

Newsletter

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March 2023

Homer Garden Club

The next HGC meeting will be held March 19 at 2:00 pm via Zoom or in person at the Aspen Hotel.



March 19 HGC Meeting Will Feature Lindsay Olsen Speaking on Kelp Farming

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Lindsay Olsen is the co-owner and operator of Spinaker Sea Farms, a 2-acre kelp and oyster farm in Jakolof Bay. Lindsey was born and raised in Homer, spending summers working on the back deck of her dad's Cook Inlet drift boat, and the off season helping on the family's oyster farm. In 2019, Lindsay and her wife Leah bought the family's oyster farm and began cultivating seaweed in 2020.



Lindsay also works as the Director of Training and Support for Green Wave, a bi-coastal nonprofit that supports the growth of burgeoning domestic seaweed industry. She holds a master's degree from the Yale School of the Environment, where she was awarded a Switzer Fellowship for environmental leadership.

In this presentation Lindsay will introduce what ocean farm-grown kelp is and why you should care about it. She will describe the growing domestic seaweed industry in the US, how kelp is cultivated, where it is sold, and current market demand for seaweed products. In particular she will focus on current farming operations across Alaska and in Kachemak Bay, and opportunities for growth within the industry in Alaska. Lastly, Lindsay will show images of kelp growing on her farm in Jakolof Bay, and describe efforts by Homer-local farmers and businesses to put K-Bay kelp on the map.

Since Lindsey is currently out of town, this will be a virtual presentation on Zoom.

The March 19 meeting will be a hybrid meeting on Zoom and also in person. Directions for the Zoom meeting are on page 2



Treasurer Report February 2023

Income

Membership	\$135.00	
Book Sales	\$10.97	
Total Income		<u>\$145.97</u>

Expenses

Meeting Venue	\$0.00	
Meeting Speaker	\$200.00	
Total Expenses		<u>\$200.00</u>

Checking Beginning Balance 02/01/2023	\$	11,788.30
Income	\$	145.97
Expenses	\$	200.00
Interest	\$	0.45
Ending Balance 02/28/2023	\$	11,734.72
Money Market Beginning Balance 02/01/2023	\$	15,094.53
Interest	\$	2.89
Money Market Ending Balance 02/28/2023	\$	15,097.42
Total Ending Balance 02/28/2023	\$	<u>26,832.14</u>



Instructions for Zoom Meeting March 19

by Kathy Dube'

March Meeting – Hybrid In Person and Zoom

Yay for sunny days! Our March meeting will be a hybrid Zoom and In-Person (Aspen Hotel) meeting. Please join us at the Aspen Hotel if you are able, or on Zoom if you can't be there in person. The meeting link is:

OR, if you don't have access to a computer and want to listen:

One tap mobile (audio only)
+17193594580,,86156646794#,,,,*907847# US

Topic: Homer Garden Club March 20223 Meeting
Time: Mar 19, 2023 02:00 PM Alaska
Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86156646794?pwd=aUpnSEdYeGhOM1I6WGE4NllwOFdEZz09>

Meeting ID: 861 5664 6794
Passcode: 907847



February Meeting Minutes

by Connie Cavasos, Secretary

Homer Garden Club
Membership Meeting at
Aspen Hotel and via Zoom
February 19, 2023

Meeting called to order by President Kathy Dube' at 2:04

Announcements: Yarrow gives an update of the Pratt Museum gardens and grounds; museum has received an EPA grant and will be upgrading trails and gardens along with free garden tours. Meetings with and stakeholders public input will begin at the end of February or first part of March.

Secretary's Report: Connie – nothing to report

Treasurers Report: Kathy for Louise – financials the same as in the last newsletter.

Committee Reports:

Gardeners Weekend: Annie – the date is the same, July 16, currently have 4 gardens but would like one more. Volunteer sheets will be out at the next membership meeting. Looking for small gardens to tour if anyone is interested in opening up for tours, please let someone on the committee know.

Speakers Committee:
Janice Holden – Still have Lindsey Olsen on kelp farming in March and Jason Davis of Sweetgale Meadworks in April. May is still open, would like suggestions from the membership.

Baycrest Garden: nothing to report

Plant Sale: Kathy for Julie – set for May 20th at the Chamber; please think about plant starts you may be able to donate, also need volunteers for this short and fun event.

Social Committee: Michael – thank you to all who have signed up, have refreshments covered through May, will try to give reminder calls to the volunteers and publish in the newsletter.

Data Base: Barb – now have 107 members

Newsletter: Paula – always looking for suggestions if anyone has articles to send

Charitable Giving Workgroup: Kathy – still working on it, should have something for the membership next month. If anyone would like to be part of the workgroup, please let Julie know.

Kathy adjourns meeting at 2:22

Janice introduces Jeff Dean, owner of the Dean Homestead and Art Studio to speak on garden art.

Benefits of Kelp

by Kaleigh Roberts, MGB Food

Kelp is often called a 'superfood from the sea' because it has 10 times more calcium than milk and more vitamin C than OJ," said Robin Berzin, M.D., functional medicine doctor and the founder of Parsley Health. "While kelp contains dozens of essential vitamins and minerals, it's difficult to find kelp on the menu and get it into one's daily diet" she said. Not to worry, though, kelp can be found as a powdered supplement, and it's easy to add to smoothies, soups, and baked goods.

Kelp is an excellent source of vitamin K, vitamin A, vitamin B-12, calcium, iron and magnesium. Vitamin K aids with bone metabolism and helps produce the protein that's key to making blood clots. Vitamin A is key to many functions in your body, from making sure you have optimal eye health to supporting the immune system and reproduction. It

also helps the heart, lungs, kidneys and other organs work optimally.

Kelp is one of the best natural sources of iodine 3, which is essential for thyroid hormone production. Iodine deficiency can lead to metabolism disruptions which can cause things like weight changes among other symptoms.

While kelp is a great source of all of the above vitamins and nutrients, its real claim to fame nutritionally is as a plant-based source of calcium—it's a better source than most vegetables, including kale.

Kelp contains a natural fiber called alginate, which studies have found can inhibit fat absorption in the gut by 75%. As a result, kelp is being researched as a weight maintenance supplement that could be added to

foods like yogurt. More research is needed to confirm these findings, though.

If you're seriously considering increasing your kelp intake at this point, then know that kelp supplements come in powdered or capsule form. While both forms are effective ways to increase the amount of kelp (and all the vitamins and nutrients it carries)* in your diet, in general, powdered forms of supplements are more quickly absorbed because there is no capsule barrier to break down (and it can also be mixed into drinks, which is a plus).





10 Garden Activities to Beat the Winter Blues

by Kim Toscano,
"Southern Living"

Don't let the dark weather get you down.

Even on the darkest days of winter, there are still plenty of gardening activities to enjoy. Get outside while the sun is shining to clip blooms and branches for a winter bouquet. Or grow something indoors to scratch that gardening itch. Indoors and out, these ten garden activities will help you beat the winter blues.

FORCE FLOWERS INDOORS

Brighten up a winter day with fresh flowers. Many flowering bulbs can be forced to bloom out of season for a colorful winter display. The easiest bulbs to force are Paperwhite Narcissus because they don't require chilling, which is a period of cold temperatures necessary for many bulbs to flower. Other commonly forced bulbs include amaryllis, muscari, and hyacinths. For a greater challenge try forcing colchicum or miniature iris. When selecting bulbs, look for varieties sold specifically for indoor forcing, as they are "pre-chilled" and ready to bloom.

FEED THE BIRDS

Food choices are getting scarce for our feathered friends. Hang a feeder outside the window near your favorite chair and enjoy the action. Offer calorie-rich food high in fat and protein such as black oil sunflower, suet, and peanuts. Each of these foods draws in different bird species. You might consider buying a bird book to identify species you don't recognize. Don't forget to offer a fresh source of water for bathing and drinking. Water features with moving water often remain unfrozen throughout winter, or you can use a simple heater to warm the water in winter and prevent freezing.

MAKE A WINTER BOUQUET

You can find something blooming even in the dead of winter. Grab your flower snips and head outside to collect a winter bouquet. Look for the rose-like blooms of Japanese camellias or the fragrant blossoms of winter daphne. Add yellow-flowering stems of winter jasmine or witch hazel, and clusters of vibrant pink winter heath. Finish floral arrangements with evergreen foliage cut from hollies, magnolia, and colorful loropetalum, or berry-covered branches of winterberry holly.

CLEAN AND SHARPEN YOUR PRUNING TOOLS

Late winter and early spring are the best times to prune trees and shrubs, cut back grasses, and trim perennials. Get ready for these tasks by sharpening

your pruners and loppers. Pruning goes much faster when your tools are clean, sharp, and oiled.

BUILD A TERRARIUM

Terrariums date back to Victorian England where they were first used for botanical purposes and later as interior decoration. They are simple gardens enclosed in glass or plastic. Terrariums provide an ideal growing environment that can be adapted to specific plant material, allowing you to grow a greater diversity of indoor plants. You can create a humid environment for ferns, mosses, and even the Venus flytrap. Curate a dry terrarium to showcase miniature cacti or design a humid, tropical scene with vibrant foliage. The possibilities are endless.

FORCE WOODY BRANCHES TO BLOOM

Just as you can force bulbs to bloom out of season, you can force deciduous woody plants to bloom early by bringing stem cuttings indoors and placing them in a vase of water. Late winter is the time to force woody branches, after plants have already experienced at least six weeks of cold temperatures. Spring-flowering trees and shrubs, such as forsythia, flowering quince, and peach trees, work best for winter forcing.

START SEEDS

Planting seeds and tending seedlings is a great way to spend a winter day. It also saves you money on transplants and allows you to select from a much wider selection of cultivars. When you start your own seeds, you can also time seed sowing according to your expected planting date so that transplants are ready when you need them. Refer to seed packets and look up the average last frost date for your region to determine the optimal sowing time.

CLEAN AND REPAIR BIRD HOUSES

Winter is a great time to prepare bird houses for the arrival of breeding birds in spring. Remove old nests and disinfect houses with a diluted bleach solution. A clean house is more attractive to birds seeking nest sites and proper sanitation improves the chances of a healthy and successful brood. Make sure your birdhouses are in place well before the breeding season begins.

POT UP SUMMER-FLOWERING BULBS

Give stored summer-flowering bulbs a head start by potting them up in late winter. While you can certainly wait until soils warm to plant stored bulbs such as

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(Continued from page 4)

can directly outdoors, why not give them a jump start? By initiating growth indoors, we can encourage plants to bloom earlier once they are moved outdoors, giving us a longer bloom season in the garden.

GROW SPROUTS OR MICRO-GREENS



We all know that good things come in small packages, and it seems this adage holds true for vegetables—in the form of sprouts and microgreens. Sprouts are essentially immature, miniature plants harvested shortly after germination, while microgreens are young, tender plants harvested as seedlings. They are both packed with flavor and nutrition, and easy to grow right on the countertop.

FOOD THAT MAGICALLY REGROWS ITSELF...

Growing anything from a seed is impressive but also difficult, unless you're blessed with a green thumb.

Sure, it saves on money but there has to be an easier way... and there is! You can actually grow food from kitchen scraps. There is something very MacGyver about that, no? It's true! You can upcycle everything from celery scraps to onion butts with a great chance of success. Use organic fruits and vegetables for the best results.

Green onions, lemongrass, leeks, fennel, & spring onions





- 1 Place root ends in water but don't fully submerge them. Change the water daily.
- 2 In 3-5 days, growth begins. Harvest the greens when full, then repeat the process.
- 3 Harvest lemongrass once it becomes a foot tall. Simply cut off what you need without uprooting the plant. FOR LEMONGRASS ONLY

Celery, cabbage, romaine lettuce, & bok choy





- 1 Submerge the roots, leaving the tops above the water line.
- 2 Spray with water a couple times a week, replacing the water every few days. Leaves will sprout in about a week.
- 3 Plant the cutting with only the leaves above soil. Harvest when fully grown, about 5 months.

Ginger





- 1 Soak the chunk of ginger overnight.
- 2 Submerge in moist soil. Keep watering until shoots appear.
- 3 Ready to harvest in a year. Simply remove entire plant, use what you need and repeat.

Onion





- 1 Plant root end and lightly cover it in soil. Keep soil moist.
- 2 Carefully separate the new onions, leaving the roots attached, and plant them.
- 3 Occasionally cut the leaves down to promote full growth. It can take up to 5 months for plants to mature enough for harvest.

Mushroom



1 Use a mixture of compost and soil.



2 Plant the mushroom stalk in the soil with only the surface of it exposed.



3 If the cutting takes, new growth happens quickly. Harvest and repeat.

Potatoes & Sweet Potatoes



1 Cut into 3 pieces, each having 1-2 "eyes" on it. Set pieces out at room temp for a few days, until fully dry.



2 Add more soil as the plant grows until it is about 6" tall.



3 Store sweet potatoes in a warm, dry place for 2 weeks before using. This is what makes them sweet.

Pineapple



1 Slice off the green leafy top and remove all fruit. Carefully remove the bottom layers until you see root buds.



2 Place in water for two weeks to form roots.



3 Growth happens in the first few months but it will be 2-3 years before harvest.



COOKING STONED.

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