



The Colonial Master Gardener

May
2018

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

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY GARY STREB

“The Art of Gardening may be deemed the most useful and entertaining of all others, as it expands the variegated beauties of nature, and administers the most wholesome food to the body.”

-- Samuel Cook, *The Complete English Gardener, or Gardening Made Perfectly Easy* (1770)



Jean-Honoré Fragonard, "The Swing," 1767, (public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

meticulously maintained dogwoods and azaleas with miles of tulip, hyacinth, and pansy borders were in full splendor for our short respite into the world of the ultra-wealthy. Hopefully everyone managed to grab a couple of ideas that will make their own garden more like this one. To call it “a garden” is a bit misleading—twenty-five acres in the middle of our nation’s capital was more like an around-the-world historical garden tour. This definitely got lots of us interested in more association-sponsored educational jaunts—any suggestions for the next one?

[Master Gardener College](#) is just a couple of months away (June 21-24) at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, May 3

**Program:
Important Gardens on the East Coast That Have Been Restored or Saved from Destruction**

**Speaker:
Carol Fryer**

What a week this has been! Absolutely perfect, sunny skies for the plant sale on Saturday. What started as gloomy, rainy conditions for the ride to Hillwood on Wednesday changed to downright pleasant conditions for our garden and mansion tours, but the great camaraderie made up for any early raindrops. What a tremendous way to meet new gardening friends and renew old friendships.

From **all** appearances the plant sale was flawless. Months of diligent and hard work paid off for all of us and for the Williamsburg community—we knew what to do when, and the community purchased the best-looking plants, both home-grown and grower-raised. Countless Extension Master Gardeners and interns from the Class of 2018 teamed together to make Bess Hopewell and Mary Mills’s vision a reality, and we all should rightfully be proud of the effort and results. Congratulations! and Job Well Done! seem cliché but couldn’t be more true. Thanks to all who helped, even if you just came to buy some healthy, thriving plants.

Hazel Braxton and John Giffin really know how to plan and carry out a road trip/educational experience/fun time! And they even got the heavens to smile on us while we were at Hillwood Estate, Museum, and Gardens on April 25. The blooming,

(The president’s message is continued on the next page)

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE -- CONTINUED

2018
MGA Board

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Registration information is now out: please remember that some of the popular classes tend to fill up early, so don't linger. Merit-based scholarships are available with the Virginia Master Gardener Association and our own James City County/Williamsburg Association. Details follow in articles later in this newsletter, on our website, or talk with Angela Cingale, our scholarship chair, and Marilyn Riddle, our representative to the VMGA. Last year's recipients, Patsy McGrady and Donna Xander, will be happy to share their experiences as well as any Master Gardener who has been there before. The advance agenda portends some fantastic sessions! And if you have earned a milestone award, this is a great time and place to be recognized by other Extension Master Gardeners from all over Virginia.

Talking about fun.....our annual Master Gardener picnic is coming up so please take note that we have booked the JCC rec center for the afternoon of Friday, July 20. This will give us the option of either air-conditioned comfort or the picnic flavor of outside tables on the patio along with playing games on the lawn in the full glory to a hot and/or humid July afternoon in Tidewater Virginia. Nonetheless, it promises to be another memorable event pulled together by our tireless and creative social committee.

Most of our projects are now up and running for our busy spring and summer sessions. And we can all remember that is like "Hell Week" for the interns as they learn what we do and apply their new knowledge to benefit the community. The vetting of the projects by your association board continues. Expansion of the Farmers Market has begun, and we look forward to more interaction with the local community. The diagnostic help desk mission will be tested because of the large amount of winter kill that the Williamsburg area has experienced. We also are experiencing a late spring breakout, so only time will tell if some plants will survive unaffected. Prune in June seems to be the buzzword for the situation, but pruning out dead, diseased, or damaged foliage is also applicable. Just don't be too quick to cut everything back or "shovel prune" a sad-looking specimen. Think how confused the public must be with all of the conflicting information—that's why they are seeking **our** help.

Enjoy the season, enjoy your garden, and enjoy the satisfaction that you are aiding your community in being able to do the same.

"Recall the vistas of various famous places, select what attracts you and add your own interpretation. It is best to use this as a theme to design the whole of the garden while adding just the right amount of changes." -- Sakuteiki (Visions of the Japanese Garden) -Heian Period, 794-1184

The MGA board meets on the third Thursday of each month at 9:30am at the Williamsburg Regional Library, Room B, on Scotland Street, Williamsburg.

The board meetings are open to all Extension Master Gardeners, and all are encouraged to attend.



This photograph shows the famous Japanese garden in the karesansui style at Ryoanji, a famous Zen Buddhist temple in Kyoto, Japan. Courtesy, Wikimedia Commons

UPCOMING SEMINARS, SALES, AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

May 3 (13560 Jefferson Avenue, Newport News). 10:00-11:30am. **Walk in Newport News Park.** Meegan Wallace will lead a walk through the upland and flood plain forests along Baptist Run in the northern portion of Newport News Park. Over one hundred species were identified in this area during last year's Bio Blitz! The easy 1.25-mile walk is on a maintained trail, though we may do some off-roading. Meet at the radio tower on Crawford Road, approximately 1.5 miles east of Yorktown Road. contact Meegan Wallace at (757) 291-1099 or clm003@verizon.net. Sponsored by the John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society.

May 5-6. (3640 Dam Neck Road, Virginia Beach). Saturday 9:00am-3:00pm, Sunday 10:00am-2:00pm. **Virginia Beach Master Gardener Plant Sale.** Thousands of plants. Master Gardener Plant Doctor volunteers will be on hand to answer questions about plants, insects, diseases and general gardening. No admission fee and free parking.

May 7. (North Phoebus Community Center 249 West Chamberlain Ave., Hampton 23663).. 5:30-6:30pm. **Vegetable Gardening 101.** Join Hampton Extension Master Gardener Stephen Bowles in the vegetable garden this season. Learn the basics of vegetable gardening in Hampton Roads, from planting to harvest, through this beginner's workshop series. Topics included: pest management, fertilizing, and succession planting. Free and open to the public.

May 10. (Northampton Community Center, 1435-A Todds Lane, Hampton, VA 23666). 1:30-2:45pm. Get Diggin' and Garden with Extension. Join "Extension in the Kitchen" for our vegetable gardening and nutrition classes. Gain basic vegetable gardening skills in our monthly program and grow your own food. Learn how to use vegetables straight from the garden and prepare healthier meals for you and your family! This program is intended for parents with young children who are also eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP), WIC, or Head Start. The first 10 SNAP, WIC, or Head Start eligible participants who complete the six "Eat Smart, Move More" lessons,



"Education," by Johannes Itten (1966), public domain via WikiArt

will receive a container gardening kit, complete with soil, seeds, and tools.

May 12. (Warwick High School Soccer Field ,51 Copeland Lane, Newport News). 10:00am-12:00noon. **Mountain Laurel Meander.** Enjoy meandering through a natural bower of mature Mountain Laurel. Mountain Laurel is infrequent in Virginia's outer Coastal Plain, but these plants were brought in by the property owner ages ago and positioned near the water's edge. There's no good place along the Noland Trail for close observation, so we will not walk the Noland Trail. We will walk an older, unimproved trail through the woods, in places steep, soft, or uneven, with loose logs, protruding roots and fallen trees. Spray feet, ankles and cuffs against ticks and chiggers. We will also see masses of Christmas Fern, Bracken Fern, and Galax with a smattering of Mayapple and Trailing Arbutus. Meet at the Mariners Museum Park's meadow area across from Warwick High School's athletic fields. If you're using GPS, go to the Warwick High School Soccer Field on Warwick Blvd, but turn into the meadow across from the soccer field. Email Susie Yager at soozigus@cox.net to register. Sponsored by the John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society.

May 19. (VIMS, Waterman's Hall, Gloucester Point). 10:00am-3:00pm. **VIMS Marine Science Day.** VIMS' annual open house is a fun-filled event for the whole family. Join us in Gloucester Point for exhibits,

Continued on the next page, page 4

UPCOMING SEMINARS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES --CONTINUED

BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

children's activities, seining, lab tours, seafood cooking demonstrations, mini-lectures, and more.

May 19. (Freedom Park). 10:00-11:30am. **Grow Your Favorite Vegetables in Your Yard.** **Barbara Gustafson**, Master Gardener and co-chair of the Historic Triangle Community Garden, will share ways to grow vegetables in raised beds, containers, flower borders and elsewhere. This event is part of the Learn and Grow Educational Series sponsored by the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. The program is free and open to the public, although a \$5.00 donation to help the Garden grow is appreciated. For more information about the Master Gardeners, go to www.jccwmg.org or contact Barbara at barbara-sg@cox.net.

June 9 (Wren Building, College of William and Mary). 10:00-11:30-am. **Campus Trees.** A walking tour of College of William and Mary campus, highlighting history of campus trees, and recent restorations in the Crim Dell meadow area. Meet at the front of the Wren Building at the west end of Duke of Gloucester Street, Williamsburg. Contact Beth at 757 221 2213 to register and for more information. Sponsored by the John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society.

June 21-24. (Virginia Tech, Blacksburg). **31st Annual Master Gardener College.** Registration is now open!



Both: Abstract child art from the Ross family of Reno, Nevada. Public domain via Wikimedia Commons.

As always, don't forget to take a look at John Freeborn's latest biweekly update from the state EMG office. Click on <https://blogs.lt.vt.edu/mastergardener/current-master-gardeners/sample-page/bi-weekly-update/> . If that doesn't work, click on <http://blogs.lt.vt.edu/mastergardener/>. Then click on "I am currently a Master Gardener/News/Bi-Weekly Update."

MAY SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

BY HAZEL BRAXTON, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

Carol Fryer is a very productive member of the James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener's Association. She is an Extension Master Gardener, a Tree Steward, and a Water Steward. Carol is currently studying landscape design and will give a presentation on some of the important gardens on the East Coast that have been restored or saved from destruction.

TREE STEWARD MEETING FOR TREE CALL PROJECT

BY PATSY MCGRADY, JCC/W TS TREE CALL CHAIR

The kick-off meeting for the 2018 season of the Tree Call project has been tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 17, at 1:30 pm at the Freedom Park Interpretive Center. The Tree Call project provides Tree Stewards who assist homeowners in identifying tree problems and recommend courses of actions.

Any Tree Stewards and Tree Steward interns interested in Tree Calls are invited to attend. Tree Stewards will be emailed the confirmed time and place of the meeting. If you have any questions on the Tree Call project or the upcoming meeting, please contact Patsy McGrady at (757) 561-6503.



"The Scream," by Edvard Munch (1893), public domain via Wikimedia Commons

PROBLEMS WITH THE VMS SYSTEM?

BY CATHY HILL, PRESIDENT-ELECT

If you are having problems entering your hours in the VMS system, myself and several other Master Gardeners will be available after the association meeting--or any time-- to help you.

Please have you login and password so we can access your account. You can reach me at needles51@icloud.com

FARMERS MARKET: UPCOMING CHANGES

BY BARRY HOLLAND



"The Fruit and Vegetable Costermonger," by Louise Moillon (France, 1631), public domain via WikiArt

We are making some significant changes to the Farmer's Market. Rather than our biweekly presence, we will now be available for our educational/diagnostic role on a weekly basis from April into October. We will have one tent with four to five Extension Master Gardeners providing diagnostic/help desk support and assisting the Williamsburg community with Turf Love, Landscape Love (during active seasons), Tree Calls, and other Master Gardener projects.

The purchase of a reliable Wi-Fi "hot spot" and lap-top with printer will increase our ability to provide on-the-spot research. Volunteers will be needed every Saturday from 7:30am until noon. Also, we'll need logistical support. Interested? Email me, Barry Holland, at fholland@cox.net.

HISTORY OF THE FARMERS MARKET PROJECT: 2002-2018

BY SALLY SISSEL, PROJECT CHAIR

In 2002, four Master Gardeners went to Master Gardener College: Barbara Schroeder (soon to be Gustafson), Susan Voight, Dale Firestone, and Angela Cingale. The major result of that year's college was the beginning of farmers markets showing up everywhere. We decided that the markets would be an ideal forum for the MG mission. Those four set up a booth at the end of Merchants Square and, as suggested, had a theme at each market which would help draw the public to the booth. After just a few markets, Barbara asked me (then the current president of the MGs) if I would be interested in being the project head for the Farmers Market –I agreed.

Through the years, we had many "interesting" times as the project grew: at first the extension office loaned us a tent which we kept in a room right behind the market itself. Soon, however, we were asked to find another place to house the tent, which turned out to be an unoccupied "cottage" at Eastern States. The place was just about to fall down and full of asbestos—very scary. Art Gustafson, Dennis Sissel, Barbara, and I then picked up the tent and took it to a space within the market—every other week, for years, and staying with the theme component. Next, we moved our belongings to a shed on the grounds of the Unitarian Church—quite a distance from Merchants Square, but we were glad to have a space that was safe. By then, we had purchased (thanks to our MG budget) two tents and a banner.

Our final, and current, home for storage came about as a joint venture with Genrose Lashinger's Matthey's Garden project and the FM project. Pooling funds from both projects, a shed was built at Mattheys with an entrance from the garden side and also from the street side. The two were self-sufficient. We added a ramp to our side for easy carrying of tents, etc., to the street. Later the ramp was replaced by steps as a safety feature.

During all my years as chair of this project, one thing remained constant: MGs were at the market every other Saturday rain or shine!! And with a theme component.

The MGs have been a fixture at the market, every other Saturday, *rain or shine*, since 2002. Without the many wonderful volunteers showing up every other Saturday, delivering the tents, showing up at 7:30 to help set up, and faithfully using their expertise to answer questions from the public as well as leading the theme for the day, the market would not have become the popular and educational project it is today. John Giffin, my co-chair for many years, has been a wonderful friend and supporter of the project.

While I was never crazy about getting up at 6:00 every other Saturday for all those years, it has been a privilege to work with the Farmers Market organization and with all the wonderful Master Gardeners who have made it all worthwhile.

LANDSCAPE LOVE

BY GARY STREB, PROJECT CHAIR

Seems to be strange to be “out and about” on our homeowner Landscape Love visits while some leaves haven’t yet broken bud. This is proving to be a challenging season for the fifty-nine Extension Master Gardeners and seventeen interns who are about to advise the homeowners of Williamsburg and James City County about the care and maintenance of their winter-damaged landscape plantings.

Several of our popular plants, such as gardenia, camilla, Indian hawthorn, nandina, tinus and chindo viburnum, aucuba, and



“In Voorhee’s Garden,” by Matilda Browne (American, 1914), Florence Griswold Museum, Old Lyme, Conn.

loropetalum will have to have to be handled with a “wait and see” approach. Establishing and improving a sustainable property continues to be our goal.

Training sessions have been completed, and we now have over sixty visits slated for our educational advice-- including a few homeowner associations-- spreading throughout the county, from Kingsmill to Lanexa. If the weather cooperates we anticipate completing the spring session by early June.

If you may be interested in joining us for the fall session please let me know at www.gstreb11@gmail.com.

“And a garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all, it teaches entire trust.” -- Gertrude Jekyll, *Introduction to Wood and Gardening* (1899)

A WORD ABOUT THE 2018 PLANT SALE

BY BESS HOPEWELL AND MARY MILLS, CO-CHAIRS

The moon and stars aligned for yet another successful Master Gardener plant sale! We do not have the final numbers yet, but everything looks very positive, so far. Hopefully, at our meeting on May 3, we will have a final tally.

We want to say a huge THANK YOU to everyone involved. ALL members of the plant sale team did a fantastic job. The hard work, cooperation, and hundreds of hours of planning all resulted in a seamless execution of everything that was necessary to get our Plant Sale ready for April 21.

We don't want to bore everyone with hearing this information numerous times. So, we'll go into specific detail at our May meeting.

Thank you all. Everyone should be equally proud of our accomplishment !!!

Editor's note: For those of you who like photographs as much as I do, I promise to include several of the plant sale and its worker bees in next month's issue as well as summary information from Bess and Mary. --- Hope

MY EXPERIENCE AT MASTER GARDENER COLLEGE

BY DONNA XANDER

Virginia Tech hosts a summer master gardeners college every year on campus. Several people had encouraged me to apply for one of the scholarships, which I did and I was awarded one. Yay!

They have everything so well organized. When you get on campus there are signs directing you to the Duck Pond parking lot where you leave your car. Tents are set up next to the lot so you can register there and get a folder with all the necessary information you need. Most of the classes and events are held at Torgersen Hall, which is within walking distance of the dining hall and the dorms, but if you don't feel like walking they provide a number of vans that will be waiting in front of the building to take you wherever you need to go.

Our first keynote speaker told us about the "Confessions of an Attention Deficit Gardener." He had the whole audience in stitches. We found out that most of us have the same affliction and don't know it. Anything new out there I have to have try it, and the more color I have in my front flowerbed the better. The urge to acquire plants is constant and often on the edge of hoarding. A new plant just makes you feel so good!

Another class I really enjoyed was "All American Selections Past, Present and Future," at which the speaker told us which new plants would arrive to your local nursery that year. I also learned how the growers go about breeding, trialing, and marketing new plants. That was also very interesting. I didn't realize what a long process that is, and how many thousands of plants are thrown out every year that don't make the cut.

One class was an open discussion among us gardeners about how to advertise the outreach programs. I found that everyone all over Virginia was having the same problem, owing to the decline of print newspapers. They did have some helpful suggestions.

All of the speakers were excellent, and the camaraderie among the other gardeners was too. In the dining hall I enjoyed sitting with people from different areas of Virginia and hearing about their gardening experiences with other Master Gardeners. On Saturday morning Blacksburg has a Farmers Market just a block away in town, so it is an easy walk. A lot of music and dancing in the street and wonderful-looking vegetables that I couldn't buy of course, but I did come away with a huge cookie as big as my head.

On Friday evening they treated us to a huge catered reception with lots of delicious food and drink and with a live band playing in the background. There is a large silent auction with gift baskets, lots of beautiful plants, garden equipment, and beautiful original artwork featuring gardens and flowers.

On Sunday before you go home there is a picnic in the Hahn Gardens. What a beautiful place to walk around with a large number of different trees and shrubs. There also is a huge water feature in the middle with large Koi swimming around; I could have sat there all day and watched those fish. What a great weekend and what a great experience.



"The Country School," by Winslow Homer (1871), public domain via WikiArt

VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION REPORT

BY MARILYN RIDDLE, VMGA REPRESENTATIVE

It was a pleasure to have Judith Alberts, Anne Nielsen, and Angela Cingale accompany me on April 14 to our meeting at Brent and Becky's Bulbs, hosted by the Gloucester unit. We were welcomed by their president as well as an employee of Brent and Becky's. This is the first time in recent memory that the site has been one of Virginia's better known horticultural businesses.

- Frank Reilly, nominations chair, announced the results of the online election. The officers will be:
President: Wanda Gerard, Suffolk
Vice President: Leslie Paulson, Prince William County
Secretary: Nelda Purcell, Franklin County
Treasurer: Georgianna Hall, Green Spring

The plans for the educational event on September 29 at Holiday Lakes 4-H Center, near Appomattox, continue. Bugs, bats, birds, and wildflowers will be the topics.

- In the absence of the scholarship chair, I advertised for the four VMGA scholarships, each in the amount of \$400. The deadline for application is May 4 to Lynn Jones.
- The VCE report by Dave Close is summarized below.
Acknowledgement of some units' pushback on solicitation for MG College sponsorships. It is to be noted that the request was for \$50/unit and we sent \$100. The most recent announcement showed that six of sixty-one units had contributed.

Strategic planning meeting in early May

Videos on You Tube

Online modules available for classes

Infographics for most units are available. Those can be helpful in advocating for more local funds.

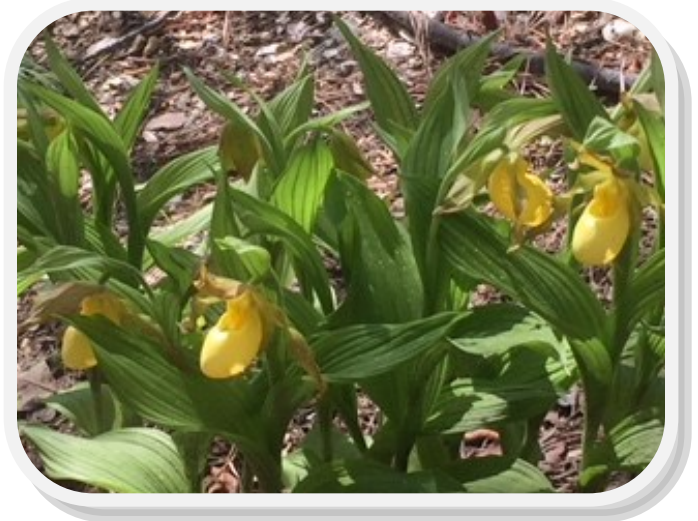
Tree Stewards manual almost ready

Dave and John will attend the Master Coordinators' Conference at U Wisconsin in Madison.

Dave has new duties as Extension Leader,
Agriculture

MG College is June 21-24.

Many thanks to intern Diana Tiller-Dichtel, who took this shot of a lady's slipper in bloom at the Williamsburg Botanical Garden last month.



OUR FIELD TRIP TO THE HILLWOOD ESTATE, MUSEUM, AND GARDENS BY HAZEL BRAXTON AND HOPE YELICH



Those who have been around awhile will correct us, but until then we will declare that the field trip to Marjorie Merriweather Post's twenty-five-acre estate in northwest Washington, D.C., was the first of its kind sponsored by the JCC/W MG Association. Many thanks to Hazel Braxton and John Giffin for making the arrangements and to Liz Favre for keeping track of the money.

Fifty-two of us (including six spouses!) boarded a chartered bus early on April 25 for the ride up 95. Hillwood is known for its large decorative arts collection that focuses heavily on items from the Russian House of Romanov (including Faberge' eggs) as well as on eighteenth-and nineteenth-century French art. Its greenhouse also houses one of the country's finest and most unique orchid collections.



Broken up into small groups, we had a guided tour of both the house and the gardens. [The mansion is entirely a museum](#) showcasing Mrs. Post's extensive collections, while the gardens were just beginning to show off [their spring blooms](#). Although we spent an hour touring the gardens and an hour touring the house, there still wasn't enough time really to see and appreciate the entire estate.

Except where noted, all photos are by Janet Smith.



Photo: Hope Yelich



Enjoy more photos of the trip on the next page, page XXX

TRIP TO THE HILLWOOD ESTATE -- CONTINUED



Photo:s Hope Yelich



Frances Knight takes a break.

Photo: Hope Yelich



Enjoy more photos of the trip on the next page, page XXX

TRIP TO THE HILLWOOD ESTATE -- CONTINUED



Anyone you know?



The crown worn in 1894 when Alexandra Fedorovna wed Nicholas II, the last tsar of Russia. Nationalized with part of the crown jewels, the crown was auctioned at Christie's, London, in 1927. It changed hands several times before Marjorie Post purchased it in 1966.

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH MAY 2018

BY HELEN HAMILTON
JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER, VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

GINGERS

The gingers growing in the woods in our area are not related to the ginger root sold in stores. Garden ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) is native to Southeast Asia, China, India, and New Guinea and is grown worldwide for uses as food and medicine. Information is available online about how to grow your own ginger plant in the home garden, using the knobby roots from the grocery.

Two species of ginger are found in our local woodlands, one is deciduous, the other evergreen. The kidney-shaped leaves of wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*) are deciduous. They are soft to the touch, densely short-hairy, evenly green, and grow in pairs. Since it spreads via long rhizomes, wild ginger sometimes grows in dense stands. The heart-shaped leaves of heartleaf ginger (*Hexastylis virginica*), in contrast, are



Photo: Heartleaf ginger (*Hexastylis virginica*) taken by Helen Hamilton

leathery, lustrous, and evergreen. Each plant produces only one leaf each year, rather than a pair of leaves. They are often mottled with silvery veining and can develop a purple tinge in winter. They grow as single leaves, rather than in pairs.

The rootstocks and sometimes the leaves (depending on rainfall) of both species have a ginger-like aroma and a hot spicy taste. The flowers of both are “little brown jugs,” growing beneath the leaves and hugging the ground (often hidden beneath leaf litter). They are pollinated by gnats, beetles, and the flies of March and April.

Wild ginger is widely distributed in the eastern and central U.S., but heartleaf ginger is restricted to the southeastern states, ranging from Virginia and North Carolina westward to eastern parts of Kentucky and Tennessee. Both gingers are widely distributed throughout Virginia, but they grow in markedly different soil types. Wild Ginger thrives in nutrient-rich soils, such as those found in calcareous ravines in the Coastal Plain; heartleaf ginger typically grows in acidic soils of moist to dry upland woods.

You can test the identity of a wild ginger by probing just below the ground with a finger and scratching the rhizome. A ginger-like smell on your finger will be proof. Native Americans and early settlers used the rhizome to flavor foods much as real ginger is used. There are numerous accounts of Native Americans using wild ginger to protect those who ate spoiled meat or food that might be poisoned. The plant has been shown to have certain antimicrobial properties, supporting early reports of its medicinal properties in the treatment of digestive disorders, to produce abortion, to reduce fever and for coughs and sore throats.

The genus “*Hexastylis*” is named from the Greek “*hex*” for six and “*stylus*” for style, referring to six distinct styles in a flower (in contrast to a single style with six lobes in *Asarum*.) For many years taxonomists have differed on whether the various species of evergreen gingers should be recognized as a separate genus (*Hexastylis*) or treated as species of the genus *Asarum*. That dispute continues today. Some recent data lends support to their separation into two genera, and both names appear in the *Flora of Virginia*.

To grow gingers in the home garden, provide a good, humus-rich soil in full or dappled shade. Propagation is by division in the spring, root-cuttings, and seed. Gingers are great ground covers under shrubbery or along woodland pathways, and they can withstand dry conditions.

For more information about native plants, visit www.vnps.org

Important Dates

- 5/3 Walk in Newport News Park
- 5/5-6 Virginia Beach Master Gardener Plant Sale
- 5/7 Vegetable Gardening 101 (Hampton)
- 5/10 Get Diggin' and Garden (Hampton)
- 5/12 Mountain Laurel Meander (Warwick HS)
- 5/12 Farmers Market (National Herb Day)
- 5/19 Marine Science Day (VIMS)
- 5/19 Grow Favorite Vegetables (Freedom Park)
- 5/26 Farmers Market (Flowers)
- 6/9 Farmers Market (Incredible Edibles)
- 6/9 Walking Tour of W&M Campus
- 6/21-24 Master Gardener College
- 6/23 Farmers Market (Water Management)



Tulips in bloom at Hillwood. Photo by Janet Smith.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the June 2018 newsletter will be Friday, May 25

Please send any submissions to Hope Yelich, newsletter editor, at hopeyelich@gmail.com

SUNSHINE NOTES

This month we sent cards to



Patsy McGrady
Hope Yelich
Holly Hills Garden Club--thanks for a donation

The organization would like to send cards to members with difficult medical issues or who have experienced a death in the immediate family. Please provide names to the EMG secretary, Jennifer Campbell, at (757) 968-9499, or jenkcampbell@yahoo.com

JCC/W Master Gardener Mission Statement

The purpose of the James City County/ Williamsburg Master Gardener is to learn, educate, and communicate environmentally sound horticultural practices to the community. Trained by the Virginia Cooperative Extension, Master Gardener volunteers are committed to offering information to the public through sustainable landscape management educational programs.

ABOUT THE VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENERS AND VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Virginia Master Gardeners are volunteer educators who work within their communities to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices through sustainable landscape management education and training. As an educational program of Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Master Gardeners bring the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the commonwealth.

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