

THE COLONIAL MASTER GARDENER

Celebrating 41 Years of Helping our
Neighbors Grow!

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

SEPTEMBER 2024

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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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The submission deadline for the upcoming October 2024 newsletter is Friday, September 20.

Send your submissions to our editor, Marion Guthrie at vp-communications@jccwmg.org, and copy our vice president of projects, Gary Griffith, at vp-projects@jccwmg.org

Newsletter layout graciously donated by Odd Moxie



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

VICKIE ROCKWELL '19

September is a tough month. Those pesky, tall, four-footed vermin are still vigorously browsing our gardens regardless of the barriers we've established, and our Association's Nominating Committee is busy seeking new Board members. September is also when we try to get one more bloom from our summer flowers while we worry about rotten branches and fantasize that hurricane season will be kind to us.

Thank you to Past President Cathy Hill, who wrote in the 2019 Newsletter an article entitled "Are You Prepared," for this list of storm tips:

1. Trees are the most important thing to consider ahead of storms. Check if you have dead or broken limbs to prevent flying objects during wind. Are there any dead trees that might fall on your house or garden?
2. Clean out gutters and other drainage structures.
3. Stake small trees and shrubs.
4. Move containers and large pots inside or in a sheltered spot near the house.
5. Protect small garden beds with bags of soil.
6. As the storm moves closer, take garden furniture inside, as well as tools, bird feeders, hanging baskets, umbrellas, and anything else that might become a projectile
7. Shut down the irrigation system completely from the main water shutoff. It prevents a leak if a tree falls and breaks one of the lines.
8. If you have a generator, ensure it is operational and has sufficient fuel.

After the storm, there are also a few things to do like:

- Check small perennials and prune back any broken areas to prevent disease or insect problems.

- As a precaution, rinse the foliage of plants. Salt spray can travel fifty miles on the wind and can cause scorching and burning of the foliage.

During my 18 years in Houston, I faced several tropical storms and hurricanes, so these suggestions are on target with my experience.

As regards the deer, I had a parade of them go through my iris bed. They stomped, sampled, and pulled up many of my rebloomers. Needless to say, I had a bit of work to do. Here are a few tips from the American Iris Society that I follow:

- Keep rhizomes uncovered and roots well-aerated.
- Trim brown or dying leaf matter and the flower stalk. Unlike high-maintenance garden plants, iris leaves don't require pruning or trimming for good growth.
- In crowded flower beds, you should divide the irises and replant them every 3 to 5 years to avoid competition for water and soil.

Deer do not like Irises, but that does not stop them from tasting them—just in case their flavor changes. A few of our neighbors feed the deer. Unfortunately, it is only illegal to feed them from September 1 through the first Saturday in January. Regarding the neighbors, remember that it is illegal to harm them at any time.

Finally, the Nominating Committee is working diligently to complete the slate of officers for the 2025 Board. The President-Elect and Vice President of Internal Education positions are open. If you want to serve on the Board, please contact Dave Kleppinger. (The current Board of Directors is listed on page 2 of this newsletter.)

To my fellow gardeners, work and stay safe.
Vickie

Roadtrip! to Norfolk Botanical Gardens

A Private Tour for JCCWMMG

Let's take Thursday, October 10th, off and travel to the Norfolk Botanical Garden for a day of private touring and education! The cost is \$40.00 per person and includes roundtrip transportation via luxury private coach, private walking tour, and private tram tour, exclusively for our membership.

The walking tour will last about an hour and include seasonal highlights in the Japanese Garden, Holly, Hydrangea, and Camellia collections, NBG's Perennial Garden, and a few other notable areas. The roses will also have a second flush!

The tram tour covers a different area of the Garden than the walk-and-talk. These two tours will give you a well-rounded view of the gardens. The tram tour is 30 minutes long and covers the history of the Garden and other horticultural highlights. NBG is 175 acres, so the tram is an excellent way to see most of the property.

Signup Details:

Reservations are based on 39 participants and are on a first-come, first-served basis. Sign up at the September or October Member meeting or contact Debe Sineath, VP of Internal Education, at dksineath@yahoo.com or 610-724-6749.

This total package deal of \$40.00 must be received no later than 10/3, with checks payable to the JCC Williamsburg Master Gardener Assoc. Checks or cash may be given to Debe Sineath at the member meeting or received at least one week prior to the trip. The address for mailing is Debe Sineath, 6000 Richpress Dr., Williamsburg, VA 23188.

Schedule:

- 9:00 a.m. Leave WRL via deluxe coach with restroom
- 11:00 Restroom, Giftshop, Baker Hall, etc.
- 11:30 Private Tram Tour
- 12:15 p.m. Garden Highlights Walk & Talk
- 1:15 Lunch on own (brown bag or food truck)
- 3:00 Departure back to WRL

Sorry, there is no cancellation refund, although you can transfer your spot to another. Lastly, as this is a private tour, the price is firm, and there are no adjustments for botanical garden members or AHS members. Think of it as taking a class with transportation included.



Master Gardener Member Meeting Programs

Buffers & Berms

On **September 5, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Williamsburg Regional Library** (or via Zoom),

Laurie J. Fox, Ph. D., a Horticulture Associate at Virginia Tech in the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, will present a lecture on berms and buffers, including their purpose and benefits. Dr. Fox will have pictures of the installation at the research center and other types of buffers and berms, suitable plants, and some resources to share. For more information, contact Debe Sineath (vp-internal-ed@jcccwmg.org). Your Zoom Meeting ID is 889 8534 0423. Bring a friend!

To access via Zoom:

Log into Zoom,

Click on Join a Meeting,

Enter the Meeting ID noted above, and

Click Join

Precious Pollinators

October 3, 2024, at 9:00 am in the Williamsburg Regional Library (or via Zoom).

Butterflies and bees are specially designed to pollinate an array of plants. They use a wide variety of strategies to find and collect pollen. Native bees pollinate 70% of all flowering plants and are more efficient than honeybees. Providing habitat for pollinators is essential for our gardens and food production.

Please join us for Adrienne Frank's presentation on Precious Pollinators. Adrienne became a member and Master Naturalist in 2008 with the Historic Rivers Chapter (HRC) of VA Master Naturalists. She has served on the HRC board in several capacities, including President and Treasurer.

Adrienne is also on the boards of Friends of Dragon Run and the John Clayton Chapter of the Native Plant Society. In 2013, she established a butterfly project for HRC and registered the Williamsburg Butterfly Circle with the North American Butterfly Association (NABA). She coordinates the NABA Count each August. She compiled Butterflies of the Greater Williamsburg Area: An Annotated List of Species.



Business Notes

BOARD MEETS

Our Board of Directors meets on the third 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.

WHAT IS INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT?

Dr. Laurie Fox and Ed Olsen presented an informative webinar on invasive plant management. Here is a link to that webinar: mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/webinar-archive, a link to a helpful Invasive plant handout DOCX, and the webinar Presentation slides PPTX.

MASTER GARDENER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

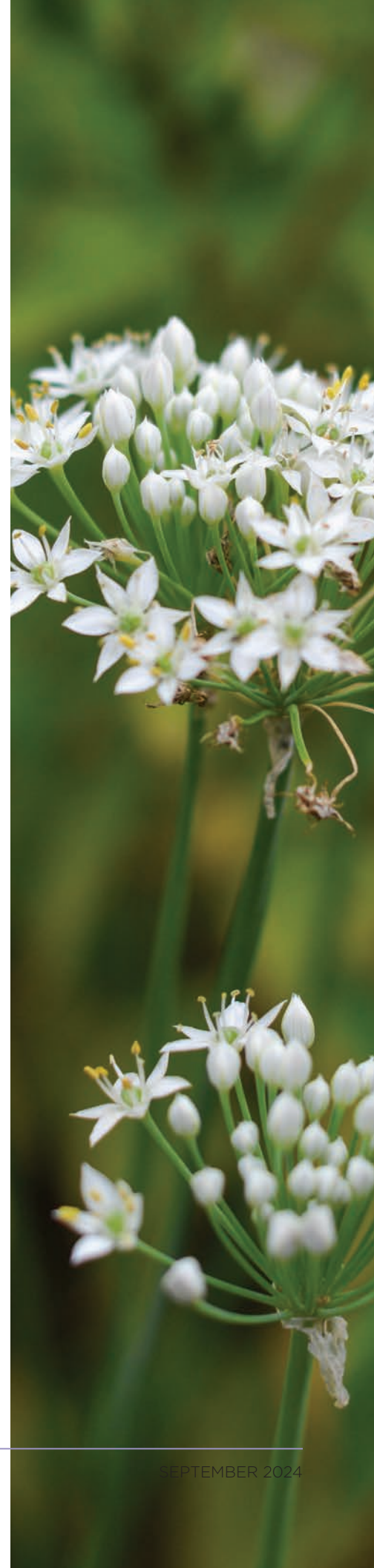
If you know of a Master Gardener who is experiencing difficult times or who deserves recognition, please let us know by contacting Dot Finnegan, secretary@jccwmg.org.

FUN INFORMATIVE WEBINARS

The EMG State Office produces monthly continuing education webinars featuring Virginia Tech and VSU experts. To view the complete [webinar archive, click here](#).

NEW COORDINATOR ANNOUNCED!

As many of you know, the Extension Master Gardener (EMG) Program Coordinator position has been vacant for about a year. Ed Olsen, our Program Director for VCE's Extension Master Gardeners, recently announced that Grace Monger Stern has accepted that post of EMG Program Coordinator. Grace will be based on campus in Blacksburg and working at the State Extension Master Gardener Office in Saunders Hall. She begins her new role on Tuesday, September 3, 2024. For information, contact Ed (edo@vt.edu). Welcome Grace!



YOU'RE INVITED TO THE
James City County Williamsburg
Master Gardeners
Ice Cream Social!

Bring your family.
Enjoy friendship and fun!
Date: Saturday, Sept 21, 2024
Time: 2–5 p.m.
Freedom's Park's Interpretive Center

RSVP: jccwmg.org/wordpress/ice-cream-rsvp

RSVP



master gardener moment

TAKE A MOMENT TO SHARE YOUR GARDEN WITH OUR COMMUNITY

The Autumn Garden!

WHAT IS YOUR PLAN FOR THE GARDEN THIS FALL?

1. Take a photo or Record a short video
(videos should be 1 minute or less)
2. Submit your photo or video by email to:
videos@jccwmg.org
3. Include your name and a brief description of your submission
4. The communications team will do the rest!

Training Team Preparing for the Class of 2025!

TERRY MCGLENNON '22 and **ELIZABETH MYERS '22**

The fantastic members of our class of 2024 have spent a very busy summer contributing over 1500 hours to over 18 projects! To date, we have 17 certified Extension Master Gardeners (EMG), and the rest of the class is quickly moving toward completing their required hours. Graduation for the class of 2024 will take place in the December 5, 2024, meeting. We are excited and thrilled with this class's progress towards their goals this year.

Keeping the momentum going, the training team has started planning for the class of 2025! Next year's training team will be led by Terry McGlennon '22 and co-led by Elizabeth Myers '22, both of whom have been members of the team for the past two years with various responsibilities. Linda Becker '22, Anne Nordin '23, and Mary Whitley '24 are joining the team and are already jumping into their respective roles. Sue Barton '20, lead for 2024, and Pam Mageland '17, lead for 2023, remain members of the team as advisors with committee chairmanships. We appreciate Sue's and Pam's willingness to continue to be a resource for continuity.

We would like to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude to Pam Hatten '18 and Alexandra Muhly '22, who are retiring from this year's team after serving multiple years each. Their countless hours of hard work and dedication, particularly in their roles as content review and scheduling chairpersons, have been instrumental to the team's success. Their positive attitudes and infectious laughter have been a true asset to our team, and we sincerely appreciate their contributions. We will strive to make them proud in the coming year.

We are currently in the process of planning our recruitment strategy for the class of 2025. We have a list of 35 individuals who have shown interest in our JCCW MGA website (jccwmga.org) over the spring and summer. To further our outreach, we will host a presentation at the Stryker Center on October 19, 2024, open to all community members. This presentation will provide an overview of what it means to be an EMG and how to apply. Share this date with anyone you know who might be interested in joining us! Applications for the class of 2025 will open on November 1, 2024. We anticipate welcoming 22 - 23 new EMG trainees/interns.



The Next Phase of Brickyard Landing

JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS, '15, Water Steward and Tree Steward

For those of us who volunteer at Brickyard Landing Park regularly, seeing the progress we make each week is rewarding. This park is one of the most glorious spots in the county, sitting on the banks of the Chickahominy River, and the new plantings and our efforts have only enhanced its beauty.

The next phase is underway and funded through a Wetlands Watch grant. This will include another large tree planting in a naturalized area, educational signs, a dry riverbed, and a native plant meadow. The meadow preparation started in early August with the mowing of the area uphill from the river with an abundance of Sweet Gum seedlings. It was also treated with water-safe chemicals to kill the grasses and weeds. The healthy crop of Japanese Stilt Grass was also mowed to attempt to get that invasive under control in the wooded glen near the high-wire right-of-way.

We anticipate installing the walkways soon. These will lead to the dock, across the field, and eventually include trails through the woods and meadow. These paths will also define the gardens and help control some of the weeds we fight in our perennial beds. Once installed, the contractors will also dig the dry riverbed.

for volunteers for these big planting days. Thank you to everyone who has participated. Contact co-leads Judy Kinshaw-Ellis (kinshawellis@gmail.com) or Donna Benson (mid520@mac.com) for more information.



After A Storm in the Herb Garden

BILL DICHTEL '18

We had a great Tuesday morning at the Governor's Palace Herb recently. Wind and rainstorms had taken a toll, and we lost a few plants, primarily to drowning as the herbs like drier soil. I had gotten together with Melody at the Nursery, and she and her team supplied us with some Chamomile, Salad Burnet, and Tarragon plants to fill in bare places. We were also pleased to find that even though our Borage didn't make it, it left some seeds that had already sprouted. The Calendula seeds we planted had also germinated.

We identified and attacked wiregrass, which can be challenging to eradicate once it takes root. We trimmed herbs, replaced plant signs, and refreshed our pine straw top dressing. Anne gave the Fennel a fresh haircut. Thanks to this hardworking Master Gardener crew, which included Jayce, Anne, Janet, and Robin, the garden was rejuvenated by the end of the session!



Water Wise: A Banner Day

Wednesday, August 22, was a banner day at the Water Wise garden outside the Human Services building on Olde Town Road. The Water Wise team of the JCCW Master Gardeners, led by Kay Clapp, engaged young visitors with stickers, coloring materials, and other hands-on activities. One of the most popular was learning about pollinators while making butterflies with ribbons and pipe cleaners.



Special Recognition for Water Wise Demonstration Garden

ELVIN AND KAY CLAPP '18

On August 6th, the Olde Towne Medical and Dental Center recognized the work of James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association's Water Wise Demonstration Garden as a "welcome sight for their patients" and families. August 4-10 was National Health Center Week, with the theme of "powering communities through caring connections." Over 13,000 patients and their families walk through this garden each year. We are proud to have supported this garden for 21 years and are humbled by this special recognition.

Over the past 3 years, the Water Wise team has not only maintained the garden but also transformed it into an interactive and educational space. Their work sessions now include greeting, informing, and educating visitors and staff. They distribute butterflies and other stickers, encouraging children to find these pollinators in the garden. Children also make butterflies, seed balls, hand-print flowers, pollinator passports, and other hands-on items. The team has also introduced the activity of "smelling" the garden herbs, with samples placed on two display tables. Children are further engaged in scavenger hunts, searching for unique and "fun" insects and plants, making the garden a truly interactive and educational experience.

For adults, a variety of publications are available on the display tables. These include our signature brochure in English and Spanish. We also distribute a guide to the blooms, berries, foliage, and stems in the garden, along with bloom times and colors. Also displayed are Cooperative Extension publications and other practical guides on garden planning, design, and maintenance. A popular hangout is a one-page sheet on JCC/W Master Gardener community outreach programs such as Landscape Love and the Pruning Clinic.

The most exciting, rewarding, and fun part of our day is talking with the visitors and answering their questions. The icing on the cake is when they share their experiences about this and other gardens, which have been an inspiration and "welcome sight" in their lives.



Individuals, left to right: Julia Smith, Linda Neilson, Sandy Lieber, Stacy DeMeo, Kay Clapp, Katherine Johnston, Paul Fameli. Photographer: Elvin Clapp.



Recruiting 2025 Class Members

TERRY MCGLENNON '22

The 2025 EMG Training Team members took their recruiting efforts on the road to the Grove Community Block Party on Tuesday, August 6th. Team members Nancy Lia '23, Anne Nordin '23, Mary Whitley '24, and Terry McGlennon '22 staffed an information table at the event and chatted with numerous community members about what we do and shared application info. Some very interested residents signed up for more information. We gave

out goodies as well. Locals were thrilled to pick up rain gauges, seed packs, and stickers for the kids. It was a great night meeting with the public and sharing information about the Extension Master Gardener Training Program.



Ecology Corner

Planting a Mini Meadow

JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS, '15

Have you planted host plants to encourage butterflies to lay their eggs in your yard, but it seems as though you do not see that many butterflies? In fact, does it seem like you see fewer butterflies in your yard each year? What more can you do? Well, what about adding a mini meadow?

A mini meadow can be anything—or any size—you want it to be. Seed sellers have meadow, pollinator, and hummingbird mixes. Some online nurseries sell mixed plug trays that would also work for starting a meadow. And, of course, you can go to a nursery that sells native plants and select the plants you want for your meadow.

As you look around your yard, find an area that is sunny for at least six hours a day. You will also want to select eight or ten species to start, and there is a list at the end of this article. If you are planting a small area, you will also want to plant shorter plants. Be sure to carefully read your plant tags and keep your plant height to about half of the dimensions of your meadow. For example, if your meadow is a six-foot circle, keep your plants to three feet and below.

Once you decide on the area where you want your meadow, it is important to kill off all existing grasses and other plants. This can be done by putting down a layer of cardboard and a thick layer of mulch and leaving it for at least six weeks. If you choose to use plugs or nursery plants, you can just cut through the cardboard and plant them. If you use seeds, you'll need to remove the cardboard and mulch, rake the area to remove plant material, and rough up the soil before putting the seeds down.

Fall is a good time to start this process, and you can seed during the winter or spring. If you use plugs or nursery plants, you must plant them in the fall or spring. If you plant in the fall, you will want to water your plants a few times, depending on when it freezes. Watch them carefully throughout the first year, watering during dry spells. If you plant in the spring, you will want to water until the plants are established and during any dry periods.

If you choose to plant seeds, you will get a few plants that will flower in the first season. The meadow plants will grow more during the second season and even better in season three. Plugs and



PHOTO CREDIT: JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS

nursery plants will give better results in the first two years. Once established, your mini meadow will require annual mowing or cutting, and you might want to add more of your favorite plants.

If you are ready to invite more butterflies into your yard, try a meadow. The additional butterflies will be rewarding. If you want to see a mini meadow seeded in December 2023, stop by the Interpretive Center at Freedom Park. To learn more about native plants, come to the Native Plant Program on September 11 at 5:30 p.m. at Freedom Park's Interpretive Center. It's free and open to the public!

For more information, here are two links: one to Tyler Arboretum's article (tylerarboretum.org/planning-and-planting-a-pocket-meadow/) and the second to How to Create a Pocket Meadow—Conserving Carolina (nativegardendesigns.wildones.org).

Suggested plant list:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Little Bluestem | Partridge Pea |
| Purple Love Grass | Senna |
| Lanceleaf Coreopsis | Liatris |
| Black-eyed Susan | Blue False Indigo |
| Penstemon | Boneset |
| Butterfly Weed | |
| Golden Alexander | |



PHOTO CREDIT: JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS

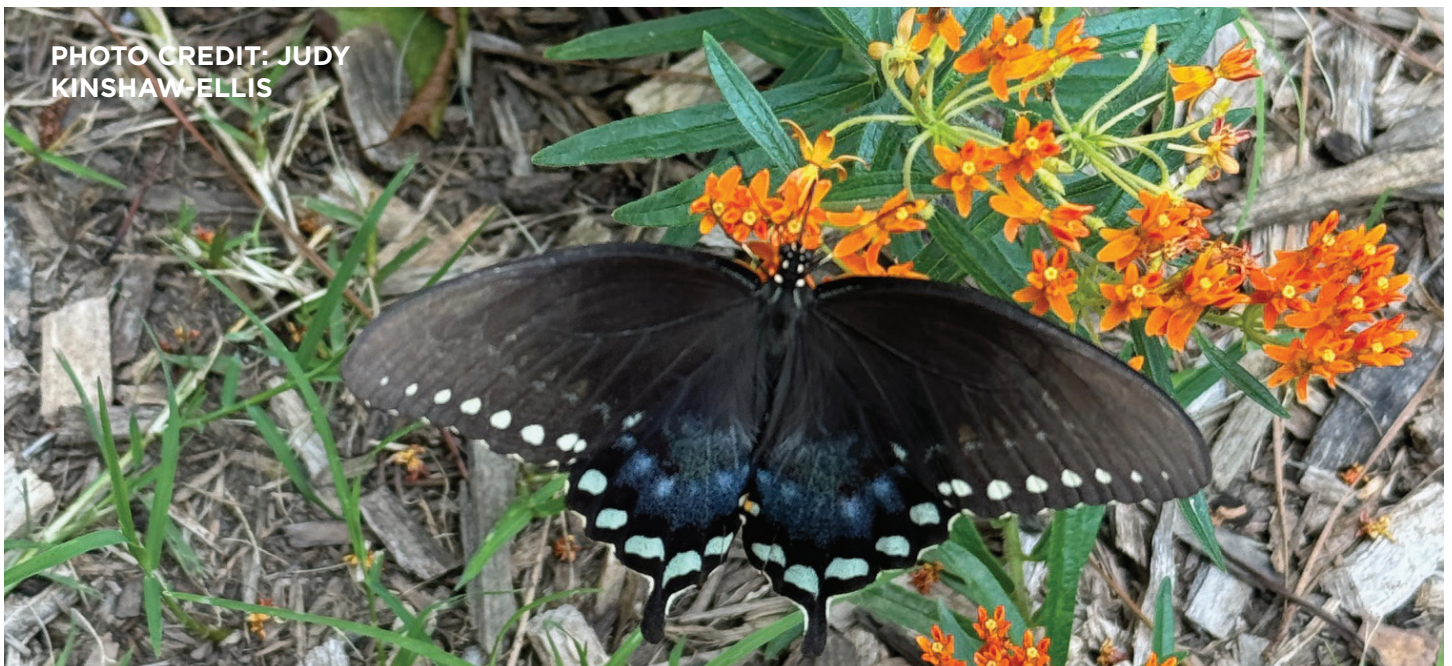


PHOTO CREDIT: JUDY KINSHAW-ELLIS

See Native Species on Jamestown Island!

ELIZABETH MCCOY '18

Jamestown Island's geology, climate, and history have all shaped what grows there today. Although Native Americans hadn't lived there for centuries before the first English settlers arrived in 1607, it was the site of the first documented permanent English colony in North America. Those settlements were abandoned by 1700 as colonists moved to better land. Today, under National Park Service management, Jamestown Island remains one of the few places left in our area to see native species growing wild with little maintenance or cultivation. Learn more about the forests and marshes of Jamestown Island as you discover the ferns growing and wildflowers blooming on the island in late summer. [Learn more here.](#)

The State-Wide Voice for Master Gardeners

MARILYN RIDDLE, '01

Vickie Rockwell, Joanne Sheffield, Carolyn Stringer, and Marilyn Riddle represented our extension on August 10 at the VMGA meeting at the edge of Henrico County. We were the largest delegation from a unit outside the greater Richmond area. The host's PowerPoint efficiently summarized Henrico EMG's volunteer activities. Complemented by a good-sized crowd, it was held in a local library branch just off I-64.

VA STATE FAIR: This year, the fair runs from September 27 through October 6, which is later than usual. If you want to volunteer on Tuesday, October 1, at the VIRGINIA STATE FAIR, contact Marilyn Riddle. She may only take a limited number of individuals on a space-available basis on other days. The site is one exit south, before King's Dominion, off of I-95 N. We should be home before dark.

OCTOBER'S MEETING: The VMGA meeting for October 12 will be held at Poplar Forest, Thomas Jefferson's summer home north of Lynchburg. Its main exterior feature is its hexagonal shape. Reservations for tour and lunch are due by October 1. Contact Marilyn (mriddle@cox.net) for information.

The next **VMGA EDUCATIONAL EVENT** is Nov 9 -12 at Hill House in Washington (north of Culpeper). The three topics are Woody Plants, Keystone Plants, and Seed Propagation. A field trip to Hill House Nursery will follow this. See the Bi-Weekly Update (<https://mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/2024/08/>) for more information.

SAVE THE DATES! The 2025 Master Gardener College in Blacksburg will be held next summer from June 12 to 15.

PERSONNEL CHANGES: Dave Close, our state master gardener coordinator for over 15 years, has left to accept a similar role at UT, Knoxville. After 15 years, Dean Alan Grant, who headed the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, retired. Devon Johnson is on medical leave. During her absence, contact Ed Olsen, our Extension Master Gardener Program Director at the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences at Virginia Tech. His email is edo@vt.edu.

VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION (VMGA): As a JCCWMG Association member, you are encouraged to join the VMGA. Annual membership is only \$15. Membership applications can be downloaded here: vmga.net/vmga-membership-application-renewal-form/. The VMGA fosters communication among all Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener volunteers.

VMGA IS A STATE-WIDE VOICE for all Virginia Master Gardeners. It interfaces with Virginia Tech (our land-grant university and the home of VCE) and the state legislature on matters important to Virginia residents. This includes help and expertise to make the decisions necessary for a successful gardening experience. This differs from our association, the James City County Williamsburg Master Gardener Association, which oversees Williamsburg, James City, Charles City, Upper York, and New Kent. For additional information, contact Marilyn Riddle, our state rep, at mriddle@cox.net.



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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