



Quail's Tales

www.HillandDalegc.org

Hill and Dale is a member of Michigan Garden Clubs and National Garden Clubs

March 2009

President's preface

As we venture into 2009, I am excited that spring is just around the corner. We've obviously had a "real" Michigan winter this year. I am looking forward to the trees budding, the birds chirping, and the grass turning green.

On May 16 the annual fund raiser will consist of member-grown perennials. Mar Sclaw y and Kathy Heckman request that members put their plants in pots and provide a name with some information about the plant (sun, shade, color, etc).

Soon a nominating committee may be calling you. Consider now what position you would like to fill. Answer that phone!!

Plans are underway for the 50th year celebration which will be held June 11. More to follow .

Taylor Garden Club is hosting "Growing Great Gardens" on March 21 from 8 am to 4 pm. Cost is \$20. More information under Coming Up. --Peggy Dapkus

March 12 meeting

Japan—land of Ikebana, bonsai, and other exotic plant forms. Mar Sclaw y took advantage of a November trip to Japan and a whole lot of digital camera memory to record Japanese flora from lush acres to discreet pots in five different areas around the country. After ruthlessly trimming her 1,000+ photos to a manageable number, she'll present Japanese flora and design with the able assistance of the club's new LCD projector. Meeting starts at 7 with refreshments, followed by the presentation around 7:15.

Hospitality...

...for the March meeting will be provided by Gretchen , Lisa and Eleanore



Winnie

Kathleen



Lori

new members pinned

February 12 meeting minutes

Garden Therapy: Angela Paul requested help with the Harrison High School classroom.

Junior Gardeners: Nancy Adams will teach the children to grow a carrot top.

Plant sale: The plant sale will be held May 16. When you pot up your plants, please include information on growing conditions. Also inform Mar Sclawy or Kathy Heckman in advance of the number and kind of plants you will be bringing in.

New business: Mar Sclawy made a motion that we purchase an LCD projector. It was seconded by Chris Sechler and the motion passed. The price is not to exceed \$900. David Henry and Sally Ouellette will research and buy the projector.

Meeting closed at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Chris Sechler, secretary

District 1 spring meeting

Aptly titled *Showers and Flowers* is the topic for the District 1 spring meeting. It's set for April 28 at the Italian American Banquet Center, 39200 Five Mile Road, Livonia. Tickets are \$22 and must be ordered and paid for by April 13 through Hill and Dale treasurer, Carol Smith.

Morning speaker is Margaret Converse, speaking on Wildflowers of Michigan. Afternoon speaker on floral design is Sherry L. Sanelli. As always, MGC Marketplace will be selling almost everything you and your garden could want, and independent vendors will also have booths.

Farmington Hills plans Earth Day event, seeks volunteers

City of Farmington Hills' environmental coordinator Tracy Slintak is seeking volunteers to give a 20 minute talk on starting a garden at the city's Earth Day celebration on April 18. The talk should be geared toward beginning gardeners. City naturalist, Joe Derek, will give a separate talk on container gardening. Tracy also hopes for volunteers to create a display on gardening and the Master Gardener program. City staff can assist in creating and printing the display, and handout material can be gotten from the extension office. The program will run from noon till 3 pm at Heritage Park Nature Discovery Center. For more information, contact Tracy at 248.871.2555 or <mailto:tslintak@fhgov.com>.

It's time...

...to be thinking about your spring garden and what it holds that can be potted up and sold at the club's perennial plant sale May 16 at Heritage Park. As Peggy notes in her President's Preface, we'd like advance notice of what you think you'll be sharing at the sale. Last year we had great success with preparing a list of plants for sale, identifying them by name, color, sun/shade, bloom time and more. When the buyers checked out, we also checked the kinds of plants they'd brought, a handy chart of information to help put those plants in the right spot in the home garden.

Last year we also sold a few house plants and unusual annuals grown from seed. Please don't limit your enthusiasm—or green thumbs—to perennials if you have something else that gardeners might find attractive for their homes. We'll be passing a sign up sheet for members to volunteer for plant organization and pricing on May 15 and the sale on May 16. And of course there will be food.

--Kathy Heckman and Mar Sclawy

Coming up

March 15--The Detroit Garden Center, a nonprofit gardening educational organization, will hold its Annual Program, Meeting and Luncheon at the Belle Isle Nature Zoo. Luncheon, meeting and program, 12:30 - 3 p.m., \$25; program only, 2-3 pm, \$5. Brenda Dziedzic, cofounder and president of the Southeast Michigan Butterfly Association will present "Butterfly Gardening in Southeast Michigan". Call to reserve a space at 313-259-6363, or email <mailto:detroitgardenctr@yahoo.com>.

March 18--"Owl Hoot" beginning at 8 pm at Tenhave Woods Park in Royal Oak, Meet at Lexington/Marais lot to attempt to lure in or have screech and great horned owls answer tape recordings of their calls. All Nature Walks and Speaker Programs are free and open to everyone.

Pre-registration is not required. For more information: call 248.246.3380, e-mail <mailto:naturesociety@ci.royal-oak-mi.us> or see www.ci.royal-oak-mi.us/nature.

March 20--"Beginning of Spring Nature Walk" 2:00 pm at Tenhave Woods, Royal Oak. Park at Lexington/Marais lot and meet at Lexington entrance.

March 21—"Growing Great Gardens," 8 am to 4 pm at the Wayne County Community College campus, 21000 Northline Road, Taylor. A joint presentation of Taylor Garden Club, Taylor Conservatory Foundation and Wayne County Community College, the day includes keynote speakers Janet Macunovich and Amanda Edmonds and other passionate gardening experts. Both keynote speeches, two workshops and a box lunch are **included** in the \$20 admission. Advance registration closed March 7, but see the registration form at www.taylorconservatory.org for possible late registration.

March 28—"Using Decay to Enhance Soil Fertility—The Basics of Composting" presented by the MSU Extension-Oakland County Master Gardener Volunteer Program Class will be held at Oakland County Executive office conference center, 2100 Pontiac Lake Rd, Waterford, 9 am to noon. Cost is \$20 per person and advance registration is required by March 18. Brochure with registration form is available at www.msue.msu.edu/oakland Call 248.858.0887 or email smithlin@oakgov.com

March 28—Yule Love It Lavender Farm's owner, Iris Lee Underwood, demonstrates how to infuse lavender in honey and maple syrup, how to make lavender body powder and use dried lavender stems and buds for a medicinal breathing treatment. Event runs from 10 am to noon. Make your \$25 reservation by March 18 by calling 248.628.7814 or email iris@irislee.org. All events held at Yule Love It Lavender Farm: 960 Yule Road,

*note from sally check out our April meeting and it won't cost you \$25

April 13—Deadline for registering for "Showers and Flowers," District 1's spring meeting. See details above.

June 13--19th Annual Ann Arbor Garden Walk. . Admission is \$12.



I'm Overlooking....

Oxalis regnellii or shamrock plant is one of the easiest houseplants to grow, producing white or soft pink flowers continuously except for a brief break in the winter. They do not require a dormancy period as some tubers do, but if they get too dry, the leaves can be cut off and it will come back. One can also separate the tubers and start new plants.

Oxalis, sold in great quantities for St. Patrick's day is not really a clover at all, but sold for its look-alike qualities. They need filtered sun indoors year round. Good light intensifies the colors on the burgundy and variegated forms. They like to be cool ~ too much heat and humidity makes the leaves collapse.

These plants are in a huge genus belonging to the wood sorrel or Oxalidaceae family. Some members of the family are considered troublesome weeds, but the kind bought at St. Patty's Day are a welcome addition to your indoor garden.

Happy St. Patrick's Day~!!!

Lisa :)



sweet potato vine

next months garden therapy project





Critter spotting

I was watching a charming critter on public tv the other day: the marmot. What a cutie. And the background announcer was explaining all the useful things that marmots provide to the environment. It made me wish we had a critter like that around here.

But...wait a sec. Look at that profile, that stubby little tail. That marmot looks a lot like...a groundhog. And indeed, that's how the show wound up: announcing that the British marmot is nothing but a groundhog in the US.

Then a friend at work told me that she's learned of the benefits of coyotes on public access tv for her hometown, just one town over from me. The local naturalist explained that coyotes love goose eggs. Definitely score one for the coyotes. They also prey on lots of small critters, like squirrels and chipmunks, the deal breaker being that dogs and cats are on their preferred list as well. Just the small pets, he emphasized. So while your pet shitzu may be at risk; the Irish wolfhound can definitely hold its own again any coyotes, or wolves for that matter, that might be in the 'hood.

Westminster Kennel Club's dog show was this past month (as was the dog show in Detroit). I will never be able to figure out how a judge can pick the best of class from, say, 15 hounds that vary in size and shape from a dachshund to a wolfhound. After what seems to me to be years of appallingly small pooches picking off the various best of class competitions, this year's hound class was won by a Scottish deerhound, with an Irish wolfhound as runner up. Come to think of it, the judge herself was of a generous size. Definitely something to look for in future kennel club contests. **

I've had a soft spot for wolfhounds for years. I spent a mountain vacation with two women, 10 cats and two Irish wolfhounds a lot of years back. They lived in a series of old trolley cars that had been welded together and (thankfully) plumbed. Each cat had its own place to eat, lest they scrap. There were cat dishes up high and down low, next to the fridge, under the table, and (painfully) on the counters. Can't recall what the wolfhounds ate, likely, whatever they wanted.

Still I've never seen two sweeter dogs, always a good trait in really big dogs. Big, shaggy and quiet, one took my forearm in her mouth, my hand hanging out one side of her mouth and my elbow barely peeking out the other side. Sweet means a whole lot more when an entire appendage is at risk. I have no idea why she thought that was a good idea. I was a lot bonier then, so maybe it was the lack of meat on that ulna that made her pause and then let go. I like to think it was because, as a gentle giant, she knew she could finish me off quicker than a wolf—no challenge at all.

--Mar Sclawy © 2009

** Sally says the Brussels Griffon that won the toy group (looks just like Ruffy) should have won BIS



