



GREEN TIMES

June 2009

Volume 8 Issue 9

Master Gardener Meeting
Tuesday, June 23, 2009 at 7pm
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

“Fluttering Flowers: The Life and Likes of a Butterfly” with Karen Richards of “K & K Butterfly”

Karen Richards has been working in the field of horticulture for 15 years. She is a certified teacher of ornamental horticulture, greenhouse operations and management. Richards has taught at-risk youths horticulture for nine years. It was during this time she found her calling in butterflies. Richards also presents after school workshops/programs called the “Flutter-bys”, as well as other fields of science for kindergarten through elementary-aged students. She also assists special needs students find their path in education and career coaching.



LILAC SATURDAYS AT NJBG



June 13 and June 20 we will gather in the lilac garden to prune, deadhead, and plant some lilacs, working to improve the great lilac gardens of Skylands. Dan Ryniec, lilac expert from Brooklyn Botanic Garden, will join us to give specific lessons in lilac care. The rain date is June 27. Call Frank Dyer at 973-962-4461 if rain threatens. We will begin about 9 in the morning and stay until after a light lunch. Come when you can and stay as long as you are having fun. Bring your pruners. If you are not a Skylands member tell the gatekeeper you are volunteering in the lilac garden. You can record continuing education credit for the time of Dan's pruning lesson.

— Edith Wallace

MASTER GARDENER PICNIC

Remember to RSVP by July 10th to 973-305-5740 for the Master Gardener picnic which is scheduled for July 23rd from 5 pm—8 pm, at Jim & Sara McHugh's home (1908 Hamburg Turnpike, Wayne). If your name starts with A—I bring an appetizer, J—R bring a salad, S—Z bring a dessert.

ELAINE'S CORNER



To do in June

- ◆ Continue planting warm-weather crops
- ◆ Fertilize rhodos and azaleas after flowering; prune if needed
- ◆ Divide spring-blooming perennials
- ◆ Move houseplants outside
- ◆ Get a tetanus shot if you haven't had one in 8-10 years. Check with your doctor.
- ◆ Water new plantings so that they get one inch of water per week, if it hasn't rained
- ◆ Continue tick control with regular mowing, carbaryl (if needed) and repellents
- ◆ Buy cool season vegetable seeds (lettuce, radishes, spinach, kale, broccoli, etc) before they are returned to the manufacturer

Plant Sale Kudos

Teamwork and fabulous plants made for a successful plant sale. Thank you to the plant sale committee for their fine work and to all the Rutgers Master Gardeners who donated plants and "green elephant" items for the event. The funds go to many needed projects and programs in Passaic County.

GreenFest Volunteers

Never a dull moment for Rutgers Master Gardeners - on the same day as the Plant Sale, West Milford sponsored a huge event called GreenFest. Four county MGs helped to address questions and had out publications for RCE. Thanks to Kathleen Caren, Cookie Gomm, Rhea Ann Link, and Judy Montgomery for their time and assistance at GreenFest.

Helpline Training Notes

I don't pay a lot attention to my lawn. I wish that I had sheep to shear it. The lawn is green, but it's not all turf grass. As far as I can tell, I have no turf diseases. It may be because I mow high and leave the clippings, adding to the fertilization of the lawn. Richard Buckley, Director of the Rutgers Plant Diagnostic Lab, had the following tips to reduce disease problems in turf, specifically red thread, dollar spot and brown patch.

- ◆ You can "outrun" the disease with nitrogen. Apply about 4 pounds of N per 1000 square feet. The best time to apply fertilizer is September, then mid-October, then April.
- ◆ Remove the grass clippings only if you have turfgrass disease
- ◆ Raise the mower height to 2 1/2 to 3 inches
- ◆ Use resistant turfgrass varieties and seeds inoculated with endophytes
- ◆ Top-dress with 1/2 inches of compost
- ◆ Consider biological controls
- ◆ Aerify in early autumn to decrease thatch and compaction (and no, clippings do NOT contribute to thatch)

Road Trips

I hope that you were able to join us for at least one of our tours and trips to various historic and horticultural places in New Jersey. I had a great time and I trust that you did too. Continuing education credits as follows:

5/7	Buck Garden	3 hours
5/20	Tallamy and NJBG	3, 3 1/2 or 4 hours (depending on the length of your garden tour)
5/27	Princeton	4 1/2 hours
6/5	Helpline Training	4 1/4 hours

Project Form

Enclosed is a Project Form. I would like to keep a file of all projects and activities whether or not they are funded by MGAPC or RCE. This is for insurance and record-keeping purposes. I just need one person from each project to complete the form. Thank you for your kind help.

ELAINE'S CORNER (cont'd)

To do in Summer

- ◆ Continue to irrigate new plantings
- ◆ Consider washing machine rinse water to irrigate, if there is a drought (no Borax)
- ◆ Continue tick control (see above)
- ◆ Let the lawn get a little higher (2 1/2 to 3 inches) to shade out weed seeds
- ◆ No lawn fertilizer in July or early August
- ◆ Pinch back leggy plants and deadhead annuals for a longer bloom season
- ◆ Net fruit to prevent the birds from eating it
- ◆ Watch roses for leaf diseases and fertilize one last time in late July
- ◆ Plant cool season vegetables
- ◆ Destroy gypsy moth egg masses
- ◆ For grubs in the lawn, treat the turf with imidacloprid (Merit, Grub-Ex) 3 weeks after peak adult Japanese beetle population (preventative) about late June/early July
- ◆ For grubs in the lawn, treat the turf with trichlophone (Dylox) if you have more than 8-10 grubs per square foot (curative) about August. Irrigate turf before and after application.
- ◆ Consider insecticidal soap as a treatment for several insect pests: mealybugs, thrips, spider mites, other sucking insects

See "To do in summer" above to control Japanese beetle grubs in the lawn, if you have them. Please know that irrigation systems increase the incidence of grubs because beetles love to lay their eggs in soft, moist turf. A drought tends to decrease the grub/beetle population.

Plant Overload

It seemed to take me a long time to plant the annuals and woody material that I purchased this spring. Energy and strength are low. My last purchase was a beautiful native plant, *Oxydendrum arboreum* (sorrel tree), from NJBG just after the Dr. Doug Tallamy lecture. I have just about reached the woody plant saturation point at the home and farm. Plants at the edges of the property give me a chance to look out the window and enjoy them year-round. I tend to avoid planting against the house except for the "funnel effect" to the front door. This also helps to reduce paint problems on the house. I finally finished today (6/8) so that I can enjoy the hot summer with my "lemonade".



Enjoy the summer and watching the plants grow. See you at area projects and the picnic!

Elaine Barbour
County Agricultural Assistant

GREAT TOMATO TASTING

Mark your calendars for the 19th Annual Great Tomato Tasting at Snyder Farm on Wednesday, August 26th starting at 3 pm to and ending at dusk.

Back by popular demand, the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension proudly announce the Annual Snyder Farm Open House and Great Tomato Tasting. This year's event will commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Research Farm, and includes the very popular tasting of both heirloom and hybrid tomatoes and wagon tours of the farm's research plots. Previous events have also highlighted variety samplings of basil, peppers, melons, salad greens, and apples - with plans already started for this year's offerings. The Melda C. Snyder Teaching Garden will showcase "chef" gardens of heirloom vegetables, a children's garden, deer tolerant landscape plants, and plants that can attract beneficial insects to your garden.

Cost is \$5 per person and children under 10 are free.

PLANT OF THE MONTH: SWEET POTATO VINE (*Ipomoea batatas*)

Each spring the garden centers have trays of tall skinny spikes (*Dracena*) and even more trays of sweet potato vines in chartreuse, near-black and variegated (tricolor). These displays are planned for gardeners who plant window boxes and want something erect and something cascading, or trailing, to give more dimensions to their floral arrangements, and their colors make for dramatic displays. Nothing trails as well as sweet potatoes. They can grow 2' a week.



This is the same species as the edible sweet potato. Digging in your window box where decorative sweet potato vines have grown you will find a large tuber, not considered as tasty as vegetable varieties that are bred for flavor.

Plants in the *Ipomoea* genus do not survive our winters. Sweet potatoes can be overwintered by bringing window boxes inside or clippings can be rooted in water or planting mix and kept in a sunny window. As sweet potatoes are relatively inexpensive it is easier to purchase new plants each spring.

The decorative varieties of sweet potato rarely flower, but when they do their pale purple trumpet shaped flowers resemble those of morning glories, a member of the same genus.

— Edith Wallace

LIFE IS GOOD

Everyday I rise; I wash up and head downstairs, then out to my garden. Before breakfast, before prayers and before I greet the day, I make a connection with my flowers and vegetables. This garden that I so lovingly toiled away in is sacred ground to me.

I meticulously chose the why and where of each tiny plant and tenderly opened the ground so it could receive each life-filled, root bearing stem. As the days have passed the ground graciously accepted and embraced the tiny plants which are now medium sized clusters.

I carefully mist the soil, pick the weeds and thank the universe for granting me the experience of watching the miracle of life. I've done this hundreds of times yet, it never ceases to amaze me. Each time I greet my garden in the morning I notice the changes: the number of leaves, the difference in height, the leaning toward the sun, the dampness of the dew and the promise of beauty, color and great flavor at my table.

Who cares about the economy, life is good on my tiny patch of earth!

— By Angela Enid Medina

MASTER GARDENER SHIRTS

Sweatshirts (\$23) and t-shirts (\$12) will be available for purchase at the June meeting.
Or call Edith Wallace at 201-444-2717 to arrange to purchase a shirt.

NEEDED: A MASTER GARDENER WHO LIKES TO ORGANIZE

The Helpline Library needs help. It should be organized and then revisited periodically. Call Edith Wallace at 201-444-2717 if you would consider this volunteer opportunity. It could be a shared task.

WHAT'S GROWING ON IN YOUR NECK OF THE WOODS?

The Record/Herald News is looking for photos of what's growing in your gardens. For more information about the contest, please take a look online at: <http://northjersey.upickem.net/engine/Welcome.aspx?contestid=7084>.

— Ray Edel

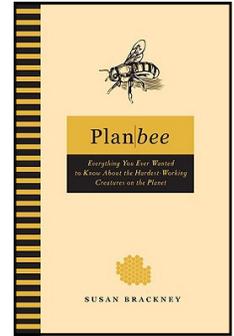
BOOKWORMS

Indiana master gardener and apiarist Susan Brackney is passionate about bees.

In her new book, "Plan Bee: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the Hardest-Working Creatures on the Planet" (Perigee, May 2009), she shares her knowledge about the well-orchestrated buzzing inside the hive.

Brackney packs "Plan Bee" with tips on how anyone – whether urban, suburban or rural dweller – can don the protective screen, build a nesting box and start beekeeping in their own backyard. She also offers facts, insights and even some recipes and instructions (bee bikini, anyone?).

The 194-page hardcover sells for \$21.95.



— Ray Edel

PLANT SALE THANKS

We would like to thank the children, women, and men of the Master Gardener Association for all your support in making the plant sale such a success. Thank you to all who donated your time, your plants, your special skills, and your prayers (for good weather). It was truly a group effort. We could not have done so well without everyone pitching in. We raised approximately \$3,200. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Please be aware of our "Friends in the Business" who helped us out:

- ◆ George Cluff of Eden Farms who let us go shopping for the eye candy and grew tomatoes.
- ◆ Chris Rubino from Monrovia who donated and delivered beautiful plants and shrubs.
- ◆ David Obsuth of Oak Farms who donated the tools and plants.
- ◆ Todd Kuehm of Farms View Road Stand for growing tomatoes.
- ◆ Skip Bartlett of Bartlett Greenhouses & Florist for growing tomatoes and donating hanging baskets.

— Jill Hanifan, Mari Striegel, Sharon Grady and Jo-Ann Pituch

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Helene and Sunny held the first committee meeting to discuss decorations for the Holiday Open House Breakfast Room on June 9th. Good ideas were tossed around and a plan was formulated. We are looking forward to having new members join the committee. "It takes a village" to decorate and man or "woman" a H.O.H. room.

All meetings will be held at Helene Christie's home which is at 40 Spruce Terrace, Wayne. Please call Helene at 973-694-1201 and plan to join our meetings. We always have fun!

— Helene Christie and Sunny Brennan

TURF FIELD DAY

Mark your calendars now for this year's Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Days which will be held on August 4th (Golf and fire turf Research Field at Horticultural Farm II, New Brunswick NJ) and August 5th (Landscape and Sports Turf Research Field Day and Equipment Demonstrations at Adelpia Research Farm, Freehold, NJ). More information will be coming to Jo-Ann at a later date. If you plan on attending the turf field days, please contact Jo-Ann Pituch at pituch@rce.rutgers.edu.

MG ACTIVITIES, PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS SCHEDULED THIS SUMMER

~ **Morris Canal Park:** Every weekday morning from about 7 am to about noon. Contact Jack Kuepfer for more information: 973-473-5176

~ **Laurelwood Arboretum**

Horticultural

2nd Saturday of the month 9am – 12 noon Meet in the pavilion 6/13, 7/11, 8/8, 9/12,10/10

Wed. afternoons 1pm - 3pm – work/learn alongside Joan Scott-Miller – Laurelwood’s Horticultural Manager and PC Master Gardener – call Joan first to confirm 973-477-4238

Greenhouse – maintaining plants Fall thru Winter – call Joan in late September for schedule

Supervise horticultural volunteer projects by individuals and groups

Plant ID – ongoing multi-year project

Other volunteer opportunities

Construction

Tours – help create a self guided tour of Laurelwood

Fundraising – Fall Plant Sale 9/26 – 10-3

For more info contact: Bonnie Joachim – vol. coordinator— 973-838-1908 bonniej142@netscape.net

~ **The Wildflower Garden at Skylands**, the NJ Botanical Garden: Contact Darlene Nowak at dnowak1@optonline.net

~ **Lilac Garden at NJBG**

Restoration

2 Saturdays in June, 2 Saturdays in September

for 2009: June 13th and 20th (27th rain date), September 19th and 26th (October 10th rain date)

Independent Projects

Deadheading in June and July

Weeding in May and June

Acquiring lunch for Lilac Saturdays

Record keeping

Maintaining tags and labels

Contact Frank Dyer at 973-962-4461 or Edith Wallace at 201-444-2717 for more information.

Contributors: Elaine Barbour, Sunny Brennan, Helene Christie, Ray Edel, Sharon Grady, Jill Hanifan, Bonnie Joachim, Jo-Ann Pituch, Angela Enid Medina, Darlene Nowak, Mari Striegel, Edith Wallace

Editor: Regina Imperato

Master Gardener Association of Passaic County Officers

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