

Kewaunee County Garden Club Newsletter

March-April 2021

'Bulb' Talk

It is fascinating that a bulb is made up of a modified stem containing a complete miniature plant, including embryonic leaf, stem, and flower parts, and surrounded by fleshy scales which provide food for the young plant and a basal plate which produces roots. All working together to find its way above ground to give gardeners delight in their landscape!

Do you ever wonder if 'bulbs actually talk to each other'? What is happening underground when the snow is melting? Or, when the temperatures soar above 32 degrees; what are they thinking?

Do they argue which is better a 'true bulb', a 'corm', or a 'rhizome'? Perhaps the more aggressive iris rhizomes try to be pushy. Meanwhile, the crocus corms are doing their thing as they emerge above ground before the rhizomes notice. Next come the 'true bulbs' ... hyacinth, daffodils, and last but not least, the tulips. It takes them a bit longer to strut their colors as they are planted deeper than the corms. What about the irises? Depending on what variety and when they are planted, they usually appear after the tulips. We cannot forget the beautiful alliums, they usually show themselves the same time as the Dutch iris.

One can wonder if they tout that their 'tunic' protects better than the others or that their 'scales' store more nutrients, or that their basal stem will produce more roots and will more than likely survive many years.

We don't usually think about what takes place underground; however, the bulbs and roots can be threatened by aphids and mites. That is why it is so important to inspect bulbs before planting to make sure they are healthy. The size of bulbs makes a difference as to how rapidly they will multiply. That is if you want them to spread rapidly!

Tulip Fingers

'**Tulip Fingers**' is an allergic contact dermatitis that can afflict those who frequently handle tulip bulbs. It can also affect those who cut or pick the flowers. It can appear as redness, eczema, or pustules on fingers and hands.



Garden Expo Review 2021

It definitely was different not attending the Garden Expo in person this year. The selection of seminars was limited by having only one per time slot. There were some interesting ones and some take a ways.

Indigenous Agri-Culture with Laura and Lea

Their timeframe of planting 'three sisters' and the recommendation to use fish fertilizer when planting.

They plant 'one' seed for them and 'six' for the community. When harvesting, they pull back the husks to dry, braid 30-60 cobs together for drying. Looking at the picked corn determined if the corn would be used for seed or soup. Straight rows on the cob would be for seed; bumpy and uneven kernels were for soup. Albino corn meant a blessing. Nothing was wasted ...used corn husks for moccasins and mats.

Sensational Seasonal Plants with Mark Dwyer

Helpful hints on plants to choose for foliage and texture in the garden. Mark gave a variety of flowers and foliage for the flower garden.

Growing Potatoes in Your Home Garden with Yi Wang

It was astonishing how many potatoes and varieties are grown in the United States. Yi touched on the soil and fertility requirements, disease-free seed tubers, planting guide, and controlling insects.

Old-Fashioned Flower Favorites You and the Pollinators Will Enjoy with Melinda Myers

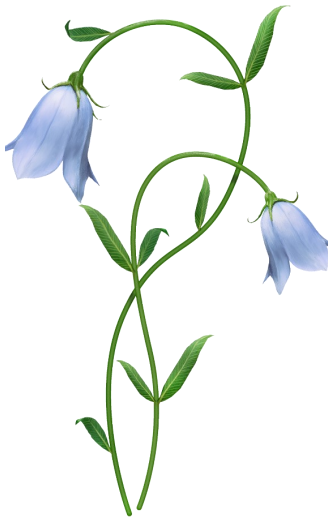
Many 'old' varieties of flowers: annuals, perennials, and biennials were discussed. We had hollyhocks on the farm which I deplored when mowing the lawn. It was interesting to find out that if you removed the reproductive part of the flower, it is edible. Melinda stated that turkeys love the Japanese beetles. However, it can be a chore hand picking them off plants, rather you can use a dust buster to vacuum them. She also advised to plant four o' clocks or geraniums among raspberries for pest control.

Invasive Jumping Worms with Brad Herrick

There are three categories of earthworms: Epigeic (little dweller—type in Wisconsin), Endogeic –topsoil dwellers, and arecic—subsoil dweller used for fishing lure

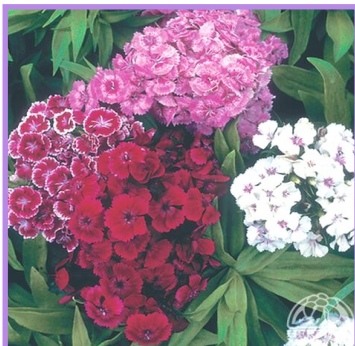
Jumping worms have a rigid body with two-tone coloration. Best way to identify them is by their white milky ring; it is smooth and goes all the way around its body. The jumping worm has 14 to 16 sections above its white ring (reproductive part). It is closer to the head than regular earthworms. Their castings look like uniform coffee grounds. They have a unique way of dropping their tail when aggravated. Jumping worms do not aeriate the soil. They dry out topsoil which becomes very loose. Arrive clean in the garden and leave clean so as to not transport them to another area.

Shaping the Garden



"The love of
gardening is a
seed once sown
that never
dies."

-Gertrude Jekyll



Designing a garden can be overwhelming and sometimes even intimidating. Color is often the first thing that comes to mind; however, flower shapes help set the mood and is a very important element in garden design. Here are some shapes to consider:

Flathead flowers have a horizontal shape that gives the eye a place to rest and has a down-to-earth feel. *Examples:* butterfly weed, lantana, verbena, yarrow.

Daises are the flower shape to choose for a simple, natural look.

Trumpets are strong, attention getting flower shapes and can be used as a focal point in the garden. *Examples:* bellflower, daylily, flowering tobacco, petunia.

Cup flowers are simpler than trumpet flowers and lend a more casual feel. *Examples:* balloon flower, crocus, peony, tulip.

Plumes bring a playful mood with fuzzy flowers. Plumes make a good transition shape between spikes and flatheads. *Examples:* astilbe, coral bells, goatsbeard, goldenrod, pampas grass.

Globe flowers have unusual shapes which stand out in the garden. Use them as accents or focal points. *Examples:* bachelor's buttons, beebalm, carnation, geranium, globe thistle.

Fillers provide a good-looking backdrop and fill in bare spots. *Examples:* baby's breath, columbine, fountain grass, mugwort.

Clusters of flowers provide some weight to a design. Loose clusters make good transitions between different shapes because of their indistinct form. *Examples:* begonia, garden phlox, spiderwort, sweet woodruff.

Spike flowers are great attention getters that add height to your garden design. *Examples:* blazing star, cardinal flower, ligularia, Russian sage, salvia, speedwell, torch flower.

Planting a lot of different shapes will keep eyes moving throughout the garden. Avoid too much contrast by repeating a shape to provide a sense of unity. Use a variety of monochromatic flowers with different shapes. Show off a favorite flower with a filler like baby's breath. Also important to consider are the seedheads. Take advantage of the shapes of seedheads and blooms, like coneflowers, that dry out to add year-round interest in the garden.

Natural Pest Control

Some plants to consider for natural pest control in your vegetable garden.

Sweet Alyssum—not only does it attract pollinators it is a natural pest control for aphids.

Chrysanthemums—the flowers contain pyrethrin which is a toxic chemical to insects but safe for humans and animals. A tea made from the flowers can be used as a spray as a natural pesticide for ticks, fleas, ants, and to repel Japanese beetles.

To make the chrysanthemum tea—steep flower petals in hot water for 30 minutes, cool. Pour liquid into spray bottle. Spray veggies as needed.

Clover—plant around cabbage to prevent cabbage worms and aphids from devouring the plants.

Scented Marigolds—French marigold variety is recommended for keeping whiteflies away from tomatoes. Marigolds prevent nematodes from munching on the roots of tomato plants. Plant near carrots, cucumbers, lettuce, peppers, potatoes, tomatoes; most veggies other than beans and brassicas. Slugs will not be attracted to the plants if marigolds are around. An added benefit, deer do not like marigolds!

Orange nasturtiums—plant by squash, cucumbers, and radishes. **Yellow nasturtiums** trap aphids and whiteflies.

Sunflowers repel aphids.

Petunias repel aphids, cabbage worms, leafhoppers, asparagus beetles, squash and potato bugs.

Four O' Clocks are poisonous; however, Japanese beetles don't touch them.

Basil—plant to repel mosquitos and flies.

Garlic—repel Japanese beetles and keeps deer away from plants.

Fennel fends off snails and slugs.

Lemongrass to keep mosquitos away.

Mint as a natural repellent for mosquitos.

Alliums for cabbage worms, carrot flies, slugs, and other bugs.

Borage—plant around tomatoes, squash, strawberries; can help all plants increase their disease resistance.

Lavender—keeps away fleas, mosquitoes, and whiteflies.

Plant Sale 2021



Flowers for Pollinators

Vines

Native Plants

Succulents

Fairy Garden Plants

FREE milkweed seeds

Starter Gardening Kits *(see next page)*

Sample of Gardening Kits



Items Needed for the kits

- **Containers** (*creative ... small... recycle/repurpose*)
 - **Variety** of flower/vegetable/herb seeds
 - **Succulent** plants
 - **Shade** garden plants
 - **Sun** garden plants
 - Garden **tools**
 - Gardening **Gloves** (*kids*)
 - **Old jeans/shorts** (*back pockets*)
 - **Farmer Bib Overalls** (*apron*)



Song of Easter

Celia Thaxter

Easter lilies! Can you hear
What they whisper, low and clear?

In dewy fragrance they unfold
Their splendor sweet, their snow and gold.

Every beauty-breathing bell
News of heaven has to tell.

Listen to their mystic voice;
Hear, O mortal, and rejoice!



Website: www.kcgardenclub.org

www.facebook.com/kewaunee-county-garden-club

President: Tom Zenner

V. President: Cheryl Eberle

Treasurer: Ann Brunner

Secretary: Sue Hepp

Marketing Committee: Barb Smith, Tom Zenner, Cheryl Eberle, Nancy Lamack, Mary Novak, and Joel Weichelt

Seed Planting Containers

- Toilet paper rolls
- Fruit or Veggie trays
- Paper cups (*unwaxed*)
- Milk or water bottles (*cloche*)
- Egg shells (*wash, bake in a 130° F oven for 20 minutes to kill any germs or bacteria.*)
- Egg cartons
- Plastic bakery containers (*little greenhouse*)
- Shoes/boots
- Paper/cardstock trays
- Paper toweling



What Kinds of Herbs to Grow?

Rosemary for its strong flavor for stews and sauces. You can also flavor olive oil with it for a special treat.

Mint has a robust, refreshing flavor for tea and is often used with pork and peas.

Sage is peppery with a touch of mint. It is great for sausage and beef. **Thyme** also pairs well with sage.

Basil and **Oregano** are ideal additions to your favorite Italian dishes especially pizza and pasta.

Dill is not only grown for pickling, try adding it to your summer salads. It freezes well.

Some of the best herbs for new gardeners are **dill**, **parsley**, **sage**, **chives**, and **cilantro**. The onion flavor of chives makes them suitable for most dishes. Add cilantro to your favorite Mexican dishes.