

# THE COLONIAL GARDENER

MAY 2023

Celebrating 40 Years of Helping our  
Neighbors Grow!

*A publication of the  
James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association*

## 2023 JCCW MGA BOARD

President:  
Deborah Bussert  
[president@jccwmg.org](mailto:president@jccwmg.org)

VP Communications:  
Marion Guthrie  
[vp-communications@jccwmg.org](mailto:vp-communications@jccwmg.org)

VCEANR Agent:  
Forrest Hobbs  
[vceagent@jccwmg.org](mailto:vceagent@jccwmg.org)

President Elect:  
Vickie Rockwell  
[presidentelect@jccwmg.org](mailto:presidentelect@jccwmg.org)

Secretary:  
Dot Finnegan  
[secretary@jccwmg.org](mailto:secretary@jccwmg.org)

Webmaster:  
Dave Banks  
[dfbanks2@gmail.com](mailto:dfbanks2@gmail.com)

VP Administration:  
vacant  
[vp-admin@jccwmg.org](mailto:vp-admin@jccwmg.org)

Treasurer:  
Linda Neilson  
[treasurer@jccwmg.org](mailto:treasurer@jccwmg.org)

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. All members are welcome to attend.

VP Projects:  
Elizabeth Myers  
[vp-projects@jccwmg.org](mailto:vp-projects@jccwmg.org)

VMGA Rep:  
Joanne Sheffield  
[vmga-rep@jccwmg.org](mailto:vmga-rep@jccwmg.org)

VP Internal Ed:  
Debera Sineath  
[vp-internal-ed@jccwmg.org](mailto:vp-internal-ed@jccwmg.org)

VMGA Rep, Alternate:  
Marilyn Riddle  
[vmga-alt@jccwmg.org](mailto:vmga-alt@jccwmg.org)

---

## NEWSLETTER

Editor:  
Marion Guthrie

Copy Editors:  
Elizabeth Myers  
Judy Kinshaw-Ellis

Layout & Design:  
Odd Moxie

**The deadline for the upcoming June 2023 newsletter is Friday, May 19.**

Send your submissions to Elizabeth Myers ([egmyers@comcast.net](mailto:egmyers@comcast.net)) or Marion Guthrie ([vp-communications@jccwmg.org](mailto:vp-communications@jccwmg.org)).







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 research-based information to educate the public in our communities (James City, Williamsburg, and New Kent counties) on the best practices in sustainable horticulture and environmental stewardship.



Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its 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, military status, or any other basis protected by law.



2022 Plant Color sticks pricing

|        |   |         |
|--------|---|---------|
| Yellow |  | \$4.00  |
| Teal   |  | \$7.00  |
| Red    |  | \$10.00 |
| Orange |  | \$15.00 |







# President's Message

---

**DEBORAH BUSSERT '16**

Greetings Master Gardeners,

Welcome to Plant Sale season! The Virginia Native Plant Society recently held their sale, and I am sure many of you were there to snap up some plants we don't often find for sale locally. The Williamsburg Botanical Garden and Freedom Park Arboretum started its Honor Box Sale, which will be ongoing through Memorial Day weekend. And of course, our Plant Sale is Saturday May 6 from 9:00 a.m. -noon, so please, come out and help with set up day, Friday, May 5 all day, and on sale day, Saturday, May 6, help from 7 - 2. There are still slots available on SignUp Genius. No excuses!

Unfortunately, our Vice President of Administration, Christine Mason, has decided to resign for personal reasons. Christine did an excellent job during her tenure, and she will be missed. We will be recruiting one of you to take over this position. Christine will be available to help with the transition, as will Vickie Rockwell, our previous VP of Administration, so you will be in good hands. Please give this serious consideration and talk to me, Vickie, or any of the other Board members if you have questions or might be willing to step up. Thank you in advance!

Master Gardener College registration is open. You can find the link in the most recent VCE Bi-Weekly update. Once again, scholarships are available through the Virginia Master Gardener Association. Anyone can apply and need is not one of the criteria. Several of our members have received scholarships in the past, and if you are considering attending MGC, I urge you to apply.

We all do so much in our gardens, but how often do we just enjoy them? I find myself so preoccupied with weeding, pruning, deadheading, watering, and transplanting that I forget the real point of the whole thing - to make a beautiful and peaceful place in my little corner of the world. Next time you go out to your own garden space, why not take a few minutes to just sit and enjoy it. Listen to the birds, watch the insects, and experience nature all around you. It can be hard to do that because there is always that weed, that faded flower or that drooping plant that is crying out for your attention. In our busy lives, taking time to rest and reflect is more important than ever. Remember Mother's Day is Sunday, May 14. A perfect opportunity to take some time for yourself. You won't regret it.

Happy Gardening!  
Deb



# Plant Sale May 6, 2023

Watch your email for instructions from Gary Streb, project lead, on your plant delivery to the WBG which is 9:00 a.m. to noon on Friday, May 5.





## May 4<sup>th</sup> Membership Meeting

Mark Your Calendar for a Tidewater Butterfly Primer! Jonay Campbell has been a member of the Butterfly Society of Virginia since 2014 and considers herself a butterfly enthusiast and native plant gardener. She has been studying and raising butterflies for about 20 years. Currently butterflies are on the decline, and it is Jonay's hope that helping others understand more about them will benefit not only the butterflies, but all of us as well.

During this program, Jonay will introduce some of the butterflies that are common in the Tidewater area, how to look for and identify them, and what to plant to attract them. She'll also discuss the butterfly lifecycle, how to garden to attract butterflies and perpetuate their lifecycle, why native plants are better, and why it's increasingly important to think about our gardens with butterflies in mind.

**5/4/2023 AT 9:00 a.m.**

**in the Williamsburg Regional Library Auditorium and  
via Zoom at [bit.ly/3Au8CH1](https://bit.ly/3Au8CH1)**



Photo by Jim Easton

## June 1<sup>st</sup> Membership Meeting

The History of Catherine Orr's Garden with Pat Rathke

Our very own Master Gardener Pat Rathke will take us on a journey to the Catherine Orr Garden at Colonial Williamsburg. Pat will show us the who, what, when and why of gardening on this historic site with an array of amazing pictures and her "secrets" that make this garden so successful.

Pat has been a volunteer and leader in the Garden for over 20 years and has been responsible for decisions on bulb, seed, and plant sequencing through the seasons in the flower garden.

**6/1/2023 AT 9:00 a.m.**

**in the Williamsburg Regional Library Auditorium and  
via Zoom, watch your email for link.**



Photo by Pat Rathke

# Ecology Corner

---

**JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS**

Master Naturalist, Tree  
Steward, and Master  
Gardener '15

## *Two Short Native Plants*

Sometimes native plants have a reputation for looking rather weedy and living a rather promiscuous life freely seeding and spreading around people's yards. Two natives that bloom this time of year, and grow low and are pretty easy to contain, are Field Pussytoes (*Antennaria neglecta*) and Narrow-leaved Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*).

Pussytoes are such a tough little plant that you might see them growing in the ditches along the road. They tolerate poor soil and sunny, dry areas, so if you have a strip near the road or driveway, Pussytoes may be just what you need. The gray green foliage hugs the ground, and the flowers stand less than a foot high and look like cute, little kitty toes. As a bonus, this is the host plant for the American Lady butterfly. Look for the blooms now.

If you are interested in reducing your lawn, but you like the look of fescue, Narrow-leaved Blue-eyed Grass could be a good substitution. It grows about 8 to 12 inches tall, but it stays in clumps. Blue-eyed Grass can tolerate some shade and it does like a moist environment. It is a nice edging plant or front of the garden plant that will have small blue blossoms early in the season and then have grassy foliage that persists through the fall.

Both plants transplant nicely, so if you have a friend who has them, ask for a start. Otherwise, look for them at plant sales this spring.



Pussy Toes - *Antennaria neglecta*



Narrow-leaved Blue-eyed Grass - *Sisyrinchium angustifolium*





Photo by Richard Rosani

# Therapeutic Gardening Receives Grant

**KAREN BROOKS '10 & BARBARA FLOYD '10**

The Therapeutic Gardening Project was recently awarded a \$1,000 grant by the Ford's Colony Garden Club Philanthropy Committee to expand our program with the Arc of Abilities. The Arc of Abilities Day Support Program is for adults with special needs. With the help of the Arc staff, our Master Gardeners teach the students how to grow and use vegetables, herbs, and flowers that they cultivate. The therapeutic garden at the Williamsburg Botanical Garden features four large, raised beds that are planted year-round. On rainy days, students meet in the Freedom Park Interpretive Center.

The grant funds will be used to make improvements to the garden and the program, which has been active for more than five years. The Ford's Colony Garden Club will be updated regularly, so their members can see the positive results of this grant.

Ford's Colony Garden Club is an active organization with 200+ members focused on beautification and conservation initiatives through environmental education, community involvement, and fundraising. It is part of the Homeowners Association and was one of the first clubs formed in Ford's Colony.

## Freedom Park Outdoor Classroom

A Department of Forestry grant and James City County Parks and Rec are making a dream a reality. An outdoor classroom is under construction and should be complete this summer in the Settlement area of Freedom Park. The kiosk will be mostly complete by Earth Day, and grading and mulching should be finished by the end of April. Benches will be installed in the next month or two. Start thinking about how you might want to utilize this wonderful new facility.



Photo by Judy Kinshaw-Ellis  
Volunteer Bill Grass (pictured) has designed and built a trifold whiteboard that educators can use for presentations. Stop by the Settlement to admire his craftsmanship.



# Water Matters Seeks Test Evaluations

As part of their Water Steward training, a group of Master Gardeners are developing a Water Matters project that includes home visits. The objective of the project is to identify water issues and educate residents. The group wants to suggest solutions and offer best management practices. To test their approach and procedures, they are currently looking for MGs willing to be trial subjects.

If you have had a water problem in the past but now have applied remedial measures, the group would appreciate visiting with you and learning from your experience. Or if you, or a friend or neighbor, have water issues in your yard, the Water Team would like to visit and provide an assessment. In either case, please contact Patsy McGrady, [patSYMCGRADY@COX.NET](mailto:patSYMCGRADY@COX.NET), 757-561-6503 to make arrangements.

The Water Matters group includes co-leaders, Patsy McGrady and Ginny Cranford as well as Carole Black, Camille Fisher, and Mary Grogan.

Photo by Elizabeth McCoy





# Lester Picot

The 2023 Training Class was saddened by the news of their classmate, Lester Picot's sudden passing on Sunday, April 16. He was a Master Gardener Intern for a short time, but those who knew him described him as a kind, friendly and inquisitive man who would have made a strong contribution as a Master Gardener. The Association extends deepest sympathy to his friends and family. A card has been sent to his family on behalf of the Association, and the Board has established a Master Gardener Training Scholarship for 2024 in his honor.



## In the Garden

Find more articles on our blog on our website, [jccwmg.org](http://jccwmg.org)

### ***Mountain Laurel, A Native Shrub to Love***

Elizabeth McCoy '18

Wild mountain laurel, *Kalmia latifolia*, sometimes grows along the undeveloped banks of creeks and rivers in Eastern Virginia...[jccwmg.org/wordpress/mountain-laurel-a-native-shrub-to-love/](http://jccwmg.org/wordpress/mountain-laurel-a-native-shrub-to-love/)

### ***Tales from the Help Desk: Strange Markings***

Patsy McGrady '10

What *are* these strange marks on my tree? [jccwmg.org/wordpress/tales-from-the-help-desk-october-2021/](http://jccwmg.org/wordpress/tales-from-the-help-desk-october-2021/)

### ***Are Robins the First Sign of Spring?***

Marion Guthrie '19

The old wives' tale is that a robin is the first sign of spring, but American Robins are an adaptable lot...[jccwmg.org/wordpress/are-robins-the-first-sign-of-spring/](http://jccwmg.org/wordpress/are-robins-the-first-sign-of-spring/)

### ***Top Plant Picks for Summer Color: Flowers Part 1***

Elizabeth McCoy '18

Even the most experienced gardener may feel a little overwhelmed with so many beautiful choices. Annual or perennial? How big will this get? Will deer and bunnies eat it? How long will it bloom... [jccwmg.org/wordpress/top-plant-picks-for-summer-color-flowers/](http://jccwmg.org/wordpress/top-plant-picks-for-summer-color-flowers/)

### ***Who Inspired You?***

Judy Kinshaw-Ellis '15

Planting 100 trees is downright invigorating...the total in the ground so far is around 1600, but there are more trees to plant...[jccwmg.org/wordpress/who-inspired-you/](http://jccwmg.org/wordpress/who-inspired-you/)

### ***Forget Forsythia?***

Marion Guthrie '19

One of my favorite garden memories is cutting forsythia boughs in March, before they bloomed, with my Dad...[jccwmg.org/wordpress/forget-forsythia/](http://jccwmg.org/wordpress/forget-forsythia/)



# Classifieds

## **SEEKING 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY PICNIC CHAIRPERSON**

We are celebrating our 40th Anniversary this summer with a picnic in July! We need a chairperson who will determine how many volunteers are needed to pick up supplies and set up the picnic on the day of the event; work with the board on the 40-year recognition segment; and rally members to attend.

The date, time, and location are already set, and you will be able to work with last year's co-chairs, Angelia Cingale and Marty Oakes, who have offered to provide their support to the incoming chairperson! Don't hesitate! Contact Elizabeth Myers, ([egmyers@comcast.net](mailto:egmyers@comcast.net)).

## **MOTHER'S DAY IS SUNDAY, MAY 14**

Why not order some Logo Gear for those gardeners in your life? The clothing is embroidered with our JCCWMGA Logo. Check out our online catalog ([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](mailto:lindabecker53@gmail.com)).

## **4H JUNIOR CAMP SEEKS MASTER GARDENER FOR JULY PROGRAMS**

The 3-day 4H junior camp is seeking volunteers eager to teach garden topics of your choice to campers on July 25, 26, and 27. There is a need for 2 volunteers per class and a plan for 2 classes per day! If you are interested in any or all of these dates, please contact Nealwyn Watkins ([nealcynw@vt.edu](mailto:nealcynw@vt.edu)) or call her at 804-695-7554.

## **MASTER GARDENER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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@jccwmga.org](mailto:secretary@jccwmga.org)).

## **GRAPE GROWERS NEEDED TO TEACH BASICS**

Clara Byrd Baker Kids Garden is looking for someone who is knowledgeable about growing grapes and can guide our third to fifth graders with planting, proper espaliering, and harvesting as well as answer questions on proper care. Please contact Juli Griffith at 785-410-1674 or ([ggriff73@gmail.com](mailto:ggriff73@gmail.com)) if you're interested or know of someone who might be. We meet at CBB at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesdays.


## **LANDSCAPE LOVE IS OPEN**

Our popular Landscape Love program is now accepting applications. Landscape Love enables homeowners in the greater James City County Williamsburg area to meet with Master Gardeners to review and discuss their landscape questions right in the homeowner's yard.

Common requests are to identify plants, plant problems, discuss solutions and suggest plants that meet a specific need such as sun, shade, or deer resistance. These Master Gardeners don't create landscape designs or address property drainage issues. Their visits are plant and soil focused.

If you would like to apply for a visit, complete the application on the website at [jccwmga.org](http://jccwmga.org). Sign up today on the website, at this link - [jccwmga.org/wordpress/home-visit-programs-5/](http://jccwmga.org/wordpress/home-visit-programs-5/). Interested in joining the LL Team or looking for more information? Contact: Sherry Walker, ([eco.sherry@gmail.com](mailto:eco.sherry@gmail.com)), Barbara Floyd, ([bmfloyd57@gmail.com](mailto:bmfloyd57@gmail.com)), Susan Zickel, ([zickel@cox.net](mailto:zickel@cox.net)).





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

Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its 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, military status, or any other basis protected by law. If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or accommodation, please notify Sandra Kee, James City County Unit at 757-564-2170/TDD\*) during business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

\*TDD number is (800) 828-1120.



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





# Editor's Message

---

MARION GUTHRIE '19

You'll notice we're trying something different this month. Odd Moxie, a local design and branding firm, has graciously offered to help us lay out our monthly newsletter. Like finding 5-gallon perennials on sale, this offer was too good to pass up.

In service of their donation, we're looking for more photographs to highlight some of the spectacular work we all do (and love.) The next time you're at a Master Gardener program, take a quick snap with your phone and send it to me; perhaps you'll see it in the newsletter! We might also share it on our website, blog, or even Facebook.

This newsletter requires many hands to build, and I want to thank our President, Deb Bussert, for her stalwart leadership, Elizabeth Myers for her news gathering competency, Judy Kinshaw-Ellis for her insights and hawk-eye editing, Elizabeth McCoy for her inspired blog talent, Odd Moxie for their generous donation, and all the gifted gardeners who took time to submit an article for this month.

Keep growing!

Marion Guthrie, Editor

[vp-communications@jccwmg.org](mailto:vp-communications@jccwmg.org)







[jccwmg.org](http://jccwmg.org)  
P. O. Box 1951, Williamsburg, VA 23187  
757-564-2175