



# ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ANCHORAGE

AMGA  
NEWSLETTER

December 2019  
Volume 21, Issue 12

*The (missing) Winter Issue*

## Co-President's Message by Elaine Hammes

For the final 2019 AMGA membership meeting in November, Pat Ryan gave us many ideas how we can use Alaska Native Plants in our own landscaping. He closed his program strumming a rousing sing-along with the audience of a popular gardening song. Pat has also provided some great ideas for holiday "Gifts for Gardeners" in Alaska Botanical Garden's recent newsletter.

The AMGA Board of Directors December meeting will be its annual "turnover" meeting: Board members whose terms are up at the end of the year will be taking a break from helping the AMGA through another successful year. Many thanks to Marilyn Barker, Don Bladow, Fran Pekar and Marjorie Williams for their work on the AMGA Board of Directors and I hope you all enjoy your much-deserved "retirement." At the same time, the board has a great foursome of new members with new ideas and who are already beginning to move AMGA forward into the next year of events with changes as we go through 2020. Congratulations and thank you for volunteering to join the board to Emily Becker, Beth Norris, Faye Stiehm and Jan Van Den Top.

By the time you see this, my plan is to have had some tasty Thanksgiving turkey with local vegetables (one of my favorites is sweet and crunchy kohlrabi), low-bush cranberry sauce and high-bush cranberry juice. Then I look forward to several evenings at the popular Holiday Lights at ABC. Another pursuit is to check out some local and on-line nurseries and seed catalogs for gardener and non-gardener gifts. Even non-gardeners can coax an amaryllis into growing and blooming, and it's always fun to see when they find out they might even have green thumbs.

In keeping with AMGA's educational purposes, the board will be working more fully with other local organizations to coordinate gardening programs in the schools. Board meetings (and volunteer positions) are always open to AMGA members. One goal for 2020 is to track more closely and recognize AMGA member volunteers, their accomplishments and time spent on AMGA activities. Numbers of hours do not tell a whole story, but they do tell some of a story and they are precious time each

individual spends to benefit the gardening community. Considering that AMGA is an all-volunteer organization, this is a big deal.

One of the main objectives of AMGA is to disseminate gardening-related information. This has historically been done at public events throughout the year such as: Fur Rondy, Spring Garden Show, and other events in support of the Cooperative Extension Service. An example of a first time event this coming summer is the Botanical Society of America holding a national meeting, "Botany 2020" in Anchorage. AMGA will likely provide some assistance, so stay tuned for volunteer spots.

Part of the method of finding volunteers is by making phone calls! So be ready with some kind of AMGA volunteer work you could do when you get the call. Many of the tasks needed are not year round, and many may take no more than a couple of days of, for example, reviewing a set of guidelines and making suggestions. Having fresh sets of eyes reviewing guidelines helps the organization provide clarity of how programs work.

One temporary volunteer is still needed to assist with updating CES's notebooks of publications. Other opportunities include organizing or preparing and presenting a 1-hour gardening-related Olé class and answering "Ask A Master Gardener" questions at events as they occur. These are just a few examples. And if you see something that needs to be done, let us know and you may have found yourself a new volunteer position.

Here's wishing everyone a happy healthy winter, and a busy summer of gardening in 2020.

Above: Crocus blooming in Gina's middle-hillside garden this October. Photo by Gina Docherty.

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# November Presentation Summary, Patrick Ryan: Native Plants

November 18, 2019 Elaine Hammes and Susan Negas opened the meeting with announcements. They then introduced the four candidates for four open 2020 Board positions. Don Bladow moved for a voice vote to elect the candidates. Barbara Baker seconded the motion. Elaine called for approval of all Board members by acclamation. The response was unanimous acclamation of the 2020 Board candidates.

Alaska Botanical Garden Education Specialist Patrick Ryan presented a talk called "Landscaping With Native Plants".

Patrick began explaining the definition of "native" plants as those adapted over 1,000s of years without human introduction. They are better at preserving habitat for animals and conserving water in our climate. Patrick cautioned against digging native plants and transplanting them. The most successful introductions occur from seed collection and cuttings. Knowing the growth requirements and mycorrhizal compatibility are critical to survival. With permission, construction sites prior to clearing are a good bet for transplanting both soil and plants.

Reasons for going native include saving time, money, and water while increasing native wildlife habitat in your yard. Some benefits include flowers, fall leaf colors, interesting twig and bark patterns for winter gardens, and winter survival. Home owners can enjoy food, medicinal uses, attraction of pollinators and birds, as well as year-round beauty.

There is a need for native plant propagation for nursery sales. Many of the plants have twin cultivars that are for sale in nurseries but not all are suitable. Some such as *Spirea* have a more attractive nursery cultivar than the native plant.

Begin planning native landscaping by considering location conditions. Sun, shade, wet to dry soil and slope all affect plant survival. Then depending on the size of the location, begin looking at the layers of plants. The tallest native tree is the cottonwood. This tree provides a fast-growing tree with good fall foliage color. The seed pods are a drawback. The canopy layer includes birch and spruce trees. The desired urban tree cover is 40% but Anchorage currently has 35%. This is better than most urban environments. Loss of many older spruce trees to age and spruce bark beetle damage now requires homeowners to find adequate replacements.

The understory layers include all the shrubs such as willow, serviceberry, and alder. Shorter shrubs include red currants, highbush cranberry, dwarf birch and others. Good ground covers include many native berries such as dogwood, *Cornus canadensis*, and kinnikinnick, *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*. Forbs in the groundcover include a long list of native flowers. These are herbaceous plants other than grasses that usually die down to the ground in winter. Patrick showed many examples.

Patrick talked about plants that are often overlooked but good for large areas for architectural value. These include devils club, pushki (cow parsley), as well as alder hedges. Plants can be used for berries, birch sap, and native traditional uses. Varieties not recommended because they get too big and weedy are the alder, willow, cottonwood, and aspen. Larch is good for a fast-growing summer screen that will allow light in in winter. Sitka spruce may be a replacement for white spruce killed by beetles but has high water requirements. Shore pine and lodgepole pine are two other possibilities. Native cultivars are needed to replace bird cherry trees.



Above: Red twig dogwood, *Cornus stolonifera*, also known as red Osier dogwood. This multi-stemmed shrub grows well in part shade. It has clusters of white flowers in the spring with a similar appearance as the familiar dwarf dogwood. Besides its flowers, white berries and red stems provide interest in the garden all year.

Below: Creeping juniper, *Juniperus horizontalis*, is a low-slung evergreen that doesn't mind growing in drier, rock, or elevated gardens. This juniper has lovely bright yellow new growth in early summer. Photos by Ginger Hudson.





*Draba, Draba sp.*, makes an excellent groundcover and it is host to numerous native pollinators. There are several species native in the state. Photo by Ginger Hudson.

## AMGA Treasurer's Report, October 2019 By Nancy Grant

### Balances 09/30/2019

Checking S-88	\$15,559.34
Savings S-1	5.25
Savings S-19	16,857.62
CD-Education 5yr 1.650% (12/20)	5325.98
CD- General 2yr 1.25% (1/19)	<u>10,401.36</u>
	\$48,149.55

### Revenue:

Interest/Dividends	2.86
Membership	323.80
Donations	<u>78.25</u>
	\$404.91

### Expense:

Operations	146.99
Grants	750.00
Hospitality	27.15
Pioneer Home	<u>181.99</u>
	\$1,106.13

### Balances 10/31/2019

Checking S-88	\$14,855.34
Savings S-1	5.25
Savings S-19	\$16,860.48
CD-Education 5yr 1.650% (12/20)	5,325.98
CD- General 2yr 1.25% (1/19)	<u>10,401.36</u>
	\$47,448.33

## Herb Study Group: An Intro to Alliums by Elaine Hammes

The November Herb Study met for jam-packed, three-in-one discussions. Marjorie, Colleen and Mary lead discussions of leeks, onions and garlic respectively. *Allium* is a genus of monocotyledonous (plants that send a single leaf shoot up when sprouting) flowering plants that includes hundreds of species, including leeks, onions, garlic, scallions, shallots, elephant garlic, chives, and ornamental alliums. The generic name *Allium* is the Latin word for garlic.

### Leeks

Before getting to the better-known species of leek, Marjorie explained two varieties of *A. tricoccum*, commonly known as Wild Leek. One wild leek (*Allium tricoccum* var. *tricoccum*) is also known as ramps, spring onion, wild garlic, wood leek or ramson. *A. tricoccum* var. *tricoccum* has reddish leaf petioles and flowering stalks that are often reddish at the base. *A. tricoccum* var. *tricoccum* is the wild leek that has been grown in ABC's Herb Garden the last several years. Another variety, *Allium tricoccum* var. *burdickii*, also called Wild Leek, has petioles and stalks that are narrow and light green throughout. There is also a cousin of the onion, leek and garlic plants, an English ramp or ramson, *Allium ursinus*. All have been used for culinary and/or medicinal purposes. And Elephant Garlic (*Allium ampeloprasum* var. *ampeloprasum*) is not a true garlic, but actually a variant of the garden leek.

The typical culinary leeks are the *Allium ampeloprasum* L. (synonyms from The Plant List include *A. ampeloprasum porrum* and *A. porrum* L.). These leeks are large non-bulbing types of *Allium* that mature to long thick blanched stalks topped with 1 to 1-1/2 inch wide flat leaves. They can be started from seed or from plants that can be ordered as starts. To get the long blanched stalks, plant the sets 6 inches deep in loose soil (such as at the bottom of a trench or by using the dibble method), and add soil in July for 5-6 inches of white tender stalks. Leeks should be harvested carefully by loosening soil with a fork well past the outside of and well below the large system of roots. Do not wash the harvested leeks until you use them. Leeks are heavy feeders and need lots of nitrogen. Marjorie has never found onion maggots in leeks that she has grown.

The more delicately flavored leeks have been eaten as vegetables for thousands of years in Europe as well as America. Leeks can be added to green salads, sliced thin and sautéed, used in stir-fry cooking and soups. Nutritional benefits include powerful antioxidants, vitamins A and K, folic acid, niacin, riboflavin, magnesium and thiamin. Leeks also contain kaempferol, a flavonoid that may help fight cancer and lower risk of chronic diseases including heart disease.

### Onions

Colleen provided historical information as well as current and local information on the most common species of onion, *Allium cepa*. Onion plants have been selectively bred for at least 7000 years, usually grown as annuals although they are biennials. One solution to the common problem with eye irritation is to refrigerate the onions before cutting them. It is also suggested to eat raw parsley to relieve onion breath.

She had some good tips from Benjamin Swimm who has raised crops for the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project in Palmer. Onions are daylight dependent and requirements vary by variety. Some varieties will only form bulbs with even amounts of daylight and night, while some will only form bulbs when daylight reaches longer hours. Therefore, make sure you buy varieties that will bulb at 60 degrees (north latitude). There has been great luck with the variety "Ailsa Craig Exhibition."

Onions can be started in mid-March in a greenhouse or under grow lights. Trimming the tops with scissors until a week before transplanting encourages the onions to grow stouter and produce more leaves. In late April plants can be brought outside to begin adjusting to cooler outdoor temperatures (and brought inside if it may freeze at night).

Cooking onions are best stored at room temperature in a dry, cool, dark, well-ventilated location and can have a shelf life of three to four months. Sweet onions that have greater water and sugar content should be refrigerated with a shelf life of about a

(continues on next page)





(*Alliums cont'd*)

month—for example, Maui, Vidalia, Walla Walla. Culinary uses are infinite. It's easier to believe the 2017 world production of dried onions was 97.9 million tons when you read the quote from Julia Child, "It's hard to imagine civilization without onions."

### Garlic

Mary has grown garlic (*Allium sativum*) since 2004 and saves the largest cloves from each year to plant for the next year. An information sheet came with the first garlic she bought for planting. The best varieties for Alaska are hard neck, and are likely found in local farmers markets. Mary has had Polish Gem and Extra Early varieties although they may no longer be available to buy. Soft neck varieties grow better in warmer climates and are generally found in grocery stores. The Cooperative Extension Service has a detailed publication "Growing Garlic in Alaska," HGA-00047, and the Alaska Botanical Garden has had a number of garlic growing workshops.

Wild leek sprouts, *Allium tricoccum* var. *tricoccum* seen at the base of joe pye weed in the Alaska Botanical Garden's Herb Garden. Photo by Mary Contrary.

Mary brought some great photos showing her process from preparing the soil to planting to growing garlic. In the fall, she uses a bulb planter and adds compost and fertilizer while planting. In the past, she used straw for mulch but now mulches with sheets of Styrofoam (and something to hold them down). About the end of May, she checks under the foam insulation for new growth, and removes the insulation for the growing season. Garlic crops are rotated every four years minimum with other crops in her garden.

Toward the end of summer it is time to harvest. Dig (do not pull) with a forked tool to work the ground gently. Mary then brushes off the soil and puts the garlic in boxes with screened bottoms so there can be air movement over, under and through. After three weeks of curing in ventilated shade, a soft brush is used to remove the soil. Then the roots are cut and the stem is cut to two inches. The garlic then goes into an open-weave bag for storage in the garage at 40-45 degrees, an ideal place and temperature for storage. It was great to see a bag of the final cured garlic that Mary brought to show at the meeting, even though we had no tasting!

The December 13 Herb Study Group topic will be *Rubus* (e.g. raspberries). This is an informal group open to anyone who is interested in discussing and learning about herbs, and/or who enjoy volunteering in ABC's Herb Garden during the growing season. The meeting will be Noon to 1:30pm at the Loussac Library, 4th Floor Learning Commons. Email the anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com for any questions.

## Bird Chatter

**IT'S A FACT.** . . Or so the Quarterly of the American Primrose Society claims, and who would dare doubt them: Alaska has the most members of the society of any place in the whole world. Washington is second and New York is third. So reports member Gina Docherty.

Well, OK. Maybe not the whole world. The entire country of Canada has ONE more member than Alaska.

But, who's counting, right?

**HEADS UP.** . . to those planning to attend the Northwest Flower and Garden Show. It's a week later this year—from February 26 to March 1st. You need to get tickets and hotel space early so hop to it.

Our own Patrick Ryan of Alaska Botanical Garden fame is one of the speakers this year.

**ADIOS.** . . to long-time MG Margaret Love, who moved to North Carolina last month. Fans were used to running into her at the ABC herb garden, on the Ask a Master Gardener table and at our plant sales. We'll miss her.

**OH POOH . . .** If you're someone who does this sort of thing, you can drop off food scraps at the muni's community compost program through December 30th. However, compost pick-up is closed until May.

Usually, pick-up has to close because, well, it's frozen solid and you couldn't dig it anyhow. But this year, who knows?

**NO COMMENT . . .** Member Cheryl Chapman swears her acupuncturist told her this story:

"One of his (two-legged) patients had a household duck afflicted with Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD. When the sun would quit us in November, the duck would retire to a corner, push its head under its wing and refuse food.

"If pressed, it would savage the ankles of the food-dish person and chase the pet Chihuahua around the house, trying to tear off its tail; so the duck got an acupuncture appointment and underwent several treatments.

"The owner reported back that the duck's attitude was much improved. But, said the doc, 'It's harder than you might think to find pulse points on a duck.' -"



## Volume Planting Small Seeds by Don Bladow

[Ed. note: Don composed this blog during the summer so references to gardening tasks will be anachronistic. However, the advice here is valuable, and . . . it's time to plan for gift purchases and next year's garden.]

When spring arrives we are all excited about planting the garden. We plan. We prepare the space. We sow seeds. Larger seeds like beans and peas are super easy to sow and even smaller ones like radishes or onion are doable. Then there are the sand grain size seeds like carrots or the tiny round ones like turnips requiring relentless and continuous thinning. We can actually eat those thinning. But early on it's a real pain. The same thing happens with the beets, turnips, radishes and all those other small seeds.

We try everything to keep from thinning those plants but usually to no avail. We have all tried the shaker method, mixing the seeds with sand, and then there is the tedious task of making seed tape if we choose. Making seed tape seems to be the only reliable method but it takes almost as long as thinning the crop. Is there a better way?

I have discovered a better way. Now let it be said that my vegetable garden is bigger than most in the Anchorage area (9,000+ sq. ft.) with the longest rows about 75 feet. Until I purchased a really cool planter I had the same thinning problems that everyone else does unless of course you are very, very careful. I have not thinned my turnips this year. The plants are about two inches apart and that is the way the seeds went into the ground. My beets and carrots are not quite as precise but I have yet to thin either crop. I will have to thin the carrots some but I can probably wait until the end of July. My second and third planting of radishes are two inches apart. No thinning required there. And next year I hope I won't have to thin the carrots either.

How did I do this? The planter, a Jung JP-1, was purchased last October. It's not cheap. The planting wheels cost \$20+ each. The machine itself is \$400+. This thing is worth every penny. My garden looks better than ever. One of the reasons is all that time I spent thinning in the past is now spent weeding and I am nearly keeping up with that. The time savings is phenomenal. Now the preparation of the soil takes most of the time before weeding starts. After prepping the soil for the third radish planting it took two minutes to sow. Most of that time was checking to make sure I had the correct wheel in the seeder and making sure the "trencher" was at the proper depth. The machine creates a trench at the proper depth, drops seeds at the spacing you set, covers them, and presses the soil down around

the seeds. When you get to the end of the row you pick up the seeder and move to the next row or put it back in the garden shed. It's certainly not for everyone but if you have a 1,000 sq. ft. vegetable garden or more you might consider getting one. This is an amazing tool. In the long run you will save a huge amount of time and quite a lot of seed as well. Buy less seed, spend less time thinning, save money, and enjoy gardening even more, if that is possible.

With this machine it's possible to sow seeds as close together as an eighth of an inch or as far apart as 12 inches. This is done with a system of gears that make the seed wheel turn at specific speeds allowing the machine to drop seed more or less frequently depending on your selected spacing. The number of "holes" in the seeding wheel also effects the sowing rate. Your rate of walking or running for that matter has no effect on the spacing. The gears are easy to change. You don't have to worry about losing the gear combinations for spacing. The gear chart combinations are on the seeder. You look at the spacing desired and the chart will tell you what gear to put on the front and back sprockets. After one changes gears a couple of times it is really easy.

Like any other tool there is a learning curve. The more you use it the more accurate the setting will be. This is a case where practice does indeed make perfect. I didn't purchase this machine initially because I thought it too expensive. But I would say it has paid for itself in time savings alone. I highly recommend it.

Three years ago I bought an Earthway seeder (\$100) that did fine with big seeds like green beans but not so well with little or tiny ones. It would be great for corn if you want to give that a try. For carrots, radishes, turnips, and beets it's about the same as the shake method but faster. Certainly the same amount of thinning is required as with the shake method. I still use it for green beans—it does a great job. I also planted fava beans this year but planted those by hand. I continue to sow peas by hand since they're planted along the fence.

I did save some shipping expense by having the Jung seeder shipped to my brother's in the lower 48. When I visited him in October last year I brought it home as baggage. Since I'm a member of Alaska Airlines Club 49, I get two bags free—I didn't open the box and called it a bag. The Earthway I purchased from Amazon, since I'm a Prime member the shipping was free.

You can also see more photos and find more tips on my BLOG: [harvestofhopememorialgarden.blogspot.com](http://harvestofhopememorialgarden.blogspot.com).





## Fall Blooming Bulbs by Gina Docherty

Want to enjoy a bit of spring at the end of summer? There are several varieties of fall blooming bulbs that are hardy here in Alaska, and are worth a try.

On a whim, I ordered some fall blooming crocus a couple years ago. The *Colchicum* bloomed, but the crocus didn't. They tried valiantly, but it was too cold and they didn't open up properly—I figured they just weren't hardy. I then promptly forgot all about them.

This year, I was pleasantly surprised to see them growing tall and blooming right through some creeping thyme. Due to the cool weather and overcast skies, they only opened up a couple of times when the sun came out, but they were robust. They were still standing and blooming until they were buried in snow. Once the snow melted, they were still standing, although somewhat straggly looking.

### *Colchicum* and *Crocus*

Both bulbs are sometimes called 'fall blooming crocus'. While flowers of the two plants may look similar, there are some differences between the two groups.

### A Word of Caution

All parts of *Colchicum* are poisonous to ingest. This is important to note due to the fact that saffron crocus is a food crop. While the flowers of crocus and colchicum are readily distinguishable, it is best to grow edible saffron crocus in a different location from *Colchicum* to avoid any potential for misidentification. The good news is that the toxins in *Colchicum* make them critter-proof. The bulb-like corms of *C. autumnale* contain colchicine, used to treat gout and familial Mediterranean fever.

**Bulbs:** Both true crocus and *Colchicum* grow from corms, not true bulbs. The corms of *Colchicum* are larger than crocus, and have different planting requirements. The larger *Colchicums* are planted at a depth of 4 to 6 inches, 4–6 inches apart. Crocus corms are planted at only 2 to 3 inches deep and spaced 2 to 3 inches apart.

**Foliage:** *Colchicum* flowers appear naked, that is the blooms emerge separate from the foliage. *Colchicum* leaves appear in spring and are large and floppy. Treat them like other spring bulbs: plant them near hostas or lilies that grow later to hide the spent foliage later in the spring. Fall-blooming crocus have narrow, grass-like foliage that appears either in autumn or in the spring, depending on the species. Spring-blooming crocus varieties flower at the same time foliage emerges.

**Flowers:** The flowers of *Colchicum* are larger than those of crocus and each corm produces 5 to 10 stalks, each bearing a single flower. Crocus blooms are daintier with fewer blooms per corm, but have a lovely detail when viewed up close. The two groups bloom September through November, with some crocus

varieties blooming as late as December, but probably not that late in Alaska!

**Hardiness:** With the exception of the saffron crocus, *Colchicum* tend to tolerate colder winter temperatures (Zones 4–10) than fall-blooming crocus (Zones 6–10). Saffron crocus is hardy to zone 4. Once again, it's worth the effort as many specified hardiness zones are not always accurate.

### Using *Crocus* and *Colchicum* in Your Landscape

Both *Colchicum* and crocus benefit from rich, well-drained soils. Drainage is particularly important during the summer months when bulbs are dormant, and most gardeners are irrigating beds. Poor drainage can lead to rotting bulbs. Rock and herb gardens make ideal planting sites, as do raised beds and perennial borders. Planting corms on berms and mounds can help improve drainage in planting beds that are not raised.

Tuck groups of bulbs in pockets to add fall color to perennial beds or try planting the corms among low-growing groundcovers such as thyme. The showy blooms will easily push through the low canopy and light mulch layers.

*Colchicum* is more tolerant of partial shade, while crocus prefers sunny locations. Avoid planting in locations where the flowers will be hidden by falling leaves in autumn.

The blooms of both crocus and *Colchicum* are low to the ground, so be sure to place them where they can be enjoyed and not hidden by larger plants. While crocus has attractive, low-growing foliage, the spring-time leaves of *Colchicum* are broad and tall. My fall crocus were about 6 inches tall.

Also remember, like all bulbs, it is best to leave the fading foliage in place as it dies to replenish the corms. *Colchicum* can produce rather unattractive foliage as it dies back late spring-early summer. But who's looking anyway?

In case you need one more reason to plant these autumn jewels, both *Colchicum* and crocus provide nectar and pollen late in the season for busy bees and other pollinators. It's too late to plant them this year, but if you order early next year, you should be able to find them. A good idea is to order bulb catalogs now and order early next year before they run out. As you probably already know, not all garden supply companies ship to Alaska.

**Bulb Sources** that do ship to AK: Brent and Becky's, Eden Brothers, Renee's Garden, Michigan Bulb (*Colchicum* only). I also found them on the Home Depot and Lowe's website, but I don't recall ever seeing them in the stores up here.

**Article Information Source:** American Meadows (NOTE: American Meadows does NOT ship to Alaska)



Above: *Colchicum* blooms in October 2019.  
Photo by Gina Docherty. See last page for close up of Crocus in Gina's garden.



## ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ANCHORAGE

Membership/Membership Renewal Form for the Year \_\_\_\_\_

**AMGA's membership year is January 1st through December 31st**  
**To ensure listing in the next MG Directory, dues must be received or postmarked by December 31st**

☐ Voting Membership (\$20) ☐ Non-voting Membership (\$20) ☐ Dual Membership\* (\$30)

MG Class Year: \_\_\_\_\_

MG Class Location: \_\_\_\_\_

40 volunteer hours complete? Yes ☐ No ☐

Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Last/First: \_\_\_\_\_

Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Other phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Dual Membership (Two current AMGA members living at same address).*

Last/First: \_\_\_\_\_

Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Other phone: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Voting Membership ☐ Non-voting Membership

MG Class Year: \_\_\_\_\_

MG Class Location: \_\_\_\_\_

40 volunteer hours complete? Yes ☐ No ☐

Cash and/or check payments can be made at AMGA meetings with completed form.  
If paying by mail, send form & payment to: AMGA, P. O. Box 221403, Anchorage, AK 99522-1403.  
Make checks payable to Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage.  
Memberships, renewals and donations may also be submitted online at [www.alaskamastergardeners.org](http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org)  
Gift membership forms are also available online.

### AMGA runs on volunteer power!

Needs vary, and may include such tasks as writing educational articles or postings, presenting monthly programs, Pioneer Home gardens' maintenance, photography, social media, web design, annual plant sale, workshops, etc. Volunteer opportunities will be provided as they occur for which AMGA will very much appreciate your support.

Your suggestions for educational program topics of interest and speaker recommendations are also welcomed: \_\_\_\_\_

AMGA Use: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_ Cash: \_\_\_\_\_ Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Rev/ Sep 2019

# December 2019 Garden Event Calendar

## Classes / Workshops

### December 7th, Saturday

Alaska Mill and Feed. "Wreath Decorating Class" at 10a, or 12p, or 2 p. \$30. 1501 E. 1st Av., Anchorage. Sign up online: [alaskamillandfeed.com](http://alaskamillandfeed.com)

### December 16 - 20

Talks in the Garden in the Alaska Botanical Garden Greenhouse starting at 12:30 each day. 4601 Campbell Airstrip Rd, Anchorage. [alaskabg.org](http://alaskabg.org)

December 16, Monday, "Landscaping with Native Plants"

December 18, Tuesday, "Jewels of the North: Wildflowers of ABC"

December 18, Wednesday, "Weeds and Wildflowers"

December 19, Thursday, "Growing Plants from Seeds"

December 20, "Contain Yourself", using containers to solve challenging growing conditions.

## Meetings and Events

### REMINDER—clubs NOT meeting in December:

AMGA

Homer Garden Club

Alaska Rock Garden Society

Eagle River Garden Club

### Late November 29 - January 11

"Holiday Lights," Wednesdays - Saturdays, 5p - 8p. \$5 members; \$7 nonmembers, children 6 and under free. Various activities different dates: bonfires, music, and childrens activities. See their website for more information. Alaska Botanical Garden, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Rd, Anchorage. [alaskabg.org](http://alaskabg.org)

### December 2, Monday

Alaska Native Plant Society, 7p-9p. John Marshall will present. Rosacea: Mary Stella will present *Physocarpus* (Pacific Nine-bark), Alpine Beringian Endemics: Debbie Hinchey will present "*Claytonia Arctica*." Campbell Creek Science Center, 5600 Science Center Drive, Anchorage. [aknps.org](http://aknps.org)

### December 2, Monday

Mat-Su Master Gardeners Association, 7p. Annual Christmas Party. Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Center, 1509 S. Georgeson Drive, Palmer. The meeting will be in Kertula Hall in the "Blue Room". [matsumastergardeners.co](http://matsumastergardeners.co)

### December 5, Thursday

Anchorage Garden Club, 7p-9p, "Christmas Party" Pioneer School House, 437 E. 3rd Ave. Anchorage. [alaskagardenclubs.org](http://alaskagardenclubs.org)

### December 5, Thursday

Wildflower Garden Club, 10a-12p. "Fresh Holiday Wreaths", **Members only Activity**. If not a member, join in advance of the event to participate. Contact Paul: [pmarmora@aol.com](mailto:pmarmora@aol.com) or Kathy: [akliska@aol.com](mailto:akliska@aol.com). Central Lutheran Church. [wildflowergardenclub.org](http://wildflowergardenclub.org)

### December 12, Thursday

Wildflower Garden Club, at 11a-1p. Annual Christmas Luncheon, **members only activity**. Location TBA. [wildflowergardenclub.org](http://wildflowergardenclub.org)

### December 12, Thursday

Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association. 7p- 9p Program: Annie Brownlee: "Fruit Tree Physiology and Growth" BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, Anchorage. [www.apfga.org](http://www.apfga.org)

### December 13, Friday

Herb Study Group, Noon-1:30p. Topic is Rubus (e.g. raspberries) at CES Learning Commons on 4th floor of the Loussac Library, 3600 Denali St, Anchorage. For info: [anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com](mailto:anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com)

### December 14, Sunday

Cook Inlet Bonsai Study Group, 1p. Planning meeting for 2020 at Paul's house. [pmarmora@aol.com](mailto:pmarmora@aol.com), put Bonsai in subject line. [alaskabonsaiclubs.org](http://alaskabonsaiclubs.org)

### December 17, Tuesday

Alaska Orchid Society, 6p. "Annual Season Holiday Party". \*Note\* this is not the fourth Tuesday of the month and not the usual location. Location TBA. [akorchid.org](http://akorchid.org)

### January 2, Thursday,

Anchorage Garden Club; 7p-9p, Pioneer School House, 437 E. 3rd Av. Anchorage. [alaskagardenclubs.org](http://alaskagardenclubs.org)

## Conferences

### January 30-February 1, 2020

"2020 Alaska Peony Growers Association Winter Conference." Fairbanks, Westmark Hotel. [alaskapeonyconference.com](http://alaskapeonyconference.com)

### February 26-March 1, 2020

North West Flower and Garden Festival, Tickets available online. Washington State Convention Center 705 Pike St, Seattle WA. [gardenshow.com](http://gardenshow.com)

### July 18-22, 2020

Botany 2020, Organized by the Botanical Society of America, will be in Anchorage. In association with the American Fern Society, Society of Herbarium Curators, International Society for Plant Taxonomy, and more: [cms.botany.org/home.html](https://cms.botany.org/home.html)



## December 2019 Garden Event Calendar



**February 26 - March 1, 2020**

63 presenters, judges, and speakers—including Patrick Ryan of the Alaska Botanical Garden.

Workshops, seminars, show gardens, plant introductions, competitions, a large exhibition, children's activities, and much more.

Registration now open; special rates at nearby hotels.

<https://gardenshow.com/>

AMGA would like to thank the Northwest Flower & Garden Festival for providing tickets to the silent auction at the 2019 AMGA Annual Conference.



**2020 Alaska Peony Conference  
January 30 - February 1, 2020**

Sponsored by the Alaska Peony Growers Association  
Network with friends and expand your knowledge (and maybe see Julie Riley!)

This year's conference focuses on peony research, transporting peonies to market, and making farms successful.

Learning opportunities through school sessions for growers  
Effective herbicide management; Cold chain management; Grant updates; workshops; and more.

Attendees can meet with industry partners and vendors in the exhibit hall.

Register by day, by the workshop, or by full conference.

**Registration is on sale and discounted now!**

<https://www.alaskapeonyconference.com>

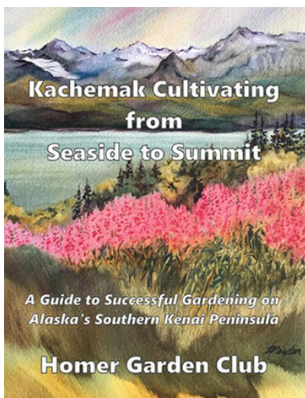
## Book Corner

The latest (4th) edition of *Kachemak Cultivating* is available!  
Over 250 pages full of great ideas and resources for gardening on the Kenai Peninsula.

Chapters are all updated, with new additions including:  
Local Climate and Soils; Improving and Caring for Garden Soil  
Starting Seeds; High tunnels  
Perennials, Bulbs, Ferns, and Grasses  
Container Gardening; Tips for Cut Flowers  
Native Plants; Herbs; Vegetables  
Trees and Shrubs with Tips on Attracting Birds  
Season Extenders and Preserving the Harvest  
Pests, Weeds, Other Problems; *and more.*

\$25. A wonderful addition to the Alaska gardener's library and a great gift for friends and neighbors who enjoy gardening—not only on the Kenai Peninsula, but in other cool climates. Get your copy(ies) at the Homer Bookstore, the Wagon Wheel, or Amazon.com—but—the club profits most if you purchase it directly from them at a meeting or event (they do not ship the books themselves).

<https://www.homergardenclub.org>

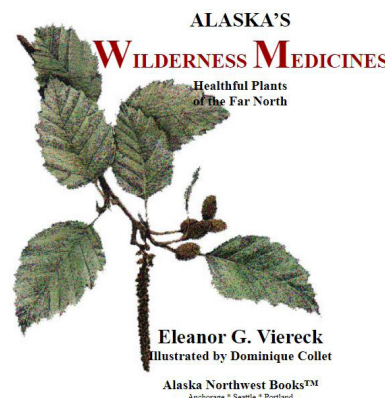


*Alaska's Wilderness Medicines*, Eleanor G. Viereck, illustrated by Dominique Collet, 1987

With more than fifty plant species described, Viereck indicates her purpose is to acquaint people with Alaskan wild plants, native and introduced, which can be used to promote health and healing, for first-aid emergency care, or to maintain wellness. Habitat, distribution, and general information on how each plant can be used along with some additional notes on history and folklore, and poisonous species that might be confused with useful ones.

An added bonus is a reference list Viereck cites which provides about 100 additional sources should one be inclined to do further research!

[www.ankn.uaf.edu/curriculum/Books/Viereck/index.html](http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/curriculum/Books/Viereck/index.html)



## Winter Meetings 2019 - 2020

**January 20, 2020 Meeting**

"A Flora Carnivora" by Mike Baldwin

**Reminder:  
NO MEETING IN DECEMBER!**



Crocus flower this fall in Gina's garden. Photo by Gina Docherty.

Far left: Heb Study Group volunteers keep the Herb Garden at the Alaska Botanical Garden vibrant. Left to Right: Michelle, Lynne, Carol, Margorie, and Sharon. Photo by Mary Contrary, summer 2019.

AMGA regularly meets at 7:00pm every third Monday of the month, September through May (except for December).

Meetings are held at the BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, Anchorage, accessed through the BP tower parking lot, the Energy Center is just south of the main building. \*NOTE: meeting location may change\*

Monthly educational programs are free and open to the public. Visitors and guests are welcomed and encouraged.

### AMGA Board of Directors

Elaine Hammes and Susan Negus	Co-Presidents
Don Bladow	Vice President
Nancy Grant	Treasurer
Fran Pekar	Secretary
F.X. Nolan	At Large
Marjorie Williams	At Large
Marilyn Barker	At Large

### Committee Chairs, Program Coordinators & Volunteers

CES Liaison:	Elaine Hammes
Broadcast Email:	Fran Pekar
Calendar of Events:	Susan Negus
Advanced MG:	Don Bladow
Directory Editor:	Janice Berry
Programs:	Marilyn Barker
Field Trips:	Don Bladow
Google Group:	Mary Rydesky
Hospitality:	Marjorie Williams
Membership & Database:	Alexis St. Juliana
Newsletter	Ginger Hudson
Website	Gina Docherty
Lifetime Achievement:	Lynne Opstad
Grants:	Marilyn Barker
Pioneer Home:	Lynne Opstad, Ginger Hudson
Volunteer Coordinators:	Julie Ginder, Joyce Smith, Lynne Opstad

## Membership Renewal

Memberships are based on calendar year. Renew your membership early to avoid the holiday crunch! Contact Alexis St. Juliana: [astjuliana@hotmail.com](mailto:astjuliana@hotmail.com)

The Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. Contact the editor, Ginger Hudson, at:

Mail: AMGA, Newsletter  
P.O. Box 221403  
Anchorage, AK 99522-1403

Email: [newsletteramga@gmail.com](mailto:newsletteramga@gmail.com)

### Newsletter Submission Deadline

The deadline for submitting an item for publication in the following month's edition of the AMGA newsletter is the 20th of every month. Items arriving after this date may or may not be included.

Educational or garden related articles, Bird Chatter, calendar items and announcements are always welcome.

AMGA Web Site: [www.alaskamastergardeners.org](http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/Alaska-Master-Gardeners-Anchorage](https://www.facebook.com/Alaska-Master-Gardeners-Anchorage)

AMGA Google Group:  
<https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups#!forum/AkMGA>

To send concerns or information to the AMGA directly, mail to:  
AMGA  
P.O. Box 221403  
Anchorage, AK 99522-1403

If you have questions or want to make address or email corrections, please contact Alexis St. Juliana at: [astjuliana@hotmail.com](mailto:astjuliana@hotmail.com)

