

Lamorinda OUR HOMES

Lamorinda Weekly Volume 18 Issue 4 Wednesday, April 10, 2024



The Real Estate Quarter in Review

... read on Page OH3

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

April Powers

By Cynthia Brian



Native trillium starts off white and turns magenta.

"April hath put a spirit of youth in everything." William Shakespeare

Gardeners refer to April showers bringing May flowers, and that is a truism. As an avid gardener, I believe in April powers as gardens burst into life, with abundant floral reveals marking the beginning of a vibrant growing season.

In late 2023, the United States Department of Agriculture updated hardiness zones based on weather conditions between 1991-2020. The upward trend in warming temperatures is no surprise, yet our area has remained at zone 9b. The zones are a recommendation for hardiness when planning your planting. To find specimens that will thrive in our gardens, I advise buying local at your preferred nursery, as you'll find natives and plants that are acclimated to our climate. Also, local nurseries employ knowledgeable garden gurus who can answer your questions to help you be more successful. Wherever you are making your purchase, keep in mind that our 9b hardiness zone is only one factor

when you are searching for the best plants for your yard. Your garden may experience a micro-climate different from your neighbors. Always familiarize yourself with the light, soil, and water requirements of your garden.

Intentional use of native plants that have formed symbiotic relationships with native wildlife over millions of years creates the most productive and sustainable wildlife habitat according to the National Wildlife Federation. Entomologist, Dr. Douglas Tallamy, and his team have identified what we call keystone plants, the 14% of native plants that support 90% of butterfly and moth species. Our ecosystems suffer without these keystones. You can search by zip code for necessary natives at www.NWF.org. Our live oak trees alone can host 275 species of caterpillars! Consider scattering seeds of sunflower, aster, fleabane, and lupin. Plant strawberries, trillium, goldenrod, dogwood, roses, and berries, as well as fruit trees including apricot, cherry, peach, and plum as hosts to moth and butterfly caterpillars, and pollen for bees. When broadcasting seeds either by hand or hydroseeding, don't cover the seeds or rake them. Do a light compression either with pieces of cardboard, a lawn roller, or even your feet. Yes, the birds and squirrels will consume some of your seeds. Sharing is caring.

... continued on Page OH6



Hyacinthoides, English bluebells or wood hyacinths.



Foreget-me nots

Photos Cynthia Brian