

The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



December 2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY ROGER EVANS

It looks like winter is starting to arrive in the area. The leaves are falling which gives us a good opportunity to gather them for composting our gardens so they will be ready for spring planting.

The board met on November 18 and discussed several issues.

A request was brought to the board for consideration and discussion prior to bringing it to the membership. The request was to consider requiring all Master Gardeners to work 8 hours a year at the help desk. Additional information was requested, but not provided prior to the board's meeting date, so it was tabled until January for consideration. Once the board gets the information, a presentation will be made to the general membership. This would require a by-law change to the hour requirements.

The board is continuing to look at better venues for our monetary assets which would bring better returns than a bank savings account. This will be ongoing for several months while options are studied and then brought before the membership.



The board also voted to host the state VMGA meeting here in Williamsburg on April 14th, 2012 at the recreation center. More information will be forthcoming soon.

We also discussed the new 2012 budget which is almost finalized. I thank all the project chairs that sent in their requests to Beth Fugate. It really helps when we have good input to work with.

The new intern class will graduate at the January educational meeting at 9 AM followed by a reception held immediately afterwards. All are invited to attend this meeting to welcome the new master gardeners.

I want to wish each and every one of our members and their families a safe and happy holiday season throughout the rest of the year.

SAVE THE DATE

Grow It & Eat It!—Saturday, March 17, 2012

The Incredible Edibles and the School Gardens have teamed to put on a one day seminar on March the 17th from 8:30 AM until 2 PM at the James City/Williamsburg Community Center located at 5301 Longhill Road. This seminar is for teachers, parents and the general public who are interested in school gardens, community gardens or personal gardens. There will be a series of six 30-minute presentations on growing edibles interspersed with break time and brown-bag lunch time, allowing the audience to visit various demos related to edible gardening.

Help is needed to organize and assist on the day of the event. If you would like to volunteer to help, please contact either Linda Lucas or Roger Evans.

Monthly Meeting

December 1, 9 a.m.,
Williamsburg Regional Library;

Video Presentation :
Doug Tallamy's "Bringing Nature Home"

Happy Holidays
To All !!



2011
MG Board

President:
Roger Evans

VP Projects:
Beth Fugate

VP Internal Ed:
Harriet Parsons

VP Administration:
Margene Hartsough

Secretary:
Mary Ellen Edwards

Treasurer:
Bob Winther

VMGA Reps:
Marilyn Riddle and
Angela Cingale

Past President:
Linda Lucas

Co-op Ext Rep:
Doris Heath
564-2170

INTERNAL EDUCATION

BY HARRIET PARSONS

The next few months will see a different schedule in our monthly meetings. I want to let you know now so all surprises will only be found under the tree. First, many of us have thought that the December speaker does not command our full attention because our minds are not on pest control, cutting back perennials, or pruning. Instead, we are thinking about how much shopping is left to do, baking to be done and wrapping presents that are still in the shopping bags. And so, instead of a speaker, we are showing the very important video, Doug Tallamy's, *Bringing Nature Home*. It runs a little longer than 60 minutes but the reward will be the cookies and treats provided by the board and waiting for you in the lobby.

January will definitely be a month of change. That is the month that our 2011 interns officially graduate. In the past we have had a graduation and dinner including spouses, the board and Master Gardeners. It is felt now that we would like to have the graduation at the January meeting so that the graduating class will be presented to and welcomed by the full James City County Williamsburg New Kent Master

Gardener membership. It will be a great opportunity for all of us to put a face with a name and to support the new interns. We will follow with a light lunch for all.

Skip to April, this is the month we will re-certify in risk-management. This will be done as a group via the internet. It is important that we all attend if possible--otherwise the onus will be on each individual to do it on his/her own. It will be much more fun to do it together so mark your calendar now to attend. No treats this time, but your re-cert will be taken care of!

Two quick reminders: Saturday, February 25, the 3rd Annual Master Gardener Day will be held at WSC. The topic is *Focus on Food—from Field to Table*. Also, on February 14, Don Haynie, well-known floral designer and owner of Buffalo Springs Farm, will speak to the Herb Society at Our Saviour Lutheran Church in Norge. Don is great and we are fortunate to be able to attend this free event. His topic will be: *Landscaping with Herbs*.

The MG Board meets on the third Friday of each month, at 9:00 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.



MATTEY'S GARDEN SHIRTS AVAILABLE TO ORDER

BY GENROSE LASHINGER

We will be placing an order for Matthey's Garden shirts over the next month. The shirts as listed below are bright red with white logo of Matthey with a shovel. Sizes are S to XL.

Hoody sweatshirt	\$20(min. 24)
Short sleeved t-shirt	\$14(min. 12)
Long sleeved t-shirt	\$16(min. 12)

Please make your check payable to Matthew Whaley School with memo of Matthey's Garden shirt. You may mail the check to me at Genrose Lashinger, 2513 Campbell Close, Williamsburg, VA 23185 or give it to me at the next MG meeting (Dec. 1).



LANDSCAPE LOVE 2011 SUMMARY

BY ANNE NIELSEN

To all Landscape Love volunteers, I thought that you would be interested to know that our two sessions in 2011 have produced some excellent statistics. **This year we visited 97 homes, logged 496.9 hours and made 418 contacts.** This is a record of which all of us can be proud. Thank you for your continuing contributions. I look forward to seeing all of you next year.

Have a blessed holiday season!

DECEMBER WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH

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

Wildflower of the Month – December

John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

WHITE OAK

Quercus alba

2011 Wildflower of the Year
Virginia Native Plant Society



Photo: White Oak (*Quercus alba*) taken by Helen Hamilton

Tall, forest trees, White Oaks grow over 50 feet tall. This species is the most widespread of the white oak group, identified by short-stalked, evenly lobed leaves, pale ashy gray bark in strips or blocks, and acorns with knobby, shallow cups. The leaves are not glossy, and more grayish or bluish than other oaks, with pale undersides. Leaf bases are rounded and the lobes are moderate to deep. Turning reddish in autumn, leaves become brown as the season progresses, and remain on the tree most of the winter. Both male and female flowers appear on the same tree in May, along with the emergence of leaves.

Drought resistant and adaptable to a wide variety of soils, White Oak may be the most abundant native tree in North America. It grows throughout eastern North America, preferring full sun and rich, moist, acidic well-drained loamy soils.

Within the genus *Quercus*, two major groups are recognized: the white oaks with rounded lobes, and the red oaks with spines or sharp points at the ends of lobes. Acorns of the red oak group are bitter-tasting, and not as readily taken by wildlife. White Oak acorns are popular food

sources for birds, squirrels and deer. Heavy crops appear every 4-7 years, and are quickly consumed by wildlife or germinate soon after falling.

The wood is hard, dense and durable, and was used for shipbuilding in colonial times. Today it is prized for furniture, flooring, and wine and whiskey barrels. The genus name *Quercus* is the ancient Latin name for "oak;" *alba* means "white" and refers to the pale bark, wood, and lower leaf surfaces.

The largest known white oak specimen had a circumference of 32 feet and grew in the Wye Oak State Park, Talbot County, Maryland. It was destroyed during a storm on June 6, 2002.

For more information about native plants visit www.claytonvnps.org.

DECEMBER GARDENING TIPS

SUBMITTED BY AILENE BARTLETT



Here are the Rodale Press GARDENER TO GARDENER ALMANAC & PEST-CONTROL PRIMER things-to-do for December:

1. Remember that it's your last chance to gather leaves for mulching, composting, or digging into the soil.
2. If weather is mild, feed pansies, snapdragons, and other winter flowers.
3. Cover strawberries with a floating row cover - they'll fare better over winter and bear earlier next spring.
4. Have row covers or burlap ready to protect camellias,

Confederate jasmine, and fig trees if temperature threatens to drop below 20 deg. F.

5. Add a second layer of row cover to protect leafy vegetables, such as spinach, lettuce, and collards (remove the covers during the day and they will continue to produce.)
6. Place a few plastic jugs filled with water between the rows to collect heat during the day and radiate it back at night.
7. Plant bareroot trees.

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FAVORITE GARDENING TIPS

BY CAROL FRYER



Recently we were asked to send Kathy Van Mullekom our best gardening tips to help promote our MG training program - the stuff we learned in class and really used. What were some of our favorite tips? Here are the results from 5 of our MGs:

From Roger Evans, class of 2009:

1. How and when to properly prune trees and shrubs.
2. How to properly get a good lawn to grow.
3. Landscape basics in order to properly display a garden.
4. How and when to start vegetables and flowers indoors for planting in the spring.
5. How to properly plant trees.

From Barb Landa, class of 2008:

1. Classic mophead hydrangeas should be pruned in late summer after flowering rather than in the spring when the flower buds will be sacrificed.
2. Some perennials, like Siberian iris and daylilies, need to be dug and divided every few years to keep them blooming heavily. Autumn is a good time for this.
3. To contain some aggressive plants, like members of the mint family (nepeta, monarda), plant them in pots or cans that are sunk in the ground.
4. Put crushed eggshells inside the planting hole for new plants to deter voles; they don't like to chew the sharp shards.
5. To extend the period of bloom for many perennials (e.g., daisies, monkshood, veronica, chelone and many more) cut back one half of the stems by 30% when the plant is six inches tall in the spring.

From Carol Fryer, class of 2006:

1. Pull mulch 3"-4" away from the trunks of trees and shrubs to prevent insects and animals from damaging the plants.

2. Ask about the mature size of a shrub or tree before buying and planting it; measure the available space in your garden (use internet sites).
3. ALWAYS read the label before using any pesticide - you probably don't remember everything on the label you need to know.
4. Not every bug is a bad bug - beneficial bugs help control bugs that are pests. (Check out info on good bugs in the library or online and make a new friend.)
5. A thin layer of compost (1/4"- 1/2") put down yearly on the lawn and garden beds greatly improves your soil over time.

From Harriet Parsons, class of 2008:

1. How important it is to utilize Waterwise gardening, learned by volunteering at the Waterwise Demonstration Garden.
2. How what I do in my yard affects our watershed.
3. How to share my knowledge of vegetable gardening and healthy food preparation with parents who are struggling to deal with developmentally challenged children.

From Angela Cingale, class of 2000:

1. The use of natural ingredients easily found in your kitchen to control pests in the garden. Vinegar comes to mind to kill weeds.
2. Attract butterflies in your garden by planting host and nectar plants. They go together!
3. When moving from one region to another, have the soil tested in several places because it could be different from one area to the next.
4. The importance of composting and amending the soil with compost.
5. The importance of learning which area of your garden is the right place for the right plant.

BOOK REVIEW

BY JEANNE MILLIN, LIBRARIAN



The Songs of Insects **Lang Elliott and Wil Hershberger**

It sounds funny but this book, obtained from one of the authors at the International Master Gardener College, would make a beautiful Christmas Gift for anyone who wonders just who is making that beautiful music you hear in the garden on an early spring night. This text also includes a CD with insect song recordings. Lang Elliott and Wil Hershberger are amazing artists and

photographers. The 75 insect musicians are illustrated with descriptions, size, frequencies sonogram, range maps, biology information and track number on the CD. Both beneficial and harmful insects are covered. Once you look at this book under QL496.5 E45 in our library, you will see why it would make a great gift.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The deadline for submission of material for the December Newsletter is Monday, December 19.

Please send to Cathy Lohwater, newsletter editor, at cathy.lohwater@cox.net or call 757-259-1133.

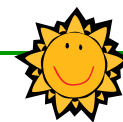
Upcoming Dates to Remember

- 12/1 Monthly Meeting, 9 AM @ WRL
- 12/19 Dec. Newsletter Deadline
- 2/14 Herb Society's Public Meeting
- 3/17 "Grow and Eat It" Seminar
- 4/14 VMGA Meeting Hosted in Wmbg.

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.

SUNSHINE NOTES



If you know a Master Gardener who is ill, facing surgery, has suffered a family loss, or any event in which that person might benefit from a **sunshine note**, please contact the MG Secretary, Mary Ellen Edwards. She will send a note or take appropriate action on behalf on the organization. Mary Ellen may be reached at (804) 966-9366 or JMEMEE12350@verizon.net.

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.

Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments. Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.