

The American GARDENER

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NOTES FROM RIVER FARM

THE ARRIVAL of March and the first day of spring signal the beginning of the gardening season. Our gardens come alive with spring blooms and new growth, local garden centers swell to bursting with new plants and fresh stocks of garden supplies, and trays of seedlings begin to show up in windowsills, on porches, and in backyard greenhouses. And, what would spring be without the eagerly anticipated parade of wonderful horticultural events sponsored by public gardens, plant societies, garden clubs, and community groups across the country? Even year-round gardeners have a hard time not getting caught up in the heady promise of a new gardening season.

Whether you are seeking out new introductions, hard-to-find native plants, or tried-and-true successes for your garden, spring plant sales and garden shows are not to be missed. In addition to some great finds, these events offer the chance to talk

with growers and other experts who share your interests. As a bonus, your purchases will probably be supporting a worthy cause! This spring, we encourage you to show support for your local gardening organizations and let them know that their work is important. Check your *AHS Member Guide* or the "Regional Happenings" section of this issue for gardens and events in your region.

With Earth Day on April 22 and National Arbor Day on April 24, spring is also a great time to get involved. Many horticultural organizations—including the AHS—could not exist without the volunteers who help with special events, maintain gardens



and greenhouses, staff information desks, conduct tours, and teach classes. Volunteering offers a rewarding and meaningful way to give back to your community. It can also be a great way to learn, meet other gardeners, green up your community, and maybe even take a few extra cuttings home. Spend a morning or afternoon volunteering this season and help us make America a nation of gardens!

Dedicated volunteers help maintain River Farm year round.

Spending a morning or afternoon volunteering this season and help us make America a nation of gardens!

One thing you will definitely want to do this spring is make time for this issue of *The American Gardener*. You will learn about the genus *Coreopsis* from noted plantsman Allan Armitage, and discover the wealth of shade-loving native perennials developed by plant breeder Charles Oliver. For something out of the ordinary in your kitchen garden, see our feature on perennial vegetables. Finally, don't miss the first installment of our new department on growing edibles, "Homegrown Harvest."

Happy gardening!

Susie Usrey, Chair, AHS Board of Directors

Tom Underwood, Executive Director

