shortages. Consider whether to amend the soil. The Cheyenne Mountain Zoo had high survival rates of plantings without amendments.

2004 Harvest Show

Want to show those "flatlanders" how well we can grow magnificent specimens in the mountains? All residents of Jefferson County are invited to participate in the Jefferson County Master Gardeners' Harvest Show on Saturday, July 31 at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds.



The 2004 Harvest Show is presented in conjunction with the Jefferson County Fair, supporting the overall theme of "Through the [Years@JeffcoFair.Fun.](http://www.coopext.colostate.edu/jeffco/)" Ribbons will be awarded in numerous categories, including flowers, herbs, container plants and artistic design. New this year is a photography category including horticultural portraits, overall landscape/gardens, and best practices. Photo entries can be from past years as well. A second new category is the scarecrow class. Scarecrow entries will be judged on creativity, interpretation of the fair theme, use of horticultural materials and humor.

For a show booklet and/or an exhibitor registration form, call the Jefferson County Extension Office at (303) 271-6620. The booklet and registration forms are also available on the web at www.coopext.colostate.edu/jeffco/.

Registration for the Harvest Show begins on Friday, July 30, from 5:30 to 8 p.m. and continues on Saturday morning, July 31, from 7 to 9:30 a.m. After open judging, all entries will remain on display until 5 p.m. when they will be available for pickup. Even if you're not interested in entering the show, the Harvest Show is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the fairgrounds off 6th and Indiana Avenues.



Gardening Tips

As gardeners we often work with manure, tools that may be rusty and other hazards, so keep your tetanus shot up to date! If you aren't sure, call your doctor's office. They should have a record of when you last had one.

GARDEN FRIENDS

The topic of beneficial plants and insects in our garden can be very extensive. There are good bugs and wildlife that we really do want to attract to our gardens, even if they may give us the "willies". A few main good bugs are: hover flies (syrphids), parasitic wasps, ladybugs (lady beetles), lacewings, some flies and our friend the spider. So, how do we encourage these bugs?

For starters, teach your kids and grandkids to observe the bugs, but don't touch. Spider webs are homes, and we should admire them but not mess them up. Second, we can plant herbs and other plants that these bugs prefer. Some are:

Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*): this one is a favorite of many good bugs. It's a big plant so give it room! It's easy to grow and is said to be a good pest deterrent when dried or used in a spray. Dried tansy is considered a safe herbal spider and ant repellent. Fill small muslin bags with dried tansy and place where spiders or ants are a problem. You can also make your own tansy spray by mashing 1-2 cups fresh or dry leaves with four cups hot water. Allow this to infuse overnight, then strain the mixture and put in a spray bottle.

Note: Tansy should not be eaten, so do be careful that the kids or pets don't get into it.

White Sensation cosmos (*cosmos bipinnatus*): This one is also a great plant for attracting those good bugs and because it's an easy to grow annual. Direct seed where you want it to grow and enjoy. It's grows 4-5 foot tall and makes a good back of the border plant.

Lemon Gem marigold (*Tagetes tenuifolia*): also known as Signet marigolds. These have an added plus of being lemon scented. They grow to 10-12 inches tall in mounds. Great for containers, window boxes and small enough to plant in front of your vegetable rows!

Evergreen Garden Club

PO Box 1393
Evergreen, Colorado 80437
www.evergreengardenclub.org



Denver Botanic Gardens Schedule of Events www.botanicgardens.org

Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs & Colorado Waterwise Council Xeriscape Tours

Denver: June 12 & 13, 2004 Colorado Springs: June 19 & 20, 2004 Boulder: June 26 & 27, 2004
www.coloradogardenclubs.org/events/xeritours.html

Enchanted Gardens of Northwest Denver 2004 Garden Tour

June 5 and 6 Location: Denver Time: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Tickets: \$12 for one day or \$20 for both days when purchased in advance, \$15 for one day or \$25 for both days on the Day/Weekend of the Event. Tickets may be purchased at The Conflict Center, 4140 Tejon Street, Denver.

For information call 303-433-4983 or visit www.conflictcenter.org.

The tour is a benefit for The Conflict Center, a 15 year old non-profit organization committed to reducing the level of violence in Denver.

Colorado Water Garden Society

Location: Morrison Center

June 6, 2004 - June 6, 2004

7:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Included with Admission to the Gardens

Denver Rose Society

Location: Gates Hall and Garden Court

June 6, 2004 - June 6, 2004

9:00 AM - 8:00 PM

Included with Admission to the Gardens

Garden Tour in the Pinecliff and Nederland area on July 10th.

For more information, call Violet at (303) 642-3356.