



The Colonial Master Gardener

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

MARCH 2004

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

“The concept of sustainable design has come to the forefront of design thinking the last 20 years. It is a concept that recognizes that human civilization is an integral part of the natural world and that nature must be preserved and perpetuated if the human community itself is to survive. Sustainable design articulates this idea through building [or planting] that exemplifies the principles of conservation and encourages the application of those principles in our daily lives” from “Sustainable Design: A Collaborative National Park Service Initiative”

PRESIDENT

Barbara Schroeder '99

HORTICULTURAL PROJ.

ASSOCIATE

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

WEBMASTER

David Banks '03

NEWSLETTER

Charlie Clapper '02

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.

You are a Master Gardener if ... you tell folks about a plant you gotta get because of how great it looks ... during the winter months with a foot of snow on the ground. Angela Cingale

SEED TRIALS

If you have four different kinds of seeds of uncertain vintage in your box, and don't want to disappoint yourself too terribly when they don't sprout come warm weather, try this:

- Find 4 Ziploc sandwich bags; number them with a permanent marker, 1-4.
- Find 4 paper towels; separate; moisten well
- Sprinkle some seeds from 1 envelope onto 1 paper towel, fold, and insert into bag #1.
- LABEL THE ORIGINAL ENVELOPE WITH #1 AND THE DATE.
- Follow suit with #2-3-4.
- Place all 4 bags on top of the refrigerator; in a single layer (most refrigerators only have room for 4 in one row - so you can reach them without a stepstool!)
- Ignore for 7 days, then check and see what you have.
 - a. any that have sprouted -- plant (note the approximate percentage on envelope)
 - b. any that have not sprouted, put back for 3-5 days, and check again
- Any that have not sprouted in about 10 days, you can safely discard (I throw mine in the compost heap just in case they decide to sprout!)
- Continue on through the rest of your old collection, until you run out of seeds, or spring arrives – whichever comes first. *Ailene Bartlett*



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Our logo is now completed and will soon appear on both our web site and our newsletter along with our motto. Both committees and especially Minouche deserve our thanks for all their hard work. Another committee has been formed to survey the membership on how our projects serve our membership and our objectives, what programs interest you, and other activities you would find worthwhile. Please help the members of this committee when they contact you.

The Reforestation Project on March 13 is almost here. We still need more volunteers on March 8, both in the morning and in the afternoon, to tag the thousands of small trees and bundle them. If you would like to help, contact Leanne, 564-2170, at the JCC Extension Office.

Our other big March event is Spring Into Gardening to be held at the JCC Community Center on March 20. With workshops on Drought Tolerant, Low Maintenance Plants, Composting, Changing From a Shade to Sun Garden, Turf Alternatives, Rain Gardens and Watershed Protection, and Spring Turf Management, there should be something for everyone. If you don't want to volunteer, attend and get recertification credit.

Of course you can also get recertification credit by attending the Maymont Garden Symposium next week, or the Hofheimer Camellia Garden February 26, or visiting Brent and Becky's Bulbs on March 25. With all this going on, spring will be here before we know it! Then we can actually dig in the dirt instead of talking about it.

Barbara Schroeder

KUDOS

Greg Allen has been selected to receive the 2004 Arbor Day Individual Award from the Williamsburg Area Council of Garden Clubs in recognition of his efforts in the George Reid Learning, Teaching and Demonstration Garden, and in re-establishing the abandoned Apothecary Garden in Colonial Williamsburg.

The Arbor Day Award ceremony will take place on Friday, March 12 at 11 a.m. in the Williamsburg Community Building, which is located at 401 N. Boundary Street, across the street from the library. Master Gardeners are invited to attend the presentation of awards and to enjoy light refreshments following the event.

Thanks to the efforts of Rudy Roberts and Marilyn Riddle, Fine Gardening magazine has been added to the Williamsburg Regional Library's periodical collection. Fine Gardening is stored at the James City County Library on Croaker Road (this is partly because of space limitations in the Williamsburg Library).

TRY THIS

Deer are an ongoing problem for our garden, and while there are lots of plants out there that don't appeal to them, the varieties I want to grow (especially the Lilies and Daylilies) always seem to be their favorites. Because I am bad at keeping up with sprays and other anti-deer deterrents, I have started planting a few chives in the hole with each bulb or plant the deer like. As the young plants grow, the chives grow with them, and the deer quickly learn that a mouthful of Daylily tastes like onions. By the time the more desirable plants outgrow the chives, the deer have learned to feed elsewhere. And, the nodding purple flowers of the chives look great alongside other flowers. *Angela Cingale*

SWEET SPICES

Strong herbs, friendly herbs and sweet spices are basic flavorings in our cooking. Of course the hot spices – the chilies and peppers – are essential to many dishes. Herbs are leaves and stems; spices other plant parts -- bark (cinnamon) pods, (cardamom), buds (cloves) and roots (ginger). Sweet spices – cinnamon, clove, ginger, and nutmeg often make baked goods special from hot cinnamon buns (or that classic comfort food cinnamon toast) to gingerbread cookies and spice bread. Cinnamon in lattes replaces sugar; cloves sweeten breath. Candied ginger adds kick. Try cinnamon on sweet potatoes and nutmeg in your turkey gravy or mashed potatoes. One other sweet spice not as well known – cardamom– is tasty in a simple egg custard. Like herbs, spices should only be used when fresh and tangy. Dead spices are better not used at all. *Helene Kraige*

THE BOOK CORNER

Barbara Luck, a member of the Class of 2004, in response to my request for "favorite books", sent the following: "I adore Nancy R. Hugo, Earth Works: Readings for Backyard Gardeners (Charlottesville, U. of Va. Press, 1997). It's set up seasonally, with a chapter for each month, but instead of being strait-jacketed into the predictable, each chapter is a beguiling sort of "ramble", full of delightful tangents that will have you reading well past midnight. Hugo can re-spark in me all the magic of reading the classic children's book, The Secret Garden, for the first time. Her enthusiasm is infectious!"

Thank you, Barbara! If there are others who would like to tout their favorite gardening books, e-mail me at bartpear@widomaker.com! *Ailene Bartlett.*

"The Seeds of Learning Program needs a shopper. You will receive a big budget to buy gardening supplies. Contact Charlene Talcott at charmac1@earthlink.net or 258-0317 for this great opportunity."

OUR ROOTS

Before the Civil War, few colleges taught or researched agricultural problems. Beginning with the Morrill Act (1862) the federal government gradually gave colleges and universities free federal lands (thus "land grant") to develop programs in "agricultural and mechanical arts". Gradually the concept expanded nationwide with increased funding support. Agricultural research stations at these schools continue to provide research-based approaches to healthier crops, better plant materials and improved environmental practices. Curious how master gardeners came to be? And why we are so closely associated with land grant universities? Continued next month.

THE FORGOTTEN SEASON[s]

13 March, 2004, 9:30 am-3:00 pm

Extension Pavilion, Randolph Farm, VSU in Ettrick, VA [20 miles south of Richmond]

804-861-8055 for required preregistration forms

Eligible for continuing education hours. Cost \$10

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING

March 4, 2004, 9:00 am, Bruton Heights

JCC/WILLIAMSBURG MASTER GARDENERS PROJECTS

COME SEE WHAT WE ARE DOING!

BARBARA SCHROEDER

MG GARDEN VISITS

- Thursday, March 25 – Visit Brent and Becky’s Bulbs in Gloucester - \$10 charge; meet at the garden at 1:45 for 2 p.m. tour.
- Thursday, May 6 – Visit Sandy’s Plants – more info later
- Dates to be announced -- Visits to the gardens of: Merle Powell, Pat Rathke, Minouche Robinson, Susan Miller, Genrose Lashinger. Are you willing to open your garden for a visit? Let Genrose know!
- May 14-15 --Take the Just Gardens tour on the Northern Neck
- Thursday, June 3 Meeting – Bayberry Lane Field Trip with lunch

4-H JUNIOR MASTER GARDENER TRAINING

Friday, March 12, from 9:00 am - 12:00 noon.

at the York Extension Office If any of JCC MGs wanted the training but missed ours, they are welcome to attend. Contact Ellen Powell by March 5 for directions.

SPRING INTO GARDENING

March 20, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm (corrected date from last month’s newsletter)
JCC/Williamsburg Community Center

GARDENING WITH CHILDREN

April 3

JCC/Williamsburg Community Center

Look for more information soon on this event being chaired by Charlene Talcott

PLANT SALE –APRIL 24th – MARK YOUR CALENDARS

JCC/Williamsburg Community Center

Help Prepare 1:00 pm Friday April 23

To increase our profit, please bring at least 12 seedlings and 12 transplants. If you need help potting or have extra pots, e-mail bobcathyripley@yahoo.com No bake sale this year. Please sign up to help at the February meeting. Put on those “potting thinking caps.” *Cathy Ripley*

Visit the Master Gardeners Association website at <http://jccwmg.org> for a complete listing of upcoming events and educational opportunities. Use of the county van may be possible for out of town events. Call Ann Odle if interested.

Plan your Volunteer Hours for 2004! See the insert to this month’s newsletter for list of active projects that need volunteers. Visit the website for a complete listing of all active projects.

Editor’s Note: Monthly meeting minutes are available at the meetings. Thanks to this month’s contributors. Please keep the articles coming. *Charlie Clapper*

New E-mail Addresses: Genrose Lashinger glashinger@cox.net and Donna Robertson fishin62@infionline.net