

April 2024

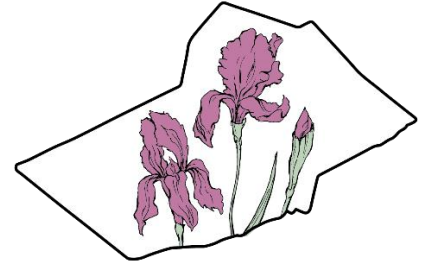
# South Schuylkill Garden Club

Third Tuesday of the Month at 6:30 PM

First United Church of Christ, Schuylkill Haven

[www.southschuylkillgardenclub.com](http://www.southschuylkillgardenclub.com)

[www.facebook.com/soschuylkillgardenclub.com](http://www.facebook.com/soschuylkillgardenclub.com)



## Cultivating the Community Newsletter

### Fun Facts About



- Did you know that April is the best month of the year to look up to the skies and watch meteor showers?
- April is known for beautiful spring weather, the start of warmer weather.
- 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 30<sup>th</sup> day was added when Julius Caesar established the Julian calendar.
- In the Southern Hemisphere, April is the seasonal equivalent of 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 19<sup>th</sup>, and Taurus, which is April 20<sup>th</sup> and onwards.
- April is a great month for meteor showers. One of which is the Lyrids meteor shower, which appears from April 16<sup>th</sup> to April 26<sup>th</sup> each year. There's another one called the Eta Aquariids meteor shower that can be seen onwards from April 21<sup>st</sup>.
- There are quite a few notable historical people born in April, such as Leonardo da Vinci, Shakespeare, and Queen Elizabeth II.
- On April 14, 1912, the famous Titanic ship hit an iceberg and sank 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.
- One of the most well-known dates of the month is April Fools' Day on the 1<sup>st</sup> 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.
- Don't forget the Solar Eclipse on April 8.

## April Tea Information:

The numbers for the Tea are growing. **We need your help.** Looking for more sandwich makers for tuna salad, ham salad, turkey salad and peanut butter and jelly etc. We are also looking for more desserts cut into petite portions. We are fast approaching 80 participants and may go over that number.

## Plant Sale Information:

### “NOW IS THE TIME”

Now is the ideal time to dig out your excess perennials as they are starting to “peek out” of the ground and pot them for the **Plant Sale on May 18**. Plants will grow faster and healthier if given individual attention. You should have all plants that you are bringing to the plant sale in pots by May 1<sup>st</sup>. That will give them time to adjust to their new surroundings and look healthy on sale day. If you have house plants that are looking a little crowded, why not separate and share them with the plant sale?

Here are some of the plant categories for the sale that the committee is looking for: Annual plants, native plants, herbs, house plants, daylily, dahlia tubers, sun perennials, shade perennials, succulents, vegetables, canna bulbs, gladiolus, hanging planters, trees, and shrubs.

We should consider thinning out some of the plants in the Schuylkill Haven Butterfly Garden as well as the Pine Grove Garden. These plants can then be sold at the plant sale. **HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED!** Please contact Nancy Russial at 570-573-9787 or Kim Morgan at 570-617-0808.

**Lots of help is also required** on Friday, May 17, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to setup, sort, price and display plants; and on Saturday, May 18, 7:45 to 2 p.m. (clean-up from 1-2 p.m.) A sign-up sheet for members will be available at the greeter’s table by the door of the April Tea, plus white sticks for labeling plants. All plants are to be labeled with

name and color before bringing to plant sale. (mark “N” if native plant).

## March Club Meeting

March 19 was our first club meeting of the year. PSU Master Gardener **Tom Reed** presented a program on making gardening easier on the body. Tom had many tips, and the two that resonated with me were to keep yourself hydrated and use sunscreen.

**Refreshments: Thank you** to Carol Haldeman, Jeanne Zulick, MaryAnn Uranium, and Marlene Fisher for the luscious refreshments.



## April 16, 2024 April Membership Tea

### Program: “Fashion Through the Ages”

A Victorian Tea with **Lucille Fala-Brennan** presenting a program on “Fashion Through the Ages.” Lucille will entertain us with music, song, and stories of the past in Victorian fashion.



**South Schuylkill Garden Club**

**Annual Tea**

Presents

**Fashions through the Years**

**By Lucille Fala-Brennan**

**Costumes & Hats of the Past**

**Victorian Music – Stories & Songs**

Join us for an evening of food, fellowship, and  
fabulous entertainment:

**Tuesday, April 16, 2024**

Doors open at 5:00 PM

**First United Church of Christ**

110 Route 61, Schuylkill Haven (next to Penn State)

**Donation: \$25 per Person**

Information call or text 570-990-9131

Seating is limited.

Taking reservations through April 6



**May 21, 2024**

**Program: "Tour of Natives in Frog Hollow"**

**Audrey Wells** will give us a tour of the native plants through the trails of Frog Hollow. We will be gathering for an earlier start on this day at **6 PM** at the pavilion by the creek.

**June 18, 2024**



**Program: "Basics of Bonsai"**

**Carl Ackhammer, Jr.** of **Zenchaser Bonsai** will enthusiastically engage all of us in a program on the basics of the Japanese art of raising bonsai trees.

**Bus Trip**

South Schuylkill Garden Club

Educational Bus Tour

**Morris Arboretum & Gardens**

Tuesday, May 7, 2024

Day Trip 8 AM – 6:30 PM

Rain or Shine Event

Cost \$65.00

For information/reservations: Carol Haldeman

570-345-2434/570-640-7511

[chaldyjr@gmail.com](mailto:chaldyjr@gmail.com)

Registration deadline April 7, 2024

**Speaking of an Educational Bus Trip**

An informal survey was taken at the March Meeting to see if there is interest in taking a mini-tour of the Manheim Trial Gardens. This is in Lancaster County where Penn State Gardens raise the newest varieties of flowers sent to them from seed companies. Late June and July is when the tours are given. It is a rain or shine tour as they are scheduled with the personnel. Looking to rent a minibus which holds up to 20 passengers.

Results of the informal survey was a positive interest from the members present. We will be moving forward with looking to setup a tour and

make transportation arrangements. More information to come as we pursue this tour.

Recently, an interview with Krystal Snyder, an extension agent with the Trial Gardens, expressed some trends happening at the gardens. Some of the varieties Snyder is excited about include larger-than-average Colocasia, or elephant ears, and a sized-down version of Joe Pye weed that's more manageable for smaller gardens. Snyder also dug into some changing plant trends, like the practice of moving houseplants outside for the warmer months or the fact that certain staples of home gardens or potting plants tend to fall in and out of fashion. One of those plants that have fallen out of fashion is the geranium.

### District II/III News:

- April 7-9 is the [2024 Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania Convention](#) in Lancaster. The specifics are in the Keystone Gardener recently received. District II/III will have two tables to demonstrate our unique talents.



### Five Ways to Prevent Damping Off of Seedlings

Have you ever sown a tray of seeds and watched with excitement as they germinated, only to see the seedlings keel over and die, sometimes overnight? What happened?

It is likely your seedlings succumbed to damping off. Damping off is the umbrella term for several fungal diseases that attach seeds and newly emerged plants. A few simple steps can prevent killing your seedlings.

One of the most important safeguards is keeping everything clean. If you reuse trays, cell packs or pots, wash them, then soak in a 10% bleach solution for at least 30 minutes. Rinse and allow to dry before filling with seed-starting mix. Clean all your tools, watering cans, gloves, and anything else that might harbor fungus.

Don't reuse seed-starting mix from year to year. Commercial seed-starting mix is sterilized to kill any pathogens. If you make your own mix, sterilize the ingredients first.

Avoid sowing too thickly, and don't over fertilize.

Use clean, lukewarm water, at least 68<sup>o</sup> to 77<sup>o</sup> F. Be sure the pots used allow for adequate drainage. Water from the bottom, not from overhead, and don't overwater.

Keep humidity from building up. If you cover to keep the mix from drying out, take it off once the first seedlings appear. Use a fan to circulate air. Put seed trays or pots on a heated mat and under a grow light.

For seeds that must be sown outdoors, wait until the garden soil is the right temperature for the type of plant you are growing. The minimum soil temperature for peas, for example, is 40<sup>o</sup>, but the minimum for cucumbers is 60<sup>o</sup>F.

### Vegetables to Grow in Containers

- Lettuce
- French beans
- Radishes
- Carrot
- Beet
- Tomato
- Kale
- Spring onion
- Spinach
- Swiss chard
- Cucumber
- Potato
- Onion
- Peppers
- Garlic