

Master Gardener Volunteers Newsletter

Monthly Newsletter for Cumberland County Master Gardener Volunteers

President's Column

We're very privileged to live in Maine, and to live in beautiful Cumberland County. It truly is a special place. From the towns that ring Sebago Lake to the hills of New Gloucester, from the islands of Casco Bay to the communities that line it - Brunswick down to Cape Elizabeth - and to all points in between, Cumberland County is rich in resources both natural and human.

Among those resources is a corps of 474 Master Gardener volunteers, trained horticulture enthusiasts who live in every corner of the county and who use their talents to enhance the beauty of this place and the food security of their neighbors and themselves. The Master Gardener volunteers in Cumberland County are united through membership in the Cumberland County Master Gardener Association (CCMGA), of which I'm honored to be serving as board president this year.

In our CCMGA board of directors meetings, we have frequent discussions about how our Association can best serve our membership in the important work all of you do on behalf of our communities. We discuss ways the CCMGA can provide you with information and opportunities which will be of benefit to you and which will support you in your civic-minded gardening endeavors. As we've discussed all of this we decided that, rather than speculating on how the Association can support you, we would ask you directly.

We have put together a survey to solicit your input on a range of items. The survey is brief - just 15 questions - but there are opportunities for you to offer opinions and perspectives beyond the direct questions, and we encourage you to share your thoughts on all aspects having to do with your Master Gardener experience. This link <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CCMGA2012> will go to the survey.

As an added incentive to participate, any Master Gardener who completes the survey can claim an hour of volunteer time toward his or her annual commitment.

Deadline June 15th.

We sincerely thank you for taking a few moments to participate in this survey. Your input will allow us to better harness and support the tremendous resource that are Cumberland County's Master Gardeners, which in turn will benefit this special place we all call home. *Bob Fowler Board President*



May 2012

Upcoming Events

Events



May 19 Master Gardener Plant Sale

June 13 Peony Social, Audubon in Falmouth,

June 16 Secret Gardens of Portland, 10-3:30,
FMI 773-0202

June 24 Hidden Gardens of Munjoy Hill, 10-4,
self guided tour, \$15/20, FMI Nini McManamy
871-7297

577-0648 or solangekell@hotmail.com

June 25 2012 FLORIADE & Paris tour FMI
Rudi Smith at candoltd@gwi.net or 725-6846
and leave a message.

July 14 The Maine Home & Design Cape
Elizabeth Garden Tour, 10-4, FMI
info@arboretumfortwilliams.org

August 11 Backyard Locavore Day, 10-4, FMI
call the office at 781-6099



Master Gardener Plant Sale

May 19, 2012

Barron Center Portland

8-1 pm

Questions: contact [Nicki Griffin, 878-8443](mailto:Nicki.Griffin@878-8443) or
gardenhandsme@gmail.com

New this year: houseplants and bagged compost.

Upcoming Events



Sunny Acre Farm 11th Annual Garden/Artisan Show 165 Middle Road Falmouth

One Weekend!

Thur: May 31st 9-2

Fri: June 1st 9-2

Sat: June 2nd 9-4

Sun: June 3rd 9-4

Tony DiPietro, Master Gardener (04) features
One-of-a-kind Birdhouses, the NEW Boomer Bed
raised garden bed system, custom wooden raised
beds and other garden related items from local
artisans. Annuals, Perennials, Vegetables & Hanging
Baskets. FMI: 781-2943 or

www.birdhousesfrommaine.com

Directory Changes

Let us know if you have any address, phone number
or email changes. *Then please make changes in your
directory.*

Eric Handley ewhcom@gmail.com

Suzanne Turdel meesue@myottmail.com

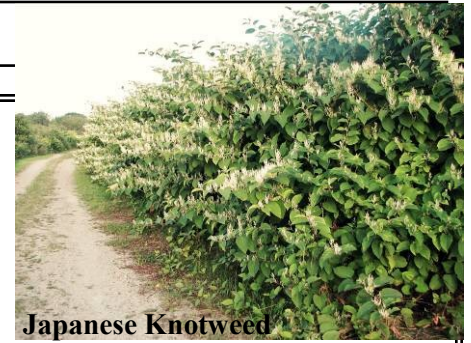
Janet Hutchinson 16 Farm Gate Road Falmouth

Down and Dirty Gardener: May 2012

Are Invasive Plants Nosing About Your Garden Beds?:

The Down & Dirty Gardener - by *Kelly Ash*

(text and photos by Kelly)



Japanese Knotweed

The best way to control an invasive plant is never to plant one. Prevention really is the best control. This may seem obvious, but as you travel around Cumberland County, Maine, you will realize how far these invasive plants have wandered. An invasive plant can be any non-native species that, once introduced, thrives in its new habitat, expands aggressively, and overtakes native plants and their environment. Invasive plants can be particularly aggressive when first introduced to a new site, as the fresh habitat's insects, diseases and wildlife do not typically keep the plants' growth in check. While invasive plants are disruptive in all environments, they are especially threatening to ecosystems, which are home to rare native plants, such as forests, wetlands, lakes, streams, sand dunes, and serpentine soils.

It is important to understand what constitutes an invasive plant. Typical characteristics of an invasive plant include: high adaptability, prolific propagation and seed production, rapid growth from vegetative phase to flower and seed, tolerance of a wide variety of soil types and weather, ease of spread through wind, water, wildlife and even human foot-traffic. Most invasive plants do not arrive without human interference. While some invasives land themselves in new habitats by accidents such as overseas shipments or seed travel, many are still purposely selected, and grown for their unique and desirable attributes. Unfortunately many invasive plants, like the Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*), are aesthetically pleasing, exceptionally hardy, exhibit rapid growth and tolerate a wide array of environments, essentially outcompeting native plants for space, water, nutrients and light. And it is because of their high adaptability, rapid growth and high tolerance that these plants ruthlessly choke, crowd-out and inhibit native plants' growth such that they eventually dominate and eradicate them.

According to the UGA Center for Invasive species and Ecosystem Health, which processes the data from the Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS.org), there are 333 invasive plant species identified growing in Cumberland County, the greatest number of species reported within the state of Maine. Learning to identify local invasive plant species is one of the first things you can do in your garden. In Maine the top ten invasive plant species include (listed from most to least abundant): Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Oriental or Asiatic Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*), Multiflora (*Rosa multiflora*), Rose Morrow's Honeysuckle (*Lonicera morrowii*), Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), Exotic Bush Honeysuckles (*L. mackii*, *L. tartarica* and *L. x bella* Zabel), Glossy Buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) and Reed Canarygrass (*Phalaris arundinacea*). *Continued following page*

When the time comes for designing your garden or landscaping your property, you should use only non-invasive plants. Purchasing native plants from your local garden center, and encouraging them to carry more native plants, will not only improve your garden, but also your neighbors'. Educating fellow gardeners and friends about the importance of invasive plant prevention and the promotion of native species will also help our ecosystems stay healthy. By leaving natural habitats and landscapes undisturbed, and growing native plants in place of some of those undesirable invaders, you will be positively affecting your community. For example, Japanese Knotweed (*F. japonica*), which once established is one of the most difficult invasive plants to eradicate, should never be planted or grown. Instead, by substituting New England Aster (*Aster novae-angliae*), Blue False Indigo (*Baptisia australis*), Sweet Joe-Pye-Weed (*Eupatorium purpureum*) or Queen-of-the-Prairie (*Filipendula rubra*), you are helping prevent the spread of this robust perennial. Native alternatives are a great way to encourage healthy gardens and plant diversity. Some other non-invasive, native substitutes you may consider include: The Sugar Maple (*A. saccharum*) for the Norway (*A. platanoides*), Chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*) instead of Japanese Barberry (*B. thunbergii*), Highbush blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*) for Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*), and Liatris (*Liatris spicata*) or Lupine (*Lupinus polyphyllus*) for that ever-so-determined Purple Loosestrife (*L. salicaria*).

Now the question comes, what do I do if I have an invasive plant on my property? First, you need to remove any invasive plant from your garden. Even if the invasive plant is not yet a problem, it should still be disposed of because in time these plants will grow and spread beyond your control. When removing the offending plant, it is important you have removed all traces, including the roots, from the soil, otherwise the plant will grow back even harder. And if you have an infamous, stubborn, invasive, such as Japanese knotweed (*F. japonica*) you actually should not dig up the roots, since this will only result in root fragments being dispersed throughout the soil and lead to many new plants. Instead, you need to be diligent and cut down the stalks repeatedly (3 or more times) throughout the season. An average Multiflora rose (*R. multiflora*) infestation is best controlled immediately by repeatedly (6 or more times) mowing it to the ground during the growing season for consecutive years. If unsure of the correct disposal method, contact the Maine Cooperative Extension and get a specialist to design a removal or a more specific eradication plan for you.

Preserving healthy environments for native plants is important in your garden but also in your community. Choose your plants shrewdly. Select native species when you can, and never introduce an invasive or potentially invasive plant. Remember, one invasive plant has a much farther reach than your backyard. By preventing the introduction of invasive plant species, you are an advocate for nature and her landscape.

Cumberland Community Garden - Rental Plots Available, Volunteers Needed

An informational meeting on the Cumberland Community Garden will be held at Prince Memorial Library on Wed. May 23rd from 6:30 to 7:30 pm for Cumberland and North Yarmouth residents interested in leasing a lot in the new community garden in Twinbrook Recreation Area on Tuttle Road in Cumberland. There is also a need for volunteers to work in the donation portion of the garden. The garden participates in the Cooperative Extensions's Maine Harvest for Hunger program. In 2011, over 1200 pounds of produce were donated to local food pantries. FMI, contact Martha Stein, martha.stein@gmail.com, 217-4456. (Yarmouth residents interested in leasing a lot in the new community garden in Twinbrook Recreation Area on Tuttle Road in Cumberland.)

There is also a need for volunteers to work in the donation portion of the garden. We participate in the Cooperative Extensions's Maine Harvest for Hunger program. In 2011, over 1200 pounds of produce were donated to local food pantries. FMI, contact Martha Stein, martha.stein@gmail.com, 217-4456.

A request from a fellow Master Gardener Kyle Fletcher Baker. You will recall as he was moving last year he provided many perennials to Master Gardeners for the digging. Here is a chance to help him out with some things that he is looking for.

"Now in my new house and setting the gardens to growing....and I'm looking for a few plants that can't be found to the nurseries anymore. Natives that fell out of favor though many gardeners have them from hand me downs....."

- * *Artemisia ludoviciana* 'Silver King' - a rampant spreader, 3-4' tall stems of silver foliage and small yellow flowers...I need this
- * *Oenothera fruticosa* - Sundrops.....yes an old standby common garden plant...but I love them....
- * *Sempervivums* 'arachnoides' - spiderweb hens and chicks....no one seems to carry these anymore - its not native but I like it.....
- * *Euopatorium perfoliatum* - Boneset.....had in my old garden...a wild plant of beauty...praying someone has a small piece I can have
- * *Iris versicolor* - Native Blue Flag Irisleft all of mine to my old home.....especially miss my pink form
- * *Aquilegia canadensis* - wow only the mail order nurseries carry this any more...anyone have some plants to share?

Mr. Kyle Fletcher Baker, MCN
Maine Zone 5

Garden Angels

Master Gardeners seem to love giving of their time and energy. Some projects are for a group of gardeners, but others like the Garden Angel Project are for spending individual time with people with disabilities who cannot garden as they have in the past.

Lots of Garden Angels and their recipients from past years will continue as partners this year. However, a dozen new recipient applications have just been received. Garden Angels are needed to help these new recipients in the towns of:

- 2 Windham
- 2 Portland
- 1 New Gloucester
- 1 Scarborough
- 5 Gorham
- 1 Westbrook
- 2 Brunswick
- 1 Harpswell

Garden Angels go to private homes for an average of one hour per week throughout the growing season with the same recipient. A lot of the gardening time is spent (you guessed it!!!) weeding, planting annuals, containers, pruning, or whatever is needed by the recipient. The recipient is encouraged to garden in whatever capacity they are able or just sit in the garden and chat while the Garden Angel is sprucing up things. But benefits are also present in the new friendships formed (and even carried through the winter), learning about heirloom plants in an elderly person's garden, adopting "splits" (hosta, lilies, iris, etc) which need a new home, or sharing some iced tea.

[Garden Angels from last year....please return your evaluations or contact Clara to tell her of your plans for 2012.](#)

Please contact Clara Ross, Garden Angel coordinator at 442-7502 or email: clara.ross@yahoo.com to become a Garden Angel and get your halo!

Contribute to our "Seed Project" fund by obtaining a Clynk Bag here at the office. You will be supporting projects that benefit the community, a school or a non-profit organization.

CLYNK ACCOUNT
BALANCE
\$47.50

In an effort to get to know one another better, we are starting a new feature. Beginning with the CCMGA Board of Directors and then moving on to a random sampling of the membership, we will be presenting a few short biographies each month. We may find we are more diverse, and yet have more in common with each other than we thought! In any case, the goal is to just feel closer to our Master Gardener Family.



Chances are, if you have worked with kids and are a Master Gardener, you have worked with Barb Hagar. Barb has been a MG since 2002. At Lincoln Middle School Barb has worked on the seed project to raise plants for our plant sale (this month!), and works with other MG's to maintain the planting beds there. Over at the Hall School with the help of third graders she has planted a lovely welcome garden. Other projects among the many Barb has had a hand in include the Spirits Alive group at the eastern Cemetery and all their good work restoring that beautiful space, and working at the Castle in the Park, Dome Gardening Project... the list goes on for this busy woman!

Barb loves heuchera in all its varieties, and "the Agastache 'Ava' that I found at High Country Gardens in New Mexico." How does this busy person find time to travel? She is also a "real fan of Fortex pole beans and grow scads of them for freezing and eating all winter." Barb has four grown sons and is lucky to have a husband who also loves gardening. Barb is retired from her ten-year position as Portland's Downtown District executive director. We are glad her retirement plans included all this hard work as a MG!



Sam Gifford followed his lovely wife Elissa into the Master Gardener program, and completed the course himself in 2010. But he still claims that Elissa "is our family's headquarters for all gardening intelligence"! Sam and Elissa's entire family is into gardening, and cover a bit of the country and climate zone maps, in Maine, Ohio, Indiana, and Florida.

Sam's personal favorites in the garden are hard to pin down, but when pushed he will choose the Russian Black tomato. His favorite flower is the orchid. Sam is happy to hop from one MG project to another, lending a hand wherever he can. Camp Sunshine is a particular favorite. As a writer and retired corporate executive, Sam has plenty to offer the Master Gardeners and extension service, and we are glad to have him on the board!



Anyone who claims "a serious addiction to the NY Botanical Garden - especially the rose garden," sounds like a Master Gardener. Betsey Anderson is a new member of the CCMGA board, and completed the class just last year. She has certainly jumped in with both feet! Her favorite volunteer placement "has and will probably always be the Flower Show, having been involved with starting the show many years ago as a Junior League member". But We are lucky to also have benefited from Betsey's participation at the Back Cove Yardscaping Project, Kennedy Park Housing Project, Cultivating Communities, and Falmouth High School.

We love our busy members! Betsey does also find time outside of master gardening to work as a non-profit consultant. Betsey and her husband Einar live in Falmouth, their two daughters live in NYC. How nice for Betsy, she can visit the girls and the botanical gardens as well!



Backyard Locavore Day

August 11, 2012 (rain date 12th)



Our 4th Annual Backyard Locavore Day will happen again this summer at sites around Cumberland County. The committee has been working hard to put together an educational day for this self-guided tour.

Garden sites focus on vegetable gardening, square foot gardening, beekeeping, food preservation, organic gardening techniques, composting and native plants.

Each site has a Master Gardener and a Master Food Preserver extending information and answering your questions.

If you would like to be part of the day and work a shift at one of our 11 sites give the office a call. Tickets this year will be \$10 and can be purchased on the UMaine website.

Diana

Tidewater Gardens Update

Dear Cumberland County Master Gardeners,

We have scheduled two more work day opportunities (if you can't make either of these, there will be more throughout the season) at the Tidewater Garden:

Thursday, May 17 from 8:30 - 11AM (we will be finish up anything we didn't complete on May 12 as well as other tasks)

Thursday, May 31 from 2-4PM (we will probably be focused on planting the new raised beds).

Maine Harvest for Hunger

Consider planting an extra row of fruit and vegetables this year and donating it to local soup kitchens and food pantries through our Maine Harvest for Hunger program.

Most wanted: fruit of all types, carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, winter squash, and potatoes.

The Maine Harvest for Hunger program is open to all interested gardeners and is coordinated through University of Maine Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Volunteer program.

Why Maine Harvest for Hunger is so important:

- 10% of Maine households, representing 141,000 people, are "food insecure" according to the USDA.
- More than 40% of Maine children under the age of 12 show some evidence of hunger.
- 19,325 Maine children are hungry.

Maine ranks 5th in the nation in prevalence of food insecurity.

For more information or to enroll in the program visit the website at <http://umaine.edu/cumberland/programs/maine-harvest-for-hunger/> or contact Colleen Hoyt at 1-800-287-1471.

CCMGNA Board Members

Bob Fowler <i>President</i>	Barb Hager
Katy Gannon Janelle, <i>Vice President</i>	Jean Gulliver
Martha Stein <i>Secretary</i>	Betsey Andersen
Jason Aucoin, <i>Treasurer</i>	Martha Palmer
	Sam Gifford

Staff

Richard Brzozowski	Extension Educator
Amy Witt	Horticulturist
Diana Hibbard	Home Horticulture Coordinator
Colleen Hoyt	Administrative Assistant
	207-781-6099

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If you are a person with a disability and will need any accommodations to participate in any program, please call Dick Brzozowski at 1-800-287-1471 to discuss your needs. Please contact us at least 5 days prior to this event to assure fullest possible attention to your needs.

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