From Georgia’s Desk

Great thanks to Michele Wright, Joan Bielski, and our Administrative Assistant, Carolyn Kulp, for their efforts in putting together the Howard County Fair exhibit! The Bay-Wise exhibit always evokes comments from visitors but what a delightful change to see kids and gardening—very creative! Exhibits don’t make a complete “presence” so thank you to the following who conversed with visitors about gardening and the MG program: Michael Baker, Joan Bielski, Charlotte Clive, Ann Coren, Joannna Cumbie, Betsy Grater, Ann Hackling, Irene Hillen, Gisela Hoffman, Karen Koebel, Anastasia MacDonald, RoseMarie Meservey, Pam Peters, Carolyn Rimes, Cindy Sabra, Barbara Schuster, Carol Spencer, Chris Toth and Lisa Wingate.

Please plan to attend our annual lunch-eon meeting, Tuesday, September 15, 10:30 (for coffee), until 2:00 p.m.

Agenda:
11:00 a.m.—12:00 Program Coordinators/ comments and questions
12:00—12:30 p.m. HCPSS Elementary Science Curriculum Coordinators: MGs Enhance the Curriculum
12:30 p.m.—2:00 p.m. Lunch and networking.

Please RSVP: so I can get a lunch count: 410-313-1913, geacker@umd.edu

Reminder: Though it is sometimes difficult to collect demographic data when we have a constant flow of traffic at events, tracking of residents is important to UME. This information pertains to funding and illustrates the impact MGs have on our community.

Lastly, though I realize that it is easy to lose/misplace the MG badge, it will be necessary in the future to ask for a replacement fee of $2.50—the cost of these plastic badges. No fee if the badge is damaged.

We are receiving 2016 MG training applications. If you know of an interested person(s), please encourage them to contact the office.

Here’s to some cooler weather!

Georgia Eacker
Master Gardener Coordinator
410-313-1913
geacker@umd.edu
What’s in a Name?

Please remember to use our proper name when promoting an event or activity. It will help us increase awareness of our program throughout the county. In print we should always refer to the program as: University of Maryland Extension Howard County Master Gardeners.

Remember to include the logo on your materials – printed pieces, slides, promotional fliers, etc. The current logo is posted on the University’s web site, and is available in color and black/white. After inserting it in your document, remember to size it by pulling from any corner. Otherwise you’ll skew the shape.

Volunteer for a Plant Clinic

Our “Ask a Master Gardener” sessions at three library branches are a great way to help area residents by sharing your gardening expertise. If you missed the story by Greg Jones in last month’s Looseleaf, I encourage you to check it out. Some MGs are hesitant to volunteer for these plant clinics, which run from April through September. They think the questions will be difficult or they won’t have a clue about how to answer. You should give it a try. You’re no doubt more knowledgeable than you think! And you have many resources to refer to for the answer.

Plant clinics will wrap-up the season at the end of September. Contact one of our coordinators if you would like to volunteer.

Central Branch: Alicia Wilmes, awilmes09@gmail.com.
Miller Branch: Barb White, barbarawhite17@yahoo.com.
Glenwood Branch: Clare Openshaw, helloclare@comcast.net.
Doings at the Howard County Conservancy at Mt. Pleasant

The Historical Vegetable Garden has continued to produce heavily. This month we are picking lots of tomatoes and beans. Two weeks ago Michelle Bryden’s daughter Elizabeth and my grandson Vinnie dug up 44 pounds of potatoes from the Colonial garden bed. We are also getting peppers and some squash although the ground hog often continues to get to the squash before we do. So far this year we have contributed about 410 pounds of produce to the food bank including lots of herbs which they state they enjoy getting. Several gardeners from the Fairhaven community garden are helping us with this project. We would also be happy to take any excess produce which you would like to donate.

Michelle and Paul have worked on the automatic drip irrigation system which needed a replacement part and have gotten it back in working order in time for the extended dry period. Now that school is back in session we will return to our 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. work schedule every Friday. Come join us when you are able.

The Conservancy is open every day from 9:00 a.m. until at least 3:00 p.m. with occasional evening programs. Check the website www.hcconservancy.org for Saturday and evening programs at Mt. Pleasant and the new Belmont site. Come out to Mt. Pleasant to hike the trails and see what is currently in bloom.

BY JOANN RUSSO, MG
Kudos to Education Happening at Patuxent Research Refuge Schoolyard Habitat

One of the joys of working in the Schoolyard Habitat is the diversity of people who we get to talk to about native plant and pollinator gardening. A recent email from Georgia thanked me for the education work the Master Gardeners are doing at the SYH, reminding me that the true work of Master Gardeners is education, and inspiring this month’s article.

On a typical weeding day families touring the Refuge and Visitor Center will stop in the garden to watch the bees, flies, butterflies and other pollinators. I usually stop what I’m doing to converse with them. It’s a wonderful opportunity to suggest that they too can have a pollinator garden in their yards. If they live close by I tell them about the US Fish and Wildlife book, *Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping* and teach them how to use it. I usually have to tell them about host plants and the loss of biodiversity caused by using only ornamentals in our landscaping. I’ve met visitors from many states and if they show interest I tell them to seek out the Native Plant society and University Extension programs in their states for information about their ecoregion. We chat about creating a sense of place in their gardens, something that makes their ecoregion unique. I plant seeds of thought.

Many times the visitors are from other countries and we compare thoughts about loss of biodiversity and how gardening practices can mitigate the losses. I’ve sown more seeds of thought.

Many photographers come to photograph our creatures. We get to talking about aperture, f-stop and other ways to capture the beauty. They tell me it’s unusual to see so many pollinators up close and personal in their native setting. I assume that those photos will eventually be posted to Facebook and other albums that will generate interest in pollinators. More seeds are sown further.

On other days summer camps and school groups will swarm through the garden doing various activities. We designed the garden with lots of pathways so children can become acquainted with the pollinators. The most frequent topic of discussion surrounds the preconceived notion that all bees sting and are scary. If we do nothing more with these children than convince them that pollinators are good, not scary, friends I will be very happy. Lots of little seeds for thought.

Church groups, conservation groups and scouts all come to do their service days in the garden. When I can be there with them I love to plant seeds of thought about how their organization can also provide demonstration gardens that would model conservation of biodiversity to their community.

The Refuge also has events at which the gardeners have been tabling. At the recent Wildlife Conservation and Recreation Day around 120 visitors interacted with our booth. The opportunities to sow seeds of change fly swiftly past us.

Many evenings I’ve thought that the real seeds we are planting in the Schoolyard Habitat are those of culture change, a pride in a sense of place and the love of biodiversity. As a life-long educator this is the real reason that I love to do my Master Gardener hours there.

By Ann Coren, MG
Here are some of the diverse pollinators who visited the Mountain Mint, *Pycnanthemum muticum* in August. Photographs: Ann Coren

Dates to join the weeding teams are:

- Tuesday, September 1, 8:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, September 15, 9:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, September 22, 9:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, September 29, 9:00 a.m.
- Sunday, October 4, 9:00 a.m.
- Tuesday, October 6, 9:00 a.m.
- Sunday, October 11, 9:00 a.m.

There will be no Planning Meeting in September

The Patuxent Research Refuge Schoolyard Habitat is located in front of the National Wildlife Visitor Center at 10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop, Laurel MD 20708

For more information please contact Ann Coren, [anncoren@hotmail.com](mailto:anncoren@hotmail.com) and put PRR SYH in the subject line.
Middle Patuxent Area Conservation Stewardship

Our first event of the fall season will be Vine Cutting and Tree Shelter Repair on September 22 at the South Wind Circle trailhead off Trotter Road in Clarksville. See the enclosed flyer for more details.

On August 19 I visited the Monarch Waystation that had been planted at the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area on May 26. The common milkweed was easily found and doing well. The butterfly weed was not visible; Jeff Claffy said it had bloomed a few weeks earlier. In my own yard, it is in all stages of growth, from new little plants to those whose pods are starting to split. My swamp milkweed mostly is in the pod splitting stage, as evidenced by the photos.

Today, August 21, I discovered 4 Monarch caterpillars on the common milkweed in my front yard. Coincidentally, these were the same plants on which I had deposited the "Euchaetes egle" (milkweed tussock caterpillar or milkweed tiger moth). This relocation was my solution to the “ethical situation question” that I had solicited input on and I’ve seen no trace of them since. I hope I can follow the Monarch caterpillars though.

BY AYLENE GARD. MG

Orderly swamp milkweed seed arrangement in pod and beautiful pre-dispersal “fluff.”

Common milkweed, Asclepias syriaca, seedling, above, and mature plant, below. Photographs: Aylene Gard
Middle Patuxent Environmental Area

Conservation Stewardship

VINE CUTTING & TREE SHELTER REPAIR

No experience necessary, one-time volunteers are welcome.

September 22 / 9-11:30 AM
South Wind Circle Trailhead

Hundreds of native trees and shrubs have been planted by our volunteers and our meadows are also surrounded by mature stands of native hardwood trees. These majestic meadow neighbors and our volunteer planting sites are succumbing to the ill effects of several different invasive vines. Come navigate the meadow edges and de-vine the mature trees. Then progress to maintenance on a small glade of Cedar trees and/or a riparian buffer planting site.

Information
Aylene Gard, Master Gardener, 410-992-9889 or Jeff Claffy, Assistant Natural Resources Manager, MPEA, 410-313-6209 or jclaffy@howardcountymd.gov.

Please carpool & tell us where you saw this flyer!

The Conservation Stewardship Project
The Conservation Stewardship Project, a joint program between the Howard County Recreation & Parks and the Howard County Master Gardeners, targets the problem of controlling invasive, exotic species in the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area. For details, directions and the full 2014 Conservation Stewardship project schedule, visit www.howardcountymd.gov/mpea.htm.
Annual Bay-Wise Garden Tour  
Saturday, September 19, 1:00 - 4:00 PM  
6425 Allview Drive, Columbia, MD 21046

This year the Bay-Wise Committee is pleased to invite you to join us for our annual garden tour at the home of fellow Master Gardener, Holly McFarland. Over the past two decades a once lean suburban plot has evolved into a lush garden oasis. Holly’s yard exemplifies the Bay-Wise maxim “Better water quality through smarter gardening” solving problems with water management effectively and imaginatively. A newly installed garden bridge built by Mac McFarland traverses a rain garden. Pathways and retaining walls have made good use of recycled materials. The yard is comprised of many different garden and entertainment areas that give the impression of a property much larger than its ½ acre. Raised bed vegetable and herb gardens, rain barrels, composting and storage of those necessary outdoor items have been cleverly incorporated into the design. Selection of plant material reflects the reality of living in deer country but the combinations and siting of plants make this a pleasurable yard to explore.

We have many gardens that typify the Bay-Wise principles but when we find one that does so in such a creative and aesthetically pleasing way we can’t wait to show it off. We hope to see you there and if you have been offering gardening advice to friends and neighbors, encourage them to join us and see how that advice can transform a yard.

There will be a native plant sale, the compost committee will have free bins for distribution, and John McCoy, watershed manager for the Columbia Association, will be there to talk about the rain garden program in Columbia. In addition, Master Gardeners will be on hand to explain the garden features and signage will identify native plants. On-street parking is plentiful.

By Linda Decker, MG
Alpha Ridge Demonstration Rain Garden

The Alpha Ridge rain garden team continued to work on garden maintenance with the help and support of some of the employees of Alpha Ridge, who have been most helpful and supportive of this project. They met early in the day (0730!) to avoid the blistering heat to spread mulch and move some of the larger rocks to better locations. The mulch will keep the weed population in check and hold in needed moisture until the highway department is able to reconfigure the roadside trench.

Plans are being considered to include Bay-Wise educational materials in the nearby gazebo, as plans are in place to clean it up and organize the area to be more appealing. Anyone for a picnic at the rain garden?

There are a variety of ways to help contribute to this community educational effort. If interested, please contact LJ or Linda. (ljmauceri@aol.com, lolson22@verizon.net)

BY PHYLLIS YIGDALL, MG
2015
BAY-WISE GARDEN TOUR
presented by
Howard County Master Gardeners

September 19 from 1:00 - 4:00 PM
0425 Allview Dr., Columbia, Md. 21046

You are invited to tour a local garden in Columbia featuring many Bay-Wise practices
designed to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay. Visitors will enjoy a delightful
landscape that creatively captures rainwater, native and deer resistant plantings, a
variety of outdoor living spaces, retaining walls of recycled materials, rain barrels,
raised bed vegetable garden, permeable pathways, wildlife habitats, and much more in
a clever, attractive and practical use of space.

This is a free event sponsored by The Howard County Master Gardeners of
The University of Maryland Extension.

For more information email: plairington61@verizon.net

The University of Maryland Extension programs are open to all and will not discriminate against
anyone because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion,
ancestry, or national origin, marital status, genetic information, or political affiliation, or gender identity
and expression.