

The Colonial Master Gardener

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

July 2008

NEWS (AND VIEWS) FROM LEANNE DUBOIS EXTENSION AGENT, HORTICULTURE



Fred Huete Center Garden Tour: Visiting Pamela Harpers Garden. JCC/W Master Gardeners with noted Horticultural Writer, Pamela Harper in her York County Garden.

Standing in front of the Master Gardeners Brag Board winner in Environmental Stewardship. The Mobile Master Gardener was submitted by project chair Denny Meghan. This is the second year in a row the JCC/W MG's took home the winner! Also pictured are Ann Neilson and Carol Fryer both recipients of a 500 hour award. (Not pictured was Barbara Gustafson who took home the 4000 hour award!!)



On June 5, we were honored to have twelve Master Gardener Emeritus attend our monthly meeting to receive their outstanding service recognition. The collective hours contributed by all the Emeritus MG's is 14,012. Congratulations to all those recognized for their outstanding contribution to the Master Gardener Association and for their commitment to servicing the needs of our community.

Those who earned emeritus status were: Jean Barter, Carl Brown, Dom Demmert, Hildegard Demmert, Dale Firestone, Audrey Hoitsma, Duane McSmith, Jack Rascoe, Rudy Roberts, Courtney Strang, Bob Strang, Virginia Warren.

A photo of our honorees will be in next month's Colonial Master Gardener.



Next Monthly Meeting

July 3, Picnic at Freedom Park, Williamsburg Botanical Garden, Native Plant Walks and Brown Bag Lunch

For more information, email John Giffin at giffinj@cox.net or call him at 345-5209 by June 30

Inside this issue:

Internal Ed News	2
Upcoming Dates	2
Mattey's Garden	3
Melissa's Meadow	3
Gardening Tips	4

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INTERNAL EDUCATION NEWS CAROL FRYER

Well, the six of us who attended MG College 2008 returned on Sunday, June 22nd with fond memories, renewed spirit and enthusiasm for what all master gardeners do and can accomplish.

It was certainly lively at the general sessions where we learned about “Sexy Trees” and “Sex in the Garden – just what are those insects up to anyway?”, taught by VT Professor Alex Niemiera, Department of Horticulture, and Professor Rick Fell, Department of Entomology. We experienced world-class keynote speakers who inspired us with their vision of designing livable landscapes, and bringing nature home with ecological designs for home landscapes – Rick Darke, author, photographer and consultant on landscape design, planning and conservation, and Cole Burrell, garden designer, author, photographer, naturalist, and teacher.

You will be hearing more about MG college and our experiences. We hope more of our members will attend MG college in 2009 when Michael Dirr, University of Georgia, author of numerous books and the authority on trees and woody shrubs, will be a keynote speaker. An event NOT to miss.

We look forward to our Picnic, July 3rd, at the Williamsburg Botanical Gardens in Freedom

Park. By the time you receive this newsletter, you will have already received e-mails from John Giffin detailing the events of the day. Look forward to seeing you there.

On a more local note, we have heard very positive feedback about our June speaker, Randy Chambers, PhD, Associate Professor of Biology and Director of Keck Environmental Laboratory, William & Mary College. Even though we have learned much this year about water quality issues, resource protection areas, buffers zones and retention ponds, hearing Dr. Chambers speak about the results of their research projects at the Keck Lab, was an eye-opener. We are so fortunate to have the academic community in Williamsburg with professors who are willing to share their knowledge and interests with us.

In August at the monthly meeting, Denise Green, owner of Sassafras Farm, Gloucester, VA, will be speaking about growing and raising native plants. Denise is the wife of Wesley Green, a garden historian at Colonial Williamsburg.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- June 29 1:00-5:00pm, Taking Root Farm Tour, Sites located in Toano, Charles City County and Providence Forge, VA, Sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension - New Kent County, and the JCC/NK/Williamsburg Master Gardener Assoc. Call (804) 966-9645 for a map and more information or visit www.jccwmg.org
- July 11 8:15-3:30, advance Master Gardener training in Middlesex County featuring Bonnie Appleton on Trees, Peter Warren on IPM and our own Leanne DuBois on Water-wise Gardening
- August 7 monthly MG meeting, Williamsburg Regional Library
- Sept 4 monthly MG meeting, Williamsburg Regional Library

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



Some of those who participated in the 2007 great spring Asian lily give away at Jim Kavitz's house have asked what happened to the broken stems and bulbs. Jim threw them in a pile at his mail box. The photo shows the results this spring.

JCC/W MG 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.

We will not gather officially in **Melissa's Meadow** in July, but feel free to come to the meadow n your own, enjoy the butterflies, and do some weeding!

MATTEY'S GARDEN T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE

Williamsburg Graphix will make a red shirt with white and blue Mattey on front for \$10.00. If we get more than 20 orders, the cost will go down. Sizes are for men and women - same as for Master Gardeners' new t-shirts. Please let Genrose (glashinger@cox.net or 221-0370) know if you want to order one (or more) and what size. I would like to place the order by July 15. At that time, I will let you know about the actual cost (no more than \$10). You can then send a check for the total. This will be our only order until fall or later.

Be the first in your neighborhood to own the very first Mattey's Garden t-shirt!!!



EDITORS NOTE: The deadline for submission of material for the August Newsletter is **July 21**. Please send to Lise Kline, newsletter editor, at legskline@cox.net or call 757-259-9477. Comments and questions about the newsletter are also welcome. Thank you.

Gardening Tips Helen Hamilton

Here are some tricks for ridding your garden of rabbit pests:

--Fill 1-gallon glass jugs with water, and set them near the rabbits' favorite vegetables. The jars reflect light, which startles the animals.

--Put milk jugs with their bottoms cut out over seedlings in the spring. (Be sure to remove them during the hottest part of the day.)

--Set old shoes or sneaker among rows and beds to give your garden a human aroma.

(From www.OrganicGardening.com)

Since the bunnies ate my broccoli seedlings before the second set of leaves emerged, I was interested in this paragraph from Organic Gardening's "Companion Plantings":

Allies: Many companion gardeners believe that beans, celery, potatoes, and onions improve broccoli's growth and flavor. Aromatic herbs, including chamomile, dill, peppermint, rosemary, and sage, are also supposed to be beneficial to broccoli and its relatives by discouraging pests.

Companions: Broccoli needs a lot of calcium, so plant it with low calcium feeders like beets, nasturtiums, marigolds, or sage. In rich, fertile soil, interplant broccoli with other cabbage-family members such as cabbage, cauliflower, collards, and kohlrabi, which share its heavy feeding habits. Underplant late-season broccoli with hairy vetch, a winter-hardy green manure that will live on to protect the soil after you harvest the broccoli.

Enemies: Many companion gardeners believe that broccoli and other cabbage-family plants are negatively affected by tomatoes. Some would add pole beans to that list, and others disagree about whether strawberries are good or bad neighbors. In scientific studies, decomposing residues of broccoli were found to have a toxic effect on lettuce seedlings. It's probably a good idea to remove and compost decaying broccoli plants instead of turning them under.

Growing guidelines:

Sow a fall crop directly in the garden in July through August. Harvest the terminal bud while the florets are tightly budded and green. If you leave the stem in the ground, you can harvest smaller side buds as they develop. Broccoli and other cabbage-family plants are heavy feeders, so top dress with compost or feed with fish emulsion every few weeks.

FOR THE BIRDS: Sunflowers attract birds and beneficial bugs.

Evidence: Researchers from the University of Florida conducted a bird census on five farms that incorporated sunflower rows with vegetable crops, and observed the birds' habits. Numbers of birds and the time they spent foraging were higher in areas that included sunflowers than in those that didn't. The researchers found remnants of caterpillars, grasshoppers, stinkbugs, beetles, and many other garden troublemakers in the birds' guts. Sunflowers served as perches from which the birds could survey the garden and then swoop down on their prey. Moreover, sunflower rows harbored big-eyed bugs, assassin bugs, and predatory wasps and spiders, all beneficial that migrated to nearby crops to hunt for pests.

Advice: Plant a central row of sunflowers amid your vegetables early in the season, so that beneficial predators can become established before pests become a problem.

DID YOU KNOW?

Nearly all (96%) of the terrestrial bird species in North America rely on insects to feed their young! Insects are very nutritious, providing birds with more protein than beef, and fat for the energy required to nurture their young and fly migratory routes. They play an important role in transferring the sun's energy from plants to other animals that cannot eat plants directly. (From "Bringing Nature Home" by Douglas Tallamy)

Therefore, if we want to have a variety of bird life in our gardens, we need to encourage insects; a richly diverse backyard habitat will contain lots of beneficial insects which should keep down the populations of insects we consider pests.

BUG OFF!

The best way to control pests in your garden is to encourage birds, toads, and beneficial insects to prey on them. But when an infestation gets out of control, try these environmentally safe, homemade solutions.

All-Purpose Spray: works on many pests, including slugs and Japanese beetles:

Chop 1 garlic bulb and 1 small onion in a blender. Add 1 teaspoon powdered cayenne pepper and 1 quart water and steep for one hour. Strain through cheesecloth. Add 1 tablespoon liquid dish soap so the spray sticks to plant leaves. Mix well. Spray the mixture on both sides of the leaves and store remaining spray in a labeled jar in the fridge. NOTE: Certain plants are very sensitive to soaps and can develop leaf burn. Always test on a leaf or two the day before spraying the whole plant. (From [Organic Gardening](http://www.OrganicGardening.com))

