

WILSHIRE GARDEN M A R K E T

May 2004 Newsletter

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MOTHER'S DAY GIFT IDEAS

Make this Mother's Day the best one your mother has ever had. Give her a gift from Wilshire Garden Market, treat her to a Linda Vater seminar, and of course, tell her how much you love her!



Mother's Day Gift Ideas from Wilshire Garden Market include:

- One of our beautiful birdbaths
- A colorful MOM garden flag
- A gift certificate
- An ornamental rust iron cross
- Monet's garden teak bench and chairs
- A candy colored oilcloth pillow or tablecloth

Julia Ward Howe, an American writer, lecturer, and Reformer born in 1819, first suggested that a day be set aside to honor Mothers. She suggested that it be observed on June 2, as a day dedicated to peace. President Woodrow Wilson signed a joint resolution in Congress on May 9, 1914, recommending that the federal government observe Mother's Day. The next year, the president was authorized to proclaim an annual holiday.

THE BEAUTIFUL BIRDBATH

One of the most frequently asked questions at Wilshire Garden Market is how to keep birdbaths sparkling clean.

Use a firm kitchen vegetable brush to rub out dirt and algae under a running hose. Or, use a wet cloth dipped in sand as an abrasive.

A chemical solution of one part bleach to ten parts water used once every two months will kill microbes. Wilshire Garden Market stocks a bio-enzymatic solution that prevents the development of organic contaminants.

Birds prefer a shallow birdbath, no more than three inches deep in the center. Add rocks or a low, flat object upon which they can stand as they bathe.

A fountain with the sound of moving water will attract a variety of species; hummingbirds bathe in flight.

Birds must have clean water, which sometimes can be difficult to find. Adding a birdbath or two to your garden is a kindness to the birds, and beautifies your garden as well.

Other helpful birdbath tips:

- Place the birdbath in the shade to keep the water cool.
- Place the birdbath in an area where cats can not lurk and close to trees or shrubs where the birds can escape if they feel threatened.
- Place the birdbath in easy reach of the garden hose.
- Place the birdbath where it is visible from indoors.



SPECIAL OF THE MONTH

Celebrate May with 20% savings on all birdbaths at Wilshire Garden Market, while supplies last. Birdbaths make wonderful gifts for many occasions.

IMPROMPTU ENTERTAINING

The season for outdoor entertaining is approaching. Inviting friends and neighbors over for a glass of wine will be easier and more comfortable if you have the right accessories on hand.

Expand your usable living space by creating a comfortable seating area on your patio. Having ample seating is essential. The type of seating you choose is determined by how many people you entertain: a dining table and chairs, a bench, or a cozy set of recliners.

Outdoor pillows are popular again this season. Pillows add color, the visual appearance of comfort and soften the hard lines of furniture. Until recently, finding durable outdoor pillows has been difficult.

Oilcloth pillows in delicious candy colors are perfectly suited for spending the spring and summer days outdoors. Polyester canvas pillows are easily washable and will not deteriorate like cotton fabric. They come in a variety of colorful stripes, subtle watercolor florals, nautical prints, and even a Burberry type plaid.

Brick can be boring and a concrete floor can be dull; outdoor area rugs add depth, richness, and style to the outdoor living room. Now recycled plastic has been woven into realistic looking Turkish rugs that can be cleaned by your water hose.

Last but certainly not least, outdoor lighting is an easy and sure way to add ambiance to your patio and garden. Copper torches can be strategically placed along pathways, at steps, or in planters to gracefully illuminate an evening gathering. Using citronella or any herb scented oil in your torches will also help repel mosquitoes. For the tabletop, you can use lanterns or votive holders. Casting an opulent, romantic glow, outdoor chandeliers have been the hot items for the year.

With the floor covered, the table set, pillows fluffed, and candles and torches ready to light, you will be ready to host a season of outdoor entertaining!

SEMINAR SERIES 2004

On Friday, May 7, Linda Vater will be presenting "Vertical Gardening". In this seminar Linda will discuss how to use topiary frames and structures in the garden on which to support climbing plants and vines; vertical gardening is one of her special talents. Just in at Wilshire Garden Market are new copper and steel trellises to help you garden vertically, beautifully. This seminar will be held at Wilshire Garden Market and will conclude with a tea in Linda's garden. This would be a very nice mother / daughter treat, especially since it falls just before Mother's Day.

The seminars begin at 10:30 and last for an hour, depending on the number of questions. The fee is \$10 per person and seating is somewhat limited, so call now to reserve your spot. Please join us!

The 2004 series is as follows:

May 7	Vertical Gardening
June 5	Shade Gardening
July 16	Flower Arranging
Sept. 25	Container Gardening

Door prizes are given at each seminar!

MAY TO DO LIST

- Prune Forsythia stems that have flowered and give the plant a good feeding.
- Time to Plant asparagus, spinach, peas, lettuce, French beans.
- Divide clumps of tarragon and chives.
- Pick thyme before it flowers.

EXTERIOR DECORATING

In response to repeated requests, Wilshire Garden Market now provides an exterior decorating consultation service. By appointment and for a nominal fee, we will make a one hour consultation followed by written suggestions to make your garden retreat more charming, cohesive, useful, and harmonious. We can also plant pots or window boxes. Call the store for more details or to set up an appointment.



Let us help you create your outdoor living room!

STAMP OUT CRAPE MURDER

One of the greatest abuses and improper forms of pruning is a malpractice referred to as “topping”. It is the uneducated butchering of trees. Too often, unwitting homeowners pay hundreds of dollars to have their trees butchered. The poor pruning of the crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) is referred to by many horticulturists as “crape murder”.



Although the butchered crape myrtle cannot be restored to its natural branch habit, improvements can be made to enhance its health and appearance. A certified arborist will know how to “un-

top” it. At the site of the butchering cuts, numerous broom like “water sprouts” will grow, instead of real branches. Besides being an unattractive mass of growth, they will be much weaker than true branches and will tear off in storms.

If the tree is small enough, the homeowner could attempt to repair a crape myrtle that has been topped, as follows:

Using proper branch collar cuts, thin the water-sprouts out from five or six down to two or three. Choose those that have the widest (those are the strongest) angles from the main branch. Not “topping” for several years will help, but the scars will always be visible to the trained eye. The crape myrtle’s contribution to the landscape will be at least partially restored.

Misguided tree butchers usually give two reasons for topping crape myrtles yearly. The first wrong reason is that dead flowers have to be cut off to promote flowering for next year. Not true! Any crape myrtle that has been allowed to grow correctly will have plenty of blooms. The second reason given is that the tree will get too large. If you choose the wrong variety for the wrong location it will be too large. Choosing the correct plant for the correct location eliminates the need to butcher; there are dozens of cultivars.

Well trained arborists say “A properly pruned tree doesn’t look pruned. A topped tree does.”

COOL NIGHTS, BRILLIANT COLORS

Traveling to the Santa Fe, New Mexico area makes some gardeners wonder why the colors of blue flowers are so intensely blue there and not in Oklahoma. At last we have the answer. Flower petals have pigments in them that respond to temperature. Certain enzymes in plant cells make the pigment during the day. This pigment is very heat sensitive. If temperatures cool down at night, the pigments endure; if temperatures do not cool down at night, the pigments break down to be re-formed the next day.

Blue and red flowers seem quite brilliant in high altitudes; yellow flowers are bright no matter where they grow. Yellow pigments are not heat sensitive. Marigolds, sunflowers, and coreopsis are as beautiful in Oklahoma as they are in Colorado or New Mexico. Thankfully, many flowers will take the Oklahoma heat if they are planted in the correct location.

MARJORIE MILLER’S FLOWERS

In her April 23 slide presentation, *Color in the Garden from March through November*, Marjorie Miller provided attendees with a lengthy list of her favorite plants for the Oklahoma climate. Since the varieties bloom at different times, with judicious selection a gardener can have color over an extended period. Her favorites included:

Latin Name	Common Name
<i>Heuchera sanguinea</i>	Coral Bells
<i>Dianthus</i>	Pinks, Carnations
<i>Veronica spicata</i>	Sunny Border Blue Speedwell
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Purple Coneflower
<i>Salvia ‘May Night’</i>	Sage
<i>Salvia ‘East Friesland’</i>	Sage
<i>Salvia ‘Indigo Spires’</i>	Sage
<i>Salvia elegans</i>	Pineapple Sage
<i>Salvia leucantha-</i>	Mexican Bush Sage
<i>Plumbago</i>	Leadwort
<i>Scabiosa</i>	Pincushion Flower

WHAT’S NEW

- Original hand thrown terra-cotta pots by local artisan Mike Paluska. High fired at 2000 degrees, these pots are frostproof.
- Copper or steel decorative trellises in new styles. Show off your climbing roses or vines with these decorative supports!
- Outdoor Turkish rugs, 6’ x 9’, in aqua, plum or blue. Made for outdoor use from recycled plastic, they can be cleaned with a hose.

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