

the GAZETTE

BIRCHWOOD GARDEN CLUB

www.birchwoodgardenclub.org

CHARTERED 1931

April Topic: All About Herbs

Submitted by Tamara Hall

The Birchwood Garden Club will hold its April 2018 meeting on Wednesday, April 4, at 7:00 p.m. in the Whatcom Museum of History and Art. The speaker for the evening will be Kristin Crouch who will present an overview on how to successfully cultivate herbs.

Herbs enhance the culinary experience but offer some landscaping challenges. Herbs can be invasive and eventually transition to woody stems, sometimes failing to thrive or produce seed heads. It is time for an herb orientation to help us solve these common problems.

A 25-year master gardener and sustainable gardening advocate, Kristin Crouch hosts *That Bloomin' Garden Show* and *The Delta Gardener*. She writes a column in the *Delta Optimist* newspaper, has articles in *Something Good* magazine, and has her own blog.

Kristin will present best principles and plant choices to make our herb gardens productive, controlled, and attractive. With her pointers, you will have an Herb Garden providing culinary treasures, sensory delight, and an orderly landscape experience.

Preparing for the Plant Sale

Submitted by Cheryl Haak

The Birchwood Garden Club Annual Plant Sale is coming very soon Saturday, May 5, 9:00 a.m. - noon, at the Bellingham Library Lower Conference Room. The community counts on our sale as a source of great plants that grow well in our area. So now is the time to start preparing your plants!

Start dividing and potting your plants. The more time plants have to acclimate, the better they are going to look for the sale. Place the pots in the best areas to insure they thrive. Try placing the newly transplanted plants in places where they are sure to get light and sun to give them a jump start.

We have found that medium size plants (1 - 2 gallon) and ground cover in 6 inch pots tend to sell best, probably because they are easier for customers to carry away and place in their own gardens.

Prepare labels. Your labels should include the name of the plant, sun or shade, wet or dry, size and color of flowers and/or fruit. Photos of the plant are

always very helpful. Blank white labels will be available at the April meeting.

Keep your plants well-watered, but stop watering (and put in a dry place) two days before the sale. Before you take the plants in, trim off any bad leaves and spent flowers.

Bring your plants to the Bellingham Library lower conference room on Friday, May 4 between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. for set up for the sale. If you are unable to deliver your plants on Friday, but would still like to donate a few for our sale, please contact Cheryl Haak at 360-671-2656 and we will pick them up for you!

Help with the sale. We count on our members to help with the sale -- setting up, helping customers choose their plants, processing sales, and serving as greeters at the door. Sign up at the April meeting or call Cheryl Haak at 360-671-2656 to volunteer to help. Remember that the plant sale is our major annual fund raising event and helps us support our service to the community!

Perennial Plant Award Winners

The Perennial Plant Association, an international professional group incorporated in 1983, has as its goal “to disseminate information of benefits to the public regarding the use and care of perennials.”

Each year, members of PPA from across North America vote on their favorite perennial. It doesn't have to be a new introduction, merely one deemed exceptional, somewhat adaptable, and readily available in commerce. There's no question that PPA award-winners are top garden performers.

2018 - Allium 'Millenium'

'Millenium' forms a compact, upright clump of glossy green, thick and strappy leaves which emit a slight smell of onion when crushed. In late July and August a profusion of large 2-inch, bright rosy purple, tightly rounded clusters of flowers appear on strong stems just above the attractive foliage.



Allium 'Millenium'

2017 – Asclepias tuberosa

A virtually hassle-free, very long lived perennial, offering three months of tangerine orange blooms (occasionally red or yellow) from early through late summer. Deadheading the flowers will stimulate another bloom cycle about a month after the first one. The flowers, which are heavily laden with nectar and

pollen, are particularly attractive to hummingbirds, Monarch



Asclepias tuberosa

butterflies, bees, and other beneficial insects.

2016 - Anemone 'Honorine Jobert'

'Honorine Jobert' produces single, 2-3” wide, pure white flowers



Anemone 'Honorine

with a cluster of bright yellow stamens in the center of each blossom. They are produced atop tall, wiry stems above an attractive clump of dark green foliage. It is a real standout in partial shade where it is happiest.

2015 – Geranium cantabrigiense 'Biokovo'

Prized for its vigorous groundcovering capabilities, 'Biokovo' will look good all season with little maintenance. In late spring, white flowers with pink sepals begin to appear and continue to bloom sporadically all



Geranium cantabrigiense 'Biokovo'

summer long. The fragrant, glossy green leaves take on reddish tints in fall.

Welcome New Member
James Butler

Plant of the Month: *Spiraea japonica* 'Walbuma'

Looking for an attractive, dwarf spirea? *Spiraea japonica* 'Walbuma' (Magic Carpet spirea) is just the thing for you. It features bright golden to lime green foliage with vibrant red leaf tips. Cluster of deep pink flowers add to the colorful display in the summer. In fall, russet red tones give a new touch of color that last all season long.

Magic Carpet spirea is a vibrant flowering deciduous shrub that originates from Japan and China. Hardy and easy to grow, it has a low, spreading habit and bears soft clusters of rich rose-pink flowers in mid to late summer. Spent flowers can be sheared off to extend flowering.

Magic Carpet spirea grows in a neat, low mounded form that is great for a foundation planting. It grows best in Full Sun to Light



Shade. It will grow 15-18" tall with a spread of 2-3'. Plant in zones 3 to 8.

This hardy, low maintenance shrub is drought tolerant. It has no major pest or disease problems

and is deer resistant. Butterflies flock to the summer-blooming flowers and birds love the seeds of the spent blooms in the fall.

To maintain its compact full shape, prune in early spring. Every 3 years it should be pruned hard to about 1 foot from the ground. Lightly shear after flowering in early summer to shape and stimulate more flowers.

Magic Carpet spirea is a delightful shrub to add to any landscape! Excellent for rock gardens or ground covers. Can be used in large containers.



Scallions and Shallots

If you like to eat and cook with onions and garlic, and aren't familiar with their close relatives, you should try shallots and scallions. They're easy to grow and both should be planted in spring. They grow most effectively and efficiently when sowed as "sets" or small plants.

Scallions are specialized onions whose bulb at the base is about the same size as the base of the leaves. The other onion relative, shallots, resembles a cross between an onion on the outside and garlic on the inside. Both scallions and shallots are milder than onions and garlic, with a flavor that comes out even more when they are cooked or roasted.

Scallions and shallots need a well-drained soil, and somewhat even moisture. Amend the soil with compost, and make sure the site is in full sun. As plants grow, hill up some soil around them to increase the blanched white portion at the base.

Dahlia Tuber Sale

The Whatcom County Dahila Society's tuber sale is scheduled for Saturday, April 7, 10:00 – 3:00 pm, at Blodel-Donovan Park in Bellingham. For more information go to whatcomcountydahliasociety.org/

Snacks - This month's meeting snacks will be provided by Corie Jensen and Patti Paul - Thank You

Meeting Minutes

March 7, 2018

Submitted by Cheryl Haak



President Ann Holland welcomed 52 members and one guest to the March 7th meeting. Minutes of the February meeting were approved. Jerry McLean gave the Treasurer's report.

Ann reminded everyone that our 26th annual plant sale (and only major fund raiser) will be held at the Bellingham Public Library on Saturday, May 5th from 9:00-noon. Volunteers are needed from 8:00 a.m. till noon that day and for set-up day, Friday, May 4th from 3:00 till 6:00 p.m. Please pot up your extra plants now so that they look good on the date of sale.

Cheryl Haak passed around the sign-up sheets for volunteers for the above dates. Please bring to the sale any box bottoms or trays you have for helping the public to carry out their purchases. Cheryl brought in 1 gallon-sized nursery pots (which seem to sell the best) and soil to share. Potting soil will be brought again to the April meeting so bring your buckets if you need some.

Labels are available for identifying your plants with the following information about the plants: Name, common and botanical is helpful; sun/shade; evergreen/deciduous; dry/wet; color of flowers; and height/width.

New Business: Nancy McMaster has decided on a day for our annual library flower bed cleaning. She will be passing around a volunteer sign-up sheet. The day will be Saturday, April 14th from 9:00 a.m. till noon. We will not be spreading compost this year, so mainly we will be weeding and pruning. This work party is a lot of fun and much appreciated by all who visit the Library.

Thank you to Judy Lewis and Candy Mathews for our snacks this evening. As always, thank you to Sheri and Russ Lambert for our great coffee which is always decaffeinated.

The Birchwood Garden Club (BGC) is open to everyone in Whatcom and Skagit Counties who supports the objectives of the organization. BGC meets the first Wednesday of each month from September thru May. Annual membership is \$10 for an individual, \$15 for a family, due in September. Membership applications are available from the website: www.birchwoodgardenclub.org.

The Birchwood Garden Club Gazette is published monthly, September thru May, by the BGC. Articles, inquiries, letters to the editor, or other comments should be directed to the Editors, Ken and Stephanie Salzman, at the above address or via e-mail to: sasalzman@comcast.net

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CURRENT OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

President - Ann Holland
President Elect - Patti Salotti
Treasurer - Jerry McLean
Secretary - Rhonda Rinn
Garden Tours – Sheri Lambert & Carol McBride
Historian – Violet Hayes
Hospitality – Carol McBride
Library/Museum Gardens – Nancy McMasters
Membership – Judy Lewis
Newsletter – Ken & Stephanie Salzman
Plant Sale – Cheryl Haak
Programs – Tamara Hall
Publicity – Susan Metcalfe
Silent Auction – Sandy Gurosko
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