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## Hot Colors for Spring

—by Evelyn Kinville, Manager, Behnke Nurseries' Floral Division

When choosing fresh flowers, how do you decide what to buy? Throughout my many years as a florist and floral designer, I have been asked by people who are choosing flowers “what do you recommend...you're the expert”. My standard response involves asking a few questions of my own. Close to the top of the list right after “what is the occasion?” is “do you have any particular colors in mind?” Most do — but many don't.

It's always fun to use the season's hottest colors if the occasion allows!

Pantone, Inc. has been the world's color authority for 45 years. Pantone's anointed colors for Spring 2008 have exciting and delicious names such as Daiquiri Green, Pink Mist, Cantaloupe, Rococco Red, Golden Olive, Croissant, and Snorkel Blue.....there are more at [Pantone.com](http://Pantone.com) so you are sure to find one that appeals to you.

If you are planning a Spring event as lavish as a wedding reception or as intimate as a dinner party in your home, you can not only impress your guests with your savvy fashion sense by wearing a Daiquiri Green ensemble that brings sparkle to your eyes....but also with Pink Mist and Cantaloupe flower bouquets that make your surroundings sing.

If you decide that Pink Mist and Cantaloupe bouquets are perfect for your surroundings, you have chosen an analogous color scheme....colors that are next to each other on the color wheel. You will be using softer hues of red and orange, which are adjacent to each other on the warmer side of the color wheel. Adding deeper hues such as coral, salmon, and orange to the softer hues can create a lively and pleasing bouquet. There are many flower types in these shades including myriad rose varieties such as 'Ambiance' (pink, peach, coral multicolor), 'Orange Unique' (clear, vibrant orange), and 'Attache' (a deep, but vibrant pink). Tulips are of

*continued on page 2*

Robert Wood Photography



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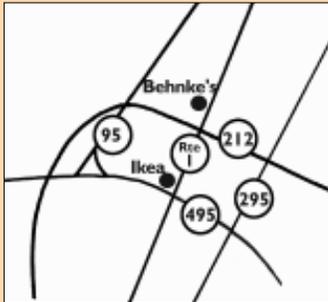
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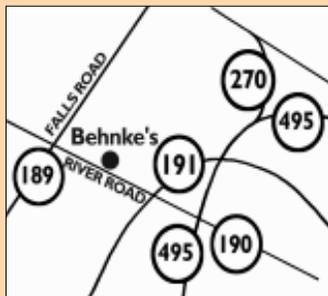
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## Meet: Evelyn Kinville

Evelyn Kinville, manager of Behnke Nurseries' Floral Division, is a world-class florist.

Growing up in dry, west Texas, she learned at an early age the soothing effects of plants and how fresh flowers can brighten a room. She decided to combine her love of flowers and artistic abilities in her college work, and earned a BS in horticulture from Texas Tech.

Following a stint in the Peace Corps in Bolivia, she moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where she began her floral career at Felly's Flowers. She spent 22 years at Felly's, managing the largest floral shop in Wisconsin. Over that time, she estimates that she designed the flowers for over 1500 weddings!

Looking for a change, she joined Hallmark to develop a pilot project to add fresh-flower offerings to the Hallmark gift stores. Over a four year period, she coordinated the program in two test markets. She then moved to 1-800-FLOWERS, where she opened new retail stores in several states, served as product manager for fresh flowers, and as a flower stylist for many professional photography sessions. She also served as Director of Marketing for USA Floral Products during which time she worked with Martha Stewart's team to develop packaging for MarthaStewart.com floral products.

When she visited Behnke Nurseries, she fell in love with the little flower shop at the Potomac site, and she has been Potomac's "florist of choice" for six years. She specializes in custom work for homes and commercial venues, as well as for parties, weddings and other events. If you are looking for an experienced florist with an artist's touch, then you should make an appointment with Evelyn. You won't be disappointed!

### Hot Colors, from front cover

course wonderful in the Spring and are available in many shades and combine beautifully with roses. Consider godetia in salmon, pink hyacinths for fragrance, and ranunculus in many shades of pink, peach, and orange. Gerbera daisies and snapdragons certainly span this color palette.

If flowers in various intensities of the same color are more your cup of tea and make a stronger statement in the surroundings, then you will be happiest with a monochromatic color scheme. If Pink Mist will have the most impact in the setting, select all the same flower variety... or using various flower types in many hues of pink will bring texture.

For a little excitement, be bold with a complementary color scheme...colors that are opposite on the color wheel. We all know about the electricity that can be generated when opposites attract.

Add sparks to Pink Mist and your Daiquiri Green ensemble with green blossoms such as viburnum, bupleurum, green anthurium, or a rose called 'Green Tea'. Consider adding deeper shades of pink or even a little red for real zing.

When it's time to plan your Spring party, whether your favorite "hot" Spring color is Snorkel Blue, Golden Olive, or Rococco Red, the same principles apply. To decorate with flowers that make a real statement, consider the occasion and the surroundings. I assure you that we can help you choose flowers that express your thoughts fashionably.



Robert Wood Photography

## Eight Steps for a Better Pruning Experience

– by Fran West, author of “The Formula for Pruning Mastery”



This time of year has us checking off many projects that get our lives in order, both inside the house and out in the garden. Pruning is a part of our garden maintenance each year and can be a frustrating process to some. Let's elevate the experience to a more enjoyable level by following these steps:

1. Invest in top-quality equipment that execute clean, precise pruning cuts. To maintain a plant's natural habit, refrain from using electric or gas-powered pruning tools. Wear safety goggles. Purchase comfortable, close-fitting gloves tough enough to provide suitable protection.
2. Start slowly. Patience will help produce favorable results. If unsure of a plant's growth in a season, prune out a maximum of 1/3 or less from the plant. If you know a plant will grow vigorously in one season, then you can prune it more severely.
3. Tarzan and Jane we are not! Stay on the ground to prune; save the riskier, higher work for the tree company experts. There is plenty of work to do on the shrub and small tree level with less of a struggle and quicker, gratifying results.
4. Work with your plant. Pruning and respecting a plant's natural growth habit requires patience. The results add aesthetic highlights to your garden. Premeditated pruning cuts (one cut at a time) with a trained eye can guide the growth of a plant in a more natural, pleasing manner; it also reduces pruning in subsequent years. On the other hand, haphazard pruning cuts stimulate undesirable, atypical growth that in turn increases your need to prune. Avoid whack and hack in your pruning vocabulary; try using prune, trim, lighten and shape instead!
5. Prune the easy plant material first i.e. dead, diseased and damaged branches. Prune these branches back to where they join their host branch. This step will greatly improve the appearance of your plant. Also remove any vines and competing plant material within the outer circumference of your shrubs and young trees; this increases air circulation and allows water and nutrients to reach the plant more easily.
6. Train your eye. It is important to see what should be removed from a plant and equally important to see what should remain. For instance, if you want to reduce a deciduous shrub in height, establish with your eyes the level of branches that will become the new top of the plant. Take hold of each branch that grows beyond this new height level and follow it back inside the plant to where it joins the next branch; make your pruning cut at that juncture. Work your way around the plant, pruning out the branches exceeding the new height.
7. Step back and observe your work from time to time. Keep the symmetry and form of the overall plant in mind as you work. A difficult pruning decision at close range is often decided more easily from a distance. Don't prune too long in one section of your plant; prune uniformly, encircling the plant multiple time as you remove branches.
8. Pruning in moderation is not fatal to your plants. If the temperature is agreeable to you and there is work to be done, then head outside and enjoy your pruning experience.



*Editor's Note: Fran West has been a pruning specialist since 1991. She enjoys giving workshops highlighting her easy approach to pruning shrubs and small trees. Her DVD and Field Guide entitled Pruning Matters, The Formula for Pruning Mastery are for sale at Behnkes and on her website [www.pruningmatters.com](http://www.pruningmatters.com). Behnke Nurseries proudly presents a lecture by Ms. West on April 19 at 1 o'clock. Although the presentation is free, space is limited, please call 301-937-1100 to register. (For complete Lecture Series information, go to [www.behnkes.com](http://www.behnkes.com), click on "GardeNews," then click on "Announcing Behnke Nurseries' Speaker Series.")*



**Bluebirds and other songbirds need insect larvae to feed their young.**  
*Photo courtesy of Doug Tallamy.*

**K**ermit and our local frogs alike would love the surge of environmental awareness. With housing developments popping up like fungi on a log, our local habitats are disappearing. The ray of sunshine in all this is that each of our homes can be an oasis of plants and their

animal visitors. Whether you own a multi-acre lot or a “postage stamp” plot, you can make a difference in keeping our lands “greener” and hospitable to wildlife. Who doesn’t want to see songbirds nesting in the trees, butterflies flitting above flowerbeds or dragonflies zipping about, eating mosquitoes? Personally, I welcome even those critters such as bats and snakes that suffer from bad press.

I see many homes with nothing but a lawn and a few shrubs along the foundation. My brain screams, plant something!! Okay— I’m a nursery worker; of course I want the entire yard planted. But there are other reasons for me to project my sense of gardening on all of those barren yards. For starters, with concern about carbon footprints, consider what a lush garden could help counteract: the lawnmower, leaf blower and car, for starters, not

to mention the power-plant output for providing your electricity. Planting just a couple of trees has a great effect on carbon dioxide absorption and oxygen production; they will help reduce water runoff, cool the yard, and shade the hotter side of the house, reducing air-conditioner demand. They provide nesting sites for birds, and food and hunting grounds for numerous insects—creatures which provide critical food for the birds and their nestlings.

Taking things a step further, adding planting beds with shrubs and perennials creates more habitat for animals that need cover. That plodding box turtle, baby bunny or shy chipmunk isn’t going to like the exposure of a sea of grass...even if the bunny trims it for you on its way through. Berries and seeds from such plantings will feed birds and other animals, especially in winter. Even your lawn can be converted into an oasis of prime habitat. A quilt of different groundcovers and interspersed beds would create the perfect mix of open ground to hunt in and shrubbery to hide in.

Animal diversity studies show that species diversity is greatest in “edge habitats” –areas where forest meets meadow, meadow meets stream, and so on – for the simple reason that species from both habitats are present in the mixing zone. Sure, your yard achieves this on a miniature scale, but the results should be rewarding nonetheless. You can help reduce the impact of habitat fragmentation, where developments and roads have split habitat

## Save the Birds!

In *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens*, University of Delaware entomologist Douglas Tallamy explains that parkland is too fragmented to sustain native species. Explaining the food chain takes us from birds to their food sources (almost exclusively native insects when raising their chicks). The native insects in turn evolved to feed on specific native plants and are unable to feed on other sources: so while your butterfly bush helps sustain adult butterflies, butterfly larvae are unable to feed on its leaves. Thus, not only does butterfly bush ultimately reduce the adult butterfly population, but it removes a prime food source for birds.

Dr. Tallamy urges you to include native plants in your gardens to help sustain wildlife, and he provides lists of natives which have ornamental value as well: a critical point in landscape design which often is left behind when the use of native plants is discussed.

# Being Green

Miri Talabac, Woody Plant Department

into little pieces too far away for animals to move between. Why is this important? Plants that need animals to disperse their seeds can't establish new colonies; animals risk inbreeding if they can't disperse to find mates; and if resources run dry, animals and plants can't reestablish themselves in a new area, and a local population might die out. A yard with good plant diversity creates a "rest stop" of sorts, a stepping stone to bridge the gaps between the remaining woods and meadows.

Consider this as a means of reducing pesticide use as well. Most pest outbreaks occur either when plants are stressed or when they are used in monoculture plantings. If properly sited, our native flora tolerate our soils and the quirks of our weather. Even if plants are stressed by a pest outbreak, they have "allies" to come to their aid as "beneficials" cue in on their chemicals broadcasting distress. A monoculture of plants is a buffet to pests—instead of the hunt-and-peck nibbling demanded by a mixed planting. A big party is always going to be harder to control than a dinner for two – it's easier to manage a pest or disease outbreak on a few scattered hosts rather than a whole hedge of them. Plus, more insect problems will be self-limiting due to the bounty of predators



*Promethea caterpillars feeding on Carolina Silverbell will become beautiful moths. Photo courtesy of Doug Tallamy.*

you'll attract by offering a diverse garden – more alternate food sources, hiding places, and sites to raise their own young. There also will be fewer pesticides to pollute the Bay, and more time to enjoy the garden as it should be – wild, yet in balance.

Certainly native plants will help flesh out your ecologically-sound garden, but non-troublesome exotics can also provide an ecological benefit in addition to their esthetic qualities. Shrubs and trees improve air quality and offer shelter.

Gardens should be everywhere – inside and outside of our homes and offices, covering our roofs, as planters hanging off parking garages and as beds lining the streets. Each of us really can make a difference right at home. Plant more of your yard, and when you do, consider native plants first. Mix it up! Try lawnless areas with a walking path, garden beds with a medley of plants and a few more trees. Put a couple of vines on that fence surrounding your yard; plant a strawberry jar and a blueberry patch; put out a birdbath, or install a rain garden or a small pond. Apartment dwellers, green up those balconies and try some window boxes. Advocate for common spaces and community gardens for harvesting and bird-watching. Freshen your living space and school rooms with more houseplants or enchant your children with a terrarium. Plant a young tree – or several! – for you and your children to watch grow. These simple steps will not only enrich our environment, but in doing so, will enrich your lives. □



*Cecropia caterpillars do little damage to Alternate Leaf Dogwood. Caterpillars are a major food source for birds. Photo courtesy of Doug Tallamy.*

THE CAPITAL BELTWAY

# Horticulture Shows

AT BEHNKE'S BELTSVILLE

This Spring, Behnke's is hosting a series of three high profile horticulture shows sponsored by *Washington Gardener Magazine*. Proceeds from the Shows will benefit *Earth Share*, a national federation that supports the country's most respected nonprofit environmental organizations. Behnkes and *Washington Gardener* hope to raise \$30,000 for their *Earth Share* project. Each Flower Show will run for four days—Friday through Monday. There is no admission charge. Each show will commence with a Friday night opening reception from 6 to 9 pm. Boordy Vineyards will be on hand to provide potable vintages for our guest's tasting pleasure during the Friday evening receptions.

Raffle drawings and native plant sales will benefit Earth Share, free event logo t-shirts, vendor giveaways, live music and lots of county-fair-style food and drink will provide fun for the whole family. The shows will be hosted at the Beltsville Behnke Nurseries location. For more information, please visit [behnkes.com](http://behnkes.com) or [washingtongardener.com](http://washingtongardener.com).



*Azaleas in bloom. Photo courtesy of Larry Hurley.*

## Azalea Show

The **Azalea Show** is Friday, April 18th through Monday April 21st. Enjoy a unique opportunity to view a huge collection of azalea, rhododendron and mountain laurel varieties. Many exotic and unusual varieties will be available for purchase. Special guest horticulturists, vendors, growers and master gardeners will be on hand to answer questions and dispense advice.



*A sea of celosia. Photo courtesy of Larry Hurley.*

## Flower Show

Second in the series is the **Flower Show**, Friday, May 9th through Monday, May 12th. This exhibition is the brainchild of a pair of world-class designers employing unusual arrangements and non-traditional plant combinations in an effort to illustrate gardening as fine art. View thousands of annuals, bedding plants, herbs and cut flowers in an astounding array of fragrance and color.



*Colorful perennial foliage featuring several beuchera varieties. Photo courtesy of Terra Nova Nurseries, Inc.*

## Perennial Show

The **Perennial Show** highlights the joys of growing the aristocrats of decorative gardening—summer perennials. This final show in the series will run from Friday, June 20th through Monday June 23rd, and will feature the most extensive collection of perennial varieties in the Washington Metro area. Feast your eyes on the incredible variance in color, texture, structure and growth habits.

## More about Earth Share

*Earth Share supports a nationwide network of the country's most respected environmental and conservation organizations and offers a simple way to care for our health, water, air, land and wildlife. Earth Share's mission is to engage individuals and organizations in creating a healthy and sustainable environment. Earth Share is dedicated to supporting the vital state, national and international organizations working to protect the environment and our well-being every day. For more information, visit [www.earthshare.org](http://www.earthshare.org) or send email to [info@earthshare.org](mailto:info@earthshare.org).*

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# Conifers for Gardens: An Illustrated Encyclopedia

— by Richard L. Bitner, Reviewed by James L. Dronenburg

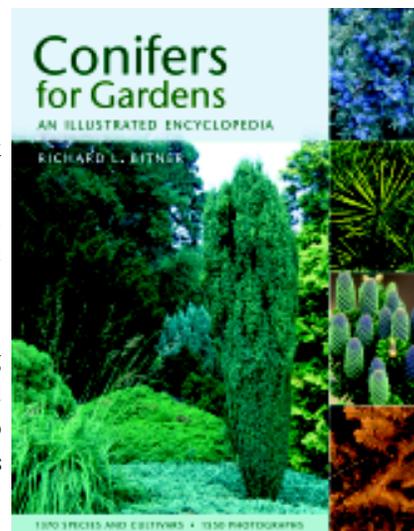
This book, by Timber Press, is and is not a coffee table book. It *is* a coffee table book because it is filled with pictures — it has to be, to distinguish between cultivars of the same species. Words won't do it, no matter how precise they are, when you are dealing with dozens of cultivars per species. The photography is truly excellent, and the photos are taken with an eye to telling you the story of what each plant is or can be.

This is *not* a coffee table book because of the information in it. Not only is there informative text on each species as a whole, but cultivars are described, and growing conditions are noted where different from the norm. Not all conifers are evergreens, and some (like the ginkgo) came as a complete surprise. Where there is a predisposition to disease this is noted, explained, disease control discussed and alternate, resistant varieties named. The author also points out which species tend to be too large for small places, a great help for homeowners.

As a last note, the rather short introduction provides an overview of the uses of evergreens, and the book as a whole gives a whole new concept of where *anybody* could put an evergreen or two. It also gives, as a whole, a look at the conifers that will make you drool to have. At the very back of the book are short lists of plants for various purposes, which is faster than (but no substitute for) actually reading the book, what a concept—and a far more useful list of where to see good collections of conifers, several of which are right here. In summary, this is a book well worth buying, well worth having.

**Incidentally, the author is coming to Behnke's to give a free lecture on conifers, on Saturday April 5.\*** Your reviewer attended this talk last year at Swarthmore, and is bringing his garden club to see it *en masse*. It will open your eyes to the possibilities that conifers, as a group, can open up for your garden.

**\*For complete Lecture Series information, go to [www.behnkes.com](http://www.behnkes.com), click on "GardeNews," then click on "Announcing Behnke Nurseries' Speaker Series."**



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*Photo courtesy of Larry Hurley*

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