



The “Show-Me” Gardener

FEBRUARY 2026

Webster Groves Garden Club

www.mgcwg.org

Email: Webster-Groves-Garden-Club@mgcwg.org

president@mgcwg.org

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2028

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General Meeting

February 9, 2026, 7:15 pm

Richard Thoma, Webster Groves Nature Study Society
Mimicry - A History of Deception in the Insect World



Richard Thoma

Richard Thoma has been a member of Webster Groves Nature Study Society (WGNSS) for approximately 40 years. Most of that time was spent participating in the Entomology Natural History group. Rich has given numerous presentations at WGNSS entomology meetings. He has a teaching insect collection of approximately 10,000 specimens. For ten years in the 1990's Rich led Butterfly Counting research efforts at Valley View Glade. For four of those years, he was the leader of the Missouri Butterfly Count organization, which was sponsored by the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Out in the field, Rich's primary interest is insect coloration, with an emphasis on mimicry. Other areas of interest include paleontology, ecology, evolution and hiking. Along with best friend Ted MacRae, Rich has completed hiking on the Ozark Trail. Rich loves to be outdoors. Every field trip brings something new to learn and fascinating to see. In addition, Rich has a strong desire to teach students and to encourage a love of nature. He volunteers to speak to school groups and other youth organizations. Usually, the talk is about the amazing world of insects. He has also been a Boy Scout leader as a camp counselor as a young adult and as a pack leader when his son was a cub scout. In addition, he has participated on the WGNSS board as Scholarship and Entomology chairs, WGNSS President, first Vice-President and currently Historian. On WGNSS' 100th anniversary, Richard was the Senior Editor of the WGNSS 100th Anniversary book.

Other

Plant Sale

Plant-Sale@mgcwg.org

Turn Around Garden

Turn-Around-Garden@mgcwg.org

Facebook

<https://m.facebook.com/WebsterGrovesGardenClub>

Unsubscribe

Unsubscribe@mgcwg.org

St. Louis Gardening Events

In February 2026, St. Louis garden events are highlighted by the annual Orchid Show at the Missouri Botanical Garden, running throughout the month, alongside Orchid Nights, Winter Forest Bathing, and specialized, ticketed educational workshops such as Owls of Missouri.

Key Missouri Botanical Garden (MOBOT) Events (Feb 2026)

- Orchid Show (Daily): Featuring thousands of flowers.
- Orchid Nights (Feb 5, Feb 19): Evening viewing opportunities.
- Winter Valentine's Forest Bathing (Feb 14): A guided sensory experience.

Other Garden & Horticultural Events

- Art in Bloom (Feb 20-22): Floral interpretations of artwork at the Saint Louis Art Museum.
- Explore Bellefontaine Trolley Tour (Feb 26): Tour of the historic cemetery and arboretum.

GARDENER'S CORNER – FEBRUARY 2026

(aka Carol's corner)

This freezing weather is making me long for a nice day working in the garden. Although we have a good month before it happens, spring can't come too soon! According to **Missouri Botanical Garden** *Tips and Tasks*, February is when you can start sowing some flower seeds. Those suggested are larkspur, sweet peas, poppies and snapdragons all of which need, for the best blossoms, to sprout and begin their growth before warm weather gets here.

Look for signs of frost heaving in the soil surrounding perennials. Plants can be lightly tamped back into the soil to cover any exposed roots. Late February or early March is also the time to cut back liriopse.

This information is a little late but still may be useful to you. The **University of Illinois Extension** has a good article on using salt to de-ice. Entitled *Deicing salt and plants: How to prevent damage to your landscape*, the article has some good tips and can be found here: <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/good-growing/2025-12-05-deicing-salt-and-plants-how-prevent-damage-your-landscape>.

I haven't checked my hellebore plants (often called Lenten roses) yet, but now is the time to start looking for their buds to poke through the ground and snow. Despite their toxicity, they are one of my favorite flowers and I have many colors in my garden. Hellebores usually start blooming toward the end of February and beginning of March. Once the snow melts, it will be time to get out in the garden and start looking for the blossoms. More on growing hellebores can be found in this article in

Southern Living, *How to grow and care for Lenten roses & other hellebores*,
<https://www.southernliving.com/garden/flowers/lenten-rose>

Inspecting your indoor plants for pests is important during the winter. If you find them, how can you identify and treat them? A timely article from **Garden Design** may be helpful in accomplishing this and successfully ridding your indoor plants of these pesky creatures. The article, *7 Houseplant Pests: How to Identify & Treat*, can be found at the following website:

https://www.gardendesign.com/houseplants/pests.html?utm_source=article-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Houseplant-Pests-1-29-26