

April 2021

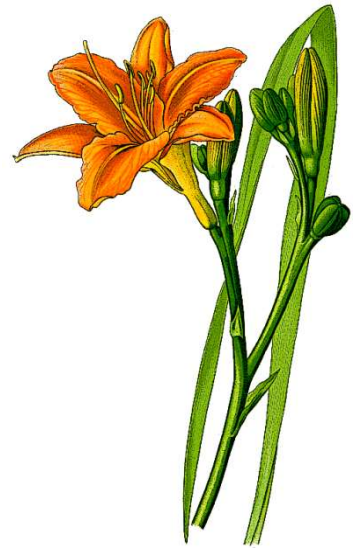
South Schuylkill Garden Club

Third Tuesday of the Month at 6:30

Jerusalem Lutheran Church, Schuylkill Haven

www.southschuylkillgardenclub.com

www.facebook.com/soschuylkillgardenclub.com



Cultivating the Community Newsletter

Weather Folklore: “When bees come out of the hive, it’s a good day to be alive.” The truth of this saying is that bees generally come out when weather is good and head back to the hive when a storm is approaching.

April is almost here.

April is known for beautiful spring weather, the start of warmer weather, and right about the time when the Easter bunny will make an appearance!

We know it is the fourth month of the year, but that’s only by the Gregorian calendar that we adhere to now. It was previously the fifth month in the earlier Julian calendar.

April also only had 29 days, but a 30th day was added when Julius Caesar established the Julian calendar.

In the Southern Hemisphere, April is the seasonal equivalent to [October](#).

No one is sure how the month ended up with its name, but we do know the Romans named it “Aprillis.”

The etymology behind the word “April” comes from the verb “aperire,” which means “to open.” It’s commonly believed that the word refers to the season of trees and flowers begin to “open” or bloom.

Those who were born in April have a diamond as their birthstone, which represents innocence. Their birth flower is either a Daisy or a Sweet Pea.

There are two zodiac signs in April. Aries, which is until [April 19th](#), and Taurus, which is April 20th and onwards.

April is a great month for meteor showers. One of which is the Lyrids meteor shower, which appears from April 16th to April 26th each year. There’s another one called the Eta Aquariids meteor shower that can be seen onwards from [April 21st](#).

There are quite a few notable historical people born in April, such as Leonardo da Vinci, [Shakespeare](#), and Queen Elizabeth II.

On [April 15, 1912](#), the famous [Titanic](#) ship hit an iceberg and sunk on her first and only voyage.

George Washington was inaugurated as the First President of the United States on [April 30, 1789](#).

Back in the time of the [Ancient Romans](#), April was sacred to the goddess Venus.

Of course, one of the most well-known dates of April, is April Fools’ Day on the [1st of the month](#). No one is sure where this originated from, but some believe it to be inspired by Geoffrey Chaucer’s story in “Canterbury Tales” called “Nun’s Priest’s Tale.”

On [April 11, 1970](#), Apollo 13 was launched and ran into difficulties about two days later. It was then that the

famous line “Houston, we’ve had a problem here” was said, and is today usually misquoted.

After a 1,500 year break, the first Olympics of the modern era took place on [April 6](#), 1896, in Athens.

The explosion of the Chernobyl nuclear plant in Ukraine occurred on [April 26, 1986](#), which forced everyone within a 300-mile radius to be evacuated.

The smaller animals that hibernate for the winter in the Northern Hemisphere usually start coming out of their burrows in April.

April is also the month that the birds migrate north and settle down for the summer to mate.

For all the car enthusiasts out there, [Ford](#) unveiled their first Mustang on [April 17](#), 1964, costing \$2,368.

The first battle of the Revolutionary War, Lexington, and Concord broke out on April 19, 1775.

Date Change

May club meeting which was originally set for May 18 has been rescheduled for **May 4**. This is a change that you might want to make in your program book for 2021. The reason for the date change for the meeting, which will be held on the Island in Schuylkill Haven under the pavilion, is to accommodate the Plant Sale scheduled for May 22. Club members on the **4 of May** will be determining what needs to be done as final preparation for the Plant Sale.

April Tea

With the uncertainties of restriction with may extend into the early spring months, the April Membership Tea will not be planned. How the rest of the year opens up to more friendly gatherings will determine efforts to invite new prospective members into the club.

Seedling Sale

The Schuylkill County Conservation District held their annual Seedling Sale. A reminder that the **delivery is April 24th**, this is a benefit of Sweet Arrow Lake County Park.

Pat McKinney at Schuylkill County Conservation District 570-391-3326 was coordinating the sale.



Plant Sale

South Schuylkill Garden Club is planning to host an outdoor plant sale at the Schuylkill Haven Recreation/Senior Center on Saturday, **May 22**. Consider what you would like to contribute. More on this as the plans materialize.

Nancy has been working overtime preparing for the plant sale. She certainly has a green thumb by the photos below.

Way to go Nancy!



Home and Garden Show

Congratulations to members of the club who got together a last minute display for the Home and Garden Show by the Fairlane Village Mall. Special Thanks goes out to Nancy who coordinated the effort. Below is a photo from the display.



Display at Home and Garden Show

PEONIES Some points shared at the District II/III Zoom meeting in March may help with peony blooms. Blooms will likely not occur the first year of planting as the focus will be strengthening the roots the first year, develop shoots the second year and support flowers the third year.

The following conditions may be responsible for poor or lack of blooms. Peonies like sunlight, need space for their roots to spread, are not fond of moist to wet soil, and keep buds on top of the tubulars within 1-2 inches of the ground. Heavy mulching may interfere with depth. Allow leaves to stay on the stalks in the fall until they grow dormant to feed the tubes with the greatest amount of nutrient for the following year.

When to cut peonies to bring indoors? It is too late once bloom is fully open; the petals will fall. Cut stems with the marble bud is just breaking and they should stay healthy for 5-10 days. - Jane

Use of Blackboard Paint for Garden Signs

For signs that show and endure the outdoor climate, consider use of Chalkboard Paint and Chalkboard Markers available at craft stores. Make sure the chalk paint will cover wood, metal, stone, glass and plastic without a primer.

What to use as plant markers? Consider wood sticks, wooden or metal spoons or jar lids. Paint on metal containers or woven baskets as decorative or gift messages.

Process: Ready the surface of debris or smudges. Apply the chalkboard paint and allow to dry 1-3 days. Write the name or message with the chalkboard markers.

Extra – The chalkboard markers can be erased with water, a household degreaser or magic eraser sponge. If this does not go well, simply repaint with the chalkboard paint, cure for several days and add a new message.

From Empress of Dirt



2021 Philadelphia Flower Show

The Show has moved to an outdoor presentation from **June 5 to 13** in the

FDR Park located in southwest section of the city. (For those who did not know the park here is a description: **Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Park** (originally named League Island **Park** and locally known as "The Lakes") is an aesthetically designed **park** located along the Delaware River in the southernmost point of South **Philadelphia**, Pennsylvania, comprising some 348 acres.) Tickets are now on sale at \$45. Space is limited due to social distancing restrictions. So if you are interested you are advised to register early. Check online at psonline.org/the-flower-show.



Description from the website reads:

“Safely enjoy 15 acres of world-class landscape and floral designs, shopping, plant displays, exciting food and beverage options, entertainment, and educational sessions — all with the exquisite backdrop of FDR Park. The Flower Show will make ample usage of the grand architecture and natural environment of FDR Park as a canvas for colorful inspirational displays.

“FDR Park includes open space, gentle hills, huge shade trees, and the sparkling water of Meadow Lake among many other amenities. Plan your Show visit to include a walk through the Park, explore the architecture, bird watch, or take the kids to a playground. Beyond the Flower Show designated area, FDR Park will remain open and accessible to the public during the Flower Show.”



Photo credit: Penn State Master Gardener Program

Have you ever wondered how your grandparents grew gorgeous tomatoes just in pot on their deck? Are you baffled by why your neighbor has such a lush herb garden on her porch while yours withers and dies? Follow the principles below to make your potted vegetables the envy of the neighborhood in no time.

Choosing the Right Container

- **Drainage:** Did you know that roots need oxygen just like we do? Water-logged soil makes it difficult for roots to breathe, so no matter what you're growing in your container, it should have drainage holes at the bottom so excess water can flow out easily.
- **Size:** A single tomato plant will need at least a 20-inch-wide pot, while peppers and eggplants can thrive in a 14 inch pot. Smaller pots are good for herbs and greens. For healthy root growth, all pots should be at least as tall as they are wide.
- **Material:** Plastic pots are lightweight and don't dry out as quickly as pots made from porous materials such as terracotta. However, heavier pots like those made from cement or stone can help prevent top-heavy plants such as tomatoes from blowing over in the wind.

What is a Hobby Greenhouse?

Not sure this will work, but this is a recording of a session I did through PSU.

https://psu.mediaspace.kaltura.com/media/Houseplant+Master+ClassA+What+is+a+Hobby+GreenhouseF+Webinar+on+03.02.2021/1_1x8a66fc

Container Vegetable Gardening

- Four Keys to Success

Container gardening might seem like a secret art but following a few key principles can help you extend your garden space with productive containerized vegetable plants.



Potting Mix

- Fill your container with a soilless mix – do not use straight garden soil! Soil and soil-based mixes are typically heavy and dense, which can prevent your container from draining properly. Soilless mixes contain a blend of several materials such as sphagnum moss, composted bark, perlite, vermiculite, or coconut coir to create a medium that drains well while holding

onto water and nutrients. Soilless mixes are also free from weed seeds and plant pathogens.

- You can also add finished compost to your soilless mix, up to 50%. Compost can have similar benefits to slow-release fertilizer and increases the water-holding capacity of your media.

Plant Selection

- How much sun will your container get? Tomatoes and peppers need at least 6 hours of sun per day, while lettuces and kale prefer some shade.
- Look for dwarf or shorter varieties of vegetables, often labeled as "bush" or "determinate" on seed packets. These will be compact plants better suited for the small space of a container. Even though they are compact, some vegetables will still need a trellis or other support; examples include tomatoes, pole beans, and cucumbers.
- Not all vegetables grow well in containers: sweet corn, watermelon, winter squash, and zucchini are all better-suited for in-ground gardening.

Water and Fertilizer

Most container vegetable gardens will need to be watered *at least* once a day during hot summer months. The potting media should always be moist but never water-logged. To make sure you're thoroughly watering your containers, add water until it starts to drain out of the bottom.

- Because plants only have access to the nutrients available in their pot, they need more fertilizer than in-ground plants, which are able to expand their root systems to access nutrients in the surrounding soil. To keep container vegetable gardens healthy and productive throughout the season, add a slow-release fertilizer at planting time and reapply a soluble fertilizer every two to four weeks.

[Erin Kinley](#)

Master Gardner Coordinator

Montgomery County

Stay Safe by staying socially separated from others by at least 6 feet. Wash hands frequently and above all don't touch your face, but with clean hands.