



Garden Club Newsletter

March / April 2024

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THIS ISSUE

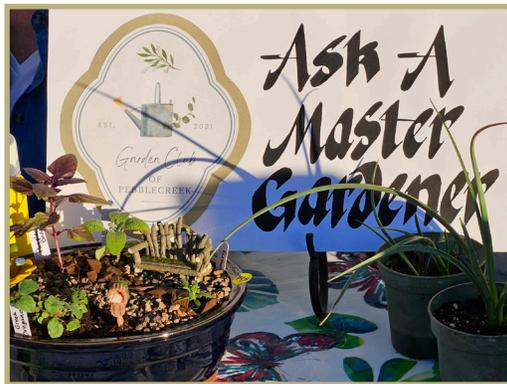
Articles: Beyond the Garden Gate; Determinate vs. Indeterminate; Featured Herb

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Parking Lot Sale Brings New Members

Thank you to all our volunteers at the Parking Lot Sale who provided valuable information to PebbleCreek residents with gardening tips.

We also acquired many new members!



We are fortunate to have several certified master gardeners as members of our club.



A question for our Master Gardener Cindi Sokoloff at the Parking Lot Sale.



MaryRose, Bonnie, Jeanne, and Susan volunteering at the Parking Lot Sale.

Upcoming Meeting

Succulents & Cacti

April 9 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Palm Room at Eagle's Nest



Upcoming Event

Garden Club Year-End Party

April 12 12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Oasis Pool - Potluck

Beyond the Garden Gate Plant Sale

The Green Thumb by Dave Rosenthal

Hey PebbleCreek! The Garden Club wants to extend a heartfelt thank you to the 250 or so attendees who turned out for our “Beyond the Garden Gate” Plant Sale on Saturday, March 23, 2024. The club also wants to recognize David and Brenda Deckard for letting folks traipse through their backyard for the day and all the hard-working and dedicated club members who made this event such a success. It was truly a team effort with many club members involved in the planning, coordination, set up, and teardown. Other generous members donated tables and chairs, herbs and plants, pots and soil, garden decorations, raffle prizes, and most importantly their time and passion.

Despite the day starting out on the cool side, by 9 o'clock a line of eager shoppers and gardening aficionados formed in front of the Deckard's home on West Granada Road. Sales were brisk and the temperature steadily rose; the day ended a perfect 79 degrees when the event wrapped up at 1 o'clock.

In addition to selling herbs and plants, the club also raffled off some very nice gifts, including a



five-gallon rose bush, bird pictures, and a hummingbird feeder kit, to name just a few. Offered for sale were Fred Nix's handcrafted charcuterie boards with both resin and oil-rub finishes, Brenda Deckard's super cute ceramic mushrooms and cactus rock gardens for the whimsical purchaser, JoAnne Clements' copper and glass yard decorations, Karen Rubsam's plant and herb stakes for order, and Myrna Bodner's beautiful glass plant stakes. There are certainly many



talented folks here in Pebble-Creek who enjoy creating things and a whole cadre of residents eager to buy herbs for their kitchens, plants and flowers, and decorations for their yards. We appreciate all of you!

Many attendees took the opportunity to ask the club's master gardeners questions regarding issues they have had or are having in their gardens. The club has several certified master gardeners who are more than

willing to share their knowledge and expertise in all things gardening.

The Garden Club of PebbleCreek also gives a big “shout-out” to the residents on West Granada who tolerated the cars, golf carts, and foot traffic on their street; we appreciated their patience.

As an added entertainment bonus, the event was overflowed by some very loud F-35's, a couple of A-10's, a C-130, and a variety of other very cool aircraft participating in the Luke Days Airshow. Of course, you could have seen that from the house next door, down the street, or pretty much anywhere in PebbleCreek, but our thanks go out to the hard-working and dedicated service members for their coincidental, but greatly appreciated, participation in helping to make this a “top-flight” event.



As a final note, we want to welcome all those who joined the club as new members and encourage other folks who took application forms to complete them and become members. We hope to see a lot of new faces at our next club meeting on April 9 at 1:00 p.m. in the Palm Room at Eagle's Nest Clubhouse. If you are interested in gardening or think you might want to get your hands dirty, please join us as a guest at our next meeting. Come grow with us!



Determinate vs. Indeterminate Plants and Why it Matters?

by Jody Ryan

If you look at the plastic tag in your vegetable starts from the nursery or big box store, you will see a specific name of the fruit or vegetable, the care instructions, and often but not always that perplexing word Determinate (D) or Indeterminate (ID). Turns out this term actually means something related to the plant's growth habit and fruit production.



Determinate Tomatoes

Determinate plants grow until they reach their maximum height, stop growing, produce all their fruit at once, and proceed to die. Genetically, determinate growth is pre-determined and limited.

Determinate (D) plants are bushy, compact, and short-lived. They have one main spurt of growth reaching three to four feet in size before yielding a single set of fruit usually in a few weeks' time. Once a mature determinate plant has produced its bountiful crop, the plant will slow its growth and die. Determinate crops are often preferred in commercial agriculture because a mechanical harvest is used to process the plant(s), and evenly ripened fruits/vegetables assure a consistent, quality product.

Indeterminate plants grow, flower, and set fruit; then grow again and continue to flower and set fruit sporadically over a longer season until they die, usually from frost or disease. Genetically, indeterminate growth continues throughout a plant's lifetime, which is undetermined in length and depends



Indeterminate Tomatoes

on a plant's health and environment. Indeterminate (ID) plants grow from the tips of their stalk, flowering and producing mainly on the ends of each stem. Indeterminates grow larger and taller, up to six feet and some as high as 12 feet, and they produce a steady supply of fruit. This type of growth often implies vining, such as vining tomatoes or vining beans, but not always. In colder climates, this growth will end when frost kills the tender tips if not the entire plant. In the Arizona desert without nighttime frost, an indeterminate plant can grow well beyond its typical lifespan in northern climates. Due to their height and continuous growth, indeterminate plants often require a cage, trellis, or support system.

What makes an indeterminate continue to grow? The answer: Meristem

Meristematic tissue (meristem) is a unique and vital part of plant anatomy. Meristem is a group of actively dividing cells found in plants. These cells can continuously divide and differentiate into various specialized cells that play a crucial role in plant growth and development. Apical meristem, both in the root and shoot, cause primary growth, lengthening the plant. Intercalary meristem increases the internode length, and lateral meristem causes secondary growth, widening/thickening the plant. Given the right resources, indeterminate meristem produces parts of a plant that varies in size and shape and continues to grow for extended periods of time in the right environment. Whereas a determinate meristem usually produces a part of the plant that has predictable size and form, such as the flower.

Common **indeterminate** plants include peas, melons, eggplant, vining winter squash, late season potatoes, and various tomatoes.

Common **determinate** plants include summer squash, bush zucchini, and both early and

mid-season potato varieties (as opposed to late season potatoes), and various tomatoes.

Chili pepper plants – spicy serranos, jalapenos, poblano, and others, are **indeterminate** plants because they continually grow new leaves, sprout flowers, and produce new fruit. Also, for this reason, they must be pruned and trained on a regular basis to ensure balanced growth for maximum fruit production. Pepper plants in warm climates can produce for many years with short breaks during the cooler winter months.

A quick reference guide:

INDETERMINATE (ID)	DETERMINATE (D)
Continuous growth through the plant's life. Often "vining" varieties	Finite growth to a set size. "Bush" or patio varieties
Prolonged, staggered harvests of fruit over a long growing season	Bears one main "bumper crop" of fruit all at once (or in short period)
Long, trailing plants sprawl out. Usually require a support structure or trellis, which also saves space	More compact, bushy growth. May need a stake or small cage to keep plants upright
Will continue to grow and produce fruit throughout the entire growing season - until frost. Ripen later, but slow and steady harvests are more manageable	Shorter-lived plants, mature (ripen) faster and "come and go" more quickly. Good for short growing seasons, succession planting, fillers, containers or small spaces
Indeterminate plants include: vining tomatoes, pole beans, melons, vining winter squash and cucumbers, peppers, eggplant, peas, many perennial plants	Determinate plants include: bush tomatoes, bush beans, zucchini and other bush summer squash (semi determinate), bush cucumbers, many annual plants
Indeterminate tomatoes can be pruned and trained. Varieties: Cherokee Purple, Brandywine, San Marzano Roma, Better Boy, Beefsteak, Pink Boar, Green Zebra and most cherry tomatoes	Determinate tomatoes shouldn't be pruned; best grown in cages. Varieties: Mountain Merit, Plum Regal Roma, Bush Early Girl, Perfect Plum, Red Racer, Gold Nugget, Washington Cherry

created by @deannacat3 of homesteadandchill.com

What are semi-determinate plants?

Along comes the best of both worlds. Some crops such as beans, potatoes, peas, squash, zucchini, cucumbers, and tomatoes can be semi-determinate and display growth habits somewhere **between indeterminate and determinate**. These plants usually excel at producing one large bounty of fruit but can be coaxed into producing more by harvesting their fruits regularly, freeing up its energy and signaling to the plant that its

production is not over. These varieties can be found at many nurseries and big box stores and have become quite popular.

Which Should You Choose?

Determinate if:

- you have a short growing season.
- you have a small garden space.
- want to grow in pots.
- you want a smaller, compact plant.
- you do not wish to use a cage or trellis system.
- you want a quick maturing plant.
- you want one large production of fruit/vegetable for freezing, canning, or making into sauces.

Indeterminate if:

- you have a long growing season.
- you have plenty of space to grow your crops.
- you want a constant supply of vegetables/fruit all season long.
- you want smaller quantities to ripen sporadically for salads, sandwiches, eating right off the vine.
- you don't mind using cages, stakes, or a trellis system.

Some indeterminates now come in hybrid form called **semi-determinate**, taking on a bushier growth habit and are easier to manage.



Semi-Determinate Tomatoes

Featured Herb



Basil

by MaryRose Gangle

Basil is in the same family as mint, rosemary, and lavender. There are more than 60 species of basil. Sweet and Thai basil are two main types; sweet basil being the most common. Basil represents mourning to the ancient Greeks and is called *sileus phuton*, kingly herb. Today it is sometimes called “king of herbs.”

Basil is an annual herb. However, if protected from frost, it is possible to grow as a perennial in Phoenix (zone 9). Start seeds indoors and transplant outdoors, after danger of frost, or continue to grow in containers indoors. You can also plant seeds outdoors between February and April. Basil grows easily in full sun and moist, well-drained soil.

Basil can be used fresh or preserved in oil in the refrigerator. Basil may be best known for its role in pesto – combined with pine nuts, garlic, olive oil, and Parmesan cheese for a delicious sauce. Basil is also an essential ingredient in Italian caprese salad – fresh tomato, basil, mozzarella, and olive oil.

Local Exploration!



Lots of Purple Lupine and bright yellow Brittlebush are displaying their spring colors on several trails at both the Estrella and White Tank Regional Parks.

Do you have a question or topic you'd like more information about?

If your answer is yes, please email the question or topic to gardenclubofpc@gmail.com

We will do our best to respond in one of our upcoming newsletters!

No question is too trivial!!



Garden Club of PebbleCreek

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