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Contributed by Janet Mackey

SPRING NATIVE PLANT SALES NEARBY

It is almost spring! I'm sure many of you are thinking about new plants for your gardens. I want to encourage you to consider adding some *native* plants – not just for their beauty, but also for all they contribute to our ecosystems.



Bluebird with breakfast-caterpillar (photo by Ron Ketter, Janet's husband)

Doug Tallamy presented a marvelous talk to our club a few years back where he helped us understand the direct connection between native plants, caterpillars, and birds. A chickadee needs 4-6,000 caterpillars to raise one nest-full of baby chickadees. If you don't grow native plants, Doug explained, you won't have caterpillars and you won't have baby birds! (If you'd like to see a free recording of Dr. Tallamy speaking this winter with his beautiful photos, here is the link: <https://u.osu.edu/certify/tending-nature/>. 10,000 people signed up for the webinar the day it was live!)

Environmental Concern's (EC) Spring Plant Sale will run from March 21 to April 15, with pick-up in early May. EC's president, Suzanne Pittenger-Slear,

showed us beautiful native plants from her St. Michael's nursery at our club meeting last spring at Sally Ackridge's home. When I checked in with Suzanne last week, she offered a special service to our club. She welcomes club members who have questions about the plants to e-mail her at sslear@wetland.org prior to ordering, or to call her at 410-745-9620 (x201). EC will post their list of plants for sale this spring on their website, and you can order by email or phone. www.wetland.org.

Adkins Arboretum's Spring Plant Sale is online again this year. The sale site opened on March 3 and will accept orders until March 31, with pick-up of the plants at Adkins at scheduled times in late April and early May. Plants will sell out fast, so order early. <https://www.adkinsarboretum.org/nursery/>

Early March weather can send a gardener's spirits soaring or crush us under ice and snow. No matter what the weather, though, it is a great time to select new plants for our gardens. I hope some of yours will be native beauties!



Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia fulgida) honoring Environmental Concern's 50th Year. (photo by EC)