

The Garden Patch



Salt Lake County Gardening Association

March 2018

From the President

Hello Fellow Gardeners,

I'd say Happy Spring, but it looks more like winter right now than it has all winter long. I'm not complaining (well, at least not too much) because I want to be able to water my yard and garden this summer! The unpredictability does make me a little nervous for the plant exchange in April. We'll have to keep our fingers and toes crossed.

You probably remember Loren coming to talk to us about new plant introductions a couple of years ago. He did such a great job, we've invited him back to join us again this month. I can hardly wait! Be sure to bring any seeds you'd like to share also.

The board's been busy working on the design for the new promotion materials for our group. We've got the business cards ready to print and we're now focusing on the flyers and name badges. Be sure to spread the word and invite those you think would be interested to join us!

See you soon!

Wendy

Upcoming Meetings

March 2018

'What's new for 2018?'

Loren Nielsen from Wasatch Shadows Nursery will talk about new plant varieties and the latest in gardening trends for this year.

Date: Thursday, March 15, 2018
6:30 PM Social / 7:00 Meeting

Location:
Salt Lake County (North Building)
2100 S State. Room 4N850

April 2018

Plant Exchange

Come join us for our annual plant exchange. Be sure to bring some of your favorite plants to share with your fellow gardeners.

Date: Thursday, April 19, 2018 6:30 PM

Location: Murray Park Pavillion #5

** remember to sign in/out with security in north building **

Association News:

I hope you will put it on your calendar to support one of our association projects this year. Weather permitting the outdoor garden projects will be starting during this month.

Come once to check them out, you don't have to be there every week. Also if you have an idea for new project that might generate some interest for our members, please let us know.

The association welcomes anyone who is an avid garden, interested in increasing their gardening knowledge, or willing to share their expertise with others.

Is there a topic you are interested in learning about or that you would like to share with our group? Please contact a member of the board.

Projects

Gilgal Garden	Judi Short judi.short@gmail.com 801-487-7387	Tuesday mornings at 8:00	Maintenance and education
YMCA	Wendy Brown 1savvyshopper2@gmail.com 801-870-5222	Thursday mornings 8:00 - 9:00	Maintenance and education
Garden Patch Newsletter	Terry Curling terryc@digis.net 801-967-1807	Varies	Writing articles, assist with production & mailing
Little Confluence Open Space	Jerry Milne jerrymilne@comcast.net 801-268-4163	Tuesday Mornings at 8:00	Maintenance and education

Gilgal Garden: Judi Short

FOOLED BY MOTHER NATURE AT GILGAL GARDEN!

Because of the warm winter, some of us have been thinking that we would begin gardening soon, and then she dumps more snow on us. Ha! We will watch the weather and see what happens. And we still have plans to get a truck of topsoil and spread it out as soon as we get a decent Saturday and a crew of volunteers with wheelbarrows. Call me if you are available to help on a Saturday in the next few weeks.

AND THE BEST NEWS ABOUT GILGAL???

All the trees and roses appear to be alive and well. Unbeknownst to us, the Parks Department turned the water off for nearly two months in Aug/Sept, and we were seriously worried that our 13 newly planted Fran Fontaine Hornbeams would not be wet enough to survive the winter, especially as the winter turned out to be very dry, until recently. So, all is well, and we can relax!!

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Little Confluence: Jerry Milne

You might have guessed that Little Confluence Park is still dormant. Besides the dog people, the ducks and geese, the only other activity involved is a family of beavers who have taken down 3 small poplar trees along the banks of the Jordan River. I have reported the beavers to the State Wildlife Assoc. and asked them to relocate them. We will see in the next few months if anything will happen. It is good to see the snow return.



Fertilizing Fruit Trees *by Jerry Milne*

Teryl Roper, USU Fruit and Nut Specialist, says that spring is the best time to fertilize fruit trees. For the most part, fruit trees only require additions of nitrogen. With the exception of iron, fruit trees generally don't require micronutrients. The amount of fertilizer to add can be based on some simple rules of thumb.

Shoot Growth. Young non-bearing trees should produce 12 to 18 inches of new growth on branches each year. Bearing trees should produce 8 to 12 inches of new growth per year. Peaches will be more at 15 to 18 inches of new growth. If your trees are producing this amount of shoot growth whatever fertilizer they are getting is sufficient. If less, the trees will benefit from additional fertilizer.



Tree Age. Another useful rule of thumb is to apply one ounce of actual nitrogen per tree up to a total of 8 ounces of actual nitrogen per tree per year. As an example a five - year old apple tree should receive 5 ounces of actual N that year. If ammonium sulfate were used (21% N) you would need to apply approx. 5 times the amount of actual fertilizer (at 21% N ammonium sulfate is 1/5 N). Thus you would apply 25 ounces, or about a pound and a half of fertilizer to the tree.

Granular fertilizers are the least expensive. After application, rain or irrigation is needed within a day or two to solubilize the fertilizer and wash it into the soil. Keeping vegetation from growing within a three-foot radius of the tree trunks will allow the trees to absorb the fertilizer without competition from other plants. A thin layer of mulch in the weed free area will also discourage new weeds from growing.



February Meeting:

House Plants and Interiorscaping

Presented by Kathy Harmon from Cactus & Tropicals

Kathy is the General Manager for Cactus & Tropicals and has worked there for 28 years.

To start her presentation she distributed a one-page handout showing a diagram of a potted plant utilizing a large outer decorative container enclosing a deep liner in which the grow pot rests. Enough Styrofoam© can be placed in the bottom of the decorative pot to elevate the grow pot as high as needed. A pot collar placed 1-2” below the rim supports the grow pot and keeps it upright inside the decorative pot. Moss can be added above the pot collar for aesthetic purposes.

Watering: She recommended saturating the root ball and not watering again until the deep liner is empty and the soil surface is dried out. How often to water depends on many factors.... temperature, humidity, amount of light and type of plant.

She recommended keeping the plant in its original pot, regular pruning, periodically aerating, and adding new potting soil if necessary.

Questions were asked on how to get Christmas cactus and orchids to re-bloom. Other questions were about problems with growing various house and tropical plants including mangos which she said are not suited to the Utah climate and would probably not produce any fruit.

On fertilizer she recommended using a balanced plant food of 20-20-20 for leafy plants and one with a higher middle number (phosphorus) for blooming ones.

To keep plants healthy the leaves should be cleaned to remove dirt and insects. She said baby wipes work well for doing this. A feather duster can also be used to remove light surface dust.

A question was asked about the control of fungus gnats. Kathy said they like moisture and not overwatering is a key factor to prevent them. Sticky yellow traps and the insecticide “Gnatrol” can also be used to control them.

We thank Kathy for taking the time to come and speak to us and share her vast expertise on growing and caring for houseplants. She or her staff will be pleased to answer any questions we might have about our house plants.

Cactus & Tropicals has store locations in Salt Lake and in Draper and can be found on the Web at: www.cactusandtropicals.com



2018-2019 Board Members

President – Wendy Brown

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Golden's Garden

by Wm. Golden Reeves



As the sun returns northward, the shade from the house that covered a lot of the green house during the winter is finally gone, and I can get full sun on the windows. With the warm weather we were having I decided to pot up the dahlia tubers and get them started. I also ran out of space for my pelargonium starts in the basement. So in mid-February I started the greenhouse up. Just before Christmas I planted Glacier tomatoes and they needed the extra head room in the basement as well. The second week in February I planted the Utah Sweet Spanish onions. I have planted peppers about two to three weeks early, so they will be ready to be planted in the garden the same time as the tomatoes in water walls. I also planted the cole crops: cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli with mostly seeds. I use the seed starting mat that heats the soil to about seventy three degrees. With the cole crops, I find it works best to let them germinate at cooler temperatures. I will start my tomato plants the last week in February.

I was able to get some yard clean up taken care of the middle of February. One of my neighbors saw me running the lawn mower to clean up the debris. He made the comment that wasn't it a little early to be mowing the lawn. I normally put the debris on the lawn so I can chop it up to add to the compost pit or to the walkways in the garden. The winter weeds have been growing good this winter. A fellow on the green house radio broadcast was trying to find out how to get rid of them. He had a good crop growing. You need to take them out before they get too big or go to seed.

With tomatoes I find that by planting different varieties of plants, you can have early ripening plants and some midseason. Then the larger tomato variety for the late season tomatoes works well. Most gardeners go to the store and buy a six pack of tomato plants and want the big tomatoes for sandwich slicing and then complain that the tomatoes do not ripen up until late August. When you see on the package of seeds that the plant will produce in 90 days that is misleading. It is 90 days from the transplanted date. So if you plant tomatoes in the middle of May do not expect to be eating ripe fruit until the middle of August. The transplants have been growing 6 to 8 weeks already. On the other hand if you plant tomatoes too early you will not get ripe fruit any earlier than you would normally. To get early tomatoes you need to plant a cold seed tomato variety. This means the blooms will set the tomatoes when the night time temperatures are between 39 and 44 degrees. Most tomatoes will set fruit when it is between 55 and 60 degrees night time temperatures consistently. So that is a little of the information I teach at the Tomato propagation class at Red Butte Garden in March.



Over the years I have been ordering a lot of the same seeds from some of the catalogs and it is a little upsetting when you get the catalog and your seeds have been discontinued. Sometimes you can go to another catalog and find out they are a new seed in that supplier's catalog. In looking through a new book, I look to find if they carry the seed variety and then I normally look for and sometimes I find something else new I want to try.

My wife tells me not to over plant the garden this year because there will not be enough water to keep it going and it will cost an arm and a leg. I can't afford to lose either one of them.

The Garden Patch

Salt Lake County Gardening Association's monthly vibe.

We welcome comments, suggestions, ideas and garden articles.

Editor: Terry Curling terryc@digis.net

Latest blog and past issues of The Garden Patch may be found at SLMG.org



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