

# CONNECTIONS

## EARLY STAGE NEWSLETTER

### SPRING 2022



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**Welcome to the Spring Edition of the Connections Early Stage Newsletter.** We hope this newsletter will help you to stay connected with us at the Alzheimer Society and provide you with some enjoyment.

We would love to hear from you and share your stories and thoughts through this space. If you have anything you'd like to contribute to our future newsletters, please reach out to Melissa at 905-687-6856 ext. 543.

# ADVISORY SPOTLIGHT BASIL BRUCE

*We have been shining a spotlight on the individuals who make up our wonderful Advisory Group who use their lived experiences with dementia to shape the work we do at the Alzheimer Society. Please enjoy getting to know Basil!*

Basil was born in Newfoundland and is from a family of fourteen! He and his wife moved to Niagara in their twenties where they raised 2 beautiful children together. When asked about his children, Basil speaks so highly of their accomplishments and careers, and it is clear how proud he is of the lives they have built. He and his wife have celebrated 63 wonderful years of marriage together and Basil reflects back on their life so beautifully.

Back in Newfoundland, Basil worked with the U.S. Navy for a couple of years. After settling in Niagara, he worked with office machines and typewriters before landing a job at General Motors where he worked until his retirement.

Outside of work, Basil kept busy in his garage where he enjoyed woodworking. His house is full of pieces that he made by hand including the kitchen cupboards and dining room cabinets. This passion extended outside of the home when Basil started to carve and paint birds. He entered (and won!) many competitions and met so many interesting people from all over the world who shared his passion.

Today, Basil leads a very active lifestyle and walks about an hour each day, even in the winter and through the snow and rain! He also exercises for about an hour and a half each day and is very committed to staying strong and healthy not just for himself, but for his family. Basil shared how grateful he is to have a family who is so good to him and who watches out for him, and they are his main motivation for staying strong.

When asked what kind of advice Basil would share with others who are living with dementia or memory change, Basil says that he has always accepted his dementia for what it is and been open about it. He says that if sharing about it can help someone else, then why not? He is involved with many of the programs at the Alzheimer Society and reflects on how kind and nice everyone has been to him. Basil explains that staying social and connected through the programs has helped him so much and hopes that it will be helpful to others too.

*Thank you so much to Basil for sharing his story and advice with us. He is such a warm and kind person and I hope you have the pleasure of knowing him or getting to know him in the future because he is sure to put a smile on your face!*

# STAYING ACTIVE

*Staying active can be tough during the cold winter months but now that spring is upon us, there are so many great ways to get moving!*

## SOLE MATES WALKING GROUP

We are so excited to introduce **Sole Mates**, a weekly walking program starting this spring.



### 6 REASONS YOU SHOULD WALK WITH SOLE MATES



support positive brain health



stay connected socially



connect with nature



strengthen your heart health



get an energy boost for the rest of the day



soak up some vitamin D

**WHEN:** Fridays (starting May 6<sup>th</sup>)

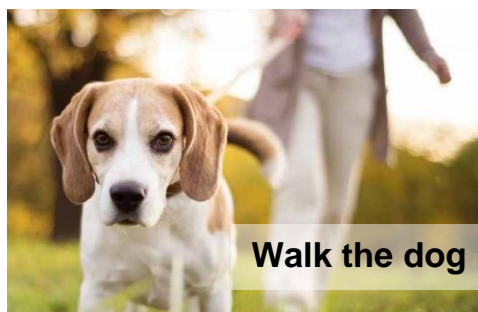
**TIME:** 10:30 am - 12:00 pm

**MEETING SPOT:** Outside the Lock 3 Museum

1932 Welland Canals Parkway, St. Catharines

*to register or learn more,  
call Melissa at 905-687-6856 ext.543*

## OTHER WAYS TO STAY ACTIVE THIS SPRING:





# SPRING GARDENING



The creative and tactile experience of being near to nature is not only good for our well-being, but it may also help to relieve some of symptoms associated with dementia. Recent research shows that there are many benefits of horticultural therapy and garden settings. These include the reduction of pain, improvement in attention, lessening of stress, alleviation of agitation, lower use of medications and reduction of falls.

## SPRING CLEAN-UP

Finally we are starting to see our green lawns and gardens appear from the melted snow that we got used to all winter long. The urge to get out our rake and start cleaning up is great, but wait! Allow the ground to de-frost and dry up before cleaning up. Working on your lawn or garden while it is still wet will cause your soil to compact and make it much more difficult for your plants and grass to thrive.

## SPRING PRUNING

Early spring is a good time to prune your deciduous plants for structure, or to remove damaged, diseased, and dead branches. The structure of the plant is more visible during the dormant season, which allows you to make more effective cuts. Cut the branch just above an outward-facing bud, behind the point of injury, if any.

## WHAT CAN I GROW OUTSIDE?

Vegetables such as spinach, lettuce, beets, peas and radishes all enjoy cool soil and can usually be planted outside in mid to late April. Watch the weather and if a frost is predicted, cover your plants to protect them.

## COMPANION FLOWERS

Are you growing a vegetable garden? Think about including some flowering herbs and annuals. These companion flowers will encourage beneficial bugs to visit your garden and keep the pests away. This is especially important if you plan to grow zucchini or cucumber as they require visits from bees and other pollinators. Plant flowers with high nectar concentrations or in shades of blue, yellow, or white. Bees like herbs in the mint family, such as oregano and thyme.

# SPECIAL DAYS

THERE IS SO MUCH TO CELEBRATE IN SPRING!



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

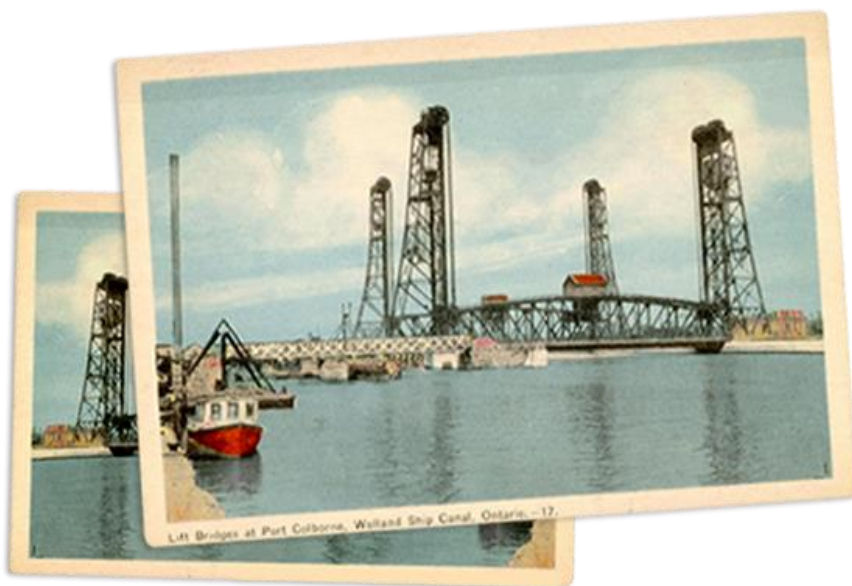
Friday April 15	<b>Good Friday</b>
Sunday April 17	<b>Easter</b>
Friday April 22	<b>Earth Day</b>
Monday May 2	<b>Eid al-Fitr</b>
Sunday May 8	<b>Mother's Day</b>
Monday May 23	<b>Victoria Day</b>
Sunday May 29	<b>Walk for Alzheimer's</b>
Sunday June 19	<b>Father's Day</b>
Tuesday June 21	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Day of Summer</b>

## R.E.B.E.L.

**THURSDAY APRIL 21, 1:30PM**

Join us for a special R.E.B.E.L. Group with the St. Catharines Museum where we will take a look back at the construction of the Welland Canal and hear some incredible stories.

We hope you can join us for a very fun and informative afternoon! Check your email for an invitation with the link to join.

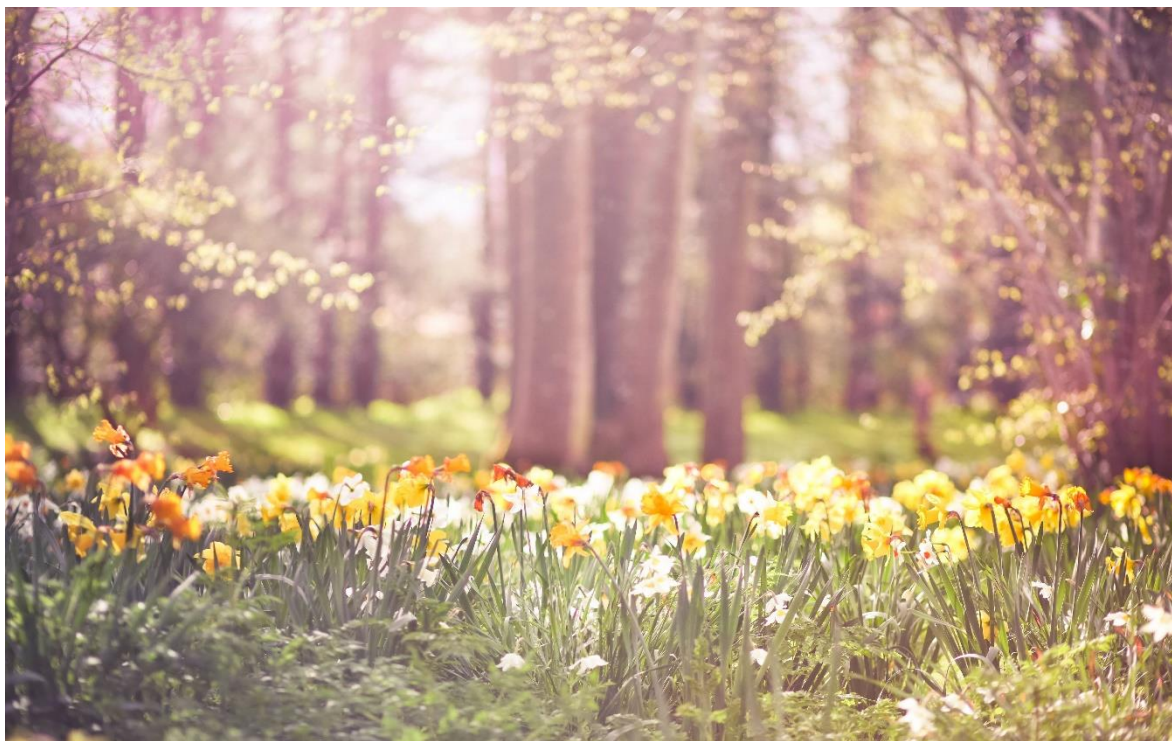


*please note that this is a virtual program that will take place on zoom.*



# A SHORT STORY FOR SPRING

WRITTEN BY KELLY PELLIS



Beatrice wakes early, but something is wrong. Where is the usual roaring of traffic beyond her bedroom window? Where is her neighbour upstairs who stomps down the stairs every morning on his way to work? Where is the shrill screaming of children as they walk to school?

In the second before she opens her eyes, floating weightlessly between consciousness and sleep, Beatrice convinces herself that the world has ended and that she is the last person alive. But then she opens her eyes, and the illusion shatters. She is staring up at the ceiling in her childhood bedroom and she remembers that she is visiting her parents for the weekend.

It is not silent, as she originally thought; the world outside is filled with birdsong. The morning is sweet and gorgeous. Pale golden sunlight slants in through the gap between the curtains. A smile curves Beatrice's lips as she kicks back the sheets and stretches luxuriously.

With sudden childish excitement, she jumps out of bed and races out of her room, down the stairs and out the front door.

*(please continue reading on the next page)*

Grass tickles her bare feet and she wriggles her toes against the mud. The bright blue sky stretches out above her and fields roll in gentle waves in every direction. Her parents' house is the only building for miles. Sunlight glints on the drops of dew glittering like scattered jewels amongst the grass. Standing beneath the spring sky, with the clean fresh air in her lungs and the sun on her skin, the city, with its grey streets crowded with disgruntled commuters, could not have seemed farther away.

Beatrice races across the grass towards the wood, taking delight in the way her hair streams behind her and the easy movement of her sleepy, sun-drenched limbs. Beneath the trees, the wood is coming back to life after its long winter slumber. Sunlight trickles in through the interlacing branches overhead, creating a shifting pattern on the ground, and sun-bright daffodils gaze hopefully towards the sky. Movement flickers at the corner of Beatrice's eye as a rabbit darts through the undergrowth, and a fox stands watching her with warm amber eyes. Wood pigeons coo gently and the stream murmurs on its winding path between the trees.

Beatrice steps into the cool silvery water and a pleasant shiver travels up her bare legs. She knows if she stands there long enough fish will start to dart around her toes.

This place had been her refuge as a child. Whenever things became too much, if other kids were being cruel to her at school, or her parents were throwing a dinner party she wanted to escape from, she could slip out through the front door and, after just a few minutes of walking through the wood, feel calm again.

She could never be completely content with walls pressing in on all sides and skyscrapers glowering down at her with a thousand windows like all-seeing eyes. She enjoys nothing better than lying on the grass in the shade of a sprawling tree, with her eyes closed and the sunshine glowing pink on the inside of her eyelids, and the warm breeze whispering through the leaves above her head.

Beatrice turns for home. Her mother is waiting for her in the hall, with a familiar expression of disapproval clouding her eyes, and an indulgent smile twitching at the corner of her lips. She reaches across and plucks a leaf from her daughter's hair.

Beatrice smiles, and shrugs.

**"Old habits," she says.**

# NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Hello Family and Friends of the Alzheimer Society!  
I hope you are enjoying the Spring edition of our  
Connections Early Stage Newsletter.

My name is Melissa Ricciuto and I am the new  
Wellness and Early Stage Coordinator. It has been  
such a pleasure getting to know you over the past  
couple of months and I am so appreciative of the  
warm welcome that I've received. Although I have  
only been here a short time, I can already see how  
special and meaningful the Early Stage programs  
are and I am so happy to be part of the Alzheimer  
Society team. I have always been passionate about  
programming for seniors and spent the last few  
years using my Recreation Therapy background to  
provide meaningful recreation and leisure  
opportunities in retirement and long-term care  
settings. I am a mom to the sweetest one a half  
year old boy who is full of so much love and energy  
and keeps me very busy and entertained outside of  
work.

I look forward to meeting more of you and am so excited to continue the wonderful Early Stage  
programs with a few new ones too! Thank you again for the kind welcome and I can't wait to  
see you at our upcoming programs.

Keep Safe!

*Melissa Ricciuto*





# IN THE GARDEN WORD SEARCH

O Y F J S S W I P S O T S X P N O  
P P R E E Y S O A V T D E J W V N  
I A J T M L E B H S O N R W D T A  
N X Z I I J I R L R M J R V B O G  
E K S X L L R U A E A B A V X M E  
A W T V I S R S V P T L N K T A R  
P E R S K U E S E P O A O S N T O  
P W A Q X R B E N E E C P G A I B  
L B W S O F E L D P S K E P L L R  
E I B N N E S S E N S B P O P L O  
B N E I I S O S R E N E P G G O C  
A I R K O T O P Z E O R E R G S C  
S H R P N A G R F R M R R J E Z O  
I C I M S G M O G G E I S B N E L  
L C E U C B O U X O L E N Q U E I  
U U S P F X P T E O F S N A H B K  
G Z B A S D B S C I L R A G R L Z

Basil

Oregano

Green peppers

Serrano peppers

Lemons

Limes

Strawberries

Blackberries

Tomatoes

Tomatillos

Lavender

Pineapple basil

Zucchini

Eggplant

Gooseberries

Garlic

Onions

Broccoli

Brussels sprouts

Pumpkins

# IN THE GARDEN ANSWER KEY

O	Y	F	J	S	S	W	I	P	S	O	T	S	X	P	N	O
P	P	R	E	E	Y	S	O	A	V	T	D	E	J	W	V	N
I	A	J	T	M	L	E	B	H	S	O	N	R	W	D	T	A
N	X	Z	I	I	J	I	R	L	R	M	J	R	V	B	O	G
E	K	S	X	L	L	R	U	A	E	A	B	A	V	X	M	E
A	W	T	V	I	S	R	S	V	P	T	L	N	K	T	A	R
P	E	R	S	K	U	E	S	E	P	O	A	O	S	N	T	O
P	W	A	Q	X	R	B	E	N	E	E	C	P	G	A	I	B
L	B	W	S	O	F	E	L	D	P	S	K	E	P	L	L	R
E	I	B	N	N	E	S	S	E	N	S	B	P	O	P	L	O
B	N	E	I	I	S	O	S	R	E	N	E	P	G	G	O	C
A	I	R	K	O	T	O	P	Z	E	O	R	E	R	G	S	C
S	H	R	P	N	A	G	R	F	R	M	R	R	J	E	Z	O
I	C	I	M	S	G	M	O	G	G	E	I	S	B	N	E	L
L	C	E	U	C	B	O	U	X	O	L	E	N	Q	U	E	I
U	U	S	P	F	X	P	T	E	O	F	S	N	A	H	B	K
G	Z	B	A	S	D	B	S	C	I	L	R	A	G	R	L	Z

Basil

Lemons

Tomatoes

Zucchini

Onions

Oregano

Limes

Tomatillos

Eggplant

Broccoli

Green peppers

Strawberries

Lavender

Gooseberries

Brussels sprouts

Serrano peppers

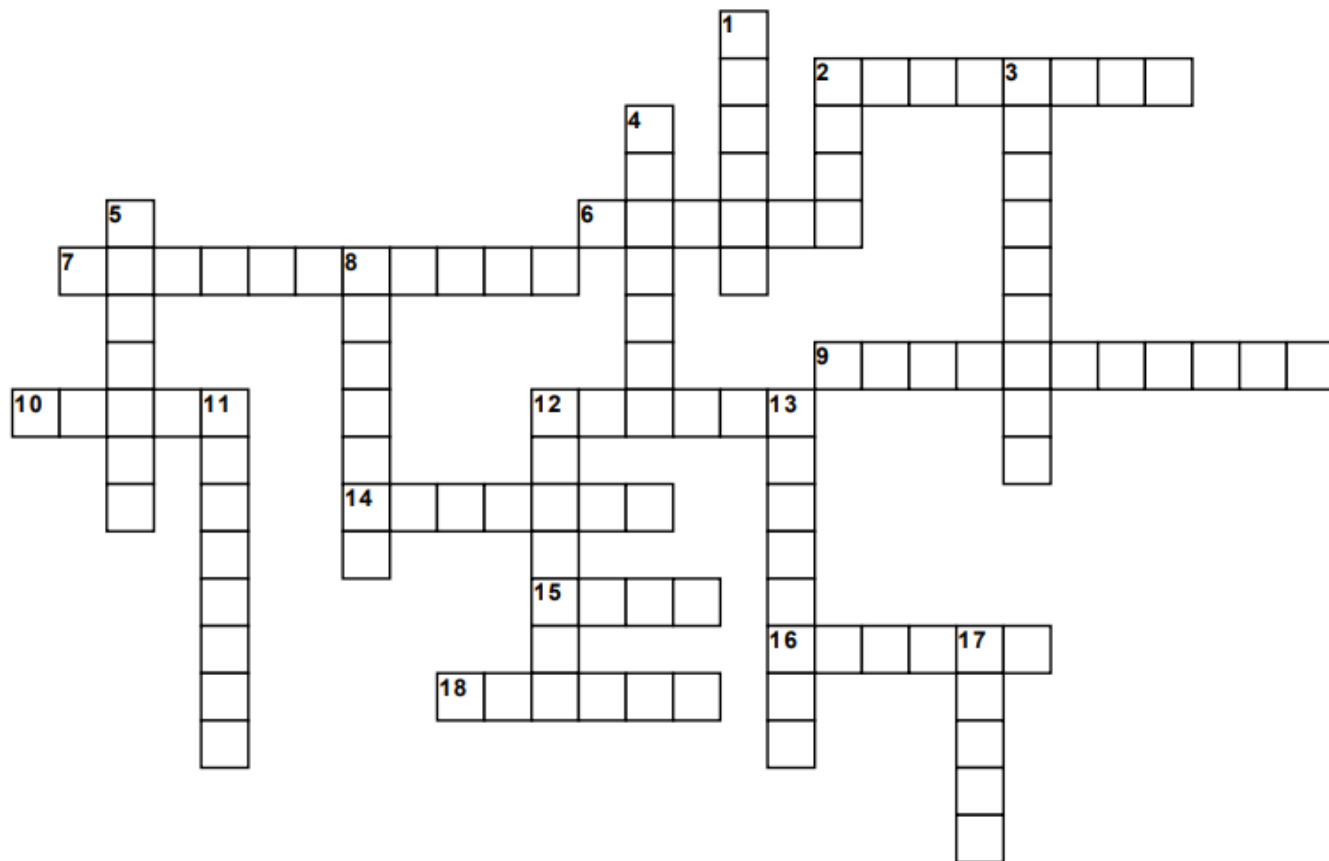
Blackberries

Pineapple basil

Garlic

Pumpkins

# SPRING CROSSWORD PUZZLE



## Across

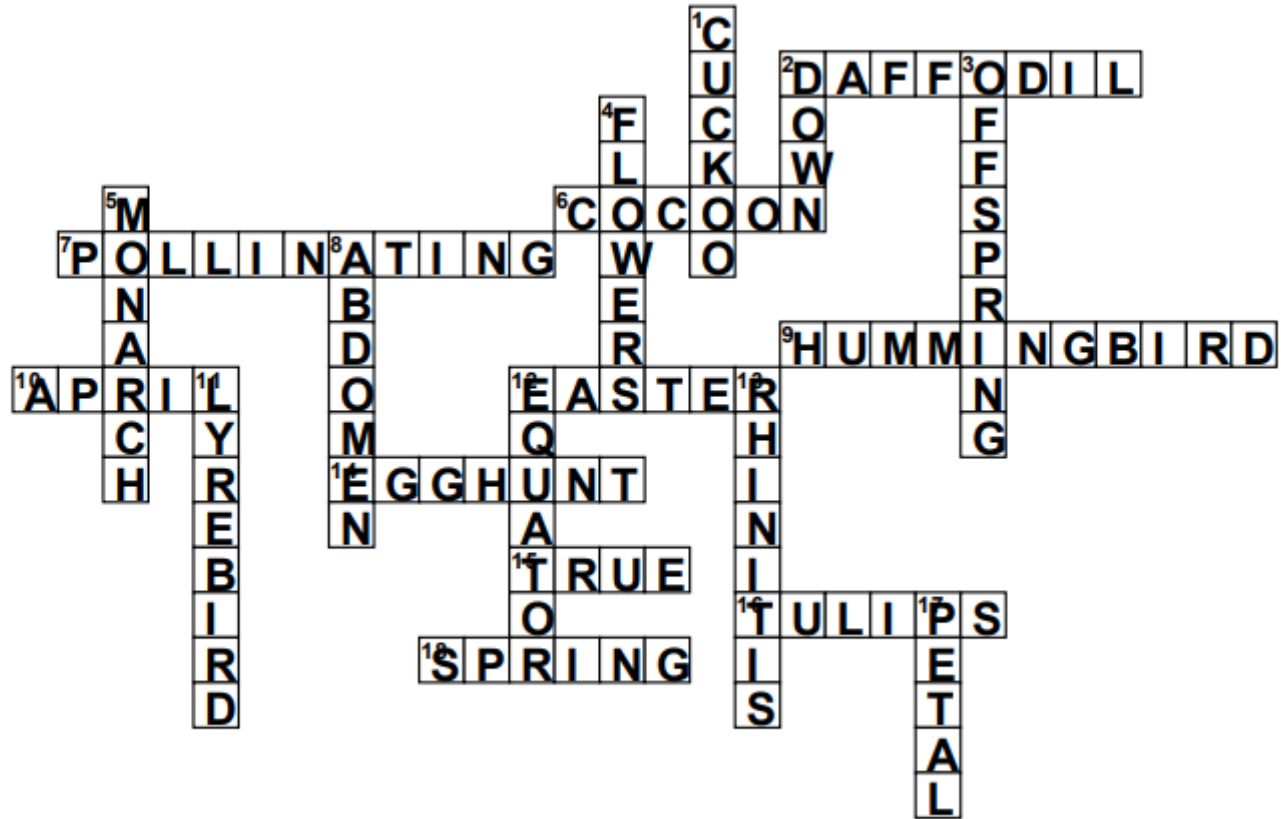
- 2 - Yellow spring flower (8)
- 6 - A silk casing spun by many moth caterpillars (6)
- 7 - Bees start doing this in early spring (11)
- 9 - Smallest bird (11)
- 10 - Name a spring month in the Northern Hemisphere (5)
- 12 - Christian religious celebration in April or May (6)
- 14 - Easter game for children (7)
- 15 - Butterflies start appearing in spring: True or False? (4)
- 16 - Holland is famous for these flowers (6)
- 18 - Bears rouse from hibernation in this season (6)

## Down

- 1 - A bird that lays eggs in the nests of other birds (6)
- 2 - Soft under-feathers providing insulation for birds (4)
- 3 - A word describing baby animals or humans (9)
- 4 - April showers bring May \_\_\_\_\_ (7)
- 5 - Migratory butterfly (7)
- 8 - Part of an insect (7)
- 11 - Australian bird known for imitating other birds (8)
- 12 - An imaginary line on the Earth's surface dividing North and South (7)
- 13 - Runny nose caused by spring pollen (starts with "R") (8)
- 17 - Part of a flower starting with 'P' (5)



# SPRING CROSSWORD ANSWER KEY



## Across

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