

# The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION &  
VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



**November 2012**



## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY MARGENE HARTSOUGH

It seems fall has finally decided to arrive and stay! What a joy to be in the garden now doing all that transplanting of things that just did not work in one place hoping the new location will be better next year. Time also to put those cool season vegetables out. I planted some lettuce recently in one of the self watering containers and look forward to crisp butter crunch lettuce in a few weeks. Love that self watering container!!

Our last general meeting featured Dave Close, Consumer Horticulture and Master Gardener Specialist, VCE MG Coordinator from Virginia Tech. He shared some important information about the VCE MG Coordinator Endowment Fund and how involved MG's from around the state have been working to make this a reality. The most important point I came away with was that by this position being funded through an endowment it cannot be subjected to budget cuts by the state. This give the MG's greater control over the position which is positive.

As the year winds down it is important to remember to get your

hours posted. To be considered an active member you must post 20 hours of volunteer activity and 8 hours of continuing education, except for interns. Waiting until after the new year to report hours really makes it difficult for your membership committee to really know who is active. Help your Board by being up to date on your hours.

Happy Gardening!! Margene

## Monthly Meeting

The next meeting is November 1.

Our speaker will be:  
Dr. Laurie Fox, on the subject of  
Sustainable Landscapes—Rain Gardens

## REMINDER FROM THE MG TREASURER

BY BOB WINTHER



### Current year reimbursements ...

Please submit any and all requests for reimbursement for the current year (2012) by December 15. The reimbursement form is out on our website. Please affix this reimbursement form to all receipts and have the form signed by you project/committee chair. As in every other year this information is very important for our Board as they prepare the new 2013 Budget and attempt to create a balanced budget.

### MGA annual dues ...

I will start collecting MGA dues beginning in November for fiscal year 2013. MGA dues are still \$15. These monies help to support the programs of your MGA and are crucial to the well being of our organization. Since these funds are the primary dollars which support our efforts in the greater community your timeliness of payment is appreciated.

Checks made out to "JCC/W Master Gardeners" with the note "Association Dues" in the memo line may be handed to me at a MG monthly meeting or sent directly to my home address.  
Bob Winther - MG Treasurer  
4751 Regents Park  
Williamsburg, VA 23188-1798

Your prompt consideration of both these important matters is well appreciated by your MGA board.



2012  
MG Board

*President:*  
Roger Evans

*VP Projects:*  
Debbie Griesinger

*VP Internal Ed:*  
Judy Casone

*VP Administration:*  
David Sisson

*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 JUDY CASONE

Our guest speaker this month has an impressive and interesting resume. Dr. Laurie J. Fox, Ph.D, is a Horticulture Associate with the Department of Horticulture, Hampton Roads Agricultural Research & Extension Center in Virginia Beach. She currently works in the areas of water quality and sustainable landscapes. At the Research Center she has established many demonstration gardens, a rain garden, a pond buffer zone, and sustainable landscape around the buildings of the facility. She is also a Board Member with The Virginia Horticultural Foundation, Educational Advisor with the Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association, Inc. and a Board Member with the Hampton Roads Nursery and Landscape Association.

She will speak to us on Sustainable Landscapes – Rain Gardens, providing us with the nuts and bolts of creating one of these attractive, environmentally

friendly additions to your landscape.

She was one of the creative and knowledgeable group of people who wrote Best Plants For Hampton Roads: A Landscape & Garden Companion. It one of the 'must haves' for gardeners. Written for our area, it is a good guide for new gardeners and a strong back-up for seasoned gardeners. She is also an excellent teacher and consults with many projects in the region including our Garden Love Program in James City County.

Be sure to be at the meeting.....you don't want to miss this.

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## 2012 FARMERS MARKET YEAR WAS

“DIFFERENT”!

BY SALLY SISSEL



Thanks to all fellow Master Gardeners and interns who helped make the 2012 Farmers Market a success. For the past six months, everyone volunteering for the Market did a superb job—all showed up on time, ready and willing to help set up and stayed to help tear down. The theme and turf tables were well manned with wonderful information and handouts for the public.

This season included a few “unique” situations! First, of course, was the Turf table without Bob Winters! We really missed him although the table was well taken care of by his substitutes Richard Stratton and Bill Roemer. It was a pleasure to welcome Bob back before season's end.

In looking at last year's notes, I stated we had the absolute worst market when it rained while we were in front of Barnes and Nobles and we had the lowest number of contacts on record: 36. Well, this year we beat our record!! We had NO contacts on Saturday, August 25 when it rained so hard we broke camp at 9:30. Thanks to Denise

Greene of Sassafras Farms for taking the wonderful (?) pictures of our booth that were in our MG newsletter. An award should be given to Jeanne Muller for chasing the rain barrel down the street. A special thank you to Dan Tevlin, John Giffin, Larry Gaskins, and Richard Stratton who picked up the tents and needed supplies and delivered them back to storage at Market's end.

Come next April, I will, once again, be recruiting. My master plan is always to have one “real” MG and 2 interns at each market, so when I put out the call, I hope you will consider volunteering for one of the 13 markets.

Sally Sissel

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.

## NOVEMBER WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH

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

### NEW YORK ASTER *Symphyotrichum novi-belgii*

This is a stunning plant in late fall, the violet-blue ray flowers with yellow or reddish disk flowers, contrasting with blooming goldenrods. Numerous flower heads are borne on slender stems with narrow leaves. A definitive characteristic is the whitish green bracts under the flower heads with spreading or backward-curling tips. The plant can grow to 3 feet tall with branching stems. There are many cultivars and color forms.

New York Aster grows along shores, in damp thickets and meadows, occurring in every county in Virginia, but only in the coastal states of the U.S. and Canada. The range is from Newfoundland to South Carolina, found often in salt marshes. It blooms September-November.



Photo: New York Aster (*Symphyotrichum novi-belgii*) taken by Seig Kopinitz

The species name is Latin for “of New Belgium”, which was the early name for New York.

For more information about native plants visit [www.claytonvnps.org](http://www.claytonvnps.org).

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## BOOK REVIEW

BY JEANNE MILLIN



The Naturescaping Work-Book  
Beth O'Donnell Young

This book is a wonderful companion to Doug Tallamy's "Bringing Nature Home." Step-by-Step Worksheets help you identify what you want and need, create a landscape plan, choose the right plants, work with the water conditions you have in your selected area, attract wildlife, identify earth-friendly materials, build healthy soil and steward your project and the land. The photographs are inspirational and beautiful. The text is easy to follow and well-organized. If "Bringing Nature Home" inspired you, this book is the next step. It can be found in the MG Library under Library of Congress call number, SB439 V68 2011.

## NEW TREE STEWARD CLASS

BY JEANNE MILLIN

Applications for the next Tree Steward (TS) Class are due by November 16<sup>th</sup> to the JCC contact, Sue Liddell, either by e-mail or to her home at 103 Worplesdon, Williamsburg, 23188. The blank application is enclosed with this newsletter and it was sent electronically to all JCC/W members in early October.

This year classes will be held on Wednesdays from 9 to 12, starting on January 9<sup>th</sup> and concluding on March 27<sup>th</sup>. In order to attract Tree Stewards from other Peninsula MG groups, classes will be held in three locations throughout the area, (JCC-Rec. Center, Sandy Bottom Nature Park, Hampton and a York County location still to be determined, either the Tabb Library or the York Fire/Life Safety Building). No location will be more than a 40 minute drive from JCC. Your check is due with your application. You will then be contacted for an interview.

One of the benefits of having Peninsula Tree and Water Steward groups is hearing the diversity of projects throughout the area. Other chapters have conducted health of trees surveys in city parks, surveyed and labeled trees, and two MG/TS groups have Tree advice services similar to our Landscape Love or Lawn Ranger groups. Will this year's class start tree advice up as their project? What would you like to do? This Advanced Training opportunity enhances your MG skills, and it should be part of your knowledge base.

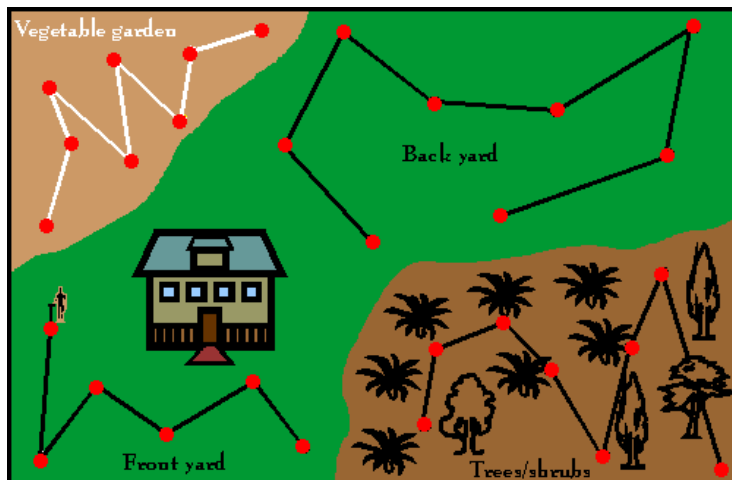
## SOIL TEST IN THE FALL – OCTOBER 2012

BY JOHN B. ALLISON, EXTENSION AGENT,  
AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES;  
SUBMITTED BY MARY MILLS

A soil test can provide information on the proper amount of lime and fertilizer to apply to your lawn, garden and other areas of your landscape. The reliability of the soil test, however, can be no better than the sample you submit. For results you can depend on, it is important that you take samples correctly to accurately represent the soil in your landscape.

To obtain an accurate soil sample divide your landscape into areas of unique use. Examples are vegetable gardens, lawns, flower beds, and areas where landscape plants are growing. Sample and box the soil from each area separately. The soil sample should not include mulch, soil from wet spots, landscape borders, ditch banks, severely eroded areas, as well as soil from under brush piles, burn sites, old building sites, fence rows, and pet areas. Soil taken from these locations would not be typical of the soil in the majority of the landscape and would produce misleading results. Recommended sampling depth for established lawns is 4 inches, vegetable and flower gardens 6-8 inches, and trees and shrubs 6 inches.

To collect soil samples use a clean stainless steel or chrome plated soil probe, hand garden trowel, shovel or spade. Do not use brass, bronze, or galvanized tools because they will contaminate samples with copper and/or zinc. A soil sample must be made up of multiple sub-samples. These sub-samples are mixed together to



make up the composite soil sample for that area. Take 10 or more sub-samples from different locations within each area to make a composite sample. Take the sub-samples in a random manner, such as a zigzag pattern to capture the variability present in the area. Mix soil samples in a clean plastic bucket. If the bucket has been used to hold fertilizer or other chemicals, wash and rinse it thoroughly before using it for soil samples. Even a small amount of soil, lime, or fertilizer in the bucket or on the sampling tools can contaminate the sample and produce inaccurate results.

Call (804-966-9645) or come by the Virginia Cooperative Extension office on New Kent Highway in New Kent and pick up as many soil sample kits as you need. Once the results come back from Virginia Tech, we can help you interpret them so you can apply the needed lime this fall.

## LAWN RANGER TRAINING

BY BARB FOLEY

“What to Do and How to do It”

Nov. 13 or 14: JCC Recreation Center, Room B,  
9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Please plan to attend only one session (both are the same).

If you are or want to become a Lawn Ranger, this is your chance to learn how or update your skills! If you plan to attend, please call the Virginia Cooperative Extension Office (564-2170) by November 9<sup>th</sup>.

Looking forward to seeing all you Lawn Rangers and “wanna be” Lawn Rangers on one of the days!

## PLEASE!!!---GET YOUR HOURS UP TO DATE

BY DAVE SISSON

Many of our current MGs have entered few or no hours in the new system. Please try to get them in SOON and keep them up to date. Daily entry is a good habit, or every time you open your e-mail. We need the information for reporting and planning purposes and the more accurate and timely it is, the better/accurate the report/plan.

If you are still 'not quite on board' or having difficulty getting there [fear of the unknown can cause procrastination, I'm told] just give me a call and I'll try to talk you through the process--757 903 7118. Dave Sisson, VP Administration.





## GARDENING TIPS

BY AILENE BARTLETT

With our weather being what it is, it's hard to tell exactly what to do to our gardens! However, you can always WEED! "The book" says cover lettuce, chard, spinach, chives, parsley, and the like, with floating row covers before the first hard freeze. When's that?? Who knows! Our "average first frost date" is Oct. 15, and guess what - still no frost! (Not at my house, anyhow!) You can continue to plant trees and shrubs. And don't forget to add your leaves to the compost pile, or shred them for winter mulch.

Are your houseplants inside yet? My big ones are, and as usual, they don't like it much. Light is fine, watering is fine, but the humidity is not high enough for them, even with daily misting. I don't think they brought any pests along in, but that's on the list for this week. If your sun-loving houseplants are small enough, you might like to invest in grow-lights for them. And don't forget a timer, so you don't have to remember to turn off the grow-lights every night after you let the dog out.

I usually repot in the fall, since the hanging ones are full of crape myrtle leaves, and the Spider-plants, Sanseverias, and some of the others go totally wild hanging in the crape myrtle all summer. In the spring, those that winter in the greenhouse will have ant nests in them, so they'll get repotted then. By the way, if anyone needs any to brighten up their houses for the winter, let me know!

By the way, too, the book says if you're going to plant your living Christmas tree, dig the hole NOW, before the ground freezes. Good idea, and you can cover the hole with a tarp and some pine straw or leaves.

### NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

The deadline for submission of material for the **December Newsletter** is **Monday, November 26.**

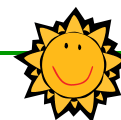
Please send to Cathy Lohwater, newsletter editor, at [cathy.lohwater@cox.net](mailto:cathy.lohwater@cox.net) or call 757-259-1133.

### Important Dates

- 11/1 Monthly Meeting at WRL
- 11/13,14 Lawn Ranger Training
- 11/26 Newsletter Submissions Due

#### 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 of the organization. Mary Ellen may be reached at (804) 966-9366 or [JMEMEE12350@verizon.net](mailto: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.

2013 Peninsula MG Tree Steward Class  
Application

General Information:

Class will be held Jan 9 to Mar 27, 2013, on Wednesdays usually from 9-12 AM except as scheduled 1-4 PM. Location will vary from Williamsburg to Hampton but no more than 45 min travel for anyone. Cost of the class is \$155, primarily for the required books and class administrative costs (copies, instructor gifts etc). Check for the fee should be sent with your application (payable to JCC/Williamsburg Master Gardeners). Fee is refundable if you are not included in the class; if you withdraw after that point, your books will have been ordered and are yours, with the remainder of the fee returned to you.

Instructions: Please return the application (electronically or in print) to the Tree Steward contact in your local MG organization. Names are listed below. If you have questions outside your unit level, please call or email Carol King, Peninsula Tree Steward Coordinator (757-268-6589, [cdkinggardener@hotmail.com](mailto:cdkinggardener@hotmail.com)).

Tree Steward Contact for Applications:

Gloucester: Jim Newton

Hampton: Shirley Boyd

Newport News: Katherine Duncan

York/Poquoson: Marilee Hawkins

Williamsburg/JCC: Sue Liddell

APPLICATION

Name:

Address:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

MG Unit:

Year of MG Training:

What are you looking for from the Tree Steward Class?

Are there any specific tree-related topics you hope to see included in the curriculum?

Are there any MG Tree Stewards or TS projects which have influenced your decision to apply to the course?

Are you able to attend all the classes? (Jan 9-Mar 27, every Wed) Note that there is just one authorized absence, which needs to be coordinated with the class Manager, Carol King.

Will you need any accommodation for disability? If yes, please say what.