



Master Gardener News

A monthly publication of the St. Louis Master Gardeners

June 2006

Calendar of Events

Plastic Pot Recycling – Weekends throughout June

June 17th - 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Speaker's Bureau Meeting Kemper Center Classroom

June 18th – Father's Day, *Try a handwritten father's day card this year*

June 25th – MG Level II Training, Private Tour of Karen Koehneman's Garden 1:00 p.m.



What's Inside

Garden Contest Deadlines Approaching!

Exciting news to unfold at upcoming Speaker's Bureau meeting

Volunteer Opportunities

Girdling –Dangerous for women and trees...see John Stephens Q&A

A Word from the Editor, by Stacy Rolfe

If I had time on my hands, I would have a yard free of weeds. My flowers would thrive in the care they received. I would relish the sun as it warmed up my back and lull in the gardens and see just what they lack. I would take the time to sit on my bench with not a care in the world if I suddenly got a drench. My fountains would sound like a place faraway and I would forget to think about what needs to be done for the day. But my swing goes unswung for the things that I have to get done. And the feeders become bare because of work not lack of care. For I have little hands to hold and noses to wipe. They'll only be little once,

so please don't think of this as a gripe. In the years to come my gardens will still be here, the weeds will be too, but sidewalk chalk doesn't stay long so I do what I must do.



MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

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





City of Kirkwood Needs Our Help

The Annual Tree Evaluations for the City of Kirkwood are about to take place, and Master Gardeners are encouraged to help with the process. Tree knowledge is not essential- training will be provided. The data collected is both practical and useful for the City of Kirkwood. Volunteer time on this project counts toward MG hours.

There will be a short training session on Saturday, June 17th at 9:00 a.m. The meeting spot is the Kirkwood Community Center. You will be given a partner, an official vest to wear, and a specific work zone. You will have one full week to complete your tree evaluations. Meet at the Community Center the following Saturday, June 24th to turn in your completed evaluations, and to enjoy a complementary lunch!

To sign up, or for further information, please call June at 577-9445.



The City of Chesterfield Needs our Help Too...

The city of Chesterfield will soon be home to its own tree nursery for use with city tree replacements and new plantings. They will be receiving 50 trees from Forest ReLeaf in October and will need volunteers to assist with the ongoing care and maintenance of the nursery. If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Mindy Mohrman with the City of Chesterfield at 636.537.4773.



Mark Your Calendars Now...

Annual MG Picnic Promises Good Ol' Fashioned Family Fun!

This year's picnic is sure to be a hit with the entire family. Located in the air-conditioned Trolley Room in the Visitor's Center at Forest Park, you and your guests will enjoy lunch, trivia games, Forest Park presentation, face painting, door prizes and raffles! There will also be a guided tour of Forest Park following the picnic. **Sunday June 11th 11:30 a.m.**

Don't miss all the fun – call Leigh Butler to RSVP at 314.577.9443

Beverages and entrée will be provided. Please sign up to bring a side dish, salad or dessert.

Speaker's Bureau Meeting June 17th



On Saturday June 17 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 the Speakers Bureau will meet to Celebrate, Recognize, Discuss, Explore and Examine 10 key issues. *Members of the Speakers Bureau will not want to miss this meeting held at the Kemper Center.* Details will be sent in a letter to each member of the Speakers Bureau. Master Gardeners interested in the Speakers Bureau but not currently a member will be invited by sending a message to Van Spurgeon or Leigh Butler.





Q&A with John Stephens

Q: Do the stump remnants from an old maple tree poison that site for future plantings?



A: No. This misconception seems to crop up with increasing frequency. Residual materials from tree removals, chips, sawdust, roots, etc., decay when left in place. During this process, certain organisms tend to deplete the soil of nutrients, especially nitrogen, reducing the vigor of new plants installed in the site. Extra nitrogen fertilizer will help alleviate this problem as will removal of the woody residues.

Q: What should I do about a root that seems to be growing around my oak tree at ground level?



A: Such girdling roots may injure or even kill host trees by interrupting the flow of water and nutrients into upper stories. The offending root should probably be cut or perhaps removed. If this seems to be a difficult task, you should seek the services of

a professional arborist.

Q: How can I get rid of large patches of wild onion that have infested a garden area, which I'm renovating?



A: Total control of wild onion/wild garlic requires complete removal of the bulbs. This is best accomplished by hand digging and carefully screening the soil for bulbs and bulblets. It is helpful to leave the tops intact during this process for easier identification. The removed plants should be placed in the trash, not added to your compost pile.

Q: What can I do to force my Zoysia lawn to green-up earlier in the spring? Would dethatching help?



A: Zoysia, *Zoysia japonica*, is a warm season grass, which means that it goes dormant with fall frost and stays brown until temperatures remain above freezing in spring. There is no practical method for changing this temperature-dependent cycle. Lawns should be dethatched when thatch exceeds one-half inch in thickness. It should be done in June after the grass has begun to grow vigorously—obviously after spring green-up.

Q: How can I determine if moving a 10 year old Japanese maple tree makes sense?



A: This will be a big job requiring mechanical equipment and expert know-how. Consult a professional arborist.

Q: What do you think of planting a climbing hydrangea in a shady garden?



A: Climbing hydrangea, *H. anomala* subsp. *petiolaris*, a vigorous, sprawling, deciduous vine is best grown in rich, medium wet, well-drained soil in part shade to full shade. It can be grown vertically on a sturdy support or as a ground cover. The flower display in early summer is stunning. It often is slow in getting started in a new location. Plant it.

Q: I have heard that cypress vine attracts hummingbirds; what can you tell me about this plant?



A: Cypress vine, *Ipomea quamoclit*, also known as the cardinal vine, produces scarlet, 1-inch flowers that are attractive to hummingbirds. This annual climber grows best in a sunny, protected site with rich soil and medium moisture.





Bird Bath by Connie Alwood

Getting Started

According to the American Birding Association there are sixty-four million Americans who watch birds. The National Audubon Society reverses that number to forty-six million. Whichever number you want to believe, one must still conclude that that's a whole lot of people. Since both surveys include a great number of armchair birders, i.e. people who just put up bird feeders in order to see anything fly around on a winter's day, I suspect that the number is misleading. I once told my brother-in-law that he had a Black-capped Chickadee coming to his feeder. He replied that he could point out the cardinals, doves and the jays, but that the rest were just birds. When I started to point out what other birds were coming to the feeder, I soon realized that no matter how interested he was, he lacked basic birding skills.

Dan couldn't use binoculars very well. When I shared my binoculars, he couldn't easily find the bird. Often the birds would fly away before he could get on them. His frustration was evident from the beginning. It was also evident that Dan was like many people, just happy to know that birds came to his feeder. He liked to see them there, but he wasn't particular about identifying them.

Yet I have also met many people who would like to know more about birds and not just the ones coming to their backyard feeders. Learning to identify birds is easier than you think. All you need is a field guide and a pair of

serviceable binoculars. Step out the door. Birds will give you two clues to where they are. They will move about and they will sing or vocalize.

In June, if you live in the city or in an inner ring suburb, there are only thirty five or so birds that you can see in your backyard. If you live in Wildwood or St. Charles County, it would be a few more. Of course, it would behoove all beginners to study the introductory pages in the field guide.

If you find that you would like to learn more, there are a couple of ways to do so. Join the St. Louis Audubon Society and/or the Webster Groves Nature Study Society. Both groups have weekly field trips and beginners are always welcome. Another proven method of improving one's birding skills is to take Bill Rowe's evening class here at the garden.

Bill is a natural born teacher and his classes are always well received. Furthermore, you will take several birding trips to nearby birding areas in order to see the greatest variety of birds. If I could just get my brother-in-law to sign up, we could talk about something other than the high price of oil.



Book Review with Holly Parks

Earth Ponds Sourcebook [The Pond Owner's Manual and Resource Guide] is a down-to-earth book which covers building and maintaining ponds of all sizes from ones large enough for fishing and boating to the smallest backyard decorative pond. It starts with the obvious: choosing a site where there is plentiful clean water and soil conditions

that slow water absorption. It discusses all the options from compacting soil to dams to rubber liners. The emphasis is on low maintenance, healthy ponds that remain stable and safe over the years. If you plan your pond carefully using these instructions, you can avoid many of the problems pond owners encounter. Each chapter ends with a listing of appropriate resources to buy products, manuals, equipment, etc.

Mr. Matson devotes a chapter to maintaining the pond that includes a section on how to analyze pond problems and then discusses several options for cleaning the pond from dredging to dyes to weeding methods to adding crawfish. The crawfish method is the most appealing as it provides a potential source for the dinner table!

There is a chapter on pond activities. You can follow the instructions to build a beach, create a skating pond for winter, using the pond for fire protection or raising fish. A whole chapter is devoted to creating an environment to attract and sustain wildlife that you would enjoy – as well as how to deter wildlife that can create problems such as geese or beavers.

The last chapter in the book is devoted to the garden ponds for the backyard. This chapter is short but very specific with detailed drawings on topics such as installing a liner.

Earth Ponds Sourcebook by Tim Matson is a 181 page softcover book published by The Countryman Press. It is available for \$21.95 [or \$17.56 for Master Gardeners] at the Garden Gate Shop at the Botanical Gardens.





Planting for Butterflies

By

Anne Ragland

Planting for butterflies will add enjoyment to your garden in the form of watching these beautiful visitors.

Attracting butterflies is easy; provide nectar plants for the adults, vegetation for the caterpillars, host plants for the eggs, a warm basking spot, and a bit of water. You don't have to plant specific plants unless you want to attract specific species of butterflies.

Butterflies are attracted to the colors red, yellow, orange, and purple. Single blossoms are easier to perch on. Plant in full sun, sheltered from strong wind. Provide flat stones to bask on and damp sites to puddle on. Puddling is when butterflies will set on a damp spot of dirt or sand to take in minerals.

Butterflies will accept nectar from many plants, but caterpillars are plant specific. For instance monarchs will only lay eggs on milkweed and the caterpillars will eat only milkweed leaves. Monarch butterflies however will drink from many species of flowers. Plant a variety of flowering plants, including natives, to provide sustenance spring through fall and you will be rewarded throughout the summer.

Suggested plants for caterpillars are: aster, carrot, cleome, clover, dill, milkweed, native grasses, parsley, and willow.

Suggested plants for butterflies are aster, bee balm, butterfly bush, butterfly weed, cardinal flower, goldenrod, marigold, nasturtium, phlox, yarrow, viburnum and zinnia.

There are many other plants attractive

to both caterpillars and butterflies. There are many sites on the web, search on butterfly gardening. The plant finder option on <http://www.mobot.org> allows you to search by plants that are attractive to butterflies. Our own MG Speakers Bureau offers a presentation on the topic. The Missouri Department of Conservation publishes a great brochure on the subject and information on their website

<http://www.mdc.mo.gov/nathis/insects/butterfly/>.

So, plant plenty of variety of flowers and sit back and enjoy nature's show.



Pass the Posies, Please

By

Cynthia Corley-Crapsey

Daylilies originated in Asia, and have been used as food by the Chinese since the earliest written records. A delicious main course is:

Stir Fry Hemerocallis Daylily Shrimp

Peanut Oil

1 T freshly grated ginger

1 clove garlic, finely minced

½ cup onion, chopped

4 daylily buds

Petals from 4 daylily flowers

8 oz. mushrooms, sliced

1 cup Chinese cabbage coarsely chopped

½ cup red bell pepper, chopped

1 lb medium shrimp, peeled and

deveined

1 T rice wine vinegar

2 T cornstarch dissolved in 2 T water

Sauce: 1 tsp sesame oil

1 T tamari

1 tsp granulated sugar

Heat wok on high heat. When hot, swirl in peanut oil to lightly coat wok. Add ginger and garlic, stirring constantly. Add onion and cook for one minute. Add daylily buds and petals, mushrooms, cabbage and pepper a bit at a time so wok does not cool down.

Cook for 1 minute, stirring frequently. Add shrimp and cook until pink. Mix sauce ingredients together in a bowl.

Pour into wok, stirring until sauce turns transparent and glossy. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

Edible Flowers From Garden to Palate

by Cathy Wilkinson Barash



Meeting Minutes for April 25th Advisory Committee Meeting may be found at

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



Master Gardener News



Wild Ones Natural Landscapers is a national organization promoting biodiversity through the establishment of native landscapes. Our St. Louis chapter **has two projects of interest to Master Gardeners:**

Sunday, June 25th – Wild Ones teams with the Green Center in University City and Shaw Nature Reserve for the second annual Grow Wild Garden Tour. Volunteers are needed to act as hosts at native gardens on the tour and to help coordinate activities at the Green Center.

Saturday, September 23rd- installation date for the winning garden in the Native Landscape Challenge. Volunteers are needed to help plant the winning garden. This project is jointly sponsored by Wild Ones, Shaw Nature Reserve and Missouri's Grow Native! program.

For more information on these opportunities, go to www.grow-wild.org and follow the links to the St. Louis Chapter, or contact Betty Struckhoff at 314.966.8404 or bettystruckhoff@charter.net

Wild Ones, Shaw Nature Reserve, Grow Native Sponsor Native Landscape Challenge.

Tell your neighbors and friends or maybe your own yard is a candidate! This year, for the first time, the St. Louis area will have the opportunity to enter the Native Landscape Challenge. Visit the Shaw Nature Reserve website at www.shawnature.org for entry form and complete instructions. One lucky winner will receive a garden makeover for his or her yard, which will include a professionally designed native landscape, up to \$1,500 worth of plant and landscape materials, and a volunteer-installed garden. **Deadline for entries is June 15, 2006.** The winner's garden will be installed on September 23, 2006. All entrants must be in a zip code starting with "631".

For more information, go to the website of any of the sponsoring organizations: www.for-wild.org (go to St. Louis chapter) or www.shawnature.org or www.gronative.org (click on workshops and events). You may also contact Betty Struckhoff at 314.966.8404 or bettystruckhoff@charter.net

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

It's not too late to enter the 10th annual St. Louis Post-Dispatch Great Garden Contest. On Saturday, June 3, the last entry form is to be published in the Lifestyle section of the newspaper. And the following Saturday, June 10, is the postmark deadline for the contest. But the Post-Dispatch also is hoping to get Internet-savvy gardeners to enter their photos, plus entry forms, on-line by going to www.stltoday.com/lifestyle/garden. They should be able to do so, right up until

the deadline.

Other parts of the 2006 contest work like this.

There are six categories, including:

- Best Home Garden by an Amateur, the top prize for garden work done entirely by the homeowner.
- Best Home Garden by an Amateur with Professional Help.
- Best Group Garden, including community gardens, neighborhood efforts, church gardens or plantings around schools.
- Best Edible Garden, for home growers of vegetables, fruits, herbs or all three.
- Best Garden Photography (please enter pictures from your own garden).
- Best Serenity Garden, a new event and one that gives even the smallest garden a chance to win (think plantings and a peaceful place to sit).

Words of advice: Don't sweat a choice of category. Judges scrutinize each entry and sometimes move gardens where they – the judges – think they should be. And consider entering last year's garden photos – it's allowed -- if this year's garden isn't quite ready to compete.

Saturday, July 8, is when all winners are to be announced in Lifestyle.

Contest prizes range from \$150 to \$1,000 in gift certificates from more than 25 of the area's top garden centers.

Winners also get memberships to the Missouri Botanical Garden, and their gardens will be featured in six weeks of stories in July and August issues of Lifestyle. Selected great gardens also get a chance to be on KTVI-Channel 2 with Dave and Janice Murray. And Kirkwood artist Diane Sauer is making special laser-cut, powder-coated steel placards for first-place winners in each category of this 10th annual event.

Need to know more? Contact Master Gardener Becky Homan, contest coordinator and writer of contest stories, directly at becky.homan@sbcglobal.net.



Congratulations to the Master Gardener Class of 2006!



The graduating class of 2006 enjoyed a lovely BBQ celebration as they received their Master Gardener certificates on May 4th. Lots of fun and joking was exchanged during the ceremony as the graduating students took it upon themselves to hand out their own “awards” to instructors from the class for their style of teaching and testing. Hmm, if my memory serves me correctly, Steve Cline was known to be one of the easier testers....no wait, maybe I didn't get that right. And there was something about the way Harold handed out and collected papers...you'll have to ask him about it.

Congratulations to the 2006 class – go forth and share your wealth of knowledge!



News from Around Town...

Leon Zickrick tells us that the downtown medians on Market and Tucker Streets have once again

received the care they need from a group of Master Gardeners. Several groups have joined the efforts to beautify downtown St. Louis. Those groups include Operation Brightside, Gateway Greening and ringleader Bill Ruppert. The results during its initial year last year were spectacular. This year promises to be even bigger and splashier displays. Take a look next time your downtown.

And its congratulations to new Mommy **Tammy Palmier!** Tammy had a baby girl at the end of May and aptly named her **Iris Victoria**. Both parents and baby are doing well.

And it looks like **Kay Pelikan** is still walking around with the after glow smile of her daughter's wedding held at the end of April ... Pictures were passed around at the graduation ceremony and both Mom and Bride looked stunning on their special day. **Barb Hilton**...looks like your turn is next!

Bill Ruppert's busy getting the word out already about the upcoming American Begonia Society meeting scheduled for September 14th – 16th here in St. Louis.

I'm sure Bill will be giving us more information about this as the date approaches.

Have some news you want to share? Just email me at srolfe@charter.net.





The swing that goes unswung...

**St. Louis Master Gardeners
Kemper Center for Home Gardening**

P.O. Box 299 • St. Louis, MO 63166
www.outreach.missouri.edu/stlouismg

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.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
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 **MISSOURI
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Steven Cline, Ph.D.
Manager, Kemper Center
Missouri Botanical Garden

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