



Evergreen Garden Club

WILD IRIS



APRIL 2020

Dear Evergreen Garden Club Members,

As a reminder, the Evergreen Garden Club April meeting is cancelled. Additional emails will be sent if it is necessary to cancel any of the remaining meetings for this fiscal year.

Julie Ann Courim has graciously volunteered to be “a point of contact” for volunteers and will coordinate connecting volunteers with EGC members in need of errands during social distancing.

Please contact Julie Ann if you wish to be included on a list of members willing to volunteer to help or if you are someone in need.

Julie Ann Courim (303) 981-3593 jacourim@centurylink.net

Blessings for health, comfort and peace.

Carol Herczeg
EGC President

THE APRIL EGC MEETING,
ALONG WITH MORNING YOGA
HAS BEEN CANCELLED.
STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY!

Evergreen Garden Club Minutes March 10, 2020

President Report: -There has been one volunteer for EGC president 2020-22 to start August 1. The remainder of the EGC fiscal year will be chair yoga. Technology officer board position has not been filled- volunteers requested. The 'Go Paint event" was noted to be fun and 6 people attended including Susan Garcia's son.

Committee Chair Reports - There were not visitors or new members present at the meeting.

Hospitality Report: Annell gave the hospitality report and Garden Tour Garden selection committee report.

1st Vice President Report: Peggy was absent.

2nd Vice President Report: Donna reported EGC has 72 current members.

Treasurers Report: Budget Review was given by Helen. Helen reported we are receiving more funds from grocery vouchers. Reminder: 1st time new member dues change to \$15 on April 1

Secretary Report: Janice was absent. February Minutes were not presented for approval.

Technology Officer Report: Susan requested volunteers for the Technology Officer board position.

Members were encouraged to continue to enjoy the refreshments offered by the hospitality committee and members.

Laura Campbell was our speaker on Forrest Bathing. She gave information about training, her business and the process/benefits of Forrest Bathing.

The garden gnome lies in the shed, benefitting, as all gardeners do, from this period of dormancy...

"I am bored shitless"



Please send any submissions or corrections for the Wild Iris to louiseheern@gmail.com

IT'S TIME TO CLEAN YOUR BLUE BIRD HOUSES!



Tree Swallow and Eastern Bluebird. Photo:
Vicki Jauron/Audubon Photography Awards

HOLE-Y WARS!

The popularity of bluebirds has been a bonanza for Tree Swallows, which use nest boxes built to the same dimensions. However, since suitable nest sites are usually in short supply, there can be intense competition.

Thoughtful hosts often reduce friction between bluebirds and swallows by setting up two identical nest boxes about 10 feet apart. If bluebirds occupy one box, they'll drive away all other bluebirds, and if swallows occupy the other, they will drive away all other swallows, leaving one pair of each to nest in peace.

Six Ornamental Native Grasses for *Dry Conditions and Higher Altitudes*

The Front Range and Eastern Plains of Colorado are part of the short grass prairie that lies in the rain shadow of the Rocky Mountains. This is a high and dry steppe climate dominated by short grasses of inches in height that include **buffalo grass** (*Buchloe dactyloides*) and **blue grama** (*Bouteloua gracilis*), the state grass of **Colorado**. The area is semiarid and the average annual rainfall is 10 to 15 inches.

Gardeners growing native gardens should understand the differences in rainfall where these grasses are native and plan supplemental irrigation accordingly. **Generally, among the natives, the taller the grass, the more water the plant requires.**

Little bluestem

Schizachyrium scoparium

Native Perennial

Height: 24 to 36 inches

Spread: 18 to 24 inches

Full sun

Moisture: Moderate to dry

USDA zones 3 to 9

Blooms mid to late summer



A lovely, tough-as-nails prairie native offering grey-green leaf blades that turn bold shades of purple, red and orange in autumn

Blonde Ambition blue grama grass

Bouteloua gracilis 'Blond Ambition'

Native Perennial

Height: 12 to 30 inches

Spread: 12 to 30 inches

Full sun

Moisture: Moderate to dry

USDA zones 4 to 9

Blooms mid to late summer



Seed Heads



Tended garden setting



Natural Setting with Companions

Side oats grama grass

Bouteloua curtipendula

Native Perennial

Height: 12 to 24.5 inches

Spread: 12 to 24 inches

Full sun

Moisture: Dry to medium

USDA zones 4 to 9

Blooms July to August

**Native prairie grass noted for
one-sided seed head arrangement**



Prairie Dropseed
Sporobolus heterolepis

Native Perennial
Height: 24 to 36 inches
Spread: 24 to 36 inches
Full sun; tolerates light shade
Moisture: Dry to medium
USDA zones 4 to 9
Blooms August to October



Natural Setting with Companions

**Mexican hair grass or Silky
thread grass (*below*)**
Stipa tenuifolia

Native Perennial
Height: 12.5 to 18 inches
Spread: 12.5 to 18 inches
Full sun
Moisture: Dry
USDA zones 5 to 10



Blue Oatgrass
Helictotrichon sempervirens

Native Perennial
Height: 24 to 36 inches
Spread: 24 inches
Full sun
Moisture: Dry to medium
USDA zones 4 to 8
Blooms June



Blue Fescue
Festuca glauca elijah blue

Native Perennial
Height: .75 to 12 inches
Spread: .50 to .75 inches
Full sun
Moisture: Dry to medium
USDA zones 4 to 8
Blooms June - July



Although not native, Karl Forrester grasses do well in the landscape (and even better when provided extra moisture). They are 99.9% deer and elk resistant.



Companion plants blend beautifully with ornamental grasses.



Companions don't always have to be plants!



Grasses are a natural for mass plantings. Remember plant 1/3 to 2/3 (one should dominate) if mass planting with companions.



Unless they are diseased, leave seed heads intact. They add winter interest and feed the birds!



Cutting grasses back in early spring will promote the best growth. Cut when you first start seeing green shoots appear from the bottom of the plant, before the shoots get too tall.



When it's time to Divide!



When it's time to divide, grasses will often die out in the middle, forming a distinct donut shape.

Note: You do not have to wait for this to happen to divide your grasses.



Divide in the spring
By digging up the entire plant –
Cut a section that looks vigorous –
Separate it from the rest of the plant –
And re-plant

For more information/options and a complete list of native Colorado grasses, visit www.ext.colostate.edu and search fact sheet 7.232

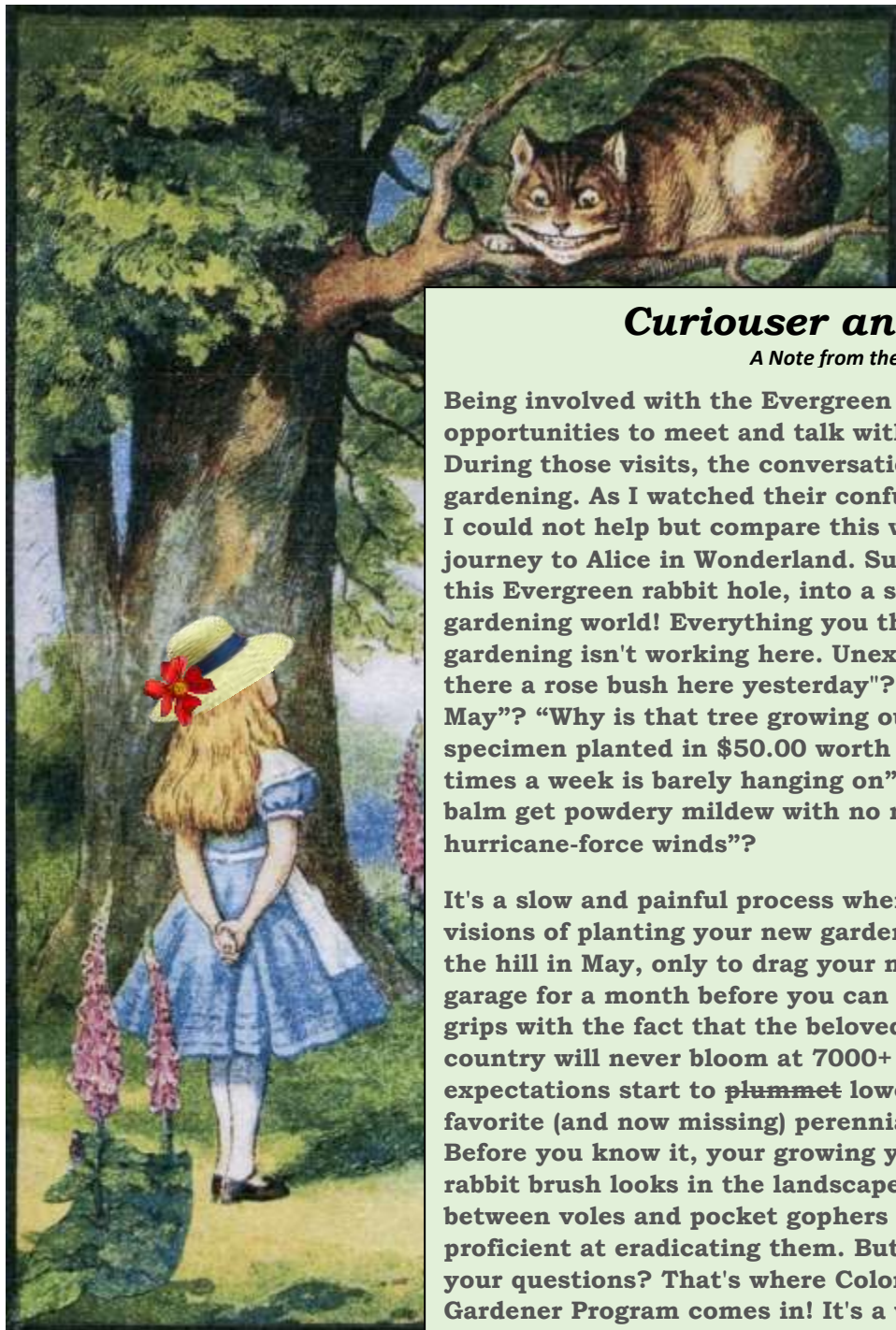
Or visit this direct link:

<http://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/ornamental-grasses-7-232/>



Colorado Master Gardener Program

Colorado Gardener Certificate Training



Curiouser and Curiouser

A Note from the Editor

Being involved with the Evergreen Newcomers Club gave me many opportunities to meet and talk with lots of folks new to Colorado. During those visits, the conversation would often turn to gardening. As I watched their confusion and remembered my own, I could not help but compare this wild high-altitude gardening journey to Alice in Wonderland. Suddenly, you have fallen down this Evergreen rabbit hole, into a strange and unexplainable gardening world! Everything you thought you knew about gardening isn't working here. Unexplainable questions like "Wasn't there a rose bush here yesterday"? "Why is it still snowing in May"? "Why is that tree growing out of a rock, when my \$150.00 specimen planted in \$50.00 worth of loam getting watered three times a week is barely hanging on"? "How did this patch of bee balm get powdery mildew with no rain, no humidity and hurricane-force winds"?

It's a slow and painful process when you first move here with visions of planting your new garden. You go to the nursery down the hill in May, only to drag your new purchases in and out of your garage for a month before you can plant them. You finally come to grips with the fact that the beloved hydrangea you brought cross country will never bloom at 7000+ feet. Slowly your standards and expectations start to plummet lower ;-). You replace all of your favorite (and now missing) perennials with anything that will grow. Before you know it, your growing yuccas and sort of like the way rabbit brush looks in the landscape. You learn the difference between voles and pocket gophers and actually become quite proficient at eradicating them. But you still don't have answers to your questions? That's where Colorado State University's Master Gardener Program comes in! It's a wonderful program that I would highly recommend to any 'moved-here-from-another-state' *curiously* serious gardener new to the beautiful and bewildering high-altitude gardening world of Evergreen. The link is listed below.

<https://cmg.extension.colostate.edu/>



DO YOU HAVE A PERENNIAL THAT WON'T BLOOM?

This may be the reason why -



Growing Degree Days (GDD) or Growing Degree Units (GDU)

A GDU is a measure of heat accumulation used by horticulturists, gardeners, and farmers to predict plant and animal development rates such as the date that a flower will bloom, an insect will emerge from dormancy, or a crop will reach maturity.

A garden perennial, for example, must accumulate a certain amount of GDU's from the sun before breaking a bud. Due to our shorter growing seasons, some later blooming and/or heat loving perennials may not accumulate enough GDU's in one season to bloom, even if the plant is hardy enough. Planting **late blooming bulbs**, and **earlier blooming perennials**, help high altitude gardeners enjoy their blooms a little longer.

This late blooming Rose Mallow (pictured below), is hardy enough to return a bit bigger and better each year at 8,700 feet. Unfortunately, it never receives enough heat units to flower before the season ends; thus, every year it freezes before it is able to bloom. It may do better transplanted to a warmer location in the garden or in a micro-climate; such as against a sunny wall or large rock. Even though it is hardy in zone 4, its late bloom time combined with our cooler summer conditions, made it a poor choice for a high-altitude garden.

Anyone who has ever tried to grow a tomato above 8000 feet in Evergreen has experienced this to some degree!



The cooler summer of 2013 and the buds are not even close to opening
September 28, 2013



Summer of 2016 was warm enough to coax the first flower in four seasons! But it didn't last long!
Sept. 20, 2016

Hummers arrive in late April!

A reminder from CSU CCC Extension, that hummingbirds typically return to Colorado in late April, so don't be surprised if you hear that familiar buzz! After their long journey from wintering in warmer climates, hummingbirds will now be frantically searching for food. Male hummingbirds arrive first to establish their territories; a good food source helps them choose a desirable site.

We're in luck since they generally nest at elevations above 6,000 feet! No need to buy the powdered hummingbird nectar mix – instead, make homemade hummingbird nectar.

All you need is 4 parts water to 1-part white granulated table sugar – boil the water, stir in the sugar until completely dissolved, and let it cool.

Adding more sugar DOES NOT HELP the hummers; in fact, too much sugar can cause liver damage. Don't use dye, food coloring or commercial nectars – they have chemicals the birds don't need and could be harmful. DO NOT USE HONEY – it will quickly ferment and become poisonous to the birds. Make sure your feeder has some red trim to attract them, and keep feeders clean. Of course, there are many native wildflowers that they are attracted to as well; feel free to contact me for more information.

Christine M. Crouse
Director/Agent, CSU Extension in Clear Creek County
303-679-2424 (Office)
Christine.crouse@colostate.edu



Don't forget to bring your feeders in at night!



About those bulbs you planted in the fall...



About Those Pocket Gophers...

Some Facts . . .

- A mounded pile of dirt is almost always proof positive of a pocket gopher.
- Pocket gophers do not hibernate and are active all year long. Some can be the size of a guinea pig.
- They very rarely come above ground. Personally, I have only seen them during the 'excavation' process!
- Except for the breeding season in spring and early summer, they are solitary and territorial, so what looks like a lot of activity can actually be caused by just one pocket gopher.
- Activity seems to increase in the fall, as mothers evict their summer litters, and the 'kids' go off to establish territories of their own. This is the time to be very vigilant!
- Pocket Gophers destroy both new and established plant, shrub, tree roots and tubers.
- A plant that comes up in its entirety during spring-clean-up has most likely been lost to a pocket gopher. The picture to the right shows the fatal damage to (what was) a beautiful 4-year-old Austrian Copper Rose bush.



Eliminating Pocket Gophers...

Before you put time and energy into either trapping or poisoning, make certain the burrow is active! To do this, completely uncover the mound to expose the plug and re-check later. If it is covered back up, it is an active burrow and your best chance of elimination. If it remains uncovered, it is not active; move on to the next mound of dirt.



Pocket gophers are typically too large for snap traps. There are multiple pocket gopher traps available on the market and said to be the most humane way to eliminate them.

While there are different options, *The Black Box* is the easiest and most effective method I have found to quickly and humanely kill the gopher.

They are sold at Big R and also on Amazon. Follow the directions on the box, or for a more detailed demonstration, search black box instructions on YouTube. The link below will take you directly to the most entertaining one I have found, but there are dozens. Good luck!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTpG93X6yZU>



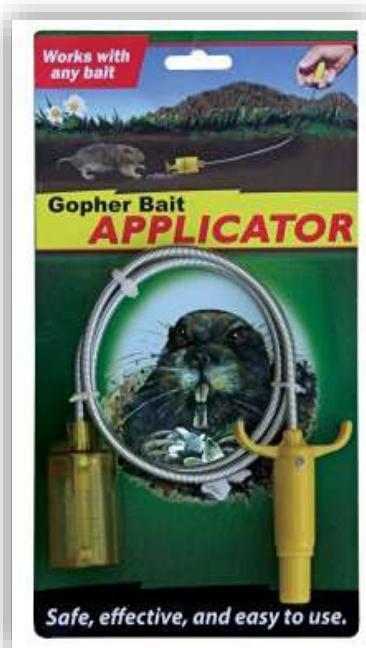
Eliminating Pocket Gophers

****Personally, I do not recommend poisoning.** However, if you decide to use a rodenticide, choose the most effective, least toxic available to minimize potential non-target poisoning. Four rodenticides are registered for pocket gopher control in Colorado:

Strychnine (0.25 to 0.5 percent active ingredient);
Zinc phosphide (2 percent active ingredient);
Chlorophacinone (Rozol) (0.005 percent active ingredient);
Diphacinone (Eaton's Answer) (0.005 percent active ingredient).

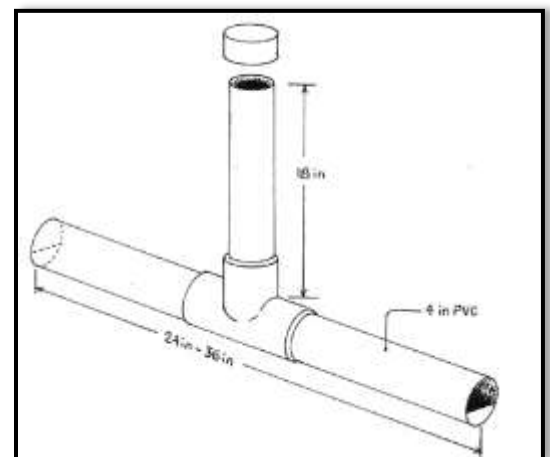
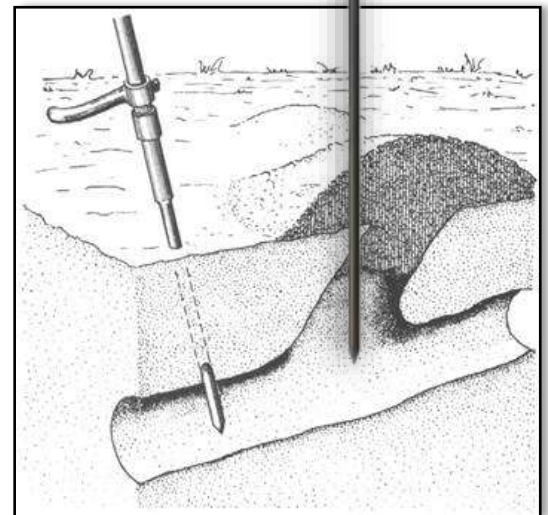
NOTE: BEFORE USING ANY RODENTICIDE, READ AND FOLLOW THE LABEL TO MINIMIZE HARM TO CHILDREN, PETS AND OFF-TARGET WILDLIFE.

** Resource: Colorado State University Extension; Fact Sheet #6.515



Care must be taken to ensure that the poison is actually placed in the tunnel.

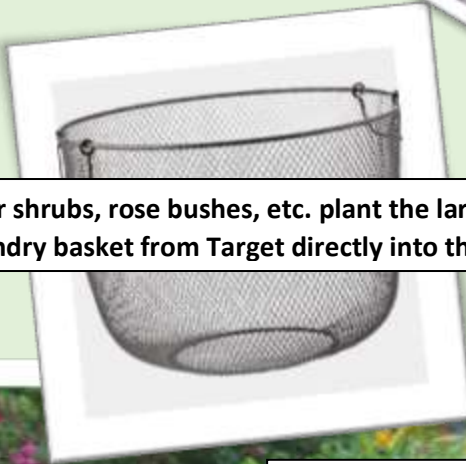
There is equipment you can purchase for this reason.



Preventing Pocket Gopher Damage



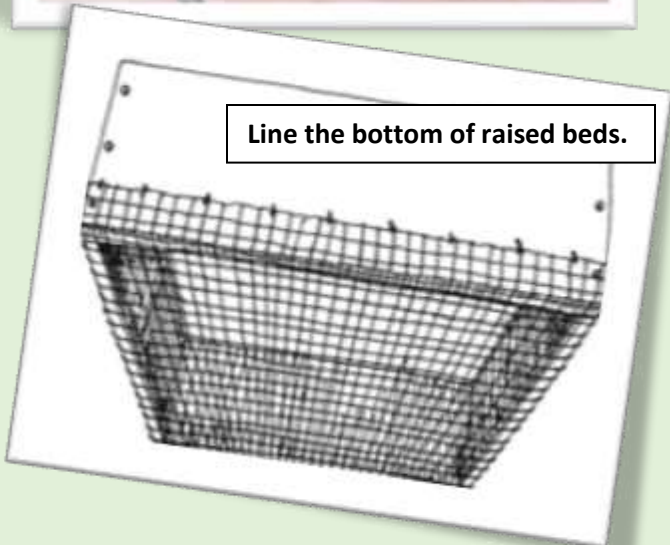
Line the planting hole with ¼ inch hard cloth wire from Home Depot



For shrubs, rose bushes, etc. plant the large metal laundry basket from Target directly into the ground.



Plant small & medium wire baskets from the Dollar Store directly into the ground.



Line the bottom of raised beds.

Since pocket gophers rarely come above ground, some of the most effective natural predators are those that can access their tunnels.



Ermine



Rat Snakes




Determined Terriers!




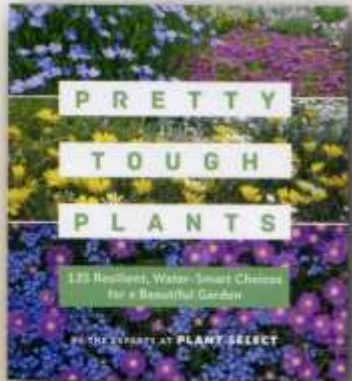
PLANT SELECT – WHAT’S NEW FOR 2020

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New for 2020

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– LAUREN SPRINGER OGDEN, Plantswoman, designer, author









"This book is like a crystal ball that reveals how we can all create gorgeous, low-water gardens."

– PANAYOTI KELAIDIS, Director of Outreach, Denver Botanic Gardens


HIGHLIGHTS

- LARGE CONTAINERS
- WINTER INTEREST
- GROUNDCOVER
- CREVICE GARDENS
- POLLINATORS
- FRAGRANT
- TEXTURE
- MEDIANS
- EDGING
- NATIVE

KEY to ICONS

-  Full Sun
-  Part Shade
-  Moderate
-  Dry
-  Xeric: No additional irrigation once established
-  Full Shade
-  Deer Resistant
-  Attracts Bees, Butterflies and Other Pollinators

COVER PHOTO: PANAYOTI KELAIDIS



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Colorado State University

DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS

Plant Select® is the country's leading source of plants designed to thrive in high plains and intermountain regions; a nonprofit collaboration of Colorado State University, Denver Botanic Gardens and horticulturists from around the world.

Dwarf Leadplant

Amorpha nana



PHOTO: JULIAN GONZALES



NEW FOR 2020
LARGE CONTAINERS • CREVICE GARDEN

Dwarf Leadplant is a native shrub that blooms spikes of honey-scented purple flowers in June. A member of the pea family, Dwarf Leadplant can take nitrogen from the air and transform it into a nitrate fertilizer with the help of a symbiotic soil-dwelling microbe called Rhizobium. As a result, this beautiful dryland shrub looks green and healthy even in the most impoverished soils. Perfect for challenging full-sun spots in the garden.

TYPE: Shrub

HEIGHT: 2-3'

WIDTH: 2-3'

BLOOMS: June

HARDINESS: USDA zones 3-6

CULTURE: Dry-adaptable soils

PAIRS WELL WITH:

- KANNAH CREEK buckwheat
- MESA VERDE® ice plant
- Winecups
- Engelmann's daisy
- Blonde Ambition grass

Golden Candles

Thermopsis lupinoides



PHOTOS: CINDY NEWLANDER



INTRODUCED IN 2021
EARLY POLLINATOR • CREVICE GARDEN

Thick clusters of bright yellow buds emerge low to the ground in April, tapering into elegant yellow golden candle spires in late spring. Attractive mounds of lupine-like foliage persist the rest of the summer. A robust, adaptable perennial for borders or xeriscapes providing cheerful color early in the growing season.

TYPE: Herbaceous Perennial

HEIGHT: 24-36"

WIDTH: 20-30"

BLOOMS: Late spring

HARDINESS: USDA zones 3-8

CULTURE: Clay, loam, or sandy soil

PAIRS WELL WITH:

- Blue Jazz pinyon pine
- MONGOLIAN BELLS® clematis
- CRYSTAL RIVER® veronica
- Golden storksbill
- Gold on Blue prairie zinnia

Mongolian Snowflakes

Clematis hexapetala



PHOTO: JAMESON COOPMAN



NEW FOR 2020
EDGING • CREVICE GARDEN

Mongolian Snowflakes is a striking herbaceous clematis forming a mounded snowstorm of 2 inch, six-petaled ivory colored flowers that come on May through summer. Spent flowers give way to shiny, feathery seed puffs that are showy in their own right. Dark green foliage supports the flurry of flowers on this drought-tolerant beauty brought to the US by Harlan Hamernik of Bluebird Nursery.

TYPE: Herbaceous Perennial

HEIGHT: 2-3'

WIDTH: 2-3'

BLOOMS: Spring-Summer

HARDINESS: USDA zones 5-9

CULTURE: Clay, loam, or sandy soil

PAIRS WELL WITH:

- Cashmere sage
- Grand Mesa beardtongue
- Pink Cotton Lamb's Ear
- Korean Feather Reed grass
- VALLEY LAVENDER® plains verbena

Indigo Blue Dragonhead

Dracocephalum ruyschiana



PHOTO: ROSS SHRIGLEY



NEW FOR 2020
FRAGRANT • CREVICE GARDEN

Indigo Blue Dragonhead is an easy to grow tidy mounding plant with needle-like leaves and dark blue flowers that are speckled and quite fragrant. This perennial will thrive in a dry meadow or rock garden setting and is tolerant of a wide range of soil types.

TYPE: Herbaceous Perennial

HEIGHT: 14-16"

WIDTH: 10-12"

BLOOMS: Early summer

HARDINESS: USDA zones 3-8

CULTURE: Clay, loam, or sandy soil

PAIRS WELL WITH:

- Penstemon varieties
- SILVER BLADE evening primrose
- Standing Ovation little bluestem grass
- Avalanche white sun daisy

Pink Cotton Lamb's Ear

Stachys lavandulifolia – Green Form



PHOTO: HARRIETT McMILLAN



NEW FOR 2020
CREVICE GARDEN • TEXTURE

Slow creeping cousin to Lamb's ear that makes low mats of soft, attractive foliage with incredibly flossy clusters of pink trumpets in late spring-early summer that really do suggest cotton candy. Rabbit and deer resistant, this perennial is a superior selection of a Turkish wildflower for the front of the garden border, or in a xeriscape garden.

TYPE: Herbaceous Perennial

HEIGHT: 8-10"

WIDTH: 12-18"

BLOOMS: Late spring

HARDINESS: USDA zones 5-9

CULTURE: Loam or sandy soil

PAIRS WELL WITH:

- Sandia coral bells
- Moroccan pincushion flower
- PLATINUM® sage
- Desert beardtongue
- Sky's Edge™ scutellaria

Summer Frost Pink Candy

Stachys lavandulifolia – Silver Form



PHOTO: ROSS SHRIGLEY



FRAGRANT • CREVICE GARDEN

An elegant, silver sport of Pink Cotton lamb's ear grown primarily for its bright, silver-haired leaves that add beauty and texture. Flossy clusters of pink trumpets suggestive of cotton candy bloom slightly less vigorously than its parent, Pink Cotton Lamb's Ear. Both Stachys, green and silver form, are destined to be classic additions to American gardens.

TYPE: Herbaceous Perennial

HEIGHT: 8-10"

WIDTH: 12-18"

BLOOMS: Late spring

HARDINESS: USDA zones 5-9

CULTURE: Loam or sandy soil

PAIRS WELL WITH:

- CORAL CANYON® twinspur
- Corsican violet
- Wee One dwarf English lavender
- First Love™ dianthus
- Dwarf beach-head iris

Leprechaun Southernwood

Artemisia abrotanum 'Leprechaun'



PHOTO: ROSS SHRIGLEY



NEW FOR 2016
LARGE CONTAINERS • ADAPTABLE • HEDGE

A compact selection of the ancient garden herb that forms a dense, symmetrical mound of whorled silver-green foliage. Plant in mass to create a low garden hedge suggestive of boxwood. Cut back in January to early spring when fully dormant. Tolerant of shady conditions as well as full sun.

TYPE: Herbaceous Perennial

HEIGHT: 24-36"

WIDTH: 24-30"

BLOOMS: Grow for foliage/
texture

HARDINESS: USDA zones 4-8

CULTURE: Loam or sandy soil

PAIRS WELL WITH:

- Red birds in a tree
- Dalmatian daisy
- LITTLE TRUDY® catmint
- ORANGE CARPET® hummingbird trumpet
- HOT WINGS Tatarian Maple

Plant Select® Demonstration Gardens

Now that you're aware of the fantastically tough and beautiful plants in the Plant Select program, you may be wondering where you can see them in action. Aside from marveling at them in your own yard, there are over 50 Plant Select demonstration gardens free and open to the public across the state of Colorado and into Wyoming, Utah, Montana, Idaho, and Texas.

Plant Select demonstration gardens thrive on xeric to low water conditions and range from high altitude, full-sun gardens spread thick with rock mulch, blushing with Orange Carpet® hummingbird trumpet, to low-growing gardens with stands of soft Dog Tuff™ grass, to cascading rock and crevice gardens speckled with SteppeSuns® Sunset Glow penstemon. Demonstration gardens offer design ideas and show how plants grow under different site conditions. Visit gardens throughout the year to see ever-changing and long-standing blooms, the pollinators that visit them, and winter interest in the low water garden.

Find a detailed list of current Plant Select Demonstration Gardens and a Demonstration Gardens Map at PlantSelect.org/Learn! Visit a Plant Select demonstration garden today, get inspired, and see what plants are thriving in your community!

By Grace Johnson, Denver Botanic Gardens Horticulturist



For more detailed information about Plant Select, refer to the June 2019 Wild Iris. For Plant Select plant options for Evergreen, refer to the October 2016 Wild Iris. Both can be accessed from our website at www.evergreengardenclub.org

19th ANNUAL GREAT SALE OF ORGANIC GARDEN PLANTS

50+ Herb Varieties! Tomatoes – dozens of varieties – mostly wonderful heirlooms!
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Most were started by our members or divided from our own organic gardens.

SATURDAY MAY 16, 2020

9:00 a.m. till 1:00 p.m.

(Come Rain or Shine! – we're warm and dry inside!!)

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A reminder from
Meredith Bossert



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and grants to other non-profits who practice and promote organic gardening principles*



Can you read this?

I think the voles are trying to send me a message! They held several practice sessions at the top of my driveway, then the one with the best penmanship left me this message at the bottom of my driveway RIGHT NEXT TO MY MAILBOX!!!!!! If you can read it, I would really appreciate your help!

Submitted by a neighbor on 'Next Door'



A SURE SIGN OF SPRING!

Alliums emerging in the Bergen Circle Community Garden

Submitted by Dee Sacks



All about butterflies

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: This article was taken from a back issue of *Garden Gate's Great Beds & Borders*. I especially liked it because almost all of the plants listed are cold zones 3 and 4; and while not necessarily native, are known to thrive at higher altitudes. Please note, however, a couple of the many varieties listed are on Colorado's noxious weeds 'most wanted' list. They can be easily substituted for a similar and/or 'safer' variety!



GREAT PLANTS

- A Globe thistle** *Echinops ritro*
Blue flowers in midsummer; 3 to 5 ft. tall, 2 to 3 ft. wide; cold zones 4 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1
- B Tall garden phlox** *Phlox paniculata*
Range of colors in midsummer; 2 to 4 ft. tall, 2 to 3 ft. wide; cold zones 4 to 8; heat zones 8 to 1
- C Purple coneflower** *Echinacea purpurea*
Range of colors in mid- to late summer; 2 to 4 ft. tall, 2 ft. wide; cold zones 3 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1
- D Black-eyed Susan** *Rudbeckia* spp.
Yellow flowers in mid- to late summer; 1 to 3 ft. tall and wide; cold zones 3 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1

 Attracts butterflies

BUTTERFLY ATTRACTION

It doesn't take lots of room to create a butterfly garden. Here's a look at a small garden that'll attract all kinds of butterflies. Tucked in next to a garage wall, it's warm and sheltered, contains a range of plants that'll attract butterflies and has a few butterfly bonuses that'll keep them visiting from spring to fall. In the next few pages, you can read more in-depth information on all these points, plus tips on how to work them into your own garden.





HAVING IT ALL This sunny, restful garden has just about all the things you need to attract butterflies: Shelter provided by tall perimeter plants and a wall, stepping stones for sunning, and a rich variety of plants. Oh, and a bench allows the gardener to rest and enjoy the garden, too! With all these plants, many of them tall, this space could feel almost junglelike. But notice how the plantings get shorter as they get closer to the path? It allows you to see all the way to the bench. That gives a feeling of space so the garden doesn't seem cluttered or claustrophobia-inducing.

GREAT PLANTS

- A Zebra grass** *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Zebrinus'; Grown for horizontally striped foliage; 5 to 8 ft. tall, 4 to 6 ft. wide; cold zones 5 to 9; heat zones 9 to 11
- B Oxeye sunflower** *Heliopsis helianthoides*; Yellow flowers in summer; 3 to 6 ft. tall, 2 to 4 ft. wide; cold zones 3 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1
- C Butterfly weed** *Asclepias tuberosa*; Orange flowers in summer; 12 to 30 in. tall, 12 to 18 in. wide; cold zones 3 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1
- D Corneliancherry dogwood** *Cornus mas*; Yellow flowers in early spring; 15 to 20 ft. tall and wide; cold zones 4 to 8; heat zones 8 to 1
- E Lavender** *Lavandula* hybrid; Purple or white flowers in early summer; 1 to 2 ft. tall and wide; cold zones 5 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1

BUTTERFLY WELCOME Of course, butterfly plants are important, but we'll get into that later. First, let's take a look at other factors that'll keep butterflies happy.

Shelter Butterflies need protection from the wind, so provide a windbreak. It could be a hedge or a group of large shrubs, or even a privacy fence. Tucking your butterfly garden up next to a garage or house wall works well, too.

Light Butterflies' wings need to be dry and warm for them to fly well, and for that they need sunlight and a resting spot. That's why you'll see them sitting in the sun, opening and closing their wings. A couple of warm, dry flat rocks, or even a sidewalk, will give them a place to rest and warm up.

Drinking pools This might not be the drinking fountain a human would choose, but butterflies drink from mud puddles, not open water. In addition to moisture, they take in salts and nutrients from the wet mud. It's easy to create a permanent butterfly "mud puddle" in your garden. Just sink a big plastic saucer in the ground, fill it with half sand and half composted manure, and keep the mixture wet. If you want to really please the butterflies, top it with an overripe banana. Sounds terrible to humans, but the butterflies will love it!

KEEP IT SAFE One last thing to keep in mind in a butterfly garden: Avoid pesticides, even the organic ones, as they can harm both the adult butterflies and the caterpillars. Your best bets for pest control are to handpick pests from plants, or spot-treat specific areas with an insecticidal soap. Birds, bees and beneficial insects will thank you, too.



WHO'S WHO?

PHOTO: Donna and Tom Krischan



Viceroy



Monarch



Queen

There's nothing more embarrassing than having a visitor in your garden and not recognizing him or her! And it can be difficult to distinguish between the three butterflies below, especially since their habitat ranges overlap. Viceroys and monarchs (that's a monarch above) are found in most of the United States and southern Canada, while queen butterflies are found in the southwestern United States.

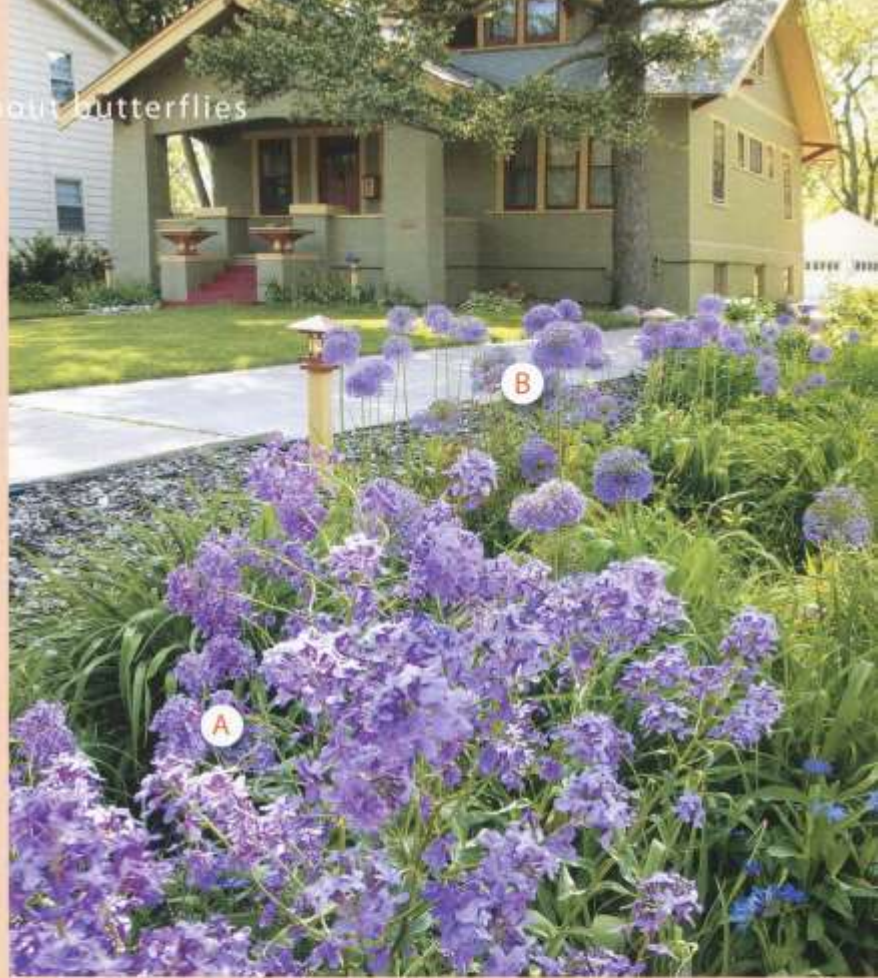
Viceroys are a little smaller than the other two, and you'll notice a prominent horizontal vein on their lower wings. The wing veins of queen butterflies are less noticeable than on the viceroy or monarch.

Scientists used to assume that the viceroy colors and pattern mimicked that of the monarch. Monarchs taste bad to birds, so if birds couldn't tell the difference, they'd leave the viceroy alone. But further research shows that all three taste bad to birds, so they all benefit from looking alike. Birds associate those colors and markings with an unappetizing mouthful, so they'll leave all three butterflies alone. That's a pretty impressive trick!

(Photo above)

A Joe-Pye weed *Eupatorium purpureum*
Pink, white or purple flowers in late summer to fall; 5 to 7 ft. tall, 2 to 4 ft. wide; cold zones 4 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1

SIMPLY STRIKING A drift of purple dame's rocket and giant alliums, both good spring butterfly plants, proves that sometimes simple is best — this garden would still be pretty with multiple colors, but a single-color theme is striking and memorable. To keep this sweep going for years, keep in mind that dame's rocket is a biennial or a short-lived perennial that reseeds readily. You can deadhead it for a small rebloom, but be sure to let some of the flower heads remain so the plants can form seeds.



GREAT PLANTS

- A Dame's rocket** *Hesperis matronalis*
Pink, purple or white flowers in midspring; 1 to 3 ft. tall, 1 to 2 ft. wide; cold zones 3 to 8; heat zones 8 to 1
- B Giant allium** *Allium giganteum*
Purple flowers in midspring; 3 to 5 ft. tall, 1 to 2 ft. wide; cold zones 5 to 8; heat zones 8 to 1



ROYAL PURPLE What could be more welcome than a last burst of color in the garden, especially if it helps attract butterflies? These low-growing purple asters, plus the lamb's ear and bergenia in front of them, attract your eye to the front of the border and away from the taller, spent plants in the back. But don't worry too much about cleanup — you can leave some plants standing for some winter interest. Sedum seedheads look great with a dusting of snow!

GREAT PLANTS

- A Tall sedum** *Sedum* spp.
Pink flowers in late summer to fall; 12 to 24 in. tall and wide; cold zones 3 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1
- B New England aster** *Aster novae-angliae*
Range of colors in late summer to fall; 18 to 72 in. tall, 2 to 3 ft. wide; cold zones 5 to 8, heat zones 8 to 1
- C Bergenia** *Bergenia cordifolia*
Pink spring flowers; 12 to 18 in. tall and wide; cold zones 3 to 8; heat zones 8 to 1
- D Lamb's ear** *Stachys byzantina*
Velvety silver-gray foliage; 9 to 18 in. tall, 12 to 18 in. wide; cold zones 4 to 8; heat zones 8 to 1

SPRING, SUMMER, FALL Planning for a three-season butterfly garden isn't all that different from planning any three-season garden. The main goal is to have something blooming all the time, from early spring to late fall. Now, it's certainly easier in midsummer, when many plants are in bloom, and that's when butterflies are most active and need the food most. But look at the list of eight spring butterfly plants at right, as well as the photos on these pages, for some ideas for plants that'll keep the butterflies happy in spring and fall, as well. Fall feeding is especially important for species like monarchs, which migrate farther south in the fall — they'll need the energy to complete their journey.

COLOR COUNTS Butterflies don't have good eyesight, so very bright-colored flowers are best for attracting them. That's why most butterfly gardens are out-of-this-world colorful. Another helpful hint: Plant flowers in groups, like the swathe of alliums and dame's rocket in the top photo at left. Those masses of a single color are easier for butterflies to spot than a few scattered plants.

Mix up the flower shapes, too. Butterflies feed by poking a slender feeding tube into flowers. So it's easy for them to feed from open, flat flowers, like the sedums at left, or daisy-shaped flowers, like the purple asters in the same photo. Those flat surfaces are also easier for the butterflies to land upon. But a few spike-shaped flowers won't hurt — the butterflies can feed on them, and your eyes will enjoy some contrasting shapes in the garden, as well. And of course, not everything in a butterfly garden has to be a butterfly plant. Those big-leafed bergenias and soft, silvery lamb's ear hide the asters' bare stems, and create a pleasing edging to this showy fall border, too.

EIGHT SPRING BUTTERFLY PLANTS

It's easy to find nectar plants to attract butterflies in the summer, but it's a bit more of a challenge in the spring. The plants on this list will help you out — and you can see what kind of butterflies to expect when you plant them, too.

- 1 Chives** *Allium schoenoprasum*
12 to 18 in. tall and wide; cold zones 3 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1; attracts swallowtails, hairstreaks, commas, fritillaries
- 2 White clover** *Trifolium repens*
6 to 12 in. tall and wide; cold zones 3 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1; attracts crescents, buckeyes
- 3 Grape hyacinth** *Muscari* spp.
6 to 9 in. tall, 3 to 6 in. wide; cold zones 4 to 8; heat zones 8 to 1; attracts skippers, whites, alfalfas
- 4 Lilac** *Syringa* spp.
4 to 12 ft. tall and wide; cold zones 3 to 7; heat zones 7 to 1; attracts swallowtails, spring azures, tortoiseshells
- 5 Moss phlox** *Phlox subulata*
6 in. tall, 1 to 2 ft. wide; cold zones 3 to 9; heat zones 9 to 1; attracts skippers, swallowtails, pearl crescents, painted ladies
- 6 Peony** *Paeonia* hybrids
2 to 3 ft. tall and wide; cold zones 3 to 8; heat zones 8 to 1; attracts skippers, satyrs, swallowtails
- 7 Crabapple** *Malus* spp.
6 to 30 ft. tall and wide; cold zones 4 to 8; heat zones 8 to 1; attracts admirals, swallowtails
- 8 Virginia bluebell** *Mertensia virginica*; 1 to 2 ft. tall, 6 to 12 in. wide; cold zones 3 to 7; heat zones 7 to 1; attracts skippers, sulphurs



SPRING BEAUTIES Crabapple blossoms are a great source of spring nectar for butterflies like this yellow swallowtail. And the trees' tiny, often sour fruits are a great winter food source for many bird species.