



# Evergreen Garden Club

## The Wild Iris

Volume 18, Issue 7 September 2005

### *A Word from the Presidents...*

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#### EGC 2005-2006 Board Members Presidents:

Jean Todd  
Meredith Bossert

#### Vice Presidents:

Kathi Grider  
Nan Spence

#### Secretary:

Chris Gray

#### Treasurer:

Priscilla Chapin

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

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

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

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

#### Newsletter Editor & Website

Beth Feldkamp 303-679-9465  
bethfeldka@yahoo.com

Dear Members,  
Welcome to the 40th year of the Evergreen Garden Club! We will be celebrating this landmark year **Sunday June 25, 2006** with a get together at the Heritage Grove adjacent to the Hiwan Homestead Museum in Evergreen. We are looking forward to seeing many of our past presidents and hearing the anecdotes and stories they have to tell. We will be asking your help in planning this fun affair, so save the date. June 2006 will be a busy month with the plant sale scheduled for **Saturday June 3, 2006**, also to be held at the Heritage Grove. Think ahead about the plant sale if you are dividing or relocating plants this fall and get them potted up so they will have a head start. Jean has plastic nursery pots donated by Sylvia Brockner ....call if you need some.

A huge thank you is in order for the board members of 2004/2005! They have served the club long and well

for two consecutive years. The great success of the 2005 Garden Tour will enable us to continue our philanthropic work in the community. Thank you again, Tricia, Karla, Beth, Joan, Lori and Louise~we love you~ You are a hard act to follow. Kathi Grider and Nan Spence, our CO-Vice Presidents, have planned interesting, educational and thought provoking programs for the 2005/2006 year. Be sure to keep your membership book handy for setting aside the dates.

As always, we will need many volunteers from the group to fulfill the many responsibilities in the club. Please, raise your hand or watch for the sign-up sheets at each meeting. As they say, many hands make light work, and we need all of you. Irma Wolf will be coordinating the community garden workers, and volunteers are needed for continuing work throughout the year, not just on the

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### *Membership Meeting - September 13th, 2005*

#### Where the Wild Things Go

John Sears, owner of Evergreen Wild Bird Store (located in Bergen Park) and new member of the Garden Club, will discuss the fall migration of area birds. John will also offer suggestions as to how we, as gardeners, can provide suitable habitats for our feathered friends.

See you at 9:15am at Church of the Hills on Buffalo Park Rd. Remember to bring your plants & cuttings for the World Gardening table, and your coffee mug.

See you there!



# Garden Club News

**WELCOME!!! New Members: Vivian Michaels, Marji Walkowiak, Virginia Cerrillo, John & Diane Sears, Connie Ning**

The 2005 Garden Tour was a great success. Many enjoyed the plant selections from each garden, and requested a copy.

**Clematis (perennial):** Clematis is grown for its blossoms, although its foliage is attractive. It is resistant to deer and elk. The Carrolls grow spring, summer, and fall blooming varieties. The alpine clematis can bloom as early as late May and also sporadically again in the fall, lasting until October. Terri's favorite is *Clematis alpina* 'Willy.' Clematis needs rich soil. Terri mixes 1/3 compost with 2/3 native soil. The roots need a thick mulch to keep them cool and moist, whereas the top of the plant needs sun. Terri soaks the plants once weekly, by hand, depending on the weather. She has had no pest or disease problems with her clematis. (Large flowered hybrids, however, are subject to a mysterious wilt.)

**Spiraea (perennial shrub):** The Carrolls grow spiraeas for both their foliage and blooms. Different varieties sport shades of green, red, and gold leaves at various stages. Spiraea is resistant to deer, elk, insects, and diseases. The foliage is attractive by early to mid June and lasts into October. Their bloom period is in early summer and is long lasting. The Carroll's favorite variety is *Spiraea bumalda* "Goldflame". Although the spiraeas in the Carroll garden are in shade during the early part of the day, they can take full sun. The Carrolls soak them weekly by hand, if needed. Some varieties will get aphids, but the Carrolls have had no problem.

**Ferns (perennial):** Ferns are grown for their foliage only. The Carroll's favorite variety is *Adiantum pendatum* (Eastern Maidenhair), hardy to Zone 3! All of their ferns are attractive by mid June. Some remain attractive into October. Some get morning sun; others are grown in full shade. They are tough plants, not protected in any way. The soil is amended to create a deep, rich, moisture retentive soil. They do need watering twice weekly and must never go bone dry.

**Ornamental Grasses (perennial):** The Carrolls grow several different kinds of grasses. They provide a unique form and structure in perennial beds. They reach their maximum size by the end of June or early July. In the summer they provide some variation of color such as blue, green, and stripes. In the fall some turn orange. They also provide winter interest in that they are sturdy enough to remain erect in snow. The Carroll's favorite grass is *Helictotrichon sempervirens* (Blue Avena or Blue Oat Grass) The grasses vary in their water needs, with some requiring a weekly soaking (by hand) and some being quite xeric. The Carrolls have had no pests or problems with their grasses and do not protect them in any way (such as mulching).

**Lavender, *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Hidcote'** (perennial): Its outstanding feature is its wonderful scent of heavenly lavender, emanating from all parts of the plant. Lavender rates a "10" for most gardeners because it provides interest all year long, although its beauty is best from late May through December. The new shoots are green and the foliage matures to gray-green. The flower spikes are deep blue-purple. Flowering begins in June and is extended when Julaine cuts flowering spikes from about 1/3 of each plant. New spikes develop, although not as prolifically as the first flush. The spent ones even provide fall and winter interest in the garden. There are few garden plants that display the characteristics to withstand our mountain climate. Its strong stems stand erect with the strength to hold firm through hail, wind, heat. Yet, it has a delicate appearance. Julaine prunes old woody stems that are less productive in the spring when the new tender shoots are developing. This helps stimulate new growth from the root system. When a plant has tripled in size (by guesstimate) she likes to divide the plant in late August to mid September.

**Mexican Evening Primrose *Oenothera speciosa* 'Siskiyou'** (perennial): This plant is XXX rated for xeriscape. Its pink flowers bloom from mid-June through the first frost. It covers quickly over the Kennedy's very dry rock garden.

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**Hyssop**, *Agastache rupis*, Sunset Mint (perennial): The Kennedys grow Sunset Mint for its wonderful root beer fragrance and bright sunset-orange flowers, which hummingbirds love. It is an attractive show-stopper from mid-July through the first hard frost.

**Russian Hawthorne Tree**, *Crataegus ambigua*: This tree is beautiful all year long. It has white flowers in the spring, toothed leaves in the summer, bright red berries, gold/orange leaves in the fall, and a lacy appearing structure in the winter. The berries provide food for birds in the winter. Its large thorns contribute to its lacy winter appearance and help deter deer and elk, although they do like to nibble on the tender new growth. Its wood is so strong that there was no breakage during the blizzard of 2003.

In the Briggs' garden the hawthorns receive full sun, although they will tolerate some shade. They are not exposed to wind. During the first two years after planting they need water both summer and winter, approximately every three weeks if there is no natural moisture. They are relatively drought tolerant and adaptable to dry conditions after they are established. When she waters it, Karla either dumps a five gallon bucket of water on it or lets a bubble water nozzle run for 5-8 minutes. She mulches the base of the trees with decomposed horse manure and wood chips every fall.

**Victorian Memory Rose**, *Rosa 'Victorian Memory'*: This hardy climbing rose was developed by the late Dr. Bill Campbell of the Evergreen Garden Club and is available from High Country Roses ([www.highcountryroses.com](http://www.highcountryroses.com)). Its pink double petal blooms are prolific and very fragrant. It sets buds by the end of June and then blooms through July, August, and sometimes September. Deadheading makes for more blooms and its hips are not attractive like the Rugosa roses.

This rose is growing on the west side of a greenhouse that provides essential support, extra heat from the stone base, and more protection from wind. Deer and elk would eat it if there were no fence. Karla waters it with a low-volume sprinkler system once weekly for about 20 minutes during the summer. It is buried in snow during the winter, but if it were exposed, it would need winter watering. Karla mulches it heavily with decomposed horse manure and wood chips in the late fall, mounding the mulch over the crown. After the danger of frost is past, she uncovers the crown but leaves the mulch around the plant.

**Asiatic Lilies**: These hardy lilies are very colorful. Since different varieties bloom at different times, you can plan successive flowers. The blooms are on stalks and the leaves are short. They are hardier than Oriental lilies.

Asiatic Lilies like sun, but can tolerate some shade. Those growing in the north garden have taller stalks and larger flowers than the ones growing in the sun. The bulbs can be planted in either spring or fall. They need to be divided approximately every five years. Deer and elk would eat them if there were no fence. Karla waters them with a low-volume sprinkler system once weekly for about 20 minutes in the summer. They are buried in snow during the winter, but if they were exposed, they would need winter watering. Karla cuts them back to 3-4 inches above the ground and mulches them with decomposed horse manure and wood chips in the fall.

After the danger of frost has passed in the spring, she uncovers the crown, but leaves the mulch around the plant.

**Yarrow** *Achillea millefolium* (perennial): The Fords grow different kinds of yarrow including our native species (*Achillea lanulosa*) and many others. They like yarrow because it will actually grow here in spite of the many challenges (altitude, harsh winters, limited water, poor soil, and browsing animals). The native yarrows can green up as early as late February, although the developed ones usually do not green up until mid or late March. Their flowers open in July and last well into September.

Although elk do not eat yarrow, they will pull the plants up. Fortunately the plants are so hardy that the Fords can replant them, if they catch it quickly, and they will still grow. In general the Fords do not water their yarrow. However, the plants that accidentally receive water definitely grow better. The Fords do mulch their plants somewhat.

**Catmint (deciduous shrub)**: The Fords like catmint for its foliage and soft purple flowers. It grows approximately two feet high and wide and makes a lovely background for annuals. Bees love it. Elk do not eat it, possibly because of its furry leaf texture. As with the yarrow above, the Fords like the plant because it will actually grow here. It greens up around the end of March or early April and lasts through the end of August. Their catmint is growing in sunny places. However, as an experiment, last fall Jenny planted some on a bank that gets less sun. We will get to see the results of her experiment on this tour.



By Julaine Kennedy

## Over The Garden Fence

As I write this it is mid-August and it feels like is in the air. Cool nights, sunny pleasant days mixed with afternoon thunder and lightning. It seems that weather patterns are no longer predictable. Do any of you remember that an afternoon in Evergreen included a rain shower, sun and rainbows was a common thing? Quite often we were treated to double rainbows. Those were the days when the Kennedy's were new to Evergreen and the Rocky Mountains. I would do my indoor 'chores' in the morning. By the time I was ready to grab the garden tools and head for our *gardens-under-construction*, I was be shooed inside by lightening and rain.

Thank to so many of you for another successful garden tour. Our appreciation goes first to the garden club members who saw the challenge two years ago and stayed with all the energy it takes to provide gardens for the community to visit. I am sure that current and past Garden Tour committee chairs would support my thoughts that no matter how many times our EGC garden tour has been held, it still is a great undertaking. Through the years the nuts-and-bolts stuff has been ironed out. But the task of finding tour committee members, prospective gardens and finally beginning to work with the current set of committees and tour garden hosts requires energy and lots of people to carry out the day's activities.

This year's tour gardens were well received by the public and so many of you have commented on what made it so. Bob and my observations reflected many of the same ideas. What a wonderful bunch of visitors we had. We enjoyed hearing about their gardens. Gardeners, you know are great for sharing and this tour was no exception. We learned so much from others. There was a good mix of homemade gardens. After a couple of droughty summers the June rains poured success into all the gardens. I need to admit I was a bit skeptical when we got to June. The soil temperatures were low enough that growth and flowering was lagging. No matter how good the soil and plants are, again Mother Nature has the upper hand. The tour sure has encouraged us to continue gardening in the Rockies.

For the past 10+ years I have observed the Spring Clean Up Day weather. My biggest observation came one year when a spring snowstorm provided a deep and moist blanket of snow several days before clean up day. T'was not a problem as warm weather and plenty of sunshine provided a great day for digging weeds and cleaning up dead plant material. We rarely miss the opportunity on the second Tuesday in May and it is a special delight to don the garden attire, dig with friends and finish up with a delicious lunch. So it has been with the tours. Hail storm the night before a tour, a hot and dry summer, road construction and still the people came. Several tours have had threatening rain that held off until the very end of the tour day.

Evergreen Garden Club's Seeds of Hope team for this year's Relay for Life came in second in funds raised. The first place team took 1<sup>st</sup> by a mere \$45.00!! Oh did we have fun decorating our garden home and sleeping tent. The weather was wonderful aside from early afternoon winds that rocked our sleeping tent till it blew down! Team members included Jim and Bev Wickland, Linda Ringrose, Joan Reynolds and Julaine. We are grateful for newfound friends, Susan Grannell, Jean Ann Wheeler Mary Rita Foster, Sue Frahm and Julaine's granddaughter, Ashleigh Kennedy for participating on the team. We had a record for all niters this year. When morning broke we still had 6 sleepyheads with us.

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## *Minutes of the June 14th, 2005 Meeting*

Members met at Church of the Hills at 9:15am and then everyone carpooled for the tour of birdhouses and greenhouses.

The first stop was at Lynette Makowski's house where members were treated to a tour of the most fantastic bird habitat in the area. Lynette's yard abounds in birdhouses, feeders, plants and an array of heated bird baths - all of which attract birds to this magnificent ornithological paradise. Lynette was such a gracious hostess. Some of the plants that Lynette especially likes to attract hummingbirds include red sage and lipstick sage, blue and black salvia and fireweed.

The next stop was at Joan Reynolds' house where members were again in for grand treat. Joan's garden is alive with many, many beautiful plants growing in the garden, in pots and in hanging baskets. And since Joan was preparing for her nephew's wedding scheduled to be held in her back yard just two weeks after our tour, we were privileged to see "the work in progress." The expression on Joan's face told the whole story of just how much she loves to work in her garden both outside and inside in her greenhouse. From there, it was on to Karla Brigg's house where we ate a sack lunch and had a brief business meeting.

Highlights of that meeting: Reports from the secretary and treasurer were omitted this meeting as neither the secretary nor the treasurer were able to attend.

Gift certificates to Evergreen Garden Center were presented to the outgoing board members and to member emeritus, Louise Mounsey, as a token of appreciation for all they have done for EGC during their term in office. Tricia Scott thanked EGC members for the gift certificates and for all the support they have shown during her two year office term. Tricia then reminded members not to forget to offer their assistance to all the new board members throughout the coming EGC year.

The final EGC meeting for the year concluded. A Garden Tour Committee meeting followed.

"New" secretary report - A thank you note was sent to Karen Knutson in June for her generous donation of orchid plants that she brought to our June meeting. These orchids, as well as a large assortment of other plants that members brought to this meeting, resulted in a nice donation for our World Gardening fund.

As well, a final thank you letter was written on July 5 from EGC to all tour gardeners. The letter informed the home owners that 267 tickets were sold, bringing in a healthy sum for our scholarship program. This EGC home tour was acclaimed by all as one of the very best home tours ever. Our sincere thanks to all who worked to make this home garden tour such a success.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Gray  
Secretary

# HORTICULTURE

## Mullein: a weed with many fine qualities

Easy to grow, with soft, buttery flowers, it deserves a look

By Lee Reich The Associated Press DenverPost.com

Mullein is too good a plant to be called a weed. Instead, call it by one of its 40 nicknames, such as Adam's flannel, candlewick, hare's beard, velvet plant, feltwort, or lungwort.

If you are not familiar with mullein, look around, and you're bound to see its spires of buttery yellow flowers rising 6 feet, or more, high along roadsides. The spires occasionally branch like candelabras, bringing a similar statuesque elegance to other parts of the country that the saguaro cactus brings to the Southwest desert landscape.

Most of mullein's leaves sit in a rosette close to the ground.

The leaves are large, grayish, and covered with fine hairs that make the leaves as soft as felt.

The only thing weedy about mullein is that it is so easy to grow. And perhaps it's been called a weed just because it has cousins that some people believe are more civilized. One of its cultivated cousins has purple centers to its flowers, but how much drama can a flower stalk only 3 feet high elicit? The same might be said for another relative, olympian mullein. The main thing olympian about this mullein is its origin in Greece.

In Colorado, the moth mullein (*Verbascum blattaria*) is considered a noxious weed, and efforts are being made to manage that plant. This plant is different, with smooth leaves that have lobes and teeth along the edges. The flowers, on a stalk that grows only about 2 feet tall, are yellow or white with violet centers. Plants bloom in July and August and will not repeat the show because, as a biennial, mullein plants die after flowering.

As a sometime weed, mullein is easy to propagate. Let plants self-sow seedlings or collect and sow the seed deliberately yourself. Nothing special is needed. Another way to propagate mullein is by root cuttings, which are pencil thick pieces of root you dig in spring and then plant. Besides beauty, mullein offers herbal medicine. Usually the leaves are steeped in water to make a tea or syrup for throat and lung problems. The herbalist Nicholas Culpeper, writing in the 17th century, also recommended mullein as a cure for warts, using the dried roots or the juice squeezed from the flowers or the leaves.

A nonmedical use for mullein is the bright yellow dye that can be extracted from the flowers. The most charming use of all is to pull a few of the large, soft leaves from the plant in spring and offer them to a child as a doll blanket. Folklore says mullein has the power to drive away evil spirits, and, in the classics, Ulysses carried the plant to protect himself against the wiles of Circe. In ancient times, the stalk was dipped in tallow and used as a torch

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**Clippings.....** Bev Wickland spent a good part of the summer tracking a creature that consumed way too much of her beautiful garden. Repellents, traps nor her dog, Chelsea was successful. Finally a potion of bait did the trick. What did she get? She's not sure; it was just too big and ugly for her to spend any time identifying it! **Peggy and Dale Fetchenheir and Karla Briggs** have been busy planting all summer long. Check out their progress at Evergreen Lutheran Church on Hwy 73. What a great landscape design for the church's new addition. **Kathi Grider** is a grandma...congratulations! **EGC** officers have a full year of programs for this year. See you in September. **Julaine**



**This is my neighbor Jacqueline Tracy's Yellow Pear and Red Sweet 100 Tomato plant grown in a pot on her deck. This is the year of the tomato!! Beth**

If you have anything you want to share with the Evergreen Garden Club. We welcome contributions to the Wild Iris. Please email them to Karla Briggs [karla@tuppersteam.com](mailto:karla@tuppersteam.com)

**Joan emailed this, but for those who don't have email here's a copy.**

Hi All

I wanted to let you know in advance that the speaker at our October 13 meeting will be garden mystery author Ann Ripley of Lyons Colorado. If you haven't read any of Ann's books, you may want to read one or more before the meeting in order to get to know her main character -gardening talk show host and sleuth Louise Eldridge prior to the meeting.

These books are fun, full of gardening tips and light reading. Most are available in paperback at stores like Borders and Barnes and Noble. I spoke with Hearthfire and they will have a few of her books in within a few days from now. All are available at the library, although many are on hold or need to be requested from another Jeffco library. The books, in order, of publication are:

Mulch 1994 Death of a Garden Pest 96, Death of a Political Plant 98, The Garden Tour Affair 99

The Perennial Killer 00, Harvest of Murder 01

The Christmas Garden Affair 02, Death at the Spring Plant Sale 03, Summer Garden Murder 05

Ann is planning to read from her newest book and talk about how the love of gardening drives her main character and the plot of her novels. She hopes to bring books for sale/signing. Perhaps if any of you have a copy(ies) of any of her books, you could bring them to the September meeting for other members to take home to ready before October. Although I have read all of the books except the latest, I only can locate The Christmas Garden Affair right now and if anyone wants to borrow it, let me know.

# Evergreen Garden Club

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[www.evergreengardenclub.org](http://www.evergreengardenclub.org)



*Celebrating our  
40th Anniversary*

## Denver Botanic Gardens Schedule of Events

[www.botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org)

### Free Days

Admission: Denver Botanic Gardens

September 19, 2005 - September 19, 2005

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

*Free days are made possible by funding from the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD).*

### Gloxinia Gesneriad Growers

Admission: Mitchell Hall

September 17, 2005 - September 18, 2005

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Free with Gardens admission

For more information, contact Bonita Hutcheson at 303-781-2406

### Glass Artists Fellowship

Admission: Mitchell Hall

September 20, 2005 - September 30, 2005

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Free with Gardens admission

For more information, contact Liz McRae at 303-452-8774.