

THE POLLINATOR



Bulletin of the GOOD EARTH GARDEN CLUB, INC. Of Cedar Rapids, Iowa

April 2012

www.gegc.weebly.com

Friday, April 13, 7:00pm, Governors Room @ Deer Ridge, Meth-Wick 1650 Koehler Dr NW CR, IA
Program will be "Problems & Questions"—Club Members
Host & Hostess will be Jean and Gordon Minehart

LEND A HAND

Sixty-five ways to help save the Earth

1. Recycle everything you can: newspapers, cans, glass, aluminum foil and pans, motor oil, scrap metals, used automobile tires, etc.
2. Investigate local recycling centers that take items that your garbage hauler may not pick up.
3. Start a compost heap using kitchen scraps and garden refuse.
4. Use phosphate-free laundry detergent and dish soap.
5. Avoid household pesticides when you can, use a flyswatter instead.

TIPS FOR BIGGER BLOOMS

- Pinch off the first flower buds on roses and chrysanthemums so the plant will put its energy into bigger and better blooms on the remaining buds.
- Feed roses, squash, and other flowering plants when the first flower buds appear.
- Choose a fertilizer with a potassium ratio higher than nitrogen. Potassium not only encourages plant vigor and hardiness, it also encourages flowers to bloom. Good organic sources include rock dust (granite dust), green sand, aged manure, compost, and seaweed- or keop-based products.
- Make sure plants get plenty of phosphorus, and essential macronutrient that promotes flowering, fruiting, and strong roots. Organic sources include bone meal (a premium source), ground rock phosphate, bat guano, and fish meal.
- Providing extra magnesium doesn't necessarily encourage bigger blooms, but it can promote better flower production. When plants do need a boost, work in one tablespoon of Epsom salt for better yields.
- Mulch the soil to conserve moisture and deter weeds for your flowering edibles don't have to compete for moisture and nutrients.

THE LONE TREE

Scarce a stone's throw from the highway,
Where a farmstead used to be;
Like a sentinel on duty,
Stands this ragged old pine tree.
With its trunk deformed and twisted
(Other trees once grew too near)
Yet, somehow, sometime, to someone,
It, no doubt, was very dear.
Children played within it's shadow
On long summer afternoons;
Storm March winds, among its
branches,
Sang their plaintive little tunes.
Of the farm house, barn and corn crib,
Not a stick or stone we see;
But the pine tree tells the story
Of a farm mortality,
Now almost the sole survivor
Of an old-time family farm,
It reminds us of an era
That was not without its charm.
Present trends in agriculture
Now demand that we replace these
inefficient, too small units;
Families, also, we efface.

Gus Carlson, Vinton, IA



PRESIDENT c/o Helen Venneman c/o Cynthia Sadecky
V.P. PROGRAMS Carol Sheets
V.P. GARDEN SHOW Jim Venneman
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BOLTING RHUBARB

If seed stalks appear in rhubarb, pull them at once. If allowed to develop, the seed stalks will reduce plant vigor and yield. Seed stalk formation or bolting may be caused by low soil fertility, drought or by extreme heat or cold. Additionally, older plants tend to bolt more than recently planted rhubarb.

Some of the factors responsible for bolting can be corrected by the gardener. Maintain plant vigor during dry periods by watering. Mulching will help to conserve soil moisture and control weeds. Replenish soil nutrients by fertilizing. Spread ½ cup of a general garden fertilizer, such as a 10-10-10, around each plant before the rhubarb emerges in the spring. If available, a 2"-3" layer of well-rotted manure would be an alternate choice.