

The Colonial Master Gardener

PUBLICATION OF JCC/WMASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION & VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



October 2012

A RAINY DAY BY SALLY SISSEL



Saturday, August 25th, will be remembered as the worst Farmers Market for the Master Gardeners in its 10 year history. To say it rained is a serious understatement--it poured and poured and poured.

All the loyal volunteers were drenched even as they were huddled under the tents. Brave Jeanne Muller was more than ankle deep in water as she ran after a rain barrel floating into Henry Street.

By 9:30, with 3 customers walking the street, I called a halt. At the very next little lull, we scrambled and got everything torn down and were gone! When I got home, I had over 4 inches already in my rain gauge and the rain was far from over.

Note: Thanks to Denise Greene of Sassafras Farm for

Jeanne Muller
With barrels —>>>>

Monthly Meeting

The next meeting is October 4.

Our speaker will be:

David Close, Virginia Tech Consumer Horticulturalist and Master Gardener Specialist



The Colonial Master Gardener October 2012



2012
MG Board

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564-2170

INTERNAL EDUCATION

BY JUDY CASONE

Our speaker this month is David Close, Consumer Horticulture and Master Gardener Specialist, Virginia Tech, Department of Horticulture. You all know David from his informational emails. He is a valuable source of knowledge for us. You will remember the warning about the problem with 'emerald ash borer'. Much later we see the article in the Daily Press, Nation and World section, telling us NASA is working on this issue by stripping the bark from a handful of specimens infested by emerald ash borers and painting the trunks white with black dots. We get the heads up from Dave and later learn NASA is also working on this issue. Nice. Another topical email was the one concerning Fall Fertilization Principles from Michael Goatley, Jr., Professor and Extension Turfgrass Specialist. This ties in very nicely with our Turf Love program.

The meeting will begin with David speaking, then Angela Cingale or Marilyn Riddle will use a forum set up to ask questions sent in by our members for discussion. I am in hopes all of you have taken

advantage of the opportunity and sent in your questions by email to either Angela or Marilyn.

As Master Gardeners we have several opportunities to learn, educate and care for our community in the process. Having recently gone through the Water Steward training, articles in the news, "Living Shorelines Protect Our Land", have a deeper and more important meaning to me.

We are now in the process of lining up meetings for 2013. Ideas are always welcome and encouraged. If you have an idea please share it with me. (Be nice.)

Basically, this column addresses the opportunities we have and the impact we can make if we but read, listen and act.



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.

LANDSCAPE LOVE

BY ANNE NIELSEN & GARY STREB



Landscape Love volunteers are primed and ready to see the 72 homeowners who have signed up this fall. We had a great turnout at our organizational meeting on September 20th and will start the visits this week. Gary Streb presented team members with a quick resume of a new program called "Landscape For Life," based on the principles of the Sustainable Sites Initiative. Angela Cingale attended a working seminar in July and brought the presentation back to us. You'll be hearing the details as plans firm for our own seminar for our Master Gardeners.

At the moment, team leaders are making appointments for visits to our 72 residents. Our goal is to complete them before the end of October. With good weather I am sure we will finish on time.

A reminder to all team members. The Diagnostic Clinic is being held 8:30 - noon, Sept 24, Oct 1, 8, and 13. You can bring in specimens from your visits to be identified, diagnosed or sent off to VT. This is perfect timing for us. Use it !

Enjoy your days in all the gardens,
Anne and Gary

OCTOBER WILDFLOWER OF THE MONTH

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

RIVER OATS

Chasmanthium latifolium

River Oats, or Inland Sea Oats is notable for its large, graceful seed heads. This is a 2-4 foot clump-forming perennial grass with flat, drooping, flower spikelets along slender, arching branches. In May the plant is a vivid green, and by mid-summer the seeds turn ivory, then brown before dropping off in the fall. The blue-green, bamboo-like leaves appear in early spring, fading to tan over the winter.

This striking ornamental grass prefers part shade and moist sands, loams and clays. It will tolerate poorly drained soils, and is one of the few grasses that does not do well in full sun; without adequate shade, the leaves turn yellowish. The plant reseeds easily and can expand aggressively within a couple of years, and blooms from June through September.

Native to most counties in the state of Virginia, River Oats is found in moist woods and streambanks from New Jersey to Georgia and northwest Florida, and west to southern Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas and Texas.



Photo: River Oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)
taken by Helen Hamilton

River Oats is a larval host for several skipper butterflies. The seeds are eaten by small mammals and birds, and the stems and leaves are used as nesting material by birds. The plant is highly resistant to deer browse.

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

REMINDER FROM THE TREASURER

BY BOB WINTHER



Fiscal Year 2012 is quickly coming to an end. I would ask that you please submit any and all requests for reimbursement for the current year by December 15. The reimbursement form is out on our website. Please affix this form to all receipts. Since I will be closing the accounts for 2012 on December 31, it is important that all reimbursements occur before that date. Any requests after that date will be applied against the 2013 budget.

On another note ...

I would like to thank everyone who submitted dues this year in timely fashion. It is important for the board to know approximately how much income will be available when preparing the new budget.

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. It is a reality that without these funds many projects would be unable to be supported.

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 this matter is well appreciated by your MGA board.

CALLING ALL POND OWNERS

BY AILENE BARTLETT

HELP! Ailene found, hiding amongst all the summer's weeds, a tub with SIX little waterlilies, left over from the plant sale! Amazingly, they survived the summer (thanks to lots of rain), but now that fall is upon us, they need a place for the winter - like someone's fishpond.

Any takers?? Let Ailene Bartlett know!

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WINTER HELP DESK

BY PEG CREWS



The interns have finished their Help Desk rotation, and they did a fabulous job. But now the Help Desk needs to be manned for the winter. So I'm asking all Master Gardeners and Interns who like the challenge and fun of the Help Desk to volunteer their time over the winter.

It's a great and easy way to earn hours. The winter Help Desk is much easier than what we do in summer. Each volunteer will be asked to work a one week period when they will occasionally check on voice mails and emails. This can be done from your home or the Extension office, whichever you would prefer.

I will ask the volunteers to go into the office at the end of their week (or the beginning of the next week) to put their contacts into the Help Desk Log. Training will be conducted in early October for all who are interested.

If you would like to work on the winter Help Desk, please contact Peg Crews at peg.crews@gmail.com or 757-741-2991.

BOOK REVIEW

BY JEANNE MILLIN



Beautiful No-Mow Yards : 50 Amazing Lawn Alternatives

By Evelyn J. Hadden

This is a beautifully photographed, idea-packed book and for those of us who cannot go cold-turkey and remove our lawn, it has some small suggestions that are possible for even the most restrictive communities that favor a yard of green. Design ideas for patios, shade and water gardens, strolling and play areas and many other inspirational possibilities are featured in Part One. Part Two, How to Get There, talks about design, maintenance and eco-friendly lawns. Part Three, contains chapters on types of plants for different uses. There is a list of references and conversion tables in the back. This is a beautiful book that can be found in the MG Library under Library of Congress number, SB473 J25 2012.

NATIVE PLANT HIGHLIGHT

BY HELEN HAMILTON

SPLITBEARD BLUESTEM

Andropogon ternarius

This is a distinctive grass in the fall with paired, silvery-white seed tufts at the ends of the stems. The fluffy seed heads catch the sun and often persist into winter. Growing in clumps, Splitbeard Bluestem has 1-4 foot stems. Narrow, ribbon-like leaves toward the base of the plant are glaucous and blue-green in the summer, turning copper, red and bronze in the fall. The flowers start to appear in late summer and are in full bloom in October.

Preferring hot dry sites with poor soil but good drainage, Splitbeard Bluestem grows in southeastern counties of Virginia. This plant is common in dry places, thin woods, pinelands, old fields, meadows and roadsides, throughout southeastern U.S. from Delaware to Kentucky and southern Missouri, and south to Florida and Texas.



Photo: Splitbeard Bluestem (*Andropogon ternarius*) taken by Helen Hamilton

This is a stunning grass for a meadow or wildflower border with the sun back-lighting masses of the V-shaped seed tufts. Juncos and chipping sparrows eat the seeds. Splitbeard Bluestem is a host plant for the Wood Nymph butterfly, whose caterpillars feed on the foliage.

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FARMERS' MARKET LATE SUMMER/FALL SCHEDULE BY SALLY SISSEL

October 6 Pruning
October 20 Composting

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

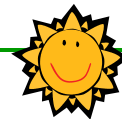
The deadline for submission of material for the **November Newsletter** is **Monday, October 22**. Please send to Cathy Lohwater, newsletter editor, at cathy.lohwater@cox.net or call 757-259-1133.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- 10/4 Monthly Meeting at WRL
- 10/22 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.

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.

Want to be a VCE Master Gardener?



Classes meet January to Early April

Students are expected to attend all classes held twice a week

Topics Covered:

- Botany
- Soils and Composting
- Plant Nutrition
- Pests and Diseases
- Turf Management
- Plant Propagation
- Waterwise Landscaping
- Landscape Design Principles
- Fruit and Vegetable Production
- Annuals, Perennials and Herbs
- Tree and Shrub Care
- Water Quality Management
- Pruning
- Weed Identification

You will be trained to work in the community:

- Demonstration Gardening Projects
- Adult and Youth Education
 - Help Desk and Plant Clinics
 - Landscape Sustainability

Tuition fee of \$150 includes the Virginia Master Gardener Training Manual and handouts

For a copy of "What is a Master Gardener?" brochure and an application, visit us at www.iccwmg.org or call Virginia Cooperative Extension at 757/564-2170

Registration opens Sept. 1, 2012 and closes Nov. 15th - classes fill quickly



Virginia Cooperative Extension
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