



Master Gardener News

A monthly publication of the St. Louis Master Gardeners

June 2005

Calendar of Events

June 12th – Missouri Botanical Garden Tour...contact Sally Cohn
314.727.6327

June 25th – City of Chesterfield Garden Tour...contact www.chesterfield.mo.us

June 29th – MG Level 2 Training
Cindy Gilberg of Gilbergs Nursery will conduct a class on Rain Bog and Pond Gardening. Class will be held at Gilbergs Nursery located at 2906 Ossenfort Rd. Glencoe, MO



What's Inside

Need a Job? Paid or Unpaid?

Learn to be a TreeKeeper

John Stephen's Q&A

Congratulations MG Grads!

The Garden Loses a Good Friend

Have you Seen Rich Little in Your Yard Lately?

A Word from the Editor, by Stacy Rolfe

Pulling Weeds.....

I believe in standing up and fighting for what you believe in...I also believe that come July certain plants just aren't worth fighting for.....Is there a statue of limitations as to how long a plant can sit on your driveway before it actually gets planted?....Do you ever wonder what your life would have been like if you had married "that other person"?....and then thank your lucky stars you didn't.....I recently had a snake on my front porch...there, are you happy now?....My yard drains me...physically and financially.....At what point did my age begin to bother me?.....I could listen to Christmas music all year long....My favorite movies

include An Affair to Remember, Pillow Talk and Barefoot in the Park...they just don't make movies like they used to....If I could sing, dance and act I would choose the role of Tevya on Fiddler on the Roof...another one that rates as a favorite....Do you ever feel the pressure that everything about your yard should look superior to your neighbors because you're a Master Gardener?....and do you ever take pride in the fact that it does?....I still amaze myself when I can pull a genus name seemingly out of thin air....Don't you just love fireflies?



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN



Missouri Master Gardener
University Outreach & Extension

To provide research-based horticultural information to the public for community service and gardening pleasure.



Kemper Center Receptionist

The Kemper Center will be seeking an individual to work part-time, Thursdays and Saturdays each week to receive visitors at the reception desk and help answer gardening questions. Hours are 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. each day. The position begins in the first week of August. Call or email Steve Cline, Kemper Manager for more information or express interest (steven.cline@mobot.org) or 314.577.9561

THANK YOU



A belated wag of the tail goes to...

Ann Case and Lola Reed for volunteering at the Home Show...Thank you!

Free TreeKeepers Course Offered



Beginning in July, Forest ReLeaf of Missouri will present a TreeKeepers course at the Meramec Campus of St. Louis Community College. Sponsored in part by the Missouri Department of Conservation, the class will educate citizens about trees, their benefits and care, and provide practical, hands-on learning in five key areas: tree identification, tree biology, planting, pruning, and insects and diseases. *The course is free, but participants are asked to provide 24 hours of volunteer service after graduation.* These hours may be fulfilled through tree care projects in the participants' communities or through projects arranged by Forest ReLeaf, which is approved for Master Gardener service.

Classes will meet every Tuesday for six weeks from 9:30 to 11:30 am, beginning on Tuesday, July 19. There will also be Saturday field sessions from 9 am-12 pm on July 30 and August 20. The course is limited to 25 participants.

Please call the college at 314/984-7777 to register or contact Forest ReLeaf at

314/533-5323 for more information.

Forest ReLeaf of Missouri is a statewide not-for-profit organization founded in 1993 to promote urban and community reforestation through education and tree planting programs.



Save the Date:
July 9-10th

Water Garden Society of Greater Kansas City is hosting the 12th annual tour in the greater Kansas City metro area.

Water Gardens 2005 tickets are available for purchase on our web site, www.kcwatergardens.com; \$10 each or \$8 for groups of 10 or more. Commemorative t-shirts are also available with this year's artwork. Start your collection! We again plan to have a DVD of all residential tour sites. Five 'Key Sites' will have pond information sheets, t-shirts, and DVDs.

If you are coming from out of town, Drury Inns has made a discount available to tour goers at the five metro locations; just mention the 'Water Garden Tour'. Links are on the web site. Bus tours are welcome; we will help you with site selection and a tour host.



There will be 69 total sites including Powell Gardens, K C Zoo, Discovery Center, five sponsored ponds, three schools, Burr Oak Woods, Kemper Outdoor Education Center, four with trains (not counting the Zoo!), Healthy Sprouts Garden, Sanctuary of Hope, KCKS Community College Day Care Center, and the ICAN facility. Representatives from the Bonsai Society, Sunflower Garden Club, Kansas City Master Gardeners, and K-State Master Gardeners will be dispensing information and answering questions at designated sites.

Congratulations to the MG Class 2005!



Hat's off to the graduating MG class 2005 who received their MG Level 1 certificates on May 5th. A job well done!



Patiently waiting for their names to be called...



A last minute "threat" from Steve to get those finals turned in on time!



Can you imagine...studying to become an MG *while* planning your May wedding!



Linda Kalicak gave the mentors a special thank you!



For a complete listing of upcoming Garden events visit www.mobot.org and click on Events in the upper left hand corner. Get all the latest news on:

Whitaker Music Festival
Garden Founder Henry Shaw's 205th Birthday Celebration
Summer Camp
Best Homegrown Tomato Challenge

Monthly Gardening Tip...

Prune your spring-blooming shrubs right after the flower show has ended. Remove branch tips that held blossoms, cutting to shape the shrub. Also, remove any deadwood. After they finish flowering, it is best to dig and divide overcrowded clumps of spring's perennials, such as creeping phlox, candytuft, dianthus, and lily-of-the-valley. Wait until fall to divide peonies or iris.





Q&A with John Stephens



Q: Why after spending a fortune to have my sweetgum trees sprayed with Florel, did I still have a large crop of seed-balls last year?

A: It is likely that the applicator used faulty spraying techniques or the window of susceptibility was missed. Florel is effective only if applied during the mid to full-bloom stage (4 to 7 days) and only in the year of application. Since it works by causing abortion of fruit, it will be ineffective if applied too early or too late.

Q: Can I trim my shrub roses now?

A: Shrub roses should be pruned lightly, if at all, after the first flush of flowers has faded; better, just deadhead them, removing spent flowers only. Next year, prune these bushes in

early March to remove any damaged or dead stems.



Q: What are those tiny, white worm-like creatures that are falling from my pin oak "by the millions"?

A: These maggots are larvae of a gall midge. They hatch in early spring, feed on oak flowers/expanding leaves, drop to the soil where they pupate, and reemerge as adults next spring. They pose no health threat to your tree, so control measures are unnecessary.



Q: How can I assess the health of a valuable, mature pin oak tree that recently dropped a very large limb?

A: Call a professional, consulting arborist. See the listings in the Yellow Pages indicating membership in the St. Louis Arborist Association. Be sure to ask about consultations and fees.

Q: Why haven't my hardy, old chrysanthemums sprouted?

A: Chrysanthemums sometimes fail to survive the winter because of cold and/or

soil that doesn't drain properly. Check the drainage of the site in question, and if remedial action is required, you have plenty of time to take action before fall planting time.



Q: Can I plant miniature roses in my garden?

A: Miniature roses perform splendidly in St. Louis gardens. They require about the same care as their larger relatives.



Q: When, and how much, can I trim my cut-leafed, Japanese maple?

A: Japanese maples are best pruned in midsummer. Before starting this exercise, decide what you wish to accomplish and then proceed such that the natural beauty of the tree is preserved. Japanese maples often resent extensive pruning.

Q: Do azaleas require deadheading after they have flowered?

A: No. In fact, unless deadheading is done carefully so as not to damage the stems, it can be detrimental. Remember to give your plants an application of an acid fertilizer after they have finished blooming.





Bird Bath

By
Connie Alwood

"Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a Mockingbird."

*Atticus Finch in
To Kill a Mockingbird*

Of course, if you have ever been awakened by the hour long aria of a nocturnal mockingbird at 3:00 a.m., as my wife and I were last spring for four nights in a row, you might not share Atticus Finch's sentiments. Blue Jays at least are polite enough not to make their raucous calls until daylight. In spite of that experience, I must admit that I'm awfully fond of these handsome birds. When they fly, they flash those white wing patches and spread their long tails, which has long white outer sheaths. They sing gloriously from the tops of trees, weathervanes and even telephone poles, sometimes getting so excited that they repeatedly bounce and flutter several feet into the air as they sing. These songs include not only their own repertoire, but also the songs of other birds, and even train whistles. Because

it is the ultimate mimic, some birders have even dubbed it the "Rich Little" bird.

I know most gardeners are familiar with the Northern Mockingbird, which is a year long resident, but how well do we know the two other members of the family that arrive in our gardens in the spring and then retreat to warmer climes in the fall--the Gray Catbird and the Brown Thrasher? Neither of these birds is as accomplished a mimic as the mockingbird is, but both are excellent songsters who nest in second growth vegetation or in our overgrown shrubs.

The thrasher, like the mockingbird likes to sing from an upper perch. His back is russet, his breast streaked. You can verify that you've identified him correctly by listening to his song which is a series of rich, whistle-like phrases usually sung twice. The catbird, unlike his cousins, sings from the very shrubs he hides in. His song includes the meowing that gives him half his name. All three birds eat a diet of berries and insects, and they spend most of their lives on or near the ground. In fact, they are just as likely to run away from danger as they are to fly from it. Be sure to watch for these three birds in or near the English Woodland Garden on your next trip there. Or place a plate of raisins on the patio table and see if one of these mimics joins you for breakfast.



Brown Thrasher



Catbird

Kirkwood Festival Relies on Master Gardeners for Advice



The Kirkwood Festival of Food and Flowers took place Saturday, May 21st in downtown Kirkwood. Activities were held at the Farmer's Market, Train Station and Station Plaza. Kirkwood Junction merchants distributed free annuals to those visiting their shops.

St. Louis Master Gardeners staffed an information table at the Train Station. Other information tables were staffed by Plants of Merit (Mary Ann Fink), Kirkwood in Bloom and the Kirkwood Urban Forestry Commission. In addition, the Kirkwood Garden Club sponsored a wonderful plant sale. Those MG's participating were Marilyn Claggett, Mary Jo Anderson, Van Spurgeon, Angie



J. Marshall Magner
May 4, 1913 – May 14, 2005

Marshall was a native St. Louisan, born and raised in Webster Groves. He attended Iowa State University and completed his bachelor's degree at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He went on to work for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, specializing in cereal and forage insect control.

When the U.S. entered WWII, Marshall was studying for his doctorate at the University of Illinois. Later, the Army sent him to North Africa as part of a malaria control unit. Marshall joined Monsanto after his military career and spent 32 years specializing in the development of insecticides for agricultural use. Marshall was recognized for earning 9 patents and writing over 60 papers and scientific articles during his career with Monsanto.

It's difficult to say that Marshall ever retired. What should have been his "golden years" found him working with the Agency for International Development. Here he was a pest management specialist in claim construction projects in Sri Lanka and in 1984 was a staff entomologist for an excavation in northern Jordan. If you do the math, that put him at 71 years of age while doing this project.

Marshall found time to give back to the community where he was raised. He was a member of the Webster Groves Planning and Zoning Commission during 1959 and 1960 and a City Councilman from 1960 – 1970. During his time as Councilman, Marshall served as the liaison with the city's park and health commissions from 1961 – 1970. He was also past President, Vice President and Director of the Webster Groves Historical Society.

In 2002, the Webster Groves City Council recognized Marshall by naming the new playground at Larson Park "Marshall Magners' Bug King". The \$450,000 project was a hit for Mr. Magner and the children who enjoy the butterfly-shaped playground.

The day before his death, Webster Groves Mayor Gerry Welch called Marshall to tell him that the City Council recently voted to name the new addition to the Shady Creek Nature Sanctuary "The Magner Woods." A ceremony to honor Marshall is scheduled for 5:00 p.m. June 22, 2005.

In addition to being a Master Gardener and Volunteer of the Year 2003, Marshall received the Garden's volunteer Lifetime Achievement award in 2004. Marshall was former President of the Entomological Society of America – North Central Branch, the St. Louis Audubon Society, Men's Garden Club of Webster Groves and the Webster Groves Nature Study Society. The local Audubon Society gave him the Conservationist of the Year Award in 1988 and the Dr. Robert J. Terry Award in 1997.

Marshall was a former cubmaster and assistant scoutmaster for the Boy Scouts. He received the organization's Silver Beaver Award for distinguished serviced to young people.

Marshall's wife Ernestine Thro of St. Charles preceded Marshall's death in December 2004. Together they raised five sons, two of which died in a plane crash in 1982.

Memorial contributions may be made to Webster Groves Nature Study Society, P.O. Box 190065 St. Louis, MO 63119 or donor's choice.

For those of you who knew Marshall Magner personally, consider yourself lucky. For the rest of us who only knew of the man, consider it an even deeper loss.



St. Louis Master Gardeners
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We would love to have Master Gardeners submit articles for Master Gardener News. Remember that articles are due no later than the 10th of the month. Please send copies to Steve Cline and Stacy Rolfe (drolfe01@earthlink.net). Letters may be edited for length or content.

Master Gardener News is published monthly for St. Louis Master Gardeners. Stacy Rolfe serves as Editor, assisted by Carol Huston (proofreader), and contributors whose bylines appear in each issue.



Steve Cline
Manager, Kemper Center
Missouri Botanical Garden

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