

# Out in the Garden



Rockport Garden Club, May 2019



## Horticultural Classroom: What's in a Name?

There are a lot of great combinations out there — peanut butter & jelly, music & lyrics, cookies & milk — and the garden is no exception. By combining Annuals and Perennials into your garden design, you can achieve the steady performance of long-blooming annuals with the cameo appearances from some of nature's show-stopping stars — the perennials.

Annuals, as its name implies, last for one year. They go from seed to blooming plant and back to seed heads before dying in fall. Many annuals are self-seeding producing babies that voluntarily emerge in spring (e.g., cosmos, California poppies, marigolds, etc.); however, most annuals need replanting each year. Incorporating annuals allows you to defy restrictive USDA plant hardiness zones and enjoy more exotic flowers that won't survive our winters (e.g., canna, fuchsia, caladium). With proper deadheading, annuals are reliable performers that provide season-long color.

Perennials, on the other hand, can take three years to reach maturity. With proper care, perennials rated for our planting Zone 6b will reliably re-emerge and bloom for many years. The catch is that perennials do not bloom all season long. Bloom times can be as short as three to four weeks or may straddle more than one season with a longer bloom period or a second round, so be sure to read the label when purchasing. Incorporate spring-, summer-, and fall-blooming varieties to extend the display. Perennials reproduce by spreading (e.g., iris, bee balm, snow-in-summer) so you can divide and relocate; or by self-seeding independent babies (e.g.,



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knautia, catmint, penstemon). In both cases, you can get more bang for your purchase bucks.

So as you design this year's garden, be sure to incorporate both annuals and perennials — a winning combination! For more information on flowers that will adapt to this summer's water restrictions, see <https://ag.umass.edu/home-lawn-garden/fact-sheets/drought-tolerant-annuals-perennials>.

## May Garden Reminders

- Prune needle evergreens; complete pruning of spring flowering trees and shrubs (after blooming)
- Fertilize lawn (4-1-2 ratio of N-P-K)
- Deadhead bulbs (leave foliage until yellowed)
- Begin rose care (deadheading, watering, etc.)
- Plant bareroot plants, summer bulbs, groundcovers; sow cold and warm season veggies
- Fertilize needle evergreens, roses, annuals, container planters, perennials, and spring bulbs (5-10-5)



## Butterfly Garden Design Workshop

Kim Smith will lead a free workshop for RGC members on "Butterfly Garden Design," Tuesday, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 9–11, 8 Graystone Road in Gloucester. This is a beautiful example of an established garden that the owner has been transitioning to include many more native wildflowers and pollinator plants. We will look at examples of natives, their benefit to wildlife, and how to cultivate. To sign up, email: [moorbymary@gmail.com](mailto:moorbymary@gmail.com).



## Happenings

- RGC Plant Sale, Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 9–Noon, DPW parking lot.