

Spring 2012 Update

Winter . . . What Winter?

Here in Swiftbrook Gardens, it seems Spring got underway in early February. In fact, excluding a brief vacation during the winter holidays, we've been excited to be busy in quite a few gardens since the new year began.

We are moderately optimistic that a continued La Nina weather pattern means the worst weather really is behind us, and that our most precocious plants to leaf and flower *won't* get slammed by a spring freeze. We do recommend waiting until after the traditional last date for frost in the Piedmont (April 11) before planting annuals, but for trees, shrubs, and hardy perennials **gardening season is here!**

In case you're wondering where to start, here are some projects you might want to consider:

Spring Maintenance Tasks (February – April)

- Continue pruning trees and summer blooming (new wood) shrubs February/ March
- Cut back butterfly bushes (late February); prune roses (Valentine's Day)
- Check perennial beds, clear mulch that may have covered crowns of plants
- Prune Camellias, if desired, after bloom
- Cut down tender perennials (early March)
- Weed
- Compost, mulch
- Fertilize perennial beds, trees and shrubs using Organic Fertilizer
- Divide and transplant summer and fall blooming perennials
- Plant/transplant trees and shrubs
- Plant annuals and perennials
- Thin annual seedlings
- Water as needed
- Stake plants such as peonies and lilies before growth makes it too difficult

Details about upcoming workshops are included in this update. For information about special classes and individualized instruction, please visit our website <http://gardenerbynature.com>.

Happy Gardening!

Dale and John

What's Blooming on March 1



Helleborus hybridus 'Dale's Strain'



Primula vulgaris from Montrose in Hillsborough has performed for us.



Bloodroot - *Sanguinaria canadensis* has not been sampled by our deer Yet.



Trillium cuneatum from a 2009 rescue has begun to naturalize in our woods.

Upcoming Workshops

Sunday, April 22 - 11:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Earth Day Workshop
Benefits of Native Plants
Fo Guang Shan NC Temple, Raleigh.
(Details at blianc.org)

Saturday April 28 - 2:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Inviting Native Plants
Swiftbrook Gardens, Raleigh
(Details at gardenerbynature.com)