



The Colonial Master Gardener

April
2015

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY SUE LIDDELL

At our March board meeting guests Sally Brooks, JCC/W Unit Coordinator, and Dan Nortman, Unit Coordinator York/Poquoson, helped us understand our position as Master Gardeners in the VA Tech hierarchy. This was particularly valuable to me. As new president of the board I was handed a manual entitled "VCE Master Gardener Coordinator." Each month the main duties of the coordinator were listed, mainly concerning planning and implementing the new class.

Consulting our executive job descriptions I found this duty was under those of the internal vice president. In the VA Tech system a paid or volunteer Master Gardener is the Master Gardener coordinator under the direction of the Agriculture and Natural Resources extension agent. If there is no ANR agent, the unit coordinator assumes the role, as Doris Heath did for us; or a program assistant is hired, as Kate Robbins. I see the board as a whole serving as the Master Gardener coordinator. Instead of having teams to carry out programs, we have project heads. Project heads **are** responsible to the board with ultimate

responsibility for all activity of the JCC/W Master Gardener program resting on Kate.

Recently all project chairs were sent a project evaluation form to fill out. As chair of the JCC/W portion of Peninsula Tree Stewards I filled out this form. Ideally, such a form should be filed each year. These evaluations will familiarize Kate with our projects. She has also visited projects as time allowed.

Communication was emphasized at our meeting. We communicate through our newsletter, at our MG monthly meetings, and through reports. Faithful monthly reporting keeps the board aware of project activity and can nip any problems in the bud. Sally Brooks is the 4H Agent as well as Unit Coordinator. We will welcome her at our April meeting.



Next Meeting:
Thursday, May 7

Program:
"Heirlooms, Seed Saving, and
Threats from GMOs"

Speaker:
Ira Wallace, worker/owner, Southern
Exposure Seed

NEW RISK MANAGEMENT CARDS

BY HOPE YELICH

Recently the new MG interns received the emergency cards that all VCE volunteers should have.

This information is important because it provides clear information on what you should do in case of a fatality or emergency that involves serious injury or life-threatening incidents during a VCE program. You should have the card with you when you volunteer so you'll have easy access to emergency procedures and numbers if needed.

THE NAMES AND PHONE NUMBERS HAVE CHANGED. Please attend the MG monthly meeting April 2, where you can pick up your new card. If you can't attend, there will be information on how you can replace your old, tattered card with a NEW one.

"WHAT IS THAT WEED?" RESCHEDULED

This Sunday, March 29, at 1:30, join Helen Hamilton at the Freedom Park Interpretive Center parking lot, where she will lead the group on a walk identifying emerging spring weeds and wildflowers. Learn which weeds are welcome and which should be eliminated. Contact Helen at 564-4494 or helen48@cox.net for more information.

STAGING FOR THE PLANT SALE BY PATSY MCGRADY



2015
MG Board

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Sue Liddell

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Marilyn Riddle and
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Co-op Ext Rep:
Doris Heath
564-2170

Program Asst., ANR:
Kate Robbins

MGs should bring their potted plants to the backyard of 105 Brookwood Drive between 9:00am—noon, Monday through Thursday, April 20 to April 23. Please turn right into the alleyway just before the address and park in back of the house. This is Ailene Bartlett's former address and the same location we have used in previous years.

Seedlings, tomato plants, and other vegetables do not do well at the staging area. Please bring these plants, and only these types of plants, directly to the plant sale site on Friday, April 24, between 10:00am and noon.

Please pot your plants in potting soil that will provide nutrients to the plants while they are at the staging area. Please do not use regular garden soil in your pots except possibly for shrubs and trees in large pots.

If you are bringing irises or daylilies, it is very important that you provide the color of the flower.

If you are propagating plants from plants you currently have, please pot them as early as possible so they can get established in the pot prior to the sale.

Thanks to all and thank goodness it looks like spring is here.

UPCOMING FARMERS' MARKET DATES

April 4
Water Wise + Barrels and Bins

April 18
Gardening with Children

May 2
National Herb Day

May 16
Flowers

May 30
Water Stewards

June 14
Incredible Edibles

June 27
Vegetables



HELP THE HELP DESK!

There are still plenty of opportunities to take a shift at the help desk. Please contact Avril Purvis ASAP (avril_purvis) if you can work on any of these dates:

The MG Board meets on the third Friday of each month, at 9:30 am, at the James City County Health and Human Services Building, on Olde Towne Road.

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

JUNE Friday, June 26th

JULY Friday, July 3
Tuesday, July 21

AUGUST Friday, August 7
Friday, August 14
Tuesday, August 18
Friday, August 21
Monday, August 24
Tuesday, August 25
Monday, August 31

SEPTEMBER Thursday, September 3

SEPTEMBER

Monday, September 7
Tuesday, September 8
Monday, September 14
Monday, September 28

OCTOBER

Thursday, October 1
Monday, October 5
Tuesday, October 6
Wednesday, October 7
Thursday, October 8
Monday, October 12
Monday, October 19
Wednesday, October 21
Wednesday, October 28
Friday, October 30

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

BY KATHY BUSH

Recently twenty of our MGs traveled to the Norfolk Botanical Garden to see the extensive Camellia collection. We also received a guided tram tour of the vast acreage and wonderful plantings and theme gardens found there. We were led through the camellia garden by its curator and caretaker. What a treasure and wealth of information and inspiration the NBG is, and it is only an hour away! Thanks to Kate Wilhide for organizing a wonderful tour!



Our speaker for our April meeting will be Christiana Tambone from the James River Association. She was quoted last year in an article in the *Virginia Gazette* about invasive grasses in the James River. We look forward to hearing an update from her on the river, storm water management, and other river-related concerns. Hope to see you there. For more information, see <http://www.jamesriverassociation.org/>



Mitzi Balma has graciously invited our Master Gardeners to view her beautiful spring garden. She collects as many daffodil and narcissus species and other spring blooming bulbs as she can and they should be flourishing on Wednesday, April 8th. We will park at the Health and Human Services Building at 5249 Olde Towne Road at 1:20 pm and carpool to her home in Ford's Colony (118 Peachtree). If you would like to go, please send a quick email to kathykbush@verizon.net to let me know.

If you missed purchasing irises at the last meeting or need more, Mike Lockett comes to Williamsburg once/month and would be glad to bring your selection. You can contact him at cmarti8855@verizon.net or (804)330-2916. Also for those who can't get enough about irises, he is also offering a tour of the gardens including his own, at the J Sargent Reynolds Community College in Goochland on Saturday, May 2. You can also sit in on his class on judging irises that he will be presenting to the American Iris Society. Contact Mike at the above email or number for more information.

Mike Lockett's Soil Mix for Iris

To a 6 cubic foot wheelbarrow of soil, add 5 lbs calcitic limestone, 2 c Hollytone or other 4-5-4 or 3-4-3 organic fertilizer, 2 c rock phosphate, and 1 c green sand. Mix well and plant your iris in this soil.

The Colonial Master Gardener April 2015

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS, CLASSES, AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

BY KATHY BUSH

April 10-12 (Colonial Williamsburg, Hennage Auditorium) **Garden Symposium- Layers of the Living Landscape.** During CW's 69th Garden Symposium, Rick Darke and Doug Tallamy, authors of *The Living Landscape*, share their expertise on using plants to create and maintain a layered landscape. Advance registration required. Call 1-800-603-0948.

April 11 (6120 Knotts Neck Rd., Suffolk, 23435. 757-483-6383). **Knotts Creek Nursery Spring Master Gardener Day Sale.** Terms are the same this year: wholesale + 10%. Cash and checks only. Check out their catalog at <http://knottscreeknursery.com/>

April 11 (Christopher Newport) **The 18th Annual Gardening symposium at CNU.** 7:30am, program begins at 9:15. The theme will be "Great Gardens, Great Ideas," with speakers Sharon Loving, Director of Horticulture at Longwood Gardens; Chris Strand, Director Garden & Estate of Winterthur Museum, Patricia Brodowski, Director of Vegetable Gardens at Monticello. Registration available at <http://cnu.edu/gardening/> Our Colonial Triangle Chapter of the Herb Society of America will be selling herbs, along with other vendors.

April 18 (Freedom Park Interpretive Center). 10:00am. Nancy Barnhart and a team of certified master naturalists will offer tips on attracting **Bluebirds in Our Gardens.** \$5 donation recommended.

April 25 (Maymont, Richmond). 8:00am—4:00pm. **Herbs Galore & More.** Expert sessions and dozens of vendors. Admission \$5, members free. <https://www.maymont.org/herbsgalore>. Presentations free with admission:

10:30-11:15am "**Backyard Hens,**" Heather De Mascio

11:30am-12:15pm. "**Herb and Flower Seeds: Sow, Savor and Save,**" Ira Wallace of Southern Exposure Seed Exchange

12:30-1:15 pm. "**Don't Bug Me: Natural Pest Control,**" Mark Landa of Boulevard Flower Gardens at Ruffin Mill

1:30-2:15pm. "**2014 Herb of the Year: Artemisia,**" Martin and Carolyn Gallon of the Herb Society of America

May 8-10 (Norfolk) **Norfolk Botanical Garden Spring Plant Sale.** 10:00am—5:00pm. The theme this year is "Incredible Edibles."

May 16 (Williamsburg Botanical Garden, Freedom Park) 10:00am. Iris Grant and Stacy DeMeo will talk about **creating a water-wise garden** and give tips on selection and design. Suggested donation \$5.

May 23 (Maymont, Richmond). 8:00-9:30am. Embark on a "**Passion for Trees**" tour among the towering trees in Maymont's 100-acre arboretum. Learn which trees are right for your own landscape, pruning techniques, and other tree care tips. Donations welcome. Register by May 22 by calling (804) 358-7166, ext 310.

June 17, Wednesday (Norfolk). Guided tour of the many themed gardens at the Virginia Zoo that we heard about in our February meeting. Sign up at the May meeting. Se Ruth Schultz for more information. **SAVE THE DATE!**

July 23, Thursday (Upper County Park). The annual JCCW Master Gardener picnic. Details to follow. **GET THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR TOO!**

DIAGNOSTIC CLINIC

BY DONNA XANDER

I would like to remind everyone that the diagnostic clinic will be up and running again during May. It will be held in the extension services building in Toano, and we will meet across the hall from the help desk on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30am to noon. We do not have a schedule made up yet, but everyone is invited to come and join in a great learning experience.

NEW INTERN CLASS



Members of the 2015 Master Gardener Training Program completed classroom requirements on Monday, March 23, moving from trainee to intern status. For the remainder of 2015, the new interns will work to complete the seventy volunteer hours required to become certified Master Gardeners. New interns will be introduced and welcomed by members of the Master Gardener Association at the April meeting. We all look forward to working with you!

VMGA SCHOLARSHIPS BY MARILYN RIDDLE

Are you planning to attend Master Gardener College this summer? Remember that there will be VMGA scholarships again this year. The amounts of the awards have not yet been determined. Any Master Gardener who plans to attend MG College 2015 is eligible, except those who have been recipients in the past. The application form must originate with unit agents or Master Gardener coordinators. In our case, that is Kate Robbins. However, it is appropriate for you to express your interest to her and provide details of your service. She will make the final decision about whose application(s) will be forwarded to the scholarship committee. Go to the VMGA website (<http://www.vmganet/>) and select "Educational Events," "MG College Scholarships," and "Scholarship Nominations" to view the actual form. The deadline this year is Friday, April 17.

For further information, you may contact the scholarship chairman, Marilyn Riddle, at mriddle@cox.net or 229-2177. Other members of the committee are Lynn Jones, Mary Ann Kincaid, Ted Munns, and Wanda Gerard. I do not recall anyone from our unit ever being an awardee. It is not based on income but rather on contributions to the master gardening efforts throughout the commonwealth. If you are receiving an hours award you may delay using this award for one year.





**A very special INVITATION to all Williamsburg/James City County
Master Gardeners from the Master Gardener Board:**

Please note on your calendars

**THURSDAY, JULY 23
UPPER COUNTY PARK
11:00 AM**

**First Annual WILLIAMSBURG/JAMES CITY COUNTY
MASTER GARDENER PICNIC**

We will meet each other at the large pavilion, where twenty tables await us for a day of sun (I hope) and fun and food! Many electrical outlets are available on two opposite walls for our use, and you will find the bathrooms so conveniently attached to the pavilion.

If you would like to assist me with the planning and logistics for this upcoming social event, please send me an email or call. I am eager to hear your wonderful ideas. The board and I are very committed to our belief that all of your “work” should allow for an occasion to “play.”

We also welcome Kate Robbins, Sally Upton, Dan Nortman, and the wonderful staff at our cooperative extension office.

Thank you, and you will be hearing more from me!

**—Debby Griesinger, President Elect
dgriesinger@cox.net
(607) 621-8317**



The Colonial Master Gardener April 2015

TREE STEWARDS 2015

BY SUE LIDDELL AND CHERE' HARPER

Twenty-four Master Gardeners recently completed the classroom portion of the Tree Steward training with a graduation ceremony at Sandy Bottom Nature Park. Master Gardeners from Gloucester, Hampton, James City County/Williamsburg, Newport News, and York/Poquoson were represented. The ten from JCC/W will work on three projects to complete the volunteer requirement. These include a tree survey and guide of Woodland Gardens at Hospice House, Williamsburg; a tree survey of the Old Towne area of Historic Jamestowne; and work on the revision of the William and Mary conservatory project for its woody botanical collections. Tree stewards take advanced training in the identification, selection, and care of trees, especially in the urban environment. These graduates will continue their work of educating the community on the value of trees.



Front Row: Joanne Sheffield, P. J. Fresquez, Ginny Cranford, Jean Johnston, Gail Weaver, Chere' Harper, Debby Griesinger, class coordinator Carol King

Back Row: Gary Streb, unit coordinator Dan Nortman

Not Pictured: Kendra Swann, Pam Woodson

THINKING OF WARM DAYS AHEAD

PHOTOS BY INTERN JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS

Cup plants not only attract hummingbirds, they sometimes encourage them to rest for a moment or two.



A hummingbird moth is a delight to watch as it moves from flower to flower.

WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH – APRIL 2015

BY HELEN HAMILTON
PAST PRESIDENT, JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER,
VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

DWARF DANDELION

Krigia virginica

Looking like a miniature dandelion, but growing only one foot tall, this annual plant appears in lawns and roadsides in spring. The stems are leafless, or leafy only near the base, and contain a milky sap. Most of the leaves are clustered around the base, long and narrow, often wider near the tip, somewhat hairy and pointed. They are about four inches long and light green. A clump of fibrous roots anchors the plant—true dandelions have a long taproot.

The flower heads are small, less than one inch across, on long stalks and composed of all ray flowers, bright golden-yellow and strap-like. The tips of the rays are flat and cut into three-to-five shallow segments. The flowers are followed by round seed heads, less than one inch in diameter, covered with bristles, which will carry the dry seeds (achenes) on the wind to new locations.

Dwarf Dandelion blooms from March through July in dry, poor soils, roadsides, fields, lawns, and sandy places.



Photo: Dwarf Dandelion (*Krigia virginica*) taken by Helen Hamilton

The plant is widespread across Virginia and ranges from Maine to Vermont to Wisconsin and south to Florida and Texas. Growing best in full sun, acidic soils, and often in disturbed areas, this little plant would do well in rock gardens and as a low border among early blooming spring bulbs.

For more information on native plants, visit www.claytonvnps.org

WHAT IS A BOTANICAL GARDEN?

BY KATHY BUSH, FROM LITERATURE POSTED AT THE NORFOLK BOTANICAL GARDEN

A botanical garden is a living museum, open to the public, housing collections of plants for display, education and research.

The practice of collecting plants in a garden for specific purposes- aesthetic, economic, medicinal-dates back at least 30 centuries. The earliest known botanical garden in the modern Western tradition was established in 1543, in Pisa, Italy. Europeans first created botanical gardens for the cultivation and study of medicinal plants.

When Englishmen and other Europeans settled in North America, they brought with them their custom of cultivating botanical gardens. One of the earliest examples was in the Jamestown Settlement- a medicinal garden thought to be the work of Dr. Lawrence Bohun, who came to Virginia in 1610. For the colonists, Virginia was a garden of strange delights, full of unfamiliar plants we now consider common, including dogwood trees and poison ivy.

Perhaps the best know gardener of the early American period was Thomas Jefferson, who spent a lifetime recording his observations of the natural world. By the 19th century, botanical gardens were firmly established in the American landscape. The oldest modern American botanical garden, now the Missouri Botanical Garden, was created in 1859 as a private estate by Henry Shaw. With the rise of philanthropy in the late 19th and 20th centuries, other individuals left their estates and gardens as legacies for the public.

Today approximately 32 million people visit botanical gardens annually in the US and Canada.

The Colonial Master Gardener April 2015

LANDSCAPE LOVE

BY GARY STREB



This spring is really trying to get started, but it sure is taking a long time! My crocus and snow drops are starting to bloom and the daffodils, English blue bells, and leucojum are about six inches out of the ground.

Time to think about your spring volunteer activity, and especially about Landscape Love. To all of you who have participated in the past I would be honored, and extremely pleased, if you were to join us again. For those of you who feel that you are missing out on the fun and excitement of Landscape Love, I would like to invite you to join us.

The registration period for the spring session is open to the public now. It started March 15 and will remain open until April 15 and is done by filling out the application at www.jccwmg.org/LandscapeLove.

If our requests track with the last few years-- we should expect between sixty-five and 100 registrants. (As of March 22 we have twenty-seven applicants.) Don't worry --we divide the share among five teams and then each team will have several customized sub-teams to do the homeowner visits.

The timeframe for the visits is late April through the end of May or mid-June, depending on the number of applicants we get. You can do as many or as few as you like.

We have scheduled two organizational/training/ refresher meetings. Please plan to attend one of the two options. First option is **Thursday, April 16, 9:00 am at the JCC Rec Center, Room B**. The second session is **Monday April 20, JCC Rec Center Room B, 9:00 am** The meeting will be about an hour—bring your calendar for April and May.

I will email each of the current Landscape Love volunteers soon to ask for recommitment plans and which meeting you would like to attend. Please make sure that you have completed all the requirements for active membership. If you haven't --please do so today! We have fourteen new interns from the Class of 2015 who have signed up to join us. If you would like to rejoin us or participate for the first time, let me know at gstreb11@gmail.com.

Happy spring and happy gardening!

E2 NEWS

BY KARI ABBOTT

It really feels like spring with the daffodils and forsythia, and the E2 students are ready to play our probability game about surviving in a habitat. It is always a class with good discussion and laughter.

At the end of May E2 starts our annual field trips. They are an adventure as no other. If any of you would like to volunteer for the field trips in April and May we would love to have you come along.

There will be a preview walk APRIL 15 for anyone interested— people who have gone before or, interns who would like to see what is up. This walk will help develop the new guide for the 2015 field trips, as York River State Park changes every year. It is a great day to come for a walk, let nature heal the stress of taxes being due.

For all field trips we start at 9:00 am and end at 12:30 pm. Coming up are:

April 28 and 29	Matoaka Elementary will be at York River State Park.
May 5	DJ Montague Elementary
May 6	Matthew Whaley Elementary
May 7	Clara Byrd Baker Elementary
May 8	J Blaine Blayton Elementary

This year we are also doing a partnership with therapeutic gardening, and we will be taking our special education friends to York River State Park on the 27th of May.

Please email bearsbaskets@cox.net if you would like to join us in E2 volunteering with school children.

The Colonial Master Gardener April 2015

Important Dates

- 3/29 What is That Weed? Walk, Freedom Park
- 4/2 MG Monthly Meeting @ WRL
- 4/4 Farmers' Market: Water Wise & Barrels and Bins
- 4/10-12 CW Garden Symposium
- 4/11 Knotts Creek Nursery MG sale
- 4/11 CNU annual garden symposium
- 4/18 Farmers' Market: Gardening with Children
- 4/19-25 Azaleas at Norfolk Botanical Garden
- 4/25 Herbs Galore & More at Maymont
- 5/2 Farmers' Market: National Herb Day
- 5/8-10 Norfolk Botanical Garden plant sale
- 6/17 Virginia Zoo tour of themed gardens
- 7/23 Annual JCCW MG picnic



SUNSHINE NOTES

In the past month the organization has sent sympathy cards to:

Ruth Murphy — Medical
Marilyn Riddle — Medical
Jan Rockoff — Death of Spouse

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 MG Secretary, Patsy McGrady, 258-1181, patsymcgrady@cox.net.

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.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the [May](#) newsletter will be [Monday, April 20](#).

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

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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Envirothon Earth Day



Saturday, April 18, 2015

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

A day of Earth friendly activities for all ages designed to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's environment.

***Live Animal Demonstrations* by AWARE at 10:00am and 1:00pm**
Rehabilitators and educators interested in helping injured and orphaned wildlife.

Join us at the New Kent Virginia Cooperative Extension Office
11809 New Kent Highway, New Kent, VA
Call 804-966-9645 for more information.

If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or accommodation, please notify New Kent Extension Office at (804) 966-9645 during business hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. *TDD number is (800) 828-1120.



**New Kent Clean
County Committee**



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