



# The Colonial Master Gardener

December  
2021

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

## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY MARTIN OAKES

I write my last President's Message with mixed emotions. I will miss the monthly contact with my friends and fellow Master Gardeners. But I will look forward to the new Board of Directors. Change and new ideas are healthy for any organization. I welcome the new members – it is a strong group with many innovative and progressive plans. Great things will occur. I thank the departing Board. This "family" was extremely supportive and extremely patient. They did the work and I just sat back and looked pretty.

The 2021 calendar year was one of change for the Master Gardener Association – and for our country in general. The Corona Virus dictated many items from project closures to membership meetings. We are back on track – at least for the most part. Flexibility in the upcoming year will be essential. Our immediate past president, Patsy McGrady, started an annual tradition of presenting a year's end summary of the organization. I will continue this in the next newsletter or as a mass email – think of it as a casual "State of the Union". The January newsletter will not be published in 2022 – the editorial staff needs a rest from the responsibility during the holiday season. A round of applause for these fine people.

I hope to see each of you at the December General Membership Meeting (Thursday, 2 December at the Library). The main focus will be the graduation of the 2019 - 2020 class. Please come and celebrate their achievement. The main business item will be a membership vote for the approval of the 2022 Budget. Linda "The Treasurer" Neilson has placed much time and effort into this endeavor – please thank her.

Please enter volunteer hours into the Better Impact system. You earned the hours so please document. I again thank the members of the 2021 Board of Directors. Your dedication is just fantastic. Our achievements are due to you.

As the Beatles sang in their 1967 album Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, "Oh, I get by with a little help from my friends." I truly thank "my friends" for their help.

Happy Holiday. Merry Christmas.

**Next Meeting:**  
Thursday, December 2  
9:00am  
Auditorium at the  
Williamsburg Library

**Program:**  
2020 MG GRADUATION

**Graduation Address:**  
Forrest Hobbs



## EDITOR'S NOTE

BY KATHERINE SOKOLOWSKY

A **GREAT BIG** thank you to our outgoing board members. We are so grateful for all of your hard work. And a special thanks to our fearless leader Marty for always providing us with a smiling face, good cheer and humor.

As we look to the new year, we are hoping our MG community will continue to provide us with relevant, informative and insightful articles for the newsletter and/or Facebook page. Keep the great articles coming!

To assist you in this endeavor, we have included guidelines for submissions at the end of the newsletter. If you still have questions, please contact Marion Guthrie at [marion.guthrie@gmail.com](mailto:marion.guthrie@gmail.com)



## MG 2020 GRADUATION!

BY BILL DICHTEL, VP FOR INTERNAL EDUCATION

Please join us for graduation! Thursday, December 2 will be the date of the next Master Gardener Meeting beginning at 9:00 a.m. either in person at the Library Auditorium or by Zoom. The Zoom link to the meeting is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2324806347>

Those that attend in person must wear your masks in the Library. The order of the meetings will be reversed this time: a brief business meeting will be first. This will be an important meeting as the budget for 2022 will need to be discussed and potentially approved. After the business meeting is completed, there will be a very brief intermission to organize the graduating class and then the grand graduation will begin.

Our President Marty Oakes will preside over the graduation along with Jen Campbell and Pam Mageland and other members of the team that lead the Master Gardener Class. Forrest Hobbs, our Extension Agent who has been an outstanding asset to the Master Gardeners, will be giving the Master Gardener graduation address. This 2020 Graduation Class has achieved milestones that no other graduation class has reached before that you will hear about in the graduation ceremony. You won't want to miss it!

Angela Cingale and her Social Committee have planned a reception at the Stryker Center immediately following the Graduation. We hope that many of you can turn out and officially welcome our newest Master Gardeners!

## SPEAKERS BUREAU

BY JUDITH ALBERTS, CO-CHAIR

The Speakers Bureau Project has been approved for 2022. Elizabeth McCoy is stepping down as Project Co-Lead and Rick Brown will step up as Co-Lead for 2022. There will be a Project Information Meeting via Zoom on January 10 at 2 pm. All MGs are invited to find out more about the Speakers Bureau. If public speaking gives you nightmares, there are other ways to be involved in this public outreach. Please email Judith Alberts at [speakers@jccwmq.org](mailto:speakers@jccwmq.org) to receive the Zoom link. The meeting will be recorded if you're not able to attend the live session.

If you need a speaker for your garden club **or any other organization**, the Speakers Bureau maintains a current list of topics at <https://jccwmq.org/wordpress/community-outreach/speakers-bureau-topics/>, and the Speakers Bureau Request Form is at <https://jccwmq.org/wordpress/community-outreach/request-a-speaker/>. Many of the programs are suitable for homeowners associations, realty offices that give regular training sessions to their realtors, and other civic organizations.

Don't forget to check out our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/VCEMasterGardeners/>. Lots of great articles, educational videos, beautiful photographs, upcoming events, and more! Marion Guthrie is doing a great job keeping us up to date, especially during this time when things are changing so frequently.

To get to our VCE James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener homepage quickly, click on <http://jccwmq.org/wordpress/>

2021  
MGA Board

*President:*  
Martin Oakes

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Deborah Bussert

*VP Administration:*  
Vickie Rockwell

*VP Projects:*  
Rick Brown

*VP Internal Ed:*  
Bill Dichtel

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Paulette Atkinson

*Treasurer:*  
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Joanne Sheffield

*Past President:*  
Patsy McGrady

*Associate Extension Agent:*  
Forrest Hobbs

*Newsletter Editor:*  
Katherine Sokolowsky  
[katherinesoko@gmail.com](mailto:katherinesoko@gmail.com)

The MGA board meets on the third Thursday of each month at 9:30am at the Williamsburg Regional Library, Room B, on Scotland Street, Williamsburg.

## Therapeutic Gardening

By Carolyn Stringer



All photos courtesy of Richard Rosania



After caring for the WBG therapeutic beds during the summer, Karen Brooks and her fellow Master Gardeners conducted four, in-person sessions during the fall with our friends from the Arc of Greater Williamsburg. The sessions included planting, weeding and harvesting the therapeutic beds, discussing different types of plants, flowers and trees, learning about specific herbs, and creating gardening-related crafts.

The main themes for fall discussion were: apples, trees, winter squash and spring bulbs. Lisa Steele and her other leaders at the Arc received our lesson plans in advance, and they engaged the young adults with activities relating to each theme, both before and after each meeting. Their support made our sessions much more memorable to the participants.

In the first meeting on September 14, four different types of apples were shown, discussed, sliced, and sampled by everyone. When checking the garden beds, the group found butterfly caterpillars on their parsley, then picked Trombone Squash to take and cook. Pat Crowe talked about Basil, the herb of the day, and showed different basil types that were passed around so everyone could smell their fragrance. The Arc leaders later followed up the MG program at their place by learning about Johnny Appleseed, and making apple bookmarks with materials supplied by Karen.

On September 28, Rick Brown took the group on a tree walk and showed them how to identify such trees as maples, pines and magnolias. Afterwards they made colorful rubbings from tree leaves which they proudly displayed. The herb of the day was parsley, and Angela Cingale told them it could be used in almost every recipe, and also to clean the breath! Everyone visited the garden beds to see how the carrots, broccoli, radish and sweet potato vines were growing, then the group planted spinach, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts.

The theme for the October 12 meeting was winter squash, and our Arc friends were shown butternut, acorn, spaghetti squash and pumpkins. They sampled some spaghetti squash slices prepared by Rick. They learned the difference between small pie pumpkins for cooking and jack-o-lantern pumpkins for Halloween. The garden craft was making lovely centerpieces by placing dried flowers in small orange and white pumpkins. Since the herb of the day was rosemary, Liz Grainer told them about its growth habits and its uses in cooking, soaps and perfumes. Sprigs of rosemary were passed around so everyone could smell their strong fragrance.

At the final session on October 26, everyone harvested the sweet potatoes, then cleaned the bed. The small space had produced several bags of potatoes which the Arc group took home to cook. Since the session theme was bulbs, they planted two pots "Lasagna Style." The pots were layered with Hyacinths, Tulips, Daffodils, and a "mystery bulb." Pansies were planted on top. They plan to have pansies all winter and fresh flowers from the bulbs in the spring. Carolyn Stringer talked about thyme, the herb of the day. The group smelled both fresh and dried thyme and learned about planting and cooking with each. They were given a recipe for Lemon Tea Bread which they planned to bake.

At the end of the session, the Executive Director of the Arc, Pam McGregor, visited us in the garden and thanked the MGs for our efforts this year. Our Arc friends gave each Master Gardener a beautiful thank-you card created with colorful pumpkin seeds that they had dried and dyed long before the Oct. 12 session that featured pumpkins!

## TALES FROM THE HELP DESK

BY PATSY MCGRADY

**Q. What is going on with my weeping redbud? Most of the leaves are covered in spots and many have black areas.**

A. The spots and blackening areas on your weeping redbud appear to be fungal infections that probably include anthracnose. It is not unusual to see redbud trees (and almost any deciduous tree) in the fall with fungal infections showing up as spots and blackened areas on the leaves. This seems to be especially common on redbud trees. The health of the tree is not seriously endangered. The best thing to do is to clean up (collect and destroy) all infected leaves as they fall from the tree. Do not put these in a compost pile but bag them and dispose. Prune out any dead branches. When the tree is dormant (late January to early March), you may want to prune selectively to promote air circulation. In the spring apply fresh mulch.

You may want to spray the redbud with a fungicide when the leaves are beginning to enlarge from buds in the spring. VCE guidelines for fungicides are provided in Table 4.1 of the Pest Management Guide: Home Grounds & Animals.

The fungicide is a preventative aid and should be applied just before the leaves fully come out on the tree. It will not kill fungus already active in a plant. Applying a fungicide to the redbud after the leaf spots appear would serve no purpose.



Redbud with Fungus  
(Photo Courtesy of Jody Stephens)

## PRUNING CLINICS RETURN IN 2022

BY GARY STREB, CO-CHAIR

“After watching the pruning videos on our Master Gardener website and reading the JCC/Williamsburg Pruning Handbook...do you still have questions about pruning plants in your own home landscape?”

If you ask this question to many of the residents of Williamsburg city, James City and New Kent Counties you will find a lot of uncertainty and apprehension about cutting into their plants. Our on-site *Pruning Clinics* can provide them the information and education they need for maintaining healthy, thriving plants.

The *Pruning Clinics* project sends pruning teams of 2-3 EMGs to resident homeowners who apply through our [www.JCC/WMG.ORG](http://www.JCC/WMG.ORG) website for an hour-long, hands-on educational session. We do not provide pruning services but after their personalized instruction each homeowner will be able to prune their plants themselves or be better able to supervise those that do.

**Registration for a limited number of visits commences December 15 and closes by January 15, 2022 on a first come—first served basis. We will start visits the week of January 17, weather dependent.**

To properly prepare we have scheduled an **orientation/training session for all new *Pruning Clinic* volunteers, as well as the “old hands”, on Wednesday, January 12 at 9:00 in the Interpretive Center at Freedom Park.** After the classroom session we will survey the Williamsburg Botanical Garden for pruning issues and what we would do to correct them, as a “practice” session for the homeowner visits. If you feel uneasy about instructing others you will find this session extremely beneficial. Each team will have an experienced EMG pruner so you will be assured of learning something of value for your continuing Master Gardener education. Everyone learns something on every visit!

We are still recruiting for pruning volunteers. Thanks to all of you that have already responded to my verbal request at the last association business meeting. If you want to join us, it is not too late! Please email me at [gstreb11@gmail.com](mailto:gstreb11@gmail.com) to volunteer or to resolve any concerns you may have.

Thanks for your continued support of this well-established community service.

## PENINSULA TREE STEWARDS

BY MARION GUTHRIE

The James City County Williamsburg Tree Stewards recently joined up with the Peninsula Tree Stewards in an all-morning informational session at the Newport News Waterworks. The Waterworks has had a forest management program since 1947 and our Tree Stewards wanted to learn more. A regional water provider, the Waterworks serves over 400,000 people in Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, York County, and part of James City County. The program promotes the health of the forests within the watershed which consists of 5 reservoirs and more than 12,000 acres.

During the morning's informational session, Waterworks professionals shared some of the different challenges and opportunities related to how forests slow the flow of water and how that supports retention of water in the reservoirs. Part of the presentation focused on how the Waterworks plants pine saplings to establish new forests that become biodiverse over time. In addition, there was discussion on the importance of carbon sequestration in the developing forest, and the role of timber management as the trees mature.

The James City County Williamsburg Tree Stewards are MG volunteers who have completed the Advanced Master Gardener Tree Steward training under the auspices of Virginia Tech. The Tree Stewards concentrate on educating not only their fellow Master Gardeners, but the larger Williamsburg community on tree-related issues. They actively promote the social, economic, and mental health benefits of trees, choosing projects that serve the residents of the county. For training, they often combine programs with the Peninsula Tree Stewards. For information contact MG and Tree Steward Coordinator, Rick Brown (ricklin46@cox.net).



Photo Courtesy of Marion Guthrie



Photo Courtesy of Judith Alberts

## WBG PROJECT EXPANDS FOR 2022

BY ELIZABETH MCCOY

Our project at the WBG will expand in the coming year to include additional work areas, more team leaders, and a longer schedule. Rich Rosania joins our leadership team as Steward of the Native Grasses Garden. He is looking for a team of volunteers to work with him to plant a selection of new native grasses and maintain that garden area.

Deb Bussert, Steward for the Perennial Gardens, will also oversee the shady Bulb Garden, with plans to renovate and replant it. Cheryl Roettger continues as Steward for the Pollinator Garden, Pam Arnold continues as the Steward of the English Style Cottage Garden, and Elizabeth McCoy continues as the Steward of the Rock Garden. Each member of our leadership team looks forward to working with Master Gardeners and Master Gardener Interns to design and care for these areas of the WBG.

All project areas are designed to inspire visitors and teach many horticultural principles of sustainable, wildlife-friendly gardening. Plants are chosen for their excellent performance in our climate and their value to support pollinators and birds. One of our goals is to be a place where visitors see and learn about plants that they may know only through reference books. We will also propagate some of these plants for sale next spring.

Master Gardeners may be found sharing their skills and knowledge throughout many areas of

## WBG PROJECT EXPANDS FOR 2022 — CONTINUED

the WBG. It is as much classroom as garden, with MGs pruning, planning, planting, and caring for a wide variety of both native and introduced plant species. Master Gardeners earn volunteer hours for their work throughout all areas of the garden.



Pollinator Palace now filled with pine cones, branches, seedheads, and other materials to provide habitat for overwintering bees and insects  
(Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth McCoy)

The Tree Steward project, initiated in 2020, working in collaboration with Dr. Donna Ware, has identified over 150 woody species within the garden thus far, and we expect to achieve recognition as a Level 1 Arboretum by Arbor Day 2022. Many of these species grow within the various garden areas included in our Master Gardener project. Several members of our EMG at the WBG Project Team also participated in the Tree Steward project and continue their work caring for shrubs and trees within the garden.

Our team will also work closely with the MGA Plant Sale as the sale is held in the WBG for the first time this coming spring. It will be an exciting year for Master Gardeners at the WBG. Our project will begin work in February and last through the end of November 2022. Please watch for announcements and plan to join us in the months ahead. Contact any of the Project Leads for more information. There is always more to learn in this beautiful garden.

## ANNUAL SPRING PLANT SALE BY DONNA TIERNEY, PROJECT CHAIR

Hello, fellow gardeners, the Annual Spring Plant Sale is the major fundraiser for our organization. These funds support our ability to do projects and outreach to our clients throughout Williamsburg and James City County. Barring any changes in COVID policy that could restrict holding this event, we are putting together a team to plan and run a public plant sale this year.

The sale will be held at the Williamsburg Botanic Garden April 29 (set up) and actual sale April 30. I will be the Team Chairman for this project. The WBG has offered us the use of the site and equipment for the sale at no cost. They will also retain any unsold MG propagate plants that the owners don't want to take back. They will be no requirement to move unsold plants since the plants will remain at WBG for resale. Please see the email I sent out with a description of the roles and responsibilities for the other Project team members.

If you don't want to be part of the leadership team, these are other ways to help:

1. Plant Propagation: Specific guidance for propagation (standard pot sizes/soil/labels, etc.) given.
2. Save used Gardening books/Trash & Treasure items: No broken or dirty items please.
3. Volunteer: Assist with set up or sales day activities.

Last year over 450 volunteer hours were logged in support of the Internal Plant Sale and over 700 plants donated! Because 2022 will be a public sale, it's anticipated that more volunteers will be needed to support the sale.

The first meeting of the Project Leadership Team will be held in early January, and the team will develop a schedule for follow up meetings. The functional sub-teams may hold additional meetings. If you would like to volunteer to participate on the Project Leadership Team, please send me an email at [dktva@cox.net](mailto:dktva@cox.net) by Dec 15 identifying which functional area you are interested in.

I look forward to hearing from you and want to wish everyone a very HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!

Thanks in advance for your support of this project.

## PERENNIAL PLANTS OF THE YEAR

BY DEB BUSSERT, PRESIDENT ELECT

Here is the next installment of my ongoing series of articles about the Perennial Plants of the Year and our experiences with them at the Williamsburg Botanical Garden.

### 1995: *Perovskia atriplicifolia*

Commonly known as Russian sage, *Perovskia atriplicifolia* is native to the Himalayas and western China. It is hardy in Zones 5-9 and grows 3 to 5 feet high by 2 to 4 feet wide. It blooms from July to October with airy panicles of light blue flowers. This plant grows best in full sun in dry to medium well-drained soils. It is drought-tolerant once established and good drainage is essential. Deer and rabbits avoid it, probably because the foliage is very aromatic when crushed. The genus is named for the Russian general V. A. Perovski (1794-1857). We tried for several years to grow Russian sage at the WGB and it never thrived, so last year we gave up and dug it out.



1995: *Perovskia atriplicifolia*  
(Photo courtesy of Deb Bussert)

### 1994: Astilbe 'Sprite'

Astilbe is a genus of about 20 species of clump-forming, herbaceous perennials native to eastern Asia and eastern North America. Hardy in Zones 4-9, 'Sprite' is a dwarf variety that grows only about 10 inches tall and features the characteristic fern-like foliage and pale pink flowers. Like all astilbes, 'Sprite' does best in part to full shade and blooms in May and June. Astilbes in general are easily grown in moist, humusy soil with even moisture. They are not drought tolerant. Removing spent flowers will not prolong bloom and some gardeners leave the dried seed heads on the plants for additional interest. Deer and rabbits avoid astilbes and they tolerate heavy shade. Foliage will decline if the plants are not kept moist. Powdery mildew may occasionally appear and in some years Japanese beetles may be a problem. Astilbes are a wonderful plant to mass or group in shade and woodland gardens as well as shady borders. 'Sprite' in particular is so small that on its own it has little impact but makes a pretty grouping or ground cover.



1994: Astilbe 'Sprite'  
(Photo courtesy of Deb Bussert)

### 1993: *Veronica* 'Sunny Border Blue'

The genus *Veronica*, commonly known as speedwell, contains about 250 species of annuals and perennials, mostly from Europe. 'Sunny Border Blue' is a tall hybrid that features dense, upright spikes of dark violet-blue flowers. It blooms heavily beginning in late May and then sporadically until frost. The foliage forms a low mound of wrinkled dark green leaves from which the flower spikes typically rise 18 – 24" tall. This

Continued on the next page, page 8

## PERENNIAL PLANTS OF THE YEAR — CONTINUED

### **Veronica 'Sunny Border Blue' continued...**

plant is hardy from Zones 4-9, requires full sun to avoid the plants becoming leggy, and does best with regular moisture and excellent drainage, particularly in winter. It will tolerate light shade but may not flower as well. Spent flower spikes should be removed to encourage additional blooms. The plant may be cut back to the basal foliage after flowering. Veronicas generally have no serious insect or disease problems but root rot may be a problem in poorly-drained soils. Deer and rabbits tend to avoid this plant. It is best used in rock gardens, massed in the front of borders and as an edger. The genus name honors Saint Veronica. In the WBG, 'Sunny Border Blue' grows reasonably well but it tends to get very leggy and has to be cut back often.



1993: *Veronica* 'Sunny Border Blue'  
(Photo courtesy of Deb Bussert)

### **1996: *Penstemon digitalis* 'Husker Red'**

*Penstemon digitalis* is a clump-forming native perennial that features two-lipped tubular flowers borne in panicles on erect, rigid stems. It blooms heavily from mid-spring to early summer. 'Husker Red' features leaves that emerge a deep maroon red in the spring, then mature to dark green. The flowers tend to have a pink blush to them. *Penstemon* typically flowers profusely and may require support. It does best in full sun, in dry to medium soils, and attracts birds and butterflies. Deer tend to avoid it and it is drought tolerant once established. Although *penstemon* has no serious insect or disease problems, root rot can occur in poorly drained soils and the plants can seed aggressively if they are not deadheaded. We have had great success with 'Husker Red' and several other *penstemon* cultivars at the WBG.



1996: *Penstemon digitalis* 'Husker Red'  
(Photo courtesy of Deb Bussert)

## PLANTS I LOVE ... AND DEER IGNORE

BY ELIZABETH MCCOY, MG AND TREE STEWARD

It is easy to fall in love with beautiful Italian *Arum*, known by some as *Lords and Ladies*. Its leaves retain their vibrant green throughout the winter, as though unaffected by the ice and freezing cold. Beautiful geometric patterns traced on the leaves in softest cream remain elegant from autumn through early summer.

*Arum* leaves appear in late September or early October. They emerge as I'm digging *Caladiums* and watching many summer perennials fade for the season. *Arum* thrives in cool, damp weather in full to partial shade, sending up fresh leaves on 10"-12" stalks in expanding patches growing a bit wider and denser with each passing year. They are a useful "shoes and socks" ground cover in our woodland garden.

Continued on the next page, page 9



## PLANTS I LOVE ... AND DEER IGNORE — CONTINUED

Native to Southern Europe and North Africa, *Arum italicum* originated in a warmer climate. It is hardy in Zones 5-9, and it has a superpower: *Arum* is thermogenic, capable of producing heat from its leaves and from its unusual flower. The mitochondria in each cell produce excess heat, which gives the plant some protection from the cold. After days under the snow, with temperatures falling below freezing at night, it still looks fresh and crisp as the snow melts around it.

A member of the *Araceae* family, *Arum italicum* subsp. *italicum* 'Marmoratum' has calcium oxalate crystals in its leaves. These crystals are very irritating to skin and soft tissue... like the tender mouths of hungry deer. All parts of the *Arum* are poisonous, including the seeds and the rhizome from which it grows. This is another reason why I love these beautiful foliage plants: *deer, squirrels, voles and rabbits won't touch them.*



(Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth McCoy)

While I am thrilled to see these beautiful plants spread through our garden by seed and division, their prolific growth and nearly indestructible nature make them problematic in other regions of the United States. Areas like the Pacific Northwest consider them invasive and ask home gardeners not to plant them. They have also begun to naturalize in parts of Northern Virginia. Thus far, they aren't considered a problem in Tidewater, Central or Western Virginia.

*Arum* remain my cold-weather guilty pleasure plant. I order new rhizomes each year as I order spring blooming bulbs from Brent and Becky Heath, and plant many of them in containers for winter interest. This plant blends beautifully with spring bulbs and winter blooming perennials like *Violas*.

Plant them beneath shrubs and amongst spring bulbs to mark where you have planted the bulbs. Interplant them with *Hosta* to keep beautiful foliage in your *Hosta* beds year-round. Pair them with either hardy or deciduous ferns for delicious springtime associations. Replace *Caladiums* with Italian *Arum* to maintain plants of similar size, texture and form through the winter months. *Caladiums* also belong to the *Araceae* family, and you'll notice the leaves and flowers are very similar to one another.

Italian *Arum* bloom in late April or early May with a spadix and spathe style flower. It isn't showy. You'll lose nothing to cut the flowers as they appear, just as you would with *Caladiums* or *Colocasia*. If you let the flower develop, drupes begin to form as the cream-colored spathe melts away. Those drupes turn bright orangey red by mid-summer weeks after the leaves have disappeared. If you want to limit this plant's spread, cut the stem away before the seeds ripen.



(Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth McCoy)

I sometimes wonder why this sturdy, easy to grow plant hasn't grown more popular. I've never seen them in pots at local garden centers. Sandy's Plants sells them in leaf, but otherwise the only way to acquire them is to order rhizomes from online nurseries.

Exotic as they may be, *Arum* still fill a niche in a North American woodland garden. They hold and protect the ground against erosion when little else grows. They sequester carbon. They produce both nectar and pollen for pollinators each spring. Birds eat their seeds in mid-summer, *and their beautiful leaves make this gardener very happy all winter long.*

## THIS AND THAT



**Save the Date  
Water Steward Training**

**When:** Fridays May 3, 2022 – June 17, 2022

**Who:** Extension Master Gardeners from the Peninsula & Southside

**Where:** Classes will be in person and will alternate between the Virginia Tech Hampton Roads Agricultural Research & Extension Center (HRAREC) in Virginia Beach and the Northampton Community Center in Hampton. Classes will include presentations, hands on activities and mandatory tours.

*Registration Specifics to follow in January 2022*

### MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM



### TREE STEWARD MANUAL

#### The Master Gardener Tree Steward Manual

The Master Gardener Tree Steward Manual is now available to download online for free here: <https://doi.org/10.21061/treesteward>. This comprehensive work was developed by Virginia Cooperative Extension for Master Gardeners (MG) who are training to be certified MG tree stewards.

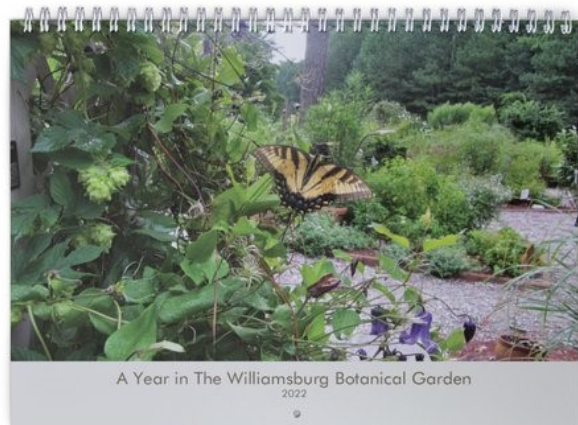
Written by a dedicated team of volunteers who themselves have completed the tree steward training, the manual covers a wide range of topics, specific to each region of Virginia, including identifying trees, selecting, and planting appropriate trees for local landscapes, caring for trees, and troubleshooting tree problems!

– Marion Guthrie

#### 2022 Gardening Calendars for Sale

2022 Gardening calendars, personalized for our area, are available for \$15.00 each. These spiral bound wall calendars feature local garden photos and monthly reminders and tips. First and last frost dates, the moons, solstices and equinoxes are noted, along with major holidays and cultural observances. Profits, beyond the actual printing costs, will be donated to the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. Copies of both the Williamsburg Botanical Gardens calendar and the Our Forest Garden calendar are available. Contact Elizabeth McCoy for more information and to place your order.

– Elizabeth McCoy



## THIS AND THAT

### News from the Williamsburg Botanical Garden!

As we wrap up 2021, the WBG is grateful for the continuing support of the JCC/W Master Gardeners. Saying "thank you" simply does not cover the depth of the WBG's gratitude to the JCCWMG members who gave the bulk of over 7,300 volunteer hours between July 1, 2020 and June 31st of this year.

The WBG has recently simplified the pricing for reserving the Garden for private events. The Garden is a very affordable site for an outdoor wedding ceremony or other celebration. If you know someone who is newly engaged this holiday season, please share our info at [www.wbgweddings.org](http://www.wbgweddings.org).

Learn and Grow programming is taking a break, but the WBG YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQccCzkZ1hRQwo-t79qVWWg>) has all the recordings posted from L&G and from the Virtual Butterfly Festival. There's plenty of gardening info to keep anyone busy on a cold wintry day.

So for this December newsletter, Happy Holidays to all! We look forward to 2022 when the WBG welcomes the MGA's plant sale to the Garden on April 30th.

– Judith Alberts, WBG Board Chair



(Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth McCoy)

### Avoid Using Invasive Plants

Here are some resources to help identify invasive plants. Not all of the plants listed are invasive everywhere.

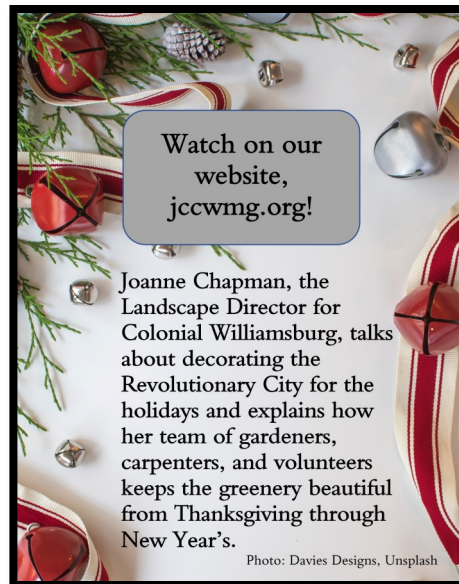
The Virginia Invasive Plant List: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/invspdflist>

The Federal Noxious Weed List: <https://plants.usda.gov/java/noxiousDriver>

The National Invasive Species Information Center can help with invasive identification: <https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/subject/identification>

The Invasive Plant Atlas of the United States: <https://www.invasiveplantatlas.org>

– Deb Bussert



Watch on our website,  
[jccwmg.org!](http://jccwmg.org)

Joanne Chapman, the Landscape Director for Colonial Williamsburg, talks about decorating the Revolutionary City for the holidays and explains how her team of gardeners, carpenters, and volunteers keeps the greenery beautiful from Thanksgiving through New Year's.

Photo: Davies Designs, Unsplash

## THIS AND THAT



(Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth McCoy)

### Continuing Education Credits Opportunity!

Our friend and fellow Master Gardener, Helen Hamilton, is leading a plant walk for the VNPS and she has opened it to Master Gardeners as well. Here are the details:

**Saturday, December 11 at 10 am:** A walk in Freedom Park to look for native ferns and mosses. Bring a magnifier to see fern sporangia and details of tiny plants. The walk begins back of Freedom Park near Go Ape, down a ravine, along a stream and back up through upland woods. Park near the playground beyond Go Ape.

Contact Helen to register/for more information .. [helen48@cox.net](mailto:helen48@cox.net); 757 564 4494

This walk would qualify for Continuing Education credits.

– Rick Brown

### Seed Swap Day

The Central Rappahannock Area MGs are holding their 6 Annual **Seed Swap on January 29, 2022** from 9:00-1:00 at the Rowser Building, 1739 Jefferson Davis Highway, Stafford, VA. Interested people are encouraged to package their saved seeds for swapping, and also to bring any garden related items they would like to swap, such as garden books and magazines, cookbooks, pots, tools, plants, cuttings, etc. Volunteers will be available to answer questions and offer tips, speakers are scheduled throughout the morning, and free seeds and light refreshments will be available. For more information, go to their website: [www.mgacra.org/](http://www.mgacra.org/).

The first official Seed Swap Day was organized by Kathy Jentz of Washington Gardener Magazine. The idea was very popular and more events were soon organized. The last Saturday in January is now designated National Seed Swap Day, with events taking place all over the country. The JCCW MGA Board is considering a similar event for our unit for 2023. For tips on Saving and Sharing seeds for a Seed Swap, take a look at: [info.plantsmap.com/journal/savings-and-sharing-seeds-for-a-seed-swap/](http://info.plantsmap.com/journal/savings-and-sharing-seeds-for-a-seed-swap/) and Learn How to Organize A Seed Swap from the Richmond Grows Seed Lending Library: [richmondgrowsseeds.org/how-to-organize-a-seed-swap.html](http://richmondgrowsseeds.org/how-to-organize-a-seed-swap.html).

– Deb Bussert



(Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth McCoy)



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!**

## THINKING OF OUR MEMBERS

The organization sends cards to members with difficult medical issues or who have experienced a death in the immediate family.

**Frank Caruso – Sympathy**  
**Barbara Floyd – Sympathy**  
**Joanne Sheffield – Get Well**

We also acknowledge achievements/milestones and donations made to the association.

If you know any member who should receive a card, please contact our secretary, Paulette Atkinson, at (757) 813-7234 or [papinehurst@gmail.com](mailto:papinehurst@gmail.com)

### ***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.*

## 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.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.



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## Guidelines for Articles Submitted to the JCC/W MG Newsletter or for Social Media use

### General:

- The editor has complete editorial control of all content and may accept, reject, or edit any piece in her/his sole discretion.
- If extensive editing is required, the editor will return the article to the author for further work.
- By submitting an article, the author agrees that the editor can do light editing (grammar, punctuation, wordiness, etc.).
- Newsletter articles should be submitted to the editor via e-mail by the deadline established in the previous month's newsletter. The deadlines for other submissions (online and print) will be as agreed upon with the editor.
- Each article should be submitted as a Word document plus jpegs or photos, if any, as separate attachments in a single email.

### Articles:

- Anything submitted must be the original work of the author. Please indicate this by including your name, your graduating class year and current MGA position (*i.e.*, President, Member, etc.).
- Topics should be of general interest to the membership and not too technical. Shorter is usually better!
- Extensive quotations from the work of others should be avoided. Cite any sources you have relied on.
- Articles should be **no more than 750 words** and written using the **10 point Ariel font**.

### Photographs:

- Photographs must be free of copyright and properly attributed to the photographer.
- We do not pay royalties.
- The source of each photograph must be identified or have a subheading.
- Do not cut and paste photographs into your Word document; send them as separate attachments.
- Submit as many photographs as you like; the editor will select those that best fit the newsletter layout. You may rank your photographs in order of your preference but the editor has the final say as to which photographs to print.