

**Summit**<sup>®</sup>  
... responsible solutions.

# Flowering Houseplants



[melindamyers.com](http://melindamyers.com)

# HOUSEPLANTS AND INDOOR GARDENING

## ELEVATE OUR MOOD, REDUCE STRESS, HELP US FOCUS AND MORE

- Adding colorful foliage and flowers boosts the benefits

**SELECT HOUSEPLANTS THAT:  
MATCH THE GROWING CONDITIONS AND YOUR GARDENING STYLE**

### **KID & PET TOXICITY INFORMATION**

Use **botanical names** when researching toxicity of plants. Common names vary on websites and with gardeners. Using the botanical name will ensure you obtain information about the correct plant.

#### **FOR PETS**

- [American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals](#)
- [Pet Poison Helpline](#)

#### **FOR PEOPLE**

- [Handbook of Poisonous and Injurious Plants](#)
- [North Carolina State University Extension Gardener Plant Toolbox](#)
- [Minnesota Poison Control](#)
  - \* Low to high severity toxicities are listed
  - \* Always double check if allergies, curious pets and children are a concern

**CHECK OUT  
KID & PET FRIENDLY HOUSEPLANTS  
WEBINAR**

**CLICK HERE AND  
ENTER PASSWORD sjw6Aay%**

**DOWNLOAD HANDOUT**



### **Summit Responsible Solutions**

Protecting you, and the environment we live in.

Summit Mosquito Dunks® and Mosquito Bits® are America's favorite biological mosquito controls because they kill mosquitoes before they become biting, disease-spreading adults. The active ingredient is *Bti* (*Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*), a bacterium that's deadly to mosquito larvae but harmless to other living things.

Summit Mosquito Bits® can also be used to control fungus gnats on indoor plants.

Summit® Year-Round® Spray Oil is an organic, environmentally responsible way to kill insect pests on even the most sensitive plants. Summit® Year-Round® Spray Oil has no bad odor, and it can be used on garden plants and fruit trees right up to the day of harvest. Use it to kill insects on indoor and outdoor plants.

**Learn More**

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*...responsible solutions.*

## LOW TO MODERATE LIGHT

- Able to read without too much strain
- Back from or to the side of an East- or West-facing window
- In front of a North window

### **PEACE LILY** - *Spathiphyllum*

- Moist soil a must
  - **Wilted and Yellow Leaves on Peace Lilies**
  - Include **Wild Valley Wool Pellets** in potting mix to reduce watering by up to 25%
    - Adds porosity, so great for all plants
  - Variegated peace lily (*Spathiphyllum* 'Domino')
- Sensitive to fluoride and chlorine in water
- \* **Toxic to cats and dogs**

## BRIGHT, INDIRECT LIGHT

- Plants in NE or NW window
- Some direct light in the morning or afternoon
- Bright the rest of the day

### **AFRICAN VIOLET**

*Streptocarpus* formerly *Saintpaulia*

- Bright east-facing window or under artificial lights
- African violet or other well-drained potting mix with organic matter
- Fertilize actively growing plants with flowering plant fertilizer
- Keep cold water off the leaves
- Leach salts out of potting mix as needed
- **Encourage flowering**
- Propagate new plants from **leaf-petiole cutting**
- Long bare stems can be buried
- Related species
  - Flame Violet (*Episcia cupreata*)
    - Colorful leaves
    - Yellow, orange, red flowers
- \* **Both species are non-toxic to humans, cats and dogs**
- Hardy Zones 11b to 12b

### **FLAME VIOLET** - *Episcia reptans*

- Similar care as African Violet
- Warmth, humidity, indirect light
- No cold water on leaves
- Moist, well-drained soil
- Velvety leaves of gray-green with brown flecks
- Red-burgundy flowers
- Hardy in Zones 10 to 11

### **CAPE PRIMROSE / FALSE AFRICAN VIOLET**

*Streptocarpus saxorum*

- Naturally grows in rocks and cliffs in Kenya and Tanzania
- Similar care as African Violet, except prefer the soil to start to dry between waterings
- Purple, white flowers
- Concord Blue from Proven Winners
- Hardy Zones 9 to 11
- \* **Non-toxic cats and dogs**



### **About Melinda**

Nationally known gardening expert, TV/ radio host, author & columnist Melinda Myers has over 30 years of horticulture experience and has written over 20 gardening books, including *Can't Miss Small Space Gardening*, the recently revised *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, and *Jackson and Perkins' Beautiful Roses Made Easy*. She hosts the nationally-syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" program airing on radio stations throughout the U.S. Melinda also hosts the internationally distributed *Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD/ Instant Video series*, including the latest *Food Gardening for Everyone DVD set*. She is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine, and writes a nationally-distributed gardening column. She appears regularly as a guest expert on national and local television and radio shows.

Visit Melinda's website,  
[melindamyers.com](http://melindamyers.com)

## **ANTHURIUM** - *Anthurium andraeanum*

- These are epiphytes, like many orchids
- Grow in a brightly lit location for best flowering
  - Will tolerate low light
- Water often enough to prevent roots from drying
  - Don't let plants wilt
- Long blooming
  - The colorful heart-shaped parts we call flowers are actually modified leaves
  - White, red, pink, violet, green and orange (Sierra Orange) flowers
- These plants need minimal fertilization
- **Anthuriums for Valentine's Day and Indoor Gardens**
- *Anthurium* 'Delicata'
- \* **Toxic to humans, cats and dogs**
  - All parts contain raphides of water insoluble calcium oxalate crystals and unverified proteinaceous toxins
  - Oral irritation and swelling

## **BROMELIADS** - Various Genera

- Epiphyte grown in a well-drained potting mix or grown as an air plant
- Those with soft, pliable leaves are more tolerant of low light
- Place those with thicker leaves in brighter light
- Long blooming, providing months of colorful flowers
- Water often enough to prevent roots from drying
  - Tank types
    - Keep leaf cup full of water and refresh regularly
  - Those growing in soil
    - Water thoroughly and often enough to prevent roots from drying
- Boost humidity
  - Group plants
  - Gravel tray

- Post flowering
  - Parent plant dies
  - Offsets form
- **Reblooming**
  - Place mature plant in plastic bag with a slice of apple for 3 days
  - Remove and wait for flowers to form
- *Guzmania* spp.
- *Aechmea* spp.
- *Neoregelia*
- *Vriesea*
- **Air Plant** (*Tillandsia*)
  - Soak in tepid water every week or two
  - More often in low humidity
- \* ***Check toxicity of species growing***

## **OXALIS / SHAMROCK** - *Oxalis* spp.

- Some species require bright light while others prefer bright, indirect
- Poor flowering when grown in insufficient light
- Clover shaped leaves of green, bronze or variegated
- Foliage folds up at night or in low light - nyctinastic movement
- White, pink, yellow flowers
- Cyclical growth
  - Late summer - slow watering and stop fertilizing
  - Fall through winter - stop watering and allow to go dormant
  - February - growth begins, start watering
  - Spring through summer - water regularly and fertilize as needed
- Burgundy Shamrock
- \* ***Toxic to humans, cats and dogs***
  - Calcium oxalates

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## **BEGONIAS** - *Begonia* spp.

- **Growing Rhizomatous Begonia Indoors**
- **How to Grow Rex Begonias** (seasonal)
- Many with attractive foliage
- Some flowering indoors
- Warm temperatures
- Good air circulation
- Avoid drafts
- High humidity
- Water when top few inches of soil are dry
  - Avoid overwatering
- Propagate from divisions, **leaves or leaf and stem cuttings**
  - Depending on growth habit
- Angelwing / Cane
- Rex Begonia
- Reiger Begonia
- *Begonia x hiemalis* 'Valentino White'
- \* **Toxic to humans, cats and dogs**
  - Calcium oxalate crystals
  - Most toxic part underground

## **CHRISTMAS, EASTER & THANKSGIVING CACTUS**

*Schlumbergera* spp.

- Bright light
- Soil slightly moist when flowering
  - Dry to the touch at other times
- Fertilize spring through summer with flowering houseplant fertilizer
- **Bud and flower drop** caused by:
  - Drafts
  - Moisture stress
  - Environmental changes
- **Rebloom** - start October 1<sup>st</sup>
  - 14 hours of darkness
  - Cool night temperatures
  - Soil slightly drier
- Easter Cactus (now *S. rosea*) - flowers as days lengthen in spring
- **Start new plants from stem cuttings**
- \* **Toxic to humans, cats and dogs**

## **MOTH ORCHIDS** - *Phalaenopsis* spp.

- Epiphyte, usually grown in orchid mix
- Long blooming plants that can flower for months
- Moth orchids are easiest as they are most adaptable to household environments
- Grow plants in bright, indirect light
- **Water thoroughly**
  - Usually once a week depending on indoor growing conditions
  - Skip the ice cube, use tepid water for best results
- Prefer high humidity
- **Reblooming** - several options:
  - Leave flower stem intact - you may get a second, smaller flush of flowers
  - Cut the stem back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> node and a new flower stem should emerge
  - Cut the flower stem back to leaves
    - It can take a year for new flowers to form, but it is the best option for the plant
- \* **Non-toxic to cats, dogs and humans**

## **BLACK JEWEL ORCHID** - *Ludisia discolor*

- Terrestrial orchid - easy to grow and rebloom
- Native to tropical South Asia
- Bright, indirect light (tolerates North window)
- Adapts to moist potting mixes and soil moisture
- Nearly black leaves with red veins
- White flowers in winter
- Zone 10

## **FLORIST CYCLAMEN** - *Cyclamen persicum*

- Cool, bright location
- Organically rich, moist soil
- Keep soil slightly moist, not too wet
- Long blooming for up to 3 months
  - White, pink, red, magenta, or lavender flowers
  - Single and double, some with ruffled petals or striped edges
  - Remove spent flowers to encourage longer bloom

- Plant goes dormant in late spring or summer
  - Leaves begin to yellow and dry
  - You can repot to stimulate new growth or move to a cool, dark location and water sparingly until new growth appears
  - Provide proper care once new growth begins
  - New flowers may appear the following winter if the plant receives sufficient light, moisture, fertilization and cool temperatures

\* **Toxic to cats and dogs**

### **CLIVIA** - *Clivia miniata*

- Yellow, orange, red flowers in spring
- Allow to rest for 3 months in winter
  - Water just enough to prevent wilting and encourage bloom
- Water often enough in summer to keep the soil slightly moist
- High humidity
- Temperatures between 65° to 68°F in summer
  - Cooler in winter
- Remove faded flowers and wipe dust from leaves
- Propagate from side shoots that often form after flowering

\* **Toxic to humans, cats and dogs**

- Alkaloids
- Hardy Zones 9 to 11

### **LIPSTICK PLANT** - *Aeschynanthus radicans*

- Epiphyte
- Trailing and a few upright forms
- Tubular red-burgundy flowers with cup-like calyx
  - Malodorous
- **Blooms** spring to summer
  - Some varieties flower year round
- Rest during winter
  - No cooler than 60°F and soil kept only slightly drier
    - Too cool or too dry results in no blooms
- Regular trimming - root the cuttings and plant

\* **Non-toxic to cats, dogs and humans**

- Hardy Zones 10b to 11a

### **WAX PLANT** - *Hoya carnosa*

- Green or variegated flat or curled leaves
- White, waxy, sweetly fragrant flowers
  - Potbound plants promote flowering
  - Flowers form on long, bare stems
  - Repeat bloom on same stem
  - Avoid over fertilization that can impede flowering
- Water regularly when actively growing
- Warmer temperatures and high humidity in spring and summer
- Cooler temperatures and drier soils in winter

\* **Non-toxic to cats, dogs and humans**

### BRIGHT TO HIGH LIGHT

- Plants in front of East or West facing window
- 2 to 4 hours of direct sun or more for those that prefer high light
- Back from South facing window - except winter

### **AZALEA** - *Rhododendron*

- Cool indoor location
- Bright or bright indirect light
- Consistent soil moisture
- Yellow, orange, pink, red, white or purple flowers
- Prune and shape as needed spring through midsummer
- Outdoors in summer
  - Shaded location
  - Fertilize as needed
  - Move back indoors in fall
- Rebloom
  - 40° to 50°F (4.4° to 10°C) November to early January
  - Soil slightly drier
  - Move to sunny location in January and water often enough to keep the soil moist

\* **Toxic to humans, cats and dogs when consumed in large amounts**

### **MINIATURE ROSE** - *Rosa*

- Variety of flower colors
- Indoors
  - Direct light
  - Consistently moist soil
  - Day temperatures around 70°F (21°C) and night temperatures minimum of 60°F (15.5°C)
  - Spider mites are a common problem indoors in winter
- Outdoors
  - Full sun
  - Moist, well-drained soil

### **GOLDFISH PLANT** - *Nematanthus*

- Flowers orange-red, look like little goldfish
  - Long lasting, mid summer to fall
  - Needs cool winter rest with slightly dry soil, followed by warm spring to flower
- Tolerates lower light
- Evenly moist soil spring through fall
  - Drier in winter - allow top 1-2" to dry
- Avoids drafts
- Tolerates winter temperatures down to 60°F
- Warmer in growing season
- Regular pinching to keep full

\* **Mixed information on pet and human toxicity**

### **KALANCHOE** - *Kalanchoe*

- Grow flowering kalanchoes in a cool, bright location
  - Cooler temperatures at night
- Water thoroughly when the top inch of soil is just starting to feel dry
- Remove faded flowers for second flush of blooms
- Grow like other succulents when it is not flowering
  - Place in a sunny window and allow the top inch of soil to dry before watering thoroughly
- Rebloom your kalanchoe like Christmas cactus
  - Stop providing the dark period when the buds are fully developed
- Many varieties available with colorful or velvety leaves

\* **Toxic to humans, cats, and dogs**

### **CROWN OF THORNS** - *Euphorbia milii*

- Thorny stems
- Tiny yellow flowers surrounded by red bracts, may bloom year round
- Room temperature in summer
  - Boost humidity if too hot and dry
- Cooler winter temperatures
- Water thoroughly before soil dries completely
  - A bit less often in winter

\* **Toxic to humans, cats, and dogs**

### **DESERT ROSE** - *Adenium*

- Succulent from the tropics, "unarmed"
  - Bright light
  - Well-drained soil
  - Pink, red and white flowers spring to summer
  - Plants may go dormant and drop leaves
    - Reduce watering
- \* **Contact dermatitis, toxic to cats and dogs**
- Zones 10 to 11 (indoors when temperatures drop to 55°F (12.7°C))

### **BIRD OF PARADISE** - *Strelitzia reginae*

- Slow growing when young
- Cooler temperatures in winter
  - Soil slightly drier
  - Overwatering leads to root rot
- Flowers royal blue, orange and yellow
  - Flowers best when potbound
  - Long lasting
  - Excellent cut flowers
  - Mature plants (2-4 years) may flower intermittently year round
- Pollinated by birds
  - When birds sip nectar the petals open to cover their feet with pollen

\* **Toxic to humans, cats and dogs**

- GI irritants
- Hardy Zones 10b to 12a

### **CHENILLE PLANT** - *Acalypha hispida*

- Also grown as an annual in hanging basket outdoors
- Long, tassel-like red flowers, usually spring through summer
- Remove faded flowers (deadhead) to promote more blossoms
- Warm temperatures above 60°F
  - Avoid direct heat from radiators and heating vents
- High humidity
- Moist soil
  - Will tolerate occasional dry conditions
  - Keep a bit drier in winter
- Copper Leaf (*Acalypha wilkesiana*, formerly *A. godseffiana*) - grown for its large, colorful leaves
- \* **Non-toxic to cats and dogs**
- \* **Toxic to humans**
- Hardy Zones 10b to 11a

### **FLOWERING MAPLE** - *Abutilon*

- Sunny window
- Consistently moist soil
- Yellow, orange, pink, red, white and bicolor flowers
- Prune in spring to promote compact growth
- Outdoors
  - Full to part sun
  - Moist, well-drained rich soil
- \* **Contact dermatitis in humans**
- Hardy Zones 9 to 10

### **HELIOTROPE / PERSIAN VIOLET** - *Heliotropium arborescens*

- White, lavender-blue or purple fragrant flowers
- Sold as seasonal bloomer to grow indoors in winter / spring in a brightly lit location
- Grown as an annual in containers and gardens outdoors in summer
- Consistently moist soil
- \* **Toxic to humans**
- Hardy Zones 10 to 11

### **CHRISTMAS ROSE** - *Helleborus*

- Cream, tan, green, pink, purple, red, burgundy or white flowers
- Indoors
  - Slightly dry soil
  - Cool, bright location
  - Move to a cooler spot if plant begins to decline
  - Move outdoors as soon as danger of frost has passed
- Outdoors
  - Shaded location
  - Can reseed
  - Winter to spring blooms, colorful sepals persist
  - Somewhat evergreen
  - Remove old foliage to showcase new blooms
- \* **Toxic to humans, cats and dogs if fresh or dried leaves eaten and dermatitis**
- Hardy Zones 3 to 8, depending on species / cultivar

## **INDOOR BULBS**

### **AMARYLLIS** - *Hippeastrum*

- Those grown in Southern Hemisphere bloom around the holidays
- Those grown in Northern Hemisphere flower January to March
- Red, pink, green, cream, multicolored flowers available
- Plant bulb in slightly larger container with top 1/3 above the soil
  - Place in cool, sunny location, water thoroughly, but sparingly until growth begins
  - Move to a cool location, but out of direct sunlight to extend flowering
  - Water as needed
  - Remove individual flowers as they fade
- Or, set bulb on pebbles in a glass container, add enough pebbles to secure the bulb
  - Keep water in pebbles just below the bottom of the bulb
- Waxed bulb - no soil or water needed, can replant after flowering
- Reblooming - many options
  - Allow to go dormant for several months in cool, dark location
  - Grow as a houseplant all year round - can summer outdoors
- \* **Toxic to humans, cats and dogs**
- Hardy Zones 7 to 10

## **PAPERWHITES** - *Narcissus tazetta*

### • Forcing Paperwhites

- No cold period needed
- Grow in a cool, bright location

### • Avoid flopping

- Replace water when shoots are 2" high with a solution of 1 Cup of 80 proof liquor to 7 Cups of water

### \* *Toxic to dogs and cats*

## **ORANGE STAR** - *Ornithogalum dubium*

- South Africa bulb
- Orange and yellow, long lasting flowers
- Bright light, evenly moist soil
- Prefers cooler temperatures 62° to 71°F (17° to 21°C)
  - Cooler night temperatures help extend flowering
- Rebloom
  - Keep watering as long as leaves are green
  - Once leaves die, allow plant to go dormant
  - Move to a cool location with minimal watering when dormant
  - New growth should appear in winter
    - Start watering
    - Return to bright light location
    - Warm days, as before and cool nights - 45° to 54°F (7° to 12°C)
    - Fertilize with flowering plant fertilizer at 1/4 strength

### \* *Toxic to humans, dogs and cats*

- Hardy Zones 7 to 10

## **REDUCE WATERING FREQUENCY**

### • Wild Valley Wool Pellets

- Reduce watering by up to 25% and add air space and organic matter to the soil

## **ORGANIC PEST MANAGEMENT**

### • FUNGUS GNATS

- Small, fruit fly-like insects
- Feed on plant roots and organic matter in the soil. Usually not harmful to plants, but annoying
- Manage larvae in soil with Summit® Mosquito Bits® (active ingredient *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*)
  - Follow label directions and repeat as needed
  - Combine this with yellow sticky traps to capture adults. This helps break the cycle, preventing trapped adults from laying eggs in the soil.

### • APHIDS

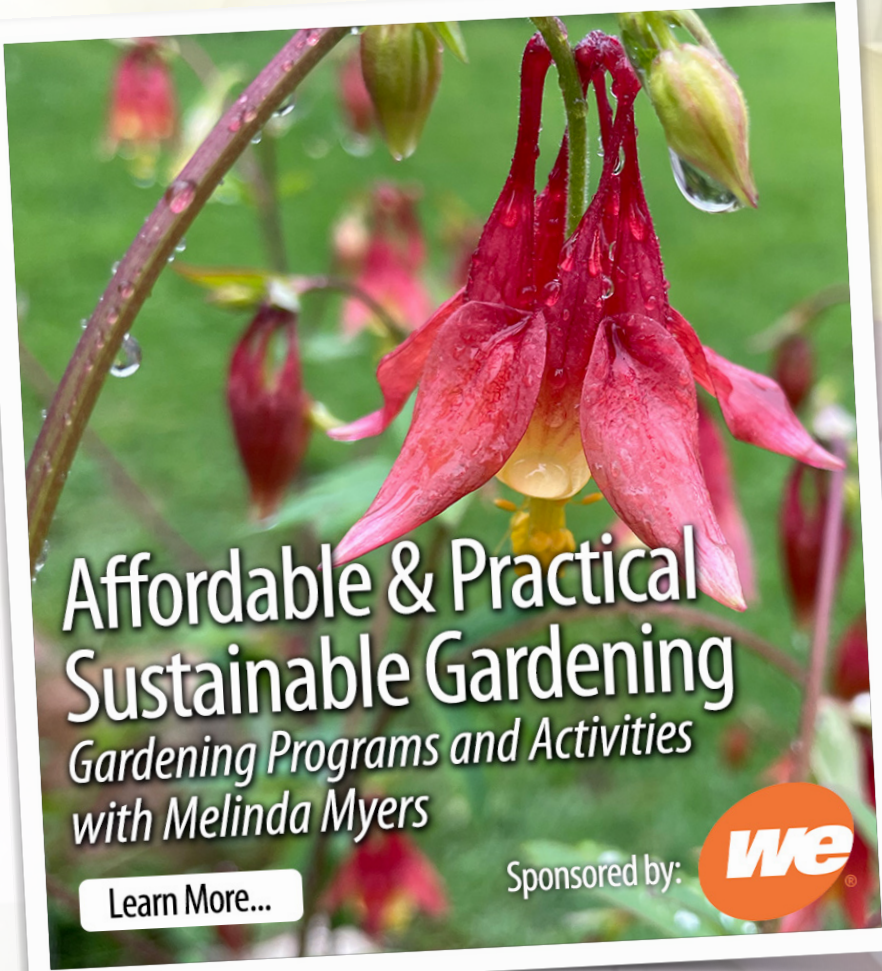
- Small teardrop shaped insects that suck plant juices
- Cause the leaves to yellow, brown, wilt or become distorted
- They secrete a clear, sticky substance known as honeydew
- Manage with:
  - A strong blast of water
  - Repeated applications of Summit® Year-Round® Spray Oil (YRSO) or Neem 85™ Cold Pressed Neem Oil (new process making it more effective at managing insects, mites and diseases)

### • MITES

- Cause similar damage to aphids
- Too small to see without a hand lens, but don't wait to see webbing before treating
- Manage with:
  - A strong blast of water
  - Repeated applications of Summit® Year-Round® Spray Oil (YRSO) or Neem 85™ Cold Pressed Neem Oil


- MEALY BUGS

- Use a cotton swab dipped in alcohol to dissolve its waxy covering and kill the insect below
- Then spray with Neem 85™ Cold Pressed Neem Oil to kill the immature insects
- This takes time and persistence to control these pests
- Or, apply organic YRSO, to suffocate adults, immature stages and eggs of these pests
- Continue to watch for outbreaks and treat as needed



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## **UPCOMING APPEARANCES & WEBINARS**

*Check often as more appearances and webinars continue to be added.*

### **Webinar March 5<sup>th</sup>**

*Start New Plants from Seeds, Cuttings  
& More*

### **Webinar March 11<sup>th</sup>**

*Save Money & Boost Your Growing  
Success with Bare Root Plants*

### **Webinar March 18<sup>th</sup>**

*Patio, Deck and Balcony Gardens*

### **March 21<sup>st</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>**

*100th Annual REALTORS Home &  
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### **Webinar March 26<sup>th</sup>**

*Get Started Growing Vegetable and  
Flower Gardens*

### **Webinar April 1<sup>st</sup>**

*Grow a Bountiful Harvest*

### **Webinar April 9<sup>th</sup>**

*7 Steps to Managing Water on Your  
Property*

### **April 11<sup>th</sup>**

*A Day in the Garden*

### **April 18<sup>th</sup>**

*Spring Rally*

### **Ebert's Greenhouse Village April**

**19<sup>th</sup>**

*Deer Resistant Gardening*

### **Iowa State University Lectures April**

**23<sup>rd</sup>**

*Gardening for Health & Wellbeing*

### **Spring Seminar at Pasquesi April**

**25<sup>th</sup>**

*Top 5 Favorite Annuals, Perennials,  
Vegetables & Shrubs for the Landscape*

### **Ebert's Greenhouse Village April**

**26<sup>th</sup>**

*Common Tomato Problems & How to  
Solve Them*

### **Ebert's Greenhouse Village May 2<sup>nd</sup>**

*Ask the Plant Doctor*

### **Webinar May 6<sup>th</sup>**

*Adding Native Plants to Any Size  
Gardening Space*

### **Ebert's Greenhouse Village May 9<sup>th</sup>**

*Ask the Plant Doctor*

### **Ebert's Greenhouse Village May 10<sup>th</sup>**

*Ask the Plant Doctor*

### **Ebert's Greenhouse Village May 16<sup>th</sup>**

*Ask the Plant Doctor*

### **Ebert's Greenhouse Village May 17<sup>th</sup>**

*Ask the Plant Doctor*

### **Webinar May 21<sup>st</sup>**

*Planting & Care of Your Rain Garden*



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