**THE LOTUS Nelumbo nucifera** Also known as Indian lotus, sacred lotus, bean of India, or simply lotus.

While you may be seeing these distinctive dried seed heads utilized in holiday decorations this time of year, did you know they are quite historic, symbolic, edible and rather quite fascinating? Read on...

**History & Botany**

Lotus Nelumbo is an aquatic perennial, surviving temps to 10 degrees F. Under favorable circumstances its seeds may remain viable for many years, with the oldest recorded lotus germination being from that of seeds 1,300 years old recovered from a dry lakebed in northeastern China. Lotus is considered to be one of the most ancient plants in existence. Lotus has the remarkable ability to regulate the temperature of its flowers to within a narrow range just as humans and other warm blooded animals do. (1)

**Symbolic Meaning**

The idea of enlightenment is symbolized by the life cycle of the sacred lotus plant because it begins its life humbly in the mud of ponds but soon grows and sends stems and flowers well above the surface of the water (up to 50cm), thus showing the path of spiritual enfolding. (1)

Chinese poets also use lotus flowers to inspire people to continue striving through difficulties and to show their best part to the outside world, no matter how bad the circumstances may be. This is understood as being just like the lotus flower, bringing beauty and light from the murky darkness at the bottom of the pond.” (1)

The Lotus also holds varying symbolic meaning among various cultures including the ancient Egyptians, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Different colors and different phases of the flower’s life having significant roles within these cultures. (2)

**Uses:**

American Lotus was a main food source for Native Americans and it is basically found east and south of the Rockies plus parts of California. While the root, shoots, flowers and young seeds are all edible, it was the root the Indians counted on to get them through the winter. (3)

Through the hot summer, Cajuns take to the bayous in their air boats, pirogues and flat-bottomed mud craft in search of patches of lotus flowers floating in the shallow swamps and marshes of coastal Louisiana. They’re out to harvest the green pods left behind after the flowers lose their petals. Each pod holds as many as two dozen seeds, a tasty treat known in these parts as “graine a voler.” Loosely translated, the Cajun French term (pronounced Grah-NUH VOH-Lay) means “seeds that fly” or “seeds in the air,” stemming from the fact that when the seed pods are left to wither, the husk retracts and pressures the seed to pop out.

Graine a voler is a seasonal treat that through the summer and early fall months is harvested to be eaten raw, fried, roasted, boiled or cooked down in soups and stews. It’s a starchy, rather bland seed with a nutty taste and a hint of sweetness in the younger, plumper pods. (4)

**Sources:**

1- [http://www.wildthingsgrow.com/lotus-history.html](http://www.wildthingsgrow.com/lotus-history.html)
2-[http://www.lotusflowermeaning.net/](http://www.lotusflowermeaning.net/)
COORDINATOR’S CORNER

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2016...

Time to re-fresh, time to plan! Below is a list of current as well as potential areas in which our mission as Master Gardeners has and can be directed within our community. I highly encourage all of you to explore at least one or more ways you can contribute. During the first month of the new year we will be holding information committee meetings on each of these focus areas so please consider coming out to find ways you can join in on the conversation and/or action!

Bay-Wise
- QA Parks & Rec Open Spaces
- Bay-Wise Fall Garden Tour
- Consults & Certifications
- Rain barrel Workshop & Seminar

GIEI + Community Food Gardening Kit
- Chester
- Talisman
- Grasonville

Youth Gardeners (Library + School)
- Kent Island Library Series
- Centreville Library Series
- Kennard, Stevensville, Sudlersville Elementary

Plant Clinic
- Kent Island Farmers Market (Thursdays)
- Centreville Library (Saturdays)

Pollinator Team
- Adkins Arboretum

Demonstration Gardens
- Library Rain Garden
- Office Entry + Sign with Eagle Scout
- 4H Park Pollinator/Native

Plant Sale
- Annual Spring Sale and Swap
- Fall Perennial Swap
- Winter Greens Workshop

Speakers Bureau/MG Panel
- MGs Speaking in the Community
- Community Outreach Tables

VOLUNTEER HOURS

If you have not signed up to log your hours online and would like to just send me an email for your username and password. All hours are due by December 18th
Happy Holidays 2015

Queen Anne’s County Master Gardener Recognition Luncheon

Wednesday, December 16th
Social welcoming 11:30am - 12:00pm
Lunch served at 12:00pm
Presentations to follow

Chester River Yacht & Country Club
7738 Quaker Neck Road
Chestertown, MD 21620

Menu
Salad:
Mixed greens, mandarin oranges, dried cranberries
goat cheese, candied pecans with a raspberry vinaigrette

Main Course:
Choice #1- Crab cake, red bliss potato, vegetable medley
Choice #2- Grilled vegetable ravioli, garlic oil, roasted red peppers, vegetable medley

Dessert:
Cherry tart

Rolls & butter, coffee & tea will be provided
Other beverages available for purchase

*Anyone with specific dietary limitations or requests should contact Molly Garrett at the time of your RSVP

Cost $29 per person
Please make checks payable to QACEAC

RSVP by Wednesday, December 9th
Adkins Arboretum’s Fourth Annual Native Garden Tour
Saturday, May 21, 2016 from 10am until 4pm

This year’s tour offers six private and rarely seen Kent County gardens that feature native plants and/or sustainable practices. Some of the highlights of this year’s tour are a small garden in Chestertown that is packed with native plants; another small property in Chestertown that features a xeriscape garden and a shed with a living roof; sustainable vegetable and fruit gardens; formal gardens with native plants; old, large native trees and shrubs; and very special woodland and waterfront gardens.

The tour is self-guided. The brochure includes garden descriptions, directions and a map. Docents at each garden will help visitors identify unusual plants and special design elements.

Please contact Alice Macnow at alicejean@netzero.net or 410-778-4275 for more information about volunteering.
The PHS Philadelphia Flower Show is an annual event at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in March. It is the world’s oldest and largest indoor flower show, attracting more than 260,000 people annually. The Show features large-scale gardens, elaborate landscapes, and over-the-top floral creations.

Visitors to the PHS Philadelphia Flower Show are treated to fabulous design, live entertainment, gardening how-to workshops, and lectures by experts. Show week begins with an exclusive black-tie Preview Party, one of Philadelphia’s premier events.

**Show Hours**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, March 4 (PHS members preview)</td>
<td>12:00 pm - 3:30 pm</td>
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<td>Saturday, March 5 (PHS members preview)</td>
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<td>Sunday, March 6</td>
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<td>Mon. - Fri., March 7-11</td>
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<td>Saturday, March 12</td>
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<td>Sunday, March 13</td>
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All proceeds from ticket sales support the charitable work of PHS including City Harvest, feeding more than 1,200 families in need in Philadelphia.
Online Workshops 2016
Horticulture Magazine Garden How-To University
http://www.hortmag.com/smart-gardening-workshops

Master Gardener Training 2016
February 11th—April 9th
Thursday evenings 5:30pm to 8:30pm
Saturday mornings 9:00am to 12:00pm
Eastern Shore Higher Education Center, Wye Mills (Chesapeake College Campus)
If you know of anyone interested in becoming a Master Gardener please encourage them to sign-up!
Contact: mgarret1@umd.edu or call 410-758-0166

Enjoy Local Fare Fair, Interest Gatherings, Chesapeake Farm Dinner and a Photo Contest!
Interact during pre-conference, skill-building workshops for farmers and food lovers alike
Experience SEVEN conference tracks - something for everyone!

Three Keynote Speakers
Ricardo Salvador
Union of Concerned Scientists
Chef Cathal Armstrong
Restaurant Eve
Natasha Bowens
The Color of Food

Early bird registration ends December 15
For more information: http://futureharvestcasa.org/conference/program-preview
QAC MG Volunteer Opportunities

Kent Island Plant Clinic
The Farmers Market is at Christ Church, 830 Romancoke Road (aka Route 8). We set the booth tables up at 3 to 3:15 pm to be ready for bugs, citizens, and damaged plants by 3:30 pm. We start knocking down the booth around 6 pm. Bring a beverage bottle to stay hydrated.

Next Plant Clinic: Thursday, December 10th
Please consider volunteering at YOUR MG table ONE day this year!
Nick Stoer 301-219-9098 nickstoer@gmail.com
Cathy Tengwall 443-994-2523 cathy1542@gmail.com

Community Gardening
NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11TH 10AM QA EXTENSION OFFICE
This winter we will be working to put together a tool kit/resource applicable for our local community members ready to dig in their community garden come Spring 2016. This toolkit will offer guidance in size/type, building costs, recommended plants and varieties, planting schedules, maintenance plans + composting, weed + pest ID, as well as the roles and number of people needed to keep it going! We have three locations in which our guidance and knowledge is needed Denton, Grasonville, and Stevensville so please consider being a part of this planning committee.

Grow It Eat It State Meeting
Tuesday, December 8th, 10am-1pm
Montgomery County Extension Office
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, MD 20855
Rsvp to jont@umd.edu

First Ever State MG Pollinator/Natural Enemies Meeting!
Friday, December 11; 10am-1pm
Baltimore County Extension Office
Purpose: Share resources, experiences, and ideas around these topics and investigate the possibility of a state-wide initiative.
Rsvp to jont@umd.edu

Host + Learn
Consider being a host or hostess for this years upcoming MG Basic Training. It's a great way to obtain educational hours listening to the speaker and gain volunteer time by offering to bring drinks and yummy goodies! Contact Molly at mgarret1@umd.edu if there is a specific date or topic you would be interested in attending and helping!
November 2015 UESBA Meeting

**Guest Speaker:** Mike Embrey Extension Apiculturalist (Ret.), University of MD

**Pollen and its uses**

Pollen is a variety of nutrients which is used to move genetic material from flower to flower. Plants have adapted to appeal to different methods of pollination; wind pollination, cross pollination.

Not all pollen is the same, it is a mixture. This mixture changes about every 30 miles. The diversity of pollen grains makes it comparable to other basic foods; meats, breads, vegetables. Humans cannot digest all of the nutrients in pollen, we get about 10%.

**Pollen to Pollen Pellets**

Honey Bees use nectar and bee saliva (lactic acid) to make the pollen stick together for easier transport and storing. When the pollen is stuck together it is considered a pollen pellet. Foraging honey bees have about a 2 mile radius for collecting pollen of different colors and nutrient values. Bees can mistake other particles for pollen like pesticides and dust. In a study they have found up to 273 different chemicals included in pollen and/or wax. Hive bees will remove the pollen from forager bees, we can remove the pollen off of bees for collection by lacing a pollen trap at the entrance.

**Bee Bread**

Bee Bread is packed pollen pellets, when the bees are packing the pollen pellets they add 3 more types of lactic acid.

**How to collect pollen**

Freeze a frame of pollen, then crack the wax off and the pollen will fall out.

Pollen Traps: You cannot use a pollen trap year round, especially not in a flow, and you need to be careful not to take too much because the hive will starve. The pollen must be removed from the trap every other day or it can mold, high heat and humidity damage pollen. Pollen needs to be dried before it can be stored. Storage is best done in dark jars or freeze dried since sunlight can destroy pollen.

**Mike Embrey’s Beekeeping 101 Classes:**

Mike will be offering several Beekeeping 101 classes this winter into spring in different locations:

1. **Talbot County:** Talbot Extension Office, Starting Jan. 23rd and then every other Saturday until April, then 1 class in late August and 1 in early September. Class start time is 9am
2. **Wicomico County:** Starting Jan. 26th and then every other Tuesday until April, then 1 class in late August and 1 in early September. Class time is 7pm-9pm
3. **Kent County:** Starting Jan. 28th and then every other Thursday until April, 1 class in late August and 1 in early September. Class time is 7pm-9pm. The exact location for this class is still being decided along with the price.

**Next Meeting:** January 13th, 6:30 pm, Kent County Library

Guest speaker: Cindy King from Kingstown Southern States. Cindy will be speaking about Honey Bee/ Pollinator friendly plants.

**More information:**

UESBA Website: [http://www.uesbees.org/](http://www.uesbees.org/)

Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/uppershorebeekeeping/?ref=ts](https://www.facebook.com/uppershorebeekeeping/?ref=ts)
Outside the Garden Gate...

**Adkins Arboretum Programs & Events Calendar**
December 5: Holiday Greens Workshop
December 12: Candlelit Caroling
https://adkinsarboretumorg.presencehost.net/programs_events/calendar/2015/12

**Ladew Topiary Gardens Fall Series**
Christmas Open House + Greens Sale
Friday, December 11th to Sunday, December 13th
http://www.ladewgardens.com/EVENT-CALENDAR
For more information, call (410) 557-9570

**A Longwood Christmas**
November 26—January 10
http://longwoodgardens.org
For more information, call (610) 388-1000

**Mt. Cuba Center Classes & Lectures**
http://www.mtcubacenter.org/education/continuing-education/
Winter + Spring 2016 Course Listings:
http://issuu.com/mtcubacenter/docs/fawi15_program_guide?e=14731861/14447371

From The Gardener’s Kitchen....

**Chocolate Boiled Cookies**  (Makes 2-3 dozen)

**Ingredients**
- 2 Cups sugar
- ½ Cup butter (one stick)
- ½ Cup cocoa
- ½ Cup milk
- Pinch of salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 3 Cups oats
- ½ Cup nuts (optional)

**Directions**
Boil sugar, butter, cocoa, and milk for 2 minutes. Remove from heat.
Add remaining ingredients and stir until well blended.
Drop by spoonful’s onto greased wax paper.
Place in refrigerator and cookies will harden as they cool.
## DECEMBER 2015

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**KI Plant Clinic, 3:30-6:30pm**

**Community Garden Meeting 10am**

**Holiday Luncheon**

## JANUARY 2016

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**MANTS, Baltimore Convention Center**

**KI Plant Clinic, 3:30-6:30pm, Chestertown**

**Future Harvest CASA Conference, Hyattsville**

**KI Plant Clinic, 3:30-6:30pm**

**Monthly MG Meeting, 9:30am, Centreville**

**Monthly MG Meeting, 6:30pm, Chestertown**

**Beekeping 101, 7-9pm, Kent County**
Master Gardener Training 2016

Interested in improving the environment?
Avid gardener or wishing you had a greener thumb?
Dedicated Volunteer?

If you answered yes to any of the questions above, you should certainly consider becoming a Master Gardener and joining the next class of enthusiastic horticulturalist! This rigorous 40+ hour course is designed to give you basic information in preparation for volunteering as a Master Gardener representative of the University of Maryland Extension. Topics will include: ecology, botany, soils, propagation, diseases, insect pests and control measures, among others. This program emphasizes community involvement and outreach as well as environmental stewardship. A fee of $200 is charged to cover all costs including the Maryland Master Gardener Handbook.

February 11th - April 9th 2016
Thursday evenings 5:30pm to 8:30pm
Saturday mornings 9:00am to 12:00pm

Location: Eastern Shore Higher Education Center, Wye Mills

For more information contact:

QAC Master Gardener Coordinator
Molly Garrett
mgarrett1@umd.edu
(410) 758-0166

Talbot Master Gardener Coordinator
Mikaela Boley
mboley@umd.edu
(410) 822-1244 ext 12

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January Newsletter Deadline: December 16, 2015

University of Maryland Extension
505 Railroad Avenue, Suite 4
Centreville MD, 21617
Phone: (410) 758-0166
Fax: (410) 758-3687
http://extension.umd.edu/queen-annes-county/about

QACMG Website:
http://extension.umd.edu/queen-annes-county/home-gardening

Master Gardener Coordinator,
Queen Anne’s County

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University of Maryland Extension

Queen Anne’s County

505 Railroad Ave.

Suite 4

Centreville, MD 21617

Vision Statement: A healthier world through environmental stewardship