



The Colonial Master Gardener

March 2023

Celebrating 40 Years of Helping Our Neighbors Grow!

A PUBLICATION OF THE JAMES CITY COUNTY
WILLIAMSBURG MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY DEBORAH BUSSERT, PRESIDENT, CLASS OF 2016



Greetings Master Gardeners,

We can feel that Spring is coming. Trees are budding, early daffodils are blooming, and birds are starting their courtship rituals. Many of our projects are gearing up. I am sure that many of you, like me, are eager to get out in the garden. Just make sure you do your stretches and strengthening exercises that were demonstrated at the February meeting. We don't want any injuries.

Although I don't put much faith in the predictions of the Farmer's Almanac, I did find its phenology (the study of the life cycles of plants and animals as they correspond to weather and temperature) suggestions interesting. For example, we are advised to plant peas when forsythia blooms; plant potatoes when the first dandelion blooms; plant corn when oak leaves are the size of a squirrel's ear; and plant tomatoes when lilies-of-the-valley are in full bloom. Has anyone ever tried to follow these suggestions? How will climate change affect these traditional practices? We already know that changing climate is affecting migratory patterns, the proliferation of pests and the prevalence of severe weather. I have to believe climate change will disrupt these relationships as well.

A huge welcome to the 2023 Training Class! They are off to a great start and will be attending our March Association meeting. Please introduce yourself and give them your personal welcome. Very shortly they will be able to start working in our projects, especially after the Project Fair, which will be held at the JCC Recreation Center on March 14th. We are looking forward to meeting and working with our Trainee/Interns.

Planning for the Plant Sale is proceeding smoothly. It is not too early to start those seeds, dig up those transplants and search your garage for items for the Green Thumb Marketplace. We need everyone to participate. If you don't have the ability to donate plants, you can volunteer for lots of other activities. We will be using Signup Genius just like we did last year, so look for the opportunity to sign up coming soon to your email box.

We are also working hard on planning for the picnic, where we will officially celebrate our 40th Anniversary. We hope as many of you as possible will be able to attend on July 23 at the 4H facility on the James River. It was a great event last year – don't miss it!

Thanks for all you do. 2023 is going to be a great year for our Association.

- Deb



2023 JCCW MGA Board

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Our Board Meets

on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 9:30 AM, in Room B at the Williamsburg Regional Library, on Scotland Street. Members are welcome to attend.

Newsletter Editors: Marion Guthrie and Elizabeth Myers

HOT WATER TRACT UPDATE

BY JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS, MASTER NATURALIST, TREE STEWARD,
MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2015

If you attended the Black History Month program at Freedom Park on February 11, you heard about how the people who lived in the free Black settlement here in James City County got nearly everything they needed from the forest and the land.

A 2018 Tree Steward project focused on identifying trees and

woody plants that would have provided food for those early settlers. It also included labeling trees and shrubs in the Settlement area, which became a part of the Williamsburg Botanical Garden and Freedom Park Arboretum.

The project has expanded to planting seedlings each year to increase the number of plant species in the woods surrounding the Settlement and increasing the number of nut or fruit bearing trees and woody plants that would have occurred naturally in the early 1800s. March is when our seedlings arrive.

This year, we will be planting a hazelnut patch, a chokecherry patch, and a highbush blueberry patch at the forest edge. We will also be setting up a watering schedule to help increase the chances that our new seedlings will survive, and we will fence the patches to reduce deer browsing. Running water is available in the Settlement.

The other big news for the Settlement is that work has started on an outdoor classroom there. It will include a graded and mulched area near the entry to the Settlement with split log benches and a tri-fold whiteboard. It will be wonderful to have a nice sitting area for people who present programs in the park.

Sound interesting? Work days start in early March with seedlings arriving around March 8. Please let me know if you would like to be on the list for workdays. Email Judy Kinshaw-Ellis at kinshawellis@gmail.com.



Photo Credit, Judy Kinshaw-Ellis

OUR MISSION

The James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association is a volunteer-driven non-profit that supports the outreach mission of the Virginia Cooperative Extension by utilizing unbiased research-based information to educate the public in our communities (James City, Williamsburg, New Kent counties) on the best practices in sustainable horticulture and environmental stewardship.

March's Membership Meeting

Working with Children

Required Training

Thursday, March 2 at 9:00 AM

Via Zoom and the Williamsburg Regional Library's Auditorium

At our March program we'll welcome our new interns and cover the required training on working with children. This training is also required every three (3) years for all certified master gardeners. Join us to meet and greet our new interns and get a refresher in this must-have training session.

If you're unable to attend in person, here is your **Zoom link**:

[https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/81857046980?](https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/81857046980?pwd=eUJlQWtvSHFpZ1pLQWRUjRjRGY29kUT09)

[pwd=eUJlQWtvSHFpZ1pLQWRUjRjRGY29kUT09](https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/81857046980?pwd=eUJlQWtvSHFpZ1pLQWRUjRjRGY29kUT09)

Meeting ID: 818 5704 6980, Passcode: 293464

MATTEY'S CELEBRATES VALENTINES DAY

BY ELIZABETH MYERS, VP OF PROJECTS, MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2022



Along with cleaning up the garden shed and planting lettuce, the elementary school students at Mattey's Garden enjoyed some treats on Valentine's Day.

WELCOME CLASS OF 2023!

BY SUE BARTON, PROJECT LEAD, MASTER GARDENER, CLASS OF 2020



Gathered for orientation on February 16 are the interns of the upcoming 2023 class. This promising group of Master Gardener trainees have started their Master Gardener certification classes which will run through early May. As part of their training, they will be attending our monthly Membership Meetings where you will have the chance to get to know your future colleagues.

April's Membership Meeting

"An Introduction to Orchid Genera Typically Grown by Orchid Collectors"
April 6, at 9:00 AM at the Library and via Zoom

This is a hands-on demonstration presented by Ron Miller of the Tidewater Orchid Society who will be giving us of some of his own personal collection of orchids. You are encouraged to attend in person.

Ron was educated at Purdue University culminating in a Ph.D. in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering and started growing orchids in 1995 as a diversion from his job as an executive at a small business in Princeton, NJ. Since then, he has gone on to growing a diverse collection of orchids including all the genera he will introduce in his presentation. His collection, at one time, reached about 450 plants which were distributed throughout his house in Loveland, Ohio, making him a true "window-sill" grower.

Dr. Miller currently lives in Carrollton, VA where his collection has dwindled to about 80 plants since moving there in September 2021. This reduction was due to the trauma of moving which includes giving up monster plants that just wouldn't fit in a rented cargo van.

A Zoom link will be provided but members are strongly encouraged to come see in person his presentation of live plants and tools for orchid care.

WATER WISE SPRINGS INTO ACTION

BY ELVIN & KAY CLAPP, MASTER GARDENERS, CLASS OF 2018

After a few months of rest and relaxation, we are excited to spring into action at the Water Wise Low Maintenance Demonstration Project. We got a running start on pruning in late February and early March and we've recently completed a soil test to evaluate the PH of the soil. New activities for 2023 will involve more bilingual educational materials and plant labeling.

The garden continues to serve as the showcase entrance to the September Community Wellness Fair at the Human Services Center with 200-300 contacts. Over 10,000 visitors pass through the garden each year as they enter the Olde Towne Medical and Dental Center and the Department of Social Services, 5249 Olde Towne Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23188.

We are abiding by the guidance of Elaine Mills, Northern Virginia Master Gardener, on how to develop and maintain layered landscapes. This includes grouping plants in drifts to enhance color and texture, placing aggressive "growers" in large pots buried in the soil, planting more native vegetation, and using more ground covers. And, of course, we'll need to weed out the invasive primrose, wild geranium, and the mint.

We have a wonderful, fun-loving, and industrious team of ten Master Gardeners, including two former project leaders.

We want to continue to grow our team and welcome you with open arms to be a part of this exciting educational adventure. Workdays are the first and third Tuesday beginning in late March from 8-11 AM in the spring and fall, and 8-10 AM in the summer. For more information contact Elvin or Kay Clapp, elvkay@gmail.com.





Photo: Microsoft Creative Commons

CAN YOU DIG IT?

BY DEBE SNEATH, VP OF EDUCATION, CLASS OF 2022

We can help you get those plants out of the ground and donated to our Plant Sale. Just contact our Plant Sale customer service **DIG LINE** at dksineath@yahoo.com or call/text 610-724-6749.

We'll get a team of volunteers over to help you but we need to hear from you now. The Plant Sale is on May 6th at the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. Hope we can count on you. Thanks!



PLANT SALE SEEKS GARDEN TREASURES FOR THEIR GREEN THUMB MARKET

BY ELIZABETH MYERS, VP OF PROJECTS, CLASS OF 2022

The Green Elephant has been renamed the Green Thumb Market and this year's market will offer a variety of gently used garden items as well as an expanded product offering which includes: Grab 'n Go gifts, potted plants, and original garden art.

The Green Thumb Market Team is looking for donations to support this effort in two areas:

1. **Trash and Treasures:** Gently used and clean garden tools including hoses, sprinklers, and watering cans. Planters, clean bird houses and feeders, statues, flags, patio décor, and other garden items you want to re-home, but we are not accepting books this year.
2. **Art Market:** Original and hand made items including greeting cards, garden pots, garden stakes, statues and other garden decor. To simplify the pricing, if you could include your estimated price range on any original art work or special projects.

You can bring your donations to our next Business meeting on Thursday, March 2. Just let us know by email (see email addresses below) what you're donating so we can make arrangements to transport and store those items prior to the sale.

Contact any member of the team with questions and information about your donations. That team includes: Linda Becker (lindabecker53@gmail.com), Christine Mason (cjvmason@gmail.com), Terry McGlennon (TerryMcGlennon4@gmail.com) and Elizabeth Myers (egmyers@comcast.net). Thanks!

WE DIG, POT & STORE YOUR PLANT DONATIONS TOO!

Volunteers are ready and able to dig up plants you'd like to donate for our plant sale. Contact Debe Sineath at dksineath@yahoo.com or call/text 610-724-6749 to make arrangements. We'll dig, pot and store your plant donations and sell them at the Plant Sale on May 6th, from 9 AM to noon at the WBG.



Photos: JCCW Master Gardeners & Unsplash Page 6

YOUR PLANT DONATIONS = THE KEY TO SUCCESS

BY GARY STREB, PLANT SALE LEADER, MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2011

Planning for our JCCWMG Association Plant Sale is ongoing and our primary focus this month is plant acquisition, a responsibility that we all share. By now we should each have a plan of what we will do to participate in our biggest annual fundraiser, by plant donations or Green Thumb items or on-site volunteering. Hopefully everyone is planning to donate plant material! Can't do this without all of you. We have plenty of empty pots for pick-up at Matthey's Garden, the Historic Triangle Garden or for pick-up at the March 2 Association business meeting. No more pot donations, please.

Notify me with the number and size of the pots you require and we will have them ready for you. We are suggesting a minimum of 10 plants for each EMG. Email me at gstreb11@gmail.com or text at 757-871-7369. Days/times will be announced later---watch for the Instructional Email. Then just fill your clean pots with your plants and deliver your healthy specimens to the Williamsburg Botanical Garden on May 5. Any questions or problems? Contact me and I will get with the appropriate committee leader to quickly provide a solution.



Here's the 2022 James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Plant Sale Video (<https://youtu.be/JEY8O4C7Cvi>) donated by Odd Moxie Design.



GET THE WORD OUT!

BY MARION GUTHRIE, EDITOR, CLASS OF 2019

PRINT OUT THIS FLYER, POST IT AT YOUR CAR WASH, OR YOUR BARBER'S, OR GIVE IT TO YOUR NEIGHBORS!

We are asking each Master Gardener to help with public awareness for our sale by printing and distributing flyers within their neighborhoods, on public bulletin boards, or at favorite businesses. With everyone's help we can get the word out with minimal expense to our unit. A copy of the flyer is included on the next page. Log your time to the Plant Sale! Thank you in advance for helping! Call me with questions—610-717-7814 or marion.guthrie@gmail.com.

James City County
Williamsburg
Master Gardeners

PLANT SALE

SAT • MAY 6, 2023 • 9am-12noon

RAIN or SHINE at the

Williamsburg Botanical Garden inside Freedom Park
5537 Centerville Road, Williamsburg

ANNUALS, PERENNIALS, HERBS, VEGGIES, TREES, SHRUBS
On-Site Help Desk to Answer Your Gardening Questions
GARDEN TREASURES at the GREEN THUMB SALE



Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

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*TDD number is (800) 828-1120.



With cooperation from the
Williamsburg Botanical Garden
and James City County Parks



SEED SWAP AT THE LIBRARY!

BY MARION GUTHRIE, VP OF COMMUNICATION, CLASS OF 2019

The James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association (JCCWMGA) is partnering with the Williamsburg Regional Library on its new Seed Exchange Program, "Let's Grow Together" at the James City County Library on Croaker Rd.

The Seed Exchange is a collection of seeds and plant cuttings available for public exchange that gives gardeners a way to share the fruits of their labor and gives novice gardeners a place to find free new plants and seeds to take home.

Volunteer! - The library is asking for seed donations and volunteers. Although it helps to have a knowledgeable Master Gardener on hand to answer questions, you don't need to be one to participate. So, ask your gardening friend to join you at the Library's Exchange.

You'll assist with some tasks done at home like separating and packaging seeds and others at the library like directing visitors' gardening questions to our Help Desk at, 757-564-2175 or going to the Help Desk link on our website, <https://jccwmg.org/wordpress/garden-questions/>.

Sign Up & Log Your Hours - To volunteer at the library, to the JCCW Library Projects in Better Impact.

Become The Project Leader - Since we don't have a project lead for this program yet, please email Elizabeth Myers, VP of Projects, if you'd like to support that leadership role.



More Info on Seed Swaps - During regular library hours, users can take home a variety of seeds including flowers, vegetables, herbs, and more. Each seed packet describes the plant and care instructions. Part of the Seed Exchange is the Propagation Station, which offers a space to give and take plant cuttings. There's a basket where you can leave your home made seed packets.

For Tips on saving and sharing seeds for a Seed Swap, look at: 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.



OUR LIBRARY LECTURE SERIES ON MARCH 11

BY VICKIE ROCKWELL, PRESIDENT ELECT & MASTER GARDENER, CLASS OF 2019

The March Library Lecture will be held at the James City County Library on Croaker Road. Gary Streb will present "Common Mistakes in Landscaping." He will talk about what NOT to do in your yard, possible fixes and importance of "Right Plant – Right Place." The program runs from 10:15 to 11:15 AM.

The Library Lectures are the 2nd Saturday of the month either at the Stryker Center or the James City County Library on Croaker Road. After March, the next program on April 8 will be held at the Stryker Center.

If you are interested in presenting a gardening topic or have questions, please contact Vickie Rockwell at varockwell@outlook.com.

ECOLOGY CORNER

HOMES FOR THE CAVITY DWELLERS

BY JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS, MASTER NATURALIST, TREE STEWARD, MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2015



Feeding the birds is a \$4 billion hobby in the United States. Some of us feed them through the things we plant in our yards, but 59 million Americans supplement with seed, suet, and other treats. Like many other hobbies, it does not take long before people want to expand the hobby of feeding and have birds stay in their yards to raise their young, and this is where bird houses come in.

While many birds are perfectly happy building nests in trees, shrubs, and even on the ground, here in Virginia, we have several birds who are cavity dwellers. Some cavity dwellers excavate their own cavities, but many use what they can find. Birds like chickadees, wrens, titmice, and bluebirds are happy to nest in man-made boxes.

Having bird houses in your yard is a fun way to watch the life cycle of birds up close. You will want to give the birds

plenty of space while they are nesting, but if the box is placed where you can see it from the house, you can watch while the nest is being built and when the adults feed the babies. If you are lucky, you will get to enjoy when the babies fledge and hang around your neighborhood as they grow into adults.

Birdhouses are available to purchase in stores and online. If you are crafty, you can build your own. Plans are available on the internet as are kits for different birds. While a wren might build in a house built for bluebirds, a bluebird will be too large for a house built for a wren. Be sure to get a house that can be opened and cleaned out after the chicks fledge.

For more information on building your own bird houses:

Bluebird box:

<https://www.audubon.org/news/how-build-bluebird-nest-box>

Wren box:

<https://www.wildlifecenter.org/sites/default/files/PDFs/Nestbox/House%20and%20Carolina%20Wren%20Nest%20Box%20Plans.pdf>

CLASSIFIEDS

ARE YOU THE EASTER BUNNY?

Easter is April 9, which may sound far off but if you're thinking about being the Easter Bunny and ordering some Logo Gear for those gardeners in your life, it's not too soon. Because the clothing is embroidered with our JCCWMGA Logo, orders can take 3 weeks. So get cracking. [Check out our online catalog \(https://stores.alogoforyou.com/master_gardeners/shop/home\)](https://stores.alogoforyou.com/master_gardeners/shop/home) and order your LOGO GEAR today! Questions? Contact Linda Becker, (lindabecker53@gmail.com)

SEEKING LEAD FOR 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Did you know 2023 marks the 40th anniversary of our Association? We would like to celebrate with a picnic this July and need a volunteer to coordinate it. If you are interested in leading this event and working with other volunteers, please contact Deb Bussert (president@jccwmq.org) or Elizabeth Myers (vp-projects@jccwmq.org).

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE for APRIL, 2023 is Monday, March 23

Send your submissions to:
Elizabeth Myers,
egmyers@comcast.net
or
Marion Guthrie,
marion.guthrie@gmail.com

If you know of a Master Gardener who is experiencing difficult times or who deserves recognition, please let us know by contacting Dot Finnegan, secretary@jccwmq.org

Direct your questions about the Plant Sale including current needs and volunteer opportunities to Gary Streb, gstreb11@gmail.com. Gary is the Project Leader for this important fundraising event. See pages 6-8 of this newsletter for more information about the sale.



JOIN LANDSCAPE LOVE. MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

BY SHERRY WALKER, MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2016

Sign up for Landscape Love by emailing Barbara Floyd at bmfloyd57@gmail.com. We open homeowner applications on the first day of Spring, March 21. Homeowners apply for their personalized session via our website, jccwmq.org. The program visits will run April through October. We will have training meetings the last week of March.

The training for Landscape Love volunteers who have participated in past Landscape Love programs will be on Monday, March 27, at 11:30 am in the Stryker building in room 128. If you are planning to participate you must attend this training. Training for those new to Landscape Love this year, will be a separate training meeting to be announced soon.

WINTER WORKOUT

BY MARION GUTHRIE, EDITOR, CLASS OF 2019



Jessi Voltin PT, DPT, Cert MDT & Courtney McThery, PT, DPT of Pivot Physical Therapy in Lightfoot, show us how to prepare ourselves for the upcoming gardening season with suggested warmups, strengthening, and stretching exercises we can do at home. Don't miss this opportunity with the experts and get yourself ready for another gardening season. [Watch: https://jccwmq.org/wordpress/video/winter-prep-for-healthy-gardening/](https://jccwmq.org/wordpress/video/winter-prep-for-healthy-gardening/)

In the Garden

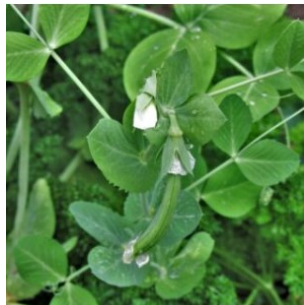
Find more articles on our website (jccwmg.org) in the blog.



[Early Spring Gardening - Achieving More with Less](#)

BY ELIZABETH MCCOY, MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2018

Now is the perfect time of year for frugal gardeners to get a head start on the coming season. Winter's garden magazines and catalogs offer a preview of the new cultivars hitting the market. Read more: <https://jccwmg.org/wordpress/early-spring-gardening-achieving-more-with-less/>



[Natural Plant Fertilizers for Your Garden](#)

BY ELIZABETH MCCOY, MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2018

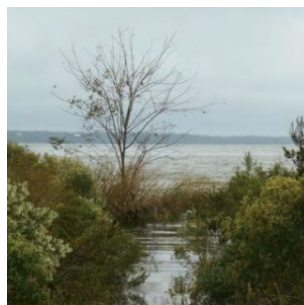
How do you fertilize your garden without buying any fertilizer? That is a key question for gardeners and farmers throughout the world today, as it was a key concern for our ancestors. Read more: <https://jccwmg.org/wordpress/natural-plant-fertilizers-for-your-garden/>



[Quince, An Early Bloomer](#)

BY WENDY HAMRICK, MASTER GARDENER, CLASS OF 2017

Most gardeners call this *Chaenomeles speciosa*, (pronounced kee NO May lees) commonly known as flowering quince. One of the first quince varieties introduced here in Virginia by English settlers and a native of Southeast...[read more: https://jccwmg.org/wordpress/quince-an-early-bloomer/](https://jccwmg.org/wordpress/quince-an-early-bloomer/)



[Planting Trees and Other Hacks to Manage Wet Soils](#)

BY ELIZABETH MCCOY, MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2018

Water may be a blessing or a curse. Gardeners usually want abundant rain to nurture their plantings and generally have a back-up irrigation plan for dry spells. Providing the right amount of water...[read more: https://jccwmg.org/wordpress/planting-trees-and-other-hacks-to-manage-wet-soils/](https://jccwmg.org/wordpress/planting-trees-and-other-hacks-to-manage-wet-soils/)



[Tales From The Help Desk: Chickweed](#)

BY PATSY MCGRADY, MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2018

Q: I usually apply a pre-emergent herbicide in spring to kill chickweed. Is it OK if I go ahead and apply the pre-emergent now? [Read more: https://jccwmg.org/wordpress/tales-from-the-help-desk-chickweed/](https://jccwmg.org/wordpress/tales-from-the-help-desk-chickweed/).

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