Summer Bulbs: Surprise Lilies
Katie Kammler, MU Extension Horticulture Specialist

If you’ll notice, I titled this article “surprise lilies”. That is the name I know this plant as but this bulb has many names throughout its planting area.

The most memorable name for me came as a revelation when I was working in the greenhouses at College of the Ozarks. Some older gentlemen came in and asked us girls if we had any naked ladies… I think our mouths dropped open before we found out that it was yet another name for surprise lilies. Other names include magic lily, spider lily, resurrection lily, pink flamingo flower, and hurricane lily.

This is an unusual bulb because the leaves come up now (in spring) and produce the food for the bulb. Then just like daffodils, the foliage withers away when warm weather comes. The surprise lily flower comes in mid-July to August. They are just naked flower stalks topped with 6 to 8 pink funnel shaped flowers. While several species of surprise lilies exist, we generally just have the one species that is winter hardy in this area, *Lycoris squamigera*.

Surprise lilies are very easy to grow. They don’t like soils that stay wet but otherwise aren’t too picky. They will do fine in part shade and average moisture and are also fine in full sun and dry conditions. Bulbs need to be

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planted 6 to 8 inches apart because they do multiply and eventually need thinning. Plant in clumps of 4-6 bulbs to keep them from looking sparse or gangly in the landscape.

For transplanting and division, the best time to dig them is after the flower has bloomed in late summer. The second best time is after the foliage dies back. After four or five years a large clump will build up. The bulbs are very large so dig about six inches away from the bloom stalk to avoid slicing into a bulb.

The other nice thing about growing surprise lilies is that they are generally pest free.

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As Spring rolls around, it seems like gardening and yard chores just pile up. There are fruit trees, grape vines, the yard, the garden and all kinds of plants to start and grow. I also like to look at buying some new fruiting bushes like blueberries, elderberries, boysenberries or such. I have to make a list and check off what I get done.

One thing I’d do is Google “grow zone for 63780” (only put your zip code where mine is). This should bring up a bunch of sites. The one you are looking for is similar to www.plantmaps.com/63780. Under this site you will find a wealth of information. One thing you will find out is your plant hardiness zone. Two other important pieces of information is your average last frost in the spring and average first frost in the fall. In our area, the last average frost occurs somewhere around April 15. Our first frost in the Fall is around October 20.

Now is the time to plant lettuce if you haven’t already. Also, peas need to be planted. Some scatter lettuce seed on the snow and then when the snow melts the lettuce is planted. Plant your peas as early as you can from March on if you so desire. Both lettuce and peas seem to be able to handle cold weather.

Now is the time to buy and plant your broccoli, cabbage, kale, collards, brussel sprouts and cauliflower. These are all cole crops and can be planted or set out four to six weeks before the last frost date. I still have my cole crops in my greenhouse but plans are to begin planting anytime. Onions and carrots can be planted two to three weeks before the last frost so they can be planted now as well. I planted my onion plants and onion sets yesterday.

I’d wait a week or two on the potatoes and corn. The ground is really cold and I don’t believe either would come up very good. As I was planting my onions yesterday my hand actually got cold from poking the onions down into the soil. You can plant your potatoes and corn a week or two before the last frost date, but I usually wait till about the last frost date to plant mine. Some of the new super sweet hybrid corn like the ground to be warm.

Beets can be planted a week or so before the last frost. After you have planted the beet seed scatter a real thin layer of straw over the bed. Beets seem to come up better through the straw.

I started some zucchini in my greenhouse this past week but will wait till middle to late...
Outdoor flowering plants and Ornamentals
- Plan to attract wildlife to your garden. Attract hummingbirds by planting red or orange flowers. Attract butterflies to the garden with a mix of perennial and annual flowers. Consider planting a milkweed species to attract monarchs.
- Prune flowering shrubs after blooming has completed. Pruning now will not affect blooms for next year.
- Apply mulch to landscape beds once soils have warmed and the chance of frost has passed.

Vegetable Gardening
- Plastic jugs make inexpensive and easy-to-use “hot caps” for your vegetable seedlings.
- When weather is wet or cold, allow about twice the germination time listed on the seed packet. If there is no sign of growth after this time, dig around to check for sprouted seeds. If you find no signs of life, the seed has probably rotted, and you will need to replant.
- When planning your vegetable garden, consider that leafy vegetables need at least six hours of sunlight to develop properly. Fruiting vegetables such as tomatoes, squash, eggplant and peppers need 10 hours of full sun.
- Cool season vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower can be planted all month.

Fruits and Nuts
- When apple trees are in full bloom, make a note on your calendar 150 days later to check for ripeness.
- Remember to follow the fruit tree spray schedule for insect and disease free fruit. (MU Guide G6010 Fruit Spray Schedules for the Homeowner)
- Thin the fruits of young apples, pears and peaches to insure larger, healthier fruit. Thin within 25 days of peak bloom, leaving 4 to 6 inches between fruit.
- Grape vines with excess vegetative growth generally have less high-quality fruit. In early spring, prune out the canes with the fewest buds to allow light, moisture and air circulation within the plant to improve the quality and quantity of fruit.

Laws
- Control lawn weeds now through late May before they get large and temperatures get too high to apply herbicides safely.
- Estimate your grass seed needs at 2 to 3 pounds of bluegrass seed or 4 to 8 pounds tall fescue per 1000 square feet.
- Do not mow the lawn until it has grown at least two inches. The roots are being renewed in the spring and grass needs vigorous top growth initially.
If you are into plants a common statement about weeds is, a weed is a plant growing where it is not wanted. When weeds are small it can be hard to decide if those small leaves coming up are friend or foe. Here are a few examples that commonly are considered foe and are normally not kept?

**Chickweed Stellaria media:** This is a prostrate, plant that grows in areas void of turf grass. It becomes a nuisance for those who are trying to keep landscape beds clean of weeds. It can be hard to keep this plant out as it may go unnoticed until it has spread more than 4 inches and really shows. By this time the fibrous root system has become more established and new roots have formed at the stem nodes.

This dainty new growth is the beginning of Cow Parsley Anthriscus sylvestris or Wild Chervil. This plant may be confused with both Wild Carrot or Hemlock because of its white, umbel flowers. It is mildly toxic like Wild Carrot but not as acutely toxic as Hemlock. Due to the mild toxicity and aggressive spreading, it is considered a weed in need of control. Control is easiest when weeds are small, as shown left, and before the roots really establish a firm hold.

**Wild garlic Allium vineale or onion Allium canadense:** This is often considered a nuisance weed as it grows faster and taller than lawn grass. It is readily spread by seed if the plant is allowed to seed itself. When cut a mild garlic or onion smell is emitted. The leaves of wild garlic are round and hollow, the leaves of wild onion are flatter and solid. Both are sometimes confused with the Star-of-Bethlehem Ornithogalum umbellatum, a spring weed that lacks the onion or garlic smell and has a distinct white line down the leaf midrib.

Sometimes a new ‘weed’ appears. Should we pull it? Is it toxic, does it spread aggressively, does it have sticky seeds? These might be reasons to eliminate a young plant but if the answers are unknown, then let it grow to find out. Use one of the following databases to identify the plant after it has matured and flowered.


Can you identify this weed as it sits now?
Many gardeners are told that diatomaceous earth can be used as an organic remedy for insects but questions abound about how it works.

Diatomaceous earth (DE) is a naturally occurring, soft siliceous sedimentary rock that easily crumbles into a fine powder. It is made of pre-historic diatoms, the fossilized remains of single-celled organism known as phytoplankton (a type of hard shelled algae).

Over thousands of years, diatoms have accumulated in the sediment of rivers, streams, lakes and oceans. Today, these diatom deposits are mined. The first pesticide products containing diatomaceous earth were registered in 1960 to kill insects and mites. As an insecticide, the fine powder absorbs oils and fats from the waxy outer layer (cuticle) of the insects’ exoskeleton, causing dehydration. It’s sharp edges are abrasive which speeds up the desiccation. It works mechanically and not chemically. It can be used on plants to discourage leaf eating and sucking insects as well as on the ground around plants to discourage snails, slugs and crawling insects. It can also be used indoors to control cockroaches, ants, silverfish, crickets, millipedes centipedes, fleas and bedbugs.

It is great for using on newly hatched larvae and nymphs including squash bugs, Japanese beetles, Mexican bean beetles and Colorado potato beetle. To be effective, insects must be well coated with the dust.

In addition to insecticides, it has been used in toothpaste, metal polishes, filtration products, absorbents, cat litter, plastics and rubber.

Natural DE is virtually non-toxic to man or other mammals, safe in our soils, and safe in our streams, lakes and oceans. However, it can pose health hazards. It can cause irritation in the respiratory system if inhaled, cause irritation to the skin or even eye problems. It can still be hazardous to beneficial insects. Avoid using on plants that are frequently visited by bees or other pollinators.

Apply to dry plants or dry soil as it is generally better used in dry weather. Humidity can limit it’s affectiveness. Reapply after rains.

For gardens, use food grade or “natural grade” DE. Food grade is 100% diatomaceous earth whereas other grades have other ingredients added such as pyrethrin pesticides and chemical synergists.

Always READ AND FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS and take steps to minimize exposure. Use dust mask to prevent inhaling. Wear gloves as it can feel like fiberglass. Use protective eye goggle/glasses to prevent eye exposure. Avoid using on a windy day. DE has an indefinite shelf life. It does not break down in the presence of sun or heat. Keep it dry.

For more information:

National Pesticide Information Center
http://npic.orst.edu/factsheets/degen.html

Arizona Cooperative Extension—Pest Press
What’s Blooming - April Wildflowers
Katie Kammler, MU Extension Horticulture Specialist

Here is what wildflowers are blooming in April (from MDC Conservation Calendar).

Bird’s foot violet
White trillium
Wild hyacinth
Columbine
Wild geranium
Virginia bluebells
Shining blue star
Crested iris
Downy phlox
May apple

For more information on native wildflowers, see Grow Native [http://grownative.org/](http://grownative.org/)

Volunteer Work
Dale Wright, Parkland Master Gardener

Need Master Gardener volunteer hours? This is your lucky day! Now in its 41st year of operation, Missouri Community Improvement Industries (MCII) is a not for profit Extended Employment Sheltered Workshop. The mission of MCII is to provide meaningful and dignified employment opportunities for 93 local people with Mental Health and/or Developmental Disabilities, that allows each individual to live as independently as possible in our community, and to reach their full potential in safe and productive work environments. In 2012, MCII purchased Dix Greenhouse, located at 1430 E. Main Street, Park Hills, Missouri. To celebrate the Dix Garden Center’s 5th spring season under the management of MCII, we are happy to offer the opportunity of volunteer hours to area Master Gardeners. There are plenty of hours available for everyone wanting to come water and feed plants, organize displays, train our employees in basic plant care, assist customers, etc.

For more information please stop by Dix Garden Center by MCII and talk to Brandon Anderson, Manager, or call him at 573-431-1027. Hours of operation are Monday through Saturday 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., and 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday.
Upcoming Events

The following Master Gardener meetings are held each month. All are welcome to attend. Please contact your local extension office to confirm location if you did not attend the previous meeting.

Parkland MGs - 1st Monday at 6:30pm, Horticulture Classroom at MAC, Park Hills
Poplar Bluff MGs - 1st Tuesday at 6:00pm at Fist Episcopal Church in Poplar Bluff, MO (Do not meet in January)
Ste. Genevieve MGs - 2nd Thursday, at 6:30pm, Ste. Gen. County Extension Center
Cape Girardeau MGs - 3rd Thursday at 7:00pm, Cape County Extension Center
Perry MGs - 4th Monday at 6:30pm, Perry County Extension Center

April

2 2nd Annual Growing Green Regional Gardening Seminar (Basic and Advanced Garden Topics), 9am to 4pm. $10 for morning session, and $10 for afternoon session. Havener Center, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Rolla. For information visit extension.missouri.edu/phelps or phelpsmastergardeners.org. To register call 573-458-6260.

7 Advanced Beekeeper Training for established beekeepers. NRCS office in Dexter, MO. To register call the Extension Center at 573-686-8064.

9,16 Perennial Plant Sale, Madison County Farm Supply in Fredericktown, MO. Begins at 8:00 am.

12 Missouri for Monarchs; 6:00pm at the Fredericktown Library.

12 MG Core Training Begins for Butler, Carter, Ripley, Stoddard and Wayne county. To register, call 573-686-8064.

16 Native Plant ID Workshop, 9 am to noon. The Breitenstein’s From Patton go south on Hwy 51, 3.5 miles, right on Hwy A, .25 miles on right. Workshop is free but must pre-register with MDC, Marcus Janzow, at 573-535-8423.

30 Webster Groves’ Herb Society Annual Herb Sale. First Congregational Church of Webster Groves, 10 West Lockwood, Webster Groves, MO. Doors open at 8:30am. Free admission. Find thousands of herbs, heirloom tomatoes, vegetables and native plants, books, demonstrations and members available to advise on the right plants. See www.wgherbs.org for the list of plants ordered for 2016.

30 Perry County MG Plant Sale from 8 am to Noon at Perry Park in Perryville, MO.

Garden Program Slated for Spring!

Do you have an interest in gardening? Would you like to learn more about working with plants? This is an opportunity for you.

The University of Missouri Extension is offering educational events through October to enhance your gardening skills. For those who wish to become a Master Gardener, you need to attend a minimum of 10 events – total cost $150. If you are interested in just learning about plants the cost is $20 per class. You MUST pre-register and pre-pay to participate in the Master Gardening Training Program.

Classes are still being scheduled for later in the summer. You may choose from the following in April, May and June:

April 12 - Fruit Production
Van Buren; 1-4pm

April 21 - Soil Health and Composting
Poplar Bluff; 3:30-6:30pm

May 12 - Vegetable Gardening
Van Buren; 1-4pm

May 24 - Vegetable Gardening
Greenville; 1-4pm

June 9 - Plant Protection, Diseases and control
Greenville; 1-4pm

June 22 - Plants and Plant Growth Environments
Poplar Bluff; 3:30-6:30pm

To learn more about these opportunities or to register, please contact the Extension Center at 573-686-8064 to sign up for the 2016 Master Gardener core training program. Call your local extension office if you are interested in attending only one program. Carter - 573-323-4418; Wayne - 573-224-3035; Poplar Bluff - 573-686
April to set them out. Zucchini are easy to start. The seeds germinate real easy and grow well. You can set them out in your garden about three weeks after planting the seeds. Cucumbers are easy to start as well.

Everyone wants to hurry and plant in the spring but wait to plant your tomatoes, cucumbers and green beans. These three can’t stand a frost so they should be planted after all danger of frost is over. May 1 is a great target date on all three in grow zone 6b. Some crops like zucchini and okra like warm to hot weather so don’t get in a hurry planting them.

If you have grape vines they need to be pruned as soon as you can. They will be budding out and putting on blossoms at any time. When you prune them they will weep but this shouldn’t hurt the vines. Not pruning them will hurt them even more. If you aren’t sure how to prune your grapes check it out online or ask someone who grows grapes. You will need to begin spraying your grapes for fungus and bugs at this time as well. Now is also a great time to spray around the vines for grass and weeds and such. I usually use roundup in the spring. Just be careful not to get it on the vines. Make sure there is little if any wind.

Some of our fruit trees are budding right now and some about ready to.
I hooked up our sprayer yesterday and sprayed all of ours with dormant oil spray. I think the only danger is making sure it doesn’t freeze after you have sprayed them. We are supposed to stay above 40 degrees for several days so I’m safe to spray.

As you plant your garden some crops should be planted for successive crops. Radishes can be planted at one week to two week intervals so that you have radishes ready on a regular basis. Zucchini is another plant to plant say every two to four weeks. Lettuce is another vegetable to plant successively. The same for some cabbage plants like Nero. Rainbow chard or kale can be planted like this. We plant corn so that we have a new batch every two to three weeks. Also potatoes! Our favorite potatoes are the new little ones about silver dollar size. Even green onions can be planted successively so that you have green onions all summer. Buy extra onion sets and stick them down in your crisper in the fridge to plant later this summer. The sets are cheap so if they spoil you haven’t lost but a dollar or two.