



Evergreen Garden Club

The Wild Iris

Volume 18, Issue 19

April 2007

A Word from the President...

It's springtime!

Time to gather our garden tools, don our gloves and go play in the dirt! (That is, when it isn't snowing.)

The human spirit is remarkable. No matter how tough life gets and how long the winter has been, when the bluebirds return, catkins appear on Aspens and blossoms begin to unfurl we are filled with a sense of hope and renewal. Out in my garden -- amidst the broken limbs, vole holes, and a landscape, which looks like a steamroller came through mercilessly downing fences, shrubs and any garden décor, which stood in its path -- the delicate beauty of spring bulbs rise up out of the destruction. Miniature Iris, Glory of the Snow, Winter Aconite and Siberian Squill have been blooming for the past several weeks. My spirits are instantly lifted when I gaze down at these tiny beauties. This is why I am a gardener!

I have felt this Joy of Spring as far back as I can remember. When I think back to childhood, I realize that most of my leisure time from March through October was spent in the

garden along with my parents, siblings, grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins. Everyone gardened and when we visited each other homes, we helped in the garden and then re-stored our energies with a large meal. In fact, my only memories of summer vacations are of working in some one's garden and of eating. I realize now why I turned out to be such a chubby gardener!

Every spring, long we before we were school age, my sisters and I were each given our own small vegetable plot and a separate flowerbed where we could grow whatever we wanted. Our neighbors used to say that all my Mother needed to do was look at the ground and flowers would instantly spring up. Starting so young under her tutelage, I should be a much more accomplished gardener than I am, but perhaps the green thumb gene skips a generation.

Some traits do get passed down however. My father used to jokingly complain that my mother lived in the garden, only coming into the house when our cries of hunger got too

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EGC 2005-2006 Board Members

Presidents:

Nan Spence

Vice Presidents:

Chris Gray

Sheila Henriksen

Secretary:

Kim Stark

Treasurer:

Priscilla Chapin

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 Fire & Rescue Station on Bergen Parkway at 9:15 am. All are welcome.

For **membership** information please contact Priscilla Chapin at 303-697-4140 or Pris4430@aol.com

Newsletter Contributions are due by the 20th of each month to Karla Briggs at karla@tuppersteam.com

Newsletter Editor & Website
Beth Feldkamp 303-679-9465
brucebethf@comcast.net

Evergreengardenclub.org

***Program Change this month**

April 10, 2007 "Easy Care Gems for the Rock Garden Xeriscape"

Mike Kintgen from Denver Botanic Gardens will speak on "Easy Care Gems for the Rock Garden Xeriscape."

Since a very young age I have been interested in plants particularly Rock Alpine plants, which lead me to intern and work at Rhododendron Species Foundation, Denver and Chicago Botanic Gardens. In 2003 I obtained bachelors in Landscape Horticulture from Colorado State University. I am currently the horticulturist for

the Rock Alpine Garden and South African gardens at Denver botanic Gardens.

The meeting begins at 9:30 am at the Fire & Rescue Station on Bergen Parkway.

Remember to bring your plants, cuttings, pots, etc. for the World Gardening Table...and your coffee mug.

See you there!



Garden Club News

Welcome New Members !!! Fran Enright, and Karel Buckley



April Hospitality Committee: Jo Powers, Pricilla Chapin, Nickie Meinert, Mary DeBaets, Jeanne Weber, Marjorie Clinton, Liz Barrett, Sheila Henriksen
Thank you!!!

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loud or darkness fell. I, too, linger in the garden until long after dark. My husband, however, has grown content to fix and eat his dinner alone: afterwards, thoughtfully turning on the outside lights so I can continue undaunted by the night. Being alone in the garden on a spring or summer evening offers an opportunity for solitary reflection after the hustle and bustle of a busy day.

However, there is also a very special joy in gardening with others. That is why I love volunteer garden work. Having an opportunity to work in our community gardens is one of the main reasons I became a member of our Club. Developing the Fire Rescue Garden last year, after working in the Hiwan Herb Garden and the Metro Dam Garden in previous years, have been among my favorite Club experiences. I can hardly wait to get started once again. I am looking forward to toiling, laughing, learning, sharing and nurturing the perennial friendships, which grow while working side-by-side.

I hope that each of you will renew your valuable commitment to our community garden efforts this spring. And, if you are new to the club, please come play in the dirt with us! It is one of the very best ways to get to know the wonderful members of our club, to learn about gardening from the old pros or to share your gardening knowledge with others -- all the while contributing to the beauty of our Evergreen community.

Whatever your plans for the season are, I hope that each of you will be filled with the joy that spring-time brings.

Nan Spence

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY April 21st.

The Evergreen Garden Club will have a booth at the 18th Annual Earth Day, at Evergreen Lake House.

Up-to-date environmental information. 50 Federal, state, and local agencies, nonprofit organizations and businesses answer questions and provide information. Free 10am-4pm.

Volunteers needed!!! Botanic Gardens Plant Sale Friday, May 11, and Saturday, May 12.

Volunteers get lunch and a free T-shirt! There are two shifts each day, 7:30 a.m. to 12 noon and 12 noon to 5 p.m. Friday, May 11, and 8 a.m. to 12 noon or 12 noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, May 12.

Please call Kathi Grider at 303-670-6909 or Lorna Chorn at 303-526-0969 if you're interested. Lorna and Kathi are coordinating this year's Garden Grown section (plants propagated from the DBG collection) for the annual Mother's Day Plant Sale.

Volunteers also needed the week of the plant sale 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Thursday for pricing and set-up.

Minutes of the March 13, 2007 Meeting

Nan began the meeting at 9:35 by welcoming all members and guests.

Secretary's Report- Kim asked for and received approval of the February Minutes as published in the Wild Iris and noted there was no correspondence last month.

Treasurer's Report- Priscilla welcomed several new members and gave the Treasurer's Report; then asked for and received approval of the financial statement.

Business Members' Announcements- Nan stated that since Connie Staponski had moved from Evergreen, she was providing the announcements this month. She noted Evergreen Garden Center was hosting many classes throughout the next several months.

Gloves- Francis said that, once again, Jack Akin had generously provided several boxes of gloves for EGC to sell in our fundraising events.

Natural Resources/Earth Day- Marilyn showed two notebooks she has assembled; one had pictures of noxious weeds and the other was a disaster preparedness notebook. She also stated a need for volunteers to help with the set up, hosting and break down of tables for this year's Earth Day. Nan stated there are many materials left from last year that can be used once again.

Linda Ringrose stated the 2003-2005 picture notebook is missing.

Community Gardens- Irma stated the community gardens' teams, as assembled from last year, would be printed in the Wild Iris and anyone wishing to change their garden assignment should contact her. She would also appreciate all participants confirming their desire to participate in this year's garden clean up. She stated she is also seeking students from Evergreen High School to volunteer this year, the EGC will get extra help with the clean up and the students receive community service credits. May 8th is the clean up date.

World Gardening- Ginny stated last month was an exceptional month for World Gardening. Plants that were not bought were donated to the Seniors' Resource Center for their green house project. Some plants were also donated to an area's boys' home.

Nan stated that anyone knowing of a member who is ill or just having a hard time to please let her know so that she can contact them.

By-Laws Update- Sheila stated the By-Laws Committee had been busy with the re-writing of the EGC By-Laws so they will more accurately reflect our new status as a Colorado non-profit corporation. She then recognized and thanked all members of the committee. Nan added the Wells Law Firm will review the By-Laws for compliance once the committee has a final draft.

Wild Iris-President's Message-Nan said she had tried to address in last month's President's Message the questions and concerns she had received as to why EGC is not able to host the garden tour this year. To that end, she requested suggestions for fund-raising events that would not require much planning, money or cause liability issues. Some of the suggestions were: selling the donated gloves at Earth Day, having a members-only tour of the gardens chosen to be in the garden tour, having a members-only tour of members' gardens, field trips, wild flower/noxious weed hikes, a members-only plant sale/flea market for members. Any of the above-mentioned fund-raising events would be for members only and therefore, not open to the general public; a small fee would be charged and the proceeds to benefit the EGC. The suggestion for an EGC calendar was made but also noted it would require much planning and funds.

Special Announcements:

- Lorna Chorn noted the Denver Botanic Gardens needs volunteers for their plant sale and to please see her or Kathi Grider for additional information.

-Jerri from the Hospitality Committee suggested a way around the food table to improve traffic flow and alleviate the congestion experienced at last month's meeting.

Speaker/Program- Chris introduced Lee Curtis, a Master Gardener with Jefferson County and she delivered her presentation on The Nuts and Bolts of Container Gardening.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40. Attendees: 58

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Stark



Over The Garden Fence

By Karla Briggs

AFTER THE SNOWS

The idea for this article was sparked by a conversation with Karen MacFarquhar. She was wondering what to do about her mashed down *Potentilla* shrub and we figured that many of us gardeners were finding curious gardening situations lurking about as the snows of '06/'07 begin to melt.

The answer to Karen's *Potentilla* question is, pruning. There is very little chance that a shrub or plant that has been weighed down by snow for the last four to five months will recover and be able to stand up on its own. So the best option is to carefully cut the shrub back to 3-4 inches above the ground. This will allow the plant's energy to go to the new growth. Remember to make the pruning cut just above the bud at an angle sloping away from it. Use clean, sharp secateurs (small pruning tool) and clean the tool with rubbing alcohol between plants to prevent cross contamination. Also be careful not to cut into the new shoots.

Shrubs and trees may have suffered a single broken branch or dead branches. Prune these out as well, giving a clean cut to the jagged break and taking out the dead branch back to the healthy branch or stem.

Now is the time to remove tree wrap used on young trees to prevent winter sun scald. When the wrap is left on during the spring and summer months it will become a shelter for insect pests.

To prune perennials, cut old stems back close to the ground, being careful of the new foliage rosettes, and clean away the black remains of last year's growth.

As the garden soil becomes workable, remove weeds and grass; when the soil is moist, the weeds are much easier to pull out whole.

After the pruning and weeding, top-dress the garden with a 2-inch layer of compost and add an additional 3 inches of mulch around the plants to help them retain temperature and moisture levels. Pull the mulch off of the plants that were covered for winter protection, such as roses and peonies, and smooth the mulch around the base of the plant.

If you have mold on the garden and grass it is probably a "decomposer" which is beneficial in adding nutrients to the soil. The only reason to remove it would be for aesthetic purposes, in which case you can gently rake it up and put it in the compost pile to aid in decomposition or turn it under in the garden soil to add nutrients.

Now is a great time to plant grass and wild flower seed between snow and rain storms. The seed will benefit by any cold snaps and begin to germinate more quickly. Be sure to prepare the soil before planting the seed by raking to clear away the debris and fluffing up the ground.

I am afraid most of us will discover some vole damage as the snow melts. The telltale piles of dirt and tunnels criss crossing our yard and gardens and the furious digging by our hounds will lead right to an entryway. Get on it NOW and begin to manage their damage. Options for managing the voles can range from trapping, gassing and aromatic deterrents. I do NOT recommend poisoning as they are a food source for wild birds and animals and an occasion a domestic dog or cat. It is not possible nor do we want to eradicate voles. As gardeners we merely want to relocate them out of our gardens into the neighbor's yard. Seriously, we have a responsibility to help maintain an ecological balance.

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(Continued from pg. 4 Over the Garden Fence)

I have come to terms with sharing the land with all the wild creatures: voles, elk, deer, etc. and am sleeping much better for it.

The good news in our gardens this spring is that we will probably have less plant death from winter desiccation. All of the constant snow cover kept the ground frozen and reduced the amount of freezing then thawing cycles, and with all of the moisture this winter the wild flowers this spring and summer should be amazing.

For additional information on gardening in our area go to www.ext.colostate.edu, and click on subjects ranging from soil amendments to native plants.

These are a few spring chores I have thought of. If any of you have additional questions or comments, please e-mail me at Karla@TuppersTeam.com, and I will respond in the June newsletter. Happy gardening!

Karla

UPDATING OUR COMMUNITY GARDEN TEAMS



Following are the community garden teams from last season. Please take a look at each team and inform Irma of any additions, deletions or changes. With the great number of new members we have gained, there is plenty of room for more help at each garden. Once a leader is confirmed for each garden, your leader will then set up a maintenance schedule to share with you--which is usually monthly throughout the summer.

So please contact **Irma Wolf** at 303-670-3402 or irmasonny@aol.com by **Tuesday, April 3**, and let her know of your interest. She can assign you, or you can choose your favorite location. This is a good way to get to know your fellow members and learn more about how to garden in this great community. Thanks again for your commitment and beautification efforts. After you contact Irma she will send out a final list in time for our May 8 Spring clean-up day.

COMMUNITY GARDEN TEAMS:

Past leaders are listed first; **highlighted** names were assigned to the team; non-highlighted names were temporary helpers and may want to be permanently assigned to the same, or to a different garden. **Extra helpers are needed in most gardens!**

Evergreen Metro Water District (dam garden): **Peggy & Dale Fetchenhier, Chris Gray, Vivian Michaels**, Dee Miller, Jo Powers, Juanita Weare, Ann Bolson, Violet Aandres

Library Garden: **Marjorie Clinton, Irene Clurman**, Karen Lawson, Dickie Langworthy

Post Office Oval: **Karla Briggs, Kim Stark, Sandy Swan**, Paul Luzetski

Post Office Skinny & Mahonia: **Sara Sperry**, : **Louise Mounsey**

Bergen Park Traffic Circle: **Irma Wolf, Ruth Alford, Karen MacFarquhar, Dee Sachs, Eleanor Viergever, Marilyn Kaussner (Exterminator)**, Mary Pinder, Lois Battle, Lucille Nelson, (Claudine Pardy 670-6381)

Evergreen Metro District Building on Stagecoach: **Beth Feldkamp, Nancy Elliott, Irma Wolf**

Hiwan Homestead Round Garden: **Bev Wickland, Julaine Kennedy, Frances Sorensen, Tina Kellogg**, Dee Hoaglund, Jeri Dufford, Sheila Henriksen, Toni Yerkes

Hiwan Homestead Herb: **Priscilla Chapin, Meredith Bossert**, Rebecca Swain, Stan Barrett, Liz Barrett

Fire Training Center: **Nan Spence, Kathy Grider, Barbara DeCaro, Lois Battle, Diane Sears, Vicki Jahn**

HORTICULTURE

HIGH COUNTRY HORTICULTURE

by Nan Spence

REVISITING THE BENEFITS OF SNOW

In last month's High Country Horticulture column, I proclaimed this year's abundant snowfall and seemingly perpetual snow cover to be Mother Nature's ultimate winter gift to gardeners. However, is it now time to revisit the benefit of the ice and snow that still cover the much of our gardens? Is the damage that many gardeners are discovering as the icebergs recede going to outweigh the advantages of the moisture and protective insulation the snow has provided? And how much moisture is too much for the low-water plants many of us now propagate?

DAMAGE TO TREES AND SHRUBS

If your garden is like mine, it is slowly beginning to emerge. Some south and west facing areas may be completely snow free. On the north and east sides, however, your garden may remain under several feet of solid glacier-like ice. These areas will be most likely be blanketed until spring, even if we do not receive any more snow.

As the garden glaciers begin to recede, you may be discovering varying degrees of damage to trees and bushes. Here and there, I find broken or cracked branches, especially near the crowns of shrubs. In the areas that were first to emerge from the snow, there seems to be slightly more than normal browse damage as the deer and elk gravitated quickly to these snow-free eating spots. Mostly, I find that shrubs are flattened as if a steamroller came through. It is time to begin pruning.

Early March, while plants are still dormant, is a good time for local gardeners to prune trees and shrubs. This year you may have a bit more to prune if the heavy snow cover or critter browsing has resulted in broken or cracked branches. When pruning, also remove any shredded bark around the broken area with a sharp knife. Where necessary, prune evergreen shrubs back to just in front of a shoot growing in the direction that you desire the plant to grow. If you are unsure of what is dead wood and what is merely dormant, or unsure if a branch is been completely destroyed, wait until later in the year to see if that part of the plant is leafing out or not. Dead wood can be pruned at any time of the year.

Look for browse damage higher than normal on trees and shrubs. You may find that the protective barriers you placed around your trees were too short to prevent browsing by deer or elk and gnawing by rabbits or rodents as they stood on a platform of snow several feet high. Unless the trunk was completely girdled, your tree should recover. Be sure to replace any critter barriers that may have been displaced or smashed by the snow.

Voles, active in the daytime, may have benefited from the snow cover that provided protection as they scurried from plant to plant beneath the snow and out of the sight of predators. It will be interesting to see, as our low shrubs emerge, if this has been a higher than normal year for vole damage.

SNOW MOLD

Snow mold, *microdochium nivale*, is predicted to be a problem on turf lawns throughout the Front Range. I have only seen snow mold in pictures. It is described as a cotton-like webbing that spreads rapidly to circular patches of a foot or more in diameter. Sometimes called "pink mold," it actually sounds rather lovely, coloring the grass in varying shades of red, green and brown surrounded by a pinkish border. It is not a permanent problem, subsiding once the turf dries out. It can be abated more quickly by raking the infected grass upward which allows it to dry faster. Rake toward the center of the mold spot, being careful not to spread the mold outward onto healthy grass. The affected spots can then be over-seeded to insure that your lawn is not left with a patchy appearance. Snow mold should not be much of a problem for local gardeners since many of us have chosen not to have lawns in the first place. However, if you do have a turf lawn and you find "pink mold," please let me know because I would like to see it firsthand.

TOO MUCH MOISTURE?

More than voles, broken branches or snow mold, I have been somewhat worried that my xeric plants would not survive this moist winter. As soon as moisture exceeded the average year-to-date totals, I contacted xeric experts at High Country Gardens in Santa Fe and at the Denver Botanic Gardens. I have been assured that we are still in the range of moisture acceptable to most xeric plants such as agastaches, lavenders and artemesias. However, the longer these winter-moisture-haters sit in a wet conditions, the more likely root and crown rot – death- will occur.

The gardening gurus assured me that any xeric plants planted in the sunny part of the garden, in well-drained soil and inorganic mulch should be just fine. However, xeric plants planted in shady areas in heavy or heavily-composed soil where organic mulch is used may be in trouble. As soon as the snow recedes, they advised pulling the mulch back from the crowns of the plants; and after the danger of frost has passed, relocate these plants to a proper xeric environment. Since my xeric plants are in sunny areas, with well-drained, lightly-amended sandy soil where pea gravel serves as mulch, my root-rot apprehensions were sufficiently calmed.

EXPECT A GOOD YEAR

Although our gardens may suffer some damage, this year's snowstorms and subsequent snow cover have protected our gardens from desiccating high subzero winds and from exposure to damaging freeze-thaw conditions. Equally important, our gardens are receiving the winter moisture critical for the survival of the great majority of our plants. Add in the fact that this winter's moisture has been more than double that of recent years, and we have every reason to expect our gardens will be better than ever.

GARDEN CLUB BUSINESS MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT

Sundance Gardens and Landscape

Hwy 74 and Meadow Drive. 303-670-0358



Sundance Gardens and Landscape is owned by Dave Thomas, who started the company 30 years ago. His expertise in mountain landscape is unparalleled. Retaining walls, flagstone patios, grass and wildflower seeding, water features of all sizes, tree and shrub planting, irrigation systems, and boulder and rock work are some of the services offered. The garden center has evolved in its 17 years of existence in many ways, but what remains the same is the excellence in plant quality. Sundance only carries plants for our mountain environment, and specializes in drought-tolerant native, and deer/elk tolerant plants. Most of our plant material is hand picked for superior quality, and prices are always fair and reasonable.

Sundance is bringing in inventory daily. Come by for a visit and see our great supply of Colorado grown Aspen, beautiful Colorado Blue Spruce, and elk-resistant flowering shrubs. Don't forget to add **Mycorrhizae*** to your new plantings for strong root development, and sow your wildflower seeds now!

*What are Mycorrhizae? The word "mycorrhizae" literally means "fungus-roots" and defines the close mutually beneficial relationship between specialized soil fungi (mycorrhizal fungi) and plant roots. About 95% of the world's land plants form the mycorrhizal relationship in their native habitats. It is estimated that mycorrhizal fungal filaments explore hundreds to thousands more soil volume compared to roots alone.

Benefits include: Improved nutrient and water uptake, improved root growth, improved plant growth and yield, reduced transplant shock, reduced drought stress.



EVERGREEN GARDEN CENTER 2007 SPRING CLASSES

Our class schedule is also on our website, www.evergarden.net
Please reserve your space early, we have limited seating!
Call 303-674-2146, or email to info@evergarden.net

April 7th :10:30 am

Speaker: Dick Bartlett; Rock gardening in the foothills. A wonderful garden choice for our altitude. You'll love this class!

April 14th: 11:00 am

Speaker: Nan Spence; "Oh Deer!" (and other critters) There are ways to both encourage and discourage wildlife of all kinds. Plants that attract or repel them. Create a habitat for birds and butterflies using habitat modification, barriers and discover who is really doing the damage.

April 14th: 1:00 pm

Speaker: Marilyn Raff; Marilyn will discuss her new book, Shrub Roses: Paradise in Bloom. This class with slide show will focus on colorful shrub roses, their easy care and adaptability to our region.

April 21st: 11:00 am

Speaker Silvia Brockner; Coffee and Conversation with our favorite local wildlife author. Learn about our native hummingbirds. How to make your garden attractive to them

April 28th: 11:00 am Speaker; Andrew Pierce; Beyond the Spring Fling! Yes, there are plants that bloom in mid to late summer or into the fall.

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



*Celebrating our
41st Anniversary*

Denver Botanic Gardens Schedule of Events

www.denverbotanicgardens.org

Denver Allied Arts Guild

Contact: Marion Wright, 303-282-5273
Show and Sale: April 16-19 (9 a.m.-5 p.m.)
Mitchell Hall

North American Rock Garden Society

Contact: Mary Komodore, 303-526-1054
Show or Sale: Apr. 21 (9 a.m.-5 p.m.)
Mitchell Hall

Denver Rose Society

Contact: Tim Tompkins, 970-689-4207
Membership Chair: Mary Kirby, 303-278-3521
Show or Sale:
April 21, Symposium
(9 a.m. - 1 p.m.) Gates Hall and Garden Court

Ikebana International

Contact: Marie Shaw, 303-429-7890
Show or Sale: Apr. 28-29 (9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily)
Mitchell Hall