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The Joys and Challenges of Gardening in Spring

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Gardening is a constant passion of mine. So when spring comes, I am very, very happy again after the winter has disappeared. This particular spring the weather has taken me on a climatic roller coaster...beginning in mid-March with 70/80 degree weather which is way to early for those temperatures in the upper Hudson Valley (Ulster County), New York. From mid March to the last week of April the temperatures ranged from highs to lows including 90's to heavy frost at night time....most of my seedlings made it through the frosty nights....I lost a few arugula patches, but row covers basically protected other more tender seedlings...we ate our first lettuce salads from the garden a few days ago....I had some red romaine and lolas winter over, plus my young lettuce and arugula plants are big enough to produce some harvesting....4 years ago I started planting ramps on our property and this spring I have started to sparingly harvest some of the leaves (scrumptious in an omelette)...the entire plant can be grilled and the bulbs pickled...the aromatic quality of ramps is very heady....a real queen of the alliums.....I'll be posting some pics of ramps and some of my other successful seedlings so far this year (Bull's Beet, my first asparagus crop, an amazing row of rhubarb in its second season, runaway red raspberries (need to get them under control), spinach, my garlic patch...including the small bulbs from the flower heads...I planted several hundred of those last fall and they are thriving....more on that later.... I haven't even gotten to the black currants or any of the flowers yet..that's for another day....

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