

## President's Message by Susan Negus

This has been an interesting few months with the Covid-19 Virus. It has affected us all in many ways. From an AMGA perspective, we have had to cancel the last two monthly meetings and the Spring Garden Show. I think many people have been left with plants they were planning on selling. Cindy Walker put her 200 tomatoes on Facebook and they were gone in a week. Sue Looney put her plants/starts on Google Group and when I called her the same day late afternoon, she was almost out of plants –although she wasn't charging anything for her plants. These are some innovative ways to get rid of your excess plants. I do not really have a feel for how many people were left with plants they wanted to sell. You could e-mail me and we can try to sell plants as a group on the internet, perhaps? One could wait for the upcoming plant sales, but I don't think things will change enough for social distancing in May, maybe by June things will get easier. I am still hoping to have the AMGA Plant Sale August 8. This is wishful thinking in a complicated time.

Thank goodness for the internet. ABC has had some good Zoom meetings. CES has been having a variety of zoom and Facebook meetings. The May UAF CES calendar is really full. If you have felt neglected by Julie Riley, fear not. She has many Zoom and Webinar meetings scheduled. I tried to capture them in the calendar this month. YouTube is a wealth of knowledge about gardening.



The Advanced Master Gardening class is on hold. There is talk of possibly having it online/Zoom. Otherwise it

will just have to be delayed for another time when things are safer. Thanks again to Emily Becker and Fran Pekar for putting so much work into it.

The plant sales we usually have in May are in jeopardy. I have talked to many groups that are sitting on hanging baskets, succulents, potted plants, and grafted trees. All trying to decide what to do with their inventory. Alaska Mill and Feed Garden Center is currently taking plant orders for curbside pickup or delivery only. I heard Forget-Me-Not nursery will sell plants online for pick up. More things to keep you on the computer.

I am hoping to have the May monthly meeting on Zoom. We will send a broadcast e-mail for directions.

Hopefully we can all start working in the garden and get away from the computer (Yea). I am still fairly frozen here, in the mid-hill side. I talked to one friend in west Anchorage and she has tulips coming up on the south side of her house. This week we are in a strong melting trend. Hopefully it won't go into a deep freeze again, of course we are in Alaska.

I hope everyone is well and staying safe. Remember we are all in this together and need to support each other.

### AMGA Treasurer's Report, March 2020

By Nancy Grant

Balance 03/01/2020		Expenses:	
Checking S-88	\$17,696.99	Operations	\$146.99
Savings S-1	\$5.25	Website	\$244.98
Savings S-19	\$18,871.65	Directory	<u>\$609.32</u>
CD Education 5yr.			\$1,001.29
1.650% (12/20)	\$5,348.13	Balance 04/01/2020	
CD General 2yr.		Checking S-88	\$16,695.70
1.95% (1/21)	<u>\$10,452.48</u>	Business MBR Shares	\$5.25
	\$50,374.50	Business Premium Shares	\$16,874.51
Revenue:		CD Education 5yr.	
Interest/Dividends	\$75.68	1.650% (12/20)	\$5,370.13
Membership	<u>0</u>	CD General 2yr.	
Donations	\$75.68	1.95% (01/21)	<u>\$10,503.30</u>
			\$49,448.89

Top: The annual uncovering of the compost. Photo by Ginger Hudson. Above: Willow buds gathered to brighten hers and her friends homes. Photo by Susan Negus .

### Inside This Issue...

President's Message  
Treasurer's Report  
Soil Health Management  
Herb Study: Basil by Lynn Hansen  
Gardening Toward Climate Change  
by Ginger Hudson  
Bird Chatter  
Victory Garden Call  
Garden Event Calendar  
Lend a Helping Hand

# Soil Health Management from the USDA

As we make our way into the early uncovered gardens, it is a good time to think about soil health. Planning in advance before you plant will save potential conundrums in the future. The following is from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services website. It was written for the agricultural audience and has been adapted and edited for space and clarity.

Soil works for you if you work for the soil by using management practices that improve soil health and increase productivity. A fully functioning soil produces the maximum amount of products at the least cost. Maximizing soil health sets the ground work, literally, for success in your garden. Soil will not work for you if you abuse it.

Managing for soil health (improved soil function) is mostly a matter of maintaining suitable habitat for the myriad of creatures that comprise the soil food web. This can be accomplished by disturbing the soil as little as possible, growing as many different species of plants as practical, keeping living plants in the soil as often as possible, and keeping the soil covered all the time, either with foliage, vegetation, or mulch.

## Manage More by Disturbing Soil Less

Soil disturbance can be the result of physical, chemical or biological activities. Physical soil disturbance, such as tillage, or only planting and removing annuals each year, results in bare and/or compacted soil that is destructive and disruptive to soil microbes, and creates a hostile environment for them to live. Misapplication of fertilizers, salt spray from ice melt, and fungicides can disrupt the symbiotic relationships between fungi, other microorganisms, and plant roots. Overgrazing—biological disturbance—reduces root mass, increases runoff, and increases soil temperature. All forms of soil disturbance diminish habitat for soil microbes and result in a diminished soil food web.

## Diversify Soil Biota with Plant Diversity

Plants use sunlight to convert carbon dioxide and water into carbohydrates that serve as the building blocks for roots, stems, leaves, and seeds. They also interact with specific soil microbes by releasing carbohydrates (sugars) through their roots into the soil to feed the microbes in exchange for nutrients and water. A diversity of plant carbohydrates is required to support the diversity of soil microorganisms in the soil. In order to achieve a high level of diversity, different plants must be grown. The key to improving soil health is ensuring that food and energy chains and webs consist of several types of plants or animals, not just one or two. In other words, variety leads to health in the garden, and interest to garden visitors.

Biodiversity is ultimately the key to the success of any landscaping or agricultural system. Lack of biodiversity severely limits the potential of any vegetative growing system and increases disease and pest problems. A diverse and fully functioning soil food web provides for nutrient, energy, and water cycling that allows a soil to express its full potential. Increasing diversity in landscapes with the use of combinations of perennials, ground-

covers, trees, and annuals increases soil health and soil function, reduces input costs, and increases plant health. Additionally, crop rotation in your garden beds changes the nutrient composition and reduces the possibility of nutrient depletion.

## Keep a Living Root Growing Throughout the Year

Living plants maintain a rhizosphere, an area of concentrated microbial activity close to the root. The rhizosphere is the most active part of the soil ecosystem because it is where food is most readily found, and where peak nutrient and water cycling occurs. Microbial food is exuded by plant roots to attract and feed microbes that provide nutrients (and other compounds) to the plant at the root-soil interface where the plants can take them up. Since living roots provide the easiest source of food for soil microbes, growing long-season crops or a cover crop following a short-season crop, feeds the foundation species of the soil food web as much as possible during the growing season.

Though there are not many greens above ground in Alaska year-round, trees and perennials are still working underground throughout winter.

Healthy soil is dependent upon how well the soil food web is fed. Providing plenty of easily accessible food to soil microbes helps them cycle nutrients that plants need to grow. Sugars from living plant roots, recently dead plant roots, crop residues, and soil organic matter all feed the many and varied members of the soil food web.

## Keep the Soil Covered as Much as Possible

Soil cover conserves moisture, reduces temperature, intercepts raindrops (to reduce their destructive impact), suppresses weed growth, and provides habitat for members of the soil food web that spend at least some of their time above ground. Many insects live in the top few inches of the soil and are important in breaking down debris and their frass produces particles that make up soil health. Keeping the soil covered while allowing crop residues to decompose (so their nutrients can be cycled back into the soil) can be a bit of a balancing act. Gardeners must give careful consideration to their plant selection, landscape design, and mulching options (including any cover crops) and residue management if they are to keep the soil covered and fed at the same time.

## Resources

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/soils/health/mgmt/>

<https://uaf.edu/ces/agriculture/soil/>

Compost Tea Made in Alaska!  
Available from The Good Earth Garden School  
<http://ellenvandevisse.com/products-page/>

## Herb Study: Basil by Lynn Hansen

Sweet Basil (*Ocimum basilicum* L.) or *O. basilicum* is native to India, Asia, and naturalized in Africa and the Pacific Islands. In other words, many warm temperate climates. It was used in ancient Egypt in the time of the Pharaohs. Basil was found growing around Christ's tomb after the Resurrection so some Greek Orthodox Churches use it to prepare holy water and pots are set around alters. In India basil is used to swear upon in court as Americans do the Bible.

Being in the mint family it is related to many of the common culinary herbs we use throughout the world today: oregano, marjoram, sage, lemon balm, and rosemary. There are many types of basil available: large leaf, lemon, cinnamon, licorice, small leaf, and bush. These plants cross pollinate easily and frequently. Keeping a variety pure can be difficult. More than 50 species are reported and taxonomy is difficult; sometimes impossible.

The University of Connecticut developed a new variety of basil named 'Dark Opal' which was a cross perfected in 1961 and sent to growers for trial in 1962. In that same year it won the prestigious All-American medal for new plants. This was astounding at the time for an herb and not a fancy flower. The two toned lavender and white blossoms probably didn't hurt either however. Since then other herbs have won this award but basil was a first.

Propagation can be by direct seeding into the earth or by soft cuttings from existing plants which are rooted and transplanted into field or pot. In the Riviera Ligure countryside of Italy it is the Genovese Gigante that is prized above all to grow. It is one of the few places growing basil year round commercially from seed sewn directly into the ground. Five to Six thousand seeds are direct seeded for each square meter, which is very crowded. When the plants get several sets of leaves they are sheared and plants allowed to branch and grow. This can happen two or three times and then they are cut low and the field is reseeded for the process to start over. Other nearby fields in Italy are covered in short row covers or glass greenhouse like structures with water and heat underground.

In the United States and most of the world basil is strictly a greenhouse or potted plant in a sunny window sill. Very labor intensive which has made this a very expensive commodity in the grocery store. Because of the current effort to eat at home and television cooking shows, basil is in high demand.

Another way to propagate is from cuttings from existing plants. Pinch the stem under the top four to six leaves and root in water before planting in a light fertile soil mix, basil roots quite easily. Transplant when ready. Most sources say to not fertilize but some say to use a balanced 1-1-1 fertilizer to the soil and then add nitrogen when plants are established.

To grow well in the ground or in a pot plants must be protected from wind in a sunny location with very fertile, well drained soil. They need plenty of water but can't sit in wet. If leaves wilt it is the lucky plantsman who can get it back to health. Keep pinching your plant after several sets of leaves have appeared and you will have nice bushy growth.

Farming basil rows and spacing depends upon method of harvest. Equipment is available to shear off the tops of plants in various widths and sizes. Plant according to how you can get the equipment through the field. In Alaska it is best to grow basil inside in a sunny

window. Our temperatures tend to be too cool at night which can cause mildew and rot. However, in our warming summers, some gardeners have luck growing basil in pots outside thus making it easy to bring them in if the weather becomes too damp or cool.

Flowers are a nice visual aspect but once they develop no more leaves will appear on that branch. Flowering plants attract bees and other beneficial insects and can also attract some pests.

Aphids are common pests but no pesticide is currently labeled for this use in the United States.

Diseases are plentiful in basil but are almost always due to lack of air circulation and too much moisture. Damping off of young starts is common. Dark spot and all manner of molds are also plentiful. Getting affected plants out of proximity quickly is one way to solve a problem before it spreads. Otherwise chemical fungicides are necessary.

Basil is best known used in the kitchen but can be used in perfumes and essential oils for flavorings. Formal gardens can include basil hedges in various leaf shapes and sizes.



Above: Purple Thai Basil. Note, even the flowers of basil are edible. Normally kitchen gardeners pinch back the inflorescence to encourage the plant to produce more leaves.

Top: Green basil plants are available from Anchorage Greens right now. Check their website for ordering information: <https://www.anchoragegreens.com/>  
Photos by Ginger Hudson.

## Gardening Toward Climate Change by Ginger Hudson

Most avid gardeners have already started seeds, made planting lists, and uncovered garden beds, boxes, and pots. Gardeners with years, many up to decades, of experience know seed and plant choices have changed over time. Some of our selections come and go like fashions. Some choices change as Alaska becomes better connected to the outside world. Yet more and more, we all realize the climate is changing and gardening choices have to evolve too.

Our seed and plant choices can make gardening successful for our needs and benefit the environment as well.

According to Paul Hawkin, author and founder of Drawdown, think tanks and institutions have put the weight of solving climate change on “they.” “They” are the energy companies, car companies, and big industry. However, there are nearly one-hundred other actions small business and individuals can do to improve the climate—in fact these groups make up the majority of solutions.

Drawdown’s data came from over sixty researchers that included professionals, Masters students, PhDs, and more. The numbers were crunched, and crunched again due to disbelief—the top issue affecting climate change: refrigeration. The next important issues: improve society by educating girls through high school, and family planning. But gardeners should direct their attention to a topic dear to our hearts: uplifting the Earth’s carbon sink is one of the top three climate crisis solutions. What does that mean? MORE PLANTS! Homeowners should plant more, landowners should plant more, farms should be smaller, more sustainable, and commercial sites should leave more permeable zones.

It’s common knowledge Alaska is not the only state experiencing a warming climate. Listening to presenters at this year’s Northwest Flower and Garden Festival, the theme was clear: face up to the change in weather and learn to work with it while helping your backyard at the same time. Multiple speakers commented on Seattle’s cherry trees this year blooming nearly three weeks earlier than normal.

Bess Bronstein, educator, horticulturist, and arborist spoke about Changing Times, Changing Gardens. Gardeners see the changes because we are in the dirt, our hands, eyes, and especially our legs when we can wear shorts more often, are sensing the changes every year. Bess wanted to grow California lilac, *Ceanothus*, in her northwest Washington garden when she first picked up her shovel 30 years ago. But the environment was too wet in winter and summer too short. Today, *C. victoria* thrives in the region, and probably too well, becoming gangly. While that is exciting, other plants are starting to fail. A mature Lawson cypress, *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*, in Bess’s yard died in 3-months. Western red cedar in the Seattle area are thinning down and dying back from the top. These trees can survive three summer months, but in turn require regular moisture the other nine months of the year. Seattle is not getting that anymore.

Environmentalists in Alaska have seen the same, some years the land receives a lot of precipitation, some not as much. There are also changes in how and when it comes. i.e., no snow before the ground freezes in winter.

So what do we do in our gardens, what can we plant, what should we not plant any more? We still want to, and still can

garden. Do we look at what is growing south of us? Bring those here? Or look to plants we can help save.

Gardeners everywhere should start by looking at a healthy forest or meadow nearby. Forests are not just a bunch of trees, they are layered with shrubs, herbaceous perennials, grasses, and ground covers. But notice, as you hike this summer, treelines in the Chugach Mountains are moving up in altitude and alders are spreading into meadows. As we update our landscapes, make selections that will adapt to where we are, in the current climate, don’t force them.

Featured speaker at this year’s Garden Festival, Dan Hinkley told his audience gardeners can cultivate plants that are disappearing in the wild. Dan, plant collector, Director of Heronswood Garden, and author, says plants are surviving in Seattle that never did when he started working in the region over 30 years ago. If these plants are not invasive, demonstration and home gardens could be the plant’s salvation.

Dan showed a photo of a begonia growing in Northeastern India with leaves the size of *Gunnera*. He collected ping pong ball sized seeds and has been growing them in his garden. Though the plant is yet to be named, it survives well in pots.

In the same wet area of India, plant explorer Frank Kingdon-Ward collected a primrose and returned it to Kew Gardens in the 1920s. The species was thought to be lost in the wild and declared extinct in the 1960s. But Dan found it on one of his trips to the wet, hard to navigate area of India and it is now blooming at Heronswood. (Dan called the plant *Primula polenensis*, yet the plant named from Kingdon-Ward’s collection is labeled *P. cawdoriana*, Dan has not been contacted to confirm the name.)

Dan traveled to Vietnam in 2019 with a group of botanists to collect a species of horse chestnut, *Aesculus wangii*. European horse chestnut is currently growing in the Pacific Northwest and other parts of the country where the North American species has been dying. Cardamom farms have made it hard for Vietnamese horse chestnut to grow in its native land so it is also endangered. Dan has been able to grow the Vietnamese variety at Windcliff. Through his and other intrepid explorers’ efforts, new plant varieties can be tried in new regions and the efforts may help save species that are dwindling.

As Paul Hawkin said in his presentation at UAA this winter: the climate is supposed to change, or we wouldn’t be here. Climate is doing its job perfectly, we have to stop using sports terms: “fight” “beat” “cut back.” We need to acknowledge science, it is getting hotter, glaciers are melting faster. Gardeners have the opportunity to try new things, to acknowledge and find the beauty in how to navigate the change.

### Resources

Project Drawdown, <https://drawdown.org/>

Chugach state park climate impact survey  
[https://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw\\_gtr950.pdf](https://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw_gtr950.pdf)

Shrub line advance indicator of climate change in Chugach Mountains  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26719133>

## Bird Chatter

**SAD BUT TRUE.** . . Could any of us have imagined it – looking forward to the pleasure of raking up all the junk we failed to rake up last fall? Singing while bagging sodden leaves, still muddy on the underside? Gathering the garbage freed by melting snow? Trying to remember what the hell you planted over there next to the big rock?

Outdoors at last, with back-breaking, muscle-straining, blister-making, real work to do? And where is the damn rake?!

Oh Joy!

Such is life during a pandemic. Any opportunity to forget about it for a while.

**GRACIAS.** . . A grateful shoutout to Sue Looney for offering her extra herb starts to green-starved MG cooks – and for being willing to pack them up and meet, suitably masked, at disclosed locations where lucky recipients, also suitably masked, could pick them up using the gloved l-o-o-n-g reach – and all for free!

**BRAIN STILL WORKING?...** “Ask Mother Nature,” newsletter of The Good Earth Garden School in Palmer, has posted this puzzler for MGs going cross-eyed from doing crosswords. They promise an answer in the next issue:

“You visit a Texas rancher in 2008 and the first thing he shows you is a round, green, patch of grass. This circle, about 10 feet across, is surrounded by bare ground and looks refreshing on a hot summer day.

Why, and what happened?

Okay, here is a hint to get you started. “These round spots are where round bales of hay were placed, bales that had been half-submerged in a flood of 1997 and were carried to this spot so the cows could eat what could be salvaged. ... Why is it a lush green here, 11 years later, while the surrounding ground is bare and baking in the hot Texas sun?”

Note: BC took out a hint – made it too easy ... maybe.

**SAD BAD...** The Guardian reports officials in Japan are discouraging people from violating social distancing rules by clipping all the buds from local showplace rose bushes. The 3,000 bushes, 180 varieties, in a city north of Tokyo, are traditional Springtime magnets for visitors and locals alike, a no-no this year.

They donated the flowers to a school, but still. . .

**GOOD TO GO...** The bad news is, no friendly group-buying trip to Courtney and Brandon’s down at Forget-Me-Not-Nursery this May – a much anticipated spring ritual.

The good news is, we can still make the gorgeous drive to Indian on our own – to pick up plants.

For the time being, no one is allowed in the greenhouse, but they’ve worked out a pretty buyer-friendly plan: Go online, choose from pictured options, pay by credit card, drive down the next day between noon and 6 pm, text Courtney (or walk up to the front door and get someone’s attention), then drive around back and your order will be waiting. In addition to plants, soil and fertilizer are available.

Check the Website ([forgetmenotnursery.com](http://forgetmenotnursery.com)) for the whole drill – Courtney says perennials will be added to the list as they wake up and make themselves attractive.

She says this system will be re-evaluated as conditions change. (907-653-7673)

At press time, Alaska. Mill & Feed had a similar set-up but check their Website – and the sites of P&M, Mile 5.2, Bells and Dimond greenhouses. At this point, most appear to be open but the situation is – to say the least – fluid.

News Flash: Local growers like these guys are going to need our support this year! Let’s step up.



## Arise Victory Gardeners! by Emily Becker

Seeds are flying off the racks! Gardening is expanding across the country in response to economic and social effects of COVID-19. The national movement is called the Cooperative Gardens Commission and is a throwback to the Victory Gardens of old. Anchorage is joining the movement with a new group, Anchor Gardens. Its mission is to make gardening resources and materials accessible to everyone in the Municipality of Anchorage.

Want to join? Fill out this form: <https://bit.ly/39nOrKM>

Join the Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/anchorgardens/>



We’re looking for materials, mentors and resourceful people who can help us grow quickly!

Questions?

Email: Emily Becker at [emilyandzeke@yahoo.com](mailto:emilyandzeke@yahoo.com)

# May 2020 Garden Event Calendar

**NOTE: All events subject to cancellation or rescheduling due to Covid-19 precautions. Please check group websites or other social media to find out if there are alternate arrangements to events. Mayor Berkowitz has extended the "hunker down" order through May 5. Remember to follow Muni and State regulations for travel and meetings.**

## Meetings and Events

### May 4, Monday

Alaska Native Plant Society, 7p-9p. Elizabeth Bluemink presents "Angelica." Rosaceae: Zoe Meade presents "Spirea."  
Alpine Beringian Endemics: Beth Baker presents "*Rumex beringensis*." Campbell Creek Science Center, 5600 Science Center Drive. aknps.org. This may be canceled or put on-line. Check website for more information.

### May 4, Monday

Mat-Su Master Gardeners Association, 7p. "State Fair Entries" by Kathy Liska. Meetings are on hold due to Covid-19 pandemic. Please check web site for possible on-line meeting. matsu-mastergardeners.com

### May 7, Thursday

Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association. Pruning and Grafting *Workshops have been canceled.* Those who placed bulk orders will be notified of where to pick up orders. www.apfga.org

Anchorage Garden Club, 7p-9p. "The Cooperative Extension Service." Pioneer School House, 437 E. 3rd Ave. alaskagarden-clubs.org

### May 8, Friday

Herb Study Group, Noon-1:30p. Topic is "Plans for 2020". Will be a Zoom Conference. for questions, e-mail anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com

### May 10, Sunday

Mother's Day at the Garden, 11a - 3 p. Alaska Botanical Garden. Check website for details. 4601 Campbell Airstrip Rd, Anchorage. alaskabg.org

### May 12, Tuesday

Alaska Rock Garden Society. Clean-up at ABG Rock Gardens. ARGS & ABG are in the process of developing a maintenance strategy, which may involve one volunteer at a time. Things are evolving, so check with ABG or ARGS for details. ARGS contact: Kathy Swick, swick@alaska.net

### May 14, Thursday

Wildflower Garden Club, 10a-12p. Verna Pratt Wildflower Trail Maintenance Service Project, This may be canceled or modified, see web site or Facebook for details. wildflowergardenclub.org

### May 14, Thursday

Alaska Rock Garden Society/Palmer. Clean up Palmer Visitor Center Garden. Maintenance on Thursdays- Volunteers needed

through the summer. ARGS is in the process of developing a maintenance strategy, which may involve one volunteer at a time. Things are evolving, so check with ARGS for details, Contact JaimecRodriguez: jrtinker@mtaonline.net

### May 17, Sunday

Homer Garden Club, 2p-4p. Aspen Suites Hotel, Homer. Homergardenclub.org

### May 17, Sunday

Cook Inlet Bonsai Study Group, 1p. "Repotting Bonsai." Dimond Green Houses. pmarmora@aol.com; Put "Bonsai" in subject line or check Facebook for details. Alaskabonsaiclubs.org

### May 18, Monday

AMGA Monthly Meeting at 7p. No Munch and Mingle. Topic presented by Steve Brown from UAF CES "Tough Turf." Will try to have online access. Will be announced on Broadcast e-mail. alaskamastergardeners.org

## Classes /Workshops

### May 1, May 8, May 22, Fridays \*

VegHeads Virtual Garden Hour 7p-8:30p. Seasoned Gardeners unite! Get together online Friday evenings to chat about vegetable gardening with Julie Riley. Registration not required. Log in: <https://alaska.zoom.us/j/499097562>

### May 5, May 12, May 19, May 26, Tuesdays \*

Zoom: New Gardener Q & A, 12p-1p. New Gardeners can ask Julie Riley gardening questions. Registration not required. Log in: <https://alaska.zoom.us/j/798249718>

### May 6, May 13, May 20, May 27, Wednesdays \*

Zoom: In the Virtual Garden with CES, 12:30p-1p. Weekly series hosted by UAF CES for tips and tricks for successful home gardening in AK. *Please register* at: [https://bit.ly/AOC\\_ITYG-CES](https://bit.ly/AOC_ITYG-CES) Check Facebook for weekly topics: <https://facebook.com/events/247911659576488/>

### May 7, Thursday

Webinar: Composting for your Farm, Yard or Garden. Presented by Kenai District Agent Casey Matney. Register at: <https://form.jotform.com/200634904076149>

### May 11, Monday \*

Zoom: Earthworms in Alaska, 11p-2:30p. Join Julie Riley, horticulture agent via Zoom. Pre-register at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/gearupgarden>

# May 2020 Garden Event Calendar

## May 13, 20th, 27th, and June 3, Wednesday

“Local Wildflower Class”. Presented by Marilyn Barker for hands on class learning to identify common plants in Anchorage. Check Web site for more details. 4601 Campbell Airstrip Rd, Anchorage, AK, 99507. [alaskabg.org](http://alaskabg.org)

## May 14, Thursday

Zoom: Fruit crops for Interior Alaska, 7p-8:30p. Presented by Julie Riley. Pre-register: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/gearupgarden>

## May 15, Friday\*

Zoom: In the Virtual Garden with CES, 7p-8:30p. Vegetable Gardening Chat with Julie Riley. Log in: <https://alaska.zoom.us/j/499097562>

## May 18, Monday\*

Zoom: Planting Trees & Shrubs, 7p-8:30p. Presented by Julie Riley. Preregister at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/gearupgarden>

## May 21, Thursday

Webinar: Direct Seeding and Transplanting into the Garden, 5:30p-7:30p. Presented by Kenai District Agent Casey Matney. Register at: <https://form.jotform.com/200634904076149>

\*These were taken off [www.uaf.edu](http://www.uaf.edu) the UAF CES website Calendar if the links don't work go to their website for more information.

## Summer Field Courses in Denali National Park

Alaska Geographic and National Park Service will have invigorating field courses this summer. Courses include transportation, overnight accommodations and hearty meals. For more information or to register please visit: <https://www.akgeo.org/field-courses/> or phone 907-683-6432

Dates TBA: Birds of Wonder Lake

Dates TBA: Birds of Denali

Dates TBA: Wildflowers of Denali.

Dates TBA: Paleontology in Denali”

July 8-10: Wolves of Denali

July 29-31: Denali Large Mammals

August 5-7: Denali's Mosses and Lichens

August 7-9: Denali's Alpine Wildlife and Climate Change

August 19-21: Bears of Denali

## Conferences

### May 1, Friday; May 6, Wednesday; and May 8, Friday

SouthEast Master Gardeners Virtual Garden Conference via Zoom. Register at: <http://seak-mastergardeners.org/index.html>

**May 1, Friday**, 6p-6:45p, “Earth Worms-Garden Good Guys or Eco Invader” by Darren Snyder. 7p-7:45p, “Garden for Pollinators-Birds, Bees and the Beetles” by Deb Rudis.

**May 6, Wednesday**, 6p-6:45p, “New and Exciting, Classic and Applicable, Fascinating Developments in the World of

Horticulture” by Dave Lendrum and Margaret Tharp owners of Landscape Alaska. 7p-7:45p, “Exploring the World for Hardy Rhododendrons” by Steve Hootman.

**May 8, Friday**, 6p-6:45p, “The Wow Factor; Beyond being Pretty! Growing and using Edible Flowers” by Patricia Hartman. 7p-7:45p, “Grow your Own Soil” by Samia Savell.

### July 18–19, Saturday and Sunday

Family Fair in the Garden. Family Programs, games, food and frolicking in the Garden. Alaska Botanical Garden, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Rd, Anchorage. [Alaskabg.org](http://Alaskabg.org)

### July 18-22, 2020

Botany 2020, Organized by the Botanical Society of America, will be in Anchorage, AK. In association with the American Fern Society, Society of Herbarium Curators, International Society for Plant Taxonomy and more. *\*\*According to the Botany 2020 website, as of April 26, the organizers have not made a final decision on physical cancellation. Hotels and airlines have eliminated or made generous change options. Note: they will be pursuing virtual presentations.\*\** For more information: <https://2020.botanyconference.org/>

## Plant Sales

*Plant Sales that are undecided under the Covid-19 social distancing:* King Tech Career Center. TBA. Palmer High School FFA Plant Sale, TBA. They have hanging baskets, succulents and grafted crabapple trees. Many of the posted plant sales may change how they do the sale, check their websites or Facebook pages.

### May 16, Saturday

ABC/Alaska Rock Garden Society, 9a for members and 10a for public. May be moved to an online format. Stay tuned for updates. 4601 Campbell Airstrip Rd, Anchorage. [alaskabg.org](http://alaskabg.org)

### May 30, Saturday

Mat-Su Master Gardeners *public sale cancelled*. Check their website for updates. [matsumastergardeners.com](http://matsumastergardeners.com)

Alaska Rock Garden Society, Valley, *cancelled*. [akrockgardensociety.org](http://akrockgardensociety.org)

Anchorage Senior Center Plant Sale 10a-2p. Main Entrance 1300 E. 19th Ave, Anchorage.

### June 6, Saturday

Wildflower Garden Club, 9a-2p. Check web site or Facebook for possible alternate details. Usually at 7435 Old Harbor Rd, Anchorage. [wildflowergardenclub.org](http://wildflowergardenclub.org)

Anchorage Garden Club, 9a-5p. Check web site or Facebook page 1-2 days ahead for location or alternate details. [alaskagardenclubs.org](http://alaskagardenclubs.org)

### August 8, Saturday

Anchorage Master Gardeners Fall Plant Sale, 9a-4p. Parking lot across from the Alaska Botanical Gardens. [alaskamastergardeners.org](http://alaskamastergardeners.org)

# Lend a Helping Hand

AMGA will continue to volunteer in gardens where we have in the past: The Pioneer Home, Senior Center, and many community gardens among them. If you are healthy and ready to get out in a garden, please use our Sign-up Genius when prompted, or respond to email requests as they begin to arrive on these lovely spring days.

Remember to check on your friends and loved ones who may need to stay isolated for health or safety reasons. Just because restrictions are easing does not mean the Covid-19 virus is gone.

Those of you who may need a helping hand: if you need food, medicine, pet care, or cheering up, please call your friends or neighbors to help.

Some of our favorite event centers and nurseries had to cancel space rentals of workshops, weddings, and birthday parties. If you can, support these outlets by purchasing gift certificates or other items for yourself or friends. They will be thankful and we will all appreciate keeping local businesses around for years to come!

## Last Spring Meeting 2020

Watch your email, check our website or facebook page, or call a friend for meeting status.

### May 18 Meeting

Tough Turf with CES Horticulture Agent Stephen Brown, possibly to be held on Zoom

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.

## Membership Renewal

### Memberships are based on calendar year.

If you have not renewed, bring your cash or check to the next meeting. Or, find a membership form in last November's newsletter and mail to the address below. Or, contact Alexis St. Juliana: [astjuliana@hotmail.com](mailto:astjuliana@hotmail.com)

### AMGA Board of Directors

Susan Negus	President
Emily Becker	Vice President
Nancy Grant	Treasurer
Beth Norris	Secretary
Elaine Hammes	At Large
F.X. Nolan	At Large
Faye Stiehm	At Large
Jan Van DenTop	At Large

### Committee Chairs, Program Coordinators & Volunteers

CES Liaison:	Elaine Hammes
CES Master Gardener Program Liaison:	Steve Brown or Gina Dionne
Broadcast Email:	Faye Stiehm
Calendar of Events:	Susan Negus
Advanced MG:	Don Bladow, Fran Pekar
Directory Editor:	Janice Berry
Meetings and other educational programs:	Emily Becker
Garden Tours:	Emily Becker
Google Group:	Mary Rydesky
Managers:	Gina Docherty and Jane Baldwin
Grants Program:	Elaine Hammes
Hospitality:	Lynn Hansen, Ruthe Rasmussen, Sharon Schlicht, and Wendy Willie
Membership & Database:	Alexis St. Juliana
Newsletter Editor:	Ginger Hudson
Website:	Gina Docherty
Lifetime Achievement and Grants:	Lynne Opstad
Pioneer Home:	Lynne Opstad, Ginger Hudson
Volunteer Coordinator:	Julie Ginder
Volunteer Coordinator:	Susan Negus



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://facebook.com/Alaska-Master-Gardeners-Anchorage)

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

To send concerns or information to the AMGA directly, mail to:  
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P.O. Box 221403  
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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)

