



I hope this newsletter finds you and yours doing well, or at least alright, or even “making it through one day at a time.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly changed our world. As Philadelphia and surrounding communities move into the Yellow phase, we at EFTE nonetheless continue with the same safety precautions we’ve been using since we started returning to site work in May. These include social distancing, wearing masks within 6 feet of any persons, frequently cleaning tools and PPE, and regularly disinfecting surfaces. If you would like more information, please contact me and I will gladly explain the specific measures we would use at your property. Our suppliers are reopening, and we are gradually able to add more shifts and schedule more jobs, so please let us know if you would like us to visit your property for eco-landscaping, tree work, or consultations.

Stay safe,  
Sherrilyn  
CEO and Owner



## PLANT SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH





A bee is fed by *Baptisia australis*

## *Baptisia australis* f (Blue false indigo)

A great garden can provide food for humans as well as wildlife. *Baptisia australis* is a stunning perennial plant native to this region and attracts a variety of pollinators. *Baptisia australis* also brings a shrub-like height and bushiness to the full-sun or lightly shaded garden, though it can be pruned to keep a smaller growth habit. The plant's common name came from a historical use as a substitute for true indigo blue dye. Later in the season, when blooming is done, the seed pods remain attractive and create a fun rattling sound when shaken.



## EFTE Spring and Summer Eco-Landscaping Services

- Chemical-free weed & pest management
- Tree services with a certified arborist
- Garden & woodland cleanup
- Design and installation of gardens, patios, fences, raised beds, container gardens, and irrigation systems
- Routine maintenance
- Home ecosystem consultations

We can help make your home and garden beautiful and beneficial—for you, the ecosystem, and the planet. [Learn more and book your spring services via our website.](#)



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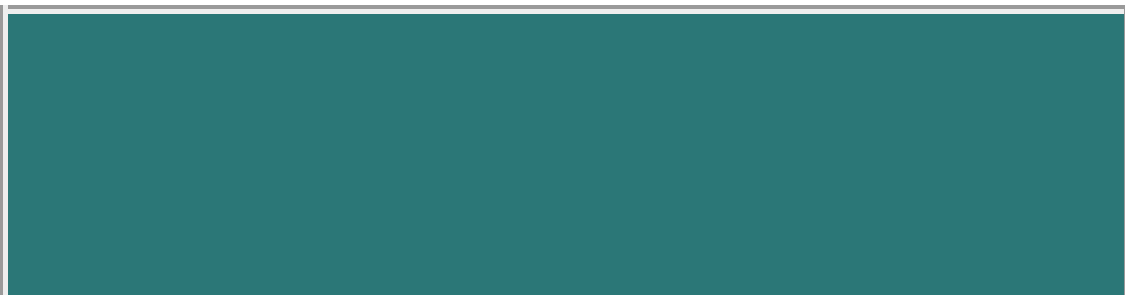
## Houseplant Staycation

Did you know that our houseplants like to get outside in the summer just like we do? Giving your plants a few months outdoors can help them grow larger and recover from difficulties like low light or a heavy draft from a window or HVAC vent. Here are some tips for successful houseplant “staycationing.”



1. Wait until nighttime temperatures are consistently above 50 degrees.
2. Use this opportunity to repot any plants that need it.
3. Include an organic soil amendment to supplement the nutrients in the potting mix. We like worm castings.
4. Place plants in locations away from direct sunlight. Some plants will tolerate direct sun better than others, but nearly all of them do well with the indirect light on a porch or a tree branch.
5. Water regularly. Note that houseplants in direct sun dry out even more quickly and may need water morning or evening during heat waves.
6. Take them back inside for the fall and winter when nighttime temperatures dip into the low 50s. Before moving, wipe off pots and check for bugs.

I didn't know that snake plant (*Sansevieria*, pictured above) flowered before I started taking mine outside in the summer. The flowers are pretty and very fragrant.





## TIPS FOR YOUR EDIBLE GARDEN

The effects of the pandemic have shown us just how important it can be to grow your own food—a home garden, no matter how small, can provide some measure of food security even in uncertain times. Seed companies have been working diligently to ship orders and communities are coming together to collectively increase local food production (check out the [Cooperative Gardens Commission](#)). If you haven't gotten your edible garden started yet, it's not too late! Seeds that would do well with a direct sowing in the garden now include: beans, carrots, cantaloupe, corn, and watermelon. Double check what weeds you might have popping up in the garden—common garden weeds like Lambs Quarter, Chickweed, and Sorrel are tasty and nutritious edibles, too! Also be sure to check out [Sherrilyn's list of late-spring garden tasks](#), which was featured on the The Penn State Extension Philadelphia Master Gardeners page.

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## Foraging Fun: Mayapple



Last month, did you notice the little gnome-size umbrella-like leaves of this plant popping up in any local patch of woods near you? A North-American native plant, Mayapple (*Ts h s t l } p y q t i p e y q* –usually forms dense mats in the woods via their spreading rhizomes. Last month, you may have noticed some of the plants develop a flower hiding under the leaves—hence, the common name "Mayapple," except it's a bit of a misnomer since the flower doesn't give way to fruit until late summer. This fruit is technically edible, although a bit of a dangerous food since 1. the fruit must be **completely** ripe to be edible and 2. the seeds are poisonous. Nevertheless, I'm keeping my eye on a local patch to see if I can get a tiny taste of the fruit this year. Remember to consult with an expert before consuming wild food.



*Eating for the Ecosystem is a woman-owned business with predominately-female work crews. In addition to our meticulous and eco-friendly practices such as limiting our carbon footprint and composting landscape debris, we are also committed to helping clients learn more about—and develop stronger relationships with—the plants in our ecosystem.*

**Help us Grow**

If you believe a friend or family member would like to learn about Eating for the Ecosystem, please [forward this newsletter](#).



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