



Garden

Atlantic County Master Gardener Program Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 6

Project Updates

- **MG Demo Garden:** Kale, parsley, cabbage, garlic and more are in full growth mode. We will collect heirloom kale seeds to share at 2006 program events. Next steps: Working with a landscaper to install additional raised beds, kiosks for RCRE information, mulching, pathways, and more. **To volunteer**, contact Mary McDermott .
- **Estell Manor Nature Center Community Garden:** See story on page 6. **Volunteers welcome** for ongoing support.
- **Forsythe Refuge:** Native garden planting and maintenance will continue through June; **volunteers welcome** for ongoing support..
- **Atlantic County Housing Authority:** Two projects are in discussion: landscape design and community gardens. We can provide landscape design and plant choice advice for residents. We may also provide guidance and support to help create a community garden where residents maintain plots for flowers and vegetable gardens. **To volunteer**, contact Mona or Cindy Krzyzaniak.
- **Pennsylvania Atlantic Nursery Trade Show (PANTS) at the Atlantic City Convention Center July 25 - 28:** Volunteers invited to participate as assistants to presentations and demos, or greeters. **To volunteer**, contact Mona; for PANTS info, see www.plna.com
- **MG Speakers Bureau:** We're looking to expand the number and content of presentations we give to libraries and community groups. **To volunteer**, contact Mona.
- **ACUA Raised beds and Greenhouse:** The ACUA has offered us the use of two raised beds and their greenhouse. Contact Mona to **get involved** in idea generation and planning.

Hot Happenings

- June 16 Bartram's Gardens and Morris Arboretum Tour
- July 5 Carol Strahlendorf and Ann Craig will host a gardening talk for seniors at the Mays Landing Library (Wed.)
- July 14 MG Association Meeting, 12:30 – 2:30 at Ann Cinquina's home. (Friday)
- Aug, 10–12 Atlantic County 4H Fair (Thurs – Sat.)



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HelpLine News and Info

HelpLine recent questions

The HelpLine is hopping! Lots of calls and lots of volunteers make a great combination. Many callers have been asking about Gypsy Moths; in some areas, clients report serious defoliation. You'll find client information in the files, as well as a special page on the HelpLine counter on "Gypsy Moth Suppression." Callers reporting large affected areas should contact their municipal offices. Municipalities have mostly completing their spring spraying program and many are tracking problem areas for possible fall spraying.

Other common HelpLine questions included Oak Gall, and infestations of carpenter bees and ants. Over the next several weeks, based on last year's Log, expect calls on lawn maintenance and weeds, apple/cedar rust, and when/how to prune spring flowering shrubs, especially hydrangea.

USFS "WoW:" Weed of the Week

The US Forest Service highlights invasive weeds on their site <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/invasiveplants/weeds/index.shtm>. Some reported as invasive in NJ include:

- **Common Chickweed:** Creates dense mats of shoots, shading seedlings of other plants and out-competing other spring annuals.
- **Fuzzy Pride-of-Rochester.** This large arching, self-seeding large shrub has escaped intentional plantings to spread and compete with native species.
- **Scots Pine:** One of the most widely distributed pines in the world, its aggressive reproduction creates a mat of seedlings that crowd out the roots of other pine species.



Green Thumb Articles

Recent articles in Mona's ongoing "Green Thumb" series in *The Press of Atlantic City* include

- Beneficial insects, June 16
- Attracting butterflies, June 9
- Planting trees, June 2
- Growing roses, May 26
- Spring blooming bulb care, May 12
- Herb garden planning

New RCRE Fact Sheets

- **Thrips (FS291 Rev. 5/06):** Thrips attack the leaves and terminal buds of flowers, trees, grasses and commonly grown vegetables. Thrips puncture the leaves and suck out the juices, causing the leaves to desiccate and plants to turn whitish, wilt and collapse. Leaves develop silver splotches or tracks, and become dwarfed and distorted to curl upward (while aphids cause leaves to curl downward.)



- **Celery Worm / Black Swallowtail Butterfly (FS281, Rev. 6/06):** Larvae feed on carrot, caraway, celery, dill, fennel, parsnip and parsley, and can strip the plant of foliage. The adults (butterflies) feed on flower nectar only. This insect is considered a minor pest of New Jersey vegetables, and is seldom found in numbers large enough to cause serious crop damage.



- **Pepper Maggot (FS279, Rev. 6/06):** These insects infest the fruit of eggplant and peppers. In eggplant, maggots tunnel extensively through the fruit. In peppers, maggots feed on the core and cause the pepper to become soft, watery, and rotten. Pepper is the preferred host, and cheese and cherry varieties are the most heavily attacked.



New Pesticide Web Info

Given our ongoing efforts to make sure that pesticides recommended in .gov or .edu fact sheets are appropriate for NJ, this new resource is welcome: The NJ DEP Pesticide Control Program's new web feature allows you to search for NJ-registered products. The flyer is posted at the HelpLine office and you can see more at www.kellysolutions.com/NJ.

Information Resources

“What’s in Season in NJ”

You can subscribe to a bi-weekly one-page report that provides a glimpse of Rutgers’ agricultural research, little-known interesting facts and stories about our food grown in New Jersey, what’s available in Jersey Fresh and Jersey Seafood, nutrition info, and Jersey Fresh recipes. The first issue (June 5) featured asparagus and strawberries. To see it and receive future reports, see <http://www.njfarmfresh.rutgers.edu> .

“New Jersey Outdoors” Program

“New Jersey Outdoors” is the DEP’s Division of Fish and Wildlife’s new outdoor recreation introduction and instruction program, as an expansion of the former New Jersey Becoming an Outdoors Woman (NJBOW) Program. A greater number of one-day programs are being developed and offered to expanded audiences that include not only women but also families and mixed groups. These programs are designed to provide the opportunity to learn a variety of outdoor activities (such as fishing, archery, kayaking, orienteering and nature photography) in a structured, leisurely atmosphere with the help of expert instructors. For descriptions, dates and times of June, July and August programs, see <http://www.njfishandwildlife.com/njoutdoors.htm> .

Want to contribute to *Garden Tales*?

Garden Tales is produced by Mary McDermott. Send topic ideas or material to Mary at mmcddmcm@comcast.net

Rutgers Gardens Classes

This ongoing series continues through the summer with classes on Plant Propagation (June 17), and Evening in the Gardens (June 29 & July 27). For more information, see www.rutgersgardens.rutgers.edu

MG Book Review:

Broadsides from the Other Orders: A Book of Bugs, by Sue Hubbell.

Review by Michelle Post

For many people, butterflies are the "acceptable" bugs. They're beautiful, they aren't scary and people want to have them around.

But if you read "Broadsides from the Other Orders," the wonderful 1993 book by Sue Hubbell (best known for her big selling "A Book of Bees") skip the first chapter on butterflies. It's the weakest and least interesting. Start instead with the chapter on ladybugs, which explains how mail order companies get the ladybugs they sell for natural aphid control.



It's not a pretty picture, with collectors rounding up hundreds of thousands of the beneficial insects as they swarm in the Sierra Nevada mountains in California. The collectors guard their territories and are clearly intent on making big money. The kicker is, the ladybugs have a homing instinct and won't stick around in your garden, so it's money (and ladybug lives) wasted.

The less attractive or downright gross bugs, like camel crickets in the photo at right (she keeps them as pets!), gypsy moths and silverfish (my personal phobia) turn out to be the most interesting. You find yourself having real affection for little critters you might otherwise fear.



RCRE Gardening on TV

“If Plants Could Talk” is RCRE’s weekly half-hour show that offers research-based information on gardening. The show airs Saturdays at 1:00 on NJN. See www.ifplantscouldtalk.Rutgers.edu .



MG Yard Sale a big success – and lots of fun!

by Michelle Post

We had a wonderful yard sale May 13. The rain stopped just in time for our 9 am start, and the day turned out to be gorgeous. We raised \$588 and got rid of a ton of stuff to boot! Thank you to everyone who volunteered on site, tagging and bagging, and collecting the cash (Ann Cinquina, Gloria, Mona, me, Bev, Mary, Maryanne, Jean, Debby Sandler, Grace, Ann Fox, and Camille) and/or donated (all of the above plus Anthony Jones -- thank you for all those new items, including a microwave oven).

Thanks also to my friend and fellow PTO member, Mary Beth Clark of Linwood, who although not a member of the Master Gardeners, donated at least 10 boxes of silver, china and glass and lots of household items to our sale. Her donations really made a huge difference for us. Another special thank you to Bev for carting many of the leftovers to a couple of nonprofit thrift stores. (We kept the collectibles, however, to try our hand at selling them on eBay. Anyone with eBay experience, please let me know and give me a few tips.)



Edible Garlic Scapes

If you planted garlic last fall, right about now the stalks, called “scapes,” form delirious loop-de-loops before they eventually mature and straighten. Enjoy their whimsical appearance, and enjoy the curly scapes in salads, soups or stir-fries. And, if you like pesto, collect the scapes in the next few weeks while they’re newly budded and still curly and blend them with olive oil and parmesan cheese. According to Mona, it’s “Oh, so good!!”



Harvesting the scapes now also enables the plant to put more energy into the bulb forming below ground. Snap the scapes off on a sunny day so the wound heals quickly. For more info from Cornell University, see <http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/yates/mg%20articles/MG10.10.01.htm>. (For your own info, not to distribute to clients, also see <http://www.moscowfood.coop/archive/scapes.html>, and for lots of scapes recipes, visit <http://forums.farm-garden.com/viewtopic.php?id=678>)

Fun Quiz

Find the 20 garden-related words in the puzzle below. (Hint: All words also show up elsewhere in this newsletter.)

R	F	E	N	N	E	L	G	A	L	L	C
E	U	V	O	L	U	N	T	E	E	R	A
S	N	C	E	Y	F	F	L	I	N	G	M
T	O	H	P	E	S	T	I	C	I	D	E
E	T	I	H	E	L	P	L	I	N	E	L
L	E	C	H	Z	S	C	A	P	E	O	C
L	N	K	Y	J	U	N	H	E	M	R	R
I	T	W	S	B	L	W	U	L	G	G	I
V	L	E	S	U	T	O	N	A	Y	A	C
Y	Y	E	O	G	Q	R	C	D	P	N	K
X	Y	D	P	Q	U	M	E	Y	S	I	E
D	A	M	S	E	L	E	X	B	Y	C	T

Allen Lacy's Garden Tour

by Michelle Post

About 15 MGs and friends toured Allen and Hella Lacy's garden and historic house on May 20. We saw a magnificent collection of plants developed by the famous garden writer and his wife during their 30 years in Linwood. And we saw their neighbor's garden, which was inspired by the Lacys' artistry and complements another historic house. Some of my favorite parts were a deep and peaceful shade garden, full of lamium, deutzia, hostas, wigelea, and caladiums.

Allen's entire property is planted in garden beds -- only tiny swaths of lawn remain. And it is crisscrossed by intersecting paths that seem to take you far, even though the lot is only 100 by 155 feet. For a suburban lot, the tree collection is incredible, with quince, holly, dawn redwood and dogwood along with a bamboo grove that Allen is able to control. Thank you to Allen and Hella Lacy for opening their incredible garden to us.

Critter Corner:

Get these guys in *your* corner

- **Assassin Bug** (Reduviidae) feeds mainly on aphids, caterpillars, Colorado potato beetles, Japanese Beetles, leafhoppers and Mexican bean beetles.
- **Damsel bug** (Nabidae) feeds on aphids, leafhoppers, mites, and caterpillars.
- **Big-eyed bug** (Lygaeidae) aphids, caterpillar eggs and larvae, immature bugs, leafhoppers, spider mites.
- **Predacious stink bug** (Pentatomidae) feeds on Colorado potato beetles and various caterpillar larvae.
- **Lady Beetle** (*Hippodamia convergens*) feeds on aphids and other soft-bodied insects such as mealy bugs and spider mites.

(From Virginia Cooperative Extension, #426-708)



Global warming and poison ivy

As if global warming itself isn't bad news enough, *The New York Times* recently noted a Duke University study showing that poison ivy grows faster and produces more urushiol, the ivy's infamous rash-inducing oil, in environments with higher levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂). CO₂ is a greenhouse gas – a chemical that traps heat similar to the way a greenhouse does -- that's considered a major contributor to global warming.



Thanks, Mona, for hosting the June Association Meeting!

Plant swap
at June 9
Association
Meeting at
Mona's
home and
garden



Seed Terms and Definitions

The 3/06 *House & Garden Magazine* provided a list of common terms often used in print, web and course materials, shown below. Also provided is the Iowa State University's definition of "Organic Agriculture"

- **Organic agriculture** uses naturally-occurring amendments for fertilization and pest management. Fields must be free from synthetic fertilizers and pesticides for a minimum of three years. Livestock must be fed organically-grown feed and pastures. The use of synthetic hormones and antibiotics is disallowed. Organic foods are processed, packaged and distributed without the use of synthetic pesticides, artificial preservatives or irradiation. – Iowa State University, <http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/sustag/resources/orgfarminfo.htm>
- **Genetically Modified Organism (GMO):** A living thing, such as a fruit or vegetable seed, whose genetics have been altered for a desired benefit. A famous example is a variety of tomato whose genes were spliced with those of a winter flounder fish in order to make the fruit more frost resistant. Today 38 percent of the corn and 57 percent of the soybeans grown in the United States are GMOs.
- **Hybridized Seed:** A crossing of two different varieties, usually of the same species, that results in offspring with clone-like similarities. Some attributes, such as taste and color, may be lost in favor of other benefits, such as the ability to stay fresh on supermarket shelves.
- **Open-Pollinated Seed:** Free or random pollination between plants of the same variety through pollen spread by natural means, such as wind or insects. Unlike the uniform results of a hybrid, these plants will often show a natural variation in leaf, color, or shape.
- **Heirloom variety:** A non-hybridized or open-pollinated seed that has been passed down for generations. When seed is saved, its valued properties, including taste and color, are largely preserved.
- **Isolation gardening:** The practice of keeping open-pollinated varieties distant from nearby plants that, because of their compatible genes, might interbreed. For example, if your 'Aunt Ruby's German Green' tomato comes out red, it has probably been cross-fertilized by insects or airborne pollen.

Congratulations to Interns and Certified Master Gardeners

The Class of 2006 was officially welcomed at the Association meeting on June 9th, with congratulations all around. At the same meeting, these Class of 2005 interns were recognized as Certified Master Gardeners, after completing their HelpLine and volunteer-hour requirements:

- Stacey Davis
- Ann Cinquina
- Thornton Hole
- Gloria Perakovich
- Debra Sandler
- Camille Griffin
- MaryAnne Mooney

Spring Fling *by Michelle Post*

Spring Fling, the May 13 4H event at the county fairgrounds, went very well. About a dozen MG volunteers manned our tables throughout the day, answering gardening questions and helping about 40 kids paint wooden butterflies, hummingbirds, turtles, and frogs. About 40 kids painted the wooden cutouts. Heather Boone made labels with the RCRE of Atlantic County Master Gardener logo, name, address and helpline phone number, which we put on the plants we sold. We sold 46 plants at \$1 a piece, all extra plants from MGs' own gardens, including some Rudbeckia, Purple Coneflower, Bronze Fennel, Rose of Sharon, Anise Hyssop, Turtlehead, Achillea, Sedum, Lily of the Valley, Sweet Woodruff, Lamb's Ears, Rose Campion, Butterfly Weed and the Monarch foodplant, Common Milkweed. As you can see, we tried to sell mostly butterfly food or nectar plants. We also gave away the rest of the tomato plants we had started. It was beautiful weather, and we made some new friends among 4H families. Thank you to all who helped, including Michelle Post, Heather Boone, Camille Griffin, Anita and her daughter Sabrina, Bunny Mason, Carol Strahlendorf, Debby Sandler, Kathy Olsen, Ann Fox, Daina Walters, Kim Hesse and Vin Thoms.

Collect Seed Packets

Keep an eye out for great deals on packaged seeds. Stores are starting to mark their 2006 seeds down as low as 10 cents per package. Start stockpiling them, as they'll be part of next year's 4H and Earth Day give-aways.

Estell Manor Community Garden,

by Kathy Olsen

On May 31, a 2006 team and Mona worked on the Back Yard Community Garden at Estell Manor Park. The Community Garden is used for educational tours and classes for students and visitors. We prepared four planting areas in the Community Garden, using plants started from seed at the park greenhouse by Helen Biggs.

In bed number one, we planted tomatoes and three varieties of peppers, bordered by beautiful marigolds to discourage the deer from dining on them. In bed two, we planted a combination of hibiscus, cosmos, geraniums, strawflowers, dusty miller, and coleus. Bed three was planted entirely with butterfly bushes. Nice work on the roto-tiller Bob! Impatiens were planted in the small beds in front of the gazebo. It was a hot morning in the park but the team's efforts showed wonderful results. When you're next in Estell Manor, visit the Park and see our handiwork.

What's next: Keeping the beds weed free and watered. If you can lend a hand, it will surely be appreciated (and count toward your volunteer hours!).



Got Tent Caterpillars? Call in the Nuthatches!

Nuthatches get their name from their habit of placing large seeds and nuts in crevices of trees and then prying them open with their bills. Nuthatches also probe crevices along tree trunks and limbs for smaller seeds and insects. The percentage of seed and insect food varies with the season. One study found the diet included



68% seed in winter, 48% seed in spring, no seed in summer (**100% insects**), and 29% seed in fall. White-breasted nuthatches eat tent caterpillars as well as ants, weevils, scale insects, woodborers and leaf beetles. Other local birds that find tent caterpillars tasty include chickadees and juncos. – Univ. of Michigan http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/accounts/information/Sitta_carolinensis.html

Port Republic School Garden Project, *by Janet Longo*

The Port Republic Elementary School project is complete. MG volunteers, in coordination with school staff and the Port Republic Municipal Alliance, assisted with Kathy Latella's third grade class to create a woodlands-themed garden in the open space between the school and Pomona Avenue. Old shrubs were removed, the soil tilled, and eco/top soil incorporated in the existing soil. Rainbow Farms' Matthew Geese compacted the soil for a path and brought in gravel and stepping-stones. The team planted azaleas, hollies, ferns, and other shade-loving plants and the kids created unique plant labels using permanent markers on river rocks. Three cement benches enable visitors to pause and enjoy the garden. The project goal was to instill a love of gardening in young children. MG volunteers included, from L to R in first photo: Glenn Pavlis, Morris Gbolo, Bob Kruk, Janet Longo, Debi Baker-Capille.



Kathy Olsen, Bob Kruk,
and Virginia Mason
working the MG Table
at ACUA's Earth Day
Event in May.



Estell Manor Greenhouse and County Buildings

MGs recently finished their support for the Estell Manor Greenhouse and County Facilities planting project. Under the guidance of Helen Biggs, who manages the greenhouse and planting activities, volunteers worked from April through early June. Work started in the greenhouse, transplanting seedlings to cell packs and then to 4" pots everything from the classic summer annuals (marigold, zinnias, dusty miller, snapdragons, celosia, vinca, and more) to hardy perennials (hibiscus, rudbeckia goldstrum, rudbeckia autumn sunrise, buddleia, and more). The plants were then set out, to the delight of residents and employees, at facilities across the county, including (from left to right) the Meadowview Nursing Home, Gaskill Park, and Lake Lenape. The plantings will only get more beautiful as the summer progresses, so stop by and get glimpse of eye-popping color. Among the many volunteers were Deb Sandler, Kathy Olsen, Mary McDermott, Janet D'Allesandro, Ana Schliefer, Daina Walter, Vin Thoms, Stacey Davis, Bob Kruk, Nancy Jansen, and Bette Del Grosso.



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Tips for June, by Phil Cross

June is perhaps the single most important time for most plants, when they are highly active above and below ground. Spring bulbs are storing energy for next spring; woody perennials are issuing new stems for next year's flowers; and plants yet to fruit or flower are preparing to burst forth. For all, nutrition and moisture are top priorities:

- Water lawns and plants deeply, to cause roots to reach downward and not be vulnerable to drought.
- Mulch all plants with an organic material that will decompose by Fall.
- Plant less temperature hardy vegetables when soil temperature at three inches deep has reached at least 60F (such as tomatoes, egg plant, and cucumbers).
- Thin out growth that will inhibit air circulation or provide a habitat for pests and disease.
- Tie and stake herbaceous perennials that are likely to overshadow smaller nearby plants.

Enjoy your lawn and garden at its most invigorating time; before mosquitoes, gnats, and flies become annoying.



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