From the Desk of Mikaela Boley

Spring is nearly here, due to a chilly start, but I’m more than ready for the season. In fact, if it is sunny and warmer than 50 degrees today, you should immediately go outside and soak up some vitamin D. I know you will have plenty of time to be outdoors this summer, but pretty soon it will be too hot and too humid to bear.

All kidding aside, I hope the change of season brings you some relief, and less allergens. If you’re looking for some opportunities, visit one of our demonstration gardens, which are located in Easton (Talbot Extension Office, Bay St., Talbot Agriculture Center), St. Michael’s (Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michael’s Library), Oxford Community Center, and down to Tilghman Island (Phillips Wharf Education Center, Poplar Island). Master Gardeners work tirelessly to make these spaces look beautiful and healthy.

Look for us at local events, as we wind up for the season. Bring your questions and concerns about the landscape, and we will do our best to help or get you answers. We are also taking requests for Bay-Wise consultations, if you would like to learn more about your landscape and its sustainability. In the meantime, go soak up some sun.

Cheers!

Mikaela Boley

Bumble Bees are important pollinators—look for our fuzzy friends this spring and provide them with plenty of plant variety to work their magic.
Spring Recipes

Courtesy of RaeAnn Holder and Mikaela Boley

Cauliflower Pick Ups
“Featured at the December 2014 meeting”

1 Head of Cauliflower
1/2 Cup Butter

Coating:
1/3 Cup Italian Bread Crumbs
1/4 Cup Parmesan Cheese
1/2 tsp Garlic Powder
1 tsp Paprika
1/2 tsp Salt
1/2 tsp Pepper

Break cauliflower into pieces and coat with melted butter. Place coating mix into plastic bag and shake pieces to coat. Place on cookie sheet and bake 20-30 minutes at 350 degrees.

Did you know…

Cauliflower is an excellent source of vitamin C.
It is actually a flower that hasn’t fully developed
It is a cruciferous vegetable, and belongs to the same family as kale, broccoli, and cabbage.
It ranks #15 in the top 30 vegetables with the most nutrient density (nutrientrich.com).

A Twist for Traditional Lemonade:

We all love lemonade this time of year. But I like to make my lemonade a little more exciting, or instead, use limeade as a substitute for some extra tartness. Here are some tips to spice up your drink this summer:

- **Seltzer Water**– try half carbonated water, half lemonade or limeade. This gives it some extra *zing*, and cuts down on the amount of sugar. Add a sprig of mint if you’re brave.
- **Lavenderade**– It sounds crazy, but try making lavender tea using the flower heads and hot water. Pull the lavender heads, and cool the tea. Then mix your lemonade with some of the lavender tea to serve. A word of caution: the tea will turn your drink a beautiful, and startling, shade of pink.
- **Try it Some-thyme**– Use an herb you wouldn’t normally mix into your drink. Forget mint– try a sprig of thyme, sage, or rosemary as a substitute. You might be pleasantly surprised by the flavor. You can also drop in some frozen blueberries or raspberries.
- **Toughen Up**– Make it a hard lemonade. Add your favorite liquor on a hot summer night. Please drink and garden responsibly!
Spring—What’s in Bloom?

By: Mikaela Boley, Master Gardener Coordinator

Even with a late spring, there are a good amount of plants with fat buds just ready to burst into bloom. As you take a walk through the woods, along the side of the road, or even in your back yard, keep an eye out for a few of our native stars:

Cercis Canadensis- Eastern Redbud
One of our earliest spring flowering trees, a very stunning pink or lavender color that blooms while other trees look bleak and brown. Preferring a part to full shade location, this tree is smaller, and more understated in the landscape. As well as being a nitrogen fixer, it has high wildlife value for butterflies, birds, and mammals.

Erythronium americanum- Trout Lily
Trout lily is a woodland flowering plant, belonging to the “spring ephemerals” group. This group is striking in its beauty, even if it is brief. Mottled brown and green leaves, the flowers are yellow on top of a short stalk. It can be found in moist, rich soils that have part-shade. Trout lily has a history of being both medicinal and edible- the leaves and flowers can be eaten, but the corms are edible as well. They have a cucumber-like taste, but can also be roasted. It is not recommended you eat large quantities of trout lily in one day.

Podophyllum peltatum– Mayapple
An early woodland spring flower, this delicate white flower is found underneath the leaves. It prefers moist loamy woodlands, and will only stick around for a short time. The ripe fruits are edible, if you can compete with the wildlife.

Mertensia virginica- Virginia bluebells
While dormant in summer, Virginia bluebells show up in March-June with flowers of varying color. They will flower blue, pink, or white depending on the acidity of the soil (it tolerates a pH between 4.5-8). It also enjoys moist, rich wooded areas and floodplains.

Asimina triloba– Pawpaw
Known for its giant edible fruit and large leaves, the pawpaw has a beautiful maroon flower in the spring time. This flower is adapted to attract pollinators, since they cannot pollinate themselves. Some may even hand pollinate this tree (when it is small) to ensure a better crop of fruit.

EdibleWildFood.com
US-Forest Service Fact Sheets ST-86 and ST-145
Adkins Arbortum
Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Database
Chesapeake Bay Program- Field Guide
Poplar Island Trip 2015:

Photo and Write-Up Credit: Pam Keeton

A sturdy group of Master Gardeners and 2015 interns braved the rain and cold on April 8th to work on the visitor’s welcome garden on Poplar Island. The volunteers planted asters and other natives, trimmed grasses, cleaned debris, and spread LeafGro to ready the area for spring and summer rush of visitors. The welcome garden, which is also Bay-Wise certified, is a passion for fellow Master Gardener Mary Sue Traynelis, who organized the outing.

Visits and trips for Master Gardeners going to Poplar Island are organized nearly every month, and the 2015 schedule has been arranged to the following dates:

- No May date available!
- June 15th
- July 13th
- August 11th
- September 8th
- October 6th

Interested in coming with? You may want to contact Bonnie James at bonniebjames@gmail.com to join in.

CBMM Rain Garden Planting:

Write-up: Mary Sue Traynelis

The Rain Garden that filters some of the runoff from the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) parking lot will get some new native plants, with your help. Bring your favorite weeding & planting tools, kneeler, gloves etc. Plants, mulch, rakes & a small tiller will be delivered. A light lunch will be provided as a small bribe.

Since the big CBMM 50th Anniversary exhibit opens in May, it would be great to have blooms for that event. That is up to Mother Nature, of course.

Thursday, April 30th is confirmed for 9 am to noon. We'll decide on the second date, if needed. We work in sprinkles but not in pouring down rain. CBMM volunteers and Master Gardeners may both gain some fun hours while helping the Bay. As always, bringing a friend is encouraged.

If you are interested in working on this date, contact Mary Sue Traynelis: mosaicmd@verizon.net.
Ask Your Horticulturist:

Dear Mikaela,

I’ve been cleaning out my rain garden recently (I know it’s a little late), and I’m noticing some growths on some of the shrubs in the garden. I’ve attached a couple of pictures.

Should I be worried? Should I prune out these growths?

-Shrub Growths

Dear Shrub Growths,

Those pictures are an excellent example of praying mantis egg cases. These are not growths, nor are they really a part of the shrub.

They will need several weeks of warm weather to start emerging, and once they do, they will start feeding on small insects (such as aphids). They will grow and start praying on larger insects, perhaps acting as pest control in your garden. They are regarded as beneficial insects, so you would do well to leave them alone. Keep an eye on it this summer to see if you can catch the emerging mantis!

-Mikaela

Above: Pictures submitted with examples of 2 different kinds of praying mantis egg cases.
Upcoming Events and Dates 2015

Bay Day— May 2nd

Join us on May 2nd on Tilghman Island for PWEC’s 2nd Annual Bay Day. It will be a special event, including an inauguration of the National Park Service Kayak Launch. More than 20 vendors, special events for kids, and lots of food will be available. The event lasts from 11-3pm.

If you are interested in serving at the Master Gardener table, please email mboley@umd.edu for schedule and sign-up.

Talbot County Master Gardener Monthly Meetings

April 15th— Oxford Community Center
Visit the Oxford Community Center to join us for the meeting, as well as a tour of the Master Gardener sponsored rain gardens. Following the meeting will be a Bay-Wise meeting to certify the rain gardens, as well as discuss orders of business.
Time: 9:30AM

May 20th— Talbot Public Library— Easton
Guest speaker Kathy Quattrone will talk “Body-Wise” Gardening, discussing the merits of going easy on your body in the garden.
Time: 9:30AM

June— NO MG MONTHLY MEETING
Due to the Master Gardener Annual Training Day, there will be no June date for meetings.

Stay tuned for future 2015 Monthly Meetings

Horticulture Therapy

We are continuing to do horticulture therapy at The Pines in Easton.

Visits are every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month— visits are 30-45 minutes. Gatherings are at 2:30pm. Grab a partner and sign up for the following dates:
- April 23rd
- May 14th and 28th
- June 11th and 25th

Contact Mikaela at mboley@umd.edu to sign up.

DID YOU KNOW...

Master Gardeners have a Facebook page? You can find us online at by clicking here. Or, search “Talbot County Master Gardeners” and follow our page! We include photos from recent activities, advice, and recent news items.

Remember to “Like” us!

Please contact Mikaela Boley, Master Gardener Coordinator with any question or to volunteer to help with a program at mboley@umd.edu or 410-822-1244.
Bay-Wise Rejuvenation

We are starting 2015 off with a bang—20 native plants were donated and distributed at our April 15th meeting, and there is more where that came from. Meetings for Bay-Wise members have been planned for this season, and we are going to take on consultations and certifications as we get into this busy time of year.

Please keep these dates on your calendar for Bay-Wise meetings:

- May 9th
- June and July TBD
- September 8th
- October 13th

Do you like solving mysteries?

Diagnosing plants, diseases, landscape issues, and other mysteries is kind of like solving horticulture crimes. If you enjoy solving puzzles, you might want to consider getting on the “asktalbotmg” reflector list. This is a Master Gardener exclusive email list, where you are able to share pictures and problems with other like-minded people. Have a plant you can’t I.D.? Share it with the group, and get input from your fellow Talbot Master Gardeners.

To get on the “asktalbotmg” reflector list, please email Mikaela at mboley@umd.edu.

Need to Unsubscribe?

You may unsubscribe from the newsletter at any time, by contacting Mikaela Boley by email at mboley@umd.edu, calling 410-822-1244, or a written request sent to: 28577 Mary’s Court–Suite 1, Easton, MD 21601. Want to receive this newsletter by email? That’s easy! Simply email mboley@umd.edu to complete your request and you will be added to the “email” newsletter list. We will also be happy to remove you from the main mailing list and save paper.

Do you have newsletter item?

We accept news items, poems, gardening advice, recipes, book reviews, and everything gardening! Please send to Mikaela Boley at mboley@umd.edu.

ASK YOUR HORTICULTURIST:

Is there a garden question that is bothering you? 
“Ask Mikaela”

mboley@umd.edu
Current Resident Or:

If you are interested in becoming a Master Gardener, call our University of Maryland Extension Office at 410-822-1244. You can also visit the Maryland Master Gardeners website at: http://extension.umd.edu/mg and the Talbot County Extension website at: http://extension.umd.edu/talbot-county.

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