Hello Master Gardeners,

I'm writing on a brisk November morning when I should be outside cleaning up flower beds, planting bulbs, and spreading mulch - but it is cozy inside and just too raw outside.

On November 7th six MG’s went to Aberdeen Proving Ground to represent Master Gardeners at an APG Health and Wellness Fair. It was a stunning success! Our salad box and Nourishmat displays attracted the attention of well over 100 people. All of them had gardening questions and inquiries about Extension services. We talked ‘til we were almost hoarse, handed out seeds, Grow It Eat It schedules, 2014 Garden Series class lists, and salad box instructions. The crowd was very interested and enthusiastic. Since Aberdeen is a part of the county that we don't often reach, it was worthwhile use of our time. Thanks to Betty Foster, Mary Greveris, Lisa Rainey, JoAnn Spicer, and intern Ellen Haas for getting up early, loading and unloading the van, and being great representatives of the Master Gardener program.

Congratulations to the intern class of 2013 - they have all passed their test and are launched toward completing their volunteer hours. This is a very active group and many are already participating in programs! It's nice to have new volunteers to share the work.

A word to committee chairs - Carol Nau is working on updating our website. She requests all the chairs to send her a program "blurb" for the website. Also please send all your class schedules and events for posting. Thanks in advance for helping out.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our holiday party at Liriodendron on Thursday evening December 5th at 6:00PM. It's always a fun evening! Thanks to our organizers Mary Driver and Ellen Post. There will be a silent auction and raffle basket to raise funds for the Scholarship committee and Bay-Wise. In addition, the Sweet Adelines quartet will once again perform for us. We would like to present the ladies with a thank-you gift for singing, so plan to bring your checkbooks and/or some cash so you can participate when we will pass a basket!!
DAYTIME STUDY GROUP

The 2014 daytime study group is scheduled to meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 1 PM. There may be occasional changes due to holidays, availability of a speaker or the room. We will try to give you adequate notice. Feel free to contact us with any questions or suggestions for future meetings.

The next study group meeting will be at 1 pm on Wednesday, December 18th at the Extension Office. This will be a Holiday Centerpiece Workshop led by study group co-chair, Linda Masland. Attendees are asked to bring greens from their gardens, clippers, any Christmas embellishments they may want to use and, of course, a container in which to construct their designs. This can be whatever you want to use to enhance your Holiday décor – Gramma’s vase for the buffet, a special bowl for the dinner table, a ceramic something-or-other for the coffee table, a lined basket for the hearth, or whatever else you can think of. Greens need to be cut the day before and conditioned – that means cutting the stems on an angle and placing the greens in cool water over night so that they can absorb as much water as possible in order to stay fresh long into the holiday season. In addition to the greens you bring for yourself please bring some extra to share. Be prepared to discuss why you chose the greens you brought, how and where they grow and any other tidbits you can offer to educate your fellow Master Gardeners – or just bring what the deer haven’t eaten and let it go at that!

Linda will bring some flowers to add to the designs and some extra containers if you do not have one you wish to use. Linda will offer flower arranging tips she’s learned over the years and will gently critique the designs created.

Along with the floral arrangement workshop, Eleanor will have an apple tasting! Bring a couple of your favorite apples to contribute to the taste test. She’s planning to bring Arkansas Black and Crispin apples for your enjoyment.

This is a stress free and fun way to get your creative juices flowing and create something unique to surely dazzle and delight your family and friends! Don’t miss this Fun, Learning, and Holiday Experience!!

Eleanor Cone – 1998, Linda Masland - 1999

POINSETTIA DISPLAY AT RAWLINGS CONSERVATORY

Extend your enjoyment of flowers during the holiday by visiting Baltimore City’s Rawlings Conservatory. On display will be Winter Rose, Tapestry, Ice Punch, Shimmer Surprise, Strawberries & Cream, and Fireworks poinsettias along with a grand decorated tree and Victorian-style train garden. The poinsettias are grown at Cylburn and may be purchased. The Conservatory celebrated its 125th anniversary on November 3rd and the poinsettia show is a continuation of the celebration. The Conservatory will be decked out in all her glory and she certainly looks great for 125, but mind you she recently had a few nips and tucks. The show opens December 7th through December 29th and a fee of $5 per person is requested. If you have grandchildren, Santa will be present December 8th from 1-3 PM, and Mrs. Clause will be visiting December 14th from 10 AM to noon. For more information go to http://www.rawlingsconservatory.org/holiday-show. Be sure to check out the slide show of last year’s display.

Elaine Dodd 2004
Education Opportunity

What Tree Is That?

Winter Tree ID Walk and Talk

January 7th, 11:00 am at Oregon Ridge Nature Center in Baltimore County
Presented by University of MD Extension:
Steve Allgeier, Horticulture Consultant & Master Gardener Coordinator Carroll Co.
Kathy O’Neill, Carroll County Master Gardener
Cost: Free

Come learn how to identify common woodland trees and shrubs this winter. You will learn some of the common tricks for winter identification of woody plants. We will also discuss the landscape value of various native woody plants and the impact of invasive species found on this walk. Feel free to bring a copy of the Peterson Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs (Extra copies will be available to borrow). The walk will be 2 hours approx. Dress appropriately. Please meet in the Nature Center parking lot.
Registration required via email: hortman@umd.edu. Include “Oregon Ridge Tree Walk” in the subject line.

Pointy clustered flower buds of Wild Cherry Prunus avium. Photo: Paul Kirtley.

The clustered terminal buds characteristic of oak trees. English Oak, Quercus robur. Photo: Sten Porse
**News Article- a correction to Joyce’s error at the monthly meeting**

**Daddy Long Legs Myth - Have you heard the following myth repeated?**

“Daddy-Longlegs are one of the most poisonous spiders, but their fangs are too short to bite humans.”

This tale has been lurking around for years. I have heard it repeatedly in the United States and even heard a school teacher misinforming her class at a museum in Brisbane, Australia. This is incorrect, but to clarify it, several points need to be explained first.

**The animals-** Most folks who retell this tale have no idea that they are referring to two completely separate groups of animals: "daddy-longlegs" and "daddy-longlegs spiders". In the animal class Arachnida, there are several lower level divisions called Orders. Scorpions are in the Order Scorpiones, spiders are in the Order Araneae, ticks and mites are in the Order Acari.

The creatures most correctly called daddy-longlegs are in their own separate Order which is Opiliones. Common names for this Order are 1) daddy-longlegs, 2) harvestmen and 3) opilionids. They are characterized by having one basic body segment which shows segmentation on the posterior portion, at most 2 eyes and all 8 legs attach to the pill-like body segment. They are usually found under logs and rocks, prefer moist habitat although they can be found in the desert, often have long flexible legs (in the temperate Northern hemisphere but there are also short-legged daddy-longlegs) and they do not produce silk so therefore they are never found in webs unless they are being eaten by spiders. Because they are found under logs and other stuff which people most often are not turning over, most folks don’t run into daddy-longlegs very often.

Another creature often called daddy-longlegs are actually spiders. These long-legged spiders are in the family Pholcidae. Previously the common name of this family was the cellar spiders but arachnologists have also given them the moniker of "daddy-longlegs spiders" because of the confusion generated by the general public. Because these arachnids are spiders, they have 2 body basic body parts (cephalothorax and abdomen), have 8 eyes most often clumped together in the front of the body, the abdomen shows no evidence of segmentation, have 8 legs all attached to the front most body part (the cephalothorax) and make webs out of silk.

This is most probably the animal to which people refer when they tell the tale because these spiders are plentiful especially in cellars (hence their common name) and are commonly seen by the general public. The most common pholcid spiders found in U.S. homes are both European immigrants. Pholcus phalangioides is a uniformly grey spider with rectangular, elongate abdomen and is found throughout the U.S. Holocnemus pluchei also has a
rectangular, elongate abdomen but has a brown stripe on the ventral side (the belly side - which is typically directed upwards since the spider hangs upside down in its web) which covers its sternum and is a stripe on the abdomen. These spiders are very common along the Pacific Coast and into the southwest deserts.

**Is there any truth to this oft-repeated tale?** Daddy-longlegs (Opiliones) - these arachnids make their living by eating decomposing vegetative and animal matter although are opportunist predators if they can get away with it. They do not have venom glands, fangs or any other mechanism for chemically subduing their food. Therefore, they do not have poison and, by the powers of logic, cannot be poisonous from venom. Some have defensive secretions that might be poisonous to small animals if ingested. So, for these daddy-long-legs, the tale is clearly false.

Daddy-longlegs spiders (Pholcidae) - Here, the myth is incorrect at least in making claims that have no basis in known facts. There is no reference to any pholcid spider biting a human and causing any detrimental reaction. If these spiders were indeed deadly poisonous but couldn't bite humans, then the only way we would know that they are poisonous is by milking them and injecting the venom into humans. For a variety of reasons including Amnesty International and a humanitarian code of ethics, this research has never been done. Furthermore, there are no toxicological studies testing the lethality of pholcid venom on any mammalian system (this is usually done with mice). Therefore, no information is available on the likely toxic effects of their venom in humans, so the part of the myth about their being especially poisonous is just that: a myth. There is no scientific basis for the supposition that they are deadly poisonous and there is no reason to assume that it is true.

**What about their fangs being too short to penetrate human skin?** Pholcids do indeed have short fangs, which in arachnological terms is called "uncate" because they have a secondary tooth which meets the fang like the way the two grabbing parts of a pair of tongs come together. Brown recluse spiders similarly have uncate fang structure and they obviously are able to bite humans. There may be a difference in the musculature that houses the fang such that recluses have stronger muscles for penetration because they are hunting spiders needing to subdue prey whereas pholcid spiders are able to wrap their prey and don't need as strong a musculature. So, again, the myth states as fact something about which there is no scientific basis.

**In summary** - For true daddy-long-legs, the opilionids, the myth is certainly false, and for the daddy-long-legs spiders it is certainly not based on known facts. Article copied from [http://spiders.ucr.edu/daddylonglegs.html](http://spiders.ucr.edu/daddylonglegs.html)

Thank you to Cheryl Roettger for sending this article to correct our misinformation.

**NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**

While the newsletter is a place for information and education, it is also a place for the sharing of gardening experiences/knowledge, recipes, thoughts, etc. All of which makes the newsletter more interesting and informative. **The article bank is officially empty**, so I am looking forward to receiving many incredible articles/poems/quotes/photographs, etc. for the 2014 newsletters. Now is the time to think about writing an article(s) for the newsletter. It is a great way to be at home in the warmth and comfort of your PJs, while gaining Volunteer Hours! Remember you get hours for **research and writing**! Please contact Elaine Dodd edodd3@yahoo.com
CALENDAR REMINDERS

1. Holiday Party December meeting is 6:00 PM at Liriodendron December 5th. Help is needed on Wednesday for setup and making arrangements at 10 am (12/4)

2. Brightview Assisted Living - 2-3pm on December 4

3. Shade Gardening Class- Bel Air Library 10:15 am, Dec 7, Pre-registration 410-638-3151

4. Evening Study Group – HCEO, 7 pm, Dec 11

4. Planning Meeting is Dec 19, 10 am, Extension Office

5. Daytime Study Group Centerpiece Workshop will be December 18, 1 PM, HCEO


7. Newsletter due date is January 4th.

Maryland Master Gardener Mission Statement

The Maryland Master Gardener mission is to support the University of Maryland Extension by educating Maryland residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes and communities.

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