

Thinking spring in the garden

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CLEMSON — Love isn't the only thing blooming this time of year, and the South Carolina Botanical Garden has the event lineup to prove it.

Monthly programs, special cultural celebrations and seasonal education are all on the spring list at the garden, and education program coordinator Allison Jones is excited to see a few of this year's events make a comeback.

Follow the Drinking Gourd on Feb. 21 lines up well with Black History Month, and the story underscores how people have always relied upon nature. The class is based on the Jeanette Winter book that shows ways slaves used stars and other natural elements to travel on the Underground Railroad.

"You can tie in social studies stuff very easily," Jones said. "Just because we do science stuff in most of our lessons doesn't mean there's not more to the story. This, while being pertinent with the timing, is a great program to bring back because it shows how everyone essentially relies on nature for everything."

Holi: The Colors of Spring is also returning to the garden calendar this year, and Jones said families may remember it due to the colorful powder that ends the program.

"People are familiar



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EVENTS AT SOUTH CAROLINA BOTANICAL GARDEN

- Feb. 21:** Follow the Drinking Gourd
- Feb. 26 and 28:** Homeschool Days — Rocks, minerals and fossils
- Feb. 25:** Night Hikes in the SCBG
- Feb. 29:** Step into the Past — Brrr Bear stew
- Feb. 29:** Family Science Saturday— Things that Leap
- March 2:** Garden Sprouts — Mondays in March through May 18
- March 4:** Lunch and Learn — Gardening for Native Bees
- March 6:** Stroller Strut — Spring Forward
- March 6:** Holi: The Colors of Spring

with all the 5Ks where you wear white and they throw colored powder on the runners," she said. "This holiday is really what kind of inspired that because, as part of that celebration, they throw colored powders."

The day will also emphasize how different cultures use plants and, of course, have some hands-on crafts

for kids to take home.

While many of the events are kid- or family-centered, there are a few targeted at adults, Jones said.

The paper flower craft night is always a blast, she said, and the crocuses on the March 20 agenda are a perfect marker for the start of spring. The monthly night hikes bring in lots of adults,

and some events have a little bit of everything.

Family Science Saturday and Step into the Past are on the same day during the same time, she said, giving families an opportunity to learn something new at the nature center and experience a true blast from the past at the Hunt Cabin.

Both events used to be called open houses, she said, and have a drop-in setup with different exhibits and craft stations.

Things that Leap will be set up in the nature center on Feb. 29 and Brrr Bear Stew is the focus at the Hunt Cabin.

"She's using that as a theme to jump off, so it could be rabbits or frogs or any other critter that hops or jumps," Jones said. "There may be some exhibits that are really focused on little kids and others aimed more at families. It always varies."

As for the bear stew, her best guess is it's a title meant to speak to hearty hearth meals of the past — there won't be any bear stew to sample.

Some events do require reservations or tickets, she said, and it's best to visit the online calendar at Clemson.edu/scbg and reserve from there.

"Some of these book really far in advance," she said, "but we keep a really full calendar, so there's always something to look forward to."



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PHOTOS SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL