



# GARDEN ALMANAC

**IHM Community  
Garden Newsletter**

**April 2018**



## **New season**

March was the beginning of a new gardening season for us here at the St. Mary Organic Farm. It's the time of year when we send out notices about signing up for a plot in the garden. Returning gardeners always get first dibs on the same garden plot they had the previous year. Many gardeners have had their individual plot for several years in a row, allowing them to improve the soil in that particular site over time.

Weather-wise, it's shaping up to be a good gardening season. The National Weather Service's long-term forecast looks quite promising. Out in the Pacific Ocean, the current La Nina is weakening and will probably sputter out later this spring. That usually means temperatures and precipitation will be near normal in our area for most of the growing season.

Gardening has become more valuable to people than it used to be. As recent as 10 years ago, folks felt it wasn't worth the time to grow a garden when you could just buy produce at the supermarket. Now however, the demand for local and organic food has increased the monetary value of garden produce. There is also increasing demand for gardening space as the trend toward urban farming becomes more popular. Fortunately, here at St. Mary Organic Farm, we have plenty of room for expansion to meet this need. If you or someone you know would be interested in a garden plot, feel free to contact me for information at [rdluzen@ihmsisters.org](mailto:rdluzen@ihmsisters.org).

**Bob**

Bob Dluzen  
Community Garden Coordinator



The garden is home to many beneficial organisms, including this praying mantis.



A praying mantis egg case in the perennial garden means this spring we'll be seeing praying mantis again this year.

*They will come and shout for joy on the height of Zion, and they will be radiant over the bounty of God; over the grain and the new wine and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; and their life will be like a watered garden, and they will never languish again.*

**Jeremiah 31:12**

## April precipitation totals

**Rainiest April:** 6.89 inches in 1947

**Driest April:** .53 inches in 1899

**Snowiest April:** 25.7 inches in 1886

**Least snow in April:** 0.0 inches in 1981



## In the Gallery

“[Earth: Our Home](#),” the current exhibit at the IHM Sisters’ Motherhouse Art Gallery, will run now through Sunday, April 29.

Earth is our home. It’s the only one we’ve got. We depend on Earth and its ecological systems, rich diversity of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters and clean air to provide everything essential to life on the planet. We share responsibility for the well-being of the whole human family, the greater community of life and future generations.

Students from Detroit Cristo Rey High School, Marian High School, St. Mary Catholic Central High School, Meadow Montessori, Monroe Middle College and high schools throughout Monroe County were invited to participate in this juried exhibit.

The exhibit is free and open to the public Monday through Friday, 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. For more information about the exhibit, contact Sharon Venier at 734-240-9754 or email [svenier@ihmsisters.org](mailto:svenier@ihmsisters.org).

## Gazebo available for your event

The gardens make a wonderful setting for our Gazebo. The primary purpose of our Gazebo is to provide gathering space for St. Mary Organic Farm activities and events that advance the educational and spiritual goals of the IHM Sisters. Other activities may be scheduled for the Gazebo if they fall within the guidelines described in the Gazebo Usage Policy.

There is no charge if your event or activity advances the educational and spiritual goals of the IHM Sisters. Free-will donations for the use of the Gazebo are welcome. To reserve the Gazebo, contact Bee Butcher at 734-240-9757 or

[bbutcher@ihmsisters.org](mailto:bbutcher@ihmsisters.org); she will happily assist you with your reservation.



## April 2018 twilight

Date	Morning twilight begins EDT	Evening twilight ends EDT
April 1	6:48	8:27
2	6:47	8:29
3	6:45	8:30
4	6:43	8:31
5	6:41	8:32
6	6:40	8:33
7	6:38	8:34
8	6:36	8:36
9	6:34	8:37
10	6:33	8:38
11	6:31	8:39
12	6:29	8:40
13	6:28	8:41
14	6:26	8:43
15	6:24	8:44
16	6:23	8:45
17	6:21	8:46
18	6:19	8:47
19	6:18	8:48
20	6:16	8:50
21	6:15	8:51
22	6:13	8:52
23	6:11	8:53
24	6:10	8:54
25	6:08	8:56
26	6:07	8:57
27	6:05	8:58
28	6:04	8:59
29	6:02	9:00
30	6:01	9:02

## April 2018 sunrise and sunset

Date	Sunrise EDT	Sunset EDT
April 1	7:16	7:59
2	7:15	8:00
3	7:13	8:01
4	7:11	8:03
5	7:10	8:04
6	7:08	8:05
7	7:06	8:06
8	7:05	8:07
9	7:03	8:08
10	7:01	8:09
11	7:00	8:10
12	6:58	8:11
13	6:56	8:12
14	6:55	8:14
15	6:53	8:15
16	6:52	8:16
17	6:50	8:17
18	6:49	8:18
19	6:47	8:19
20	6:46	8:20
21	6:44	8:21
23	6:43	8:22
24	6:41	8:24
25	6:40	8:25
26	6:38	8:26
27	6:37	8:27
28	6:35	8:28
29	6:34	8:29
30	6:32	8:30
31	6:31	8:31

## April normal temperatures 1980-present

Date	Normal High temp. °F	Daily Low temp. °F	Daily Average temp. °F
April 1	53	34	44
2	53	35	44
3	54	35	44
4	54	35	45
5	55	36	45
6	55	36	46
7	56	36	46
8	56	37	46
9	57	37	47
10	57	38	47
11	57	38	48
12	58	38	48
13	58	39	48
14	59	39	49
15	59	39	49
16	60	40	50
17	60	40	50
18	60	40	50
19	61	41	51
20	61	41	51
21	62	41	51
22	62	42	52
23	62	42	52
24	63	42	52
25	63	43	53
26	63	43	53
27	64	43	54
28	64	44	54
29	64	44	54
30	65	44	54

## April record temperatures 1874-present

Date	Record High °F	Year	Record Low °F	Year
April 1	80	2010	14	1923
2	83	1963	17	1881
3	77	1999	14	1954
4	74	1921	9	1874
5	79	1921	16	1881
6	83	1929	18	1982
7	83	1991	10	1982
8	79	2001	11	1982
9	78	1931	19	1985
10	86	1977	20	1989
11	87	1977	22	1940
12	89	1977	18	1976
13	87	1977	19	1950
14	81	2006	20	1950
15	85	2003	21	1935
16	86	2002	17	1875
17	85	1976	10	1875
18	86	2004	8	1875
19	83	2005	23	1897
20	82	1985	20	1897
21	86	1987	21	1875
22	87	1980	20	1875
23	88	1925	23	1986
24	86	2009	27	1892
25	87	1994	26	1892
26	86	2009	27	1926
27	84	2009	28	1996
28	84	1986	28	1934
29	83	1899	26	1977
30	87	1942	28	1876

## April precipitation

Date	Greatest Precipitation Inches	Year
April 1	1.3	1959
2	1.44	1945
3	1.06	1980
4	1.06	2003
5	2.59	1947
6	2.41	1886
7	0.92	2010
8	0.94	2002
9	1.4	1998
10	1.21	1939
11	1.6	1965
12	1.24	1903
13	1.52	1979
14	1.14	1980
15	1.48	1919
16	1.19	1930
17	1.56	1930
18	0.93	1917
19	1.38	1911
20	3.58	2000
21	1.13	1937
22	1.23	1952
23	0.96	1977
24	1.57	1880
25	1.41	1961
26	1.1	1998
27	1.4	1943
28	1.93	1936
29	1.99	1909
30	0.97	1962

## April snowfall records

Date	Snowfall (Inches)	Year
April 1	3.3	1881
2	2	1975
3	4	1903
4	2.7	1920
5	5	1982
6	24.1	1886
7	6	1894
8	1.3	1938
9	1.8	1942
10	3.5	1923
11	2.5	1885
12	2.3	1932
13	2.5	1940
14	2.4	1923
15	2.6	2014
16	2	1943
17	4.5	1921
18	1.6	2011
19	3	1943
20	1.2	1947
21	0.3	1978
22	1	1911
23	1.2	2005
24	3.1	2005
25	0.4	1976
26	0.1	1932
27	0	2016
28	0	2016
29	3	1909
30	0	2016

## Gardening in the 1900s



**Cattle Manure**  
**in Bags** *Shredded or Pulverized*

Best for all indoor and outdoor work. No bad odor. Easily applied. Delivered East of Missouri River. \$2.00 Per Bag (100 lbs.). Write for circulars. **THE PULVERIZED MANURE CO.**  
19 Union Stock Yards, Chicago

This ad is from *Garden Magazine* published in the early 1900s. With accumulated inflation, the \$2 price would equal about \$55 in today's money. Nowadays, 100 pounds of composted cow manure can be purchased at a garden center for around \$11.

## IHM Garden Bee Journal: March 18, 2018

By Judy Durfy

It was almost 60 F<sup>o</sup> when I arrived at the apiary to get a head start on spring cleanup. As expected, even though there was enough food for the hive that had survived up to March, the extreme temperature fluctuations were too rapid for the bees to react to. The hive failed, most likely right after my last visit. I was prepared though, and have two "packages" of bees on order and arriving in late April.

I spent the next three hours cleaning up all the hive components and setting them up for the new bees. While scraping propolis and burr wax off frames and brushing off dead bees, I started to notice quite an audience gathering. There were the usual noisy blue jays and some woodpeckers. I also found the usual squatters residing in the spare hive equipment, a deer mouse family of four, sleepily peering up at me from its warm leaf litter nest. The mice had no problem sleeping through Michigan's long winters.

I'm excited about the new bees that will be arriving soon. For the first time, I was able to order 100 percent pure Russian queens! For the last decade or so, the Russian bee breeders have been growing the supply of Russian stock. Until now, only Russian/Italian crossed queens were available with ordered bee packages, and only in limited amounts. I am hoping these pure Russian queens will do what the Russian bees are known for: spending most of their energy raising more bees. If so, I can increase the number of hives, which means a higher chance of coming through winter with at least one surviving. Of course, by making more bees, they will have less surplus honey, if any (they have more mouths to feed). However, the queens produced by these two packages later in the year will fly out and mate with the local feral bees and their hives will have hybrid offspring that will, hopefully, have good survivability and good honey production. We must wait and see.

# Nature Explorers

## Meet the state bird of Michigan



Found throughout most of the United States, the robin is one of the first birds you will see at the end of winter. It is the largest of the North American thrushes.

Females are slightly lighter in color than the males and the males are slightly larger than the females.

In the winter, robins migrate south and can be found as far south as Mexico and Guatemala. In the summer, they can be found as far north as northernmost Canada and Alaska.

The females lay an average of four eggs per season. Eggs take about 14 days to hatch.

**FIND OUT** the state bird of other states.

**OBSERVE** how many robins you can see in your neighborhood.

## Considering a gift to St. Mary Organic Farm?

Donations are always appreciated and are tax-deductible. Your contribution will go toward local educational programs on gardening, healthy eating and lifestyle, environment protection, conservation and other programs that are part of our mission to do God's work by making our community a better place to live. They may also be used to purchase equipment and tools and to maintain garden facilities.

As a friend of St. Mary Organic Farm, together, we can work to expand and provide gardening space to even more families in our area who otherwise would not have the opportunity to garden.

Please make your check payable to IHM Sisters and include St. Mary Organic Farm or SMOF in the memo line.

## From Pope Francis' Encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for our Common Home*

Politics and the economy tend to blame each other when it comes to poverty and environmental degradation. It is to be hoped that they can acknowledge their own mistakes and find forms of interaction directed to the common good. While some are concerned only with financial gain, and others with



holding on to or increasing their power, what we are left with are conflicts or spurious agreements where the last thing either party is concerned about is caring for the environment and protecting those who are most vulnerable. Here too, we see how true it is that "unity is greater than conflict" (140). [#198]

## Phases of the moon

### April 2018

	Last Quarter - April 8
	New Moon - April 16
	First Quarter - April 22
	Full Moon - April 30

## Water project



Last fall, our water supply went down due to an aging water meter and valve. The traffic cone marks the location of the old faulty underground water hook-up.



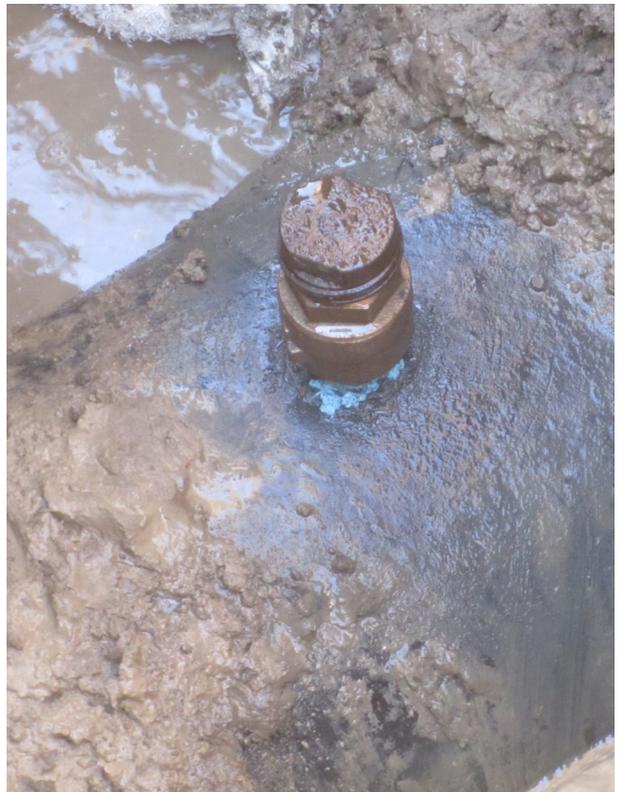
The City of Monroe Water Department crew began the new water hook-up by locating and exposing the buried water main.



The water meter will be installed into this cylinder, called the "meter pit."



Once the water main was exposed, it had to be prepared to accept the new water hook-up. The water pressure is about 70-80 pounds.



With the pipe tool removed, the connector is exposed.

## Water project continued ...



A one inch copper pipe was installed from the water main ...



... to the meter pit.



On March 21, the garden soil was relatively dry. Some of our over-wintering winter rye cover crop was beginning to grow.



After the meter and a couple of shut off valves were installed, a manhole cover was put down.



Phase two involves hooking up our water lines to the meter, then running underground pipe and installing freeze-proof spigots.

*The garden suggests there might be a place where we can meet nature halfway.*

*Michael Pollan*