

GARDENING

# Wildflowers carry special legends

GARDEN SPOT



MARTY FIGLEY

Some early wildflowers are beginning to bloom, and what a pretty sight they are!

One of my favorites is *Hepatica nobilis*, sometimes called liverwort, but also a name of choice, gold-on-trefoil, ivy-flower, mouse-ears, squirrel-caps and other names.

The plant is low growing with blue, lavender, purple, maroon, pinkish or whitish flowers that appear at the ends of fuzzy stems. They close in cloudy weather and at night.

The foliage comes after the flowers bloom and lasts throughout winter; old leaves are frequently purplish red. The plant grows naturally in dry woods, sandy slopes and thickets, with the flowers appearing in April and May with, or just after, crocus bloom.

There are many cultivated species, all excellent for the garden. This species, with rounded leaves, is the variety *obtusata*. The variety *acuta* has sharp-lobed leaves. They are members of the large buttercup or crowfoot family.

As with most wildflowers,

there is lore and legend associated with hepatica.

Indians used the plant medicinally and as a charm to put on traps for fur-bearing animals. At one time it was thought to cleanse the liver because the leaves resembled that body part, but it seems that has been disproved.

In 1657 a Swiss physician theorized that the part or parts of a plant that physically resembled a certain body part could cure it. This is called the doctrine of signatures. Often nicknames and proper names originated from the physical characteristics of the plant (i.e. liverwort in this case).

In the 1890s it was said that a girl in the Carolina mountains could win the love of any sweetheart she wished, by secretly throwing over his clothing some of the powder made by rubbing together a few of the heart-shaped leaves that had been dried by fire.

Inspiring program

Many wildflowers will be featured in a program, "Consider the Lilies," by Carl Price. You won't want to miss this dual-screen musical presentation sponsored by Cranbrook House and Gardens Auxiliary.

The time, date and place: 10 a.m. Wednesday, March 7, in the DuSalle Art Gallery auditorium, in the lower level of the Cranbrook Art Museum at 500 Lone Pine in Bloomfield Hills. Shuttle

service begins at 9 a.m. from the Christ Church parking lot, across Lone Pine.

Come and enjoy the program, then make a day of it and go out to lunch.

Dr. Price was senior pastor at the Methodist church in Midland for 25 years. Since his retirement he is now on the staff part-time of First United Methodist Church in Birmingham, where he teaches Bible classes.

He and his wife, Pat, have led inter-generational hiking groups for the past 10 years or so to national parks, such as Glacier National Park (his favorite) and Rocky Mountain National Park.

Dr. Price's interest in the natural world began in Scouting and the fact that he spent a lot of time with his grandparents in West Virginia.

"I love the outdoors," he said. "In fact, for a time I considered wildlife conservation as a career before I decided to become a minister."

His favorite wildflower? "It depends on the day. I guess the Alpine gentian in the high country is one favorite because it is hard to find."

This program will be memorable and all are invited. Ticket prices are \$8 for auxiliary members, \$10 for non-members. Questions? Call (248) 645-3149.

GOOD GARDEN TIPS

Congratulations to Four Seasons Garden Center and Landscape Services, which received a Community Service

Award from the Michigan Recreation and Parks Department. The award was for "outstanding commitment and service to their community." Glen Goldberg, company president, accepted the award in January.

Tip sheets describing the "least toxic" pest and disease management approaches are available at Trevarrow Ace Hardware, Tolly's Greenhouse and Garden Center, and Uncle Luke's Feed Store in Troy; Maskill's Hardware in Birmingham; Durat Lumber & Ace Hardware in Berkley; Hilzingers Ace Hardware, The Garden of Royal Oak, and English Gardens in Royal Oak; Four Seasons Garden Center and Scheer Ace Hardware in Oak Park.

Let's take the mystery out of soil pH. Think of it as a thermometer with a scale from 1 to 14. The higher the number, the more alkaline the soil; the lower the number, the more acidic. The middle number, 7, is neutral.

Many garden plants like a slightly acid soil, around 6. Herbs and veggies generally like it more neutral, around 7; and woody plants like more acidic, around 6.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then 111, then 3445. Her fax number is (248) 644-1314.

**J FOUR**  
**DECKS/ROOF**  
 Low Roofs  
 Car Offs  
 All Types of Decks  
**Free Estimates**  
**810-245-6082**  
**Ask for Dan**  
 jfourdevelopment@yahoo.com

SAVE UP TO 85% OFF retail ON ALL 1ST QUALITY NAME BRAND BLINDS & WALLPAPER  
 HunterDouglas, Duette, Silhouette, Waverly, Village, Levolor, Kirsch, Graber, LouverDirect, Imperial, Seabrook, Thomas Kwakke, Ralph Lauren, Carey Lind, Hantico and More!  
**NEW COMPUTERIZED WALLPAPER SEARCHES**  
 View over 125,000 patterns in our showroom on computers with easy-to-search menus. If you can dream it... our experts can help you find it faster!  
 Now SUPER VALUE WALLPAPER: **\$2.99 SUPER VALUE IN STOCK WALLPAPER NO PAYMENT FOR 90 DAYS\***  
 call... **1-800-442-3919** or visit... [www.decoratoday.com](http://www.decoratoday.com)  
**2 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS**  
 1-800-442-3919  
 HOURS:  
 Mon - Wed 10am-6pm  
 Thurs 10am-6pm  
 Fri 10am-6pm  
 Sat 9am-5pm  
 Sun 11am-5pm

CALENDAR

Here is a list of upcoming Home and Garden shows:

**ANTIQUES MARKET**  
 The fourth annual Michigan's Home and Garden Antiques Market displays antiques and accessories for the home, garden and personal adornment in an antique garden setting. Selections include jewelry, furniture, garden and architectural pieces, birdbaths and benches, ornamental iron and garden geos, quilts, folk art, vintage clothing, purses and perfumes. Show hours are 2-9 p.m., Friday, March 16; noon-8 p.m., Saturday, March 17, and noon-5 p.m., Sunday, March 18, at the Southfield Civic Center, 26000 Evergreen (located at 10 1/2 Mile Road). Admission is \$6 with ads or listings or \$7. One paid admission is good for all days of the show. Children under 12 admitted free. For information, click on [www.antique.com/M&M](http://www.antique.com/M&M)

**GMC BUILDERS**  
 The GMC Builders Home & Garden Show, the 83rd annual home show presented by the non-profit Building Industry Association of Southeastern Michigan, features products and services for home and garden at the Cobo Conference-Exhibition Center in Detroit. Show hours are 2-10 p.m., Thursday and Friday, March 22 and 23; 10 a.m.-10 p.m., Saturday, March 24 and 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sunday, March 25. Admission is \$7 adults, \$5 seniors, and \$4 for children 6-12. Children under 6 are free. Visit [www.builders.org](http://www.builders.org) or call (248) 862-1019.

**ANN ARBOR**  
 The 2001 Ann Arbor Spring Garden & Flower Show features Elvin MacDonald, "The Garden Guru," who is the senior editor at Traditional Home Magazine and other garden experts. This year's theme is "Homescapes." The public can participate in "Plants on Parade" with forced bulbs, bonsai, house plants and miniatures. Children can participate in garden workshops and major landscape displays, vendors and a greenhouse will be featured. Show hours are 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Friday and Saturday, March 30 and 31, and 10 a.m.-4 p.m., April 1, at the Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, 5055 Ann Arbor-Saline Road, Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and \$5 for children 5-12. For information, contact the Ann Arbor Spring Garden and Flower Show at (734) 434-8004 or e-mail [AAlowershow@aol.com](mailto:AAlowershow@aol.com)

**OUSTANDING VALUE**

# Leather Italian Style

*JUST Arrived From Italy*

**REGULAR \$5,004 NOW \$2,997**

**REGULAR \$2,191 NOW \$1,349**

**REGULAR \$2,000 NOW \$1,749**

**REGULAR \$2,676 NOW \$1,649**

The best leather value in America. Master tailored in Italy. Distinctive designs and variety of colors. Sofas, loveseats and sectionals all specially priced.

## Newton

**FURNITURE**  
 Good Price. Good Furniture. Good Idea.

Monday-Saturday 10-9  
 Sunday 12-5 Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or Newton Charge

BLOOMFIELD HILLS 248-333-1304  
 LIVONIA 313-475-0010  
 NOVI 248-349-4600  
 STERLING HILLS 810-264-1400  
 CLEARFELT CENTER 313-371-9900

Read Taste on Sunday