



The Garden Buzz...



Down Home Garden Center & General Store
Newsletter

May 2014

Grow for Life

Give your child a good start in life by encouraging him/her to spend time with nature and growing plants. If you have a yard or even a small patio or balcony, you can involve your kids in gardening activities. Working in the garden offers a physical challenge along with an opportunity to care for the Earth and enjoy nature. And most of the time, the end result is something pretty to look at--or tasty to eat.

Vegetable Gardening Activities

Letting kids plant a small veggie garden can inspire them to try new foods. You can start with seedlings or grow plants from seed. If your child has a favorite vegetable, like tomatoes, it's definitely worth trying to grow your own. Try favorites like carrots, string beans, strawberries and corn. And those tomatoes come in dozens of colors, shapes, and sizes. If they grow it, they are more likely to eat it.

The Potting Station

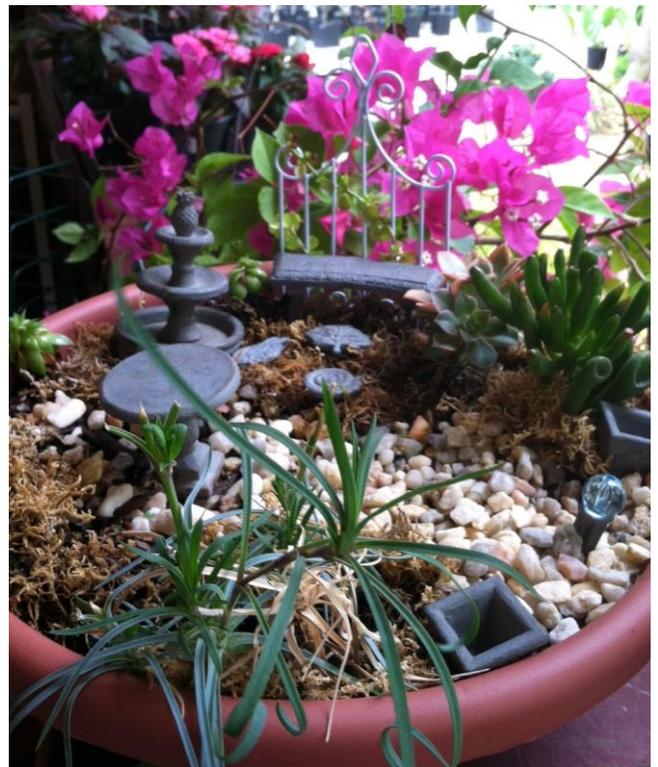
Check out our new Potting Station. For a small fee, children can plant seeds and bedding plants in a container that they can take home and nurture. You can choose from flowers, herbs and vegetables. They can make a hanging basket for Mother's Day. It's a fun and exciting way to have your child begin a lifelong love of gardening.



Register for our Fairy Garden Workshop

Do you want a fun activity to do with your children or grandchildren? Or maybe you just need a creative outlet for yourself. Try a Fairy Garden. A Fairy Garden is a miniature garden complete with structures and actual living plants. It is designed to give your green thumb a place to tend year-round and to bring fairies, and good luck, to your home. It's a tiny space created and tended with love. The design and components are limited only by your imagination. If fairies aren't your thing, you can create a "dinosaur" garden. You can also create a "Pizza Planter" with tomato plant and herbs. (Everything to put on a pizza). During our Workshop, you will create your own Garden, which you will take home. You can register online on our website:

www.downhomegarden.com.



Choosing Plants to Attract Hummingbirds

Choosing plants to intentionally attract hummingbirds requires you to understand how hummingbirds feed and what types of flowers meet those needs. There are 3 basic plant characteristics to keep in mind.

1. **Nectar** - Hummingbirds visit plants for food and they search for nectar rich blossoms that allow them to fuel up. Nectar is a sugar rich liquid produced by flowers. Birds and insects ingest it as food and, in the process, they help pollinate the plant.
2. **Color** - Hummingbird feeders are usually red because hummingbirds can spot red at a great distance. Although they will feed on any nectar rich flower, no matter the color, crimson red petals will catch their attention as they are flying by. You do not need to plant only red flowers, but having a few good sized patches of red will make it easier to attract hummingbirds.
3. **Shape** - There are 3 aspects of flower shape that can be used to attract hummingbirds:
 - o Tubular flowers - Hummingbirds' long pointed beaks are built for long tubular flowers, like larkspur, foxgloves, morning glories and salvia.
 - o Clusters - They also prefer flowers that bloom in clusters, like bee balm and lantana, so they can dart and sip from one to another. Plants with only a couple of large flowers or gardens with only a few of each plant would require more work and energy expenditure to find enough nectar to eat their fill.
 - o Height - Since hummingbirds often feed while hovering in flight, flowers that are held above the foliage, like coral bells, or that dangle below and outside of it, like fuchsia, are the easiest for hummingbirds to access.

Hummingbirds are tiny, but they have a high metabolism and require a great deal of food. They must eat more than their weight in food every day or they are in danger of starving. They like to take their food in meal, spaced throughout the day. They will eat a lot and then burn it off and eat some more. You can help them out by providing a hummingbird feeder in addition to flowers. Please visit our store for a good selection of hummingbird feeders and nectar.



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