



# The Magnolia

## April Newsletter 2017

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**Gardeners' Guild of Braintree**

<http://www.gardenersguildofbraintree.com/>

**Contact:**

Regina Zahran  
Corresponding Secretary  
[rmzahran@yahoo.com](mailto:rmzahran@yahoo.com)

If you have events, news, stories or photos to share, please send them to [rmzahran@yahoo.com](mailto:rmzahran@yahoo.com).

Deadline for the next e-newsletter is April 21, 2017.

### MEETING DETAILS

**Program:** *"On Your Mark, Get Set ... Grow!"*

**Guest Speaker: Melissa Pace**

Starting a new garden, no matter if it is your first or not, can be overwhelming. Many of the ideas we discuss will be applicable to rehabbing established gardens as well – This talk will help you develop a step-by-step plan for your new endeavor. Learn about the incredible benefits of having your soil tested and how to do that, gain ideas on reducing common problems from ever appearing in your garden, and making a plan to reduce the future work your garden will need.

Each member will receive a personal worksheet full of prompts and design tools to assist them in developing the perfect garden plan. Melissa Pace is an award winning horticulturalist that competes in numerous garden and flower shows. She has been a URI Master Gardener since 2003. This presentation is open to the public with a suggested donation to the Gardeners Guild of Braintree of \$1.00.

**Date:** April 3, 2017

**Time:** 7:00 pm Gardener's Guild Business  
7:30 pm Program

**Place:** Masonic Temple  
403 Washington Street  
Braintree, MA 02184

**Membership and Remembrance Hostesses:**  
Gail Burns and Sue Ghiloni

**Hospitality Hostesses:** Etta Forti and Carmela Varraso

**Bakers:** Donna Bertoni, Barbara Cooper, Marie Welch, Erin Wilson, Sandra Young

**Invocation:** Santina Giannino

**Hospitality Chair:** Sarah Sciascia and Patty Jenkins

## GGB MEETING DATES

Meetings are held the first Monday of the month ~ October through May

### 2016

**October 3** *Just Cook (Cooking from the Garden)*

**November 7** *Herb Gardening through a Sustainable Lens*

**November 28** *Christmas Greens Workshop*

**December 4** *Boutique and Holiday House Tour*

1 Marinelli Court



### 2017

**January 9** *Potluck and Brown Bag Grab Auction at the Bean Museum*

**February 6** *Workshop: Sustainable Gardening and Growing your own Micro-garden*

**March 6** *Botany for Gardeners*

**April 3** *Getting Started - Getting your Garden Ready for Spring*

**May 1** *Annual Spring Banquet*

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hi Everyone:

**REMINDER:** We will be holding our elections and allocations vote at the April meeting, please do your best to attend. Also, remember to bring your checkbooks and sign up for the banquet scheduled for Monday, May 1, at Alma Nove in Hingham. The price of the banquet this year is \$45 (see page 12 for more information).

### Guild Business:

As mentioned above, we will be holding votes for our officers for the 2017–18 season and allocations. I would ask that you please try to attend the April meeting to vote on these important issues.

Also included are: (1) Committee Description information sheet regarding the various Committees and (2) a Committee Selection sheet. It would be most helpful if you could make your Committee selections and bring this sheet with you to the April meeting. This is most important if you are signing up for Community Beautification. If you can get your sheets to Rochelle Moore by the April meeting this would be greatly appreciated. Last piece of business, in accordance with our By-laws, all membership dues are due by **June 1, 2017 at the latest**. Please submit your dues to Carole Wilson or send your dues to her home, 333 Tremont Street. Please do not hand over a check to “someone” you think is responsible for it. The only person that should receive the “dues” checks is Carole. The same applies for the Committee Selection sheets, please be sure to get them to Rochelle. Lastly, a reminder to all Committee Chairpersons that their “End of the Year Reports” are due – in triplicate – at the next Executive Board meeting. If any Chairperson is unable to make the next Executive Board meeting, please do your best to get them to me as soon as possible. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to call or e-mail me.

Thanks everyone and see you at the April meeting. Bring your friends!!!! We had several popular meetings this season; thank you to all who brought along a friend. We are also going to have a Plant Sale in mid-June, stay tuned for more information. Also, a big “thank you” to our Publicity Committee for doing such a great job in getting the word out!

And, again, as always, my message is that this is your garden club. If you have an idea or suggestion, a critique or complaint, please contact me or any board member. You have a voice and we are listening.

Best,

Joan

[jhutchon@yahoo.com](mailto:jhutchon@yahoo.com) / 781-843-0084



## COMMITTEE UPDATES

### Publicity

Press releases were sent to the regular media outlets regarding the February meeting: Braintree Forum, Patriot Ledger, Braintree Advertiser, Braintree Patch.

*Publicity Co-Chairs: Steph McLaughlin and Tina O'Brien*

## TREASURER'S NOTE

Dear GGB members,

Hard to believe but our 2016/2017 Gardeners Guild year is coming to an end on April 30, 2017. With our new year set to start on May 1, 2017, I would like to put out the first reminder that your Annual Dues for the new year 2017/2018 are due before June 1st. Along with your \$30.00, Annual Dues, please include your committee choices for next year. In order to get our next membership book printed on time, with as little stress as possible, it would be fabulous if you could get those dues and committee choices in before June 1st. I am happy to start receiving your next year's dues and Committee Choices at any time. The Committee Choices document will be attached as a separate document. If you are paying by check, please make your checks payable to: Gardeners Guild of Braintree. You can give them to me directly at our next meeting on April 3, 2017 or mail them to me at:

Carole Wilson  
333 Tremont St  
Braintree, MA. 02184

Thank you very much and I hope to see you all back next year.

Carole Wilson, Treasurer

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Please do your best to attend the April meeting. The Membership will be voting on its Slate of Officers nominated for the 2017 - 2018 year. The Nominees are as follows:

President:	Rochelle Moore
1st Vice President:	Gail Rotondi
2nd Vice President:	Vacant
Treasurer:	Carole Wilson
Recording Secretary:	Phyllis Field
Corresponding Secretary:	Regina Zahran

Thank you,

Nominating Committee: Barbara Black, Chair, Lynda Mitchell, Barbara Sullivan, Sarah Sciascia and Maggi Johnson

## NEW GARDENERS GUILD OF BRAINTREE MEMBER

Our members are brought together by a love of gardening, an interest in the purpose of the club and a willingness to share in the club's activities and responsibilities. We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest member:

- Nancy Neary

## BIRTHDAY WISHES

A very "Happy Birthday" to our members who have special days in **April**:



Lucile Barton  
Mary Fitzgerald  
Etta Forti  
Patty Jenkins  
Gail Ritz  
Sarah Sciascia  
Catherine Toohey

## QUOTE

I like gardening — it's a place where I find myself when I need to lose myself.

— Alice Sebold

## PLANT THERAPY

### News from Plant Therapy

Carolyn Mahoney, Plant Therapy Chairperson, will feature interesting horticultural therapy and therapeutic horticulture articles in our monthly member newsletters. If you are interested in joining the Plant Therapy Committee, please contact Carolyn at [carolynmahoney@beld.net](mailto:carolynmahoney@beld.net).

## FEATURED TOPIC: ESSENTIAL OIL DIFFUSERS

### 10 Reasons Every Home Should Have An Essential Oil Diffuser

If you're no stranger to natural living, you've probably already read a recommendation or two about using essential oil diffusers to improve your health, increase your energy, or to help you sleep better. The fact is, these handy little devices are great for all of those things and more. While the list of possible uses for a diffuser is quite extensive, we've narrowed it down to (what we consider to be) the top 10 reasons to own an essential oil diffuser and use it every day.

#### 1. Relaxation and Sleep

One of the best and most well-known uses for essential oils is their ability to help you unwind at the end of a hard day. While there are several other methods for getting your soothing oils from the bottle into your blood stream where they start to work their magic, the diffuser is by far the easiest and longest-lasting of them all. Keep one at the office to help you relax on your lunch break. Have a diffuser ready to go with the push of a button when you get home from work in the evening. Set one on the bedside table to help your mind and body relax so you can sleep better at night.

**Recommended oils:** chamomile, lavender, clary sage

*Get more expert tips on how to catch some high-quality zzz's (from a former insomniac) with these [11 Natural Sleep Remedies That Really Work!](#)*

#### 2. Mood Elevating

Just as a diffuser can help you to de-stress, they can also be used to create an energizing mood. This is not only great for when you're feeling sad or depressed. You can use your diffuser to inspire high spirits during the holidays, to set a positive atmosphere for business meetings and social gatherings, to help you get moving on a slow morning, or even to create a romantic atmosphere for that special someone in your life.

**Recommended oils:** sweet orange, jasmine, rose, scotch pine, sandalwood, vanilla

### 3. Ward Off Illness

Using a diffuser in your home or office is a great way to keep cold, flu, and other nasty illnesses at bay that works on three levels. First, many essential oils are powerfully anti-microbial and when introduced into the air in vapor form, the organic compounds within the oils come into direct contact with airborne pathogens before they can invade your body. Second, essential oils can also be used to boost the immune system. Last but not least, some diffusers also double as humidifiers which will help to keep your airways moist and healthy so you are less susceptible to any microbes that do make it into your body.

**Recommended oils:** tea tree, sage, rosemary, grapefruit, lemon, thyme

### 4. Helps You Breathe Easier

Essential oils are great for reducing inflammation and congestion in clogged airways to help you breathe more easily. If you are prone to allergies or other breathing disorders, try diffusing essential oils in the room (or rooms) of your home where you spend the most time. Just remember to keep a box of tissues handy as your nose and sinuses begin to open so you can also avoid that mad dash to the bathroom!

**Recommended oils:** [peppermint](#), rosemary, lemon, eucalyptus

*Want more tips on how to naturally improve air quality so you can breathe better and be healthier? Our wildly popular [10 Reasons To Have A Himalayan Pink Salt Lamp In Every Room Of Your Home](#) is an absolute must-read!*

### 5. Pain Relief

While most people will tell you to apply essential oils directly to the body for pain relief, you can also use a diffuser to extend their effects. This method is an excellent way to combat persistent pain such as that caused by headaches, sore joints, and overworked muscles.

**Recommended oils:** ginger, chamomile, lavender, eucalyptus, clary sage, rosemary, bergamot

*Also, be sure to check out these [14 Effective Natural Remedies To Relieve Joint Pain](#) to learn more about using natural home-remedies in lieu of chemical-laden pain meds!*

### 6. Improve Cognitive Function

Using essential oils in a diffuser is a highly-effective way to super-charge your brain cells. Again, this effect works on multiple levels. First, many essential oils have [adaptogenic](#) qualities – meaning that they are soothing when you're stressed, but they can also give you a pick-me-up when you're feeling down or sluggish. By leveling out your mood, the oils in the air will help you to focus. Also, there are several essential oils which are known for their powerful ability to balance the body's hormones. With regular use, these oils can actually help to heal the underlying causes responsible for hampering cognitive function.

**Recommended oils:** peppermint, eucalyptus, lemon, pine

*(Further Reading: [9 Essential Oils For Hormonal Imbalance & How To Use Them](#))*

### 7. Safer Alternative to Candles & Incense

If you have pets or small children, burning candles or incense can be a potentially hazardous practice. With an essential oil diffuser, you can reap the benefits of aromatherapy – and to a much greater effect – without the risk of burns, wax spills, or other accidents.

**Recommended oils:** any

### 8. Repel Insects

Whether your problem is mosquitoes, house flies, fruit flies or moths, you can use essential oils in your diffuser to

deter these critters from entering your home.

**Recommended oils:** clove, lemongrass, rosemary, cedarwood

*Arm yourself against the swarms of creepy crawlies this spring and summer with these [6 Fragrant Herbs & Plants That Repel Flies](#) and [13 Natural Ways To Keep Mo Away!](#)*

## 9. Keeps You Cool

(While it might make you appear more eco-savvy to your friends and family, that's not the kind of 'cool' we're referring to.)

In the heat of the summer months, running the air conditioner all day and all night is a surefire way to send your electric bill through the roof. Instead, try diffusing your favorite crisp, cooling minty essential oils in the rooms where you spend the most time to help you beat the heat.

**Recommended oils:** peppermint, eucalyptus, spearmint, wintergreen

## 10. Saves Money

So far we've covered the top nine reasons that owning a diffuser is an investment in your health and well-being, but it's more than just that. With all of the versatile uses for essential oil diffusers around the home which ultimately lead to less doctor visits, lower electric bills, fewer cups of coffee and better productivity; you will soon discover that this handy little device is a money-saver as well!

**Recommended oils:** all

## GGB PLANT SALE: MID-JUNE

Heads Up! Upcoming Fundraiser in June: PLANT SALE

Just a heads up that the Gardener's Guild will be holding a plant sale sometime during mid-June. All members are asked to participate in this plant sale by donating 3 potted plants each. These plants can be plants started from seed, plants from your garden, or potted plants purchased from the store.

In addition to selling plants, we plan to have a "Hidden Treasure" table so please look for all of those wonderful items you might have hiding in your shed, garage, and attic that you have been saving but no longer use. There is someone out there that would love to have some of these things and would make good use of them. It might be an old garden ornament, urn, a former dish garden container, an old wire egg basket, a small wooden box, tea pot or kettle, even an pair of old rubber boots that some fern or succulent would love to live in. Be creative and make someone happy with your treasure. It's a win-win for everyone!

The planning for this fundraiser is at the very beginning stages. There will be a more detailed discussion held at the April meeting.

## MULCH FAQs

### Q. What is the purpose of using mulch in the garden?

A. Mulch (such as bucketful, above, about to be spread) serves several purposes. It will not just suppress weeds and slow moisture evaporation, but should also break down into the underlying soil gradually and thereby improve the soil's texture. A layer of mulch helps moderate soil temperatures. Mulch serves as a buffer from soil compaction caused by rain, and helps prevent the crusting-over of bare soil that can sometimes prevent moisture from being absorbed.

### Q. What makes good mulch?

A. This can be very confusing, particularly because what's sold as "mulch" in many cases isn't really very suitable for

performing the full range of duties that I think mulch should accomplish (above). Briefly, I look for a material that is:

- An organic substance (meaning deriving from some living or formerly living matter);
- Fine- to medium-textured so it will break down into the underlying soil...
- ...but substantial enough to stay put;
- Preferably aged before I use it;
- Dark in color, like soil is (if for the ornamental beds);
- Available locally at a good price, preferably in bulk delivery unbagged;
- Not a source of contaminants, pests or diseases.



To elaborate: Any mulch I use in my ornamental beds must be fine-to-medium textured and dark colored so it looks good. Forget anything that's going to sit there and never break down, like big hunks of bark (which I call "baked potato mulch" because they look like giant spuds sitting on the ground to me), or anything that's bright orange. I am completely opposed to dyed mulches.

One caveat: Very fine-textured materials like sawdust do not make good mulch as they cake and fail to decompose.

Why use a product that has been aged or composted before you use it as mulch? That extra step really makes a difference in the mulch being ready to do its job as a soil-improver. Wood products in particular may also rob soil Nitrogen while decomposing, unless composted first (before they're spread as mulch).

I used to use bagged mulches, including cocoa hulls and various bark products. I have since switched to local materials I can have delivered in bulk, sans plastic bags (and minus all the fuel used in processing and trucking of bagged stuff across the nation to my local garden center). Environmentally, it's important to buy locally when you can, especially with bulky items.

Technically, plants can serve as a sort of living mulch as well; that's why certain ones are termed groundcovers.

### **Q. What do you use for mulch in your garden?**

**A.** On my ornamental beds, I use a composted stable bedding product – a local agricultural byproduct from horse or dairy farms that has been allowed to age first. It's simply wood shavings (not too fine, not too coarse, as you can see in top photo) that farmers spread on the floors of animal stalls to absorb manure and urine, and then muck out and compost afterward to recycle it. I expect you can find a local source via your county cooperative extension office; this website give a sense of the kind of product I am talking about, though I buy from a local farmer.

Leaf mold (partially rotted and shredded leaves) would also be great, if your local landfill offers it, or start a leaves-only compost pile in fall and pre-shred it like this.

In my vegetable garden, I use straw (which is of course not dark-colored), preferably chopped. In rough areas such as along the roadside outside my fence, I will use wood chips from the power or phone company, or from a fallen tree. I will also use wood chips or bark chips on utility-area pathways (behind sheds, between vegetable rows). I pile up wood chips and let them age before using them.

For more details about pros and cons of different mulches, try this fact sheet from Cornell Extension.

### **Q. When do I apply it, and how much should I use?**

**A.** I mulch my perennial and shrub beds in spring, but not until after the soil has a chance to warm and dry a bit. I also am conscious of areas where I want biennials and other self-sown plants to have a chance to do their thing; mulching these too soon may prevent successful reseeding.

You want a 2- or 3-inch layer, generally speaking, and if you use the right stuff, about half of that will work into

the underlying soil before you go to replenish in fall or the next spring.

Keep the mulch a couple of inches away from trunks of trees and shrubs; never pile it up, volcano-like, against them, as that can invite pests and diseases.

Anytime I work in an area and disturb the mulch, I add a bit more rather than leave bare spots. I apply mulch to new beds whenever I plant.

Mulch is sometimes also used in winter in cold zones to help keep newly planted things in the ground, or to shield tender plants from damage (such as the graft union on roses). For that purpose, materials like evergreen boughs (which would not normally be good for mulch) may also be used.

**Q. Do I have to move the mulch before adding compost and fertilizer?**

**A.** If you use a mulch that has the correct texture and has been composted first, this should not be a problem. I simply “top-dress” (spread compost and all-natural organic fertilizer right on top of last year’s partly decomposed mulch) then replenish the mulch as needed.

The problem with most mulches, even bagged shredded bark, is that they haven’t been composted before they are sold and/or are too coarse, so they don’t break down very well, but rather form a sort of coating on top of the soil.

Good mulch, on the other hand, breaks down and improves the soil below. I don’t mean it breaks down in a week or a month, but over the course of a season or two.

If you have a thick layer of mulch that’s not breaking down nicely, and the layer is just getting thicker and thicker each year, rake some away and then add your amendments and start using a new, better-quality mulch this year on top of that.

**Q. Are cocoa hulls good for mulching?**

**A.** I used to use bagged mulches, including cocoa hulls, many years ago. I have since switched to local materials I can have delivered in bulk, minus the plastic bags. There is no cocoa-processing plant nearby and hence no local source of this recycled product.

Cocoa hulls can be very high in potassium, which can be a problem for some plants in some soils, and they may be toxic to pets (particularly dogs) if they are swallowed. So those factors added to the “buy local” environmental argument put them on my “no” list today.

Additionally, cocoa hulls are hard to spread and either blow away or clump together if the bag got wet (sometimes they can be moldy in damp weather, too). However, they have many of the qualities I want in a mulch: They are dark in color and fine textured and look good on the beds.

**Q. Can I use mulch made from recycled tires?**

**A.** To me this seems a real environmental no-no – yet another wacky thing that is being tried out on us unsuspecting consumers. Yes, it’s re-using worn tires...but putting them into the landscape, and nature, in shreds is as bad or worse as piling them up at the dump whole. They don’t break down and become incorporated into the soil, so they’re no good, and even dangerous. Remember that animals and much smaller living organisms interact with and inhabit the soil – I don’t think a worm wants to process tire shreds while making worm castings, or a robin wants to rustle around in the tire litter (though they love the leaf litter!).

My rule: To be a mulch, it must be organic (a living/formerly living material) so it can decompose over time and return to the soil, not taint it. The one exception to my mind re: the organic rule would be some stone materials used in certain zones and certain types of landscapes.

**Q. Is black plastic or landscape fabric a good mulch?**

**A.** Black plastic can be used to heat up an area (such as for sweet potatoes or pumpkins) but should not be left in place as it prevents moisture from entering the soil and otherwise interferes with soil health. Roll or fold it and reuse the

plastic year after year.

Landscape fabric, or so-called geotextiles, are not a substitute for mulch. They should not be used in garden beds, though they may have a role as a weed-block beneath gravel of pathways or patios, for instance.

**Q. What about Ruth Stout’s mulch methods?**

**A.** Long before phrases like “lasagna garden” were making the rounds of the as-yet-uninvented internet, Ruth Stout (author of “Gardening Without Work,” 1961) was layering all her organic materials on top of her soil—sheet composting, as it might be traditionally called. Her tactic served to thwart weeds, reduce the need for fertilizers, conserve moisture and spare her the work of composting in a conventional heap with all the toting and turning of materials.

Her approach to gardening starts with the foundational principle of applying mulch, mulch and more mulch, and then simply moving it back a tiny bit each year a bit to make room for a row of seeds rather than all that turning and tilling (and weeding).

She said the “aha” came one spring when the plow man hadn’t come yet to till, and she was eager to get planting. She saw that the asparagus (a long-lived perennial vegetable crop) was already up and growing, right through the layers of fallen leaves and such. “I walked over and said to the asparagus, ‘We don’t have to plow for you; why do we have to plow for the other vegetables?’” Stout recalls. “And the asparagus said, “You don’t.””

Where do you get all that mulch? The garden creates it, or at least some of the raw material that becomes it: spent cornstalks and uprooted pea vines and the like, to which Stout added fall leaves and also bought-in straw or hay (“spoiled” hay was fine, and cheaper; don’t worry about a little decay, she said).

**Q. Do you mulch your pots and other containers?**

**A.** I do apply mulch to the soil surface in my containers, to help keep roots cool and keep moisture in. Depending on the plant, I may use composted stable bedding or a small stone (pea stone).

**EARLY AND MID-APRIL GARDENING CHORES FOR THE WEEKEND**

By David Epstein

The second week of April brings about the opportunity to do a lot of yard work if you live in an area where the snow is gone. This time of year there is no shortage of chores, but with limited time, there are certain tasks more critical than others.

There are all sorts of opinions on some of these things and you can likely find someone who might give you a different answer, but these are my top recommendations for early April.

**Lawns**

The grass is beginning to green up and you can help this process by adding some fertilizer and lime to your yard. The best way to know what your lawn needs is to get a soil test. These are easily obtained from the University of Massachusetts. You learn more about the process at <http://soiltest.umass.edu/>

Since I know most of you won’t get a soil test, I do recommend a slow release organic fertilizer this time of the year along with lime and corn gluten for crabgrass prevention. The corn gluten has nitrogen in it, so if your lawn is very healthy you can forgo the fertilizer.

It’s very important you not put down crabgrass preventer and seed your lawn unless the product is specifically made for that purpose. If you use corn gluten and then seed your lawn, the gluten will prevent the seed from germinating.

I don’t recommend seeding your lawn until later this month or the first two weeks in May. My reasoning is that the soil is often not warm enough in April for the grass to germinate quickly. The chances of a hard rain washing away the seed or birds eating the seed are high if you put down grass too early.

**Garden beds**

Try to get up the dead leaves and sticks from around your gardens. Rose leaves can carry spores of disease and these

can get onto your plants this spring. Fresh mulch helps conserve moisture and keeps out weeds. Seeing bare soil around your plants isn't a good thing. The soil will dry out much quicker and weeds have an easier time establishing themselves in this situation.

If you are putting mulch around trees don't pile the mulch up around the trunk. Mulch that looks like a volcano around the trunk of the tree is too high and can quickly damage or even kill the tree.

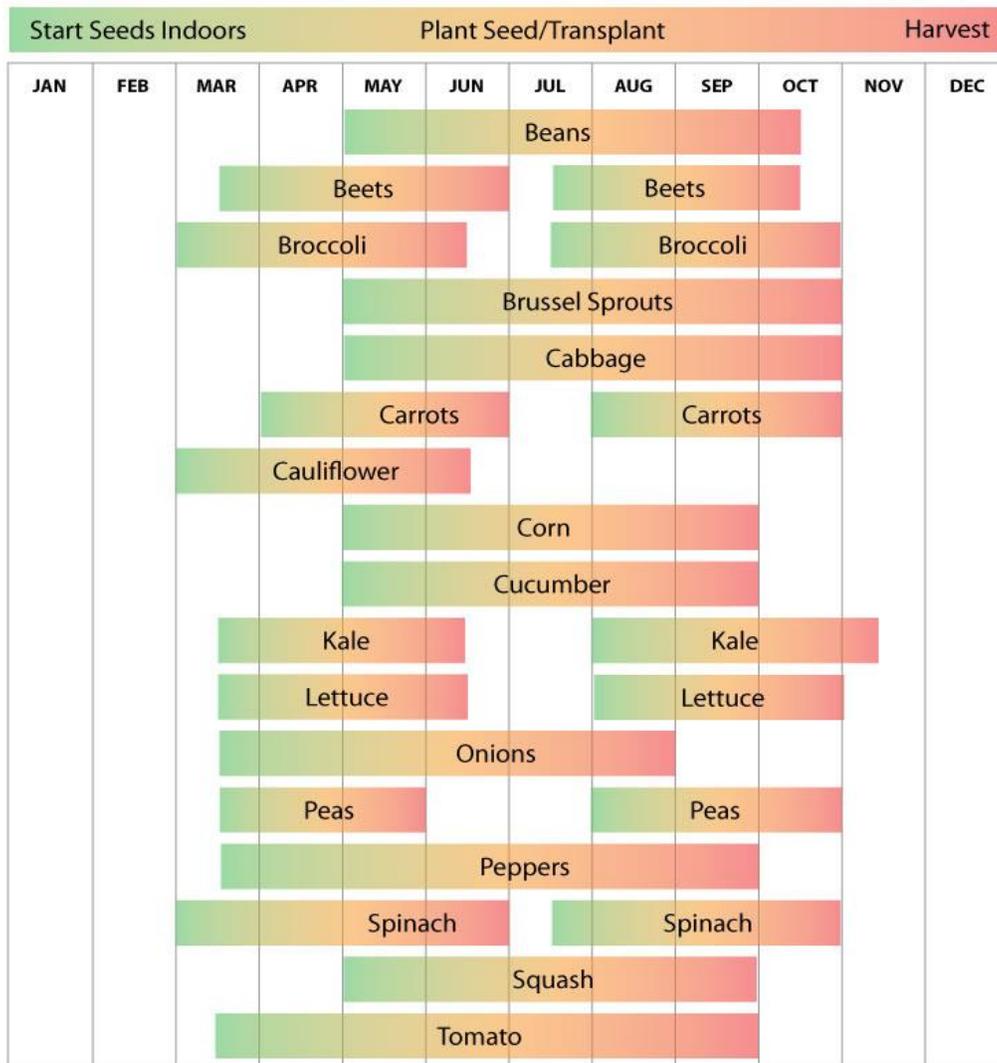
I don't recommend pruning any plants now which flower before June 15th. The reason for this is you will take off the blooms. I like to enjoy the early flowering trees and shrubs and then prune. You can however prune Rose of Sharon this weekend. This small tree/shrub can be pruned heavily and I have taken as much as 3 or 4 feet off of an eight foot specimen.

If you want to plant some vegetables in mid-April you can put in seeds of peas, lettuce, carrots and radish. I don't recommend starting peas or root crops inside. Lettuce can be started inside and then moved outside if you wish. Broccoli, kale, cabbage, and other cold weather crops can also be planted this weekend. I like to work some organic vegetable fertilizer into the soil before I plant. Another trick is to put a handful of composted cow manure (it doesn't have an odor), into the hole when you plant. Just be sure to mix it in with the existing soil.

Other things I will be doing this time of year is sharpening and cleaning any tools I didn't get to in the fall, replacing rakes and fixing leaky hoses. All in all there isn't enough time for everything, but it's all worth the effort come summer.

Follow my tips and ask garden questions on Twitter @growingwisdom.

## ZONE 6: PLANTING SCHEDULE



## UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST BEYOND THE GGB

### Gardening Green Expo at Kennedy's Country Gardens in Scituate

**Saturday, April 1, 2017**

Scituate: The annual Gardening Green Expo will take place from 10 am to 4 pm Saturday, April 1, at Kennedy's Country Gardens, Route 3A.

This year's theme is "beautiful Landscapes, Less Water." Vendors and presenters will talk about drought-tolerant plants, organic lawn care practices, the importance of healthy soil, low-water grass seed cultivators and soil testing. In conjunction with the theme, you will be able to place orders for rain barrels and composters.

The expo is free and sponsored by the WaterSmart program, the North and South Rivers Watershed Association and Kennedy's Country Gardens. Bring your soil sample to have it tested and get recommendations about how to improve your soils. Stroll through Greenhouse 4 and visit with vendors of products and services that will help you green up your garden. Also on hand will be local environmental organizations. Come learn all about how you can help preserve our water supply and the environment. This is a free event and is family friendly, so bring the kids!

For more information, visit [www.greenscapes.org](http://www.greenscapes.org) or call 781-659-8168. Kennedy Country Gardens is at 85 Chief Justice Cushing Highway.

**Location:**

Kennedy Country Gardens  
85 Chief Justice Cushing Highway  
Scituate, MA

**Sponsor(s):** Kennedy Country Gardens

**Time(s):** 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

**Cost:** Free

**Phone:** 781-659-8168



### How Native Plant Cultivars Affect Pollinators: Annie White, [Ecological Landscape Designer](#) & Adjunct Professor, University of Vermont; Cambridge Public Library - Free

**Wednesday, April 5, 2017**

Presented by Grow Native Massachusetts

Initiatives to address pollinator decline are widespread and native plants are the preferred choice for pollinator habitat restoration. The growing demand for natives, coupled with a longstanding desire of horticulturalists for enhanced bloom, color, or other characteristics, has led to the increased selection and breeding of native cultivars. Although these cultivars are typically marketed for their ecological benefits, until now there have been no scientific studies to support or refute these claims. So are native cultivars as valuable in pollinator habitat gardens as the true native species? Annie White will help answer this question by sharing the results of four years of field data. Her research is groundbreaking and remarkable.

*Annie White is the founder of [Nectar Landscape Design Studio](#) and an Adjunct Professor at the University of Vermont. She earned her MS in Landscape Architecture from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her recent PhD in Plant & Soil Science from the University of Vermont was focused on this exceptional new research on native plant cultivars.*

**Location:**

Cambridge Public Library  
449 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02138

**Time(s):** 7:00 to 8:30 pm

**Cost:** Free

**Phone:** 781-790-8921

**Email:** [officemanager@grownativemass.org](mailto:officemanager@grownativemass.org)

**Sponsor(s):** Grow Native Massachusetts

**Website:** <http://grownativemass.org/programs/eveningswithexperts>

## NEXT MEETING SNEAK PEEK: ANNUAL SPRING BANQUET

**May 1, 2017**

**Annual Spring Banquet**

**Location:**

**TBD**

SAVE THE DATE: set aside Monday, May 1, 2017 for the Annual Meeting and Banquet, which will be held at Alma Nove, Hingham Shipyard at 6:00 pm. We hope to see you all there. Please see the tempting menu choices below:

- ❖ Cocktail hour and meeting begin at 6:00 pm
- ❖ Mixed greens, tomato, cucumber with red wine vinaigrette
- ❖ Main Course ~ Please choose from the following:
  - ~ Pan seared Faroe Island salmon, fingerling potatoes, cippolini onions, kale, beet vinaigrette
  - ~ Wood-grilled Bell & Evans chicken, whipped potatoes, garlic-herb roasted broccolini, mustard butter
  - ~ Homemade gnocchi, wild mushrooms, Maderia, truffled Pecorino
- ❖ Dessert: Chocolate Bundt cake, cherry syrup, salted caramel, house-made Bailey's ice cream; Coffee ~ Tea to follow dinner

The fee for this outstanding event will be \$45.00. Please make your check payable to: The Gardeners' Guild of Braintree. RSVP's are requested by **April 15, 2017**; don't forget to include your **menu selection** and **check** when you can bring it to the April meeting or mail it to either Stephanie or Cathy at the address below:

Cathy Toohey  
29 Hawthorn Road  
Braintree, MA 02184

Special "Thank You" to Stephanie Minchello and Cathy Toohey for their help arranging this event.



**GGB is on Facebook** Are you on Facebook? If so, don't forget to "Like" Gardeners' Guild of Braintree to get updates, reminders and to see some great photos from past events. Contact Gail Ritz to add anything to the facebook page.