



Master Gardener News

A monthly publication of the St. Louis Master Gardeners

August 2005

Calendar of Events

August 5th – Basic Power Point Training Class at UMSL.

August 19th – Advanced Power Point Training Class at UMSL

August 31st – MG Level II Class on Perennials by Bill Ruppert. Kemper Classroom. **Note date change**

September 3rd – 5th Japanese Festival

October 1st – 2nd Best of Missouri Market



What's Inside

Too Late to Plant Potatoes? Find out in John Stephens Q&A

New Master Gardener Logo is underway...read the Advisory Minutes

State MG Conference Nearing

From Lemonade Stands to Apple Cider Stands...Best of Missouri is upon us

A Word from the Editor, by Stacy Rolfe

Hmmm, what to write, what to write, what to write. Think. Think. Think. Every month I put myself to the task of coming up with something to say. Something to keep with the season. Creative if at all possible (and sometimes certainly not). Funny (maybe). Soul baring (think big hands). Educational (that's a stretch). Eye catching (I don't know). Well let me tell you – it's not easy. Once I finish writing this (that is if I actually do finish) I'll start keeping post-it notes on my brain to remind myself of ideas to write about for the next month. I suppose I could write about the incredible day 30 MG's were treated to on the recent tour of Forest Park, hosted by Flora Conservancy. Ask anyone who attended- we were all so impressed with the beauty of the park, the ownership of the MG's who serve as it's caretakers, and the pride that we all walked away with knowing that the largest

urban park in the country rests not only here in our own city, but, is perfectly spoiled by the volunteers and commitment of our own Master Gardeners. Or should I say something about the Best of Missouri Market that's coming up in a mere 2 months? Can't do that – Dan's expecting a full blown article inside. I could tell you that I recently weathered the "green meanie" slide and "tornado" at Six Flag's Hurricane Harbor, but, unless you're 12 years old, that wouldn't really matter, plus, who really cares? So, I'll skip it. Or I could tell you that I told our 'sprinkler guy' who was at our house today that I don't know what I would do without him – but, you might think I'm showing off, which I'm not. I'm just incredibly grateful that he makes it possible for all my plants to get water from a source other than me. So, what do I write about??? Think. Think, Think. Looks like another night I'll have to sleep on it.



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

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





Kemper Center Receptionist 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.

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



Are you 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 email Jackie.juras@mobot.org

Pot Recycling Success!



The Kemper Center has offered once again for the sixth year to recycle pots and trays for Garden members, the St. Louis area public and garden centers. This year's goal was to collect 40,000 pounds, but it went one step higher -- 60,000 pounds!! We are proud to say that it continues to grow in popularity as our gardeners demonstrate their concern for the environment. All this has been made possible by grants from the St. Louis - Jefferson Solid Waste Management District and the Department of Natural Resources along with the MO Environmental Improvement and Energy Resource Authority. Over the last six years, we have diverted about 200 tons of plastic from the landfills. We would like to acknowledge the following volunteers who assisted this effort - it's hard work but they were terrific. Our pot recyclers included Cindy Corley-Crapsey, George Thornburgh, Anna Leavey, Lola Reed, Rhett Ruecker, Betsy Alexander, Betty Burdick, Carla Jackson, Peggy Moehlenbrock, Pat Lynn, Susan Hackney, Terri Bonebrake, Bob Irwin, Anne Kirkpatrick, Hohit Maheshwari, Diane Ely, Peggy Knippel, Verna Gremaud, Lisa Dieckhaus, John McLain, Pam Hass, Carol Gravens, Claire Linzee, Tobi Ross, Angie Menard, Marjorie Domeier, Lind Kalicak, Laura Chisolm, Rosalie Seeman, Mike Olson, Linda Strunk, Ann Robison, Maddy Sheprow, Evie Dickerman, Ron Stevens, Nancy Seifer, Diane Dunn, Tina Eimer, Holly Beck, Jack Lane, Harold Tennyson, Deborah Ladd, Gary Karpinski, Valerie Dowdy, Emery Harmon, Jan Thomas, Patti Donovan, Anne Orcutt, Leon Zickrick, Cathy Arnold, Martha Gallagher, Connie Alwood, Ken Duenke, Dan Gravens, Mike Fink, Katie Belisle-Iffrig, Craig Jung, Jackie Juras, Jean Ponzi, and Glenda Abney. I want to personally thank Mary Ann Fink, also a Master Gardener for her constant dedication to this project. We look forward to next year! Steve Cline





Q: Are these "pimples" on my grape leaves, (specimen submitted), of any significance?



A: The "pimples" are leaf galls of grape phylloxera, aphid-like insects that can infest both foliage and roots of wild and cultivated grapevines. Leaf galls are unsightly but do little damage. Infestation of roots, however, leads to root galls, which can cause severe root pruning, decline, and death of susceptible vines. American grape varieties, whose root stocks support the worldwide grape industry, are tolerant to the root gall form of the insect. Foliar sprays to control phylloxera are usually unnecessary.

Q: Is it likely that TMV is causing the lower leaves on my tomato plants to curl and turn yellow?



A: It is unlikely. Leaf roll is associated with varieties carrying

a so-called wilt gene and is characterized by upward curling of leaflets on older, (bottom), leaves. Factors that promote curl include high temperature, drought, very wet soils, and heavy fruit set. No special treatment is required.

TMV, tobacco mosaic virus, on the other hand, can also cause foliar curling but is usually first expressed in new growth, (top), as light and dark mottling with slight deformation of leaflets. Sometimes, green fruits are also mottled and plants are stunted. Plants should be destroyed.

Q: Is it too late to plant potatoes?



A: Potatoes, for fall harvest, can be planted through July 15. You may have trouble in finding suitable stocks of seed potatoes for purchase at this time of year. Try an Internet search.

Q: How can I hold my gloxinia over for reblooming?



A: After flowering ceases and dormancy approaches, reduce quantity and frequency of watering over a period of about three weeks, or until the stems have died back. Store the rhizome, still in its dry, pot mixture, until repotting time next spring. At that time, remove the rhizomes, carefully shake off the

dry, previous year's mix, and pull them apart. Plant each rhizome singly about one inch deep in moistened potting mix, and place the pots in bright, filtered light. When growth starts, care for the plants as in the past.

Q: How much longer must we endure the current onslaught of Japanese beetles?



A: Although you may find a few Japanese beetles into early October, their numbers remain high enough to cause significant feeding damage for only about six weeks. This year, that means their numbers should be much reduced by the end of July. Meanwhile, continue your control measures, handpicking and/or sprays, as required.

Q: What should I be doing—my onions are falling over?



A: This is normal behavior. Onions should be harvested in late July or early August when most of the tops have fallen over. Pull the mature onions in the morning, and allow the bulbs to air dry in a shady spot. Then before evening dew falls, tie them into bunches for hanging in a dry place with good air circulation. Full drying may require two to three weeks. Try to keep the dry wrapper scales as intact as possible, as they enhance keeping properties. When dry, cut stems to 2-inches and store bulbs in mesh bags under cool, dry conditions. Properly stored, well-dried onions may keep until midwinter.





Upcoming Events

Goin' to Kansas City 2005

Master Gardeners of Greater Kansas City 11th Annual Missouri State Conference September 17th – 18th

Still need a push to register for the State Conference? Here's just a few:

Choose from 15 workshops, one conducted by Nationally known Author Felder Rushing (Saturday morning), 5 incredible tours offered on Saturday afternoon including the breath taking grounds of Powell Gardens, Great Kansas City food and hospitality, BBQ Dinner and jazz Saturday evening, additional workshops and luncheon on Sunday, and lots of time to spend with fellow Master Gardeners in a new environment!

Where: Hilton Garden Inn,
Independence, MO
Telephone #816.350.3000 or
800.445.8667
Special Conference room rate of \$85
plus tax

Cost: Pre registration by August 15th
\$110.00; after August 15th \$135.
Optional Advance Training Friday,
September 16th \$25
Commemorative T-shirt, \$14
First 50 registrants receive a

complimentary MG canvas bag!

Application forms, conference
information available at
<http://extension.missouri.edu/mg> and
www.hiltongardeninn.com

Questions? Contact Dan Gravens at
314.821.1786

Best of Missouri Market a 2005 MG Initiative



Beginning with the upcoming Best of Missouri Market, October 2nd- 3rd, Master Gardeners have been offered the opportunity to put the 'cider press' under our volunteer umbrella, gain hours, have fun and raise money for various MG projects.

If you've never had the chance to attend the Best of Missouri Market, you're missing out on one of the highest regarded fall festivals offered in the state of Missouri. The BOM includes a gathering of people from all over the state who come to share and view wares from within the state. Items include food, crafts, drinks, soaps, jellies, jams, apple butter, kids area (decorate pumpkins, make bonnets, HomeDepot has a children's workshop, cow milking) sausages, cheeses, recipes, and more. This is a very upscale venue appealing to those who just want to enjoy the festive atmosphere to the serious minded connoisseur.

Master Gardeners will be operating the *electric* cider press, new for this year to make apple cider for sale. Local boy scouts and girl scouts will also be on hand to help out too. Volunteers are needed to operate the cider press, "run" the cider from the presses to the jugs, and sell the cider to the public. Approximately 20-25 people will be needed to volunteer each day for four hour shifts. We will be pressing and selling approximately 4,000 pounds of apples!

Our booth will be a large 10x12 tent with 2 tables and 2 cattle drinking galvanized tubs filled with ice to store the apple cider. We are also looking for someone with an artistic flair to help out with the signage for our booth as well as decorate the tent.

All proceeds earned from the sale of the apple cider will be used for future MG purchases, such as laptops, presentation materials, educational training needs etc.

So why not plan on spending a few hours having a good time with MG's, making friends, earning money for our organization and enjoying the Best of Missouri market yourself! For further information, contact the chairperson for the MG booth, Dan Litsch at 636.938.5487.

Garden Clubs and Shows

August 6th – 7th Daylily Show and Sale
at Ridgway 9-5 p.m.

August 13th – 14th Iris Society Sale at
Ridgway 10-5 p.m.

Federated Garden Clubs Show at
Ridgway 9-5 p.m.

August 17th – 28th Gesnariad Show and
Sale at Ridgway 9-5 p.m.



Level II Training Guidelines, Approved Activities and Applications...

A new format for achieving MG Level II certification is now in effect. If you are interested in advancing to Level II, contact Phil Egart at 314.577.9441 or phillip.egart@mobot.org to receive information by mail or e-mail. The information sheet contains Master Gardener Level II Training Guidelines, Level II Approved Activities, and an Application for MG Level II Certification.



**Advisory Board Committee
Minutes for June 28, 2005** can
be found at
<http://outreach.missouri.edu/stlouismg/minutes/minutes.htm> Next
meeting will be held August 30th 1-3
p.m. EECC Bldg.

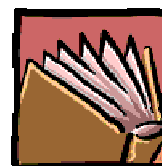


Bird Bath By Connie Alwood

Most Master Gardeners know all about plants that will attract birds to our gardens. We've put in winterberries for the robins and

mockingbirds and coneflowers and sunflowers for the goldfinches and cardinals. Most of us even have a bird bath or two and have watched the starlings and the chickadees take their morning baths. This is all good entertainment, but we can take this one step further by putting in a "bubbler." Bubblers attract birds that we seldom see. These are the treetoppers such as the spring and fall warblers, migrants who will stop to drink and bathe because nothing attracts birds more than gently running water. Many of these birds eschew suet or birdseed. Their idea of a good meal is a tasty insect or larvae found in your sycamore or oak, so don't expect them at your feeders. Birdbaths don't attract them either. They want running water, but it must be gentle. I found out this little known fact after I put in a two thousand gallon pond complete with a waterfall. Grackles even walked through the waterfall, but it scared the warblers, the jewels of the songbirds, away. Instead of spending thousands of dollars on a big fishbowl, what I should have done is read Randy Korotev's article on the Webster Groves Nature Study Society's website (<http://levee.wustl.edu/~rlk/wgnss/fountain.html>) where he outlines how you can purchase and put together a fairly cheap (less than twenty-five dollars) bubbler. See you at the hardware store

**Have a bird question for Connie? You
can email him at**
calwood@sbcglobal.net



Book Review By Holly Parks

Bulbs, one of the Taylor Gardening Guides, covers 480 spring and summer bulbs. It starts with a short discussion of general topics such as planning for season-long bloom, buying and growing bulbs. This includes detailed instructions for propagation, forcing bulbs indoors and overwintering tender bulbs. However the largest section of the book is devoted to specific cultivars of various bulb groups. Bulbs is a good reference book for any gardener wanting to start or expand their bulb collection.

The gallery of plants lists the bulbs in alphabetic order, including a color photo of the bulb in bloom and a short summary of growing requirements: size, light requirements, soil requirements, suitable zone range and some short comments.

The encyclopedia of plants follows the gallery [although I would have preferred combining the two sections]. The encyclopedia is also arranged alphabetically with the detail information about the bulb and specific cultivars that the author feels perform reliably. The encyclopedia describes the plant, more detail on growing the bulb and a list of



specific plants with description of the unique characteristics. This section covers the expected standards such as dahlias, lilies, narcissus, tulips, hyacinths and muscari. It also lists some unexpected plants such as daylilies, four- o'clocks and liatris. Bulbs by Barbara W. Ellis is a 439 page softcover book published by Houghton Mifflin. It is available at the Missouri Botanical Garden gift shop for \$23 before your discount as a Master Gardener.

Deer Wrecking Havoc on Your Plants?



Here's a new product to try as recommended and proven effective by our friends at Wild Birds Unlimited in Chesterfield. It's called the All Natural Plant Saver Deer Repellent and according to store owners Butch and Jan Payne, they have used this product since spring and have found it to be extremely effective at keeping the deer at bay. According to the manufacturer, Cedar Creek Products, here's how it works: Sprinkle the product on the ground or hang the enclosed little bags every 2-3 feet in the garden. Tie the bags onto your shrubs and trees in the winter to deter them as well. Some people have found them to be a blessing at the bird feeders! Comes with 10 little cotton bags to hang around the garden. All conveniently packaged in a larger cotton bag.

This product boasts preventing deer damage from fruit trees, blooming plants

and is safe for shrubs and flowers.

Won't wear off from rain or irrigation systems. Keeps deer away from plants for six months. This is an all natural product made up of cloves, bone meal and soap. Sells for \$9.99 for one size bag. Wild Birds Unlimited is located at 1739 Clarkson Rd. 636.537.5574

Dividing Perennials

Reproduced with permission from *St. Louis Times* article by Steven Cline, Ph.D.



If you garden with a lot of perennials, there comes a point when they become overgrown and begin to lose their vigorous growth and flower development. Late summer is the time to consider dividing these plants. The reason for dividing is three-fold: to keep the plants young and vigorous, to control growth preventing them from getting out of bounds, and to multiply the number of plants you have reducing the purchase of new ones. The division process involves digging out the old clumps and physically splitting them apart so that young plants and their root systems can be moved to a new location. This is the easiest method of propagating and it ensures, unlike the consequences of seed propagation, that the new plants will be just like their parents in growth habit and flower color. As a general rule, spring flowering perennials can be divided in the fall while fall flowering perennials should be divided in the spring. The three most commonly planted and divided perennials are daylilies, irises, and peonies. Here are a few tips on getting them under control and re-established.

During the hot summer weather, an overgrown daylily bed will become slightly yellowed and look weak. As individual

daylily clumps get old, their centers will no longer produce leaves and flowers and overall, the bed will look a little thin. Renovating daylilies to get rid of the old centers and separate the juvenile plants is an easy practice best done in mid-August. About a day before digging the plants, water an otherwise dry bed and cut the leaf tips back to about half height. Begin by prying the clumps out of the soil with a four-tined spading fork. The fork is the best tool since it gently lifts the root system without a great deal of injury. Shovels will tear root systems and cause too much damage. After digging, lay the plants on their sides at the edge of the bed, then begin working the soil. This is the time when you can amend the soil to improve drainage and increase its tilth. Compost or sphagnum moss can be incorporated by layering a three to six-inch working it in. There is no need to add fertilizer at this point. This should be done in the spring as the ground warms up and leaves appear. Next, hose the plants down with a good stream of water to remove some of the soil and with the aid of two spading forks slide these into the center of each clump, forcing the clump apart by leveraging the forks apart from each other. One clump may be divided several times to gain bunches with 2 to 3 leafy shoots. These can then be replanted in the prepared bed spacing plants 16 to 18 inches apart. There is no real trick to setting the plants back into the bed since daylilies are very forgiving and tend to seek their own soil depth over time. As a rule of thumb, plant each clump no more than 1 inch below the surface of the soil. Planting deeper may retard and reduce flower production in subsequent years. Daylilies need about 6 to 8 weeks to develop a new root system and this growth needs to be completed before the average first frost: October 15 in St. Louis. Plantings can then be mulched for winter using 2 to 3 inches of bark, composted leaves or leaf mold.



Dividing irises is similar to daylilies except that now you are dealing with a rhizome root system instead of a fleshy one. Iris can be divided every 3 to 5 years to reduce crowding and maintain vigorous growth. Begin by digging out the rhizomes and washing away most of the soil. Examine the roots for signs of rotting or holes in the fleshy part possibly caused by iris borers. Cut these damaged areas out and discard. Then, cut the healthy rhizomes into sections. Each section must have a fan of leaves, several inches of rhizome and healthy roots. Trim the leaves to one third their height and dig a shallow hole in a sunny, well drained site. Make a cone of soil in the center of the hole and place the rhizome on it with the roots spreading out in all directions. Cover with soil and water well. Iris are shallow growing so this means that they should be planted level with the soil surface. Space each division 18 inches apart.

While many perennials can be divided in the spring as well as in the fall, peonies should be divided in the fall. Peonies have a tuberous root system that produce underground eyes from which new plants arise. The trick here is to gently lift the root system with a garden fork, then wash the root system off to expose the developing pinkish eyes from which shoots will grow. Use a sharp knife to slice the tubers from the crown downward. You will need to retain 3 to 5 eyes on each division in order to generate a new plant. Discard weak and diseased sections and those with fewer eyes per section. Most of tuberous-rooted plants do not like to be disturbed and it may take several seasons to re-establish flowering. Plant tubers no deeper than one inch into the soil, then mulch with one inch of compost or leaf mold. Peonies set deeper may not flower the next year. This is a common mistake. Space plants 3 feet apart. Peonies need to be divided only when the plants become crowded and flower size is reduced. This may be every 8 to 10 years.

August Tip of the Month



Sow seeds of beans, beets, spinach, and turnips now for the fall garden. Spinach may germinate better if seeds are refrigerated for one week before planting.

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.

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

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