

The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WBG MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION & VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



August 2006

President's Corner Charlie Clapper

In June, I finally made it to Master Gardener College. Barbara and Art Gustafson, Rich Strenkowski and I attended the Leadership Development Training on June 20 and 21. On June 22, Barbara, Art and I attended the MG Coordinator's Meeting. That afternoon through Sunday, June 25, Barbara and Art, Ailene Bartlett, Francis Knight, Rich Bunger, Dave and Virginia Banks and I attended the College. The experience was extremely positive. The knowledge and insights gained will be useful in building an even stronger James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener's Association.

About 50 Extension Agents and paid and volunteer Master Gardener Coordinators attended the Leadership Development Training. Since JCC/W does not have a paid MG Coordinator, our MG Association serves in the MG Coordinator role. What we quickly learned is that every MG unit operates differently. The units have organized their programs and volunteers in many different ways. Learning about the different approaches helps us decide which have application here in JCC/ W. Of

particular interest is training for new master gardeners. In several units the selection process includes interviews, signing a statement committing to continuing as a MG after completion of training and committing to leading a project as part of the internship. I believe some of the ideas are worthy of consideration.

The Coordinators discussed the results of the Myers-Briggs Type indicator test which each of us took prior to MG College. These test results, which show a wide range of personalities, are useful in building effective relationships within volunteer organizations. Other ideas explored include project management, volunteer retention, and volunteer needs.

On Thursday morning Dave Close, State Master Gardener Coordinator briefed the coordinators on ongoing Extension issues: updates on the Training Manual Revisions, Statewide Jamestown 2007 events, State Record Keeping System, new Extension marketing 'look', Milestone Scholarships for MG College and a new more focused approach to "Brag

Boards."

College began on Thursday afternoon. To see the range of sessions offered please visit www.ext.vt.edu. Subjects covered including "air spade" demonstrations, tree injection, sports turf, insects, pruning, environmental initiatives, working with communities, horticultural therapy, and even railroad gardening – something for everyone. The sessions I attended were uniformly high quality in content and presentation.

There is strong social aspect to the College. Ample opportunities exist over meals, before and after sessions, at Brag Night and coffee breaks to meet and exchange ideas with MG's from across the Commonwealth. It is a very knowledgeable, congenial group of gardeners. Next year let's aim for at least 25 attendees from JCC/W MG Association. Get your advanced training hours in one weekend. See you in Blacksburg!

Next Monthly Meeting

AUGUST 3, 2006 at the York River State Park, beginning at 9:30 AM, THERE WILL BE NO BUSINESS MEETING! Please see more info and directions to the park on Page 4 of this newsletter.

If you are interested in native, plants, wildlife or drought resistant plantings, this is the place to come and learn. Attendees will gather in the park's amphitheater at 9:30 AM. You may want to bring sun screen.

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Internal Education News Jean Winters

Kind hearts are the gardens...

Kind thoughts are the roots...

Kind words are the flowers...

Kind deeds are the fruits.

Program Steering Committee Meeting

Our meeting on July 12 concentrated on ways to work with the questionnaire and verbal responses as compiled and presented by Anne Haltiner. Our special thanks go to her for her

detailed report. Shirley Mitchell also helped with the questionnaire. The list of educational needs and interests is vast and we hope to include programs, focus groups, trips and hands-on opportunities as we move forward. It will take time and work to accomplish this. We have a large membership and we will need your support to be successful!

The "annuals" and "perennials", our fun terms for those who are in the present class and those from earlier classes, will have opportunities to enhance their understanding of topics, work with oth-

ers with similar interests and generally enrich our roles as Master Gardeners. The true essence of our being Master Gardeners is to share our knowledge as an "extension" of the training we have received through Virginia Tech and like sources. Involvement with the community is key to that end. Thus, we need to be informed, not only for our own benefit but to help others. The process will be evolving as we move forward, please join us to continue to make our organization a valuable resource in Williamsburg! Let's have fun at the same time!

TRAPDOOR SPIDER, SCIENTIFIC NAME: UMMIDIA SP. (ARANEAE: CTENIZIDAE) LEANNE DUBOIS

This came in the office recently and was sent to the VT lab for identification. The lab verified it to be a Trapdoor spider. Trapdoor spiders dig a tunnel in the ground and seal it with a hinged lid. Trapdoor spiders construct burrows lined by their silk and closed by a hinged door of silk, moss, and soil. There they lie in wait for passing prey, usually an insect; when the prey touches silken threads radiating out on the ground near the door, the spiders quickly open the door to capture the prey and drag it down into the tunnel. Closely related to Tarantulas, Trapdoor Spiders make up the family Ctenizidae. They are generally small, are harmless to humans, and are found in many warm climates. They also use their burrows for protection and as nest sites, the female spinning her egg sac for about 300 eggs in the burrow.



Upcoming Dates to Remember

- July 26 Steering Committee meeting, 10:00 am, Toano Extension Office kitchen
- August 19 Super Turf Saturday, JCC/W Rec Center
- Sept 7 Monthly MG meeting, America's Anniversary Garden, Leanne DuBois, Extension Agent, Williamsburg Regional Library
- Oct 5 Monthly MG meeting, State of the Chesapeake Bay, Libby Norris, VA Watershed Restoration scientist, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Williamsburg Regional Library

We're on the web
at
www.jccwmg.org

FIFTH ANNUAL SUPER TURF SATURDAY SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2006

Turf Specialists from Virginia Tech will speak on various turf topics, which include Lawn Establishment, Lawn Renovation, Warm & Cool Season Turf, Managing Lawn Weeds and other Lawn issues. Turf Industry Experts will speak on Improving Your Soil, Managing Moles, Voles & Other Critters and Selecting Seeds, Fertilizers and Soil Amendments. A Working Lunch with live demonstrations and Trade Show with helpful displays of Lawn Care equipment and supplies will take place after the morning session. Get ready for fall planting!

Pre-Registration is required and forms are available at the Extension Office, both libraries and the Recreation Center on Longhill Road. You are invited to attend the various sessions (Education hours) and free lunch will be served...in return we will appreciate

your help with various jobs that are part of the day. This year it is to be in remembrance of Bob Annette, a very popular speaker for three years...his subject was "Moles, Voles and Critters" (always a problem!).

Below is a list of the jobs to be done throughout the day and the days prior to the event.

- Materials-booklet-assembly, **Thursday, August 17th** at 2:00 pm at the Extension Office kitchen in Toano.
- Registration...8:30 am on **August 19th**.
- Morning Session Introductions and Housekeeping Guidelines in each room (3).
- Afternoon Session Introductions and Housekeeping Guidelines in each room (3).

- Pre-Morning Session Activities...Coffee, Door Prizes, Trade Show Set-Up on August 19th.
- Lunch Chores...Table supervision, Clean-up before Afternoon Session on August 19th.
- If you are available for any assignment we think of at the last minute!

Please call the "Turf Team" (Bob and Jean Winters) at 564-1662 if you can participate. Your assistance is greatly appreciated! This program has been well received in the past and we hope that our fifth will be super! Your assistance will be part of our mission as Master Gardeners...to spread the word about good practices for successful lawns and ultimately appropriate concern for our environment!

GARDENING TIPS FOR AUGUST HELEN HAMILTON

IT'S B A A C C C K K K K! Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*), that is. Now popping up everywhere – birds and the wind have distributed seeds far from the ditches and edges of woods where you see growing populations each year. This harmless-looking grass, not more than a foot tall, but straggly, is a very nasty invasive. It furnishes no nutritive value to wildlife and rapidly outcompetes all natives. Deer won't eat it, does that tell us something?? Like Kudzu, it has heavily infested national parks, roadsides, and homeowners' properties.

Please pull this plant wherever you see it, or mow before it sets seed. In the fall it releases millions of seeds which remain viable for MANY YEARS in the soil. So, it must be pulled or mowed for 3-5 years before exhausting one seed drop. There is a native, non-invasive look-alike called deer-tongue

grass which is well-anchored in the soil. Stiltgrass is an annual, the roots are shallow, and is very easy to pull.

Don't let this invasive in your property! If a population sets seed, it will take over, and you will be fighting it for years!

FUNGUS ON YOUR PLANTS? Want to try a non-chemical control? Mix two tablespoons of baking soda in a quart bottle of water; add a couple squirts of liquid dish detergent such as Ivory, shake well and spray tops and under-sides of leaves. Be sure to test an area first.

You can help reduce powdery mildew and other fungal diseases when you plant perennial, trees and shrubs far enough apart to allow light and air to circulate through and dry out the plant. Also avoid overhead watering, which

keeps plant foliage too wet. Use soaker hoses to thoroughly water the root zone instead; this also reduces evaporative loss to heat and sun.

FERTILIZER. Fish add natural fertilizer to the water, so when you change the water in your aquarium, or outdoor pond, you can use it to water your plants.

SECOND BLOOMS. Pinch back and fertilize many of your perennials to promote a second or third bloom this season, such as, Daylilies, phlox, delphinium, daisies, sedum, hostas, lambs ear, etc. Get a second bloom from faded annuals by cutting them back to approximately half their height, then fertilize them with 1/2 cup of 5-10-10 fertilizer per square yard of planted area and apply a generous layer of mulch.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL MG RECEIVING SERVICE AWARDS

EDITORS NOTE: The deadline for submission of material for the September Newsletter is August 15. Please send to Lise Kline at legskline@cox.net or call 757-259-9477. Thank you.

250 Hours

Kari Abbott
Carole Ashton
Ralph Ashton
Sherry Curtis
Ann DeForest
Leanne Dubois
Claire Gross
Judy Hansen
Mary Ann Kimminau
Alice Kopinitz
Kimberly League
William Leonard
Ann Lorish
Jodi Luke
Judy Mays
Pat Rathke
Catherine Ripley
Jean Ripley
Thomas Rogers
Rebecca Sutton
Helen Walter

500 Hours

Kari Abbott
Deanna Albright
Suzanne Brown
Mary Jane Fellowes
Linda Lucas
Minouche Robinson
Jean Winters

1000 Hours

Kari Abbott
Faye Anderson
Art Gustafson
Lynn Trott

4000 Hours

Ailene Bartlett

Certificates and Pins will be presented at the September General Meeting.

Please Note change of address for:

Donna Xander Dxander2@verizon.net

Jim Massengill 345-0527

Bob Winters rowinter@vt.edu

More on the August MG Meeting at York River State Park

All plantings at the York River State Park are natives. Three areas of interest we will be touring are the butterfly garden, the riparian planting area that includes highland, lowland, and wildlife-friendly plants, and the new native version of the America's Anniversary Garden.

Many plants are rescued from development and transplanted at the park. Carolyn Wills, one of the wonderful volunteers who does this, will lead half of the MGs on a tour and Charlene Talcott, JCC/W MG, will lead the other half. It will be educational for anyone interested in native, wildlife, or drought-resistant plantings. The Master Gardener Meeting will begin at 9:00 am in the amphitheater. Please feel free to contact Charlene Talcott at charmac1@earthlink.net.

DIRECTIONS:

To get to York River State Park from I-64, take the Croaker Exit (231-B). Travel north on Rt. 607 (Croaker Road) for 1 mile, then right on Rt. 606 (Riverview Road) for about 1.5 miles, and turn left onto York River Road. Travel approximately 2 miles to Day Use area and parking lots. Because you will be here for a program, you will not have to pay the parking fee.