

Gardener's Corner April, 2026

Happy Spring! So far, April is bringing much-needed showers. Although it's difficult to get into the garden, I'm not complaining because we sorely need the rain now so flowers will bloom in May.

Tasks and tips from the **Missouri Botanical Garden** suggest that now we can plant trees and shrubs. Some shrubs and trees that should be planted or transplanted in spring, rather than fall, are butterfly bush (Buddleja), dogwood (Cornus), rose of Sharon (Hibiscus), black gum (Nyssa), Vitex, redbud (Cercis), Magnolia, tulip poplar (Liriodendron), birch (Betula), Ginkgo, hawthorn (Crataegus), and most oaks (Quercus).

Look out for galls on junipers and dispose of them before the orange jelly galls emerge so they don't spread rust diseases to other trees like apples, crabapples, and hawthorns. You can apply a preventative fungicide to these trees as they bloom

Once new growth on established rose bushes is about 2" long, a balanced fertilizer can be applied. Spraying for control of black spot can begin now.

Prune dead and weakened wood from winter injured broadleaf evergreens. Wait until the last average frost date, April 15th, to prune boxwoods. Also inspect these shrubs for leafminer as their new leaves emerge. Spring-flowering shrubs, such as Weigela, Viburnum, Rhododendron, and lilacs should be pruned after they bloom.

Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) can be transplanted after they bloom but before the foliage disappears. Late April is the time to begin planting caladiums, gladioli and cannas. Once your Easter lilies are finished blooming, they can be planted outdoors.

Garden Design has a good article on *How to Design a Wellness Garden for Healing and Relaxation*. It discusses what a healing garden is, some of the common elements, and helpful design tips in creating one. You can find it at:

https://www.gardendesign.com/landscape-design/wellness-garden.html?utm_source=article-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=wellness-garden-3-26-26

Some virtual programs of interest in April are the following:

April 7th, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. *Growing a butterfly garden: Illinois butterflies and their host plants*. **University of Illinois Extension**, [4 seasons gardening webinar series](#).

Register here:

<https://registration.extension.illinois.edu/start/four-seasons-gardening-webinar-growing-a-butterfly-garden-april-7>

April 8th, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. *Native Plant Initiative – Growing Equity, Resilience and Community*. **St. Louis County Library**. Register at:

<https://slcl.events.mylibrary.digital/event?id=292568>

April 22nd, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. *Trees for Bees*. **St. Louis County Library**. Register at:

<https://slcl.events.mylibrary.digital/event?id=292570>

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