



Master Gardener



VOL. 13 No. 7, JULY, 2008

NEWS FOR DELAWARE COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS



July Calendar

July 12—2nd Saturday

10:00 AM—Smedley Park—
Caring for Landscape Trees
by Alan Jensen Sellers

Tuesday, July 15th, 6:00 pm

See Page 2 for more info

No MG Board Meeting in August

August 9—

10:00 AM—2nd Saturday @Smedley
Hypertufa Workshop with Eleanor Tickner
&

9:00am to 4:00pm

4-H Fair - Newtown Square

Tuesday, August 12—Rain Barrel Workshop

We are having a **special August meeting** on August 12th at 7:00 pm at the Pennsylvania Resources Council in Newtown Square. The topic is a "Rain Barrel Workshop" and the cost is \$10 per person, unless you are a member of PRC, then it will be \$5. We will learn how to install and equip our gardens with a rain barrel, and solve common storm water runoff issues.

The program is for one hour and if you are interested please email me at and I can send you more info, if needed. They would like an estimate of how many will attend, so if you this sounds like an informative and fun evening, let me know and I will see you there.

Joe Daniels

See page 2 for directions

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FROM THE COORDINATOR:



Linda Barry

The Teaching Gardens are looking great thanks to all of you who have been planting and maintaining them.

We received a check for \$100 from Haagen-Dazs as part of their *Help the Honey Bees* initiative to create a 'pollinator friendly' garden. Since we already had a Bird and Butterfly garden we didn't need to add many plants. Ginger Pryor, our state coordinator, has prepared a brochure titled "Pollinator Friendly Gardening" that can be distributed to the public. They are available in the office. Please let me know in advance if you need a large quantity.

Many thanks to Bridgette Anderson and Tracey Carson for organizing and photographing the Master Gardeners. Many e-mails and phone calls were exchanged to get our photos.

Also thank you to Elsie Mueller for writing the article about the Hortline (pgs 7 & 8) for our monthly mailing from the Extension office. Master Gardener activities will be featured in June and August mailings in 2008. The newsletter is distributed to the Cooperative Extension Board, County Council members, Southeast Regional Director and County Extension Directors in our region.

Enjoy your summer. I hope to see you at the July meeting at Neumann.

Fall Fest Plant Sale

We need many contributions to make the Fall Fest Plant Sale a success! Please start potting up your donations now! Shrubs, trees, perennials, houseplants, herbs and succulents are all welcome. This fall we are stressing 'pollinators' in particular – so please divide or propagate from your garden popular pollinator friendly plants such as Echinacea, Solidago, Verbena bonariensis, etc. to help make the Plant Sale a success in September. Also, please have all of your plants 'named', if not with the Latin or botanical name, then with its common name. If you have questions, please call Marion Nelson.

JULY 15, 2008 – MG Meeting

**Our Lady of Angels Convent,
609 Convent Rd, Aston, PA 19014**

Our July 15 meeting features a 6:00 pm summer tour of the Convent Garden at Our Lady of Angels, hosted by Sister Corinne Wright. Some of you may have seen the Garden in March with HGS - we've had many requests for an opportunity to visit again, and they have graciously invited us back. The Convent Garden is 150+ years old. Reflecting its farming history, it has a natural look with walking paths, a labyrinth, shrines, an innovative solar fountain, many native plants, a community farm, & more.

Parking is available in the Our Lady of Angels Convent/Franciscan Spiritual Center parking lot, directly across Convent Road from the Convent building. A short walk across to the Convent Main Entrance.

Convent Garden Tour begins at 6:00pm; our regular meeting begins at 7:00 with a presentation by Sister Corinne on the Environmental Initiatives of The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia. We believe our educational missions are well aligned, and look forward to further collaboration.

Note: due to construction underway at Neumann College, Convent Road is not accessible through the campus.

Rain Barrel Workshop, Pennsylvania Resources Council

We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming fun-filled educational experience! Here are a few tips on how to make the most of your upcoming class.

Arriving at PRC

Location: 3606 Providence Road, Newtown Sq

Parking is available!

Where to meet: Proceed directly to PRC's Environmental Living Center. It is the building to the left of the parking lot. Walk up the steps and around to the front of the building to enter the main entrance (the large black door).

Inclement weather: Workshops will run as long as PRC is open. In case of inclement weather, call the PRC's Environmental Education line at (610) 353- 1555, ext. 232. If the program is cancelled the outgoing message will let you know (otherwise the program will run as scheduled).

We look forward to seeing you in our August 12th workshop! If you have any questions please call (610) 353- 1555, ext. 232.

FROM MG PRESIDENT

... *Kathy Hornberger*

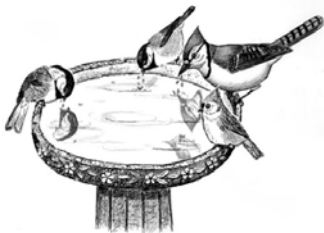
For those of you who missed the opportunity to have your backyard certified as suitable habitat for wildlife by the National Wildlife Federation last year, you have a chance to redeem yourself! And for those of you who took advantage of last year's program, here's another one for which you probably already qualify!

A recent email from the Pennsylvania state program of the National Audubon Society announced its **Audubon At Home Bird Habitat Recognition Program**, which encourages residential owners, as well as schools, businesses, and public venues, to manage their properties to sustain birds and other wildlife.

Overdevelopment has converted major natural areas into artificial landscapes of buildings, concrete, macadam, and grass, resulting in reduced habitat for birds and other wild creatures. Loss of native vegetation has allowed for the rapid invasion of exotic species. These two factors, habitat loss and invasive exotic plants, are the two major reasons for reduction of native fauna and flora. In addition, impervious surfaces result in runoff, pollution, and reduced water quality.

According to Steven Saffier, Audubon PA's coordinator for the Audubon At Home program, "backyards, gardens and other outdoor spaces can provide essential habitat for many birds. Converting even a portion of a traditional grass lawn to native plants will attract more birds, and transform your yard into a vital part of Pennsylvania's rich ecosystems." Using less pesticides or eliminating their use completely, providing a water source and being more conservative of water use in general, and removing invasive non-native vegetation are some other requirements to have your property certified.

My life is enriched every day because I made the landscape surrounding my home a habitat for birds and other fauna. A pair of Bobwhite Quail even showed up last summer! I encourage each of you to do all you can for the birds and other wildlife will follow. For more information on this program, visit <http://pa.audubon.org/habitat/>.



Another Reason to Curb Air Pollution

One more possible explanation for the decline in bees and other pollinators has been discovered by the University of Virginia. Their Department of Environmental Sciences study showed that air pollution from power plants and vehicles is destroying flower fragrance, which interferes with the ability of pollinating insects to find flowers. Bees need nectar for food. Think about it.

Read more about the University's study at <http://www.virginia.edu/uvatoday/newsRelease.php?id=4814>

THERE'S A NEW COMMITTEE IN TOWN!

The MG Board has approved a proposal for an Environmental Stewardship Committee. Committee members include Kathy Hornberger, Bev Kostek, Helene Maculaitis, Lois Sellers, Jeanne Skinner and Marion Yaglinski (chair). The committee will be a resource to all MGs and will be working to increase the visibility and scope of our ES efforts in the community we serve.

I believe that educating our community about environmental stewardship is the most important mission we have as Master Gardeners. Environmental stewardship and sustainable living is no longer an option. The health of the planet and all of its life forms depend on making changes in the way we live and garden.

Our first act was to add new materials to the library—2 books (Green Gardener's Guide and Easy Green Living), and 2 DVDs (An Inconvenient Truth and The 11th Hour). Please take the opportunity to check out this material. If they're not in the office, check your local library.

Stay tuned--you'll be hearing a lot more from us in the future.

Marion Yaglinski

TIPS FOR GROWING ROSES THE ORGANIC WAY

by Joe Daniels

If you like to garden organically, trying to grow healthy roses is a nightmare. If you notice black spot, powdery mildew or Japanese Beetles, you can't reach for the chemicals.....so what is the answer??? Here are a few tips that may help you this summer:

1. Don't spray at the first sign of aphids. Instead, allow time for the birds, ladybugs, and other predatory insects to discover them. They will lay eggs close by, or parasitize them. Rub out aphids with your fingers.
2. Use roses in mixed planting rather than in dedicated rose borders, as this lessens the chance of diseases like black spot.
3. Under plant your roses with non-invasive herbaceous perennials such as Campanula lactiflora 'Prichard's Variety', Viola cornuta and hardy geraniums. This understory will help to prevent fungal spores from splashing up from the soil.
4. Use some late-flowering nectar plants to sustain hoverflies and lacewings. Both have predatory larvae which feed on aphids.
5. Gaura lindheimeri, annual cosmos and penstemons can sustain insects and bees until late autumn.
6. Feed roses well, once in March and again after the first flush of flower. Use garden compost, or well-rotted manure or a slow-release, or sprinkle-on rose fertilizer.
7. Prune roses and make cuts that slope away from the buds, using sharp pruners. Remove the dead, dying and diseased wood by late spring, keeping the shape open to allow a flow of air
8. Mulch with well-rotted organic material during winter to create a barrier between soil and rose.

9. Be bold and replace disease-prone roses with better varieties. Ideally replace the soil or re-plant in a different position.
10. Plant one rose that produces hips to sustain the birds.

TOP 10 DISEASE-RESISTANT ROSES

1. Silver Ghost- A repeat-flowering shrub rose with single white flowers and dark healthy foliage (2 ft.)
2. Temptress- A repeat-flowering dark red climbing rose with glossy dark green foliage, for pillars, walls and arches(up to 6ft.)
3. Golden Gate- A mid-yellow, repeat-flowering climber with semi-double flowers for pillars, walls and arches (up to 6ft.)
4. Cinderella- A light pink, repeat-flowering climber bearing clusters of quartered flowers. Very fragrant (over 6ft.)
5. Lancashire- A low-growing repeat-flowering ground cover rose, with unscented red flowers and dark green leaves (2 ft.)
6. Buxom Beauty- Highly scented, mauve-pink hybrid tea rose with healthy foliage and large spiraled buds which give huge flowers (4ft.)
7. Champagne Moments- A superb floribunda with clusters of pale apricot flowers fading to cream (3ft.)
8. Red Finesse- a dark red floribunda with rich green leaves (3ft.)
9. Summer Beauty- Short apricot floribunda with clusters of full flowers and olive-green foliage (2ft.)
10. Caribbean Dawn- A semi-double patio rose with lots of pink flowers shaded in yellow and orange and small green leaves (2 ft.)

Upcoming Speakers Bureau talks and workshops:

July 12	Smedley	2 nd Saturday	Care of Trees	10 am-Noon
July 16	Friendship Circle	Darby	Keeping a Garden Alive	1:00 pm
July 19	Tyler Arboretum	Media	Composting	11:30 am
July 19	The Grange	Havertown	Invasive Plants	10:00 am
July 24	Radnor Library	Radnor	Composting w/kids	4:30 – 5:30pm
July 28	Haverford As-sisted Living		Butterfly Gardening	2:00 – 3:00pm
August 9	Smedley	2 nd Saturday	Hypertufa Containers	10 am-Noon
August 9	4H Fair	Newtown Square	Bug Making	11:00am – 3:00pm
Sept 13	Smedley	2 nd Saturday	Fall/Winter Garden Prep	10 am-Noon
Sept 20	Ridley Twp.Library	Ridley Twp.	Scarecrow Making	10 am-Noon



LOOKING AHEAD
NEW FRONTIERS™ IN HORTICULTURE AND
GARDENING — MARCH 22-26, 2009 LAS VEGAS

The Las Vegas International Master Gardener Conference will address issues that gardeners everywhere face — water conservation, proper plant selection, soil enrichment, pest control — while also presenting new concepts in environmental stewardship and “green” technologies. Since what is old has become new again, we will also explore historical and traditional plants and methods.

Workshop Topics:

Green Technologies, Water Conservation, Heirloom Plants, LEED, Healthy Gardening, Native Seeds, Farm to Restaurant, Ancestors’ Gardens, Trees for Tomorrow, Artful Gardening, Water Harvesting, Soil Microbes, Interactive Learning.

Tours:

[Hoover Dam, Grand Canyon, LV Springs Preserve](#), Ethyl M Cactus Garden and Living Machine, Red Rock Canyon, Spring Mountain Ranch, Desert Rose Garden, China Ranch Date Farm, Gardens at the Bellagio and Wynn resorts.

Our host hotel, the Alexis Park Resort Hotel, is the premiere all-suite non-gaming resort in Las Vegas. Best of all, we'll have the entire campus to ourselves!

Beautifully landscaped grounds, three sparkling pools and finely appointed guest suites ensure a relaxing retreat. It's just minutes from the exciting Las Vegas Strip, where you can enjoy world-class cuisine, fantastic shopping, renowned golf courses and spectacular entertainment. Check out www.alexispark.com.

On-line conference registration and hotel reservations will begin in Summer 2008. Special conference rates will be available.

No MG News in August

The deadline for articles to be published in the September MG Newsletter is **Wednesday, Sept. 3rd**, Please be timely & send your article to: [Barbara Smith](mailto:Barbara.Smith).

MG OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

President: Kathy Hornberger -
Vice President: Lorraine Altrichter
Secretary: Gail Sklar
Treasurer: Liana Bauerle
Coordinator: Linda Barry— 610-690-7669

lrb16@psu.edu

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Elsie Mueller
Fall Fest Alyce Zellers
Diana Breen
Field Trips: Gerry Eunson—
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Hortline: Ron Gatto
Veronica Connor
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Speakers Bureau: Joe Daniels
Special Events Gerri Eunson
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Stephen Hinds
Butterfly: Kathy Hornberger
Terrace: Carl Pfeiffer
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Merry Place : Janae Alberts, Marianne Martin
Mischa House: Nancy Simons

Tyler Partnership: Jeanne Skinner
School Gardens

Main Street School: Delilah Foldes
Sabold Sculpture Garden: Holly Thorpe

Grant Writing Gail Sklar

EARTH NOTES

by Marion Yaglinski



Xeriscaping—the ultimate in conservation and sustainability

Want to save time, money and water? Who doesn't! Saving time and money is always a good thing, but it's especially important to be water conscious these days, since climate change is making our weather patterns so weird and water shortages are popping up all over the country.

Xeriscaping is a good way to conserve water. It will also save time and money.

Xeriscaping is a combination of seven gardening principles that reduce water consumption and protect the environment while creating a lush, colorful and creative landscape.

I know what you're thinking, but xeriscaping is *not* dull and boring. And it doesn't mean *no* water, but rather water applied in controlled amounts and locations. Although it was originally developed for drought-afflicted areas, xeriscape principles can benefit any landscape, not just those in desert-like climates. Xeriscaping will allow you to have a lower water bill *and* a beautiful garden filled with lush flowers.

Consider these seven xeriscape principles:

Planning and Design: Walk around your property to get a feel for the land. Notice the natural micro-climates. Look for wet, dry, warm, cool, shady and sunny areas. Plan to maximize the use of natural precipitation. Group plants with similar water needs together. If you love water hogs like cardinal flower and obedient plant, put them in that wet area of your yard. Place shrubs and trees so that they provide natural heating and cooling for your home.

Soil improvement: Improve your soil with shredded leaves, peat moss and/or compost to feed the soil, improve soil texture and help retain water.

Appropriate plant selection: Add some drought resistant plants to your landscape. Try some native plants—they're easy to grow. Make sure you put the right plant in the right place by choosing plants that will thrive in your hardiness zone and by putting sun-lovers in a sunny area and shade-lovers in a shady area.

Practical turf areas: Reduce the size of your lawn as much as possible. Plan a few small turf areas for open space and outdoor activities. Use water-saving grass species adapted to your area when you plant new turf or reseed your lawn.

Efficient irrigation: Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation systems. They deliver water right to the roots at a slow rate, which encourages absorption and reduces pooling and erosion.

Use mulch: Put down two to three inches of mulch to keep the soil cool and moist, prevent soil erosion and block out weeds. The best mulch to use is shredded leaves or compost, because they slowly become part of the soil and feed your plants, eliminating the need for chemical fertilizers.

Appropriate maintenance: Mow, weed, prune and fertilize properly. Cut grass only to three inches—no lower. Weeds compete with your plants for water, so remove them ASAP (*if* any weeds manage to come up through the mulch, that is). Never fertilize during a dry spell—it will just further stress your plants. Or use compost and shredded leaf mulch instead of fertilizer to feed the soil.

Still not convinced? Check out the benefits you will enjoy by using xeriscape principles...

Watering requirements will be lower, and can be met with simple irrigation systems. Xeriscaping can reduce landscape water use by 50 - 75%. (Did you know that over 50% of residential water use is for landscape and lawns? And that adds up to a nice reduction in your monthly water bill.)

Other than occasional pruning and weeding, maintenance will be minimal.

Healthy organic soil provides sufficient nutrients for native plants, so there's no need for chemical supplements. This means you save money *and* the environment.

Xeriscaping can raise property values which more than offset the cost of installation. It also protects your landscaping investment by drought-proofing it.

Fuel consumption from gas mowers is minimized or eliminated with minimal turf areas. Small turf areas can be easily maintained with a reel mower.

Using native plants, shrubs and trees creates a friendly habitat for local wildlife, which means you get to enjoy birds, bees and butterflies and they get to enjoy you.

Want to get started? Peruse these websites:
Create a Drought Resistant Landscape: <http://aginfo.psu.edu/news/march02/drought.html>
Drought-resistant Plants: http://www.eartheasy.com/grow_xeriscape.htm#c
Native Plants: <http://www.redbud-cnps.org/designIdeas.htm>

For detailed information about xeriscaping, go to Xeriscape Colorado: <http://www.xeriscape.org/planningarticle.html>