

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ANCHORAGE

AMGA NEWSLETTER

March 2019
Volume 21, Issue 3

Alaska Master Gardeners Annual Statewide Conference April 6, UAA Campus: Lucy Cuddy Hall and Rasmuson Hall

➤ A Brief Preview of Events ➤

Mistress of Ceremonies: CES Horticulture Agent Julie Riley
Special appearance by Mayor Ethan Berkowitz
Keynote, "Understanding Roots" with Author Robert Kourik

Workshops:

"The Secrets Behind Compelling Combinations"

by author and designer Brenda Adams

"Fruit for the Urban Garden" by horticulturist Debbie Hinchey

"Just Say Grow! Raised Bed Gardening in Southcentral Alaska" by grower Deb Blaylock

"Small Spaces, Big Gardens—Using the Design Process to the the Most From Your
Outdoor Spaces" by Landscape Architect Elise Huggins

"Small Plants for Small Spaces: Alpines and Hypertufa" by nursery owner Jaime Rodriguez

Vegetable Container Gardening by Rob Carter, Director of the Alaska Plant Materials Center

"Insects in the Garden: Friend or Foe" by IPM specialist Janice Chumley

Fast Composting by CES Horticulture Agent Steve Brown

Closing presentation, The Good, the Bad, and the Unbelievable by Author Robert Kourik



<https://alaskamastergardeners.org/conference.html>

Co-President's Message by Susan Negus

The first day of Spring is March 20, 2019 is also called the March Equinox or Vernal Equinox. This day marks the first day of Spring in the Northern Hemisphere. Probably won't find any spring like conditions here in Anchorage. Although, I always enjoy this time of year because the days are noticeably longer and all my house plants are noticeably happier. It is also a good reminder to start getting ready for the real spring in Anchorage, seeds, plant starts, and grow lights. Some of you have probably already started. I know I will be soon.

The annual directory will be mailed out any day now and I want to thank those who dedicated so much time into this project: Janice Berry who put it all together and delivered it to be published; Jane Baldwin who managed the membership database; and Cheryl Chapman who did the time-consuming proof reading and corrections. I know I would just call them and ask "Is it done yet?" Talking to them has helped me appreciate all the hard work they put into the directory.

Since it is officially Spring, the calendar is filling up with classes to attend. Botanical Gardens has a great assortment of classes. Featuring some of our own Master Gardeners, Ginger Hudson and Dr. Marilyn Barker. Alaska Mill and Feed has some interesting topics at a convenient time on Saturday mornings.

Many of the Gardening clubs are offering some good meeting topics. There is an interesting Symposium for Flower Judges or anyone interested in more advanced horticulture knowledge sponsored by the Anchorage Garden Club, see the calendar listing form all the details.

This is the first time I have put the calendar together, I hope I haven't forgotten or missed anything. I would appreciate it if you know of events or classes that come up please e-mail me, so I can put it into the calendar.

Let's not forget to sign up for the Anchorage Master Gardeners Statewide conference: "Urban Gardening in the Last Frontier". Registration is open. The conference committee is another group of people that have each put a lot of work into this event. I am really looking forward to attending. Hopefully I will see you at the Conference.

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AMGA Board Meeting: February

Fur Rondy and AMGA Conference offer volunteers fun opportunities

On Monday, Feb. 11, 2019, Co-President Susan Negus presided over Board members FX Nolan, Nancy Grant, Fran Pekar, Don Bladow, and Marjorie Williams. Database custodian Jane Baldwin and Pioneer Home coordinator Lynne Opstad attended. Those absent were Elaine Hammes and Marilyn Barker.

Harry Deuber and Elaine Hammes completed an inventory of the storage unit and all property owned by Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage (AMGA). FX Nolan agreed that with depreciation the valuation for all items is \$0. This will be reported to the State of Alaska Corporations Section for AMGA's nonprofit report.

Kay Shoemaker-Howell, University of Alaska Fairbanks Director of the Alaska Master Naturalist Program, will present the February meeting program titled "The Alaska Master Naturalist Program." The previously scheduled speaker had a family emergency.

AMGA will join the Cooperative Extension Service to share two or three tables at the Midtown Mall Fur Rendezvous event. A SignUpGenius notice will be sent out recruiting volunteers in 2-hour time slots for Feb. 23 and Mar. 2.

The 2019 Statewide Master Garden Conference hosted by AMGA will be April 6. All venue contracts are in place. Speakers and topics have been confirmed. A webpage on the AMGA site will have all information and live sign-up by the end of the week. Maximum attendance is 200. Lynne Opstad gave an overview of the Silent Auction plans. Paul's Tree Service. Forty has offered to be a conference sponsor with a generous donation, and Lynne has also received over forty very nice items from various donors for the silent auction.

Committee reports included the successful conversion to Mailchimp from Constant Contact for broadcast email service. A discussion of various volunteer outreach platforms shows a need to coordinate among various committees for a concise volunteer network in the future. Janice Berry reported the directory has gone to print. Marjorie Williams reported that donations for monthly meeting door prizes are down. Rack cards have been developed and printed for booths and the upcoming conference.

Treasurer's Report

Balances 12/31/2018

Checking account	7,579.84
Savings account	<u>10,785.12</u>
	\$18,364.96

Dedicated Funds	5,260.79
Interest Bearing CD	<u>16,251.71</u>
	\$21,458.51

Revenue:	
Donation	620.00
Interest	2.88
Membership	<u>1,299.12</u>
	\$1,922.00

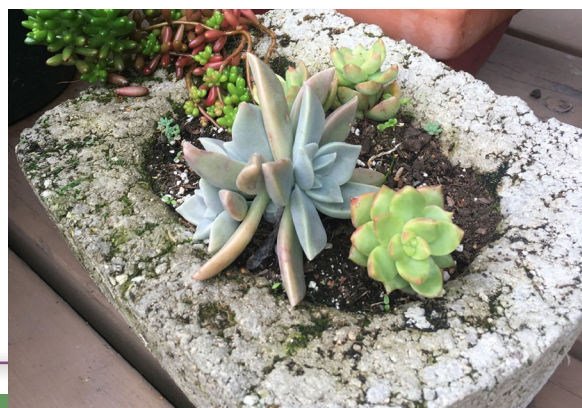
Expense:	
Operations	<u>146.99</u>
	\$146.99

Balances 1/31/2019

Checking account	9,352.01
Savings account	<u>10,786.95</u>
	\$20,138.96

Dedicated Funds	5,260.79
Interest Bearing CD	<u>16,251.71</u>
	\$21,512.50

Hypertufa trough. Jaime Rodriguez will speak about troughs and small alpine plants at the Annual Conference April 6. Photo by Janice Berry.



Volunteer Opportunities

Master Gardener Annual Conference, April 6

Do you love to organize? The 2019 conference committee can still use some help preparing attendee packets, set-up, and take-down. Contact Harry Deuber: denali542@yahoo.com, or 907-440-6372

Spring Garden Show at MidTown Mall, April 20

Share your knowledge with new gardeners, learn from experienced gardeners, and visit with other garden groups! Contact Harry Deuber: denali542@yahoo.com, or 907-440-6372

Herb Study Group: St. John's Wort by Wendy Willey

The Herb Study Group meeting was on February 1st at the Loussac Library. Thank you Elaine Hammes for leading our discussion on St. John's Wort. We were also joined by Julie Riley via video conference from Fairbanks.

St. John's Wort, *Hypericum perforatum*, is a flowering shrub native to Europe, western Asia, South Africa, North America, South America, and Australia. It gets its name from the fact that it often blooms on the birthday of the biblical John the Baptist, June 24th. In Greek hypericin means "over an apparition," since it was thought protect one from evil. The word wort simply means herb.

The flowers and leaves of St. John's Wort contain active ingredients such as hyperforin. The leaves are dotted with pellucid glands and contain capric acid which gives off the unpleasant smell of wet goat's fur when handled. It is available as a supplement in teas, tablets, liquids and topical preparations.

This plant is a rhizomatous, perennial herb that grows upright with a stem that is woody at the base. The leaves are opposite and oblong with transparent spots throughout. Its flowers are bright yellow, numerous and flat-topped corymb.

St. John's Wort is considered an invasive weed in many parts of the world. Programs in eradication have been developed in Canada, California and Australia. It is reproduced by seeds and short rhizomes. Original infestations are usually associated with logging, fire, mining or other disturbances. This plant is well adapted to a variety of habitats and climatic conditions. It is known as an extremely aggressive weed in the Pacific Northwest and has been found growing in Hoonah, Sitka and Prince of Wales Island. In these areas it needs to be monitored carefully.

Caution:

Before we look at what this herb can be used for I want to cover the side effects. St. John's Wort is generally considered safe when used orally in appropriate doses however it can cause many unwanted side effects.

- * Agitation * Irritability * Anxiety
- * Burning or prickling sensation
- * Dizziness
- * Diarrhea
- * Dry mouth
- * Fatigue
- * Headache
- * Increased sensitivity to sunlight
- * Insomnia
- * Low blood sugar levels
- * Restlessness
- * Stomach discomfort

There isn't enough information about the safety of using St. John's Wort topically. Don't use during pregnancy or while breast-feeding.

Check with your doctor before using St. John's Wort in combination with any prescription drug. There may be possible



St. John's Wort, *Hypericum Perforatum*,

Source: Wikimedia commons. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hypericum_perforatum_L._\(8070411635\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hypericum_perforatum_L._(8070411635).jpg)

Credit: Udo Schmidt from Deutschland
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>

interactions. Using this herb can result in decreased absorption and increased clearance of certain drugs. St. John's Wort in large doses can also be poisonous to grazing livestock. Symptoms include restlessness, skin irritation and increased respiration. It displaces native plant species and reduces foraging sites for wildlife. In late summer, the plants dry stalks may increase the risk of fires in forests and rangelands.

This herb is an astringent, analgesic, antidepressant, antispasmodic, stimulates bile flow, antiviral, anti-inflammatory, sedative and restorative tonic for the nervous system.

St. John's Wort has been used for centuries for depression, melancholy and hysteria. In a series of studies that were presented in 1992 at the Fourth International Congress on Phytotherapy in Munich, the herb helped well over half of those in the study. It has also been used for menopausal symptoms when combined with a particular form of black cohosh extract. It is said to reduce symptoms of hot flashes. An infusion of leaves and flowers in olive oil is excellent for burns and healing inflamed, dry and cracked skin.

Our next meeting will be Friday March 8th, from 12:00p-1:30 at the Learning Commons in the Loussac Library. Our herb of the month will be Feverfew, *Tanacetum parthenium*, lead by Debbie Hinchey. We will also be welcoming Julie Riley via video conference to the meeting. We will see you on the 8th.

2019 Alaska Master Gardener Statewide Conference

April 6 • UAA Lucy Cuddy Hall



URBAN GARDENING IN THE LAST FRONTIER

Garden Market
Silent Auction
Door Prizes

Robert Kourik, keynote speaker

Early Registration (Before March 15)\$85
Registration.....\$95

www.alaskamastergardeners.org • Lunch included

Major Sponsor



UAF is an AA/EO employer and educational institution and prohibits illegal discrimination against any individual: www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination.

Garden
Market
Vendors
at the
Conference

Robert Kourik, Keynote Speaker, Author (will be bringing books)
Tamara Johannes, Killer Designs Studio LLC ❁ Susan Hviid, Simply Susan
Nickel LaFleur and Allison Lee, Garden Bling ❁ Laura Walter, Whispering Bird Glass
Shirley Ryan, Frontier Landscaping ❁ Mindy Tomazevic, Designer Hot Pads by Mindy
Petra Illig, Alaska Rhodiola Enterprises, llc ❁ Brenda Adams, Speaker, author (books)
Jaime Rodriguez, Speaker, Alpine Garden Nursery

Bird Chatter

OMG! . . . Just when we thought “good news” had been abolished along with state and federal Climate Change commissions, this wonderful bulletin blasted forth from Fairbanks: Fred is OUT!

The boss of the UAF department that rules Cooperative Extension has returned to Texas whence he originated. (Sorry, Texas) He will be remembered here as the enemy of all that AMGA stands for. Faced with budget cuts, he apparently did what most UAF folks do—he screwed Anchorage, cutting almost all \$\$\$ that supported AMGA here.

Bye-bye Julie Riley. Bye-bye office and classroom space (Thanks to Mayor Berkowitz for rescuing us). Kitchen gardens for people who need fresh veggies? Soil safety practices? Food safety concerns for half the population of the state? Who cares. Beauty? Hahahaha!

OK, that’s enough. And just BC’s opinion, of course. Perhaps he was a concerned, sensitive, thoughtful leader and we just missed the evidence of his deepness.

BC is cautious about his replacement, Dr. Milan Shipka. He’s an animal guy—reindeer—a highly qualified, experienced, heavily bearded 20-year UAF prof. But with the governor’s proposed budget cuts—he really slashed the university—BC is not hopeful of a better future.

Here’s part of the official announcement: “Shipka takes on the leadership of SNRE from Fred Schlutt, who plans to move to Texas, his home state. Schlutt, formerly the vice provost for Extension and Outreach, served as the Cooperative Extension Service director since May 2009.”

CAN’T HELP IT. . . . Two of BC’s friends have recently confessed to feeding feral domestic rabbits that showed up in their yards. The feeders—one member, one

nonmember—know the rule is don’t, but they can’t help it. They want the rabbits to visit them, a warm, cheery encounter in our dismal winter; and who can blame them? We’re told feeding wild animals is illegal, but here’s what the relevant reg says:

“5 AAC 92.230. Feeding of game. A person may not intentionally feed a moose (except under terms of a permit issued by the department), bear, wolf, coyote, fox, or wolverine, or negligently leave human food, pet food, or garbage in a manner that attracts these animals.”

Don’t see no rabbits in there. But BC’s law license has been revoked, so don’t rely on this. However, know that one sure result of feeding rabbits in your yard is more rabbits in your yard. And be careful not to squash them when you back out of the driveway.

BTW, know the difference between a rabbit and a wild hare? Prof. Google says hares turn white when it snows. Bunnies don’t.

SAVE THE DATE. . . . And bid on silent auction items at our big Conference next month. Lynne Opstad reports one item in the auction is two tickets to the Homer Garden Tour weekend on July 27th and 28th, plus lodging for two nights at the Spyglass Inn. A copy of the Homer Garden Club’s new book “Kachemak Cultivating from Seaside to Summit” is included.

Lucky winner! The Homer event is one of the best garden-ing events in the state. This year’s main speaker (probably not included in the prize) is Fergus Garrett, head gardener of the world-famous Great Dixter Garden in Sussex, England—known for its innovative use of color and style. Better reserve seats and lodging soon. Fran Durner, a regular, says both sell out quickly. For more info on our silent auction, check out Lynne’s list below. Have something to share: stoomey@ymail.com



Don't Miss Out on These Rare Opportunities! Silent Auction at the April 6 Conference

A Silent Auction will be held at the April 6th Statewide Master Gardener Conference. Registration fees only cover a portion of the cost of holding a conference this size so additional income is generated through the auction, Garden Market and the sale of AMGA logo wear. Some of the exciting items on auction are seen to the right.

We are still working on packages for the auction. In particular we are looking for items for a bird package—for instance, a bird house or seed; gift cards to a gas station; and a berry picking fork and food preservation items such as canning jars. We are accepting items on a limited basis; if you have something to contribute please contact Lynne Opstad, lopstad@gei.net

We have a fantastic line up of speakers so register for the conference now and please remember to stop by the Silent Auction, Garden Market and AMGA table while at the conference!

- ✿ July Homer Garden Tour weekend tickets and lodging
- ✿ Tickets to the Northwest Flower and Garden show
- ✿ Original works of art by Alyse Gilbert and Andy Sonneborn
- ✿ Beautiful Glass Fusion artwork by several Master Gardeners
- ✿ A gift basket from Alaska Mill and Feed
- ✿ Floral Design lesson by Paul Mamora,
and a Wood Turning lesson by Don Bladow
- ✿ Houseplant arrangement by Green Connection
- ✿ Gift certificates to Shuzy Q and Moose’s Tooth
- ✿ Books including *Alaska Wildflowers* by Jeanne Lawrence
plus Brenda Adams’ books and several CES publications.
- ✿ Garden art
- ✿ Garden Consultation

March 2019 Garden Event Calendar

MEETINGS

Monday March 4

Alaska Native Plant Society meeting; 7p “INaturalist and Borneo”, at the Campbell Creek Science Center, 5600 Science Center. <http://aknps.org/Pages/Meetings.php>

Mat Su Master Gardeners MMGA Meeting, 7p at the MTA Headquarters building in Palmer, 480 Commercial Drive, Palmer, AK. www.matsumastergardeners.com

Friday March 8

Herb Study Group: noon *Tanacetum parthenium* by Debbie Hinchey, at the Learning Commons in the Loussac Library, Anchorage. anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com

Thursday March 14

Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association Meeting: 7p “Plant Propagation Methods” by Debbie Hinchey, at the BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, Anchorage. www.apfga.org

Wildflower Club Meeting: 10a-11:30a, “Wood Bison of Alaska”, Their History and the re-introduction. Presented by the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center. Central Lutheran Church, 1420 Cordova Street. www.alaska.gardenclubs.org

Friday March 15

Herb Study Group: Noon-1:30p, “Golden Feverfew” Presented by Debbie Hinchey; Meeting is at CES office located at the Loussac Library, 3600 Denali St. Anchorage. anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com

Saturday March 16

Alaska Rock Garden Society Meeting: 2p, “How to Build a Rock Garden,” slide show and possible demonstration. A panel of four people will be available to answer questions and add information as the program progresses. Profile: Latin in the Garden. Eagle River Elk’s Lodge, 17111 Eagle River Loop RD, Eagle River. www.akrockgardensociety.org

Monday March 18

AMGA Meeting: 7p, “Pruning 101,” presented by Kathy Liska; at the BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, Anchorage. <https://alaskamastergardeners.org>

Tuesday March 26

Alaska Orchid Society Meeting: Wayne will do a slide show of various Cattleya and related groups. Business meeting is at 6:30p with program beginning at 7p, BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, Anchorage. <http://www.akkorchid.org/>

CLASSES

Alaska Mill and Feed Spring Class Schedule in March. Sign up for classes, \$5 per class, 30 person limit per class.

www.alaskamillandfeed.com

Saturday March 2: 10a-11a, “Birch Tree Tapping”

by Valerie Barber

Saturday March 9: 10a-12p, “Dahlias Class”

by Marya Morrow

Saturday March 16: 10a-11:30, “Bee Keeping” by Matt Hale

Saturday March 23: 10a-11:30, “Seed Potatoes”

by Greg Kalal

Saturday March 30: 10a-11a, “Raspberry and Strawberry Care” by Tim Pritchett

Alaska Botanical Garden Classes, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road. Registration required. www.alaskaabg.org

- **March 7-8**, “Landscape Design”, by Ginger Hudson.

3 day course, Thursday and Friday class from 6p-8p, Saturday is from 10a-12p

- **March 16th**, “Winter Plant Identification” by Dr. Marilyn Barker, a retired UAA Professor. A winter identification walk through the Lowenfels- Hoersting Nature Trail.

- **March 11-14**, “Spring Break in the Garden”, 12-3p on the 12th-14th. Will offer a kid friendly workshop on Monday the 11th. \$5/Family & \$10/Workshop.

- **March 26**, “Seed Starting” by Will Criner, Garden and Facilities Manager. 6p-7:30p

- **March 28**, “Seed Starting” by Will Criner, Garden and Facilities Manager. 6p-7:30p

- “Guided Gardening with ABG”. The ABG is offering a unique comprehensive guided gardening program for the 2019 growing season. Start your garden off right by growing your own vegetable garden at ABG. Garden staff will mentor and guide participants throughout an entire growing season.

- “Summer Camps for Children”; Full day and Half day options.

CONFERENCES

March 8-9

Alaska Food Festival and Conference; 2 days of foodie and farmer fun with folks from around the state. In Homer at the Lands End resort. Hosted by the Alaska Food Policy Council and the Alaska Farmers Markets. Register at the website: www.akfoodpolicycouncil.org

April 6

AMGA Annual Statewide Conference, “Urban Gardening in the Last Frontier” at UAA Campus, Lucy Cuddy Hall. alaskamastergardeners.org/conference.html

March 2019 Garden Event Calendar

June 17-21, 2019

2019 International Master Gardeners Conference, "Penn's Woods: Digging into our Roots" at Valley Forge Casino Resort, Valley Forge, PA. www.internationalmastergardener.com Registration: <http://www.cvent.com/d/hgqxlp>

June 13-17, 2019

Flower Judges School and Symposium
8a-4p at the Central Lutheran Church in Anchorage.
Sponsored by the Anchorage Garden Club. The courses are open to anyone interested in learning more advanced horticulture and or for those seeking to become certified Judges. The subjects appear to be Pelargoniums, Lilacs and Iris. For more information contact Carol Norquest 907-248-9563 or norquist@alaska.net

✻ **APRIL 6** ✻

AMGA Annual Statewide Conference

UAA campus, Lucy Cuddy Hall

Urban Gardening in the Last Frontier

Keynote speaker Robert Kourik, Author of:

Understanding Roots;
Roots Demystified;
and others.

✻ Plus: silent auction, vendors, AND Julie Riley! ✻

Register by mail or online:

<https://alaskamastergardeners.org/conference.html>

March 8 - 9, 2019

ALASKA FOOD FESTIVAL & CONFERENCE

Lands End Resort • Homer, Alaska

Get Involved
Become a Presenter,
Vendor, or Sponsor

LEARN MORE:

akfoodpolicycouncil.org/2019-conference

AMGA 2019 Winter Meetings

March 18: Pruning 101 with Kathy Liska

April 15: Butterflies, Birds and Spring,
with Rick Sinnott

May 20: Strange Things Done
Under the Midnight Sun:
Gardening oddities, eccentricities,
and bizarre facts of nature,
with Julie Riley

Membership Renewal Past Deadline!

If you have not renewed your membership, do it
now to stay on our mailing list.
Contact Don Bladow: dfbladow@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE!

Fur Rondy
Through March 3
Tell your friends to visit the
CES/Master Gardener table
at MidTown Mall

Spring Garden Show
April 20
MidTown Mall

Talk to residents about gardening in
Anchorage, seed planting schedules,
compost, recommended varieties, and
your fabulous gardening experiences!

Look for link to sign up in your email soon!



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

Meetings are held at the B.P. Energy Center, 1041 Energy Court,
Anchorage, AK, 99508

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:	Harry Deuber
Broadcast Email:	Fran Pekar
Calendar of Events:	Gina Docherty, Interim
Advanced MG:	Ginny Moore
Directory Editor:	Janice Berry
Programs:	Marilyn Barker
Field Trips:	Marilyn Barker, Interim
Google Group:	Mary Rydesky
Hospitality:	Marjorie Williams
Membership & Database:	Don Bladow
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

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

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
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:
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If you have questions or want to make address or email corrections,
please contact Don Bladow at: dfbladow@gmail.com

