Spring is Coming: It’s time to ‘Get in Your Zone’

By Nancy Moses Greenblatt

You probably already know that Montgomery County’s gardening zone is 7A. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s newest Plant Hardiness Zone Map divides the country (including Hawaii and Alaska) into 13 separate zones. Each zone is 10°F warmer (or colder) in an average winter than the adjacent zone. North zones have lower numbers.

To find your zone, go to http://www.planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/ and enter your zip code.

This map, issued in January 2012, updates the USDA’s 1990 zone map. It also gives much of the country warmer zone designations than the earlier version.

Hardiness zones are based on the average annual extreme minimum temperature during a 30-year period in the past, not the lowest temperature that has ever occurred or might occur in the future. Gardeners should keep that in mind when selecting plants, especially if they grow plants not rated for their zone. However, the warmer zone labeling through much of the county does not mean you should start pulling up plants that supposedly wouldn’t grow in a warmer area.

Tricky Microclimates

Nevertheless, the USDA alerts gardeners to microclimates that are too small to show up on the map: “Microclimates, which are fine-scale climate variations, can be small heat islands—such as those caused by

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Plant Clinics are ‘on the grow’

By Sue Kuklewicz

What do you think was the first question asked at the opening of the January 2014 plant clinic? It was, “How do I grow tomatoes?” This just goes to show you that we’re all eager to launch the 2014 growing season.

It will be a challenge to top the successes of 2013. MG’s directly donated 3,654 hours at PC’s, made contact with close to 5,000 clients, and expanded from 13 to 15 clinics. We added a new clinic at the Praisner Library (Sue Kuklewicz, MG-PC Coordinator) in Burtonsville, a previously underserved area. This clinic was a huge success with 907 contacts.

Continued on page 4
How can we share the science knowledge that we learn?

Last month I wrote about the important role of science in Master Gardeners’ education. This month we’ll explore how we might share this knowledge with the thousands of contacts we make each year. The Seed is already engaged in this activity for Master Gardeners.

In the November/December 2013 issue of The Seed the column “Ask and Answer” posed a common question: “Why Isn’t My Maple Showing Fall Red Color?” A stunning photo of bright red maple leaves framed a very clear answer with the conclusion that fall color varies by tree species.

Taking this strategy to a weekly Plant Clinic, SWAT information table, or GIEI Open House could involve expanding on that new scientific fact you have learned to show it in a friendly and fun display. Here are two examples.

Create a display of common insect predators in the Maryland landscape that are beginning to like stink bugs. With an iPad you could show Mike Raupp’s videos of yellow and black garden spiders and the Chinese praying mantis devouring the BMSB.

Per “Ask and Answer” you might set up a simple poster with the caption “What on EARTH is that Spider Doing?” Click here to view the yellow and black garden spider video. Click here to view the Chinese praying mantis video.

Explore the importance of biodiversity in the trees we select for a landscape. Per “Stumped” you might have a poster that begins with the question, “Why Are There No Trees in This Landscape?” Show photos of eastern forests in 1940 – before and after the loss of the American chestnut.

I would love to hear YOUR ideas. But remember - discuss your plans with the Chair of the Committee for your event before embarking on your project.

Janet

Photo of the Month

At Brookside Gardens, the winter bark of Cornus alba lights up the hillside.

Photo by MG Susan Bell
blacktop, concrete, or a south-facing wall—or cool spots caused by small hills and valleys where cold air pools first. “

In our geographically large county, one can see blooming forsythia in Silver Spring a week prior to forsythia still in bud form in colder Poolesville-by-the-Potomac. At least one unnoticed, chilling quirk is a large, low-lying area from Laytonsville to Adamstown, looking more like a 6B zone. And MG Erica Smith relayed to The Seed that the Germantown Community Garden lost its tomato plants during a site-specific frosty mid-May night, 2013.

While the USDA map is based on cold-weather averages over 30 years, it doesn’t account for the beneficial effect of a snow cover over perennial plants or the regularity or absence of freeze-thaw cycles. Other peculiar gardening challenges of the Mid-Atlantic region are summers of high heat and humidity along with clay soil.

Those are conditions that MG Coordinator Steve Dubik wants us to remember when working with the public, as well as another common oversight. “We tend to give insects a bad rap when plants perform poorly in season,” says Steve, “but the blame really could point to winter-cold injury.”

So as spring sends us into our psychological gardening zone, be sure to be a student of the nuances of microclimates.

From Cornell University, Department of Horticulture

Hints that will better determine which plants will survive winter

- In general, healthy plants that are well matched to their site (correct sun exposure, healthy soil, good drainage, suitable pH range, etc.) are more likely to overwinter.
- Plants usually survive well if temperatures cool gradually in fall and early winter, allowing the plant to harden off.
- Do not apply nitrogen fertilizer to plants late in the season as it may cause them to put on a flush of growth that will not harden off properly and stress the plant.
- The moderating effects of snow cover on soil temperature may help some marginal plants overwinter.
- Prolonged low temperatures may be more damaging than a single cold night.
- Marginal evergreens can benefit from shade during winter, and may actually survive better on the north side of buildings.
- Plants in containers are much less likely to overwinter compared to the same plants planted in the ground. [Some advise using plants for containers that are hardy to one zone colder.]
Plant Clinics are ‘on the grow’

The Twinbrook Library clinic (Barbara Waite-Jaques, MG-PC Coordinator) expanded from bi-weekly to weekly, improving the quantity and quality of our contacts. There is value in being in locations every week. Our clients come to count on us and remember to bring samples to go with their questions. This takes much of the guesswork out of our responses.

We are adding activities at our clinics to interest and educate children. Last year’s Insect Zoo at the Olney clinic (Katie McIe, MG-PC Coordinator) at the Olney Farmers Market, has expanded to the Praisner Library. Everyone particularly loved watching the praying mantis eat the stink bug. We hope to expand this in the coming year with continued help from Mike Raupp, Ph.D., the “Bug Guy,” and his team at the University of Maryland.

Vegetable gardening is of rising interest in the county. Partnering with the Grow It–Eat It group, we staffed a clinic table at two GIEI events held at Derwood last year. This year we’ll be at all three of GIEI’s events. Additionally, we had a clinic at one community garden using PC volunteers who do not usually work in this setting. It was an education for MG’s as well as gardeners. This may become a regular event at various community gardens. These are examples of MG’s collaborative efforts to take our expertise across activity lines, thereby fulfilling our MG mission of education.

Applying the adage “location, location, location” to our quest for well-placed clinics, we closed an underused PC in Poolesville. But in 2014, we are reopening at the newly renovated Gaithersburg Library (Frances Smithson, MG-PC Coordinator) and expanding to the Wheaton Library (Taffy Turner, MG-PC Coordinator) and a new once-a-month clinic at the Kentlands Farmers Market (Sandra Christian, Coordinator).

We have the formula for the “right plant (clinic),” and we always are looking for the “right place.” We look for new places to reach budding gardeners (including underserved minorities); to interest children in gardening; and to educate the public on such matters as the new fertilizer law, Emerald Ash Borer, Asian Longhorn Beetle, and the ever-present Brown Marmorated Stink Bug.

For the full list of clinics by location and hours see our website: http://www.extension.umd.edu/mg/locations/plant-clinics

MG BENEFIT

MG Seed Swap at March GIEI Event

What: Seed Swap
When: March 29, 2014 at the GIEI event. Seed swapping starts at 11:15 a.m.
Where: Derwood

What better way to get spring started than participating in our Master Gardener Seed Swap at the March Grow It Eat It event? All MGs are invited to join in. You can bring your own or purchased commercial seeds.

Here are guidelines on packaging your own seeds:

Seed Packet: Place at least 10-20 seeds in a re-sealable plastic baggie.

Labeling Seed Packet Baggie:
Use a white label for the information, or use white paper taped to the baggie. Include as a minimum the following: plant name (common and Latin if known), date for planting (if from a seed packet use the date on the packet; if you saved seeds last year, then use 2013), growing conditions, and where you collected the seeds, or purchased them.

Click here to view GIEI Spring Open House flyer.

MG’s Katie McIe and Jan Nickens answer a gardener’s questions at the Olney plant clinic at the Olney Farmers Market.
Most fungus gnats can be a nuisance

Q. I have several potted plants that I overwinter indoors. Recently when watering them, I have noticed tiny little insects flying out of the soil. These insects are very annoying! What are they and how can I prevent them? Signed, Bugged in Bethesda

A. These insects are probably fungus gnats, *Orfelia* and *Bradysia* spp. They are small, mosquito-looking insects often found indoors in the vicinity of houseplants. Adults are harmless and do not bite, although they are a nuisance in large numbers. The fungus gnat larvae develop in the growing medium of houseplants and are usually located in the top two to three inches of the soil. Fungus gnats can thrive outdoors as well; they breed in decaying plant matter, leaf mold, fungi, and organic mulch.

Adults are about one-eighth of an inch long with long legs and antennae. An adult fungus gnat can lay up to 200 eggs in the one week that it spends as an adult. The adult then dies, leaving the larvae to hatch in about four days. Most fungus gnats are just a nuisance and do not cause damage to plants, although there are some species that feed on roots and cause damage. Some species burrow into roots and stems, causing wilting.

Here are some tips for avoiding and controlling fungus gnats.

- Do not overwater your houseplants. Let the potting medium dry out between watering, especially the top one to two inches of soil.
- Re-pot your houseplants periodically. Over time, the growing medium breaks down and starts to retain too much moisture. Re-potting with new, sterile potting medium can prevent problems.
- Before reusing, clean any pots that contain decayed and decomposing roots and old potting medium.

Some pyrethroid-based insecticides may be effective in killing adult fungus gnats with repeated applications. Biological controls include *Bacillus thuringiensis* subsp. *Israelesis* (Bti), although this formulation is not generally available through retail outlets. Fungus gnats are attracted to the color yellow. Traps can be made by coating yellow strips of paper with corn syrup and placing them sticky-side up on the top of the potting medium. However, this will not kill the larvae. Raw potato chunks placed in the growing medium will attract the larvae. Replace the potato chunks every few days.

Source: [http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7448.html](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7448.html)
Announcements

Here’s a bonanza of volunteer opps as gardening season nears

Let’s Boost Numbers at Black Hill Butterfly Habitat

By Marsha VonDuerckheim

Where have all the butterflies gone?
At the end of last summer, butterfly counts across the country and in Mexico showed record low numbers of many species, perhaps most notably among the migrating monarchs. For the second year in a row, over-winter tallies of monarchs in 2013-14 reached an all-time low, decreasing a distressing 50% from 2012-13.

Most explanations pointed a finger to out-of-sync weather patterns and habitat loss. In Mexico, sheltering forests are shrinking from illegal logging. In the United States, modern agricultural practices have led to widespread reduction of the native milkweed absolutely essential to butterfly reproduction. Increasing habitat protection for monarchs in both the U.S. and Mexico is extremely important. This is where Master Gardeners can make a difference. For the past seven years, we have helped to restore, re-create, and maintain a small meadow along Route 121 through Black Hill Regional Park in Boyds. This meadow has become a thriving habitat with food, water, shelter, and larval hosts for up to 40-50 different species of butterflies.

Volunteers Needed
To continue to thrive, the meadow needs a little help from Master Gardeners. For six Wednesdays, beginning March 26 and ending April 30, we go into the meadow from 9 am to noon to do early spring cleanup, tackle invasive weeds, add new plants, and monitor the emergence of the new season’s growth. By May 1, with milkweed and other perennials knee-high, we take a break until October. Then, for another six Wednesdays, we prepare for winter.

Join us in the meadow across from 20612 Clarksburg Road (Route 121) in Boyds. All MGs and interns are welcome. For further information, contact MG Marsha VonDuerckheim (vondurckheimmd@hotmail.com).

To create a butterfly habitat in your own back yards, check out the Monarch Waystation website: http://monarchwatch.org/waystations/.

Get in on the action with SWAT

What: SWAT Activity Volunteer Meetings
When: Various, see below
Where: Derwood, in the garage meeting room on the lower level

Master Gardeners and interns are invited to learn more about participating in activities of SWAT (Special Work Action Teams) this March. Please join us for any or all of the following sessions offered by the SWAT coordinators to prepare for the Spring Gardening Season and earn volunteer service hours!

Monday, March 17, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. - Community Garden Consultants
Wednesday, March 19, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. - School Garden Consultants
Friday, March 21, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. - Special and Retail Info Table Team

Each session will provide potential volunteers with the tools they need to be successful in their chosen SWAT activity. If you just want to learn more about what SWAT does, this is the time to learn–no obligation! Please RSVP to Pat Lynch at mgpat.lynch@gmail.com if you plan to attend.

Continued on page 7
Here’s a bonanza of volunteer opps as gardening season nears

Derwood Demo-Garden Needs Volunteers

What: Volunteer Opportunity and Orientation Day
When: First Work Day: Tuesday, April 1, 8 a.m. to noon
Where: Derwood Demonstration Garden at the Extension

Typically the Derwood Demonstration Garden needs about 50 volunteers during the season, with about a dozen working on any given day. Our primary goal is to reach out to the public to share our gardening experiences and knowledge. Our second goal is to furnish a learning environment for Master Gardeners. Here are some of our activities:

- educate ourselves hands-on;
- demonstrate plants that can grow successfully in Maryland conditions;
- demonstrate Integrated Pest Management practices;
- use signage and brochures on the plants and practices;
- provide plant materials for use in the Therapeutic Horticulture program;
- provide therapeutic horticulture activities for autistic children;
- participate in public events such as Grow It Eat It and Harvest Festival; and
- provide scheduled tours for county organizations.

Please contact one of the lead gardeners listed below to find out how you can work with them. We are looking forward to getting to know our new interns as well as reconnecting with our long-standing volunteers.

Lead Gardeners

Shade Garden: Carol Martin
Wildlife Garden: Mary Johnson
Ponds: Bobbie Walker
Vegetable Garden: Erica Smith and Robin Ritterhoff
Potatoes: Barbara Knapp
100 sq. ft: Mary Anne Normile
Kitchen Garden: Ida Wallenmeyer
Herb/Fragrance Garden: Marty Isaacson
Children’s Garden: Lily Bruch
Therapeutic Horticulture: JoAnn Mueller
Autistic Children’s Garden: Ellen Meyerson

Butterfly Garden: Bobbie Maxwell
Compost: Susan Eisendrath
Turf Plots: Joe Ginther
Fence: Tom Maxwell
Equipment, Tools: Joe Ginther
Irrigation: Sue Schick
Bulleting Board: John Gelb
Plant Label Making: Barbara Dunn
Garden Mapping: Barbara Dunn
Garden Structures: Rachel Shaw

Please join us! Contact Maria Wortman – mariabkw@verizon.net or Darlene Nicholson – kdnick@comcast.net for more information.
Make a Simple Rain Gauge

Take a half-gallon milk container and cut off the top section with a pair of scissors. Bury the container in the ground so only one inch of the container is above ground. After the next rainfall, measure the depth of the water in the container with a ruler to see how much rain fell.

Adapted from DC Water for Kids – Use Water Wisely Outdoors
http://www.dcwater.com/kids/activities/usewaterwisely.html

Editors Note: Many of us would like to work with a younger generation to pass along our infectious enthusiasm and knowledge of gardening but don’t know where to start. This occasional column hopes to help with that!

Celebrate Water with Kids

By Pam Hosimer

Staring dreamily out the window at snowflakes skittering by in a frigid March breeze, it is easy to forget how important that frozen water is. Water is a staple of life and the focus of the United Nations World Water Day on Saturday, March 22.

On this day share our love of the environment by bringing your kids to the free H2O Summit, from 1–4 p.m. at the Silver Spring Civic Center, One Veterans Place. There will be workshops about river conservation and the new FrogWatch USA program, green crafts, environmental demonstrations, and a tour of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission’s Closed Circuit TV Truck. The TV “show” is where kids can take a peek inside local sewer pipes. (“Oh gross!”)

Use this pre-spring month to evaluate your water use and make changes to be more earth-friendly. My favorite book, How the World Works, is a spectacular pop-up book illustrating environmental concepts in an engaging way. My favorite section is “the story of the water cycle.” For green ideas check out 101 Ways You Can Help Save the Planet Before You’re 12! This book has practical, budget-conscious suggestions for all ages, such as drinking tap water from a reusable water bottle, washing in cold water, and bathing the dog outside on the grass.

If your kids love technology, go online to DC Water for Kids. This excellent local resource is stuffed with facts, activities and project ideas. You can click on the DOWNLOAD link on the left to access the printable version of many of the ideas. The Xeriscape page has great garden advice about native plants and mulch. And don’t forget to keep an eye on Montgomery County’s own My Green Montgomery website for future kid-friendly ideas and events happening locally to celebrate water and keep it flowing.

Resources

101 Ways You Can Help Save the Planet Before You’re 12! by Joanne O’Sullivan, pgs 15, 25, 86-87
FrogWatch - http://www.aza.org/frogwatch/
H2O Summit - https://montgomerycountymd.mygreenmontgomery.org/h2o-summit
How the World Works by Christiane Dorion, “The story of the water cycle”, pages 7-8
My Green Montgomery - https://montgomerycountymd.mygreenmontgomery.org/

Make a Simple Rain Gauge

Scroll or Return to Table of Contents
Here are some home-gardener questions that came to the MG Extension office, plant clinics and to HGIC recently. Some questions we answered and some had us -- STUMPED!

Maintaining Healthy Hemlocks

Maintaining healthy hemlocks is not an easy task as one Gaithersburg resident found out when she brought in some samples of dying branches to the Extension office for advice. Extension specialists found them infested by two of the most common pests to cause problems for our native hemlocks.

**Hemlock Rust Mite**

The hemlock rust mite, *Nalepella tsugifoliae*, belongs to the Family Eriophyidae, and commonly causes injury to Canadian hemlock, *Tsuga canadensis*. This pest also feeds on fir, spruce, and species of Taxus.

Adult eriophid mites are minute, yellowish-orange, and spindle-shaped with four legs. They live on the surface of needles instead of inside a gall or bud, feeding on both upper and lower surfaces of needles. Large populations of mites can cause hemlock foliage to turn yellow before ultimately dropping.

This native pest is active in late winter and early spring when several generations are built up, as well as in the fall when they prepare to lay eggs to overwinter. Do not overfertilize conifers where this mite is a problem. Horticultural oils or insecticidal soaps may be applied in April through June to kill overwintering immatures.

Ref: [http://plantdiagnostics.umd.edu/level3.cfm?causeid=961](http://plantdiagnostics.umd.edu/level3.cfm?causeid=961)

**Hemlock Woolly Adelgid**

The hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), *Adelges tsugae*, that originated from southern Japan, was first reported in the eastern United States in 1951 near Richmond, VA. In eastern North America, this introduced insect pest attacks both Canadian (*Tsuga canadensis*) and Carolina (*Tsuga caroliniana*) hemlock which are often damaged and killed within a few years of becoming infested.

HWA is a tiny insect that is closely related to the aphids, and produces woolly white masses. From mid-July until mid-October, they are immatures (nymphs) and are flat, black, oval, and ringed with a fringe of white waxy strands. In mid-October, they start feeding by using their piercing-sucking mouthparts to remove plant sap from the twigs of the host plant.

While they feed, they develop into adults with new egg masses beginning in March. This stage is the most noticeable for the masses have the appearance of small, white cotton balls lined up at the base of the needles.

The problem is very manageable if addressed early and aggressively. One of the best options is the use of horticultural oils. These can be applied as either a dormant oil spray and/or as a summer spray. In order for these to be effective, the application must be thorough throughout the entire plant and may need to be reapplied later in the growing season.

Continuing Education Corner

Editors’ note: Want to find the web link for an organization offering a class, to get more information, or to register? See the green column at the side of this page headed, "Visit Website for More Classes," and click on the organization’s link to go directly to its website.

March Continuing Education Corner

March 1, 10:30 am–12 pm. Orchid Symphony First Movement: Evolution, Biogeography and Ecology. This lecture will cover the evolution, biogeography and ecology of orchids in conjunction with the USBG Orchid Symphony exhibition. Orchids form one of the largest plant families dating back to the Age of Dinosaurs. Learn how modern research methods are being used to better understand these plants and conserve them. U.S. Botanic Gardens Conservatory Classroom. FREE; pre-registration required.

March 1, 2–3 pm. Signs of Spring Tour. Explore the first signs of Spring at the National Botanic Gardens and learn to identify a variety of common native plants and the important clues they reveal about the life cycles of their surroundings. Outdoor tour; canceled in the event of rain or snow. U.S. Botanic Gardens, meet in Conservatory lobby. FREE; no pre-registration required.

March 4, 9:30 am. Hydrangea paniculata pruning. Ladew Gardens Visitors Center. FREE for members; $10 for non-members (includes admission to gardens and nature walk). Pre-registration required.

March 6, 4:30-7 pm. How Plants Work Teacher Training. A behind-the-scenes workshop to learn how to use the garden as an extension of your classroom. U.S. Botanic Gardens Conservatory Classroom. FREE; pre-registration required.

March 8, 1-2 pm. Alienweeds: Tapping the Abundance of Invasive Plants. Habitat restoration often begins with the removal of exotic invasive vegetation that can yield an abundance of material: paper and fabric, fibers, pigments, lumber, chemicals, fuel and food. Learn how one gardener turns local invasive weeds into inks, printing blocks and sheets of paper. Hands-on display. U.S. Botanic Gardens Conservatory Classroom. FREE; pre-registration required.

March 9, 1-4 pm. Bonsai Repotting Workshop. Bonsai museum staff will teach repotting concepts and skills, giving individual attention to each tree brought in by a student (limit of one large or two small bonsai per student). U.S. National Arboretum, Bonsai & Penjing Museum. $29 ($23 for FONA/NBF); pre-registration required.

March 11, 12 noon-1 pm. Medicinal and Poison Plants Tour. A walking tour of the U.S. Botanic Gardens Conservatory that features poisonous and medicinal plants and how they are used to make life-saving medicines. U.S. Botanic Gardens, meet in Garden Court. FREE; no pre-registration required.

March 14, 12 noon-1 pm. Sugar, Sex and Poison: Plant Secrets. Learn how the world of pollen, poisons, pigments, pheromones, sugars and sex translates to sound organic practices that can benefit us all. U.S. Botanic Gardens Conservatory Classroom. FREE; pre-registration required.

March 15, 10 am-noon. Lawn Care Best Practices. Basic and advanced information covering the five most important lawn care principles, using a pro-active approach that emphasizes preventive techniques to reduce weeds, pests and diseases. U.S. National Arboretum. FREE; pre-registration encouraged.

March 15 or 16, 9:30 am-4:30 pm. 2014 Orchid & Heritage Plants Diagnostic and Repotting Clinic. Bring a heritage plant you are...
Concerned about and learn how to care for and re-pot it. Heritage plants are those that need specialized care or may have been in the family for a very long time, such as African violets, Christmas cactus, succulents and begonias. Behnke’s Beltsville store. FREE; no pre-registration required.

**March 16, 1:30-3 pm. Early Spring Containers.** chanticleer Garden’s Jonathan Wright shows how to plant a beautiful early Spring container that will thrive and warm up any cold day. Container plants available for sale following. Green Spring Gardens Park. $12 for non-Fairfax residents; pre-registration required.

**March 18, 4:30-6 pm. How to Make a Home Worm Bin.** A workshop suitable for children age 6 and above and adults, too. Hands on demonstration with instructions for care. Brookside Gardens Visitors Center Adult Classroom. $22 per household ($20 for FOBG); pre-registration required.

**March 27, 2-3:30 pm. Local Gardening 101: Getting the Garden Ready for Spring.** What to tackle first, what can wait, and what you need not bother with at all. Brookside Gardens Visitors Center Adult Classroom. $18 ($15 for FOBG); pre-registration required.

**March 29, 8:30 am-3:30 pm. Lahr Native Plant Symposium: Yes, You Can!** Make your garden more ecologically beneficial, sustainable, and beautiful with inspiration and how-to information from leading figures in the gardening world. Topics include the philosophy and design intent behind the new innovative native plant garden at the New York Botanic Garden, the many reasons to use more native ferns, ponds and aquatic plants, propagation how-to’s, and practical alternative energy projects for the garden. U.S. National Arboretum. $89 ($71 for FONA); pre-registration required.

**March 29 or 30, 9:30 am-4:30 pm. 2014 Orchid & Heritage Plants Diagnostic and Re-Potting Clinic.** Bring a heritage plant you are concerned about and learn how to care for and re-pot it. Heritage plants are those that need specialized care or may have been in the family for a very long time, such as African violets, Christmas cactus, succulents and begonias. Behnke’s Potomac store. FREE; no pre-registration required.

**March 25, 8 am-4 pm. Invasive Species Program.** A daylong program sponsored by University of Maryland Extension in cooperation with the Maryland Arborist Association. Includes invasive disease and insect updates; best methods to treat emerald ash borer, boxwood blight update, Asian longhorned beetle update; rose rosette overview and research update; bacterial leaf scorch – latest research on detection and control; and a hands-on lab. Baltimore County Center for Maryland Agriculture (Cockeysville). $40 for registrations by March 17 (lunch included); $45 for registrations after March 17 (lunch not guaranteed).

**STATE MG ADVANCED TRAINING**

**Native Plant Essentials (three different location and dates below).** This course will serve as the basic introductory course to all MG Advanced Training native plant classes and as a survey course for folks who want to know more. Introduction of what’s native and why, soils, ecology, climate and the concept of native plant communities, why native plants are important and what their preservation and success means for all of us. Includes a hands-on component with either identification exercises or a field walk. Presenter: Sara Tangren. $35; pre-registration required.

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**Webinar Policy**

The following MC-MG guidelines for determining how webinars qualify for Continuing Education credit were developed by a Board ad hoc committee and approved by MG Coordinator, Steve Dubik.

**Continuing Education:**

1. Subject matter must be relevant to the field of horticulture.
2. Continuing education hours may be granted for webinars assuming:

* The duration of the program is a minimum of 30 minutes for which a MC-MG would earn 30 minutes of CE credit.
* The source is an educational or governmental organization (e.g., University of Maryland, Penn State University, Maryland Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture or Environmental Protection Agency).

* The webinar has been pre-approved by the state or local Master Gardener Coordinator.

At least five of the required continuing educational hours must be earned in a face-to-face environment such as meetings, seminars or workshops.

If you have questions as to whether a webinar may be accepted for continuing education credit, contact the local Master Gardener Coordinator or designee.
March 15, 9:30 am-3:30 pm. Cylburn Arboretum (Baltimore). Registration deadline is March 7.
March 18, 9:30 am-3:30 pm. UME Washington Co. (Boonsboro). Registration deadline is March 11.
March 20, 9:30 am-3:30 pm. Anne Arundel Co. Dairy Farm (Gambrills). Registration deadline is March 13.

March 25, 9 am-4pm. Organic Vegetable Gardening. This program will define the terms “organic” and “sustainable” and teach you about the products and techniques that will help you to succeed. Additional topics include contaminants, safety, climate change, reading labels, soils and fertilizers. An intensive, interactive class with pre-class assignments on-line (so computer access is required). Presenter: Jon Traunfeld. UME Montgomery Co. (Derwood). $35; pre-registration by March 18 required.

MORE WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING

Environmental Concern, Inc. in St. Michael's offers courses on wetlands.

The USDA Graduate School offers a Natural History Field Studies Certificate Program.

The University of Maryland Extension sponsors the Maryland Naturalist Program. Sessions are held in different areas of the State. [http://extension.umd.edu/masternaturalist](http://extension.umd.edu/masternaturalist)


WEBINARS and CHATS

Tree Talk Thursdays: (not approved for CE credit). Casey Trees’ online chat series held every second Thursday of the month at noon to discuss urban forestry and tree care topics. Archived chats are available for replay and sharing. [www.caseytrees.org](http://www.caseytrees.org).

Seed Savers (not approved for CE credit). Recorded webinars include: Population Size; Planning Your Fall Garden; Pepper Seed Saving; Eggplant Seed Saving; Planting Garlic; Dry Seed Cleaning; Growing Biennials for Seed. [www.seedsavers.org](http://www.seedsavers.org).

Save the Date!
MG Annual Training Day: May 29 at the University of Maryland College Park.

**LOOKING AHEAD**

April 3, 2-3:30 pm. Local Gardening 201: Tackling Common Challenges. Case studies of gardeners who have conquered problems like poor drainage, gardening on a slope, deer, planting in clay soil, etc. Brookside Gardens Visitors Center Adult Classroom. $18 ($15 for FOBG); pre-registration required.

April 3, 4-7 pm or April 4, 10 am-1 pm. Rain Garden Workshop. Learn techniques to evaluate your yard and create a rain garden using native plants and enhanced soils while taking advantage of the County’s rebate program. Brookside Gardens Visitors Center Adult Classroom. $15 ($12 for FOBG); pre-registration required.
GROW IT EAT IT
University of Maryland Extension
Maryland's Food Gardening Network
Montgomery County Master Gardeners

Spring Open House
March 29th, 8:30am - 1pm
at the Agricultural History Farm Park

Learn...
how to start seeds.
basic veggie gardening.
all about growing fruits.
all about squashes.
small scale gardening.
how to keep animals out.
how to compost.

See...
a veggie cooking demo.
children's garden ideas.
what makes soil healthy.
the Demo Garden.

Do...
bring seeds to swap.
bring tools, learn tool care.
bring your garden questions.
buy locally grown plants.
pick up a free composting bin.

http://extension.umd.edu/growit/montgomery-county-vegetable-gardening-classes-and-events

The classes and demonstrations are FREE, but donations are appreciated.

Agricultural History Farm Park 18410 Muncaster Road, Derwood, MD 20855
301-590-9638

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