



Master Gardener News

A monthly publication of the St. Louis Master Gardeners

July 2005

Calendar of Events

July 4th – Happy Birthday America!

July 13th – Tour of Forest Park
Level 2 Training

August 5th – Basic PowerPoint
Training at UMSL

August 17th – Perennials Presentation
By Bill Rupert

August 19th – Advanced PowerPoint
Training at UMSL



What's Inside

Volunteer Opportunities

Q&A

A Rose is a Rose...

Become a "Citizen Scientist"

A Peek at MaryJo Anerson's Yard

Listing of our 2005 Graduates!

A Word from the Editor, by Stacy Rolfe

Did you get a chance to jump on the garden tour wagon this summer? I must admit, I have never gone on a garden tour in the past for most part of the smug feeling of "what can I see in their yard that I don't already have?" Alright, well put me in the time out chair because let me tell you, I went on one of these tours this summer and it put me in my place and then some! I didn't actually go on the tour per se, but, I was asked to write the descriptions of each yard that was to be shown on the Chesterfield Garden Tour. And so you see, I was granted a personal tour of six different yards to be put on public display. Let's just say that after having gone through this experience, I had a range of emotions that played havoc with me. Beginning with sheer surprise and amazement at the beauty of what I saw, to a greater respect for homeowners who take so much pride in their

landscapes that nary a weed would dare sprout up from the ground, to an overwhelming feeling of seeing first hand why my yard never makes it in the Great Garden Contest. I will say though, that after I pulled up my bootstraps and picked up my crumbled pieces of pride, I went to action on my own yard. I pulled, moved, shaped and recreated things in my own landscape that I never would have thought of doing before. This garden tour opened my eyes to new possibilities. I saw new plant combinations. I saw benches being tucked away that made for a very inviting respite. I saw unique lawn sculptures catch me by surprise – and I liked that sense of whimsy. Yes, the garden tour was a good thing for me to see. It allowed me to see my own yard in a more creative way...give it a try next time.



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

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





Reception Desk Openings

Use your gardening knowledge and friendly smile to welcome and direct visitors at the Kemper Center for Home Gardening's Reception Desk. Openings are available one or two days a month on Fridays, Saturdays, or Sundays for a couple of hours.

Please contact Tammy Palmier at (314) 577-9487 or email her at tamara.palmier@mobot.org for specific dates and times.



St. Louis University Gardens to Tables Project

St. Louis University Department of Nutrition and Dietetics is promoting food gardening in St. Louis with its Gardens to Tables project. This ambitious effort merges nutrition educators, farmers and gardeners, and chefs to teach children and families ways to supplement their

diets with locally grown produce. Programming takes place year-round with children both in school and after school, The International Institute, Head Start, The Clayton Farmers' Market, and SLU's summer Culinary Camp.

Much of the commitment for Gardens to Tables must be volunteer and SLU's Department of Nutrition and Dietetics is seeking Master Gardeners who can volunteer a few or many hours assisting with garden maintenance, with basic gardening education, and at the Clayton Farmers' Market.

If you would like to know more please contact Marilyn Claggett, Master Gardener, 968-1653 or moann11@aol.com or the SLU Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, 977-8523.



Become a 'Citizen Scientist' for the Missouri Botanical Garden!

Are you are concerned about the spread of harmful invasive species and want to help reduce their ecological and economic damage? Now you can make a difference as a Citizen Scientist for the Missouri Botanical Garden.

Citizen Scientists are volunteers who receive expert training to identify and track important plant invaders in our area. They locate where these invaders have arrived and get that information to those who can do something about it. These volunteers contribute vital invasive species data directly into a national database.

Regional agencies that manage for invasive species receive regular updates on this tracking data to help them take appropriate action.

"The Garden is committed to mitigating the spread of invasive species," said Dr. Kim McCue, conservation biologist at the Missouri Botanical Garden. "The Citizen Scientists will be part of a nationwide effort to document and report occurrences of invasives."

Because species become evident at different times of the year, two training sessions will be held. The first will begin in early August with a second session in Spring 2006. Training is free of charge. Volunteers must be age 16 or older. No experience is required, only a willingness to learn and complete the training.

For more information, please call the Missouri Botanical Garden's Volunteer Program Office at (314) 577-5187, or e-mail jackie.juras@mobot.org.





Q&A with John

Stephens

Q: How can I get rid of what's left of my zoysia lawn to prepare for planting fescue?



A: Stop mowing your existing lawn in early August. Two weeks later, thoroughly spray the area with Roundup as recommended on the container. After about ten days, rake off all debris and prepare the soil to receive the new seed, which can be sowed any time in September. Starter fertilizer can also be applied at planting time. Cover the seed with straw if desired and keep moist until the seed has germinated. Defer mowing until the new grass is three inches tall.

Q: How should I care for my new hanging basket that is planted with torenia?



A: *Torenia fournieri* is an increasingly popular tropical that is grown as a summer annual in beds or containers. It requires fertile, moist soil that is well drained and shade during the hottest part of the day. It will benefit from monthly applications of a high-potash fertilizer and dilute iron chelate solution. Torenia can also be grown in the winter greenhouse.

Q: Does a cactus cutting have to be "cured" before planting?



A: All succulent cuttings, whether taken from leaves, stems, tips, or joints of parent plants should be dried and allowed to callus before planting, (also applies to offsets). Most cuttings will callus over in just a few days, although large cuttings have been reported to take up to ten days. "Cured" cuttings root best if planted just deeply enough to stand erect in a dampened, 50/50 mixture of sand and perlite and kept warm.

Q: What could be wrong with my wilted, recently planted Japanese maple?



A: Assuming that your tree was healthy when planted and good procedures were followed in its installation, subsequent watering practices always become suspect when sudden wilting occurs. It's likely that your tree has been receiving too little or too much water. With all the publicity about our abnormal droughty conditions, you may be overwatering. Check the soil; it should be moist, not soggy.

Q: How often should I fertilize my newly planted herbs?



A: Do not fertilize herbs; most produce maximum flavors and aromas when grown in soil of low-to-average fertility.

Q: How can I cure a condition called leaf-curl disease on my peach tree?



A: This disease is caused on peaches and nectarines by a fungus. Nothing can be done about peach leaf-curl in the current season. After leaves have fallen this fall, spray your tree with a lime-sulfur preparation or chlorothalonil, a fungicide. If disease appears to be severe, repeat the treatment before new growth starts in the spring. Use all sprays according to the labels on the containers.





Don't Miss

the Tour of Forest Park on July 13th

A few seats are still available on the bus for the Master Gardener Tour of Forest Park, scheduled for Wednesday, July 13 at 10:00 a.m. Settle in with your fellow Master Gardeners as you learn the fascinating history and current renovations of one of the nations top urban parks. Wear a comfortable pair of walking shoes as the tour will include both the bus as well as walking touring.

Meet at the Dennis and Judith Jones Visitor Center, (just north of the Muny and east of the History Museum). The tour ends with lunch at Ruthie's Grill at the Probstain Golf Course, the cost for lunch is \$7.00 and is payable the day of the tour.

Please RSVP to Phil Egart at (314) 577-9441 or phillip.egart@mobot.org.

This class is Level II training and qualifies for credit.

*Bus is handicap accessible



Advisory Committee Minutes for June 1, 2005 may be reached by clicking

<http://outreach.missouri.edu/stlouismg/minutes/minutes.htm>



Let's Hear if for the 2005 MG Graduates!

Betsy Alexander
Betty Burdick
Lisa Diekhaus
Diane Dunn
Tina Elmer
Susan Goldstein
Peggy Knippel
Anna Leavey
Pat Lynn
Mohit Maheshwari
John McLain
Angie Menard
Patty Mendicino
Tobi Ross Watkins
Rhett Ruecker
Rosalie Seemann
Linda Strunk
Linda Stuckmeyer
Anthony Tainter
Pat Winkelmann

Just Look at Mary Jo Anderson's Yard!



This is her 2004 tropical curbside garden featuring a Brugmansia started last year from her sister's plant!



Another 2004 photo from Mary Jo's 'free spirited' perennial border featuring favorite transplants from a friend's garden

Way to recycle those plants Mary Jo!

Keep those pictures coming! Send your yard photos to srolfe@charter.net





Bird Bath
By
Connie Alwood

Okay, it's not the Second Coming; nevertheless, religious metaphors abound when people speak of the sightings of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Even its nickname, the Lord God Bird, evokes the awesome splendor of this magnificent creature. In hopes of a glimpse of it, teams of ornithologists, naturalists and outdoorsmen have spent countless hours in search of what some call the Holy Grail of the bird world.

For two years now the news of a sighting in Arkansas' Cache River National Wildlife Refuge in 2003 has been kept a secret so that various national environmental groups with the help of private donors could purchase more private land, further protecting the habitat of this almost extinct species. But when word got out two months ago that a team of experts had confirmed the bird's existence, it became international news.

The Ivory-billed Woodpecker was never common. Native Indians collected it for its prized bill, wearing it as an amulet. Then Europeans cleared the bottomland forests and drained the swamps, its only habitat. At one time the Ivory-billed Woodpecker made its home along the Mississippi River as far north as St. Louis. In fact, a specimen of a female bird was collected near Forest Park on May 8, 1886, and that specimen still exists in the Denver Museum of Natural History. After 1895 the bird was extirpated in Missouri. Its last sighting in the U.S. was in what is known as the

Singer Tract of bottomland woods and swamps in Louisiana in the 1930s.

For over sixty years birders have been looking in vain for this feathered needle in a bayou haystack. Now we know it still wings its way in some godforsaken swamp a few hundred miles south of here. Hallelujah!



Book Reviews
by Holly Parks

Perennials for the Lower Midwest presents 101 of the author's favorite perennials for the challenging area in which we garden, ones that can be trusted to do well in our area. The major criteria are the ability to withstand our hot summers and our alternating freeze and thaw winters. The plants must have good-looking foliage for most of the garden season and require minimum care. Mr. Hagar feels that for every plant that won't thrive in the "Zombie Zones," there are at least two more that will. Many plants on the list are native to our area – no surprise that they would do well. Some would be considered "weeds" by most gardeners; don't be surprised to find Queen Anne's Lace and cattails!

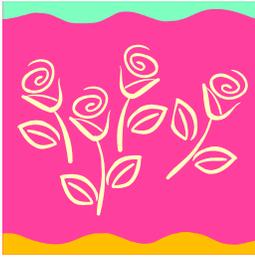
The photos illustrate real gardens created by landscape designers as well as amateur gardeners. Both text and

photographs are replete in ideas for easy and effective plant combinations and color schemes. The author recommends choosing perennials that will grow well in the soil already in place rather than amending the soil texture and pH balance. Regular fertilizer and integrated pest management are the only other practices he prefers.

Each plant has a separate section devoted to it accompanied by close-up photos of the plant and ones showing the plant in a typical garden setting to give an idea of scale and form. The author specifies varieties for color or other behavior and suggests when to use this particular perennial such as in the shade, in clay soil, against a wall, etc. He gives a number of examples of how he has used the plant and several suggestions for other combinations to try.

Perennials for the Lower Midwest by Ezra Haggard is a 208 page soft cover book published by Indiana University Press. It is available at the Missouri Botanical Garden gift shop for \$29.95 before your discount as a Master Gardener.





Roses
By
Anne Ragland

Roses add beauty and fragrance to any garden. Contrary to popular belief, they are not a difficult plant to raise. Roses are typically broken down into six categories: shrub, hybrid tea, floribunda, grandiflora, miniature, and climbing/ramblers.

Shrub roses come in all sizes and shapes and work well in the landscape whether trained to a fence or covering the ground. They provide abundant bloom with a minimum of care. Most will bloom intermittently throughout the summer.

Hybrid teas are good if you want to cut long stemmed, large flowers. They have many petals, are usually fairly tall and upright, and some have great fragrance.

Floribundas are the most colorful of all rose types. Planted in mass, they provide garden color all summer blooming in clusters with many colors to choose from.

Grandifloras will provide abundant garden color and vases of cut roses. They are constantly in bloom, grow in various shapes and heights, and come in a wide range of colors.

Miniatures have the exquisite beauty of roses in delicate detail. These plants may be small, but they are perfectly proportionate with diminutive flowers, foliage and usually compact habits.

Climbers can add vertical interest on a trellis or arbor. They dress up a drab fence with color and foliage.

Almost all roses need at least six hours of full sun per day. Zephirine Drouhine and some newer varieties like the Knockout series can do well with less.

Roses need well-drained soil. Plant in a hole twice as large as the diameter of the root ball. Plant so that the graft union is just below the soil surface. Place two – three inches of mulch around the base of the plant to retain moisture

A soil test can inform you any nutrients needed. Bone meal will help with root and bloom development. A half cup on Epsom salts once a month between May and August will provide them with needed magnesium.

Roses need about an inch of water week. Watering in the morning will allow the sun to dry off foliage during the day lessening the chance of disease.

even an Ameren UE driver stopped by to check and see that the flowers he inadvertently hit while bumping up on the median were okay! Now that's taking pride in your city!



Tip of the Month

Divide crowded iris and daylily clumps after they have bloomed.



A hearty thank you is extended from Bill Ruppert of Horticulture Co-Op to all Master Gardeners who participated with the recent downtown plantings on Market and Tucker Streets.

If you haven't driven by to see the results of all the plantings, you're sure to be amazed at the *explosion* of tropical color in the midst of downtown traffic.

Word has it that the downtown population is so appreciative of the efforts put forth to beautify the area that



Ornamentals – All Month

Perennials that have finished blooming should be deadheaded. Cut back the foliage some to encourage tidier appearance.

Provide water in the garden for the birds, especially during dry weather.

Remove infected leaves from roses. Pick up fallen leaves. Continue fungicidal sprays as needed.

Newly planted trees and shrubs should continue to be watered thoroughly, once a week.

Fertilize container plants every 2 weeks with a water soluble solution.

Keep weeds from making seeds now. This will mean less weeding next year.

Keep deadheading spent annual flowers for continued bloom.

Fruits – All Month

Cover grape clusters loosely with paper sacks to provide some protection from marauding birds.

Week One – Prune out and destroy old fruiting canes of raspberries after harvest is complete. Blackberries are ripening now.

Weeks 2-3 Apply second spray to trunks of peach trees for peach borers.

Weeks 3-4 Early peach varieties ripen now.

Week 4 – Thornless blackberries ripen now.

Turfgrass – All Month

Water frequently enough to prevent wilting. Early morning irrigation allows turf to dry before nightfall and will reduce the chance of disease.

Weeks 3-4 monitor lawns for newly hatched white grubs. If damage is occurring, apply appropriate controls, following product label directions.

St. Louis Master Gardeners Kemper Center for Home Gardening

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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 Stacy Rolfe (srolfe@charter.net). Letters may be edited for length or content.

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