



# Garden Tales

Atlantic County Master Gardener  
Association Newsletter



## Coordinators Comments:

By *Mona Bawgus*

Hello Master Gardeners:

The gardening season is just starting and already there have been many challenges. Each incidence, involved some unwelcome visitor to my garden. This morning I was greeted with torn branches and a devastated Japanese maple. Someone during the night decided to completely defoliate my tree and then left the branches on my back steps.

I don't think I am alone in my complaints. Many gardeners have told me stories of their pets enjoying a romp in their vegetable beds and squirrels digging up every bulb that they painstakingly planted in containers last fall. And we won't even talk about voles and deer. So why is it that we continue to plant and weed and spend hours upon hours in the garden?

For me the answer lies in the beauty of the first daffodils and tulips popping open in early spring, the magnolias unfurling the most delicate flower and engulfing every bit of space on bare branches, and the miracle of waiting for the first planted seeds to germinate and pop through the soil.

The challenges can be overwhelming but the rewards are definitely worth it. So gardeners, keep smiling even when nature seems to be testing your every step.

~Mona

## Important Dates

April 13	ACUA Planting (Sign-ups completed)
April 13	MGA Meeting 12:30 P.M.
April 18	Pleasantville School 9 AM
April 18	Buena Library – MG Marie Frost Speaking
April 19	Earth Day at FAA Tech Center
April 20	Demo Garden 9 AM
April 22	ACUA Earth Day 9 AM – 4 PM (Sign-ups completed)
April 25	Tavistock 7 PM – MG Jesse Connor Speaking
April 26	Pleasantville School 9 AM
April 27	Helpline Roundtable 10 AM
May 3	Galloway Library 6:30 – Houseplants
May 4	Demo Garden 9 AM
May 8	Galloway Library – Native Plants
May 10	Pleasantville School 9 AM
May 11	MGA Meeting 12:30
May 18	Set-Up for Plant Sale
May 19	MG Plant Sale 10-4
May 22	Demo Garden 9 AM
May 24	Pleasantville School 9 AM
May 25	Helpline Roundtable 10 AM
May 28	Office Closed
June 1	MG Graduation at AC Aquarium
June 5	Demo Garden 9 AM
June 16	MG Day at AC Aquarium

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**RUTGERS**

New Jersey Agricultural  
Experiment Station

## Topics to look forward to when working the Help-Line:

- Fruit Trees
  - Pest Control
  - Spray Schedules
- Lawns
  - Yellow Patch
  - Brown Ring Patch
  - Weed Control
- Boxwood Blight (read up on it in P&P Advisory, page 3)
- Hemlock Woolly Adelgid
- Ticks and Their Control/ID
- General Pruning Questions
- Soil Tests
  - Kits \$20 (current turn around time of about a week)
  - pH only - \$2 - done here at office. Customer must bring at least a cup of soil to complete test.

## “Green Thumb” Articles

Use the following Green Thumb articles as resources for clients while volunteering for the help-line. The articles are located in the “Green Thumbs” binder on the bookshelf in the help-line office:

Bromeliads  
Onion Sets  
Sapsucker  
English Ivy  
Mugwort  
Screech Owls  
Shady Gardening  
Warm Spell 2012  
Houseplant Light

## New or Updated Factsheets:

FS1124 – Vegetables Disease Recommendations for Home Gardens

FS1137 – Improving Soil Quality by Increasing Organic Matter Content

Fs1179 – Eating Seasonally

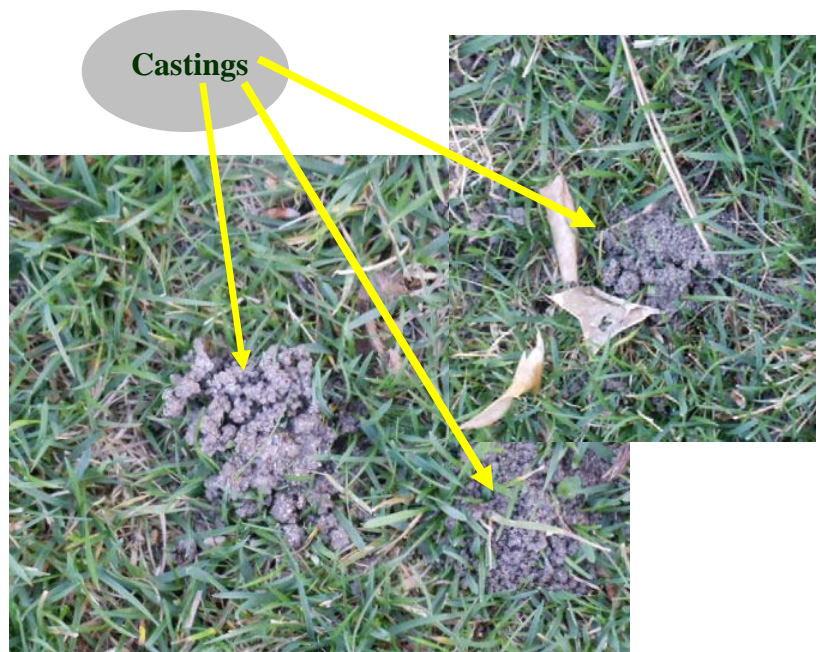
Publications available at:

<http://www.njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/>

## Mystery Solved – Doug Groff [11]

Over the past several weeks I have noticed small piles of dirt throughout my lawn. (See below pictures) I assumed some type of insect was the culprit so I went into my master gardener investigative mode and started researching what insect or insects leave little piles of dirt in grass. I discovered that what could be an underground insect invasion threatening my lawn was actually a beneficial phenomenon. These small dirt piles scattered throughout the lawn are castings from night crawlers and other earthworms. Most visible in spring and fall, their tunneling is really beneficial to soil and indicates the lawn is healthy. The tunneling also helps aerate the lawn.

You can manage the effects of earthworms without using toxic pesticides. Since these little mounds can make your lawn "bumpy" and uneven to walk on there are some methods to minimize the impact of earthworms. First, apply a thin layer of compost to your lawn and rake it in smoothing out the castings. You may have to repeat this process every week or so until the lawn levels out. You may wish to apply a pre-emergent weed preventer after you rake the lawn as weed seeds can find their way into the openings left by the tunneling. It may also help to cut back on irrigation especially if the lawn gets soggy as earthworms prefer moist soil. They dislike acidic soils or those with a pH lower than 6. In some areas applying ammonium sulfate, ammonium chloride or other acidifying fertilizers can help cut back earthworm activity. Enjoy the spring planting season.





# Demo Garden/Volunteer Dates



We had a great group of master gardeners (new class and past class participants) out at the demo garden on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Although it was brisk out, the master gardeners quickly warmed up by cleaning out all of the beds, trimming herbs, pruning perennials, taking out a tree, planting peas, and covering the weeded raised beds that are currently not in use with cardboard to keep the weeds down until planting.

The raised beds have also been numbered with the goal of having a list of plants available by the garden for the general public to take with them after visiting the demo garden.

## **VOLUNTEER HERE!!!!**

(All are weather permitting)

Forsythe Refuge – Every Thursday 10 am to Noon

Demo Garden – April 20<sup>th</sup>, May 4<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>, June 5<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>

Atlantic City Aquarium – Check weekly emails or contact John Collette

Atlantic County Park Plantings – All of May and part of June – 10AM – 2PM. Please sign up with Anita

Master Gardener Plant Sale – May 18<sup>th</sup> (set-up day) and May 19<sup>th</sup> (sale day)

Galloway Library Butterfly Garden – Check with Jesse Connor for upcoming dates

## **ATLANTIC COUNTY PARK VOLUNTEER DESSERT SOCIAL**

Volunteers and guests are invited to the Nature Center, Estell Manor Park on Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 pm.  
Let Anita know if you plan on attending this event.



# Greenhouse Planting



Using the greenhouse at the Atlantic County Utilities Authority, Atlantic County Master Gardeners (students and graduates) met in March to start seeds for upcoming events.

'Rutgers' tomatoes were started for ACUA's Earth Day event on Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Along with the tomatoes, four different varieties of peppers were started for the plant sale. 'Ancho' (hot), 'California Wonder' (bell pepper), 'Cubanelle' (frying), and 'Corni di Toro' (banana) will all be available for purchase at the Atlantic County Master Gardener Association's Annual Plant Sale on Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>.

These vegetable plants will be taken care of and monitored by Mona and master gardeners to ensure healthy plants.

## Rutgers Tomato



- Smooth skin;
- Freedom from fruit cracking;
- 'Second early' maturity;
- Handsome flattened globe shape;
- Vigorous healthy foliage to ripen more fruit and reduce sunscald;
- Firm thick fleshy fruit walls for its time, though considered extremely soft by today's definition of tomato firmness;
- Uniformity true to type in the field.

For more information visit:  
<http://www.njfarmfresh.rutgers.edu/JerseyTomato.html>



*"Knowledge is knowing the tomato is a fruit.  
Wisdom is not putting [them] in your fruit salad."  
— Miles Kington*

# Voles, Weeds, and Chatter

## Those Pesky Voles!!!!



If you have worked the helpline you have had a question or several on voles and sensed the frustration of homeowners over their bulbs being eaten.

According to a study done at Cornell University you might have better luck trapping these pests with dried-bulb/applesauce mixes. The study assessed the relative palatability of fresh bulbs and dried-bulb/applesauce mixed for prairie voles. At sites where rodent damage to flowering plants has occurred repeatedly over many years, bulbs including daffodils, painted arum, camass, glory-of-the-snow, autumn crocus, persian fritillaria, snowdrop, and grape hyacinth exhibit resistance and should be planted. In areas where herbivore damage is infrequent, bulbs including hyacinth, crocus, iris, onion, tulip, and squill also could be selected. Whenever rodents are present, tulip bulbs should be protected with repellents or physical barriers. These costly protective measures can be avoided by planting the most resistant bulb varieties at sites where frequent pine vole or meadow vole damage is anticipated. Also, removal of mulch from planting beds may reduce meadow vole tunneling and associated plant damage ([Merwin et al., 1999](http://horttech.ashspublications.org/content/19/3/499.full)).

For the full study visit: <http://horttech.ashspublications.org/content/19/3/499.full>

## Purple Deadnettle (*Lamium purpureum*) and Henbit (*Lamium amplexicaule*) –



Purple deadnettle is often confused with Henbit. Both are winter annuals but purple deadnettle has upper leaves that are triangular, occur on petioles, and are distinctly red or purple-tinted. Henbit's upper leaves are sessile (directly attached to the stem) and lower leaves have petioles.

Both of these weeds can be prevented with a fall pre-emergent herbicide or a post-emergent broadleaf herbicide when the weeds are small, and non-blooming. If not using chemicals, hand pull or try to keep the weeds mowed to prevent bloom and additional seed set.



## Garden Chatter

**Interesting Blogs** - John Drexel has become friendly with a garden writer named Nancy Ondra. Nancy lives and gardens at Hayefield in Bucks County, PA and has published a number of gardening books. (I have all of her books.) We have exchanged emails for some time and she has a wonderful blog I think Master Gardeners would enjoy. Nancy's photography, writing style and blog are well worth exploring. She has an international following. Her blog address follows: <http://hayefield.com/2011/08/15/garden-bloggers-bloom-day-august-2011/>

**T.V. Show of Interest** - Doug Groff and his wife have been watching a show called Rosemary and Thyme. The Show is about professional gardeners who get involved in murder mysteries as they complete their



# Garden Chatter cont' d

gardening for rich clients. Their take on the show is that it is very good!!! Check it out on the BBC channel on Friday nights at 8 pm.

**About.com's Readers' Choice Awards** - Check out what readers have voted as the best in the following gardening categories:

**Gardening Blog** – Digging: It All Starts with a Patch of Dirt, written by Pam Penick

**Gardening Catalog for Plants and Seeds** – Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds

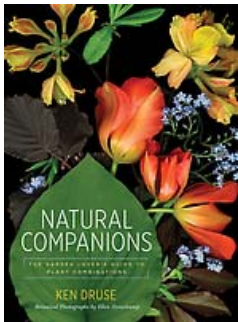
**Gardening Magazine** – Garden Gate® Magazine

**Classic Gardening Book** – American Horticultural Society A to Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants, by Christopher Brickell, Henry Marc Cathey (DK Publishing)

**New Gardening Books** – The Resilient Gardener: Food Productions and Self-Reliance in Uncertain Times, by Carol Deppe (Chelsea Green Publishing)

Results and further information can be found here: <http://gardening.about.com/od/Readers-Choice-Awards/tp/2012-About-Com-Readers-Choice-Awards-For-Gardening.htm>

## New Gardening Books for 2012



### **Natural Companions – Ken Druse**

Hardcover: 256 pages

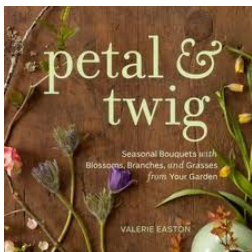
Publisher: Stewart, Tabori & Chang (March 1, 2012)

ISBN-10: 1584799013

ISBN-13: 978-1584799016

In *Natural Companions*, acclaimed garden writer Ken Druse presents recipes for perfect plant pairings using diverse species that look great together and bloom at the same time. Organized by theme within seasons, topics include color, fragrance, foliage, grasses, edible flowers and much more, all presented in photographs of gardens that show planted combinations from a wide variety of climates and conditions. *Natural Companions* also

features more than one hundred special botanical images of amazing depth and color created in collaboration with artist Ellen Hoverkamp using modern digital technology.



### **Petal & Twig – Valerie Easton**

Hardcover: 128 pages

Publisher: Sasquatch Books; 1 edition (January 31, 2012)

ISBN-10: 157061766X

ISBN-13: 978-1570617669

Forcing flowers to stand up and do tricks is the old way of flower bouquets. That called for flying in blossoms from around the world. The new way is so much more DIY and all about what's happening in the garden right now--no matter the season. *Petal & Twig* is full of photographs and descriptions of wonderfully fresh combinations from garden-expert Valerie Easton's own garden. With an inviting and personal tone, Easton shows how to assemble floral combinations for color, for fragrance, to express the essence of the season, for the dinner table, for the kitchen, for the bookshelf. Inspiration, experimentation, and simple pleasure are the keys to the new bouquets.



## Moon Gardens – Anita Wagner

We have heard of all sorts of garden types throughout our education as master gardeners. Rain gardens, shade gardens, and native plant gardens are among the few that we hear often.

As we are paging through our garden catalogs why not think of incorporating a moon garden in to your landscape? A moon garden is one that includes plants that bloom later in the day with flowers that are white, yellow, cream or pale pink, have a strong fragrance, and/or are plants that reflects the moonlight with their silvery leaves.

One of the most important aspects to include in a moon garden is a bench or sitting area so that you may thoroughly enjoy the blooms and scents under the moon light. Not only will you enjoy the plants, but you will enjoy the pollinators that come out at night such as the hummingbird moth.

Four o'clock, moon flower, night blooming or angled loofah, Angel trumpet, evening primrose, sweet scented nicotiana, dusty miller, lamb's ear, artemesia, flowering tobacco, summersweet and sweet mock orange are just a few of the plants that can be used when developing this garden. Don't forget to add your herbs like basil, oregano and mint, too.



### Garden Lesson

Now that spring has sprung  
The planting has begun  
In the garden  
For the seedlings to survive  
Protection we provide  
We water so they thrive  
In the garden  
Now we made the room  
For our plants to bloom  
We are enjoying the sun  
Yet the work isn't done  
In the garden  
Remember to do this  
And all will be bliss  
'Cause  
Even the Garden of Eden  
Needs "weedin"

By Janet Osborne[09]

## Master Gardener 2012 Plant Sale

May 19, 2012

Rain Or shine  
While Supplies Last

10 am—3 pm  
Galloway Library/Patriot Lake  
Jimmie Leeds Road, Galloway

#### Sale:

Sale runs as a cash and carry.  
Debit and credit cards NOT accepted. Checks accepted written to 'Atlantic County Board of Ag.'  
**RAIN OR SHINE.**

Sale held by Atlantic County  
Master Gardener Association in  
Cooperation with Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Atlantic  
County.



#### This years plants will include:

Wildlife/Native Plants  
Drought Resistant Plants  
Annuals/Perennials/Herbs  
Tomatoes/Vegetables  
Shrubs

Soil test kits will also be available for \$20.00

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*Mona Bawgus*

Mona Bawgus  
Program Associate - Agriculture

**Happy Birthday Master Gardeners!!**



April - None  
May - None

June

2<sup>nd</sup> Roz Herlands  
11 Sandy Templeton  
13 Robin Lara

July

7<sup>th</sup> Nancy Short  
25<sup>th</sup> John Marositz  
28<sup>th</sup> GiGi Larsen  
31<sup>st</sup> Camille Griffin

Call Anita to be added to the birthday list!!!  
We are missing many of you!!



**Want to contribute to  
*Garden Tales?***

Send topic ideas, photos, or  
material to Anita at  
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Atlantic County Master Gardener Program  
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