

# NoCo Bloom

EARLY SPRING 2018



REAP THE AWARDS OF  
**shrubs**

MARCH  
INTO  
**MULCH  
MADNESS**

ROLL OUT  
THE  
**RAIN  
BARRELS**

HARD DAY'S  
NIGHT WITH  
**JAPANESE  
BEETLES**



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY  
 Horticulture and Landscape Architecture  
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 Fort Collins, CO 80523-1173  
 Bldg. Shepardson 111  
 970-491-7019  
[hortla.agsci.colostate.edu](http://hortla.agsci.colostate.edu) 



CSU EXTENSION IN LARIMER COUNTY  
 1525 Blue Spruce Dr.  
 Fort Collins, CO 80524-2004  
 970-498-6000  
[larimer.org/ext](http://larimer.org/ext) 



THE GARDENS ON SPRING CREEK  
 CITY OF FORT COLLINS  
 2145 Centre Ave.  
 Fort Collins, CO 80526  
 970-416-2486  
[fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens) 



## NoCo Bloom

PLEASE NOTE: If you are a gardener needing help and live in Weld County, visit the Weld Extension Office at [weldgov.com/departments/csu\\_extension](http://weldgov.com/departments/csu_extension) or call directly to 970-400-2066 for assistance.

We want to hear from you! For inquiries, please contact Korrie Johnston ([kjohnston@fcgov.com](mailto:kjohnston@fcgov.com)) at the Gardens on Spring Creek.

# We Dream of Gardens

March is that refreshing time of year for garden dreaming, planning, and preparing. NoCo Bloom is here to help so you can garden wisely and successfully in the often-challenging high plains of northern Colorado. This month, we are examining all the ways shrubs can make a significant positive impact in your garden space. We're providing our favorites for drought tolerant varieties, design and maintenance tips, and suggestions for adding varieties that bring beauty, scent and color. In addition, get schooled on the Japanese Beetle, the benefits of mulch, rain barrels, and our vibrant community calendar.

Brought to you by Colorado State University's Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, the Gardens on Spring Creek and CSU Extension in Larimer County, NoCo Bloom brings together inspiring and useful information that supports you through the gardening season. Good luck on making this year in the garden the best one yet!

**Korrie Johnston**  
 Editor, NoCo Bloom

**Dr. Jessica G. Davis**  
 HLA Department Head  
 Colorado State University

**Dr. Alison O'Connor**  
 Horticulture Extension Agent  
 CSU Extension in Larimer County

**Michelle Provaznik**  
 Executive Director  
 The Gardens on Spring Creek

# When to Take A Little OFF THE TOP



## PRUNING, SHEARING AND SHAPING

Alison O'Connor, Horticulture Agent, CSU Extension in Larimer County



Use shrubs in the landscape for their flowers, foliage, twig color, texture, fruit and food for birds.

Regular pruning of shrubs will enhance plant vigor, increase flower and fruit production and can add shape and dimension to the plant.

Avoid shearing (trimming off just the outer foliage); instead, make good pruning cuts that benefit the shrub's shape and form.

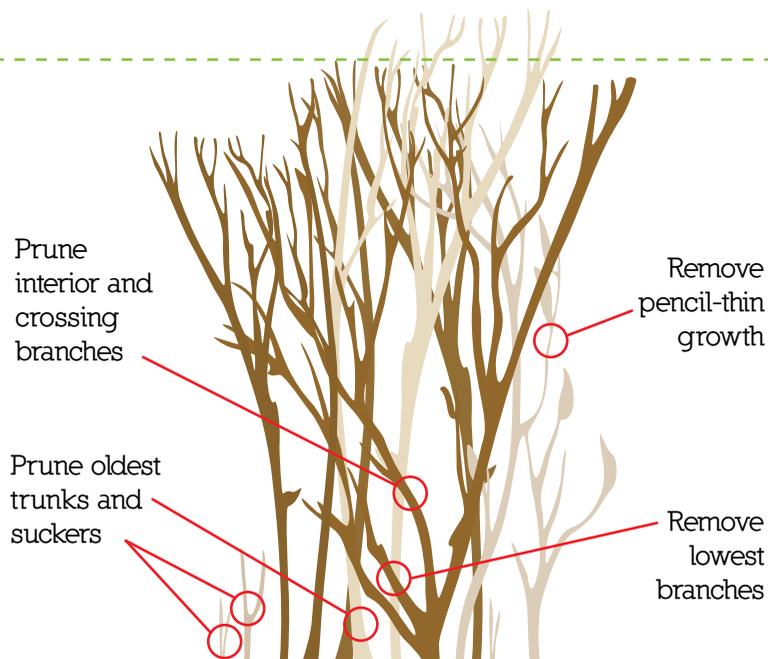
Generally, shrubs should be pruned during the dormant season, prior to budbreak. The exception are spring-flowering shrubs like lilac and forsythia—these should be pruned after flowering.

If shrubs are overgrown or have lost their shape, practice renewal or rejuvenation pruning during the dormant season. Renewal pruning removes a third of the oldest canes/stems to the ground, each year for three years. Rejuvenation pruning removes all of the stems/canes at once. Both of these practices can result in younger shrubs that have better form, shape, flowers and fruit.



Shrubs will benefit from a 3-4 inch thick layer of mulch, but keep mulch from touching the base of the shrub.🌿

### PRUNING TIPS



## march events

### FORT COLLINS

Mar 1 - **Order now for Garden in the Box** (professionally-designed DIY xeriscape garden kits) Available to all, Discounts available in some cities, See website for varying pickup dates, \$79 to \$159, [resourcecentral.org/gardens](http://resourcecentral.org/gardens)

Mar 10 - **Succulent Wall Hanging**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$35, Teens & adults, [gulleygreenhouse.com](http://gulleygreenhouse.com)

Mar 14 - **Build a Worm Farm**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$15, All ages, [gulleygreenhouse.com](http://gulleygreenhouse.com)

Mar 17 - **Beekeeping for Beginners**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Mar 17 - **DIY Hypertufa Troughs**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Mar 18 - **Miniature Gardening Class**, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, \$40, [fortcollinsnursery.com](http://fortcollinsnursery.com)

Mar 24 - **Colorado Gardening Hacks: Lessons from a Decade of Colorado Gardening**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$10, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Mar 24 - **Colorado Native Plants**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$10, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Mar 24 - **Create a Hanging Easter Fairy Garden**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$30, All ages, [gulleygreenhouse.com](http://gulleygreenhouse.com)

Mar 31 - **Easter Eggstravaganza**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, Free, All ages, [gulleygreenhouse.com](http://gulleygreenhouse.com)

### LOVELAND, ESTES PARK & WINDSOR

Mar 10 - **Monthly Bird Walks with Sheila Webber**, High Plains Environmental Center, 2968 Bluestem Willow Dr, Loveland, Free, [suburbitat.org](http://suburbitat.org)

Mar 12 - **Container Gardening**, Clearview Library, 720 3rd St, Free, Windsor, [clearviewlibrary.org](http://clearviewlibrary.org)

Mar 13 - **The Invasives are Coming!** LWP/High Plains Environmental Center, 2698 Bluestem Willow Dr, Loveland, Free, pre-registration required, [cityofloveland.org/LWPLectures](http://cityofloveland.org/LWPLectures)

### CALENDAR COORDINATOR

Kathleen Atkins, Master Gardener  
Colorado State University Extension  
Please submit your gardening classes & events to [nocobloomevents@gmail.com](mailto:nocobloomevents@gmail.com).



## march events

Mar 13 - **Timing is Key! Starting Veggies From Seed**, Estes Valley Community Center, 660 Community Dr, Room C, Estes Park, Free, registration required, [colorado.gov/pacific/evrpd/seniorservices](http://colorado.gov/pacific/evrpd/seniorservices)

Mar 14 - **Sustainable and Manageable Landscapes**, CSU Extension, Loveland Library, 300 N. Adams Ave, Free, [lovelandpubliclibrary.org](http://lovelandpubliclibrary.org)

Mar 15 - **Northern Co Beekeepers Association: Swarm Preparations**, Larimer Co Ranch, McKee Building, 5280 Arena Circle, Loveland, \$5 for non-members, [nocobees.org](http://nocobees.org)

Mar 21 - **Loveland Youth Gardeners: Info, Impact & Vision**, Loveland Garden Club, All Saints Episcopal Church, 3448 N. Taft Ave, Free, [lovelandgardenclub.com](http://lovelandgardenclub.com)

Mar 21 - **Shrubs for your Landscape**, CSU Extension, Loveland Library, 300 N. Adams Ave, Free, [lovelandpubliclibrary.org](http://lovelandpubliclibrary.org)

Mar 28 - **Emerald Ash Borer**, CSU Extension, Loveland Library, 300 N. Adams Ave, Free, [lovelandpubliclibrary.org](http://lovelandpubliclibrary.org)

## april events

### FORT COLLINS

Apr 4-7 - **Blossoms and Butterflies Art Exhibit**, Community Creative Center, 200 Mathews St, Free, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 6 - **Blossoms and Butterflies First Friday Art Walk**, Community Center for Creativity, 200 Mathews St, Free, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 6-8 - **Perennial Palooza Sale**, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, Free admittance, [fortcollinsnursery.com](http://fortcollinsnursery.com)

Apr 7 - **Free Property Tour**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, Free, Teens & Adults, [gulleygreenhouse.com](http://gulleygreenhouse.com)

Apr 7 - **Growing Tomatoes & Peppers with Ease**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave., \$18, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 7 - **Just Drip It!** Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave., \$10, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 13 - **School's Out Day Camp**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$55, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 14 - **Beekeeping in Spring**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 14 - **Habitat Hero**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, Free, Adults, [gulleygreenhouse.com](http://gulleygreenhouse.com)

## A HARD DAY'S NIGHT WITH JAPANESE BEETLES



*Tony Koski, Turf Specialist  
CSU Department of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture*

A bit lost in the justifiable concern over the destructive emerald ash borer is the growing presence of Japanese beetle along the Colorado Front Range. Now firmly entrenched in Denver, Boulder, and Pueblo, discovery of this insect in Fort Collins in 2017 suggests it will be problematic for the northern Front Range.

Unlike most other insects, both life stages are damaging: the adult beetle feeds on the leaves and flowers of ornamentals and fruit crops (grape, most roses, linden, American elm, Virginia creeper, fruit trees are especially favored) and the larval grub stage consumes roots of lawn grasses (favorite), vegetables, and other landscape plants. The good news is that vigilance and the use of cultural, chemical, and biocontrols can greatly minimize damage.

To have adults and grubs identified (plus, we would like to know where it is living!), bring samples to the Larimer County Extension office at 1525 Blue Spruce Drive (open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday).

For more information on Japanese beetle identification and management, check out these web resources.

### FROM CSU

[extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/insects/japanese-beetle-5-601](http://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/insects/japanese-beetle-5-601)

### FROM PURDUE UNIVERSITY

[extension.entm.purdue.edu/publications/E-75.pdf](http://extension.entm.purdue.edu/publications/E-75.pdf)

According to CSU research by Dr. Whitney Cranshaw at the Littleton War Memorial Rose Garden in 2017, some roses were found to have less feeding by Japanese beetles. These varieties included: Child's Play, Class Act, Colossus, Cupcake, Electron, French Lace, Gemini, Jean Kenneally, Joseph's Coat, Old Glory, Perfecta, Picotee, Rainbow Sorbet, Shining Hour, Sun Sprinkles, Angel Face, Carrot Top and Merlot. It should be noted there may be variation of feeding in individual landscapes.

For other lawn questions, call the Larimer County Extension office at 970-498-6000 to talk with a Master Gardener ([larimermg@gmail.com](mailto:larimermg@gmail.com)) or email me your turf questions, [tony.koski@colostate.edu](mailto:tony.koski@colostate.edu). 🌱



# ROLL OUT THE RAIN BARRELS

*Alison O'Connor, Horticulture Agent,  
Colorado State University Extension in Larimer County*

Property owners in Colorado may now collect rainwater on private residences (up to a quad-plex). Owners may collect and hold up to 110 gallons on their property at any time. Collected water should only be used in the landscape and not for drinking, bathing, laundry or dishes. It's also not recommended for animal use. Any water should be used within a week to prevent mosquito larvae and other contaminants. For every inch of rain that falls on a catchment area of 1,000 square feet, you can expect to collect about 600 gallons of water. For more info, please visit CSU Extension Fact Sheet #6.707 at [extension.colostate.edu](http://extension.colostate.edu).

1 The downspout attachment must be within 1-2" of the rain barrel inlet.

2 The barrel must have a removable lid. This will help with draining and cleaning.

3 The inlet should be lined with mesh or have a collection screen (like a colander) to collect debris and prevent mosquitoes.

4 The overflow valve should be located near the top of the barrel; attach a hose or PVC pipe to direct water away from the foundation.

5 When full, a barrel can weigh hundreds of pounds. Add a security strap for safety.

6 Install a water spigot near the base of the barrel for ease of use. You can also attach a hose to the spigot.

7 Raising the barrel results in better water pressure. Place the barrel on a sturdy, secure base.

8 Use any collected water within 7 days for landscape purposes only!

9 The overflow hose, attached to the overflow outlet, must be directed away from the home's foundation. The overflow hose should be 6-8' long.



## april events

Apr 14 - **Uncommon and Underused Perennials**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$10, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 15 - **Miniature Gardening Class**, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, \$40, [fortcollinsnursery.com](http://fortcollinsnursery.com)

Apr 21 - **Build a Bee House for Earth Day**, Gully Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$30, All ages, [gullygreenhouse.com](http://gullygreenhouse.com)

Apr 21 - **Earth Day Tree Sale & Giveaway**, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, Free admittance, [fortcollinsnursery.com](http://fortcollinsnursery.com)

Apr 21 - **New Technologies in Irrigation**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$10, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 21 - **Rain Barrels 101**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$10, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 28 - **Growing a Cut Flower Garden**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$18, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 28 - **Make a Living Necklace**, Gully Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St, \$15, Kids, [gullygreenhouse.com](http://gullygreenhouse.com)

Apr 28 - **Migration Celebration: Birding Event**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, Free, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

Apr 28 - **Spring Open House**, Fort Collins Nursery, 2121 E. Mulberry St, Free, [fortcollinsnursery.com](http://fortcollinsnursery.com)

Apr 28 - **Wild Wines**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, 21+ only, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

### LOVELAND, BERTHOUD, ESTES PARK & WINDSOR

Apr 3 - **Berthoud Historical Society Garden Group: Gardening 201: Gardening Ideas and Design**, McCarty-Fickel Home Museum, 645 7th St, Basement Mtg Rm, Free, [berthoudhistoricalsociety.org/gardengroup](http://berthoudhistoricalsociety.org/gardengroup)

Apr 4 - **First & Third Wednesdays: Gardening Topic by Master Gardeners**, Treasure Island Demonstration Garden, 31457 Weld CR 17, Windsor, Free, [windsorgov.com](http://windsorgov.com)

Apr 9 - **Soils and your Garden**, Treasure Island Demonstration Garden, 31457 Weld CR 17, Windsor, Free, [windsorgov.com](http://windsorgov.com)

Apr 10 - **Succession Planting**, Estes Valley Community Center, 660 Community Dr, Room C, Free, Call 970-586-8191 to register, [colorado.gov/pacific/evrpd/seniorservices](http://colorado.gov/pacific/evrpd/seniorservices)

Plant Select™



### ★ Most Neighborly

Make watering easy and efficient by selecting shrubs with water requirements similar to neighboring plants. Position a Red Yucca—*Hesperaloe parviflora* next to another very low water user like Mojave Sage—*Salvia pachyphylla*.

### ★ Most Attractive ★

Allow shrubs to grow to the natural form and size. Stop the harmful hedging and instead select shrubs that meet the height and shape criteria of your space. This Daphne—*Daphne x burkwoodii* 'Carol Mackie' showcases this tip.



### Best Duo

Pair a shrub with a plant that has a different but complimentary texture or color. Pair a broad leaved shrub with delicate leaves or flowers of another plant. The White Potentilla paired with Globe Allium is pictured.



Plant Select™

## REAPING REWARDS

### IN YOUR GARDEN

is easy when your design vision honors the natural form and beauty of shrubs. Incorporate these simple tips and watch as your vision board transforms into a showstopper space.



### ★ Best Dressed in Winter

Celebrate winter with interesting features like the red twig bark of the Dogwood or the evergreen pop of Manzanita—*Arctostaphylos*.



### ★ Best Native

Dot the landscape with well-placed native shrubs like Golden Currant—*Ribes aureum* to provide habitat and food for wildlife and pollinators.



**KATIE COLLINS**  
Water Conservation Coordinator  
Fort Collins Utilities

## We Recommend... These Drought Tolerant Shrubs

Jesse Eastman, Owner, Fort Collins Nursery



### JAKOBSEN MUGO PINE

*Pinus mugo* 'Jakobsen'

This compact dwarf evergreen has a natural bonsai appearance with dense clusters of deep green needles perched at the tips of its gnarled branches. Slow growing and drought tolerant, this is a perfect specimen plant for a rocky outcrop in a rock garden setting. 1.5'-2' tall, 2'-3' wide, Full sun.

### BLUESTEM JOINT FIR

*Ephedra equisetina*

An ideal plant for year-round color in harsh environments, the dense and finely textured branches are a beautiful blue green hue which form a wonderful backdrop for its bright yellow flowers and red berries. Performs well in poor dry soils, struggles in wet soggy conditions.

4'-5' tall, 6'-8' wide, Full to partial sun.



Plant Select™

### PAWNEE BUTTES® SAND CHERRY

*Prunus besseyi*

This tough, native, drought tolerant shrub grows low to the ground, creating a blanket of color all season long. In the spring, small fragrant white flowers coat the stems. Rich green leaves in the summer give way to brilliant orange and red fall color. Abundant black cherries are very attractive to wildlife.

12"-18" tall, 6'-8' wide, Full sun. ☼



Plant Select™

# SHRUBS

# april events

Apr 14 - **Monthly Bird Walks with Sheila Webber**, High Plains Environmental Center, 2968 Bluestem Willow Dr, Loveland, Free, [suburbitat.org](http://suburbitat.org)

Apr 16 - **Water-Wise Landscape Seminar: Plant Selection for a Pollinator Friendly Landscape**, Community Recreation Center, 250 N. 11th St, Evergreen Room, Windsor, Free, [resourcecentral.org/seminars](http://resourcecentral.org/seminars)

Apr 16 - **Waterwise Plant Selection, Installation and Maintenance**, Center for Resource Conservation, Windsor Community Recreation Center, 250 11th St, Free, Register at website, [resourcecentral.org/water-wise-seminars](http://resourcecentral.org/water-wise-seminars)

Apr 18 - **High Plains Environmental Center: Pints for the People**, Loveland Ale Works, 118 W. 4th St, Free admittance, [suburbitat.org](http://suburbitat.org)

Apr 18 - **Roger Hines: A Cutting Garden**, Loveland Garden Club, All Saints Episcopal Church, 3448 N. Taft Ave, Free, [lovelandgardenclub.com](http://lovelandgardenclub.com)

Apr 19 - **Northern Co Beekeepers Association: Splits for Sustainability**, Larimer Co Ranch, McKee Building, 5280 Arena Circle, Loveland, \$5 for non-members, [nocobees.org](http://nocobees.org)

## FOR THE LOVE OF SHRUBS OUR THREE FAVORITES

*Michelle Provaznik, Director,  
Gardens on Spring Creek*



### MOUNTAIN MAHOGANY *Cercocarpus montanus*

Mountain mahoganies are a beautiful addition to the xeric garden. The almost-evergreen leaves are dark green on the top and fuzzy gray underneath. The name *Cercocarpus* is Greek for “tailed fruit,” aptly describing the odd-shaped fuzzy seeds that cover the stems in fall providing winter interest. This shrub requires minimal care throughout the years.



### CRANDALL CLOVE CURRANT *Ribes odoratum 'Crandall'*

This currant provides interest throughout the growing season. The small, bright yellow, trumpet-shaped flowers lining the branches of this shrub are a sure sign of spring, and their clove-scent is sure to catch your attention. The blue-black fruits ripen in mid-summer. This fast-growing shrub continues to provide interest in the fall when its light green, tri-lobed leaves turn deep red to reddish-orange.



### CHEYENNE MOCK ORANGE

*Philadelphus  
lewisii 'Cheyenne'*

Talk about tough, this shrub was found thriving in the USDA Experimental Station in Cheyenne, Wyoming, after many years of neglect and introduced by Plant Select® in 2001. White, 2-inch blossoms cover the shrub in early summer. Their sweet fragrance will cause you to stop and find the source. This xeric shrub is a nice size for a mixed border and can even function as an informal hedge. 🌿



# may events

## FORT COLLINS

May 5 - **Macro (Close Up) Photography in the Garden**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

May 5 - **Make a Melted Bead Sun Catcher Mobile**, Gulley Greenhouse, 6029 S. Shields St. \$15, Kids, [gulleygreenhouse.com](http://gulleygreenhouse.com)

May 5 - **Vintage Garden Tea**, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave, \$30 per adult, \$15 per child, [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)

**Colorado Master Gardener Office Hours**, Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday Morning, CSU Extension in Larimer County, 1525 Blue Spruce Dr, Free, [colostate.edu/Depts/CoopExt/Larimer](http://colostate.edu/Depts/CoopExt/Larimer)

**Native Plant Master Courses**, Throughout the summer at various open spaces, parks and research centers, \$30 to \$90, [larimer.extension.colostate.edu](http://larimer.extension.colostate.edu)

**Read and Seed**, Every Monday & Tuesday, Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave. \$3. [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)



# SPRING IS HERE! IT'S TIME TO **PLANT IT FORWARD!**



**PLANT IT FORWARD**  
Fighting Hunger from the Ground Up

As a joint partnership between the Gardens on Spring Creek and the Food Bank for Larimer County, Plant it Forward

encourages local gardeners to plant, grow, and share some of their fresh produce with community members in need. Remember no donation is too small to make a huge impact! Individuals, families, neighborhoods, businesses, churches, and other organizations are encouraged to participate. For more updates, visit [plantitforwardnoco.org](http://plantitforwardnoco.org).



## may events

### LOVELAND, BERTHOUD, ESTES PARK & WINDSOR

May 1 - **Tree Selection for Northern Colorado with the Windsor Tree Board**, Clearview Library, 720 3rd St, Free, [clearviewlibrary.org](http://clearviewlibrary.org)

May 2 - **First & Third Wednesdays: Gardening Topic by Master Gardeners**, Treasure Island Demonstration Garden, 31457 Weld CR 17, Windsor, Free, [windsorgov.com](http://windsorgov.com)

May 5 - **Habitat Fair & Plant Sale**, High Plains Environmental Center, 2968 Bluestem Willow Dr, Loveland, Free, [suburbitat.org](http://suburbitat.org)

May 8 - **Native Plants**, LWP/High Plains Environmental Center, 2698 Bluestem Willow Dr, Free, pre-registration required, Loveland, [cityofloveland.org/LWPLectures](http://cityofloveland.org/LWPLectures)

## WHY I VOLUNTEER



**“I volunteer** because Fort Collins  
**loves nature**  
as much as I do.”

—*Tim Weinmann*  
*Master Naturalist*



# A Blanket of Mulch

## DOES IT ALL IN THE GARDEN



Charleen Barr, Colorado State University Extension  
Master Gardener in Larimer County

Tired of pulling weeds? Wincing about rising water costs? Then consider using mulch in your garden. Mulch offers many advantages to home gardeners.

A blanket of mulch helps moderate soil temperature extremes in all seasons. In spring, mulch protects emerging plants from winter drying and frost heaving. Mulch is beneficial to use over bulbs because it delays growth until the weather is warmer. It also helps slow weeds, conserves water by reducing evaporation, and increases infiltration while minimizing soil erosion.

Organic mulches break down over time, adding organic matter to soils. Wood and bark chips, straw and grass clippings are examples of organic mulch. Inorganic mulches include gravel and rock. Mulch is like putting an insulating blanket around plants and trees. Spending time mulching works magic for plants by protecting them from cold, heat and drought. Plus, mulch makes the landscape look more “finished” and tidy.

### The City of Fort Collins offers two locations for free mulch to residents:

Timberline Recycling Center, 1903 S. Timberline Rd, and the northeast corner of the parking lot at Gardens on Spring Creek, 2145 Centre Ave. Mulch is placed in the bins each week by the City’s Forestry Department, but at no specific time or day of week. Community members may haul away as much mulch as they need. Free mulch is not available to commercial businesses. ♻️



SLOWS WEEDS  
saves water  
FEEDS SOIL  
looks great



## SPRING PLANT SALE

### May 12-13

### GARDENS ON SPRING CREEK

The sale of the year is back! We have just what you need to grow a beautiful landscape, bountiful veggie garden, and lively containers. Staff and volunteers from The Gardens and students from CSU and FRCC have cultivated thousands of annuals, perennials, herbs, and veggie starts for your garden. Proceeds benefit all three organizations. Remember to bring your own box to carry your plants home! Watch our website ([fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens)) for a complete list of available plants.

#### MEMBERS-ONLY:

FRIDAY, MAY 11, 3 - 6 P.M.

#### PUBLIC HOURS:

SATURDAY, MAY 12, 9 A.M. - 4 P.M.

SUNDAY, MAY 13, NOON - 5 P.M.



## WATER USE Q&A



# Be a Good Parent to Your Landscape

Liesel Hans, Ph.D., Water Conservation Manager, Fort Collins Utilities

Raising plants is a lot like raising kids. At first, they don't appear to do much and only need tiny but frequent meals. As they grow, they eat more but less often. Xeric "water-wise" plants are the least needy offspring; after proper care and establishment they flourish with far less parenting and water.

### Q: HELP! HOW DO I UNDERSTAND WHAT'S NEEDED?

A: Plants and babies can't tell you what they need, but you can learn to notice the signs. Only water if the soil around the base and an inch or two below the plant is dry. Watering "just in case" is harmful, and may cause mold or fungus. A soil moisture meter works like a thermometer and can help you know when to water. Also, know your plant's particular water needs. Some prefer to dry out between waterings, while others need more uniform soil moisture.



### Q: WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO WATER?

A: You wouldn't use a ladle to airplane-in pureed peas, right? Choose the right equipment for the job. Plants absorb water through their roots, so applying water directly to the area underneath the spread of the plant is the most effective and efficient approach. Drip systems deliver water slowly and only where your plants need it.

It helps to break up waterings into shorter intervals to allow the first watering to soak into the soil. Then, the second watering can infiltrate more deeply, encouraging drought-resilient, deep-root growth. Otherwise, you're wasting water and increasing your utility bill when it pools and runs-off. By only watering the top few inches, the roots stay at the surface, making them sensitive to heat and drought.

### Q: WHY DO THE YOUNGEST NEED MORE?

A: As plants first establish, they need more water to grow deep, drought-tolerant root systems—most of the action is hidden below the surface. After the first summer, you'll notice significant growth and by the second and third summers, you can reduce watering significantly. Your babies are all grown up and ready to be more self-sufficient adults. They'll still need your care and occasional watering (parenting is for life, right?). 🌱

**Plant Select®**  
Sugar Bowl Clematis  
*Clematis scottii*

# Waterwise Plants Save Water. Add Beauty.

**Fort Collins  
NURSERY**

2121 E. Mulberry St., Fort Collins, CO 80524 • 970-482-1984 • [www.FortCollinsNursery.com](http://www.FortCollinsNursery.com)



# How to Select WATER-WISE PLANTS FOR YOUR LANDSCAPE

**SEEK OUT**  
plants that are adapted to our region through our programs like Plant Select® and Garden in a Box →  
([fcgov.com/giab](http://fcgov.com/giab)).

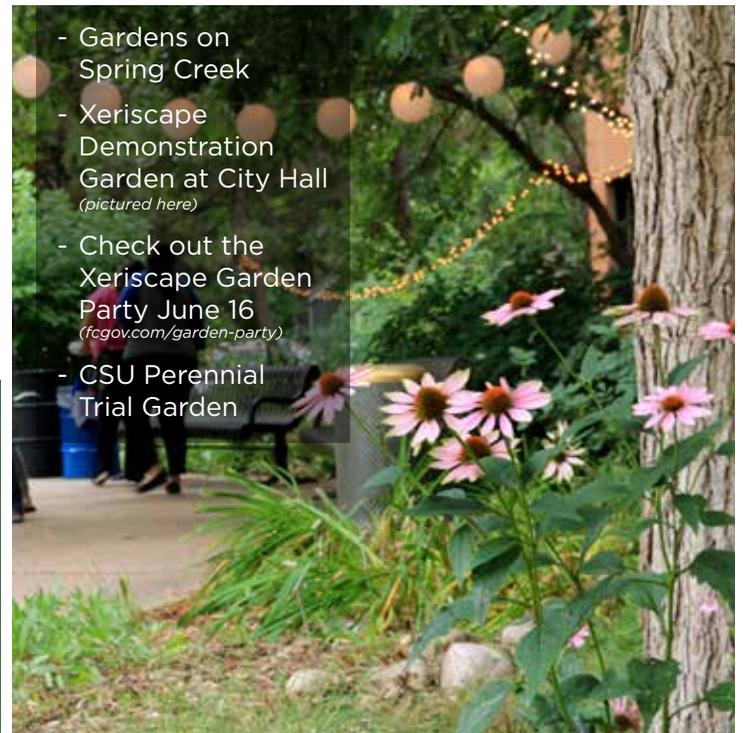


**ZONE 5 THRIVES**  
Check USDA hardiness zone on plant tags. Northern Colorado falls into Zone 5.

5

**Visit local demonstration gardens year round**

- Gardens on Spring Creek
- Xeriscape Demonstration Garden at City Hall (pictured here)
- Check out the Xeriscape Garden Party June 16 ([fcgov.com/garden-party](http://fcgov.com/garden-party))
- CSU Perennial Trial Garden



On average, water use increases by more than **50%** during the summer months.

50% MORE SUMMER USAGE

WINTER USAGE

**FOR MORE RESOURCES**

[fcgov.com/water-smart](http://fcgov.com/water-smart)



*Anaphalis spp*

## KEEP IT LOCAL

Visit a local nursery or plant sale and ask about water requirements.

Look for keywords: low water, very low water, xeric, native and drought tolerant.

OVER 400 OPTIONS!

Check out water-wise plant lists from our Xeriscape Incentive Program ([fcgov.com/xip](http://fcgov.com/xip)).

**TIPS**



**Take pictures** and write down names of plants you like. Send pictures to a local Master Gardener volunteer ([larimermg@gmail.com](mailto:larimermg@gmail.com)) for help identifying plants.



*Erigeron speciosus*



## GO NATIVE

Native plants are not only perfectly suited for our climate, they also support native pollinators.

Check out this native planting guide at:

[fcgov.com/low-water-native-plants](http://fcgov.com/low-water-native-plants)

City of  
**Fort Collins**  
Utilities