



# The News Vine

## April 2024 Newsletter

Denise Bozeman, Corresponding Secretary



*Arrive by 9:15 for setup. Please wear your club name badge. Lunch will be after meeting.*

### SBGCA MEETING

10 AM – Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>

At Melbourne Public Library

540 E. Fee Avenue, Melbourne

**Program:** Medicinal Use of Herbs

**Presenter:** Joanna Helms, Mama Jo's Sunshine Herbals

**Hostesses:** All Club Members

### BOARD MEETING

1:00 PM – Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>

At the Home of Mary Deffebach

417 Sunset Blvd, Melbourne Beach

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Executive Committee and Chairs with new business are expected to attend, all members welcome.

RSVP to hostess if you are coming, and contact Jeri at 321.536.3183 or [jerironaldson@gmail.com](mailto:jerironaldson@gmail.com)

if you would like to be on the agenda.

*Please wear your name badge to our meetings.*

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

9:30 AM – Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>

At the Home of June Sims

1289 Stephanie Court

**Program:** Sea Beans and Driftseeds

**Presenter:** Ed Perry

**Hostesses:** \*Beth DeStefano, Beth Evander & Alice Williams

If you are unable to attend notify Angie at 321.917.6787 or [aleeney13@gmail.com](mailto:aleeney13@gmail.com)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello dear members.

Happy Spring! On behalf of our community, I'd like to express my heartfelt congratulations to all of you for donning your aprons and rolling up your sleeves and hosting a wildly successful pollinator fair.

It was a testament to the unwavering commitment, grit, and grace of our participating members. There was never any doubt that we would accomplish our mission, because this group of women can do anything beautifully!

Next, we will turn our attention to promoting our paver project in a new way. Our vision is to memorialize more veterans along the Lily Park path. Donna will lead this project so contact her if you would like to help visit VFW's. Donna and Casie have updated our website to include a QR code so that we can purchase our pavers online! Thank you, Ladies!!

Speaking of QR codes, we can also use the QR code to pay our dues online as well! Please, dear members, **make sure to remit your annual membership dues by the end of April!** Late dues are a huge inconvenience to the membership and treasury committee and are subject to additional fees.

The DOCK Garden needs your help. It remains an empty pallette just waiting for you to join in and help. We have raised beds that are ergonomically accessible, so if anyone is interested in helping, we would love to have you join us!

Please mark your calendar for the Garden Club by the Sea hosted SBGC meeting on **April 1st at 9:30 Fee Ave library**. Let's have a robust turnout!

Joan has been busy planning our **May 22nd luncheon**, which will be held at Dijon's Village Market. Save the date, and come see Alice present our wonderful, well deserving 2024 Scholarship recipient.

Finally, we are beginning to plan next year's events. If you have any suggestions for speakers/activities please contact me. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our Garden Club. May your Easter season be bright and happy. May the sunshine of spring and the Easter season warm your hearts every day.

With Smiles,  
Jeri Ronaldson

## APRIL IN THE SEASIDE GARDEN

By Jenifer Marx



Cake by Toronto Baker Julia Gallay

## What to Plant in April

**Flowers that tolerate full summer sun** include ageratum, amaranth, asters, vinca (or periwinkle), celosia, coleus, cosmos, dahlia, dahlberg daisy, lisianthus, blanket flower (*Gaillardia pulchella*), gazania, gerber daisy, kalanchoe, sunflowers, gomphrena, melampodium, lobelia, portulaca, blue salvia, red salvia, dusty miller, marigolds, and zinnias.

**Flowers for shady areas** include non-stop and tuberous begonias, caladium, coleus, firecracker flower (*Crossandra* spp.), impatiens, Euryops (bush daisy) and geraniums.

**Flower seeds to plant right away** include Celosia, Coleus, calliopsis, Crossandra, dusty miller, Exacum, Gaillardia, Gazania, holly- hock, Impatiens, Lobelia, Marguerite daisy, marigold, Nicotiana, ornamental pepper, Pentas, periwinkle, Phlox, Portulaca, Rudbeckia, Salvia, Streptocarpus, sweet William, Thunbergia alata, Torenia, Verbena and Zinnia.

**Bulbs and bulb-like plants** include Achimenes, African iris, agapanthus, Amazon lily, Aztec lily, tuberous Begonia, blood lily, Caladium, Canna, Crinum, Gladiolus, gloriosa lily, kaffir lily, shell ginger, society garlic, spider lily, tiger flower, walking iris and Watsonia.

Bulbs add vibrant color and attractive foliage to the garden setting. They are easily propagated by division, offsets, bulblets or cuttings, depending on the type of bulb. See: "Is this a bulb? The difference between bulbs, corms, rhizomes, and other bulb-like plants."

<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/is-this-a-bulb.html>

**Vegetables:** beans (bush & pole), Chinese cabbage, okra, collards, New Zealand summer spinach, peanuts, sweet corn, southern peas, sweet potatoes, squash, Swiss chard, calabaza, chayote, yard-long beans, jicama and other tropical crops. Start seed- grown okra, southern peas, and Swiss chard to plant in May.



Honeybee on Catmint | Photo Courtesy Yale School of the Environment

**Herbs:** basil, chives, garlic chives, dill, borage, pineapple sage, Mexican oregano, fennel, Mexican tarragon, oregano, mint, rosemary, sage, sweet marjoram and thyme.

**Fruits:** Plant watermelon, bananas and other tropical fruits such as guava, papaya and pineapple. Containerized fruit plants can be planted throughout the year.

**Trees and Shrubs** - Spring is a wonderful time to plant new trees and shrubs and the time when the greatest selection is available. See below for upcoming sales. However, delay planting balled and burlap-wrapped palms until summer rains begin. Keep the bud tied until it forces new growth. This keeps the young leaves from drying out until new roots are established

**Native Shrubs** – Add diversity to landscape with native shrubs that are attractive, wildlife-friendly and low maintenance. This UF/IFASA video showcase seven lesser known, native shrub alternatives that could be used in hedges and screening: horizontal cocoplum; Bahama wild coffee; golden creeper; fiddlewood; Spanish stopper; seven-year-apple and white indigoberry. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndY8KK7cXbl>



### What to Do in April

April is usually dry and windy so monitor the landscape for water distress. Fruiting trees need at least an inch of water weekly. However, citrus are sensitive to too much water, so water when soil feels dry.

Be vigilant. April is a buggy month so watch for spider mites, aphids, leafhoppers, and thrips. Examine your garden and landscaping on a regular basis to avoid major problems caused by drought, insects, or disease.

Spider mites, aphids, soft scales and other soft-bodied insects can be killed using a spray of 2-1/2 tablespoons each of baby shampoo and vegetable oil per gallon of water. Repeat in 5 days for mite control, as needed for other soft-bodied insects. Do not apply horticultural oil when temperature exceeds 90 degrees F.



Cottony Cushion Scale | Image Courtesy Matthew Orwat

Check weekly for powdery mildew (crape myrtles, roses), black spot and thrips on roses, spider mites on daylilies, chewing caterpillars on cannas and oleander and grasshoppers on lilies. Apply *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Dipel, Thuricide) to kill caterpillars if there are too many to pick off by hand. It won't affect most beneficial insects.

Think about creating low maintenance perennial beds, a butterfly area, or clustering herbs and flowering plants in pots, which can be moved to a location where there is shelter from the relentless summer sun.

Trim old flowers stalks from amaryllis, Amazon lilies and other spring flowering plants.

Root 4" to 6" long softwood cuttings for potting after about 6-8 weeks.

Add holiday poinsettias to the landscape and give them a spring trimming.

Apply a good layer of mulch to keep moisture in and weeds down but don't let mulch touch the trunk of trees. Ideal depth: 2 to 3-inches around trees and shrubs and 1-inch in flower beds. Do not mulch citrus.

Cut back spring-blooming shrubs soon after they bloom.



If you haven't already done so, finish spring feedings of fruit trees and foliage plants.

Feed crotons in April, June, and August.

Feed palms with a slow-release fertilizer as instructed on the label.

Apply magnesium sulfate (Epsom salts) to poinsettias, gardenias, fruits and palms showing yellowing deficiency symptoms on oldest leaves.

Feed vegetable plantings lightly every 3 to 4 weeks.

Apply wonder-worker Maxicrop on both sides of leaves of fruit trees and stressed, ailing plants. The best time to spray is late afternoon; second best is early morning.

Delay planting balled and burlap palms until the summer rains begin. Keep the bud tied until it forces new growth. This keeps the young leaves from drying out until new roots get established.

Remember that bats and other wildlife may be raising their young in palms or trees this month so hold off on pruning them.



Plumeria – A Great Passalong Plant

**Passalong Plants** are a Southern tradition and this is the time to divide bulbs, ornamental grasses and herbaceous perennials to share with friends. Examples of passalong plants:

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/passalong-plants.html>

## Native Plant of the Month – the Butterfly Orchid



One of the showiest native species, the Florida butterfly orchid (*Encyclia tampensis*) has small flowers colored yellow, copper, green, orange, or bronze. A cluster of these blooms looks like a flutter of tiny, colorful butterflies. It grows as an epiphyte in almost every county in the state. Notably, the orchids can withstand a freeze, making them popular on the northern edge of their range. Learn more about Florida's native orchids. <https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/floridas-native-orchids.html>

**Pollinator Weed of the Month** – Spanish needles (*Bidens alba*) aka Beggar's tickweed, is one of Central Florida's top pollinator plants. It is a native flowering annual in the *Asteraceae* (sunflower family) and a pollen and nectar source for many species of bees, wasps and butterflies. It is also a larval host for the dainty sulphur (*Nathalis iole*) butterfly. Spanish needles is the third largest source of pollen for Florida's honey industry.

Interestingly, the leaves of *Bidens* are quite nutrient dense and can be eaten raw, but taste better cooked. The blossoms can be used in salads and the dried leaves make a sleep-inducing tea. Both leaves and flowers are high in vitamin E. The plant grows around the world and in various cultures is used in folk medicine for its antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, liver-protective and blood-pressure lowering effects.

*Bidens* has an upright habit and grows to a height of three or four feet. It is very attractive plant for casual settings, especially toward the rear of wildflower gardens. Once you have *Bidens*, you will always have this plant. It can be quite weedy. The seeds have barbs which stick to clothing and pet fur. They grow abundantly at the side of roads and in sunny disturbed areas.



## Indefatigable Worker Bees

Did you know that it takes a dozen bees to gather enough nectar to make a single teaspoon of honey, each of them alighting on roughly 2600 flowers and flying 850 miles back and forth. A worker bee weighs little more than a breath – around 100 mg – but she can carry half her body weight in nectar.

### Visit Leu Gardens to see Alex Heveri's "Glass in Flight 2" through May 5th

Make plans to see this breathtaking collection of glass and steel larger-than-life sculptures of various insects and birds created by the talented artist Alex Heveri. This exquisite display captures the beauty and grace of the creatures' wings, with intricate designs. As the sunlight filters through the colored glass, it creates the illusion of lifelike movement. We invite you to visit this exhibit today and experience the perfect illustration of where art and nature meet. Don't miss out on this seeing this beautiful exhibit, included with general admission. <https://www.leugardens.org>

### A Green Thought

How fair is a garden amid the trials and passions of existence.

By Benjamin Disraeli, British statesman and writer

### Blooming Cakes

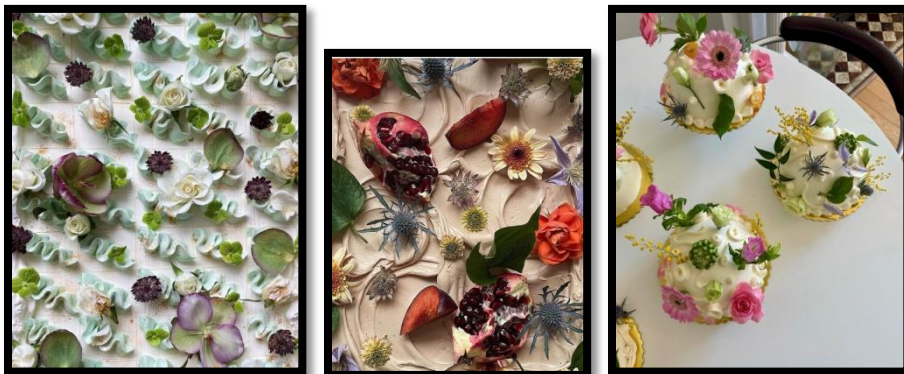
Sheet cakes, some as long as seven feet, and decorated with all manner of flowers and fruits are having a moment. Toronto baker Julia Gallay, known as GALLZ, was recently featured in an extensive New York Times article. Learn more about this young baker and her blossoming cake business. Maybe you'll be inspired to make a more modest sheet cake celebrating Springtime and decorated with treasures from your garden.

[https://www.blogto.com/eat\\_drink/2021/01/toronto-woman-launches-cake-business-after-losing-job-due-pandemic/](https://www.blogto.com/eat_drink/2021/01/toronto-woman-launches-cake-business-after-losing-job-due-pandemic/)

Happy gardening and happy baking!



Seven-Foot-Long Cake by GALLZ



Cakes by GALLZ



# SERENE HARBOR FLORAL ASSIGNMENT

Linda Paige & Jenifer Marx

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Serene Harbor is in great need of pantry items such as children's snacks. Please feel it in your heart to bring a donation to the next meeting. Thank you for caring!

# GARDEN OF THE MONTH AWARD

By Cathy Berkman & Mariane Brillante

The April Indialantic Garden club by the Sea award goes to Denise Halkias of 320 Orlando Blvd. The historic home was built in 1926, and Denise has lived there for 34 years. She is an Interior Designer and has done many renovations inside and out while keeping the authenticity of the home. The beautiful landscape includes: triangle palms, bougainvillea, passion vines, many staghorn ferns in the oaks, and so much more. Her sweet sheltie Sophia was seen taking a nap in the garden on a lovely afternoon.

