



The Colonial MasterGardener

Publication of JCC/WBG Master Gardener Association & Virginia Cooperative Extension

February 2005

SUSTAINABILITY

"First, a vine's leafy embrace, and then, death by clinging." The list of invasive vines is impressive -- kudzu, oriental bittersweet, porcelainberry, Chinese wisteria, Japanese honeysuckle, English ivy and others. Many of these plants were introduced with good intentions. They grow rapidly and are attractive. But once established they are difficult to control or eradicate. Run amok these invasive vines can destroy your landscape.

PRESIDENT

Barbara Schroeder Gustafson
'99

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EXTENSION AGENT

Leanne DuBois, '96
JCC Coop. Extension Agent
564-2170

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David Banks '03
258-8632

NEWSLETTER

Charlie Clapper '02
564-6191

The purpose of the James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener is to learn, educate and communicate environmentally sound horticultural practices to the community.

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING

February 3, 2005

9:00 am

WILLIAMSBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY

FERNS

Jim Orband, York County Extension Agent

Odd as it may appear, a gardener does not grow from seed, shoot, bulb, rhizome, or cutting, but from experience, surroundings, and natural conditions."

Karel Capek, (THE GARDENER'S YEAR, 1931)

VIRGINIA GARDENER

Have you seen the January/February 2005 issue? If you have not, find a friend who has a copy, or visit the Extension Office to look at one - it's full of good stuff! There's a super article on topping trees (which we should copy and give to VDOT, Dominion Power, and every tree service around!); an article on the old Ruth Stout organic gardening method, still practical and practicable; Diane Relf read my mind and contributed "Landscaping with Fine Taste", on growing edibles with ornamentals. And there's more! It's a "must read"! **AILENE BARTLETT**

VALUE OF VOLUNTEER TIME

What is the current value of volunteer time per hour? According to the *Independent Sector*, the estimated dollar value of volunteer time is \$17.19 per hour for 2003 based on the average hourly earnings of all production and non-supervisory workers on private non-farm payrolls (as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics). This figure includes 12 percent for fringe benefits.

LEANNE DUBOIS



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The year has begun and many of us are already meeting to plan our many old and new projects. But first a pause for our annual graduation dinner where we welcomed 31 new Master Gardeners to the fold. Over 100 Master Gardeners and spouses and class instructors attended. We thank Virginia and Dave Banks and Sally Sissel and Sue Liddell, the managers of the 2004 class, for making this a gala affair.

Over the holidays Ailene Bartlett and I met to discuss the possibility of establishing a project focused on vegetable gardening. Then when I attended the Children's Summit last week, 4-H requested Master Gardener's advice on various youth vegetable gardens now being established in our area. The time seems ripe! An e-mail sent to our members this last week listed our initial objectives and asked for other members to join us in exploring setting up a vegetable gardening project. Please let me know if you are interested.

Mary Sheedy, who has done such a fantastic job as our publicity chairperson, is planning to move out of our area to be closer to her family. Helen Hamilton and Alice Kopinitz have offered to replace her as co-chairs. Project chairs will be asked to appoint a member from their groups as a liaison with to work with our publicity team to brainstorm and get pertinent information to the public. Mary and I are also organizing a meeting between the new co-chairs and selected editors and writers of our local newspapers. Let's give this new team all the help they deserve.

Last, but far from least, the 2005 Class for prospective new Master Gardeners is now underway, The classroom is packed with 32 students hoping to join our ranks plus nine professionals studying to improve their skills. If any current MGs wish to sit in on class, please contact Rich Bunger so he can find you a vacant seat. And so we begin a new and exciting year.

BARBARA SCHROEDER GUSTAFSON

BOOK CORNER

I made another trip to Fredericksburg, and of course hit Borders, my favorite place to visit! I found a treasure: Felder Rushing's TOUGH PLANTS FOR SOUTHERN GARDENS. You may recognize his name from another well-known Southern garden book, PASSALONG PLANTS. I have heard him speak, and he is a certified nut, but also a well-trained and ardent horticulturist. His many years as an Extension Agent are only a small part of his background.

TOUGH PLANTS... describes, as the subtitle says, "low care, no care, tried and true winners", and he doesn't spare the punches. It's nicely arranged, with all sorts of lists, helpful hints, and his irrepressible humor on every page. I'd consider it almost a "must-have" in every MG's library. Oh, by the way - good photos, too. It covers the gamut, group by group - annuals, bulbs, lawns, grasses, shrubs, trees, perennials, "porch plants" with even sidebars on vegetables! Try it - you'll probably love it! **AILENE BARTLETT**

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: SUBMIT MY HOURS MONTHLY, AND VOLUNTEER TO BECOME A PROJECT CHAIR OR MG ASSOCIATION OFFICER

VISIT THE JCCWMG MASTER GARDENERS' ASSOCIATION WEBSITE AT <http://jccwmg.org>

WHAT IS A RIPARIAN FOREST BUFFER?

A forest buffer is an stand of trees and vegetation that intercepts surface runoff, subsurface and groundwater flow and removes the effects of nutrients, pesticides and other chemicals that could enter our streams, rivers and lakes. Buffer zones filter out much more sediment, pesticides and nutrients than grass turf. Mature trees along a stream bank can effectively use and buffer excess nutrients before they reach the water. Buffer zones control stream bank erosion, regulate water temperature, remove sediments and nutrients, reduce downstream flooding, provide wildlife habitat and increase property values. **LEANNE DUBOIS**

THYMELY TIPS

- Forced bulbs should be ready to move into the light after three months of 40 degree temps. Water sparingly.
- Order perennials and bulbs for cut flowers this summer.
- Check protective mulches around trees and flower beds.
- Don't forget your indoor houseplants. They could use a lukewarm shower to remove dust, pests, etc. and protect the health of the plant.
- Did you know that The Montreal Botanical Garden is the second largest horticultural garden in the world? Road trip anyone? **HEIDI MCCUE-GOMES**

YOU'RE CORDIALLY INVITED TO A WORKSHOP

On Thursday, February 17th, we're offering a workshop for all Master Gardeners who do or are considering doing engagements for the Speakers' Bureau or any other educational appearances. Kicked off by a Christopher Newport University faculty member the program will be led by Peggy Krapf, Carl Brown and Leanne DuBois. This panel of experts will tell us *what works, what doesn't, the role of visuals (including PowerPoint), tailoring your talk, "is stage fright all it's cracked up to be" and other tips and tidbits.*

The workshop begins at 10 am in the community room of the James City County Library on Croaker Road.

Since educating the public is our prime responsibility, this workshop is appropriate for all Master Gardeners. Advanced training credit hours will be given for the session. Please confirm your attendance with Greg Allen by e-mail (allensofva@verizon.net) or telephone(258-5348) so we can plan the room setup.

HORTICULTURAL OILS - GET A JUMP ON INSECTS THIS SEASON.

Many of the insect problems we see in the Extension Office throughout the growing season can be eliminated by a late winter scouting walk. Everything from bagworms to scale can benefit from either mechanical removal or the application of a dormant spray. Oils are petroleum-based products that also contain certain fatty acids which form layers on plant parts to smother insects. There are two kinds of oils: growing season (summer) and dormant. Summer may be used on growing, leafy plants during the summer, as well as during dormant periods. However, the recommended use rate during summer is normally lower than for dormant periods. 'Dormant oils' are heavier weight oils, which evaporate more slowly and providing better insect control. They are also more likely to injure green plant tissue. Now is the time to start thinking about applying dormant oil sprays. These sprays help to reduce the number of insects that survive the winter and are an excellent Integrated Pest Management tool to get a jump on your summer pest problems reducing the need for pesticides. This oil kills the over-wintering forms of many pests, including spider mites, aphids and scales by blocking their breathing pores (spiracles), smothering and suffocating the insects. (continued)

Applications made during the winter months minimize phytotoxicity to plants. Still some plant species such as arborvitae, beech, hickory, red and silver maples species are very sensitive to dormant oil sprays. Also sensitive are blue needled conifers, which tend to discolor. Do not use the sprays on sensitive plants that should be listed on the label.

Fewer problems occur when applications are made when plants are completely dormant. A way to minimize potential phytotoxicity is to make sure that the spray solution is properly mixed and continually agitated. Because plants treated with oil are more susceptible to freezing injury, avoid applying oil sprays within 24 hours of temperatures below 40 degrees. The best time to apply is early spring prior to bud break. In addition, dormant oils should not be applied to overly stressed plants. You know the drill.....be sure to carefully read the label before application. Happy insect hunting! **LEANNE DUBOIS**

DUES

2005 MG dues of \$15.00 are due. Mail a check to: DAVE BANKS, Treasurer,
215 Charter House Lane, Williamsburg VA 23188

UPCOMING MEETINGS

February 8 The Herb Society of America, Colonial Triangle of Virginia Unit will meet at 1:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall of Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church located at 7479 Richmond Road in Norge. Pressing herbs and flowers and how to use them in crafts will be presented by Bev Credle, Master Gardener and a member of our Unit. Bev will also show items she has made using pressed flora. Non-members are welcome and admission is free. For information: 564-9580.

March 3 Karen Schumaker speaking about the Williamsburg Land Conservancy

April 7 TBA with a Social Time after the business meeting to welcome the Class of 2005

May 5 Linda Johnson of Christopher Newport – Plants that WORK

June 2 Trip to 4-H Center for our meeting with a speaker, guided tour and lunch

We are also planning two field trips: in April a trip to Petersburg with Donna Ware and in May a trip to Denise Greene's Sassafras Gardens in Gloucester. Stay turned for dates and times. We still need several people to help set up coffee and tea for the April meeting. Please let Genrose Lashinger know if you can help.

WELCOME TRANSFERREES

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"The true gardener must be brutal - and imaginative for the future."
Vita Sackville-West (1955)