

February 2022

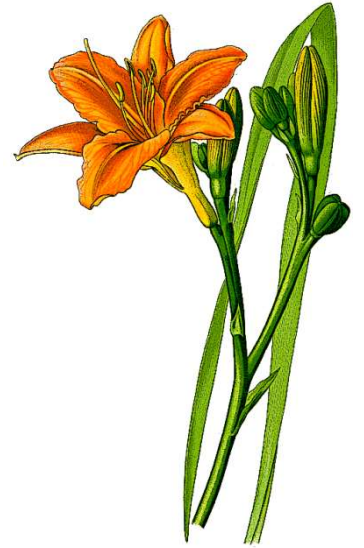
## South Schuylkill Garden Club

Third Tuesday of the Month at 6:30

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

### Weather Folklore for February

**A wet February, a wet Spring.** Winter either bites with its teeth or lashes with its tail.

- There is always one fine week in February.
- If bees get out in February, the next day will be windy and rainy.
- Fogs in February mean frosts in May.
- Winter's back breaks about the middle of February.

### March Club Meeting

Coming out of the winter chill into the winds of March will find us gathering for our first club meeting for the year 2022. **March 15** is our club meeting date with the meeting held at the church. Our speaker will be Tom Reed, Master Gardner and his presentation will be "Garden Technology."

Members on the refreshment committee for the March Meeting are Linda, Carol, Larry and Jeanne.

### Bus Trip 2022

The Bus trip has been planned for Thursday **May 5, 2022**. It is to Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve with a guided tour which lasts 1 -1/2 hours. Theme for tour is "Spring Bloomers." Walking on your own after the guided tour is encouraged. The trails are not handicapped accessible. Plants will also be available for purchase. Second stop will be at Paxson Hill Farm Garden or take a self-guided tour

for \$5.00. Registration deadline is **April 5, 2022**. Cost is \$60.00 and checks are made payable to SSGC. Mail registration to Carol Haldeman, 105 Beuchler Lane, Pine Grove, PA 17963

### Speaking of Trips

A 4-day Garden tour is available to those interested. It is operated by Sandy Hendricks out of District V. Dates of trip is June 7 through June 10. Leaving Watsontown at 7:30 AM on the 7 of June and returning to same area by 7PM on the 10 of June. Gardens to see are many and here are just a few examples: Meadowbrook Farm, Highlands Mansion & Gardens, Hagley Museum & Library, Nemours Estate, Gibraltar & Marian Coffin Gardens, Scott Arboretum, Terrain, Brandywine Museum, Longwood Gardens, Chanticleer, Valley Forge Nursery, and Shofuso Japanese House & Gardens. Contact can be made with Sandy about the trip at 570-538-1339 or email her at [toribell@ptd.net](mailto:toribell@ptd.net)

### April Tea

Linda Bollinger has graciously agreed to Chair this committee. She will be reaching out with a date and time to plan out this event. Before we know it April will be here. Other members that signed up for this committee are Bonnie Bernat, Maris Kilgus,

Kathy Townley, Nancy Russial, Sharon Glasure, Barbara Malewski, Jeanne Zulick, Larry Moyer, Helen Moyer.

**April Tea date is the 19 of April.** Program will be Victor Perez and he will be speaking on Dahlias.

### **Plant Sale**

Before we know it, we will be out separating plants for the annual plant sale. Nancy Russial has agreed to chair this committee. She had a lot of support from Carol, Kaye, and Larry who will play a major role again this year. Members who signed up for the Plant Sale are Linda Bollinger, Sharon Glasure, Kim Morgan, Lillian Patten, MaryAnn Uranium, Bernice Francaviglia, Carol Haldeman, Larry Moyer, Nancy Taylor, Pat Wishousky, Joan Medlinsky, Kaye Moyer, Kathy Townley, Jeanne Zulick. Nancy will be reaching out with a date for the committee to me soon.

Plant Sale is set for the **21 of May**. Drop off will be May 20.

Kaye is currently Looking for those 4-inch square pots and those rectangular trays for the plant sale.

### **Desk of District II/III Director**

#### *GCFP State Convention*

The Keystone Gardener printed issue should have arrived at your homes. The state Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania convention, April 3-5, 2022, will be held near Philadelphia area in Malvern, PA this year. The closeness allows more the opportunity to attend. The array of speakers are outline in the program. Be aware of the **February 22 registration date.**

Jane Kruse is going and will secure a hotel. With others attending, we can share a hotel and travel. Let me know by **February 12** at 570-628-4802 or [pachejane@verizon.net](mailto:pachejane@verizon.net)

### **Speaking of District Info.**

We will be hosting the **District II/III meeting** for **June**. The date for this meeting and program will be **13** with the hours of approximately 9:30 to 1:30. Jane is chairing the committee for this event. Carol and Linda have graciously agreed to coordinate

refreshments. As always help is need with this event and if any members are interested in helping, please contact Jane, Carol, or Linda.

### **Frog Hollow**

Efforts are underway to keep the jewel of Frog Hollow Environmental Center near Friedensburg open to the public. Drew Kline of Schuylkill County Parks and Recreation and Pat McKinney with Schuylkill County Conservation District have confidence for outside funds to purchase Frog Hollow for County ownership and return Frog Hollow to a natural passive park.

County Commissioners need to know that there is support for this public space in central part of Schuylkill County. Call or write the County Commissioners of your desire for the county to pursue the purchase of Frog Hollow.

Barron Hetherington at [bhetherington@co.schuylkill.pa.us](mailto:bhetherington@co.schuylkill.pa.us)

George Halcovage at [ghalcovage@co.schuylkill.pa.us](mailto:ghalcovage@co.schuylkill.pa.us)

Gary Hess at [gness@co.schuylkill.pa.us](mailto:gness@co.schuylkill.pa.us)

Schuylkill County Court House  
401 N. Second Street  
Pottsville, PA 17901  
570-622-5570

**Please Share photo from your gardens.**

**Email photo to:** [kamorgan11@gmail.com](mailto:kamorgan11@gmail.com)  
**or text to 5706170808**



*Doesn't tis make you feel like spring just might get here. Thank you, Jeanne, for sharing.*



*Twins. Such radiant color. Thank you, Jeanne for sharing.*

**So, I started this list below and I would love if all of you experienced gardeners would send me your ideas of "You know you are a Gardner when . . ." Let us keep the ideas flowing and add to the list. Let us see how many ideas we can come up with. Just email your ideas to me at**

[kamorgan11@gmail.com](mailto:kamorgan11@gmail.com) or text it to me at **5706170808**

### **You know you are a Gardner when:**

- Your gardening gloves fall out of the car door
- You have gardening tools in trunk of your car
- You develop community gardens
- Your gardens are themed
- You weed your neighbors' gardens
- You dead head your daughter's flowers
- You empty the dehumidifier and use the water to water your potted plants
- You sprinkle your son's hair from a recent haircut around your plants to keep the deer away
- Pull weeds in public gardens
- Carry a small set of pruners in your back pocket
- You are constantly checking the weather report
- You plant by the phases of the moon
- You cover your fall plants to protect them from the first fall frost
- You count on the first frost being in November
- You cover your plants before the frost hits.
- Clean your gardening equipment before putting away for the season
- You stare looking at seed and plant catalogues for next year
- *You know you are a Gardener ... When you go to the store for groceries and come home with some*

*plants that just jumped into your cart.*  
– Pat P.

- *You know you are a Gardener ... when you can resist everything but temptation in a Garden Center. There is always room for one more.* – Pat P.
- *You know you are a Gardener ... when you smile YES when a gardener-friend asks you if you could use a few iris or daylilies that she is separating because they need thinning.* – Pat P.
- *You know you are a Gardener ... when the Plant catalogs arrive in the middle of winter.* – Pat P.
- *You know you are a Gardener ... when the plants in your garden have come from other gardening friends. Memories ... I plant my friends.* – Pat P.
- *You know you are a gardener when \_\_\_\_\_.*

### New and Newsworthy Indoor Plants

Explore some new varieties of old favorite indoor plants, including the versatile peperomia, “mini monstera,” croton, Fatsia, ZZ plant, and members of the Ficus family.



Tradescantia 'Bubblegum'. Photo credit: Penn State Master Gardener Program

The popularity of houseplants continues to grow—trending plants are featured on social media, in

magazines, and on television shows. Houseplants have officially been added as a new category to the "Year of the" program sponsored by the National Garden Bureau, a non-profit organization promoting gardening in North America. The houseplant of the year for 2022 is peperomia.

There are thousands of types of peperomias, and all belong to the Piperaceae family, the same family as true black pepper. The genus name, *Peperomia* reflects this relationship, coming from the Greek *peperi* meaning pepper and *homios* meaning resembling.

Peperomias are easy to grow and thrive in medium to bright indirect light. The succulent leaves are thick and waxy, so keep them on the dry side, watering when the top 1 to 2 inches of soil feels dry. *Peperomia* 'Hope' is a new variety, a trailing form with round to oval, light green leaves that emerge on pinkish-orange stems. Another attractive cultivar is *Peperomia caperata* 'Frost'; its rippled green leaves are dusted with silvery frost. The plant grows approximately 6 to 12 inches high and wide.

New cultivars of some of the tried-and-true favorites are being developed and introduced by plant breeders. The traditional inch plant (*Tradescantia zebrina*) with variegated green, purple, and silver markings on the foliage has been upstaged with a fun new cultivar, *Tradescantia* 'Bubblegum' with bright pink, white, and green variegated leaves. The leaves are thicker than the species, and the terminal growth is tightly whorled with fuchsia undersides. Because of the variegation, the plant grows best when it receives at least six hours of bright indirect light daily. If the light is not sufficient, the plant will lose its variegation and may become leggy. The plant's natural growth habit is to vine; pinch the stems regularly to keep the plant compact; the cuttings will root easily in water and can be shared with friends. Some individuals are sensitive to the sap contained in the leaves of the *Tradescantia*, so wear gloves or wash your hands after handling the plant. The inch plant is also mildly toxic when ingested, so keep it out of reach from pets and young children.



Houseplants in genus *Ficus*, such as the popular fiddleleaf fig, weeping fig, and rubber tree are increasingly popular, but these plants tend to be finicky. They require consistent watering, especially when the plants are young; if allowed to dry out, the foliage often drops. However, when provided with regular watering and good indirect light, they will thrive.

*Ficus elastica* 'Ruby', a variegated rubber tree, produces unique tri-colored foliage of intense dark green, coral pink, to creamy white. New growth emerges as a pinky-orange shade. Site the plant in bright, indirect light to keep the colors vivid—a few feet from a southern or western exposure is ideal.

*Ficus altissima* 'Yellow Gem' is a stunning interior plant with thick green leaves edged with a yellow border and prominent yellow veins. The lemon and lime variegated will intensify in ideal light conditions and with maturity. 'Yellow Gem' is a large plant reaching about 9 feet in height, so position it where it has room to grow.

*Ficus benghalensis* 'Audrey' is a new arrival in the houseplant market. Its matte green foliage and prominent light green venation are striking. These 10-foot-tall ficus trees make great indoor plants for high light areas and are best sited in an eastern-facing window or a few feet away from a southern or western exposure.

Move over monstera, and make room for *Rhaphidophora tetrasperma*, commonly known as a mini monstera, mini split-leaf, or Ginny philodendron. While it bears a resemblance to both the *Monstera* and *Philodendron*, it belongs to neither genus; this is further confused by the common names associated with the plant. *Rhaphidophora* is easy to grow and has a fast growth rate when placed in good indirect light such as an eastern exposure. While the plant tolerates low light conditions, the foliage will fail to split when light levels are too low, and the leaves may scorch if light levels are too high. It is necessary to provide support for the vining stems, which can reach 12 feet in height.

Another colorful plant that grows best in good indirect light is *Croton variegatum* 'Picasso's Paintbrush'. It is a slow-growing croton with narrow, featherlike foliage in a mix of green, orange, red, and yellow. Like all crotons, the plants do not like to be moved once they are acclimated and will often shed leaves when moved. Crotons are susceptible to mite damage, so it is essential to regularly clean both sides of the foliage to prevent insect infestations.

The spider's web Fatsia (*Fatsia japonica* 'Spiders Web') is a handsome foliage plant with splashes of white dotting the broad, palmate leaves. Typically grown outdoors in zone 7 and above, the striking white and green variegated foliage will stand out on a patio or bright interior space.

An easy-to-grow plant requiring little maintenance, low light conditions, and infrequent watering is the ZZ plant (*Zamioculcus zamiifolia*). A new dwarf cultivar 'Zenzi', produces shiny, dark green succulent leaves and thick stems. This tough, compact plant is ideal for desks and side tables and prefers to be pot bound.

Take the time evaluate the growing conditions in your home and seek out a few of these exciting foliage plants that are being developed and are available at local garden centers and online.

Nancy Knauss

Master Gardner Coordinator

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## Don't Stop Beleaving!

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