

Gardener's Corner

April 2025

April not only brings showers, it's bringing heavy rain, high winds and tornado warnings. As I write this, thunderstorms are moving through the area so getting out in the garden is an "iffy" event. My tulips, daffodils and hellebores, however, are beautiful this year when not getting beaten down by a thunderstorm.

For April, the **Missouri Botanical Garden** advises that now is the time to remove winter mulch from roses. Once mulch is removed, compost can be worked around the roses. Boxwoods should not be pruned before April 15, the last average frost date. As their new leaves appear, check for boxwood leafminer. Spring flowering shrubs should be pruned after they finish blooming including Weigela, Viburnum, Rhododendron, and lilacs (*Syringa*). If you have had lace bugs on your azaleas previously, plants can be sprayed in early spring.

Virginia bluebell can be transplanted after blooming and before they lose foliage. Your Easter lilies can be transplanted after they bloom. Place the bulbs 2-3 inches deeper than they grew in the pot.

If lace bugs were an issue on azaleas in the past and control is warranted, spray in early spring as soon as the eggs hatch when the nymphs are young.

When buying bedding plants, be sure to choose compact plants that have not begun to flower. Early through mid-April, hardy annuals can be transplanted outdoors.

It's that time of year where those darling, but plant-eating critters emerge. Yes, I'm talking about bunnies. There are several ways to keep problem rabbits from destroying your garden. **Garden Design** has some good suggestions for how to manage them in an article entitled *8 ways to keep rabbits out of your garden*. You can find it here:

<https://www.gardendesign.com/how-to/rabbits.html>. Other sources specifically discuss what plants rabbits don't like to eat. This includes one from **Better Homes and Gardens** (<https://www.bhg.com/gardening/pests/animal/editors-picks-top-rabbit-resistant-plants/>) and a more comprehensive one from **The Spruce** entitled *Rabbit proof flowers and plants* which can be found at <https://www.thespruce.com/what-are-some-rabbit-proof-flowers-2132657>.

Some virtual programs of interest in April are the following:

April 29, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. *Nature's Uninvited Guests: The Impact of Invasive Plants*. This is part of the **University of Illinois Extension's Four Seasons Gardening Webinar Series**. Register at: <https://registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/four-seasons-gardening-webinar-impact-of-invasive-plants-and-how-to-get-rid-of-them-april-29>

The two below are YouTube programs which you can watch at your leisure.

From **Big River Big Woods Wild Ones** is *Living Mulch*. You can find it at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3BvMcjeW-s>

The **University of Wisconsin Extension** has a YouTube presentation on a subject many of us in Webster Groves are aware of: *What's the Deal with no-mow May?* See it at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_LiGxiYM-bA&t=4s