



# The VMGA Report

A Voice for Virginia Master Gardeners  
vmga.net

Nov/Dec 2020

Volume 26, Number 3

## VMGA Officers

President-  
Leslie Paulson  
Prince William County

Vice President-  
Nelda Purcell  
Franklin County

Secretary-  
Betsy Brown  
Bedford County

Treasurer-  
Georgianna Hall  
Loudoun County

## In This Issue

- Message from the President
- Proposed changes to the By-laws
- Crape Myrtle Scale
- State MG Coordinator
- IMGC T-shirt design contest
- What's wrong with my oak tree?
- The Grainthumb
- Virtually a plant sale
- Plant A Row
- Book Review
- Spotted Lantern Fly
- Calendar

Editor-  
Peggy Fox, Newport News  
with assistance from  
Lynn Hamm,  
Western Tidewater

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the Virginia Master Gardener Association is to foster communication, education and fellowship among Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener volunteers.

---

## From the President

 Leslie Paulson, Prince William

It's been amazing to hear of all the activities going on for Extension Master Gardeners, even in this crazy time of covid-19.

One of the educational speakers for our October meeting, Devon Johnson, State EMG Communications Project Coordinator, explained to attendees how the Bedford County EMG Training Modules can be used to help conduct an online EMG Training Course. Several representatives of EMG units weighed in on how they are using different methods for their training classes. For a list of online modules, go to: <https://emgmodules.ext.vt.edu/> . For further details or if you have questions, contact Devon at: [devon35v@vt.edu](mailto:devon35v@vt.edu) .

The Focus Point for our December VMGA Board meeting will be: How does your unit use Mentors to help train new Master Gardeners? I look forward to hearing how you use this resource in your unit.

Those who attended our last meeting will know a vote on proposed changes to the VMGA Bylaws was attempted. This change addresses the conducting of Association and Board Meetings via electronic means. According to our bylaws, current members approve the Association's bylaws and elect its Board of Directors. We are required to have a quorum present to vote on changes to the bylaws. (A quorum is equal to ten percent of our total membership, which consists of Active and Lifetime members.) Isn't it nice to still be learning new things, even at our, for sure my, age? You all showed great support for this change which included a friendly amendment to the changes. However, when it came time to vote, many members had already left the meeting and we did not have the required quorum. At the December meeting we will vote on the bylaws within the first 15 minutes of the meeting, which will then allow all to be present for our vote.

We need volunteers to help sell our merchandise. If you are interested in helping us raise money for the State EMG Coordinator Endowment, here is a great way to jump in and do so. Jody Purches, VMGA Fund Raising Chair, has stepped down. We will

Got an upcoming event to publicize?

**Submit your unit announcements to the State MG Coordinator for inclusion in the Bi-Weekly EMG Update**  
<https://www.mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/biweekly-submission/>

**AND**

also to our **VMGA Calendar of Events** in care of:  
[Calendar@vmga.net](mailto:Calendar@vmga.net)

Submissions via email should include:

- The title of your event
- The date of your event
- A sentence describing your event
- The location of your event
- A link or attachment providing additional information

**In the news:**

Has your unit or have the members of your unit been featured in your local newspaper? Let us know! Send links to:  
[newsletter@vmga.net](mailto:newsletter@vmga.net)

announce her replacement at the December meeting. Jennifer Gallion, who has kept track of all the merchandise we sell, has stepped down as well. Think about it and let me know if you are interested. Just email me at: [President@VMGA.net](mailto:President@VMGA.net). For now, merchandise sales have been suspended until a new committee/team can be formed.

It is almost 2021 and we are looking for EMGs who would like to serve on our Board of Directors for the future. Our Treasurer is serving her second term and it would be great to find someone soon for this position. This person would have a chance to shadow Georgi Hall and learn all the steps which will lead to a smoother transition. And remember, too, we have many committees you may serve on as well.

It is hard to believe it's that time of year already, so let me wish you all a *Happy Thanksgiving*. We all have been reminded this year of how precious and precarious life can be in our world. I hope you all find ways to celebrate with family and friends, even if it is by sharing a computer screen. Take care and be safe.

Leslie



---

## VMGA BY-LAWS: PROPOSED CHANGES

to be voted on at December 12 meeting. (Proposed changes are highlighted in red.)

### ARTICLE V Board of Directors

Section 1. The Board of Directors will consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, the Chairpersons of the Standing Committees, the Immediate Past President, and the Extension Representative.

Section 2. The Board will fix the date, time and place of meetings, determine the Association's Standing Rules, and perform such other duties as are listed in these bylaws or prescribed by the membership. The Board shall be subject to the orders of the Association and none of its acts shall conflict with the action taken by the membership.

Section 3. The Board will meet at least four times a year. Any Association member may attend these meetings. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President and will also be called upon written request of at least twenty-five (25%) of the Board. **Board members who are not present in person will have the right to participate by telephone or electronically. The Board may meet electronically as in Article IX, Section 4.**

Section 4. Fifty percent (50%) of the Board will constitute a quorum at all Board meetings.

**ABOUT VIRGINIA  
MASTER GARDENERS  
AND VIRGINIA  
COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION (VCE)**

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 VCE, 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. VCE 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.

**ARTICLE IX  
Meetings of the Association**

Section 1. The Annual Meeting. The Association will hold an annual meeting each year, at a date, time and place to be determined by the Board. The membership will install officers, **approve the budget**, and/or transact such other business as may properly come before the annual meeting. Notice of annual meetings will be mailed at least thirty (30) days before the meeting.

Section 2. Special Meetings. A special meeting may be called by the President, a majority of the Board, or by a petition of not less than twenty-five percent (25%) of the voting membership. Special meetings will be held at a time and place to be determined by the Board and within forty-five (45) days of the date that they are called. Notice of any special meeting will be distributed to each member at least thirty (30) days before the meeting and will include a statement of the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is being called.

Section 3. Quorum. Ten percent (10%) of the voting membership will constitute a quorum at Association meetings.

**Section 4. Meetings Held Electronically. Meetings of the Association may be conducted through use of Internet meeting services that support voting, visible displays identifying those participating, identifying those seeking recognition to speak, showing text of pending motions and showing the results of votes. Electronic meetings may be held when so directed by the Board or, in the case of special meetings, when so directed by those calling the special meeting.**

**Electronic meetings will be subject to rules adopted by the Board that specifically govern this format. Such rules, as adopted by the Board, will supersede any conflicting rules in the parliamentary authority and may not conflict with or alter any rule or decision of the Association.**

Voting on the proposed changes will be conducted during the December 12 VMGA meeting. Voting is open to current VMGA members only. If you would like to join or renew your membership, go to: <https://vmga.net/wordpress/vmga-membership-application-renewal-form/>

---

**CRAPE MYRTLE SCALE** Reprinted from MGNV Nov 2020 newsletter

Crape myrtle bark scale is a new invasive pest in our area, and effective controls appear to be limited. Responding to one inquiry about trees infested with this new pest, Extension Agent Kirsten Conrad wrote that the crape myrtle "is a lovely, tough, non-native tree, but the recurring cost of treatment may prompt you to choose a native and perhaps less troublesome tree. To be honest, I love the tree and have often recommended it for harsh situations. But I am doing so less and less . . . the

## VMGA Website

Leslie Paulson,  
Prince William

Please submit additions,  
corrections or report  
broken links to:

Leslie Paulson at:  
[ljp6651@comcast.net](mailto:ljp6651@comcast.net)

Dave Banks  
[webmaster@vmga.net](mailto:webmaster@vmga.net)

## VMGA

Membership has its  
advantages:

- Online modules
- Unit Support
- Scholarships
- Newsletter
- Advanced Training
- Discount event fees
- Membership Directory
- Statewide Networking

treatment is a systemic insecticide that is taken up by the roots and pushed out throughout the tree. It is expressed in every part of the plant and the chemicals have been implicated in deaths of honey-bee larvae which fed on the pollen from flowers of treated trees.”

---

## From VCE State MG Coordinator's Office

Kathleen Reid

Five Leadership Training Webinars were conducted in October, covering a variety of useful topics. Two sessions, *Creating Engaging Presentations* and *People Problems: Managing Conflict Locally*, were recorded for later viewing. The notes from three sessions were compiled and loaded for reference: *Notes for Volunteer Engagement in a Virtual World*, *Racial Understanding Dialogues* and *Programming Pivots: New Program Development during the Pandemic*.

Continuing Education Update: Plant ID Weed Clinic Soils Insects Plans for recorded videos are in the works for release in January. "ID's and Diagnoses"

E-Giving Campaign Fundraising efforts for the State Coordinator Endowment will be coming in February of 2021 as part of VT Giving Day.

IMGC 2021 Going Virtual The full schedule will be released in mid-March. Visit <https://internationalmastergardener.com> for more information. Registration for IMGC will open in early April.

---

## IMGC 2021 Tee Shirt Design Contest

Congratulations!! Our winners are:

- Linda Williams Carroll/Grayson – "Dogwood"
- Pat Machowsky Greenspring – "Buttonbush"
- Ruby Gardner Gloucester – "Cardinal and Bee Balm"

---

## 2020 VMGA BI-MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

Our meetings will be held via Zoom. Watch for upcoming emails for further details.

December 12 Zoom® Hosted by Danville MGs

February 13, 2021 JCC/Williamsburg [jccwmg.org](http://jccwmg.org)

## **Resources**

Find out more here

[Extension Master Gardener website](#)

[VMGA.NET](#)

[VCE MG YouTube](#)

[VCE—Facebook](#)

[Volunteer Management System](#)

[Online Learning Opportunities](#)

[VA EMG Bi-weekly Update](#)

[Marketing and Branding Resources](#)

---

## A NEW LOOK: VMGA Website

It's true! Changes are happening on our website. Check it out now: <https://vmga.net> If you have events you'd like to see included on our Calendar, send details to Joann Richards at [calendar@vmga.net](mailto:calendar@vmga.net)

---

## WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY OAK TREE?

Jordan Herring, Virginia Department of Forestry

Reprinted with permission.

Over the past few years, oak trees have been declining in northern Virginia. Working for the Virginia Department of Forestry, I am asked all the time why someone's oak tree is dying (or dead). Many expect a direct answer as to why their tree has died, but unfortunately, most of the time it is very difficult to pinpoint the direct cause of mortality. Usually, your tree is suffering from a multitude of factors, whether that be environmental or human-caused.

### **Environmental factors affecting oak trees**

Have you ever heard the phrase "too much of a good thing"? While this rings true for humans in regard to our mental and physical well-being, it also applies to trees! Environmental factors such as drought, flooding, extreme storms, and warmer temperatures are all factors that can cause trees to decline. This especially rings true when they are happening at much higher intensities and frequencies, such as we have been seeing over the past decade due to climate change.



### **Human factors affecting oak trees**

While we may not realize it in the moment, there are many things that we do to trees that often are the cause of their demise. If you start to see a tree declining on your property, it is important to step back and think about any actions that you may have taken that could have affected its health.

Were some of the roots cut to install a new building or driveway? Construction can be a death sentence for many trees due to the cutting of the root systems and possible mechanical damage that can occur to the trunk from heavy equipment. Also, construction equipment running over the root systems can cause the soil to become compacted and can deprive the roots of oxygen. While the tree might not show evidence of decline until years after the construction occurred, the damage is done and there is not much you can do to save the tree.

Another factor to think about is if there were any herbicides sprayed somewhere





Links to places of interest around the state:

**Virginia Is For Lovers**

**Blandy Experimental Farm**

**Hahn Hort Garden**

**Norfolk Botanical Garden**

**Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden**

**Maymont**

**Williamsburg Botanical Garden**

**Meadowlark Botanical Gardens**

**Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU**

**I Love Gardens.com**

**Virginia Gardening**

**Greenspring Gardens**

**Southern Virginia Botanical Gardens, South Boston, VA**

**US National Arboretum**

**The Quarry Gardens at Schuyler**

else on the property. Sometimes chemicals can drift on a windy day and affect other vegetation that you wanted to protect.

### **What can you do to help your oak trees?**

There are a few preventative measures you can take to improve the health of your prized oak trees.

-Avoid damage to your trees from construction within the root systems.

-Water trees during a heavy drought with a hose running on a low setting for thirty minutes.

-Mulch your yard trees at least 3 inches deep and as far out from the tree as you are comfortable.

-Do not “volcano mulch” your trees. Volcano mulching is when mulch is piled up against the tree. If possible, avoid letting mulch touch the tree directly. Doing so can cause excessive moisture to the trunk and cause girdling roots, eventually killing the tree.

If you are worried about the health of your tree, contact an arborist or your local Virginia Department of Forestry representative. It is always smart to get an opinion from an expert before making any treatment decisions for your trees.

*Jordan Herring*

*Senior Area Forester*

*Virginia Department of Forestry*

*Potomac Work Area (Loudoun, Prince William, Fairfax, Arlington, Alexandria)*

*675 Frost Avenue*

*Warrenton, VA 20186*

*(540) 333-3644 (cell)*

*(540) 347-6305 (office)*

*Web: [www.dof.virginia.gov](http://www.dof.virginia.gov)*

*VDOF: Protecting and Serving since 1914*

---

## **THE GRAINETHUMB**

**George Graine, Fairfax\***

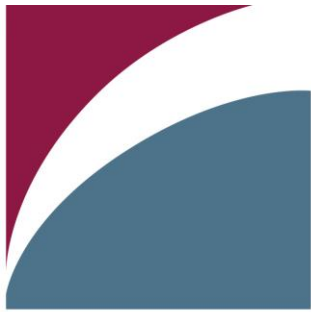


### **Garden It Forward**

“The garden, like beauty in landscape, is inimical to all evil passions: it stands for efficiency, for patience in labour, for strength in adversity, for the power to forgive.”

Sir George Sitwell in “On the Making of Gardens” (1999)

Have you ever wondered when you purchase an award-winning book, what makes it so? “Potted and Pruned: Living a Gardening Life” by Carol J. Michel (Gardenangelist Books, 2017) is such a winner. This



## Virginia Cooperative Extension

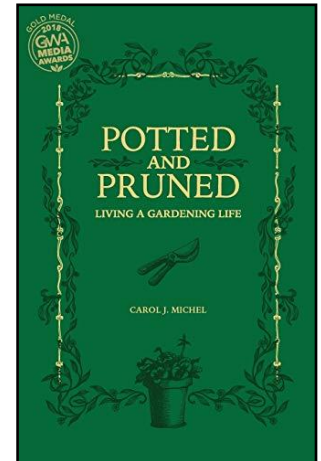
Virginia Tech  
Virginia State University

[www.ext.vt.edu](http://www.ext.vt.edu)

Virginia Cooperative Extension 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, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.

book is totally replete with humor in a not subtle way. It places emphasis on the relationship between gardeners and nature and how you can become a better steward for your landscape. For the moment, set aside the preachiness of sustainability, biodiversity and ecological principles. Of course, all these concepts are important, but let's lighten up for now. During these trying times consider a different facet of gardening. Throw in some whimsy, some wit and you will quickly realize that gardening can be fun and enjoyable. This book is not anything like an old tome such as "War and Peace," "Crime and Punishment," or "Gone with the Wind." Rather, in just 128 pages and 36 chapters (!) you will find a ton of garden wisdom seasoned with mirth.

Start your journey with the eccentricity of a gardener. This is not really a new idea, but it does provide some perspective on what is to come as you read on. Gardening is personal and deals with many whims of nature. As well, it makes for an interesting "hobby." It can even be critical to your well-being. You should also enjoy reading several chapters on weeds - ugh! Perhaps you will even see yourself as Michel describes her entreaty without using any "weedicide." Weeds seem to have no bounds and they decidedly lack manners because they tend to take over when you are off considering other activities.



Switching gears, let us clear up a point about why it is important to use botanical Latin when it comes to plant names. Gardeners who use Latin words are not show-offs or attempting to act professorial. There are many reasons to understand why this off-putting language is important. Even though we tend to refer to plants by their common names, this can become confusing when discussing a plant with someone from a different region in the country or beyond. They may call your plant by something different, ergo, botanical Latin is the universal language of plant names. Michel gets this point across in the chapter "A Gardener's Guide to Temporary Botanical Names." Here you will laff-a-lot as you read about such plants as Neverknewia, Forgetia, and lest we forget Weedisia.

Now turn to a garden malady commonly known as "Garden Attention Distraction Syndrome" or GADS. Have you been victimized by this problem? Indeed, you are a lucky gardener if you figured out how to overcome or even avoid GADS. Essentially this problem occurs when something unforeseen happens and you cry out for help as you yell to no one in particular – Good grief, where the dickens did I leave my favorite pruner? Or perhaps you were pulling weeds only to stop in your tracks to watch a butterfly checking out Asclepias (commonly known as butterfly weed). Oh well, you will get over it as this is just something that you need to learn to live with. In a chapter on "Buying Shrubs" you might see yourself. According to Michel, there are at least five types of people who purchase shrubs. These are The Researcher, The Grabber, The Rescuer, The Experimenter and The Gardener. How do you see yourself? Space does not permit an extensive definition of each. Suffice to say The Researcher has done all the homework, using the internet, books and more. The

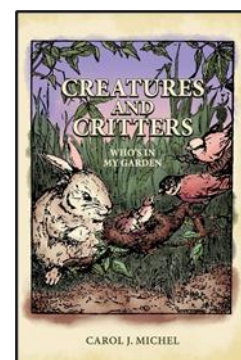
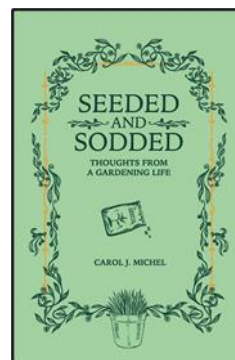
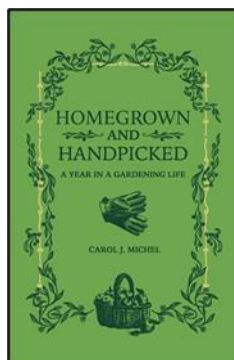
Grabber says to himself, “If it looks good – buy it.” The Rescuer looks for a bargain shrub at the pink sale. The Experimenter wants to know what’s new or different and is willing to take a chance. And then there is The Gardener. This is best described as an amalgamation of the four other types. Have you been there, done that?

Another type of gardener is an individual who seeks uniqueness, that is, a rare plant in cultivation. Many considerations (or could it be consternations) are directly involved before a purchase is consummated. After all this fuss, how will you feel if or when your rare plant loses its luster? This is not unusual these days considering the ability of the green industry to employ micro-propagation (tissue culture) of plants raised under sterile laboratory conditions or through the development of a genetic mutation that is propagated for the retail trade.

Something else for the gardener to consider is an interesting approach for the determination of how much mulch do you need to buy or where to locate a new planting bed. For those with a mathematical bent, this is the formula:  $(S+P+C) \times D + To + Ti + W + Cu = GE$ . Now isn’t that easy-peasy? Again, space does not allow for a full explanation of how this “alphabet” works but know that GE means Gardening Equation which, after all, is what you are seeking to find out. A brief explanation of the formula and the abbreviations follow: Soil(S) + Plants(P) + Climate(C) x Design(D) +Tools(To) + Time(Ti) + Weeds(W) + Chemical usage (Cu) = Gardening Enjoyment or Gardening Experience (GE). Of course, many words are included in the book explaining the formula. It is an informative read and you will learn a lot. The ultimate goal is to help you improve your gardening experience so that your time in the garden is well spent.

Now you know why “Potted and Pruned” was elevated to the most prestigious award from an organization of garden writers. You can follow the author on her blog, [www.maydreamsgardens.com](http://www.maydreamsgardens.com) .

Other titles by Carol J. Michel:



*\*Editor's Note: Congratulations to George (pictured at the top of this article) in recognition of his latest milestone achievement of 14,000 service hours as a Fairfax County Master Gardener. George has served VCE for over 30 years.*



---

## VIRTUALLY A PLANT SALE

Sandy Achterman, Chesapeake

So many things this year have combined to change life in ways we couldn't have imagined: not eating out, no movies at the theater, working from home, home schooling children and grandkids, just to mention a few. For some of us having the time to spend gardening has been a godsend. But, what to do about acquiring new plants??

Late April for us, Chesapeake Master Gardeners, has always been Plant Sale time. This year we could not have our annual, traditional sale. We waited and hoped we might be able to have a fall sale instead, but that, too, was not meant to be. Not a group to be held down for long, we decided to launch a virtual sale! And so, we got busy. Planning, weeding, cleaning, trimming and inventorying. Having just finished our sale, I can say that although not the revenue generator our traditional sale usually is, it was nonetheless a great success!

Most important was planning how to keep it safe for everyone. That meant making it possible for there to be no contact between customers and Master Gardeners. We advertised on our website and Facebook® page and spread the news via word of mouth. We set up one volunteer to receive orders by email. She would take in the orders, keep records, assign another MG volunteer to pull the order, and answer questions when they arose. The puller would pull the requested plants and deliver them to a central pick up area. The puller would then notify the customer that their order was ready for pick-up and the customer came by at their convenience to take their new plants home. Since we chose the front porch of our Extension office, customers were able to slip their payments through the front glass doors. Transaction accomplished with no face to face contact!

While we do count our sale a success, there were a few drawbacks and a definite learning curve. Most of what we learned had to do with the unexpected enthusiastic response we received, especially in the first week or two.

Keeping very good records is very helpful, especially when questions arise. I learned to print each and every order and include information such as date received, date completed, which volunteer handled pulling the order, and of course, all contact information. I tried just moving the orders to a dedicated file in my email, but soon (very soon!) discovered how hard it was to find the one order I was looking for among the many we had received.

Having a large enough pick-up area is important. During the first two weeks our sale area got quite crowded. We were forced to set up a secondary pick-up area when

we struggled to keep orders separated in our primary area. It was important to have a way of grouping each customer's order and marking it with their name.

As said, we did not anticipate the number of orders we received. Arranging more volunteers than you think you will need to pull orders will help prevent burn out. Even with the best laid plans, there will be unexpected events and illness keeping some who volunteer from being able to be there. Bless those ladies and gentlemen who filled our orders during the first two weeks. They definitely went above and beyond!

I believe all our volunteers have a new respect and appreciation for having an up to date and accurate inventory. Our nursery is fairly large and being able to quickly find plants to fill a customer's order made the need for a good inventory essential. Since I will never be convinced that an inventory can be kept completely accurate much past the date it was completed, I'd do a new inventory just prior to the start of a sale.

Those volunteers who did the pulling and transport of orders to the pick-up spot certainly worked many hard hours, but so did their cars. Mileage, gas and dirt! Oh, the dirt! I quickly stopped worrying about the mess and decided I'd have my car cleaned when all was said and done.

It is true that fall is a great time to plant, but it is also a time when some plants are beginning to go to sleep for the winter. Customers still want to see the plants they are buying, but in this case, they had to trust us to choose the healthiest ones. In some cases, it was difficult to convince our customers that most assuredly their new plants would look fabulous come spring. I would suggest preparing customers ahead of time when certain plants have gone dormant or are headed in that direction.

As I have said, our sale was a definite success. We have no fear of being able to continue our programs such as 'Ready, Set, Grow' and 'What is a Tree?' next year. And I would like to say to all our Master Gardener friends across Virginia, it is possible to have a plant sale and still keep our distance in these trying times!

---

## PLANT A ROW FOR THE HUNGRY

Kandy Keith, Chesapeake

Plant a Row (PAR) for the Hungry is part of a national movement begun in 1995 by Jeff Lowenfels in Anchorage, Alaska. As a writer, he asked his audience to Plant a Row of vegetables for a local soup kitchen. The program became so successful, he then introduced it as a national program to Garden Writers Association (now

GardenComm). Garden writers began to ask their readers/listeners/clients to plant an extra row of produce each year and donate their surplus to local food banks, soup kitchens and service organizations to help feed the hungry.

In 1998, the Extension Master Gardeners in Chesapeake, VA began their participation in PAR under the leadership of EMG Sheela Macumber. The goal: 10,000 pounds per year. Donations of fresh vegetables and nonperishable items were collected in the Agricultural Trailer, June through September. We know that our goal was met several times while collecting at the trailer. The fresh vegetables and canned goods were picked up by a volunteer from the House of Blessings, a local food closet in Chesapeake. They are still our distribution source.

In 2006, Mary Hammel, EMG Chesapeake and PAR volunteer, took over the committee overseeing PAR and continues in that role today.

Over the years we achieved our goal several times, but as we all know there are good years and bad years when growing vegetables. Even in the bad years we successfully collected 8,000 to 9,000 pounds of food to feed the hungry. Eventually, the Agricultural Trailer became too small. We formed a partnership with the Chesapeake Central Library which graciously allowed us to set up in the lobby area where visitors enter and exit. Library manager, Zach Elder, has been supportive of this program. At the trailer and at the library, we provided seeds, instructions for growing vegetables and herbs, recipes for those vegetables, information about the program and gardening/flower stickers for the children who came with their parents. We even had a “live” sunflower getting people’s attention, inside and out, and giving out the stickers.

This year has been exceptionally challenging because of the coronavirus. With all the guidelines and restrictions from VCE/VT and the government we thought that PAR would not take place in 2020. The library was not open, the trailer was too small for volunteers to “social distance,” all had to wear a mask, and we couldn’t hand out receipts to our donors. Instead, donors were asked to stay in their cars, or at least six feet away from the volunteers if they walked up, and email addresses and cell phone numbers were collected to send donation receipts electronically. Most learned to just pull up to the curb and our volunteers would come and collect their donation.

After talking to the library manager, Zach Elder, he suggested that we set up tents outside and to the right of the library entrance. While not ideal, especially if the weather turned rainy or the temperature reached almost 100 degrees, it was a viable option. We began the first Tuesday in June with a tent and tables set up under the trees. It was a very slow start since we had moved our drop off location and a lot of people were quarantining themselves, but then things began to pick up.

During this time, we decided to use social media to advertise our donations and what PAR is all about. New people became familiar with our program and our regular donors were notified of our new location. Weekly and monthly, photos and details of donations and how many families were fed were shared. We even had a group from Williamsburg donate over 200 pounds of fresh produce over the course of two visits. Over time, we ended up not needing the tent very often since the trees provided shade. Only one collection day was cancelled, due to the remnants of a hurricane passing through.

With only a few weeks left in our scheduled collection and despite all the changes, challenges and a cancellation, we were very close to our 10,000-pound goal. With the addition of a “rain/hurricane date”, we collected 10,489 pounds of fresh produce and nonperishable items, collecting 1,025 pounds on that final day. Our group will still accept donations through mid-December through our office and with Mary’s contacts. We are so fortunate to have helped feed 1,612 families with 4,559 adults and children. (Information provided by House of Blessings).

We look forward to an even better event next year if our country gets ahead of the coronavirus and life gets back to normal.

---

## BOOK REVIEW

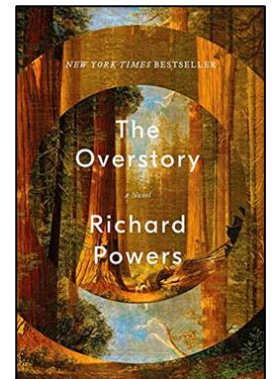
Tom Baughn, Fauquier

The Overstory by Richard Powers

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, Best Seller, and awarded top recognitions, in 2018, by dozens of literary groups.

The fictional story that Powers tells is unquestionably about the verdant overstory, trees. However, there is another overstory, of sorts, that makes this book about much more than trees. Homo sapiens presume to be the apex overstory above all other living things, including trees. Powers addresses that philosophy, as he injects new discoveries of plant to animal communication, rudimentary memory, even intelligence. Powers continues, turning conventional thinking on its head, although humans think they have to save the trees, he subtly posits how the forest may well save humankind, despite its arrogance and false sense of superiority.

Clearly there are two dominant threads in his book. There is the familiar clarion alarm against the destruction of forests in an unsustainable rush to create more land for producing food and lumber for homes. Powers echoes climate change science, reminding us that forests are the most efficient mechanism to reduce the



run-away buildup of planet warming carbon dioxide. His characters educate us about how trees not only store carbon, as part of photosynthesis, and how that carbon is sequestered even in death. The complex decomposition of a tree does not release the carbon back into the atmosphere to compound the problem of excess carbon dioxide. He also explodes the myth that replanting the forests is the answer. Powers' ecological message is informative and important, but the other dominant thread is perhaps the more important for him.

The second, and perhaps more important thread, analyzes homo sapiens. Refreshingly, he does not take the easy route railing against capitalism. His characters certainly express such sentiments, condemning a myopic disregard for the long-term health of all life on earth, including humans. Yet, in the honest clumsiness of his characters, he also portrays the ineffective rationalizations of the supposedly enlightened back-to-nature advocates.

In the beginning of his work, Powers raises the question of whether plants should have rights. His character argues that until they are granted such, they will be property to be used anyway humans see fit, like slaves. He returns to this conundrum at the very end of the book when his original progenitor of this idea, now nearly totally paralyzed by a stroke, manages to slur the words of an epiphany. Though incapacitated by his condition, his excitement is palpable. He has seized upon a strategy for defending the enlightened advocates on trial for domestic terrorism. In the advocate's desperation, they resorted to destroying the equipment that was denuding the forests. After seeing the flaws in the normal defenses for the domestic terrorism, he redefines the principle of imminent danger to justify the use of force. It is justified to use force to stop a murderer attacking a person. Now, the law must recognize that maxim for a forest, but imminence must be defined in terms of a forest that lives several generations, not simply a single generation of humans.

Powers believes that human beings are presently rushing headlong into their own suffering even suicide. Yet, the forest overstory and plants in general, perhaps in another form, will very likely survive such disaster, as they have for millions of years, far longer than humans have been on earth. Powers has used his story to lay out an alternative for his readers and in the process, may have planted the seed in enough humans that the story comes true in real life, in our world, on this earth. What we are learning about plants and trees may well save humans, by revealing not only the importance of all life, but also the noble intelligence of all life that has a right to exist.



---

## Reminder: MG COLLEGE 2020

Recorded sessions from our Virtual MG College are available for viewing by paid registrants only, through December 2020. You will need your USER ID and PASSWORD which was created with your VT Guest Account. **Please note that session recordings are for personal use only. Please do not share video recordings with your friends or with EMGs who did not register for college.**

To access CANVAS, go to: <https://login.vt.edu/profile/cas/login?execution=e1s1>

---

## SPOTTED LANTERNFLY NOW PRESENT IN OREGON AND OHIO



*Spotted lanternfly, adult - Photo by Lawrence Barringer, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture*

**SCIENTIFIC NAME:**

*Lycorma delicatula* (White) ([Barringer et al. 2015](#))

**COMMON NAME:**

Spotted lanternfly (SLF)

**NATIVE TO:**

China ([Dara et al. 2015](#))

**DATE OF U.S. INTRODUCTION:**

First detected in 2014, but appeared to have been present in the U.S. for 2-3 years ([Dara et al. 2015](#); [Barringer et al. 2015](#))

**MEANS OF INTRODUCTION:**

Possible pathways include imported woody plants, wood products, and other commodities ([EPPO 2016](#))

**IMPACT:**

Poses a serious economic threat to multiple U.S. industries, including viticulture, fruit trees, ornamentals and timber ([Urban et al.](#))

<https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/terrestrial/invertebrates/spotted-lanternfly>

As recently as October 19, 2020, confirmed sightings of SLF have been reported. The latest states to record data are Oregon and Ohio which brings the total number of states invaded by the pest to 12 (Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, Oregon and Ohio).

Stay alert and report sightings to VDACS or VCE.

Informative video can be found here: <https://youtu.be/azsU1rgKg7s>

**Submitting a sample:**

*Specimen should be dead and placed in isopropyl or rubbing alcohol.*

**Please provide the following information, so we can track the spread:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ County or City \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date Collected \_\_\_\_\_ Plant/Host Habitat \_\_\_\_\_

Comments or special instructions \_\_\_\_\_

Submit the sample to your nearest local Cooperative Extension Office: <https://ext.vt.edu/offices.html>

Or submit a picture electronically: <https://ask.extension.org/groups/1981/ask>

For information on Spotted Lanternfly, see: [ext.vt.edu/spotted-lanternfly](http://ext.vt.edu/spotted-lanternfly)

*Prepared by: Eric Day, Theresa Dellinger, Doug Pfeiffer, Mark Sutphin and Chris Bergh. Virginia Tech Entomology*



**Virginia Cooperative Extension**  
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

[www.ext.vt.edu](http://www.ext.vt.edu)

---

## STATE COORDINATOR ENDOWMENT

For current details, go to: <https://mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/current-resources/state-coordinator-endowment/>

---

### Calendar 2020

December 12 VMGA Bi-monthly Board Meeting 10:00am

### Calendar 2021

January 23 MG Central Rappahannock Seed Swap

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rYa9-th4hwPrVOrQ\\_GhWNOXwA84Z4W09/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rYa9-th4hwPrVOrQ_GhWNOXwA84Z4W09/view)

AN INTRODUCTION TO SEED SAVING FOR THE HOME GARDENER

<https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/2750e/>

April 17-24 The Path Forward: Historic Garden Week 2021

<https://www.vagardenweek.org/>

April 22-25 Colonial Williamsburg Garden Symposium

<https://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/learn/on-site-opportunities/>

Sept 13-17 International Master Gardener Conference--Virtual  
"Cultivate Our Legacy"

<https://www.internationalmastergardener.com/>