

# Summer Garden Tours



# CENTRAL PENINSULA



# GARDEN CLUB

**August 2018**

PO Box 767 Kenai, Alaska

[www.cenpengardenclub.org](http://www.cenpengardenclub.org)

The summer tours have been happening and if you haven't got a chance to attend one, well you don't know what your missing! I enjoy seeing many of you that attend regularly! The tours are so informative, inspirational and educational besides giving everyone a chance to get to know other garden club members better, outside of our regular meetings.

I would like to thank the volunteers that have helped make the tours happen so far, Terri Carter from the Soldotna Montessori School, Troy Castimore from Soldotna Methodist Church, Karluk Acres Farm, Rusty Ravin Plant Ranch, Mary Lamb, Charlie McCrone and Dennis Spindler.

I specially want to thank Phyllis Boskosfsky as she has stepped up to help with all the planning, the description of the tours, the time to preview at each garden, and many emails to many of you setting up the tour. Also, Pat Udelhoven has been a huge help with many of these same tasks. Thank you both!

We are always looking for volunteers to help with any part of the tours and if you are interested please let me know, either by email to [morris.dp907@gmail.com](mailto:morris.dp907@gmail.com) or give me a call and we can chat about it. 907-953-361

*Peggy Morris, summer tours committee chairperson*

**Garden Tour of Mary Lamb's:** What a beautiful greenhouse set up we visited at Mary Lambs! Even though we had a little rain the welcome we got was warm and full of gorgeous plants. Mary shared a taste of her cucumbers which were great, had water, tea, cookies and even wine. Nice to see how people garden and the funniest were the bellowing miniature donkeys! We got to explore outside as well and finished with the composting pile. Thank you for sharing your slice of heaven! *(by Denise Dutile)*

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information available at [www.cenpengardenclub.org](http://www.cenpengardenclub.org),

on facebook, or by contacting

Renae Wall, [cenpengardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:cenpengardenclub@gmail.com)

### Will's Rambles: HELP!!

by Will Hightower



If you read the summer newsletter, you know that I hosted one of the spring workshops. This was a ladies-only, hands-on wood working class. A similar class was done several years ago. Between the two classes life had demanded that I refrain from any extra activities. This spring it looked

like I could give the time needed.

When I asked what ladies would like to make, I was told that making more arbors would be great. Well, OK, it had been 8 years between the workshops and we had a membership turnover. The results (as reported) were: everyone had a fun time playing with tools and had a nice arbor.

During the workshops (4 sections in all) the idea of having additional hands-on workshops was kicked around. This could be a fun activity, but I do have one problem. Just how many arbors can one area use? It would be fun to build some different projects.

One of the ideas, discussed, was a square, tapered trellis. I hopped on this idea and sent a tapered trellis prototype

with the last two gals for field testing. It ended up that I thought the design was a good project and now have several in my high tunnels for additional testing.

What I need are **project ideas**. What would gardeners like to build for their gardens? Not all ideas would be practical for an afternoon workshop, but maybe, with the right design...

So far suggestions have been made for:

- A bench
- A chair
- Birdhouse
- Flower boxes
- Barrel
- Windmill

There have to be other possible projects. Let me know. Thanks.

Will Hightower

## August Announcements

**Arbor Alternatives:** Will Hightower, popular author of "Will's Rambles" and arbor workshop teacher extraordinaire, is looking for more ideas for wood garden projects. Have any ideas? If so, send them to Will at ice-anvil907@gmail.com.

**No August General Meeting:** Remember, there is no general meeting in August, but watch for the meeting announcement in the September newsletter. September will be the beginning of our garden meetings for the winter.

**Like to Write or Research?** Sharon Gherman, our Newsletter Editor for the past few years, will be taking a break from editing duties come January 2019. We're going to need a new Editor! If you think you might like to edit or write for the newsletter, please talk to her (sgherman677@gmail.com) or Renae Wall ( ). It's not a hard job, and it means you can follow your interests and share them with all of us!



**Do You Garden and Blog?** If you garden on the peninsula and blog about your garden activities, send Sharon the URL of your blog and we'll share it with others! (sgherman677@gmail.com)

**Facility Bed Maintenance** I want to thank everyone that has helped with the watering, weeding and cleaning up the facility beds that the garden club maintains every summer. They look beautiful and that doesn't just happen, but it has happened because of people like you that give of their time!

Thank you to Deanna Huntley who helped with the drip water system as well as weeding and maintaining the flower bed at our new meeting location at the Peninsula Grace Brethren Church. The May Workshops planned and made the new flower bed happen, which looks so nice. If you haven't seen it yet, stop by and have a look!

Thank you to Helen Groenveld, Terrell Brewer, Susan and George Hedrick, Marci Dragnich, Beth Dietrich and Mary Armstrong for helping at the Aquaculture Center flower beds. Thank you Dennis for donating some of your blue poppies for these flower beds also. I am sorry if I missed anyone.... As always, if you are interested in volunteering and want to meet other gardeners and chat over the weeding or other maintenance projects, let me know! Morris.dp907@gmail.com or 907-953-3611

*Peggy Morris, Facility bed maintenance chairperson*

### Vendors Invited: Harvest Moon Local Food Festival in Soldotna

Vendors, come join us for a fun event! Kenai Local Food Connection's Harvest Moon Local Food Festival will be held Sept. 15, 2018 in Soldotna Creek Park, 10 am to 6 pm. It's the Kenai Peninsula's biggest local food celebration of the year. There'll be live music, food demonstrations, guest speakers, kids' activities, food trucks featuring healthy, local ingredients, and all sorts of Alaska Grown and Made in Alaska food and wellness products.

Why Sept. 15? It's the first Saturday after the regular farmers markets close, when local farmers will be well-supplied with fall vegetables to be pickled, canned, frozen and stored for winter use. And besides, the end of the harvest season is always a good time to celebrate the abundance of local food here on the Kenai Peninsula!

Vendor information: In keeping with the festival mission, the festival is limited to vendors of food (grown, harvested or made in Alaska) and medicinal/wellness/personal care products made from locally grown or wild-harvested ingredients. Kenai Local Food Connection is a non-profit organization, and fees have been set low for this first-time event to encourage all to participate. The Early Bird rate is \$10 per 10' x 10' tent space. But fees double after Sept. 1 and space is limited, so please apply early!

To apply to be vendor, follow the link below and click "Apply Now"!

<https://www.kenailocalfood.org/projects>

***We're in need of someone to layout the October newsletter as Bruce will be gone. Do you know MS Publisher and can lend us your skills in September? Please let Sharon Gherman, editor or Renae Wall, President know!***

Have you noticed browning trees on your property? What the heck is happening to your spruce trees? It could be the spruce bark beetle.

Here are some facts and figures about our little forest pest:

### What are spruce bark beetles?

- Spruce beetles are only ¼ inch long.
- Spruce beetles infest Sitka, white and Lutz spruce (white/Sitka hybrid) most often and attack black spruce only rarely.



· Beetles live in the thin, phloem (growing) layer between the bark and the wood. So the wood remains

undamaged by the beetles and useable for construction for some time.

- One female beetle may lay from 10 to 150 eggs in "galleries" constructed beneath the bark in the phloem tissue.
- A large, downed spruce tree may contain more than 100 beetles per square foot of bark.
- Beetles emerge from infested tree and fly to new host trees from mid-May until mid-July (when temperatures are above 60° F).
- Spruce Beetles feed and breed on wind-thrown, fallen or injured trees wherever there are spruce forests. When conditions are right, beetle populations may outgrow the supply of down trees and move into nearby living trees, especially mature spruce stands.

### How do I know if I have them in my spruce trees? What are the signs?



#### Leaves or Needles

· The needles on conifer trees, like pines, begin to turn a reddish-brown color. Often the change begins at the top of the trees and moves down.

· Some trees may slowly fade in color from green to brown.

substance.)

· A white pitch tube means the beetle was successfully repelled by the tree. If the pitch tube is reddish brown, most likely the beetle was successful in attacking the tree.

· The pitch is accompanied by a sawdust-like substance, called frass, created by bark beetles and their larvae as they borethrough the bark.

· Frass has accumulated in tree crevices and may have fallen to the ground, resembling very fine, reddish-brown coffee ground material at the base of the tree.

· Bark flaking or holes in the bark caused by woodpeckers foraging for bark beetles are also a good indicator that bark beetles are present.



· Removing bark sections will reveal holes created by bark beetles, as well as dead or degraded inner bark.



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## *The Beetles are Back (cont.)*

### *If I have them, what can I do?*

- About your only option is to remove the tree completely and debark the wood. Then it can be used for firewood.

### *If I don't have them, what can I do to prevent them?*

- Spruce bark beetles target mature trees that are already stressed, so keeping your trees healthy will help. Watering them deeply and applying an 8-32-16 fertilizer in the spring can help.
- Prune the lower limbs up in the fall and remove them. This can change the environmental conditions and make the tree less appealing to the spruce bark beetle.
- Avoid bringing beetles in on wood. Firewood should be debarked and the bark burned to keep from importing them.
- Avoid damaging your trees, which stresses them.
- There are a couple of insecticides developed to protect conifers from the spruce bark beetle, but the tree must be sprayed preventively up 25 feet from the ground. A professional arborist can provide this service for you.

## **Seed-Gathering Time is Almost Here**

by Sharon Gherman, Master Gardener & CPGC Newsletter Editor



This is the time of the year when I start purposefully noticing plants blooming in gardens on my own property and around town. In my head, I'm ticking off plants in a list because I want to go back and collect a few seeds from some of the best of them later on. Here are a few tips for gathering and storing perennial seeds:

1. Wait until a sunny day after the blooms have faded. Once the blooms are faded, the seeds are usually ripe and ready to harvest.
2. Take paper bags, a pair of scissors, and a marker with you. Seeds from each different variety go into their own labeled paper bag. I include the name of the plant, bloom color, and date and location of collection on my bags. Often I bag them attached to a stem or two.
3. Once you get home, lay each plant out on their bag or on newspaper to dry completely for a few days. Don't get them mixed up!
4. After they are dry, open the seed pods and remove the seeds. If you want to get fancy, they sell glassine bags for seed storage. Or you can use paper bags. Don't use plastic – if there's but a speck of moisture left on the seed, it will mold the whole bunch. Label each bag.
5. Store multiple bags in a mason jar, seal the jar well, and store it over the winter in the freezer.
6. Come spring, plant and enjoy!

