

Meadowlark's melody announces arrival of spring

I don't know about you, but my definition of spring in the high country of Wyoming is not a date on the calendar or daylight-saving time but the call of our state bird – the meadowlark! They usually show up sometime in late April to early May – their melody tells me spring has arrived in Wyoming!



By Tom Heald

As I pen this, the winds and snows of winter are still evident. My travels this past winter in southern Wyoming have given me pause as to how difficult it can be to live in this great state. Rawlins westward to Evanston was hit extraordinarily hard with wind and heavy snow. But the warming sun of spring and the snow melt will mean a beautiful prairie – if nothing else but just to admire.

In this spring edition, we tried to highlight some great plants, from perennial flowers to trees, for your consideration. Far too often, we see folks limiting their choices on plant materials that are hardy and adapted to Wyoming. There are always more plants to write about than space allows in this publication, so, if you want more information about something in this publication, e-mail or call the authors!

The same can be true for the ever-persistent weed issues with which we all must contend. Weed control is not simply about spraying problem weeds but is about developing a strategy to remove those plants and replace them with desirable species. Get to know your weed and pest professionals, and let them help you strategize a weed control plan for your property.

We have a couple of articles that were difficult to write – one on animal welfare, the other on building ponds. As you read both articles, I think you'll see neither subject is easy to write about. Further, both subjects require bringing in specialists to help you make the right choices for your situation.

Lastly, we have several Barnyards&Backyards educational events occurring around the state. These are often half-day events tailored to give "hands-on" experiences that, with the information provided, you'll be able to employ on your property. Do plan to attend.

As always, never hesitate to call or e-mail me or any of our authors. We are committed to serving your resource needs.



Tom Heald is an area UW CES educator for Converse, Natrona, and Niobrara counties, and he is coordinator of Barnyards&Backyards magazine.