

# THE COLONIAL MASTER GARDENER

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Celebrating 41 Years of Helping our  
Neighbors Grow!

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PLEASE NOTE: Our Board typically meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m., in Room B at the Williamsburg Regional Library on Scotland Street. All members are welcome to attend.

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### NEWSLETTER

Layout & Design:  
Odd Moxie

**The submission deadline for the upcoming August 2024 newsletter is Friday, July 19.**

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Send your submissions to our editor, Marion Guthrie at [vp-communications@jccwmg.org](mailto:vp-communications@jccwmg.org), and our vice president of projects, Gary Griffith, at [vp-projects@jccwmg.org](mailto:vp-projects@jccwmg.org)

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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; Williamsburg, James City, Charles City, Upper York 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.



# President's Message

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## A little of this and that...

**VICKIE ROCKWELL '19**

I was going to start this message by hoping that July's weather would bring us some relief from the dry weather we have had in June. Guess what? The rain clouds are almost absent from the Williamsburg forecast for July. We are going to have another month of watering our gardens and lawns. With that in mind a few tips:

- Water in the morning. Don't water in the heat of the day.
- Keep the spray low to the ground. Aim the water at the base of the plant, avoiding wetting the foliage (invites fungus and Mildew).
- Mulch around your plants to prevent runoff and keep the soil wet longer.
- For a small garden, use a watering can, a watering wand, or a hose with a good nozzle that allows you to water right at the soil level near the plant.
- Lay your drip hose directly on the ground near the plant so the water goes where it is needed for more dense plantings or larger plants.

The end of June was a busy month - Master Gardener College (VMGC), the tour of Williamsburg Botanical Garden (WBG), and Pollinator Palooza. Thank you to all who participated in making these events successful.

The Virginia Master Gardener Association held their annual business meeting at Brent and Becky's in Gloucester this year. The program had three excellent speakers: Joe Tyconievich presented "Making More Plants: Simple Plant Propagation at Home,"

Holly Scoggins, "Mistakes Were Made: Three Decades of Gardening Gaffs and Poor Plant Choices," and Brent Heath, "Bulbs as Companion Plants."

One of the points Joe made was to plant your perennial seeds "whenever." There are optimum

times to sow perennial seeds, but he said that the seeds know when to germinate and sprout. Don't be afraid to get them in your garden or to start them outside. With regard to cuttings, use tip cuttings. Cut off lower leaves off the cutting. Scrape the stem and dip in rooting hormones. Plant in a starter medium. For some herbs and shrubs, rooting may take a month or two. Don't despair.

Holly's presentation was on the 'right plant—right place.' She shared many of her mistakes, which resulted in humorous and expensive results. Her best advice was to read the labels and instructions that come with the plant and believe them. She made all of us feel better about our gardening decisions—good and bad.

Brent, as always, was inspirational. His love of bulbs and plants knows no bounds, and he shared his secrets with all of us. His presentation was fresh and this one on companion plantings gave us so many new ideas to try.

Reminders:

- Emily Coyner is organizing the Nominating Committee for the September elections.
- There will not be a general meeting in July. Our next General Meeting is on Thursday, August 1, at 9:00 am in the Williamsburg Regional Library or via Zoom.
- Save the date for an Ice Cream Social at the Freedom Park Interpretive Center on September 21 from 2 to 5 p.m.

Vickie

# Master Gardener Member Meeting Program

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## Great Plants for Dry Shade

On **August 1, 2024, at 9:00 am in the Williamsburg Regional Library** (or via Zoom), Michelle Baudanza, Conservatory Curator at the Norfolk Botanical Garden, will present a lecture on drought-tolerant and easy perennials and shrubs for your garden. She will also delve into more unusual selections, providing you with a unique opportunity to expand your horticultural knowledge in a practical and applicable way.

Michelle has been with the Norfolk Botanical Garden for over five years, and before that, she worked as a landscape designer and horticulturist for the city of VA Beach. Michelle was inspired to pursue her degree in Ornamental Horticulture from Christopher Newport University by spending time outdoors while stationed at Ft. Bragg, NC, in the 82nd Airborne Division.

Plan to attend this lecture in the auditorium at the Williamsburg Regional Library or via Zoom (Meeting ID is 889 8534 0423). It is open to the public. For questions, contact our VP of Internal Education, Debera Sineath, at [vp-internal-ed@jccwmg.org](mailto:vp-internal-ed@jccwmg.org). Open to the public - bring a friend!

To access via Zoom:  
Log into Zoom,  
Click on Join a Meeting,  
Enter the Meeting ID noted above, and  
Click Join



# Business Notes

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## FILM SCREENING!

Watch "[Uninvited](#)," about the spread of invasive species and strategies to manage that spread. Doug Tallamy, an esteemed Entomologist at the University of Delaware, Bernd Blossey, a distinguished member of Cornell University's Department of Natural Sciences, and Jennifer Dean, a respected Invasive Species Biologist at the NY Natural Heritage Program, all they share their insights.

As part of the documentary, viewers are encouraged to report invasive species. Virginia residents can report using EDDMapS.org or directly with VA DCR. Both methods are linked on this page: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/invsp-whatyoucando-map>. VCE has provided this link so you can [watch the film at your convenience here](#). Don't miss the opportunity!

## HURRY-WATER STEWARD TRAINING, 2024

VCE is offering Water Steward training online this summer from July 8-Aug 17. This eight-week course will include four live Zooms (July 8, July 22, August 5, and August 12 at 4:00 p.m.), weekly recordings and readings, assignments for you to complete independently, and one group project. After completing, Water Steward interns work with their local Extension agent to develop and complete project. [Click for more information and to register.](#)

## ICE CREAM SOCIAL IS COMING!

As a change of pace from the annual picnic, at the last Board meeting, they decided to hold an ice cream social for this year's membership reward event and are encouraging our members to bring their families. They've agreed that the Interpretive Center at Freedom Park is a good location, and after reviewing available dates, they chose Saturday, September 21, from 2 to 5 p.m. in the large conference room, which will give us access to outside seating on the patio as well as its close to refrigeration to keep the ice cream cold.

We're looking for a few dedicated party impresarios to help plan the particulars, such as ice cream toppings, decorations, and activities, and help with set up and clean up. Your contribution is key to making this event a success, and we are truly grateful for your willingness to help. Bring your ideas and ice cream social experiences to our Zoom call on Tuesday, July 16, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Here is the link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82290177728?pwd=ew3SvYGX2lbAQuFXuUYmbJ7Nc8zGXg.1>.

For more information, contact Marion Guthrie at [marion.guthrie@gmail.com](mailto:marion.guthrie@gmail.com).

## YOUR INPUT IS KEY!

The Ad Hoc Projects Review Team has completed its initial round of interviews with all project team leaders. We're just beginning to review the results and will draw conclusions...but not until after we survey all our Master Gardeners for your input.

The Board aims to ensure the success of all projects and that these projects provide our hardworking Master Gardeners with the joy and gratification they deserve. Your valuable efforts are the backbone of our projects, and we sincerely appreciate your contributions.

You'll soon receive an email survey to complete. We value and need your input, and we've made the survey as easy and straightforward as possible. So please be on the lookout for the survey and take a few minutes to share your insights. For more information, contact David Kleppinger ([housemountain@icloud.com](mailto:housemountain@icloud.com))

## CONTINUING EDUCATION WEBINARS

The VCE's Extension Master Gardener (EMG) State Office organizes monthly continuing education webinars featuring esteemed Virginia Tech and VSU experts. To access the [complete webinar archive, click here.](#)

# VMGA Annual Meeting – June Summary

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**MARILYN RIDDLE '01**

## **Annual Meeting**

The Virginia Master Gardener Association held its annual meeting at *Brent and Becky's Plants*, Gloucester, VA, on June 21, 2024. The James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association (JCCWMGA) was well-represented at the annual meeting, with Vickie Rockwell, Joanne Sheffield, Gary Streb, Ruth Huber, Su Carlile, and Michele Garrard in attendance. Their active participation and contributions were greatly appreciated and brought recognition to our association. Thank you all for representing us.

## **Dave Banks Makes Honor Roll**

Among the most significant actions at the meeting was the naming of our own Dave Banks, longtime VMGA webmaster, as a member of VMGA's Honor Roll! Congratulations to Dave on this well-deserved honor. Several retiring VCE personnel were also named in another category.

## **State Fair**

Our State Fair participation is a crucial part of our association's activities, and it will continue this year with units taking charge on a rotation basis. We've already expressed our interest in serving on Tuesday, October 1, and this is a great opportunity for both veterans and newcomers. Your participation is highly valued, and we encourage you to indicate your interest in the next two weeks.

## **College Scholarships**

Seven scholarships for Master Gardener College in 2025 will be awarded. That number is determined by the executive board, not the committee. The increase in dues was voted upon by the assembly after being presented by the finance committee. Annual dues are now \$15, and continuing dues (formerly known as "life") are now \$135. This is the first increase in a number of years.

## **VMGA Directories**

New member directories will be emailed to all members in mid-October 2024. This is a once-a-year occurrence. If you need to update your contact information, please send the changes to Tonya Harper. Henrico Co will host the group in August, and Hill City, Lynchburg, will host at *Poplar Forest* in October. For more information, contact Marilyn Riddle at [VMGA-rep@jccwmg.org](mailto:VMGA-rep@jccwmg.org).

# Irrigation, Diplomas, and 80 Classes at Matthey's Garden

TIFFENI GOESEL '18

## \$1000 from Eagle Aerie #4548

Matthey's Garden received a generous gift of \$1,000.00 from Eagle Aerie #4548 of Williamsburg, an international organization that helps communities and neighborhoods with meaningful projects and needed resources. The check was presented on June 4th, 2024, by Williams Wallace, a Master Gardener and a member of Eagle Aerie.

This significant donation was used to replace the old, irreparable drip irrigation system. Hertzler & George, a full-service Williamsburg-based landscape service, built and installed the new tower irrigation system. The impact of this gift has been transformative for Matthey's Garden operations.



Featured center are Tiffeni Goesel, Project Leader, and Wallace Williams, Board Member Eagle Aerie 4548

Thank you to our Matthey volunteers who hauled watering cans and dealt with persnickety hoses during our water challenge. Thank you to Sue Barton, who negotiated with Hertzler & George and worked with our tight budget. Now, no matter what the weather

brings, Matthey's Garden will be watered.

## Green Thumb Graduation

Undoubtedly, one of the most memorable moments of the year was the Green Thumb Graduation for our Kindergarten and First-Grade classes. Each student received a certificate, a tangible testament to their active participation in the garden classes throughout the 2023-2024 school year. The children's delight was infectious as they proudly placed their green-inked thumbprints on the certificate and posed for their class photos. This heartwarming scene truly underscored the profound impact of our garden's educational initiatives.

## 80 Classes!

Thank you to the Curriculum Team for such a wonderful school year in which we taught 80 classes! With an appreciative heart. For more information, contact Tiffeni Goesel, Project Lead ([tiffenigoesel@cox.net](mailto:tiffenigoesel@cox.net)) at Matthey's Garden.

**Accepting Donations** at [jccwmg.org/wordpress/donations-2/](http://jccwmg.org/wordpress/donations-2/).

Updating old infrastructure can be expensive, and your help is appreciated.



# The First Annual Pollinator Palooza

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JEN CAMPBELL '16



The First Annual Pollinator Palooza at the Pollinator Garden at Veterans Park was a resounding success on many levels. There was something for everyone - whether it was learning something new, creating an artful masterpiece, or supporting the local habitat by finding a home for a native plant. It was well attended by both local community members and visiting vacationers. The many Master Gardener volunteers, including several interns, were enthusiastic about supporting the activity station and sharing their knowledge and experience. Lastly, the garden was spectacular, full of blooms and bustling with nature. It was as if it knew it was hosting a group of very special people for this first-time event, and it was ready to show off.

The first event, the Children's Extravaganza, held on June 20th in conjunction with James City County's Longest Day at Play (Summer Solstice), had eager participants lined up before the 10:00 a.m. start time. Receiving a smiley face bracelet and a goody bag to collect all their loot at the registration table, they could proceed to any of the six craft stations to learn and create pollinator-related masterpieces.

There were greenhouses to build, seed balls and seed tape to construct, butterflies to paint, and headbands to create. A scavenger hunt in the garden had children, parents, and volunteers seeking elusive caterpillars and other insects. Fortunately, the various shades of flowers were easy to find, as were the nearby bluebird and bat houses. Upon the hunt's conclusion, the children donned a colorful pair of gloves, picked their favorite color of trowel, and, with the help of a Master Gardener, planted a milkweed plant in the garden.

Trooping over to the Williamsburg Beekeeper Association booth, participants had an opportunity to conduct a different type of search—find the queen bee. Prior to departing, participants were able to grab some free earth-friendly takeaways and even a native shrub to take home and plant. In all, over 150 participants enjoyed a glorious day in the garden.

The second event, held on Saturday, June 22nd, took a slightly more mature slant and featured a number of Pollinator-friendly organizations showcasing how to help our pollinators. Representatives from the Monarch Society, Butterfly Society of Virginia, Plant Virginia Natives, Virginia Natural Heritage, Virginia Department of Transportation, Colonial Soil and Water Conservation, JCC Sustainability Division, Williamsburg Area Beekeepers, and the Boys Scouts exhibited some very cool stuff to highlight their initiatives to help preserve pollinators and their habitats. The displays had the added bonus of providing a networking opportunity for representatives to share information and reconnect on future initiatives. It was truly rewarding to see all the resources being applied to preserve our natural habitat. While the extreme heat warning likely kept some away, the event was exceptionally well attended.

Both events featured a variety of giveaways, including Bartlett Tree Experts graciously donating over 250 plants featuring five different types of native shrub saplings. It is fair to say that everyone walked away from the Pollinator Palooza with some newly imparted knowledge, some cool gear, and maybe a native species to plant in their own backyard. And they walked away with a smile. The success of the Pollinator Palooza was a testament to the hard work and dedication of many individuals. Special thanks go out to Terry McGlennon, who organized the Children's Extravaganza; Cheryl Lynch, who coordinated Saturday's Family event; and the Communications team, who played a crucial role in spreading the word about the First Annual Pollinator Palooza. Their efforts, along with the enthusiasm of the many Master Gardener volunteers and the support of the local community, made this event a resounding success.



# The Chelsea Flower Show, Lessons Learned

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**BETSY BEYER, '24**

I was lucky to attend the Chelsea Flower Show this year in May. As you know, it is a hallmark event in the horticultural calendar, showcasing a blend of innovation, tradition, and sustainability. Held annually by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) on the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, this year's show was noteworthy for its themes and initiatives. Here are some of my key takeaways from the event:

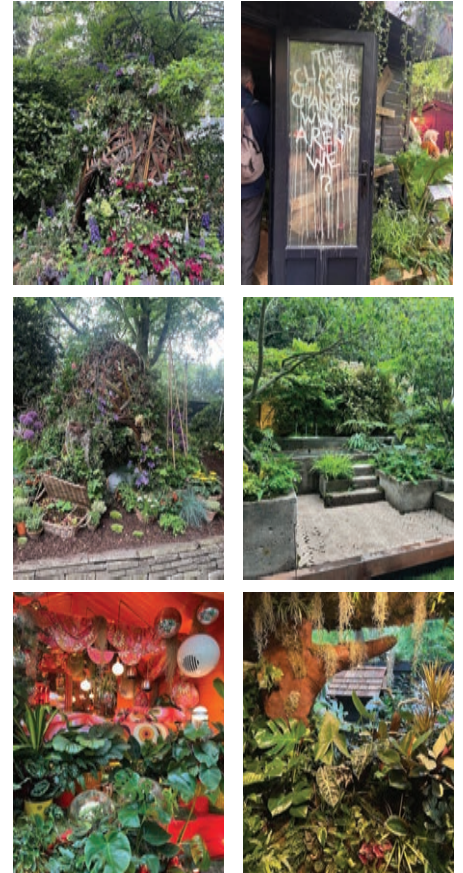
## 1. Sustainability at the Forefront

Sustainability was a central theme at Chelsea 2024, with numerous gardens and exhibits emphasizing eco-friendly practices. Designers displayed innovative ways to create beautiful, sustainable gardens that promote biodiversity and reduce environmental impact. For instance, many gardens incorporated recycled materials and focused on drought-resistant plants to address water conservation issues. One standout was Sarah Price's "RHS Regenerative Garden," which highlighted the principles of regenerative gardening. This garden demonstrated how gardening can help restore ecosystems and combat climate change through soil health improvement, water management, and the use of native plants.

## 2. Celebration of Children's Gardening

The Chelsea Flower Show 2024 made a significant effort to engage younger audiences. The "No Adults Allowed Garden," designed collaboratively by children from Sullivan Primary School and garden designer Harry Holding, was a unique feature. This garden, rich with imaginative elements such as woodlands, meadows, and a wetland, was a place for children to explore and connect with nature. This initiative not only highlighted the creativity and enthusiasm of young gardeners but also underscored the educational value of gardening for children.

The garden was a landmark for the Chelsea Flower Show, being the first to be entirely designed by children. It aimed to offer an immersive experience where kids could freely explore, play, and engage with nature. To gain entry, adults had to pledge to plant a tree, donate to the RHS Campaign for School Gardening, or find a flower starting with the first letter of their name. This rule emphasized the importance of environmental responsibility and learning through fun.



### **3. Focus on Climate-Resilient Gardens**

Several gardens focused on creating landscapes that are resilient to climate change. Tom Massey's "Dry Garden" emphasized plants that thrive in arid conditions, showcasing a palette of drought-tolerant species. This garden provided practical ideas for gardeners facing water scarcity and highlighted the importance of adapting gardening practices to changing climatic conditions.

### **4. Integration of Technology in Horticulture**

Another notable trend was the integration of technology in gardening. Exhibits demonstrated how technology can enhance garden design, maintenance, and sustainability. Technology's role in modern horticulture was well represented, from smart irrigation systems that optimize water usage to apps that help gardeners identify plants and manage their gardens more efficiently.

### **5. Biodiversity and Wildlife Gardens**

Promoting biodiversity was a key theme, with many gardens designed to attract and support wildlife. Joe Swift's "Urban Wildlife Garden" showcased how urban spaces can be transformed into havens for wildlife. Features such as bug hotels, bird feeders, and various plants that provide food and shelter for insects and birds were highlighted. These gardens emphasized the role of urban green spaces in supporting biodiversity and improving ecological health.

### **6. Innovative Plant Varieties**

As always, the Chelsea Flower Show was a platform for introducing new and innovative plant varieties. Breeders and nurseries presented plants with improved characteristics, such as disease resistance, extended blooming periods, and unique colors. These new introductions inspire gardeners and help them enhance their gardens with the latest horticultural advancements.

### **7. Tributes to Historical and Cultural Themes**

Several gardens paid homage to historical and cultural themes, celebrating heritage and storytelling through plants and design. The "Historical Landscapes Garden" by Marcus Barnett recreated elements of famous landscapes from history, blending traditional gardening techniques with modern aesthetics. These gardens provided a journey through time, connecting visitors with the past while inspiring contemporary garden designs.

### **8. Gardens as Therapeutic Spaces**

The therapeutic benefits of gardening were a recurring theme. The "Healing Garden" by Jo Thompson highlighted how gardens can serve as sanctuaries for mental and physical well-being. Many gardens at the show focused on creating spaces that promote mental health and well-being. The "Forest Bathing Garden," which won Best in Show, highlighted the therapeutic benefits of nature immersion, drawing inspiration from the Japanese practice of *shinrin-yoku*. Incorporating elements such as sensory plants, calming water features, and comfortable seating areas, these gardens demonstrated the restorative power of nature. The "Healing Garden" by Jo Thompson also highlighted how gardens can serve as sanctuaries for mental and physical well-being.

### **9. Recognition of Talent and Innovation**

The show celebrated the achievements of both seasoned and emerging designers. Awards and accolades recognized exceptional creativity, innovation, and horticultural excellence, honoring the work of individual designers and inspiring the wider gardening community.

The Chelsea Flower Show 2024 was a vibrant celebration of horticultural excellence, offering insights into the future of gardening.



# Ecology Corner

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## Protect and Preserve Forest Plants by Removing Stiltgrass

**JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS '15**

The forest floor is home to many of our intriguing spring ephemerals like Spring Beauty, Virginia Bluebells, and other plants like Partridge Berry and Ebony Spleenwort. An infestation of Japanese Stiltgrass grows quickly and can crowd out the desirable native plants that inhabit our forests. It is important to work at eradicating stiltgrass as soon as you find it and before it goes to seed, as the seeds can lie dormant for several years. July and August are the months of the year to remove stilt grass from your shaded areas.

Fortunately, this invasive species, despite its threat, has a shallow root system, making it a relatively easy target for removal. A post-rain shower scenario further simplifies the task. While mowing or weed whacking are viable options in some areas, hand pulling is the more precise method, allowing you to uncover the hidden treasures beneath that thick blanket of stiltgrass.

If you've been battling an infestation for several years, the removal process is not a one-time event. It's a commitment that spans multiple years. However, take heart in the fact that it gets easier each year as fewer and fewer seeds are allowed to set on the plants. If you manage to remove the plants before seeds are formed, you can leave them on the ground or compost them. Otherwise, bagging the stiltgrass and disposing of it in the trash is the way to go.

Once your removal is complete, keep an eye out each summer and remove any new stiltgrass growth you see. Then, enjoy looking for all the new plants that will sprout once the invasives are gone.

For more information: <https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/terrestrial/plants/japanese-stiltgrass>



Comprised of over 200 master gardeners, the James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association serves the gardening public in Williamsburg, New Kent, Charles City, Upper York, and James City Counties.

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