September is a transition month for Master Gardeners. Many projects are winding down for the year, and volunteer opportunities become scarce. If you find yourself needing volunteer hours to make your quota, the Charles County Fair can be your ticket. The Charles County Master Gardeners provide educational displays at the Fair, and participation as a “display educational specialist” (booth staffer) provides plenty of opportunity for volunteer service hours. MG volunteers greet the public at the display booth, answer gardening and horticultural questions, and help promote awareness of the Master Gardener program. This a great opportunity for MG Interns to work with experienced MGs, in mentorship and fellowship. The 2015 Charles County Fair will take place Thursday, September 17, through Sunday, September 20. Volunteers can request and select their days and time slots. Our display design team is already hard at work creating an informative display that promises to provide a great public educational booth, as well as dazzle the Fair judges. If you would like to volunteer to help staff the display areas during the Fair, please contact Bob Peregoy at 301-645-5079 (home), or 301-653-3679 (cell), or by email at rperegoy2705@verizon.net.

Article by MG Bob Peregoy, Project Lead
This season a dry second half of May gave way to a very wet June with many places in the county getting around 9 inches of rain! These consistent, heavy rains of June helped get new transplants established, but the dampness and warm weather has also brought more disease problems especially in the vegetable garden. I hope that your garden is faring well!

The spring got off to a good start with a very successful plant sale. With your hard work, we raised almost $2400! Thanks to everyone who worked to make that possible. From the Dr. Mudd House to Plant Clinics and more, the summer projects are underway. Check the calendar for important upcoming dates. As we look towards the fall I encourage you to get on board with some of the upcoming opportunities. The Charles County Fair is a great way to get out to educate the community and to raise awareness of the program. As always, I encourage you to be thinking of new projects and ways to reach our community.

Thank you for all your service to our community!

Article by Luke Gustafson, CCMG Coordinator

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Do You Know these Bugs? Bug Day Coming in September!

Answers on page 7
Bay-Wise certified Master Gardeners have completed 7 landscape and 2 vegetable garden certifications since the beginning of April. Those certified are:

Landscape certifications were completed for Swan Point Yacht and County Club Clubhouse, Swan Point Yacht and Country Club golf course, Marlene Smith (intern), Jane Tyson (intern), Tracey Alston (intern), Paco and Linda Blake and Rhonda Radford.

Vegetable certifications were completed for Paco and Linda Blake and EatWell Natural Farm.

If you would like your landscape and/or vegetable garden certified, please contact Janet McGrane. Filling out the yardstick and going through the certification process count as Bay-Wise volunteer hours.

Certifications for MG Interns Jane Tyson and Marlene Smith
Left to right: MG Janet McGrane, MG Intern Jane Tyson, MG Ann Gillespie, MG Intern Marlene Smith and MG Neal Johnson

Certification for MG Intern Tracey Alston
Left to right: MG Neal Johnson, MG Intern Tracey Alston and MG Millie Havrilla

Article and Photographs provided by MG Janet McGrane
Growing Garlic

Garlic is an excellent garden crop and now is a good time to start planning for fall planting. This hardy bulb can be planted from mid-September thru early November. Fall-planted garlic cloves put out roots and get established, so they are ready to grow again first thing in the spring. It is encouraging in the springtime to see the green shoots growing long before other vegetable crops. Garlic can also be planted in the early spring – around the same time as early potatoes – but it will not yield as well as fall-planted garlic.

To plant, break the bulb apart and plant individual cloves 2 inches deep and 4 to 6 inches apart in rows. Once the shoots emerge from the ground, cover the rows in mulch such as shredded leaves or straw to keep down weeds. Hardneck varieties produce a flower stem called a scape. These tender stems are harvested in early June, before the bulbs are dug late June to early July. Harvesting the scapes diverts energy down to the developing bulbs. They have a mild garlic flavor and can be used like scallions. Harvest the bulbs in late June to early July as the tops begin to die back.

There are a plethora of varieties of garlic out there to try. Many mail order seed companies offer numerous types. If you want to grow heirloom varieties, order your garlic early since some varieties sell out early. Garlic from the grocery store should not be planted since it can carry disease and may have been treated with a sprout inhibitor. Garlic varies widely in size, flavor, storability and ease of peeling, so you can find a type that matches your preference.

For more information on growing garlic, see the Garlic publication (GE 110) or the HGIC YouTube video. See the Vegetable Planting Calendar for Central Maryland (GE 007) for approximate planting dates for a wide range of garden vegetables. It is a useful tool for garden planning.
Veggie gardening in New Hampshire during the summer is challenging to say the least. I bought an Earth Box 2 years ago in hopes of actually harvesting some produce. Hindered by a very active red squirrel and deer population and a short growing season, I had limited success last year.

This year has proven a bit better. At a Merrifield Garden Center Seminar, I learned a tip to put an inch of pea gravel on top of the soil to deter rodents digging. So far it is working. I initially planted the yellow squash plant I bought at the MG plant sale in the Earth Box. It bloomed profusely but when the veggies grew about 2 inches long they all developed blossom end rot. I transplanted it to a standard pot and had more control of the water and the problem disappeared. I will be harvesting some veggies later this week.

The eggplant that I bought at the sale fared better. The 5-5-5 fertilizer and the garden lime used in the Earth Box was perfect for the eggplant. It took a while for the blooms to form but I have 1 purple eggplant actively growing and 2 other blossoms ready to bear.

Tomatoes also initially had many blooms and fruit but alas, the plants developed the early blight. The initial fruit has matured but the plants are dying and I will be removing them this week.

So, I guess my experience gives me hope that with patience, veggies can be successfully grown in containers.

Article and Photographs provided by MG Sue Brewer
The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations has designated 2015 as the International Year of Soils (IYS 2015). According to the FAO, the goal of IYS 2015 is “to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of soil for food security and essential ecosystem functions”\(^1\), and the specific objectives of the IYS 2015 are to:\(^1\):

- Raise full awareness among civil society and decision makers about the profound importance of soil for human life;
- Educate the public about the crucial role soil plays in food security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, essential ecosystem services, poverty alleviation and sustainable development;
- Support effective policies and actions for the sustainable management and protection of soil resources;
- Promote investment in sustainable soil management activities to develop and maintain healthy soils for different land users and population groups;
- Strengthen initiatives in connection with the SDG\(^*\) process (Sustainable Development Goals) and Post-2015 agenda;
- Advocate for rapid capacity enhancement for soil information collection and monitoring at all levels (global, regional and national).

The SDGs is an agreement of the United Nations to develop a set of international development goals. According to the FAO, “our soils are in danger because of expanding cities, deforestation, unsustainable land use and management practices, pollution, overgrazing and climate change. The current rate of soil degradation threatens the capacity to meet the needs of future generations. The promotion of sustainable soil and land management is central to ensuring a productive food system, improved rural livelihoods and a healthy environment.”\(^2\)

Some interesting facts shared by the FAO\(^2\):

- Soils help to combat and adapt to climate change by playing a role in the carbon cycle.
- Healthy soils are the basis for healthy food production.
- Soils support our planet’s biodiversity and they host a quarter of the total.
- Soil is a non-renewable resource, its preservation is essential for food security and our sustainable future.
- Soils store and filter water, improving our resilience to floods and droughts.
- Soils are the foundation for vegetation which is cultivated or managed for feed, fibre, fuel and medicinal products.

As Master Gardeners, our mission is to “support the University of Maryland Extension’s mission by educating residents about safe, effective, and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes, and communities.” During the IYS 2015, I encourage everyone to spend some time educating yourself and others about the importance of soils.
2015 International Year of Soils (continued)

There are numerous resources available on the internet for learning about IYS 2015, including:

The FAO website, which offers a wealth of educational material related to the importance of soils, including downloadable, printable fact sheets:

The Soil Science Society of America, which has a celebration page that includes downloadable activities, monthly themed videos, and more:
https://www.soils.org/iys

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service:
http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/wa/home/?cid=STELPRDB1264830

And remember, “healthy soils for a healthy life”.

References:

Answers to “Do You Know these Bugs?”

**Top Left** (Photo and information provided by Dave Lewis): Carpenter ants are the largest ants on the continent. They tunnel through dead or decaying wood and build nests. They can be found in just about any structure. Like other ant colonies, they have a queen who lays eggs. They are not poisonous but their bite can hurt. In addition to wood, they eat other insects and plant juices. To eliminate the carpenter ant, you have to eliminate the queen.

**Top Right** (Photo and information provided by Dave Lewis): Cow killer bugs (or velvet ants) look like ants but are actually wasps. The female has a vicious sting that is rumored to have killed cows (hence the name). Females lay eggs in a bumblebee's hive. When the eggs hatch they eat the larvae of the bumblebee. Cow killers can be found in fields, sandy areas or in the forest. They tend to be more nocturnal. Some were spotted at last years Bug Day.

**Bottom Left** (Photo and information provided by Luke Gustafson): Photo taken at the Plant Clinic Practicum at CSM in June. Newly hatched assassin bug (Family Reduviidae) nymphs next to egg casings on holly leaf.

**Bottom Right** (Photo and information provided by Janet McGrane): Great Spangled Fritillary on swamp milkweed
Do You App?

As smart phones get more popular, lots of interesting apps are coming out that are gardening related. I found this one while I was in Hawaii and it really helped identify some of the great flowering plants there. So, if you know of an app that the rest of us might like, please send to me — I will highlight one app each newsletter.

Deborah

Like that Garden (iOS and Android)

You either take a picture while using the app or you can have it look at a picture in your photos and it will show you the most likely matches—really easy!
Calendar
Training Highlighted in Bold

August
1, 15 9am-1pm; Plant Clinic, Waldorf Farmer's Market, contact Luke Gustafson
25 10am; Membership Meeting at Extension Office; Open to all MGs
27 6-9pm; MG Green Roof Training and Essential Elements of Conservation Landscaping at MWR Lawns; contact Sandra Reissig

September
5, 19 9am-1pm; Plant Clinic, Waldorf Farmer's Market, contact Luke Gustafson
8 6:30-7:45pm; Turf & Lawn Maintenance at La Plata library; Open to the public; register with library, Luke Gustafson
12 9am-4pm; Community Garden Training for MGs at the Center for Educational Partnership (PG County); $40; register at http://cgtmgcep.eventbrite.com
14 6-7:30pm; Turf & Lawn Maintenance at Waldorf West library; Open to the public; register with library, Luke Gustafson
17-20 Charles County Fair, to volunteer contact Bob Peregoy
21 6-7:30pm; Composting at Waldorf West library; Open to the public; register with library, Luke Gustafson
22 10am; Membership Meeting at Extension Office; Open to all MGs
28 6:30-7:45pm; Composting at La Plata library; Open to the public; register with library, Luke Gustafson

October
3 Monarch Mania, Cobb Island, time TBA
11am-2pm; Composting Workshop, Rain Barrel Workshop & Shred Event (partnership with county gov’t) Charles Co. Gov’t Building parking lot 200 Baltimore St. La Plata; contact Luke Gustafson
3, 17 9am-1pm; Plant Clinic at Waldorf Farmer’s Market; contact Luke Gustafson
11 12-3pm; La Plata Day
27 10am; Membership Meeting at Extension Office; Open to all MGs

November
24 10am; Membership Meeting at Extension Office; Open to all MGs

December
8 6pm; Holiday Party, more information to follow
Submit articles, photos, reports, events, and other items for publication to Deborah Determan at CompostSubmissions@yahoo.com by October 15, 2015 for the Autumn 2015 newsletter. If you send a photo, please include a brief description of the activity and names of persons included in the photo, as well as the photographer’s name. If you send a photo of a plant, please include the scientific name, if known.

Showy orchis, *Galearis spectabilis*

This beautiful plant was found on a wildflower walk on the marsh trail in Mount Aventine’s Chapman forest on Sunday May 4, 2015. The habitat for the Showy orchis is rich, moist woods and edges of swamp.

Photograph provided by MG Pat Biles