



VMGA REPORT

Spring Edition

Volume 25 . Issue 9

May/June 2015

A Message from the President

Spring is here and Master Gardeners throughout the Commonwealth are excited to get outside and start gardening. In case you missed our last bi-monthly meeting held in beautiful Rocky Mount, here is the run down.

The By-law Revision Committee has been very busy and prepared a report with recommendations. Each of the recommendations were discussed and will be e-mailed to each VMGA member. Voting will take place at the annual meeting during Master Gardener College.

VMGA has decided to contribute funds to print a new Master Gardener Coordinator's Handbook. This will allow each Extension Office to have a printed resource.

VMGA is excited to announce that the association will match all new contributions to the Master Gardener Coordinator Endowment fund from May 1st until August 30th. VMGA will match cash donations up to \$6,000. Check out the Master Gardener Coordinator Endowment page on www.vmga.net to make a donation.

VMGA needs you and your unit to help with the Silent Auction this year at Master Gardener College. The Silent Auction is a very important fund raiser for the MG Coordinator Endowment and it's a load of fun. We have developed a playbook with the best practices for running the event efficiently as possible and we will encourage several helpers to help with the logistics. If you are unable to volunteer as a coordinator, please think about contributing to the auction. (Maybe you have a gift that needs re-gifting, or you have some garden art that needs a new home, and plants are always a hit.) We have several people that have experience in the coordinator position and are willing to help you get started. Please let Tina Chaleki know if you are interested by emailing chalekie@gmail.com.

Do you have a special interest in creating logo items that are practical and useful for all Master Gardeners? VMGA is looking for a Merchandising Lead Person. This person would report to our Fund Raising Chair and the good news is that we have developed Standard Operating Procedures to help you along the way. We have several people that have experience in the position and are willing to help you get started. Please let [Tina Chaleki](#) know if you are interested.

The VMGA education Committee is planning a training event on September 19th at Virginia State University. Be on the lookout for more information.

Thank You to all of the Unit Representatives that responded to the last two president's questions for their unit report. We have collected valuable information for VCE concerning the retention of Master Gardener Volunteers and the number and types of community gardens Master Gardeners support throughout the state. If your unit did not get a chance to respond, it's not too late to send a report to [Joan Richards](#), VMGA Secretary, so your unit will be included in our report.

VMGA offers scholarships to Master Gardeners planning on attending Master Gardener College. Visit www.vmga.net for more information about the scholarships. Remember that the VCE agent must complete the nomination form for those interested. If you missed the deadline for this year, put this on your calendar for next year!

A reminder that VMGA annual dues are due. You can renew your membership on-line at www.vmga.net.

We hope to see you at Master Gardener College, the Silent Auction and the VMGA Annual meeting.

VMGA OFFICERS

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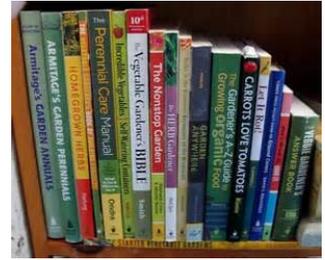


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**50 REFERENCE AND READING SUGGESTIONS FOR A MASTER GARDENER BOOKSHELF**

By George Graine, Fairfax Master Gardeners

**ENTOMOLOGY AND PATHOLOGY**

IPM for Gardeners: A Guide to Integrated Pest Management, Raymond A. Cloyd, Philip L. Nixon, and Nancy R. Pataky, (Timber Press, 2004)

Diseases & Pests of Ornamental Plants, 5th ed., Pascal P. Pirone, (John Wiley, 1978)

Diseases of Trees and Shrubs, 2nd ed., Wayne A. Sinclair, Howard H. Lyon, and Warren T. Johnson, (Cornell Univ. Press, 1987)

Insects That Feed on Trees and Shrubs, 2nd ed., Warren T. Johnson and Howard H. Lyon, (Cornell Univ. Press, 1988)

A Color Atlas of Pests of Ornamental Trees, Shrubs and Flowers, David V. Alford, (Timber Press, 2003)

Managing Insects and Mites on Woody Plants: An IPM Approach, 3rd ed., John A. Davidson and Michael J. Raupp, (Tree Care Industry Association, 2014)

Common-Sense Pest Control: Least-Toxic Solutions for Your Home, Garden, Pets and Community, William Olkowski, Sheila Daar, and Helga Olkowski, (Taunton Press, 1991)

Turfgrass Problems: Picture Clues and Management Options, Eva Gussack and Frank S. Rossi, (Natural Resource, Agriculture and Engineering Service Cooperative Extension, NRAES-125, 2001)

What's Wrong With My Plant? (And How Do I Fix It?): A Visual Guide to Easy Diagnosis and Organic Remedies, David Deardorff and Kathryn Wadsworth, (Timber Press, 2009)

What's Wrong With My Vegetable Garden?: 100% Organic Solutions for All Your Vegetables from Artichokes to Zucchini, David Deardorff and Kathryn Wadsworth, (Timber Press, 2011)

Rodale's Color Handbook of Garden Insects, Anna Carr, (Rodale Press, 1979)

Good Bugs for Your garden, Allison Mia Starcher, (Algonquin Books, 1995)

The Truth About Organic Gardening: Benefits, Drawbacks and the Bottom Line, Jeff Gillman, (Timber Press, 2008)

The Truth About Garden Remedies: What Works, What Doesn't & Why, Jeff Gillman, (Timber Press, 2008)

WEEDS

Weeds of the Northeast, Richard H. Uva, Joseph C. Neal, and Joseph M. DiTomaso, (Cornell Univ. Press, 1997)

Solving Weed Problems: How to Identify and Eradicate Weeds Effectively from Your Lawn and Garden, Peter Loewer, (Lyons Press, 2001)

Weeds in My Garden: Observations on Some Misunderstood Plants, Charles B. Heiser, (Timber Press, 2003)

LAWNS

Scott's Lawns: Your Guide to a Beautiful Lawn, 2nd ed., (Meredith Books, 2006)

Smart Yard: 60 Minute Lawn Care, Jeff Ball and Liz Ball, (Fulcrum Publishing, 1994)

Beautiful No-Mow Yards: 50 Amazing Lawn Alternatives, Evelyn J. Hadden, (Timber Press, 2012)

PRUNING

The American Horticultural Society-Pruning & Training: The Definitive Guide to Pruning Trees, Shrubs, and Climbers, revised ed., Christopher Brickell and David Joyce, (DK, 2011)

The Pruning Book, 2nd ed., Lee Reich, (Taunton Press, 2010) The Pruning of Trees, Shrubs and Conifers, George E. Brown, 2nd ed. revised and expanded by Tony Kirkham, (Timber Press, 2009)

TREES AND SHRUBS

Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, Propagation and Uses, 6th ed., Michael A. Dirr, (Stipes Publishing, 2009)

The Homeowner's Complete Tree and Shrub Handbook: The Essential Guide to Choosing, Planting, and Maintaining Perfect Landscape Plants, Penelope O'Sullivan, (Storey Publishing, 2007)



TREES AND SHRUBS cont..

Common Native Trees of Virginia: Tree Identification Guide, (Virginia Department of Forestry, 2007)

Variegated Trees & Shrubs: An Illustrated Encyclopedia, Ronald Houtman, (Timber Press, 2004)

Hydrangeas for American Gardens, Michael A. Dirr, (Timber Press, 2004)

PERENNIALS AND MORE

The Well-Tended Perennial Garden: Planting & Pruning Techniques, expanded edition, Tracy DiSabato-Aust, (Timber Press, 2006)

The American Horticultural Society Flower Finder, Jacqueline Heriteau and Andre Viette, (Simon and Schuster, 1992)

Armitage's Manual of Annuals, Biennials, and Half-Hardy Perennials, Allan M. Armitage, (Timber Press, 2001)

The Encyclopedia of Grasses for Livable Landscapes, Rick Darke (Timber Press, 2007)

Covering Ground: Unexpected Ideas for Landscaping With Colorful Low-Maintenance Ground Covers, Barbara W. Ellis, (Storey Publishing, 2007)

Perennial Ground Covers, David S. MacKenzie, (Timber Press, 2002) (This is an encyclopedia.)

SHADE GARDENING

An Encyclopedia of Shade Perennials, W. George Schmid, (Timber Press, 2002)

The Complete Shade Gardener, George Schenk, (Timber Press, 2002)

NATIVE PLANTS

Easy Care Native Plants: A Guide to Selecting and Using Beautiful American Flowers, Shrubs, and Trees in Gardens and Landscapes, Patricia A. Taylor, (Henry Holt, 1996)

Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants, C. Colston Burrell, (Brooklyn Botanic Gardens-Handbook #185, 2006)

Why Plant That When You Can Plant This?: 255 Extraordinary Alternatives to Everyday Problem Plants, Andrew Keys, (Timber Press, 2012)

A Garden of Wildflowers: 101 Native Species and How to Grow Them, Henry W. Art, (Storey Publishing, 2003)

GARDEN DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE

The Essential Garden Design Workbook, 2nd ed., Rosemary Alexander, (Timber Press, 2009)

The Essential Garden Maintenance Workbook, Rosemary Alexander, (Timber Press, 2006)

The Perennial Gardener's Design Primer: The Essential Guide to Creating Simply Sensational Gardens, Stephanie Cohen and Nancy Ondra, (Storey Publishing, 2005)

BULBS

Bulbs for Garden Habitat, Judy Glattstein, (Timber Press, 2005)

Garden Bulbs for the South, 2nd ed., Scott Ogden, (Timber Press, 2013)

Fooling Mother Nature: Forcing Flower Bulbs for Indoor Bloom, George Graine, (Virginia Cooperative Extension Publication HORT-76NP, 2014)

ENCYCLOPEDIAS

Wyman's Gardening Encyclopedia, expanded 2nd ed., Donald Wyman, (Macmillan Publishing, 1986)

Garden-pedia: An A-to-Z Guide to Garden Terms, Pamela Bennett and Maria Zampini, (St. Lynns Press, 2015)

The American Horticultural Society A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants, revised ed., Christopher Brickell and H. Marc Cathey, (DK, 2004)

MISCELLANEOUS

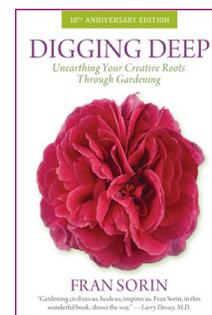
The New York/Mid-Atlantic Gardener's Book of Lists: More Than 200 Lists That Make Gardening Easier, Bonnie Lee Appleton and Lois Trigg Chaplin, (Taylor Trade Publishing, (2001)

Date prepared: February 7, 2015





THE GRAINETHUMB
GARDENING – A MORE CREATIVE APPROACH
By George Graine, Fairfax County Master Gardeners
Imagination is more important than knowledge.....Albert Einstein



Not often does a book come along that discusses the soul of a gardener and the garden when compared to a typical treatise on landscape design, veggies or plants for the sake of plants. It is refreshing to read about *Unearthing Your Creative Roots Through Gardening*, the subtitle to the 10th anniversary edition of *Digging Deep* by Fran Sorin (Braided Worlds, 2014). Also, it is unusual when an author provides guidance and inspiration as you yard-about and connect with Mother Nature. To be sure, self-awareness, discovery and well-being are the watchwords for *Digging Deep*. In that regard, this book takes you on a journey that will help see your vision and gardening plan come to fruition. The message is clear as the author shows you the way so that you will not be overwhelmed by nature. In a series of building blocks, seven chapter headings (called stages by the author) are a giveaway to the contents of the book. These are:

- Imagining – the sparks of creativity
- Envisioning – giving shape to your dreams
- Planning – laying down the bones
- Planting – tasking action
- Tending – the act of nurturing
- Enjoying – reaping what you have sown
- Completing – cycling through the season

The end game is unlike a symphonic crescendo but rather a continuing activity where you will become totally involved in a positive way as you look at your garden handiwork. If you follow these stages you will receive an abundance of knowledge on how to design a garden that you may have only dreamed about. Your latent creative and innovative side is sure to be aroused as you remove the cloak of self-doubt and develop a can-do strategy. Wabi-sabi is a Japanese saying meaning everything is imperfect, impermanent and incomplete. Is it any wonder that gardeners oft spoken idiom is “a work in progress.” An excuse? No – A fact!

Sorin has masterfully put down on paper a fulfilling experience that she desires to share with her readers. She sets the stage for gardening; however, the chapters noted above need not be read in a linear manner if you have a mindset (read experience) that “allows” you to skip some reading. Nevertheless, it is a good idea to eventually read those skipped chapters in order to see how each stage relates to one another because you may pick up some pointers that you otherwise may have missed. By thinking positively you are bound to be successful because the guidance provided is spot on and interesting to read. Take ownership of your garden and do not be lulled into some pre-conceived landscape design text book school solution. Putting this another way, do not get bullied into accepting whatever a landscape designer is offering as the solution for your project.

Do you like to play outside as you yardabout? You should, because that is when spontaneous and creative thoughts often come about. Thinking positively dispels a notion of drudgery even though some chores cannot be described in other ways. Block out from your mind so called “normal rules” for gardening. As in fashion, some subscribe to the notion of when it is “permissible” to wear white or velvet or patent leather? In regard to garden rules, keep in mind that there are no rules because nature can be very forgiving. Gardening without play is setting you up for a distasteful experience. Develop your own expression in a way that pleases you and not what others may think. Of course if you live in a neighborhood that has homeowner restrictions they often only apply to the front yard. Surely you have other areas around your home that may cry out for self-expression. Do not let arbitrary rules spoil your play time.



Gardening: a More Creative Approach cont.

Throughout *Digging Deep* the author provides ideas that will inspire you as well as provide “tips” to keep you focused on a particular gardening stage. In addition to these tips, you will also find “exercises” that help lead to a successful gardening experience.

To garden means to live with ambiguity and this can be a positive happening. As you relax, let any pressure subside. Take a deep breath and chances are you will be back in the business of solving whatever garden problem irks you. A restart to a problem often results in an improved solution. This frustration, if you can call it that, is part of the creative process. Be assured that your instincts will lead you to the proper direction. *Digging Deep* is not a gardening-by-numbers book as previously alluded to; therefore, dispel any idea you may have of mimicking a pre-planned garden based on a landscape design text because all of us are unique in many ways. Your garden can make a personal statement that says this is me and this is my garden. That means garden with intent and emotion, and too, think of gardening as actively relating to the plant material you select.

Your garden emphasis should be on self-expression other than neighborhood conformity. If you do hire a landscape designer it should be with the understanding that the designer really listens to you and understands your desires and financial arrangements. The author does not loath designers. Quite the contrary as she emphasizes that the homeowner and the designer need to work together as a team. As for the budget process, you may find it necessary to scale back the project by spreading it out over several years. It is important to have a dialogue with the designer so that both of you recognize potential problem situations and to factor these in before any digging starts. The decision to add, delete or have a landscape makeover means you have decided to do something. Together, try to determine what changes you are contemplating and difficult as it may seem, try not to become confused with what appears to be an overwhelming task. It is a good idea to take a walkabout or drive around your neighborhood and the surrounding area because you are bound to see something that strikes you. Also, visit several full service garden centers. This too can be a real eye opener. With these ah-ha moments, you will see plants that may be appropriate for your landscape. Make notes as you consider how plants will look grouped with each other. What will be the visual experience for your Eden? Of course sun, shade or whatever the environment must be considered as well as style. That could mean naturalized, formal, rich in color, textural or anything else that that you desire. Also consider your garden as living art because plants grow. Also, not to be forgotten, consider the “ugly” side of gardening. Yes, grow it and pests and disease will come; however, with careful plant selection this type of problem can be minimized.

If you tend to garden with a neat-nik DNA that is okay or if you do not mind a bit of mess in the garden that should not be a problem either. Late in deadheading or weeding who cares. Your landscape is all about you. The point is to take ownership of your property. Collaborate with someone who is knowledgeable such as the aforementioned landscape designer and an experienced gardener is not necessarily a bad choice for advice. Once again, do not subjugate your ideas or instincts because you are in charge of what will be the result of your effort. Wipe the word intimidation from your mind. Know that your garden is part of your autobiography because it gives you pleasure and perhaps others will appreciate what you have accomplished. *Digging Deep* will surely show you the way to a more creative approach to gardening.

Correction

In the last issue of the newsletter, an article on VMS was published. In that article were several items specific to MGNV logging of hours. I apologize for any confusion or inconvenience this may have caused anyone. As always if you have questions about logging information into the VMS system, see the VMS page at <http://blogs.lt.vt.edu/mastergardener/current-master-gardeners/volunteer-management-system/>

On this page are a user guide and several tutorials to help you.





What to do this Month: May



Make another planting of warm-weather vegetables such as beans, corn, squash, eggplant, tomato, and peppers. Southern favorites include okra, southern peas, and sweet potatoes.

Make sure that crops have plenty of mulch during dry spells.

Remove suckers from your tomato plants. Be sure that the plants are tied up on stakes or trellises and vines are not on the ground.

Continue to plant heat-loving herbs, including basil, oregano, sage, Mexican tarragon, and rosemary.

Watch out for insects devouring your plants, especially tomatoes.

Water early in the morning and deeply, avoiding leaves.

Fertilize your annual and perennial flower beds.

Remove any dead flowers from your plants to encourage new growth.

Plant annuals that can take the summer heat, such as angelonia, wax begonia, and ornamental pepper.

Plant bulbs for a summer of color, including early- to late-blooming varieties of daylilies.

Bring your houseplants outdoors to help rejuvenate them. Check them for any diseases or insects.

Newly-planted shrubs require special attention. Be sure to keep them well watered and mulch around them if you have not already done so.

Keep your lawn healthy by watering, fertilizing with control-released nitrogen, and mowing regularly to prevent pests.

For healthy grass, avoid weed and feed products. Only apply herbicides to areas with weed infestations.

Watch out for lawn insects and use control measures. See your local lawn care center.

Mow your lawn at recommended heights (St. Augustine and Bahia: 3 to 4 inches; Centipede: 1.5 to 2 inches; Dwarf St. Augustine: 2.5 inches).

Finish pruning spring-flowering trees and shrubs after they bloom. Lightly prune azaleas.

Get ready for hurricane season. Check your trees for damaged or weak branches and prune as needed. Consult a professional.

Mulch between the rows in your garden to help control soil temperature and retain moisture.

Be sure to check your plants for any diseases or insects; treat them when necessary.

Thanks to Hanover Master Gardeners for these tips.

VMGA will make reasonable attempts to contact you when emails to you bounce, but you can do your part:



Email the [Membership Chair](#) with changed email addresses.

Make sure you have no blocks on emails from VMGA.

Don't let your Inbox get "full"!

Renew online.

Thank you!



What to do this Month: June



Harvest your vegetables as soon as they are ripe for freshest taste, to prolong production, and to avoid pest issues. Beans, peas, squash, cucumbers, and okra are often ready in June.

Harvest Irish potatoes when two-thirds of the tops have died down. Store in a cool, dark place.

Store onions in a dry, airy place.

You can still plant okra, southern peas, lima beans, and sweet potatoes.

Plant heat-loving herbs, including basil, rosemary, and Mexican tarragon.

Pinch your annual and perennial herbs to promote bushier growth.

Carefully monitor and control for harmful insects.

Remove any dead/finished vegetable plants from your garden; plant new crops in their place.

This is normally a rainy season, but ensure that your garden receives 1 inch of rain per week.

Plant annuals that can take the full sun during hot summer months, including celosia, portulaca, vinca, and some coleus.

Remove any dead or old flowers from your plants to encourage new growth.

Do not remove the foliage of spring bulbs until it has yellowed and dried.

Stake any tall plants to help prevent any damage.

Add bright color to the landscape with perennials, including zinnia, salvia, and blue sage.

Plant palms during these warm, wet months. Make sure that the trunk is not covered with soil or fertilizer.

Lightly prune summer flowering shrubs, such as oleander, hibiscus, and crape myrtle.

For healthy grass, avoid weed and feed products. Only apply herbicides to areas with weed infestations.

If you have areas where grass simply doesn't grow well, consider a ground cover.

Mow your lawn at recommended heights (St. Augustine and Bahia: 3 to 4 inches; Centipede: 1.5 to 2 inches; Dwarf St. Augustine: 2.5 inches).

Thanks to Hanover Master Gardeners for these tips.

Thanks to the Hanover Master Gardeners for these monthly tips! Remember all areas in Virginia are not alike so check your USDA zone here:

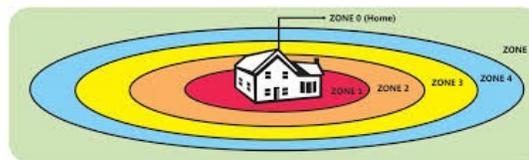
<http://www.plantmaps.com/interactive-virginia-usda-plant-zone-hardiness-map.php>





Permaculture: Zones of Use

By Laura Kerson



In this month's article we'll look at how efficient garden design can help save you time and energy. One way to do this is by thinking about your yard in terms of zones. The two things you'll want to keep in mind are: how often do I need to access this element, and how often does it need maintenance? Simply put, the more the area is used, the more easily accessible it should be. Bill Mollison, the co-founder of permaculture, says that if your slippers get wet by the time you've cut chives for your morning omelet, your herbs are too far away!

The zones begin in your home with zone 0 and extend outward, with 5 being farthest away. Zones are not determined by static categories like trees, flowers, or vegetables, but by your relationship with the elements on your site. You will need to start thinking about how you interact with the features in your design in order to determine where they belong in the landscape. In our area most yards only have space for zones 1 and 2, so we'll focus on those for this article.

Zone 1 is the most intensively used zone, requires the most maintenance, and is visited several times a day. It is not necessarily everything immediately surrounding your home, but is determined by how often you visit that area. If you drive to work every day and walk down a path to get to your car, the areas along that path could be part of your zone 1. A flower bed along the wall of your house that you never visit would not be zone 1, even though it is touching the house. Zone 1 will include herbs, vegetables, a patio, flowers for cutting, worm bins, bird baths, and maybe your chicken coop. Put these features in frequently visited and easily accessible areas.

Zone 2 is still visited often, but not necessarily every day. You might place your garden shed or greenhouse here along with some fruit trees, wood storage, and vegetables that have a longer growing season or are only harvested once, such as potatoes.

If zones 1 and 2 are placed correctly, you should start to notice the home and garden blending together and the ease of transition from inside to out will improve. A good design will be tailored to the user and will reflect their likes and interests. The morning coffee drinker will have a cozy seat right outside the patio door while the gourmet chef might locate his herb spiral garden there.

If your property is larger, it may contain zones 3-5. Zone 3 is space where staple crops, an orchard of larger trees, or pasture for livestock are located.

Zone 4 contains areas that are mostly wild, but are occasionally visited to collect wild foods, for timber production, or as animal forage areas.

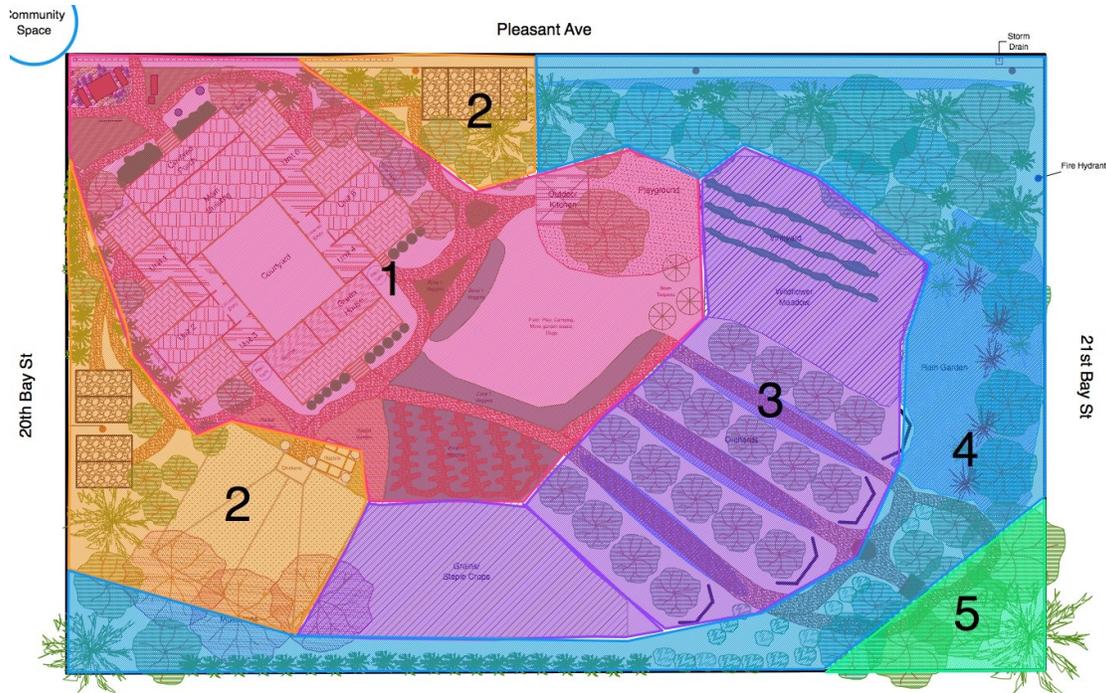
Zone 5 is unmanaged wilderness that is left for nature.

When thinking about the zones at your home, keep in mind that they are not hard lines, but conceptual boundaries to help you plan. They can be any size, shaped by topography, sunlight, ease of access, and your own needs. Zones of use are not strict rules that must be followed, but a tool to help you think about your use of space, the flow of energy on your site, and how to organize it to your advantage.

Permaculture: Zones of Use continued on page 9



Permaculture: Zones of Use cont.



You can see that the zones radiate out from the cluster of homes in the upper left-hand corner of this co-housing site design

Challenge Issued by President Brennan

President Christy Brennan challenges all Master Gardeners to contribute to VMGA's State Coordinator Endowment. VMGA will then match all cash donations up to \$6,000. The cash donations must be made between May 1 and August 31, 2015.

This challenge came about after a recommendation by Fund Raising Chair, Tina Chaleki (Louisa). The Endowment team of the Fund Raising Committee wants to increase the cash balance so that the interest earned is higher. Currently, the cash balance is \$237,282 – just \$12,718 shy of \$250,000. VMGA's \$6,000 match to \$6,000 cash donations will bring us just about to an immediate goal of one-quarter of a million dollars.

This will be a major milestone for the Endowment! The Endowment was initiated at a time when the budget for the position of the State MG Coordinator was unstable. There was frequent turnover and the position was vacant for many months at a time. Taking on the task of funding the Endowment got the attention of leadership at Virginia Tech and funding for the Office of the State Coordinator has become constant. While we work to fully fund the one million dollar Endowment, the separate interest account could bring us needed program support to our Virginia MG program.

Think about it! Your cash contribution or that of your local association will be **doubled!** VMGA would very much appreciate any amount that you can donate. Donations are made directly to The Virginia Tech Foundation, account #886119. Visit VMGA's [Endowment webpage](#) for more information. There you will find a link to the State MG Coordinator [Endowment form](#) so that your donation is correctly credited to you. Please contact Christy with any questions by emailing president@vmga.net.

VMGA thanks you, in advance, for supporting this effort!



VT Plant Disease Clinic:

Eastern filbert blight, caused by the fungus *Anisogramma anomala*, is an indigenous and relatively harmless pathogen on American hazelnut (also known as filbert, *Corylus americana*), which is an understory tree in the eastern U.S. However, it is a common and serious disease on European hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) grown for nuts or as an ornamental. On a susceptible hazelnut, the pathogen causes perennial cankers that expand annually and eventually girdle branches and the trunk, killing the tree.



Football-shaped fruiting bodies of the Eastern filbert blight pathogen appear about a year after infection, which occurs on tender new growth in the spring

Management of this disease on susceptible plants requires early detection, repeated fungicide applications, and sanitation. Fruiting bodies of the pathogen are very distinctive: look for rows of large, black, football-shaped fungal fruiting bodies breaking through the bark along the length of the branches. Affected branches should be pruned out well below visible cankers and prunings should be burned or removed from the location. Fungicides containing chlorothalonil or copper hydroxide, applied three or more times in the spring, starting at bud swell to bud break, should control the disease. The fungus infects tender new shoots as they elongate in the spring, but the fruiting bodies do not appear until about a year after infection.

Early spring or winter is a good time to look carefully for cankers of Eastern filbert blight and prune out affected branches. Early infections often begin on the top of a tree and young cankers may be overlooked because only a few fruiting bodies may be present. Some cultivars of European hazelnut have resistance to the disease; however, breeding programs for hazelnut are located in Oregon and cultivars developed there may not be resistant to strains of the pathogen that are found in the eastern U.S. For more information on this disease refer to the *Anisogramma anomala* publication at http://wiki.bugwood.org/Anisogramma_anomala_%28eastern_filbert_blight%29





EDUCATIONAL CALENDAR



April 10-12 (Colonial Williamsburg, Hennage Auditorium) Garden Symposium- Layers of the Living Landscape. During CW's 69th Garden Symposium, Rick Darke and Doug Tallamy, authors of *The Living Landscape*, share their expertise on using plants to create and maintain a layered landscape. Advance registration required. Call 1-800-603-0948.

April 11 (Christopher Newport) The 18th Annual Gardening symposium at CNU. 7:30am, program begins at 9:15. The theme will be "Great Gardens, Great Ideas," with speakers Sharon Loving, Director of Horticulture at Longwood Gardens; Chris Strand, Director Garden & Estate of Winterthur Museum, Patricia Brodowski, Director of Vegetable Gardens at Monticello. Registration available at <http://cnu.edu/gardening/> Colonial Triangle Chapter of the Herb Society of America will be selling herbs, along with other vendors.

April 18 (Freedom Park Interpretive Center). 10am. Nancy Barnhart and a team of certified master naturalists will offer tips on attracting Bluebirds in Our Gardens. \$5 donation recommended. April 25 (Maymont, Richmond). 8am—4pm. Herbs Galore & More. Expert sessions and dozens of vendors. \$5 for Marketplace. <https://www.maymont.org/herbsgalore>

May 16 : 3rd Annual Living in the Garden: A Plant Lovers Symposium , University of Mary Washington, Lee Hall 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

More information and register: <http://www.mgacra.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/2015-Living-in-the-Garden-A-Plant-Lovers-Symposium.pdf>

Grow Some VA



Grow Some VA!TM Is a social action campaign of the Virginia Green Industry Council that encourages homeowners to reduce water runoff from their yards and gardens into local waterways that flow to the Chesapeake Bay by applying recommended conservation practices and by planting 'Virginia Grown' plants. Improving water quality in our streams, rivers and Chesapeake Bay is everyone's responsibility. Plants grown in Virginia are acclimated to the local growing conditions, varieties that do well in the Virginia climate are readily available in local nurseries and more and more 'native' plants are also available for the benefit of wildlife. So Grow some VA is more than a catch phrase; it is a challenge to everyone to do their part at home, at the work place and in your community.

Like them on Facebook. /www.facebook.com/growsomeva



HCMGA Elementary School Programs Going Strong for 22 Years

By: Mark Welch, HCMGA School Program Coordinator



Way back in 1991, Lynchburg's Hill City Master Gardener Association (HCMGA) was confronted with a pressing challenge. To keep their organization going and growing, they needed to establish and implement a new source of sustainable and relevant public education programs to both serve their community and afford more opportunities for their swelling membership to fulfill their service requirements. They decided that an excellent venue that could make a big impact in their community was youth education programs. So with the assistance of the Lynchburg Cooperative Extension Agent and the approval of the Lynchburg City School Board, they implemented a pilot project consisting of a series of five garden programs, two in the fall and three in the spring, serving about two hundred 3rd and 4th graders in one of the city's larger elementary schools. The programs were an immediate hit with students, teachers and administrators alike. In short order, they expanded their efforts to include four more of the city's elementary schools.

Over the years, the school programs evolved in step with changes in school curricula and teaching requirements. Also, HCMGA grew as a community service organization with service venues branching out into a growing assortment of other community activities and services, straining volunteer time and budget resources. The expanding scope of educational programs in the early 1990's, without any income-generating activities threatened the sustainability of the school and other programs. Eventually, an annual HCMGA Festival of Gardening plant sale was incorporated generating much needed revenue and solving the financial constraints that had been limiting the scope of programs in those early years.

In 2001 another major change came along. The federal "No Child Left Behind Act" was enacted followed by adoption of Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) curriculum objectives and testing requirements. Implementation of the policies placed new demands for time on the schools' calendars. Consequently, our programs had to be consolidated. We went from five annual visits to each school down to three and focused our efforts on the 4th grade classes where biology and ecology topics occur throughout the SOLs. The content of the programs was redesigned to complement specific SOL objectives. That brings us to where we are today.

One could say that HCMGA school programs, ongoing now for 22 years, have become a traditional part of the 4th grade experience for students, as well as many of their teachers and parents. Each of our three annual programs in each school features a short PowerPoint classroom presentation followed by three or more hands-on practical activities where the children learn one-on-one or in small groups with Master Gardeners. In the fall we focus on Living Soils and Composting. Discovery activities include composting with worms, a discussion about things we can and should not compost, and an activity where the children assemble a compost pile using grass clippings and leaves. We have two spring programs. Our March program explores houseplants, their geographic origins and history. Hands-on activities include nature's five plant propagation strategies using seeds, a guided tour of houseplant varieties using many living examples, and the children pot a Spider Plant that they can take home. Our second spring program is timed with planting season and looks at Life in the Garden, exploring plant and animal energy cycles and a host of ecological relationships in the garden. Hands-on activities include garden fertilizers and plant watering requirements, an exploration of many living examples of the wide diversity of annual flowers and herbs for use in home gardens, and a guided activity where the children plant annual flowers in their school gardens.

Each school program is organized and led by a Master Gardener program chair and is typically carried out with the assistance of 15-20 Master Gardeners and intern volunteers. Last year our elementary school programs served about 370 4th grade students and 30 teachers for a total of nearly 1200 educational contacts-hours over the course of the school year. The hands-on exposure to relevant nature topics in "real-life" contexts and the extended social experiences afforded the children through participation in gardening activities with Master Gardeners continue to make these valued programs fun and rewarding educational activities for the children, teachers and Master Gardeners alike.



It's Silent Auction Time!



The Silent Auction is one of the fun events at MG College, always good for friendly competition, lots of laughs and really good stuff! And it raises significant funds for VMGA's State Coordinator Endowment. You can be a part of this event in many ways.

Even if you aren't coming to MG College, you can participate by making a donation of an item or items to be auctioned. **Plants** are always GREAT and generate a lot of bidding excitement. It's always fun to see bidders carefully watching for higher bids for the **gardening tools, accessories** and **garden art** they *just have to have!* **Pots, crocks and other planters** – with or without plants – perennially see competitive bidding. **Gift baskets** of gardening or botanical items are very popular and add nice sums for the Endowment. If you are inclined to approach a local nursery or business for a donation, a solicitation letter is available – just email auction@vmga.net. We ask that you find transportation for your item(s) to MG College, and that you let us know what is coming. Please email auction@vmga.net with the item description, fair market value (bust-out retail cost) and the name, email address and VCE unit of the donor. An online form is also available at <http://vmga.net/silentauctiondonation.php>. Another way to participate is to fill one of the positions that pulls off this successful event. A proven method for running the auction easily and smoothly has evolved over the years, so we know roles and their commitments. This team clicks like a well-oiled machine and has fun in the process. (The checkout of *more than 150 items* was completed in less than ½ hour last year!) Can you help in any (or all) of these areas? Write auction@vmga.net to contribute your time and skills.

Pre-College item registration and acknowledgement (1 person with email skills; about 10 hours over 6 weeks)

Spreadsheet Manager – 1 person with basic Excel spreadsheet skills – add items to provided spreadsheet as items are pledged (4-6 hours prior to College over 6 weeks), update items at College (1-2 hours); as Closeout Team member (2-3 hours), enter price paid, provide winning bidder info, and announce total amount donated to Endowment; verify spreadsheet data from bidding sheets and email copy to CALS Development (2-4 hours in the 2-3 weeks after MG College)

Item Receptionists – up to three volunteers needed to receive items as attendees register at dorm (1-5pm Wednesday afternoon, 9am-12pm Thursday morning, 1-5pm Thursday afternoon); send items to Torgersen Hall via Dave's and John's luggage haulers; provide updates to Spreadsheet Manager

Setup Team – three volunteers to move tables around in auction room (if needed); arrange items on tables Thursday afternoon/night (goal is to open the auction by Friday afternoon); complete bidder sheets; update Spreadsheet Manager with changes, additions

Close Out Team – 9 volunteers from 6:30-9pm Saturday – halt bidding (all 9); process bidding sheets and receipt forms and provide receipt forms to winning bidders (2-3 volunteers); gather items for winning bidders and escort winning bidders to items after payment made (6-7 volunteers); cashiers (3 volunteers); move tables to original room set up as room empties (all)

For those of you planning on attending MG College, we encourage you to participate by bidding early and often! The Silent Auction annually raises in the neighborhood of \$3,500 for the Endowment. It is always loads of fun, and you take home really great stuff!

And to everyone who donates or transports items, volunteers to be a part of the auction team or who bids – a huge THANK YOU from VMGA's Fund Raising Committee!



It's Not Too Late!

VMGA College Sponsorships



We are assisting in finding sponsors for our next VCE MG College which will be held June 24-28 of this year. Your VMGA organization has always been a sponsor and will do so again this year. We are looking for new sponsors. Perhaps your local unit association could see their way to provide some sponsorship. Do you know of any organizations, businesses or individuals that you interact with in your communities that could do this? With your help we can have the best VCE MG College ever. If you need any assistance or have someone you would like us to approach, you can contact Sue Edwards at suedward@vt.edu or John Freeborn at freeborn@vt.edu.

STATE COORDINATOR'S LIAISON REPORT (JOHN FREEBORN)

AS REPORTED BY ANGELA CINGALE

A report from John Freeborn, Assistant Master Gardener Coordinator, Virginia Tech, Department of Horticulture, at the VMGA meeting in Rocky Mount, Virginia, on April 11, 2015.

1. The winner of the iBook Publication Contest has been selected and notified. There will be an official announcement in the Spring In-Season Newsletter. The topic was international vegetables that can be grown in Virginia. The publication will discuss cultivation, harvest, and preparation of those vegetables. A second place entry will be on hobby winemaking, which made the decision close at the end.
2. Our second WebEx was on March 19. This session covered was the MG Association, what the benefits of a MG Association are, and how they fit in to the overall EMG program. Both of these WebEx sessions are posted on the website in the MG Coordinator's section along with the PowerPoints. Our next WebEx session will be on May 14.
3. Winter Conference—Our poster created by Riley Sixta won second place in the poster competition. This poster, titled Exploring the Enhanced EMG Program, showed the growth of the program over the past twelve years and highlighted a number of the new communications products that have been developed in the past twenty-four months.
4. The first week of May is the National Extension Conference on Volunteerism in Maine. Dave Close and Jeremy Johnson will both be attending this conference, and Dave is presenting while there. Dave's topic will be Barriers to Volunteer Leadership.
5. The statewide urban nutrient management program is ready to be rolled out. It is called Virginia Healthy Lawns and has taken into account materials and procedures from 8 different EMG lawn care programs across the state. We have received funding from DCR for development of this program, and DCR will be reporting the acres of turf that are enrolled in this program to the EPA.
6. MG College Update—All speakers, workshops, and tours have been confirmed. Registration is set to go live the last week of April (or maybe the first week of May), and the group who handles registration for us is currently building the registration



Master College 2015 Breakdown:

Along with the usual offerings for Master Gardener College, this year features Advanced Master Gardener Training for Tree Care Stewards.

Speakers: 50+ expected

Range of Topics:

- Food preservation
- Weed identification
- Arboriculture
- And much more!

Expected Attendance: 250+ Master Gardeners

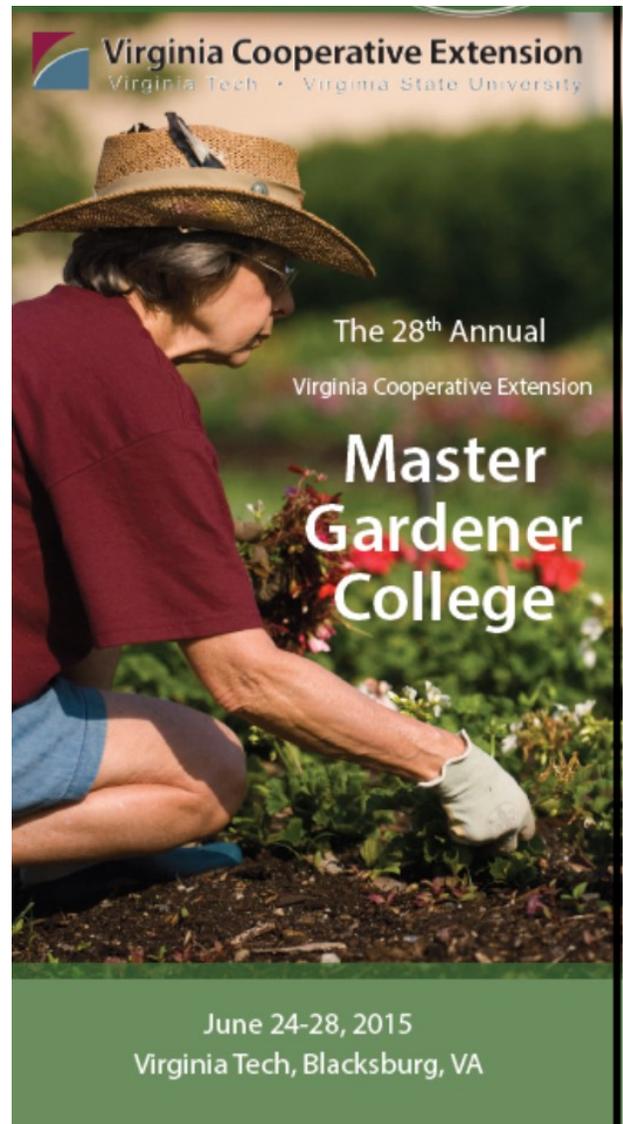
A preview:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S67R_wuVpak

Its never to early to plan ahead. The 28th annual Master Gardener College featuring Tree Steward training will be held June 24-28, 2015. For more information go to

<http://blogs.lt.vt.edu/mastergardener/current-master-gardeners/mg-college/faq-2/>

Scholarships are available. Talk to your unit representative. Also, if you received a milestone award in 2014, you may be eligible for a discount on the 2015 Master Gardener College registration fee.





MAY IS TICK-BORNE DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH!

BY KATHY BUSH

Most of us have heard of Rocky Mountain spotted fever, which is caused by the American dog tick and results in flu-like symptoms and a rash. Lyme disease is spread by deer ticks that cause auto-immune and neurological problems if not treated. Do you know what a lone star tick looks like? Have you heard of Alpha GAL, which causes you to be allergic (possibly have anaphylactic shock) to red meat? (See <http://wtop.com/news/2014/05/tick-bites-could-cause-red-meat-allergy/>) Just this week in the news, I heard about 'Powassan Virus' from a tick bite which can be deadly. (<http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2015/04/08/doctors-say-tick-borne-powassan-virus-is-worse-than-lyme-disease/#.VSfjnmM2zOO.mailto>). Be cautious when working outside.

Virginia Tech has this advice on its website: http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/2906/2906-1396/2906-1396_pdf.pdf

Control: The following methods of prevention are recommended by the Virginia Department of Health.

Avoid tick infested areas such as tall grass and dense vegetation

Walk in the center of trails and avoid brushing against weeds and tall grass

Keep grass and underbrush cut and thinned

Wear light colored clothing so ticks can be found easily

Tuck pant legs into socks so ticks stay on the outside of pants.

Conduct tick checks on children and pets every 4 hours

Keep pets outside from April to September to help keep ticks out of the house

Use tick repellents that contain at least 30% DEET

Ask your veterinarian to recommend tick controls for your pets

Treat your lawn with an approved pesticide for tick control

Treat clothes with permethrin and be sure to follow all label precautions

Ticks are best removed with tweezers or by wrapping the tick in tissue paper and pulling out with fingers. Do not twist or jerk, and pull slowly to avoid leaving the mouthparts in the wound. Do not use nail polish, petroleum jelly, alcohol, or hot matches to remove the tick.

Wash the wound with an antiseptic after the tick is removed. Kill the tick in rubbing alcohol and keep it in a small vial for a few months in case any disease symptoms develop.

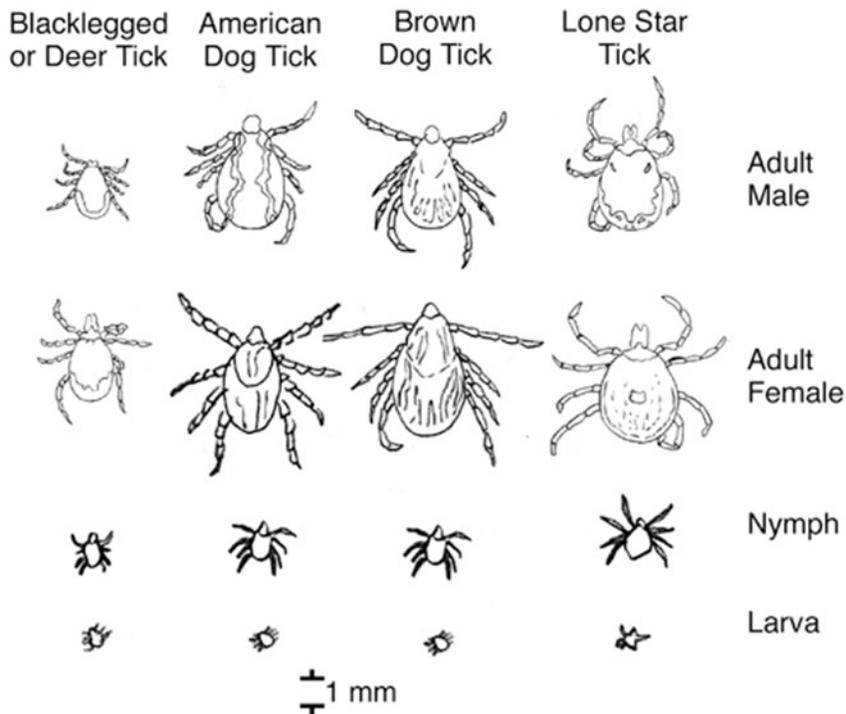
Remarks: Ticks cannot fly or jump.

For safety's sake, be sure you can identify the various kinds of ticks in the area and know what the signs and symptoms of infection from a tick bite look like. Seek medical help if you have a reaction to a bite.

Tick Awareness continued p.17



Tick Awareness continued



MGs, in association with the Williamsburg Botanical Garden are hosting a “Meet the Gardener” themed tour of the WBG at 1:00 and 3:00 on Saturday, May 16. The tour will include a brief history of the garden and provide an overview of the many growing environments within the garden. In recognition of the 10th anniversary of the WBG, the tour will also highlight several of the gardeners who manage specific sections of the garden. Attendees will have an opportunity to ask questions of the gardeners. Those planning on attending are asked to sign up at the website williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org. But if it’s a last minute decision, please just show up. The tours follow a 10:00 morning presentation at the Freedom Park Interpretative Center by MGs Iris Grant and Stacy DeMeo. They will be discussing “Tips on Water Wise and Low Maintenance Gardening.”



Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

Williamsburg Botanical Garden

10th Anniversary

Meet the Gardener Spring Tour

May 16, 2015 1:00 and 3:00

Freedom Park

5535 Centerville Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23188



Sign-up at williamsburgbotanicalgarden.org

Tours are provided as a collaboration of the VCE JCC/W Master Gardeners and the WBG gardeners.

Master Gardeners are a volunteer organization operating under the Virginia Cooperative Extension.

If you are a person with a disability and require assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity please contact the James City County Unit at (757)564-2170/TDD* during business hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to discuss accommodations. 5 days prior to the event. * TDD number is (800) 858-1120

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USDA Observes Kick Off of the International Year of Soils



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today begins its celebration of the [International Year of Soils](#) to highlight the importance of healthy soils for food security, ecosystem functions and resilient farms and ranches.

"Healthy soil is the foundation that ensures working farms and ranches become more productive, resilient to climate change and better prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century," Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said during an event today at USDA headquarters. "We join the world in celebrating this living and life-giving resource."

With an increasing global population, a shrinking agricultural land base, climate change and extreme weather events, the nations of the world are focusing their collective attention to the primary resource essential to food production—the soil. The United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), working within the framework of the [Global Soil Partnership](#), spearheaded the adoption of a resolution by the UN General Assembly designating 2015 as the International Year of Soils. The year of awareness aims to increase global understanding of the importance of soil for food security and essential ecosystem functions.

"Most people don't realize that just beneath our feet lies a diverse, complex, life-giving ecosystem that sustains our entire existence," said Jason Weller, chief of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). "We are helping producers unlock the power of soil health as part of an important and very successful national campaign. Our campaign demonstrates our renewed commitment to soil conservation and soil health."

NRCS is coordinating activities to mark USDA's involvement in the International Year of Soils. Nearly 80 years ago, NRCS, formerly the Soil Conservation Service, was created to improve the health and sustainability of our nation's soils. The agency's original mission continues to this day – providing assistance to producers looking to improve the health of the soil on their land.

Conservation that works to improve soil health is one of the best tools NRCS has to help landowners face these impending challenges – and maintain and improve their productivity with the use of soil management systems that includes cover crops, conservation tillage and no-till and crop rotations. These systems reduce sediment loss from farms and ranches, buffer the effects of drought, flood and other severe weather; sequester carbon and create biodiversity in our rural landscape.

"International Year of Soils provides an opportunity for us to learn about the critical role soil conservation and improved soil health play in the economic and environmental sustainability of agriculture," Weller said.

Working with the [Soil Science Society of America](#) (SSSA) and other partners, NRCS will be showcasing the importance of soil with monthly themes created by SSSA:

January: Soils Sustain Life

February: Soils Support Urban Life

March: Soils Support Agriculture

April: Soils Clean and Capture Water

May: Soils Support Buildings/Infrastructure

June: Soils Support Recreation

July: Soils Are Living

August: Soils Support Health

September: Soils Protect the Natural Environment

October: Soils and Products We Use

November: Soils and Climate

December: Soils, Culture and People

For more information, visit NRCS's [soil health webpage](#) or the [International Year of Soils webpage](#).



Eat Like a Chicken

One of the first weeds to emerge in spring is common chickweed (*Stellaria media*). It is an annual, but since each plant can produce 2,500 to 15,000 seeds, if you have it in your garden it is likely to become a permanent guest. It begins as a small plant; only 1/8 to 1/3 inch long. The stems are limp, and as they spread they root at the nodes so a single plant may become a matted groundcover that can take over large patches of lawn or garden. Its white flowers are tiny also – about 1/4 inch across. Technically there are 5 petals (thus “stellaria” or star) but each petal is deeply notched so they look like 10. The good news is that chickweed is eminently edible – and not only by chickens. All parts of the plant (except the roots) may be cooked or eaten raw. Recipes abound on the internet – one place to look is <http://www.wildmanstevebrill.com/>. Steve Brill, a well-known urban naturalist, says that chickweed has “more vitamins than a health-food store.” Supposedly eaten raw it tastes a bit like sweet corn. The recommended way to use it is to pull up the entire plant, cut off the roots, wash carefully, pat dry, and chop it up for a salad. A simple way to cook chickweed is to first lightly sauté a garlic clove in olive oil; add the washed but not dried chopped chickweed to the pan, cover and steam for about 5 minutes; season with a few drops of soy sauce.



Written by Alice Bagwill, VCE Master Gardener

Piedmont Master Gardeners Award \$5,000 in School Grants



The Piedmont Master Gardeners, serving Albemarle County and Charlottesville, have awarded \$5,000 in horticulture grants to local schools.

This is the second year schools have been able to apply for Grants. Twenty schools are recipients of Grants to either establish new gardens or expand upon existing programs. It is PMG's attempt to increase garden education outreach to the youth of the community. Funds for Grants are possible through the dedication and support of members who contribute many hours towards the annual Lectures Series, “Through the Garden Gate” tours and plant sale.

Joyce Grunewald

PMG Grant Coordinator



VMGA
A Voice for Virginia Master Gardeners

Deadline for / Newsletter is
Please submit any announcements or articles to be
included in the next issue to:
Jan Worthy, editor
Central Shenandoah Valley MGA
jancwva52@gmail.com

**ABOUT THE VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENERS
 AND VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**

Virginia Master Gardeners are volunteer educators who work within their communities to encourage and promote environmentally sound horticulture practices through sustainable landscape management education and training. As an educational program of Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Master Gardeners bring the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the commonwealth.

Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments. Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative Action employer.



As a reminder, dues that are paid after January 1st of 2015 are good till May 31st 2016. No need to wait till late May to renew. Sending your dues in a few months early will help the Membership Committee in being able to timely process the applications. Renewing members have the option of submitting an online Membership Application <http://vmga.net/VMGAmembershipapplication.php> and paying by either check or PayPal OR downloading an application <http://vmga.net/PDF/VMGA-application-Rev-03-2014.pdf> and mailing it to the Membership Chair. Renewing members submit a Membership Application to ensure current choices for participation and contact information. Life Members are asked to keep VMGA informed of any changes in contact information – email the [Membership Chair](#).

Questions? Contact the [Membership Chair](#)



Submit a nomination for our *Volunteer of the Month* award. **We want to recognize the best volunteers in the state** each month on the VCE public website (maybe more depending on number of nominations received). Nominations can be submitted using this survey. Copy and paste this link to access the Volunteer of the month nomination form.

https://vce.azl.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0NuDUwkelMdlPrlf

It is easy. Just requires a short write-up and a picture.

Also, make sure you recognize your Unit volunteers as well on your own Unit Website.

You can continually submit throughout the year, but the first selection will be made with the nominations received before February 1.

Like us on Facebook
 VCE Master Gardener Program

VMGA Bi-Monthly Board Meeting

When: Saturday, June 27th
Where: Blacksburg, VA

For more details see vmga.net/meetings.htm

Newsletter Submission Deadline

The deadline for submission of articles and announcements for the July/August newsletter is 6/10/15.





ABOUT THE 2017 IMGCC

The International Master Gardener Conference (IMGCC) has been held every two years since 1987. The IMGCC provides an opportunity for Master Gardeners, State and County coordinators to come together and learn through seminars and tours, celebrate successes through the [International Search for Excellence Program](#), and meet and network with Master Gardener volunteers, faculty and staff from across the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and South Korea.

In 2017, the [Oregon State University Extension Master Gardener Program](#) and the [Oregon Master Gardener Association](#) will host the 2017 International Master Gardener Conference at the [Oregon Convention Center](#) in Portland, Oregon, July 10-14, 2017.



Calendar of Events

If you wish to have your event published in future newsletters, please send to jancva52@gmail.com