



## GREEN TIMES

February 2010

Volume 10 Issue 2

### Master Gardener Meeting

**Tuesday, February 23, 2010 at 7 pm**

Totowa Business Center  
930 Riverview Drive, Suite 250  
Totowa, NJ

### Meet us for dinner at 5pm

Miranda's Café

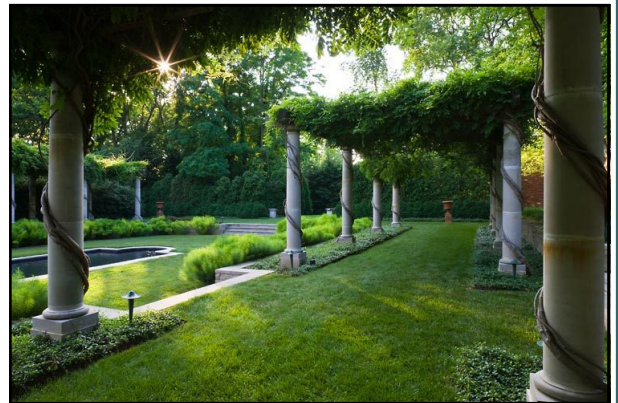
Route 23 North, Wayne NJ

Allow 15 minutes to get to the meeting

## **“GREENSCAPING: THINKING GREEN WITH SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES” with KATY WEIDEL**

This program was developed by the Environmental Protection Agency about environmentally beneficial landscaping.

Katy Weidel, LLA, FASLA, is the supervisor of park planning at the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC), Lyndhurst. She holds a Master of Landscape Architecture from Cornell University, College of Arts and a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Cook College, Rutgers University. She has won several New Jersey Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects Merit Awards — including honors for NJMC Interpretive Park Signage (2006), NJMC Mill Creek Point (2005) and NJMC World Trade Center Memorial (2004).



### **SAVE THE DATES**

- ◆ Morris Canal Park “Clean and Grow” Restoration Campaign: April 30th 3 p.m. — 6 p.m. and May 1st 9 a.m.— 12 p.m.
- ◆ NJBG Lilac Saturdays are coming so save the dates: May 12th and 19th (rain date May 26), September 18th and 25th (rain date October 9th)
- ◆ MGAPC Plant Sale: May 15th 10 a.m. — 2 p.m. This is our only fundraiser so please contribute plants and participate in any way you can.



## ELAINE'S CORNER



### To do in February

- ◆ Prune fruit trees and grape vines.
- ◆ Scout for tree problems like black knot on cherry and egg masses of gypsy moth on hardwoods - prune out the black knot and rub off the thumb-size brown egg masses.
- ◆ Let chilled bulbs warm up indoors for forcing.
- ◆ Try growing some paperwhite narcissus.
- ◆ Keep the bird feeder filled. Watch out for bears!
- ◆ Cut forsythia, pussy willow and quince branches for forcing indoors.
- ◆ Late in the month, look for winter aconite, snowdrops and primrose to begin blooming. Hurray!
- ◆ Armchair garden. I love those catalogs and magazines!

### Great Backyard Bird Count

Calling all birders! The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent and in Hawaii. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. Go to [www.birdsource.org](http://www.birdsource.org) for more information. The dates for the bird count are February 12th-15th, 2010.



*What a desolate place would be a world without flowers!  
It would be a face without a smile, a feast without a welcome.*

- Clara Balfour

Elaine Barbour

County Agricultural Assistant

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ February 18th—21st ~ NJ Flower and Garden Show, Edison. For more information visit: [www.macevents.com](http://www.macevents.com)
- ◆ March 9th ~ First Annual Soil Health Conference, Burlington County College, Mt. Holly. For more information visit: [www.sjrkd.org/soilhealth/](http://www.sjrkd.org/soilhealth/), email [pevans@bscd.org](mailto:pevans@bscd.org), or call 609-267-7410
- ◆ March 11th—14th ~ Springfest, Sussex County Fairgrounds, Augusta, NJ. Discount coupons at our office or on their website: [www.springfestgardenshow.com](http://www.springfestgardenshow.com) . 973-948-9448
- ◆ March 13th ~ Garden Symposium at Stuart County Day School, Princeton, sponsored by MGs of Mercer County. [www.mqofmc.org/symposium](http://www.mqofmc.org/symposium)
- ◆ March 13th ~ Native Plant Society of NJ Annual Meeting, 10 a.m.—1 p.m., at CCM in Randolph. Program is free but registration is required at [www.brownpapertickets.com/event/93746](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/93746)
- ◆ March 21st ~ Home Gardeners' School, SEBS campus, New Brunswick. Discounts available. Contact [ocpe@njaes.rutgers.edu](mailto:ocpe@njaes.rutgers.edu) or call 732-932-9271
- ◆ Rutgers 2010 Garden Series Classes begins in March. For more information visit <http://rutgersgardens.rutgers.edu/classes.html>
- ◆ May 6th—8th ~ Bee-ginner's Beekeeping. Contact the Office of Continuing and Professional Education for details and costs at [www.ocpe.rutgers.edu](http://www.ocpe.rutgers.edu) or 732-932-9271
- ◆ June 18th and 19th ~ Beyond the Basics: Practical Hive Management Tools for Beekeepers. Contact the Office of Continuing and Professional Education for details and costs at [www.ocpe.rutgers.edu](http://www.ocpe.rutgers.edu) or 732-932-9271

## BOOKWORMS

Author Mel Bartholomew is once again putting his best foot forward — this time to the kitchen.

The retired engineer has come out with a cookbook companion to his popular *All New Square Foot Gardening* book (Cool Springs Press, Nov. 2009).

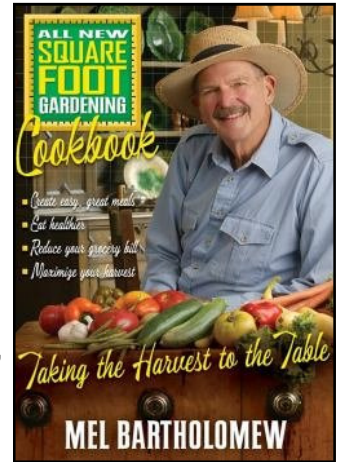
The 176-page soft cover book features more than 135 fresh from-the-garden recipes for 17 vegetables, herbs and fruits. The dishes range from pickling and salads to spreads and sauces.

Each section offers up tips on when and how to harvest and expected yield.

My favorite part(s) of the book are cute little quick “hits” at the beginning of each chapter — “Storage,” “Eat/Don’t Eat,” “Companion Planting,” “Kid’s Corner” and a “Mel Says ...” feature.

The book sells for \$19.95.

For more information visit: [www.coolspringspress.com](http://www.coolspringspress.com).



— Ray Edel

## PLANT OF THE MONTH: BOSTON FERN

(*Nephrolepis exaltata bostoniensis* 'Dallas')



About 100 years ago a drooping mutation of a popular houseplant fern was found in Boston. It is so much more attractive than the species that the Boston fern has become the most common fern used as a house plant. Boston fern fronds may grow to 5' long. A variety of the Boston fern, 'Dallas,' never gets very big and is used in small spaces and in dish gardens.

Boston ferns take little care: bright light but not direct sun, room temperature throughout the year — however a summer in light shade will stimulate good growth, frequent watering, fertilize in spring and summer. The only pests are aphids and scale insects. Regularly arranged dots on the underside of fronds are spore cases, not insects.

Some plants have been in families for many years as they are easy to propagate by division.

— Edith Wallace

## “SOUPER” BOWL

In honor of the Super Bowl, we will be collecting cans of soup which will be distributed to the needy, at our February meeting.

## OPTIMIST LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Kudos to our own Jack Kuepfer. Say the words *Morris Canal* and the name Jack Kuepfer comes next—he is the recipient of the newest Clifton Optimist Club recognition—the Optimist Lifetime Achievement Award. At age 89, Kuepfer attends to the historic site daily in an effort to restore, maintain, and beautify the park. The 2010 Clifton Optimist Award Winners will be feted on May 2nd at 4 p.m. at a dinner to be held at the Clifton Recreation Center.

Jack was also featured in the cover story of the Friday, January 29th Clifton Journal. Congratulations!

— Ray Edel

## GARDEN QUESTIONS ANSWERED HERE

It is hard to stop reading the American Horticultural Society *New Encyclopedia of Gardening Techniques* edited by Ellis *et al.* long enough to write. There are 444 pages divided into 10 chapters: basics, wildlife, ornamentals, vegetables, fruit, lawns, water gardening, containers, greenhouses and propagation. In 44 pages there is an excellent summary of everything I learned in a semester-long course on propagation. I wish I had this as a textbook. There is "a little of this" and "a little of that" which adds up to a great whole.

New information (to me): crane fly larvae are called leatherjackets and they eat grass roots. Most of the drawings are excellent, especially those that show exactly how to prune, and the pruning directions are species specific. The method for pruning and keeping raspberries in control looks practical. The directions for growing figs are not appropriate to New Jersey. The text is weak on introducing native plants and not very effective in explaining the threats of invasive plants but these are minor complaints in a good book. I want a copy. Put it at the top of your wish list as recommended by Ray Edell last month. When you have a garden question look in this book in the Helpline Library before going to specialized books.

— Edith Wallace

## CLASS SCHEDULE CHANGES

(Refer to the complete class schedule in the January edition of Green Times)

"Small Fruit" has been re-scheduled for April 22. That means the "Houseplant" lecture with Madeline Flahive-DiNardo has been canceled. It will not be re-scheduled.

CHANGE – February 25, Organic Gardening will be taught by Jan Zientek, Essex County Program Coordinator.

Tuesday, March 9, Plant Propagation at SEBS, New Brunswick\*

Bus leaving at **9 a.m. sharp**

We should be back by 2:30 p.m.

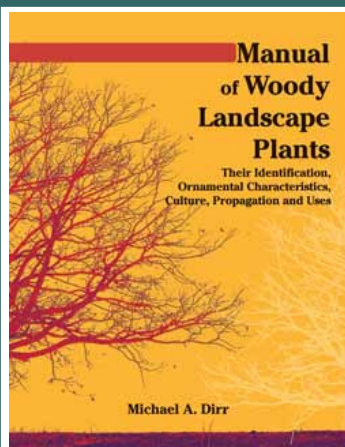
NEW --Thursday, March 11, Happy, Healthy Houseplants with Elaine Barbour

Wednesday, April 28, Flower Gardening at SEBS, New Brunswick\*

Bus leaving at **8:45 a.m. sharp**

We will be back by 3:30 p.m.

\*For bus trips, bring your lunch and beverage. Park your car behind the building by Senior Services, Totowa Business Center, 930 Riverview Drive



## DIRR DOES IT AGAIN

We have the NEW edition of *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants* by Michael Dirr in the Helpline Library, purchased by Passaic County Rutgers Cooperative Extension funds. The last edition was published eleven years ago. Did our library need the new (6<sup>th</sup>) edition? Yes. Do you need the new book? At \$96.80 for the hardcover or \$76.80 for the soft cover book, I'm not sure. Do I need my own copy? Yes. Dirr is the book in my library I use most often to confirm tree or shrub identification, to learn more about woody plants, and to enjoy the personal opinions.

He includes new information, new species, and new cultivars. There are more pages. The lilac section (an excellent survey of lilacs) in the new edition begins on page 1102 and 981 in the previous version due to the quantity of new information. This time Dirr has made note if the plant is "in the category of weedy-invasive and is listed on the Global Invasive Species Database." Our invasive porcelain berry is called "Porcelain Ampelopsis" (Dirr lives in Georgia) and he says of it, "Another vine which is rarely visible in the modern landscape..." I wonder what he would say about

kudzu (the vine I have heard is covering the southeast) if it were a woody plant. Come to the Helpline office to look at this book before you make a purchase. The drawings and commentary are of the highest quality, typical of any book written by Michael Dirr.

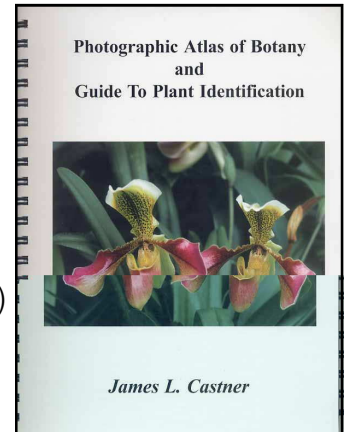
— Edith Wallace

## FINALLY, A BOOK THAT CLEARLY EXPLAINS THOSE BOTANICAL TERMS

Most of our Helpline Library books are for generalists. *Photographic Atlas of Botany and Guide to Plant Identification* by Costner is more for the botanically minded, however all of us who attempt identification and sometimes have trouble with terminology NEED this book. When I first opened the book the page was "Thorns--Spines--Prickles." Everyone "knows" that roses have thorns, however, botanically they are called prickles and on page 9 the difference is clearly explained. In the introductory section there are many definitions and there is a glossary at the end of the book, but of greatest value are the clearly labeled photographs. Some of us understand pictures best, and these photographs are as clear as drawings.

Botanists use many specialized terms. Here is a place where the meaning is clearly shown. There are more terms explained in this book than most of us will ever use, nevertheless this is the place to go when we need to understand botanical terminology to identify plants. Finally, the difference between a spike (stalkless flowers from a single axis) and raceme (stalked flowers from a single axis) is clear. Some of the most confusing (to me) terms describe types of fruit. Here they are clearly illustrated.

The second and longer part of the book is devoted to plant families. This topic cannot be simplified but it can be clarified and Costner has succeeded. If you have trouble with the concept of a plant "family", looking at pages describing some familiar plants should make this clearer. Heliconia and bird-of-paradise are in separate families and they are placed on opposite pages so these easily confused families are differentiated. Costner has included ferns, and gymnosperms as well as the flowering plants. Begin with plants and their structures you know and learn more about the beauty and structure of plants. The photography is clearly labeled and attractive.



— Edith Wallace

### 2010 MEETING DATES

#### Board Meeting Dates

(3rd Wednesday - 6:30 p.m.)

Feb. 17, March 17, April 21, May 19, June 16, Sept. 15, Oct. 20 and Nov. 17

#### General Meeting Dates

(4th Tuesday - 7 p.m.)

Feb. 23, March 23, April 27, May 25, June 22, Sept. 28, Oct. 26 and Nov. 23

Contributors: Elaine Barbour, Ray Edel, Jo-Ann Pituch, and Edith Wallace

Editor: Regina Imperato



### Master Gardener Association of Passaic County Officers

Ray Edel, President  
Janet Rekesius & Mary Ann Sytsma, co-1st Vice-Presidents  
Howard Aschoff, 2nd Vice-President

Joan Kaynak, Treasurer  
Patricia Engrissei, Recording Secretary  
Regina Imperato, Corresponding Secretary

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