



Master Gardener

Brunswick County Master Gardener Volunteer Association

NEWSLETTER

March, 2008

Upcoming Events...

- March 18th** Work Day in Garden & Greenhouse
- March 13th** Free Pruning Seminar at Extension office 1:00 – 3:00, bring tools
- March 27th** Regular Meeting
- March 29th-30th** Brunswick Home & Garden Show
- March 29-30th** Historic Poplar Grove Plantation's Herb & Garden Fair
- April 3rd** Waterwise Seminar Extension Office 5:00 till 7:00
- April 7th** Work Day in Garden & Greenhouse
- April 9-13th** Wilmington Azalea Festival
- April 10,11,&12** Spring Plant Sale
- April 19th** Coastal garden Club Tour of Gardens & Spring Tea at Woodsong
- April 23rd** Winding River, Spring preparation and waterwise seminar
- June 18-21st** Southern Region Master Gardener Conference
- Oct 5-8** 2008 MG Conference in Brunswick County
- Dec 10th** Christmas Party

Upcoming Speakers

March 27th Ken Fager is an Agricultural Research Specialist, North Carolina State University and will speak on Organic Vegetable Gardening - practical examples that promote diversity and soil quality. Ken will explain the utilization of cover crops in a reduced tillage gardening system that lends itself to a bounty of fresh vegetables.

- April 24th** Peter Hertyl - NCSU - Ground Pearls
- May 22nd** Bryce Lane NCSU Gardening Ideas
- June 28th** Frank Galloway - Plants for local use
- July 24th** Dr. Frank Blazich - NCSU - Summer Propagation
- Aug 28th** Charlotte Glen - Plants for difficult situations
- Sept. 25th** Ronda Sherman - Vermicomposting
- Oct 23rd** Toby Bost
- Nov. 20th** updates by horticulture staff

2008 Dues are due! [See back page.](#)

Wanted! Name our Newsletter

Let's come up with a catchy name!
Send Me your suggestions
jloughlin@ec,rr.com

Historic Poplar Grove Plantation's 2008 Herb & Garden Fair

Sat (9-5) & Sun(10-4) Mar 29&30
The Fair is where to find great plants. Well known growers bring in truckloads of fresh, locally grown herbs, annuals, perennials, shrubs, trees and hanging baskets.



Wanted: Herbarium to make a collection of dried plants mounted and labeled for use in scientific examination. See Shirley.

**Will we see you at the March Meeting
on the 27th at 9:00 am ?**

From the Presidents Desk ...

Since I received no names for the newsletter I can only assume we do not wish to have a name for the newsletter. No interest was shown in the Herbarium project. Hopefully someone in the 08 Master Gardener Class will be interested in taking on this project. Help is needed in the greenhouse to prepare for the April Plant sale. Work days in the garden are first Monday and the third Tuesday. With spring right around the corner a lot of help is needed in the garden.

I recommend that you go to the web site and read the newsletter, schedule of events, speakers, minutes, etc. The newsletter needs news. Let Joe know what is happening.

Welcome to the 2008 Master Gardener Classes. They are already volunteering.

The 2008 Conference Committee is hard at work. Silver Coast Winery has been chosen for the reception. Have mailed out approximately 275 letters asking for support. We will start following up on the letters shortly. Our first money has been received for an ad in the program. We have been promised a 5 inch plant for each attendee at the conference. Have received two silent auction donations. If you would like to help on the conference contact me. There is still a lot that needs to be done.

Master Gardeners' Library

The library in the Master Gardeners' Office now consists of over 270 books. The 2008 recent additions are The Southern Living Garden Book (the most recent edition), Pass Along Plants (recommended by Bryce Lane on his TV show), The Handbook of Oleanders, Durr's Trees and Shrubs for Warm Climates (a beautiful book) and 3 children's books on gardening related topics that will be used for the Supply Elementary School project and Life on the Farm.

In February 2008 the book inventory was completed. The next steps are to find missing books, organize the books in the MG office so that they're easy to locate and possibly make the updated inventory accessible from the Website. The inventory is currently on the computer in the Master Gardener Office (in Excel).

If you have any suggestions for new books or would like to donate books to the library, please contact Grace Wrigley at 846-3341 or email gwrigley@atmc.net.

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Joe's Kitchen

I just got back from the Philadelphia Flower Show. I didn't pick up any recipes, but the show was definitely "cooking". We had such a good time; I thought I'd share some thoughts.

Bruce Williams led a group of 44 on a bus trip that had five stops; we left Wilmington early and drove to Richmond, VA to see the Lewis Ginter Gardens. Ginter is a nice stop if you are making your way north on 95. It has a decent size conservatory, some beautiful, well marked gardens, and made an excellent lunch stop. Our accommodations for three nights were in Wilmington, Delaware. We started our next day at Longwood Gardens.

Wow! The Conservatory there is measured in acres and every square inch was great. Even at this time of year, Longwood is worth a full day (wish we could of stayed). Citrus, camellias, tons of orchids, hibiscus, roses, and so much more the list would fill the entire newsletter. The afternoon was another DuPont Garden and House.

Winterthur is situated on large wooded and hilly area of Mr. DuPont's farm. He became a collector of American furniture and art and kept adding to his farm house till he had filled 175 rooms and had to move to the guest house (I believe it had 65 rooms). The natural beauty of the woodland garden is quite a setting for his mansion. If you admire American antiques, this stop is for you. We spent our third day at the Flower Show. It took me about 5 hours to see it all, some took even longer. It's setup with about 1/3 theme gardens created by different organizations, about 1/3 were displays that were either judged or were educating, and about 1/3 commercial booths. They also have seminars running constantly. Great Show! Huge Crowd! The crowd start to thin about 3:00 pm and the show stays open well into the evening. Pace yourself, go out and enjoy Philly a little, and have fun!



March Hotline Calls:

In March 2007 there were 187 inquiries to the Hotline and 37 requests for information from our participation in March Garden Shows.

General: 85 - 18 requested Newcomer packets and 17 requested soil sample kits and interpretation of analysis. The rest were for various information such as pruning, plant ID, composting, plant selection for our area, landscaping, and bird information.

Lawns: 64. The majority of calls concerned Centipede and St. Augustine grasses and weed control.

Shrubs: 19. Gardenia, Azalea, and Oleander had the most questions. Roses and privets also had a few.

Trees: 36. Crepe Myrtle had the most inquiries with questions about fungus and selection for this area. Fruit trees, palms, pecan, holly's trees had several calls each.

Pests: 11. All the usual suspects; Moles, Voles, Fire Ants and deer.

Veg./Flowers:23 Grapes, Tomato, Blueberry, were the main concern. Flowers varied all over the place. I enjoyed the question about soil oysters.

Southern Region Master Gardener Conference - June 18-21, 2008 in Oklahoma – for detail check the website <http://www.mastergardener2008.com>

ADVANCED EXTENSION MASTER GARDENERSM 2008 CLASSES

Plant ID – Thursday's March 27– May 29, 1-3:30 p.m. (proficiency test - May 29, 2008)
Cost: \$40.00

Landscape Class Dates and times:
April 2, 9, 23, 30 and May 7 (9-noon)
April -*15or16, meet with regular MG Class
May - field trip TBA
May 22 – MGA meeting with Bryce Lane landscape design concepts, installation and management

Work Days

Please come and help us when you have time, but especially on the work days. March 18th and April 7th

Gardens: Jim Blake is available to direct your work.

Greenhouse: Tyler Ash always needs help weeding and getting plants ready for sale.

David Barkley

Extension Horticulture Agent
Brunswick County Cooperative Extension Service

MARCH GARDEN CHORES

1. If weeds have been a problem in your landscape beds, consider using an appropriate pre-emergence herbicide. The timing is critical for good results....it needs to be in place before the weeds appear! One rule to remember: if you had weeds last year, expect a volunteer (bumper) crop in 2007.

2. Most pruning on rose bushes should be completed this month if you haven't done so already.

3. There are numerous fruit trees that will fit into most landscapes. Be sure to locate them away from active people use areas. If you are in a small setting, consider using a dwarf cultivar. Be sure to plant a pollinator if necessary. You should also note that deer are attracted to fruit trees. If you are in a "deer zone", it is recommended to erect some type of fence around each tree. Electric fences work well in orchards but are not practical for homeowners with a limited amount of space.

4. Begin designing a perennial border. There are 20-25 very popular herbaceous perennials that are (almost) fool-proof, for all areas of North Carolina. Prepare the beds by deep tilling and incorporation of plenty of compost and plant later in the spring.

5. Want to improve the looks of your landscape by 100%? Many landscapes would look better if a 3-4" layer of organic mulch was applied around the shrubs. Then take a square blade shovel and put a professional edge on the bed. Be sure to edge at least 18-24" out from the outer edge (dripzone) of the shrubs

6. Think about adding some garden sculpture to the landscape. Any number of birdbaths, gazing globes, wildlife or human figurines and statues can be found in garden centers and antique shops. If you don't believe this is the latest "style", just thumb through a few gardening magazines.

7. Although a severe case of spring fever makes a gardener do strange things, one temptation to resist is to work in the soil if it's wet. Think twice before you work in wet soil. Compaction problems are unforgiving

What to Plant: You may continue to plant larkspur, poppies, and dianthus. In mid-March plant coreopsis, cherry laurel and southern magnolia and vegetables such as: broccoli, beets, cauliflower, and cabbage. Containerized roses can be planted anytime between March and May. This is the beginning of the next best time to plant ornamental shrubs and trees.

What to Prune: Prune deciduous spring flowering shrubs after flowers fade; quince, spirea and forsythia all flower on old growth. Do not prune shrubs that haven't bloomed yet such as azaleas and Indian hawthorns. Prune roses before bud break. Toward the end of the month, prune freeze-damaged oleanders in Coastal regions. Heavy pruning and rejuvenation pruning of summer blooming shrubs can be done now. On Rabbiteye blueberry bushes, prune to maintain 6-9 branches per plant.

What to Fertilize: The winter has been cold and warm at times. Typically it is best to fertilize most ornamental plants around April 15. You may apply bulb fertilizers according to label directions after bulbs emerge. Wait on other ornamentals until April. If you have not already fertilized pecan, do so now at your earliest convenience.

Vegetable Garden Tips:

- When sowing seeds for transplants, leave about 1/4 inch of space between seeds to allow them to grow adequately and to discourage damping-off fungus
- Erect trellises now for beans and cucumbers in Lower Piedmont and Coastal Plain, if you are going to train them on trellises later in the season.
- If your garden space is limited, grow vegetables that are especially delicious and nutritious such as tomatoes and green, leafy vegetables. Also select those that bear for a long time, such as broccoli. Cucumbers and melons do well on a fence, if the fruit is supported by slings. And don't grow it, if your family won't eat it!
- When planning your vegetable garden, consider that leafy vegetables need at least six hours of sunlight to develop properly. Fruiting vegetables such as tomatoes, squash, eggplant and peppers need 10 hours of full sun.
- For easier watering of tomatoes and other large vegetables, plant a gallon can with holes punched in the bottom nearby. Watering through the can keeps water off the top of the ground and puts it near the roots where it's needed.
- For faster growth of vegetables in containers, use black plastic pots to warm the soil (81 degrees F on sunny days compared to 72 degrees for the same mixes in clay or white plastic pots).
- Delay organic mulching to allow soil to warm deeply, but act before weeds become established.
- Harden transplants of vegetables by decreasing water, fertilizer and growing temperatures. Transplant on a shady day in late afternoon or in early evening to reduce transplant shock. Water with a half-strength fertilizer solution. For a few days after transplanting, protect the plants from wind and sun by placing a piece of newspaper or cardboard on their south sides or by covering with jugs, baskets or flower pots. Water the plants once or twice during the next week.
- When transplanting seedlings from peat pots be careful not to allow the rim of the peat pot to protrude above the soil level. If the rim is above the soil level, it will act as a wick and draw moisture away from the transplant. To prevent this from happening, break away the uppermost rim of the pot before planting and make sure the pot is completely covered with soil.
- Introducing children to gardening can be a rewarding experience for the entire family. Give them a small plot of their own with full sun, good soil, and drainage. It's a pleasant and productive way to spend time together.

2008 Dues Notice

Dues are payable by January 1 each year.

(But we will accept them now!) (Hint! Give us a twenty and forget it for 4 years)

Make checks payable to: Brunswick County Master Gardener Volunteer Association (BCMGVA)
\$5.00 per Individual

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Mail checks to: **Allen Smith**
4515 Fieldstone Cir SE
Southport, NC 28461

NAMETAG; you have earned it, now wear it.
We would all like to know your name.

If you have an item for the newsletter, submit it to Joe Loughlin (jloughlin@ec.rr.com)

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