The Gardener's Pen

A Publication of the Oregon Master Gardeners™ Association in Cooperation with OSU Extension Service™

Revised and Updated Guidelines for the Oregon State Master Gardener of the Year and the State Behind the Scenes Master Gardener of the Year

The Oregon Master Gardener Awards Committee worked hard to revise and update the criteria for both the Oregon State Master Gardener of the Year award and the Oregon State Master Gardener Behind the Scenes award. The criteria are now more specific and the wording is clearer. Some of the changes include:

- The addition of the number of hours volunteered in both the last five years and over the entire Master Gardener's career and how they are scored.
- A description of how the Master Gardener supported the Master Gardener mission.
- Leadership roles at various organizational levels that the person accepted and completed.
- The impact the person has had on the Master Gardener program.

Comments by the Extension faculty and/or staff along with their signatures are still required. It is important to note that if this section is not completed the application cannot be accepted. See page 8 of this newsletter for more information on how to submit.

The complete revised application and guidelines can be found on the OMGA website at:

https://omga.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Criteria-for-Statewide-Master-Gardener-Awards.pdf

There are many worthy Master Gardeners in Oregon.

Please take the time to nominate one of them.

Hello Oregon Master Gardeners,

I always appreciate your willingness to share articles about projects and events in your local chapter. And yes, **pictures are great** to include with your article. Please keep them coming. Information on the issue themes, how and when to submit is located on the ***OMGA webpage.***

Enjoy your master gardener experiences this coming year and let me know if there are any specific topics you think the Gardener's Pen should pursue.

Thank you for all you do to share the sustainable gardening mission! Help me to keep OMGA members connected and informed on your chapter news and activities, education news and mutual gardening interests.

Marcia Sherry

OMGA Newsletter Editor

APRIL 2019

Gardening Solutions

OMGA™

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The deadline for the July 2019 issue is:

No later than June 9th, 2019

"Firewise Gardening"

Send your articles to:

GardenersPenNewsletter@gmail.com

from the President's desk...

...by Eric Bosler, 2019 OMGA President, Central Gorge

*Spring has sprung.....*Finally! There's still a few patches of snow around but they are fading.
*The grass is riz.....*Actually it has been laid pretty flat and will need some serious renovation.

*I wonder where dows flowers is.....*Yes it rhymes… but except for a few crocus everyone else is still afraid to stick up their noses.
*They say the boids is on the wing.....*Must have been written by someone from New Jersey.
*But ain't that silly....*Well you know the rest. I didn't promise Robert Frost.

*Chosen as the state bird in 1927 by Oregon's school children in a poll sponsored by the Oregon Audubon Society, the **western meadowlark** is native throughout western North America and is known for its "distinctive and beautiful song."*

When I was a kid, this poem about spring always brought a chuckle. But "sprung" or not, Master Gardeners are always into spring. Orders from the seed companies (one of my fellow chapter members calls the catalogs "Garden Porn") have arrived and seedlings are started in anticipation of enough soil warmth to support the transplants.

I've found myself wondering if seed size makes a difference. Having planted everything from carrots to Scarlet Runner beans and watched amazing transformations that occur regardless of size, I could not decide. Is bigger better or does smaller have the advantage? Well, Helene Muller-Landau, staff scientist at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute says that both have their advantages. "Species that produce large seeds (e.g. coconuts) have the advantage under stressful conditions — such as drought or shade — while plants that produce large numbers of small seeds (e.g., fig species) have the advantage in areas with adequate water and light."[1] Since our gardens tend to be well managed micro-climates, the size of the seed is probably not going to be a major factor in our success at growing what we prefer. However, as I don't have the warm tropical breezes of a south sea island I'll not be trying coconut seeds.

So we've already hit the garden centers and we can't wait to put those plot plans to work. There are classes to attend, plant sales to organize, garden tours to promote…the list goes on and on. We are a busy bunch. But my MG calendar has a hole in it. There will be no Mini-College this year. As was explained in the last issue of the Gardener's Pen, the decision to postpone OMGA's annual educational event was not easy. The 2019 Chapter Survey is telling us that Mini-College is something that has a great value to many of us. OMGA is working to put a plan in place and staff it with committed volunteers who will bring Mini-College back for next year and carry it forward into the future. If you have thoughts, ideas, or a few hours which you can commit to this project please let us know.

"*Fostering quality continuing education of all Master Gardeners.*"[2] Support of the educational mandate of our member chapters is a primary function of OMGA. Through programs such as the Extension Educator Grants, Karl Carlson Memorial Fund Awards, and the Marje Luce Search for Excellence Awards, OMGA utilizes your membership fees to promote chapter educational activities. When we learned that the OSU Extension Webinar Series, created by Brooke Edmunds, was searching for the funds needed to continue producing this outstanding project, it was truly a "no brainer" decision to assist in any way possible. The OMGA Chapter Survey[3] asks the question; "Have you taken one?" Fully half of you have indeed taken one or more of these excellent educational programs. Not only is OMGA supporting the Webinar Series but we're exploring ways to assist in this project's future.

So "spring has sprung…" and the garden beckons. We'll be planting some old favorites, some new things and shaping up the focal points in the landscape. OMGA is doing the same think and looking forward to a productive year.

[1] https://scienceblog.com/30074/university-of-minnesota-scientist-finds-that-big-plant-seeds-dont-always-beat-out-small-seeds/

[2] OMGA Mission Statement

[3] Survey Recap

We Really Want to Hear from You!

...by Eric Bosler, OMGA President, Central Gorge

We Heard You!

In February, OMGA created a short Internet based survey. Your chapter leadership and program coordinators were asked to distribute to all Oregon Master Gardeners a link to the survey with a request that everyone take a couple of minutes to provide OMGA their input. The survey's purpose was to document how OMGA programs are serving the mission to support "effective educational outreach of sustainable gardening practices."

Response to the survey has been excellent. Currently over 23% of Master Gardeners across Oregon have taken the survey and provided OMGA with a lot of very valuable information that will assist us as we move forward in supporting Master Gardener Chapters.

An example of this effectiveness is related to the survey question: ***OSU Extension has produced a series of educational Webinars. Have you taken one?*** Fully 50% respondents reported that they had indeed, taken advantage of this outstanding educational program. OMGA was approached with a request to provide funds to assist in the continuing production of the Webinar series, preliminary results from the survey point out that the funding decision should be seriously considered by OMGA.

The survey is currently still open. If you have not taken it, please take about three minutes and give us your input. OMGA values this information and your opinion. Our goal is to do a more effective job of delivering on our mission and you can help us to better understand how to do that.

To take the OMGA Chapter Survey simply click on: **OMGA Chapter Survey 2019**

To see the survey recap presented at the 1st Quarter Board meeting: **Survey Recap**

EEG Report 2018

The **OMGA Extension Education Grant Program** helps OSU Extension Staff responsible for County Master Gardener programs enhance their ability to educate the public in home horticulture through chapter programs and projects. Funds for the grants come directly from OMGA membership dues.

Last year in 2018, we had asked the grant recipients to provide a brief description, and if possible a photo, of the grant dollars at work. The report, linked below, was made to the OMGA Board during the 1st Quarterly Board of Directors (BoD) meeting which was hosted by Marion County on March 2nd.

Check out how your dollars are working in the communities we serve. ***EEG Report 2018***

Laminated Garden Diagrams and Activity Cards in Demonstration Garden in Columbia County

Bee ID Project of 718 bees collected from Oregon gardens - Gail Langellotto, OSU Professor

Materials to construct the Learning Garden Classroom Pavilion in Multnomah County

Upcoming Leadership Forums

...by Chris Rusch, OMGA President Elect, Douglas County

First Quarter Leadership Forum – CULTURAL AGILITY

Our first leadership Forum for 2019 was held in Marion County on Friday, March 1st. Our guest speaker was Gilda Montenegro-Fix who spoke to us on **"Cultural Agility".** Gilda is the owner and founder of "Celebrate Diversity!".

Gilda is a past Olympian in the sport of white water slalom kayak and is the only woman from all of Latin America to compete in this discipline. She spoke to us about the cultivation of equity, diversity and inclusion in our Master Gardener organization.

We began our Cultural Agility journey exploring our own implicit bias and stereotyping. The training was expertly facilitated to create a sense of belonging, stimulate curiosity and growth. We learned some cross cultural communication skills and tools to move us toward a better understanding of inclusion and valuing diversity.

Second Quarter Leadership Forum – Fire Wise Landscapes

Our Leadership Forum for our next meeting will be Friday, June 7th in Jackson County. This forum will focus on **Fire Wise Landscapes** and the role of our Master Gardener organization in promoting this important program. We have invited some experts in the field to speak at this event.

Third Quarter Leadership Forum – Membership Survey

The third Leadership Forum will be Friday, September 6 in Linn County. This program will focus on the recent **membership survey** that was conducted. We will share the results of the survey and review some areas of improvement for our OMGA organization.

Fourth Quarter Leadership Forum – Grant Writing Workshop

The final Leadership Forum will be held in Tillamook County on Friday, November 1st. This will be a workshop on **Grant Writing**. At this meeting, we will also celebrate some past Karl Carlson, Search for Excellence, and Extension Educator recipients with short presentations on their individual projects.

I hope that everyone will enjoy these topics.
Make sure to mark your calendars. Everyone is welcome to attend!

Excuse me, but there's a worm in your Pesto

...by Gail Langellotto, PhD, Statewide OSU MG Coordinator

Every summer, my husband and I harvest kale and basil to make pesto. Often, the basil does quite well, with few pest problems. This is because I seek out basil that is resistant to powdery mildew. You can refer to the PNW Handbook to find suggestions for pathogen-resistant basil varieties

https://pnwhandbooks.org/plantdisease/host-disease/basil-sweet-ocimum-basilicum-downy-mildew

The kale, on the other hand, often comes with several added bonuses that I don't want in the pesto:

- Cabbage worm larvae (caterpillars) and eggs
- Aphids - with signs that an infestation was imminent
- Spiders and their webs

When we harvest the kale, and I carefully inspect and wash each leaf before cutting the flesh of the leaf blades from the rib. We make a tasty kale pesto, that is delicious on pizza with homemade crust and sauce (shout out to my husband, who is the cooking brains in this operation).

When I have pest problems on my kale, how do I try to manage them?

Two cabbage worm eggs on kale. I picked these off of kale leaves, as I watered the garden.

Cabbage worms are the larvae (young) of the ubiquitous cabbage butterflies **(Pieris rapae)** that you see flying around everywhere. The adult butterflies lay their eggs on cruciferous plants: broccoli, cabbage, collard greens, Brussels sprouts and kale. The larvae can't feed on non-crucifers. Thus, females who make a 'mistake' and lay their eggs on a non-cruciferous plant basically doom their young to death by starvation.

A late-instar cabbage worm, almost ready to build a cocoon.

I've dealt with the cabbage worms most summers. Every day when I take my daily walk through the garden, I carefully picked their eggs off of the kale leaves. I search the leaves and pick off the caterpillars that hatched from eggs that I missed. A few years ago, I was happy when my husband cleared out a nearby tangle of grape and blackberry canes (i.e. stems), and the spiders promptly migrated from that area and into my vegetable garden. The spiders surely help to keep the cabbage worm population down - pouncing on caterpillars as they munch on my kale, or entangling the caterpillars in their web. They might even munch on an aphid or two (although, spiders really prefer and need the protein rich meal that the caterpillars offer - much more nutritious than the sac of sugar that is an aphid).

Spiders munch on cabbage worms and other insect pests. I leave these be in my garden. They're my pest control buddies.

But, the spiders can't do it all themselves. This is because spiders can go remarkably long time periods without eating. I sometimes need to go out into the garden and use chemical controls against certain pests. My conundrum, however, is that I want to control the cabbage worms and the aphids, but not harm the spiders. I needed to use pesticides that had a 'narrow spectrum' of activity. Narrow spectrum insecticides harm a relatively few types of insects and other arthropods. Broad spectrum pesticides harm a large array of insect types, and are thus more likely to harm both your pests (which you want) and your beneficials (which you don't want).

I went to my pesticide storage container, and decided on 2 products. Both products are organic. When I need to use a pesticide, I prefer using organic pesticides, over synthetic pesticides in my vegetable garden. The major benefit of using an organic pesticide over a synthetic pesticide is that organic pesticides degrade quicker than synthetics, after they are applied. I hate the idea of eating pesticide residues with my vegetables, so when I am treating edible plants, I almost always use an organic product. I want that extra assurance that the vegetables will be pesticide free when I harvest, cook and consume them.

cont'd...Excuse me, but there's a worm in your pesto

The products are also formulated, so that they will help manage the cabbage worms and the aphids, but that they are unlikely to harm other insects and arthropods. I wanted to protect my garden spiders, after all. They're my caterpillar eating buddies.

Label of a narrow-spectrum insecticide with the active ingredient Bt-k (Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki).

To control the cabbage worms, I chose a dust formulation of a product whose active ingredient is *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki* (also called Bt-k). The insecticide only works against the larvae of butterflies and moths (like, the cabbage worm caterpillar I often need to manage on my kale). In addition, this insecticide must be *eaten* in order for it to be effective. Thus, if I sprinkle the dust only on my kale leaves, only those c*aterpillars* that are *eating my kale* will get a dose of the insecticide. The brand name of the product doesn't matter. Look for the active ingredient (Bt-k), formulated as a dust.

Pay attention to the directions for use. You only need 0.5-1 oz. per 50 square foot of garden. One ounce = 2 tablespoons. Thus, for a standard sized 3 foot by 5 foot garden bed, you only need one third to two thirds of a tablespoon. Since this product often comes as a dust formulation, and is packaged in way that you can simply 'shake out' the pesticide, much the same way you might sprinkle Parmesan cheese on top of spaghetti, it's unfortunately easy to over apply this pesticide. To avoid over applying, set the dispenser so that the pesticide will lightly sprinkle out of the packaging. Don't open the dispenser all of the way when applying.

Instead, apply a fine dusting, with the container open only the tiniest

If you apply the dust with all of the holes open, you're likely to over apply this insecticide in your garden.

To control the aphids, I chose a ready to use spray formulation of insectidal soap, which has an active ingredient name of 'potassium salts of fatty acids' (or something similar). Insecticidal soaps work by degrading the exoskeleton of the insect. Thus, they are best against small, soft-bodied insects, such as aphids, whiteflies or thrips, and tend to have little effect on larger, harder-bodied insects such as beetles, caterpillars, grasshoppers. Insectidal soaps must contact the aphids in order for the insecticide to work. Unlike Bt-k, insectidal soaps do not require the insect to eat the toxin. Instead, the insectidal soap must contact the aphids in order for the insecticide to work.

Label of a combination insecticide, including broad spectrum pyrethrins, as well as insecticidal soap

Note that the product at left has two active ingredients: pyrethrins plus potassium salts of fatty acids (i.e. insectidal soaps). This is an example of a combination product. The product to the right has only one active ingredient: potassium salts of fatty acids.]

Label of an insecticidal soap product, with the active ingredient 'Potassium Salts of Fatty Acids'.

Here's Hoping Your First Days of Spring Aren't Boring!

...by Heather Stoven, Yamhill County Extension

Now that we are out and about enjoying the first days of warm weather, so too are other creatures: **shothole borers.** There are a few different species of shothole borer (aka ambrosia beetles), although the primary species that cause issues is the European shothole borer *Anisandrus (Xyleborus) dispar*. While out on a walk during our first day of 70 degree weather, I spotted some weeping sap coming from some small holes in a birch tree. For those of you that have been paying attention to birch tree health, you likely know of the bronze birch borer that has been causing tree death in our area as of late. These holes, however, were smaller in size at only 2 mm and round in shape. Shothole borers are small beetles, brown in color and only 3mm long. The beetles overwinter as adults and during the first days of warm weather in spring (above 65°), the female beetles become active and look for a new host. Preferred hosts include: maples, birch, beech, ash, magnolia, cherry, oak, elm and many others. Females are attracted to weak or stressed trees, so perhaps this birch is already inhabited by bronze birch borer or is having other issues.

After finding a host in the spring, females burrow into the heartwood, create galleries and lay 40-50 eggs within. The females cultivate a fungus (the ambrosia fungus) in the galleries for herself and her developing larvae to eat. The larvae develop into adults in the summer and remain in the trees until the following spring. Trees affected by these borers often eventually die due to the interference of the vascular tissue within the tree, girdling it. So, now that you are running out the door to check the status of your trees, make sure you take a watering can (at least during the dry months) – there isn't much you can do to prevent this insect other than maintaining tree health and reducing stress.

For more information: ***http://jenny.tfrec.wsu.edu/opm/displaySpecies.php?pn=530***
http://oregonstate.edu/dept/nurspest/Borers.html

Educational Opportunities by Brooke Edmunds, OSU Extension

Do you want to keep the webinar series going in 2019?

We need your help to keep the OSU Master Gardener Advanced Training Webinar Series going in 2019 & beyond! Due to changes in the structure of the national Extension organization, OSU Extension will no longer have free access to their webinar platform and technical support staff starting in 2019. We feel our webinar series provides a valuable and accessible educational opportunity to our Master Gardener volunteers and we're not ready to stop yet! But, each monthly webinar costs ~$250 to deliver (with the speakers generously donating their time). We have secured temporary funding to keep the webinars going at least through May 2019.

If you or your county MG Association would like to support this series, please consider making a tax deductible donation via the Agricultural Research Foundation at Oregon State University. More details on how to donate and what the funds will be used for can be found here:

https://wp.me/p7ymwn-2Q

Questions? Contact Brooke Edmunds at: **brooke.edmunds@oregonstate.edu**

Missed a webinar in the 2018 series? Recordings are available! Each webinar is one hour of Continuing Education for MG's. For more information go to:

http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/ediblegardens/2018/09/24/the-complete-2018-mg-webinar-series/

Updates for state and chapter MG awards and Grants

The Statewide Master Gardener awards have been revised to provide better guidance on how nominations will be reviewed by a committee. Please, carefully read the:

'Criteria for Statewide Master Gardener Awards'

when creating a nomination for **Statewide MG of the Year** or **Statewide Behind the Scenes** awardee.

County MG of the Year and **County Behind the Scenes** forms are selected by individual county or regional Master Gardener Programs. These applications are not reviewed by a committee.

The annual deadline of May 15th for submitting these Master Gardener awards is rapidly approaching. Please pay attention to this deadline and submit your nominees by this date!

- **Please make sure to include a photo of your nominees with the application.**
- **Please let Gail Langellotto know if you have any questions.**
- **Award nominations are due to Gail Langellotto via email: gail.langellotto@oregonstate.edu or 4017 ALS Building, Corvallis, OR 97331) by May 15th, 2019.**

Karl Carlson Memorial Fund

OMGA, in cooperation with the OSU Extension Service, oversees the Karl Carlson Memorial Fund. It commemorates the life and work of Dr. Karl Carlson, and serves as a tribute to his dedication to the OMGA and to the OSU Extension Service.

The purpose is to enhance the OSU Urban Horticulture Program by making available OMGA funds to help OSU MG Chapters in the following ways:

· In the establishment of new OSU MG Chapters.

· To assist new or struggling OSU MG Chapters become better established.

· Implementation of new programs/projects related to urban horticulture when financial assistance is needed.

Due Date for Submission is May 15, 2019

Committee Chair: Barbara Casteel, Tillamook
Email: bcasteel97141@gmail.com

Extension Educator Grant

The OMGA Extension Educator Grant Program has funds to help OSU Extension Community Horticulture Agents, Program Assistants or designated OSU Extension Staff responsible for County MG programs to enhance their ability to educate the public in home horticulture.

Due Date for Submission is June 1, 2019

Committee Chair: Jeanine Johnson, Central OR
Email: jkjohnson@bendbroadband.com

Marje Luce Search for Excellence (SFE)

Search for Excellence (**SFE**) is the recognition program of MG volunteer work, both throughout the US and Canada and across Oregon within the OMGA. If your MG chapter has a project that you would like to have considered for a SFE award, please do not hesitate to apply. Recipients award will receive a cash award for their chapter.

Submissions can be made in one of seven categories: Youth Programs, Demonstration Garden, Workshops, Community Service, Innovative Project, Special Audiences, or Research.

The **judging criteria** are: simplicity, practicality, originality, consistency with MG mission, clarity and completeness, significant learning and number of people impacted. Notifications will be made by June 14th.

Due Date for Submission is May 15, 2019

Committee Chair: Chris Rusch, Douglas
Email: crusch@hughes.net

Longevity Recognition

The purpose of the OMGA Longevity Award is to honor Oregon MG's who have been loyal and dedicated volunteers for 20, 30, 40 or more years. These awards are one way to say THANK YOU.

Each Oregon MG who completed MG Training 20+ years ago and who has continuously paid their dues, is eligible to receive this award. All award recipients will receive a certificate, the 20-year members will receive a "Twenty Years of Service" service bar for their badge, whereas the 30-year and 40-year members will receive a unique recognition pin.

Due Date for Submission is May 15, 2019

Committee Chair: Marcia Sherry, Yamhill
Email: msherry114@gmail.com

All forms can be found at this OMGA website:
https://omga.org/documents-and-forms/

Painful Gardening Mistakes: Master Gardeners Tell All

...by Paula Bertram, UCCE MG of El Dorado County

Editor's note: I ran across this article written by a master gardener from the University of California Cooperative Extension in El Dorado County, outside of Sacramento. Since our theme is "Gardening Solutions", I thought it was appropriate to share it as a "hands on learning experience". I'm sure we all have stories to tell like these, what we thought were going to be successful "Gardening Solutions" became mistakes. Enjoy!

We were recently able to wheedle/cajole/bribe some of our most experienced Master Gardeners into admitting their mistakes. Really bonehead mistakes. Rookie errors. Under the conditions of anonymity, these MG's recount some of their gardening bloopers.

1. **Right place/wrong plant errors.** "We built our house next to three young Douglas Firs. From eight feet, they have grown to 40-foot giants, tower over the house, shade everything, and are a major fire concern. Now cutting those down will be very tricky without risk to house." "I planted a rock rose near the asparagus bed. In a few years it grew over most of the bed, attracted by the water and fertilizer used. I pruned it back on one side, only to create the most unattractive, bare branch rockrose in history. It never grew back any leaves on the pruned side. Finally decided to dig it out---destroying the rest of the asparagus bed in a "Caddy Shack" scenario. **Remember, friends, plants grow.** They can be like kittens or puppies. Very cute and easy to pick up and move around in the early stages… but then they get big, heavy, and they shed. Somebody has to water and feed during your vacations. And they live a long time. Scrutinize the plant label or a good gardening reference before purchasing or planting something permanent. Decide whether the ultimate size and horticultural needs of the plant work with your space, hardscape and plant neighbors.

2. **Potted Plant Woes.** I have the bad habit of buying beautiful plants at nurseries or plant sales. I want to have one of everything! Then they sit on my porch for months because I don't have time or space to plant them. Then they die and I start accumulating more unfortunate victims. I received a beautiful Japanese Maple in a gorgeous pot as a gift. After a while, it looked droopy. I decided to repot it in a smaller container (?). The roots were rotted from too much watering, so I watered it less. It continued to decline. When I decided to put it out of its misery, I discovered that I had left the plastic nursery tag on the trunk. The poor thing had strangled. Nuff said---just makes you want to weep, doesn't it?

3. **No Good Deed Goes Unpunished Department.** I planted a cover crop mix -- not only in my vegetable garden, but under oaks in a wilder area of my property. For some reason I thought the oaks "needed nitrogen." Now I spend all my time mowing down invasive clover and vetch instead of the native grasses that were there. I used to subscribe to the "if a little is good, a lot is better" theory of gardening. By completely over fertilizing my lawn, I created a striking tigerish effect: death-by fertilizer - burned streaks alternated with lush green growth where I had missed. Decisions on fertilizer, cover crops and other cultural requirements are not always simple. Sometimes **Less (really) is More**. Get a good up-to-date gardening text and/or consult reliable sources such as your Cooperative Extension to get research-based advice.

4. **The Power of Mistakes.** Somebody gave me a rooted cutting from their garden. I planted it in the back of the bed and promptly forgot both what is was called and where I put it. (Boy, does this sound familiar!) For two years we kept unwittingly either pulling parts of it up or trimming it to the ground. Finally, this spring, we never got around to weeding. The neglected sticks grew into five foot asters covered in blue flowers from July until frost. Although painful and sometimes costly, **mistakes are important**. Lessons learned from mistakes are much more powerful than what we learn from successes. Or so social scientists tell us. We mere mortals must bumble along, trying our best. And sometimes the "mistake" is really a disguised gift. So **label your plants**. And be at peace with your mistakes.

Cats in the Garden! What to Do?

...from acmg.ucanr.edu, UCCE MG Program, University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

The master gardener help desk frequently gets questions regarding cats in the vegetable garden such as: "My cat is using my vegetable garden as a litter box. Can I still eat the vegetables?" "How can I keep the neighborhood cats out of my garden?"

Talking about cat feces is an unpleasant topic but questions about soil contamination are very important. Cats like to use soft soil as a litter box and cat feces can be a source of serious diseases in humans. One of these is toxoplasmosis, which can cause miscarriages, or be passed from the mother to an unborn baby causing serious health conditions later in the child's life. Toxoplasmosis can be life threatening for those with compromised immune systems. Any animal waste, not just cats, can also contaminate the soil with other parasites such as roundworm and hookworm and bacteria such as E. coli or Salmonella.

So what to do if a cat uses your vegetable garden as a litter box? It must be cleaned and the sooner the better. Make sure you:

- Remove all feces if possible and in the immediate surrounding soil.
- Dispose of any produce that came in direct contact with feces.
- While in the garden remove excess soil from produce.
- Wash produce under running tap water rather than batch washing in a basin. Washing produce in a basin can result in cross contamination.
- Wash your tools, boots and gloves - away from the garden area.
- Always wear gloves while gardening.

There are many opportunities for bacteria and parasites to contaminate your food from your garden before it gets to your kitchen. Water, tools, animals, manure or contaminated soil may spread harmful organisms in your garden. Incorporate good food safety practices in all phases of your gardening. To read more about food safety practices please see UC's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources Publication 8366, ***Food Safety in Your Home Vegetable Garden.***

But to that other question - how to keep cats out of your vegetable garden? There are many, many suggestions and it may take some experimenting to find what works for the cats in your neighborhood.

The most effective method is to block access. Use a chicken wire fence or wire cage around your bed, or floating row covers*. If you don't have small children a low voltage wire can be effective. Place it about 4 inches above the edge of the raised bed and attach it to fiberglass rods pushed into the soil at each corner of the bed. The wires should run to each rod and then to an electric fence charger; some of which are battery-powered. Once the cats learn to avoid the beds, you can dismantle the fence or turn it off or remove batteries.

Since cats like the garden's soft soil your goal is to make it less attractive to them. Chicken wire laid above the soil keeps them from digging. Or make the soil uncomfortable for cats to walk on by using rough textured mulch or sprinkling prickly pinecones throughout out your garden. Placing chop sticks or 10 inch plant stakes every 8 inches will discourage cats from scratching and digging which is necessary for them to use your garden as a bathroom. It is thought cats dislike citrus smell so sprinkling lemon or orange peel in your garden can be a deterrent. There are many products on the market such as motion-activated sprinklers and ultrasonic devices that will deter cats from coming into your garden.

You can read more about these and other ways to deter visiting cats at:

https://today.oregonstate.edu/news/how-keep-frustrating-felines-out-garden

https://davidsuzuki.org/queen-of-green/keep-cats-garden/

Fun with spring word search

M	R	O	C	E	S	P	A	L	I	E	R	B	N	M
K	M	O	N	O	E	C	I	U	S	T	I	E	D	W
P	Y	S	Q	X	V	Y	T	Q	W	S	N	N	E	P
E	D	S	C	U	J	S	C	K	E	O	O	E	T	S
R	E	P	E	A	E	R	A	T	E	P	B	F	E	H
M	M	R	F	R	R	N	R	U	D	M	A	I	R	E
A	O	I	W	D	I	I	B	B	S	O	R	C	M	R
C	Z	N	F	E	Z	C	F	N	F	C	E	I	I	B
U	I	G	S	T	S	J	A	I	M	S	R	A	N	A
L	H	C	U	A	B	W	Y	C	C	M	O	L	A	C
T	R	L	O	N	O	B	E	I	E	A	O	Q	T	E
U	Z	O	U	I	L	F	A	E	C	O	T	D	E	O
R	W	A	D	L	T	M	S	Z	T	D	U	I	Q	U
E	T	M	I	L	I	C	E	W	U	P	T	S	O	S
I	F	F	C	O	T	H	E	Y	L	X	E	D	N	N
S	A	L	E	P	A	C	D	J	I	T	N	A	L	P
E	R	O	D	N	H	L	L	Q	P	E	Z	O	S	N
E	G	W	A	E	L	U	I	G	E	O	S	M	I	N
B	W	E	X	P	K	M	N	Z	F	O	L	I	A	R
C	Y	R	O	O	T	P	G	H	U	M	U	S	V	F
G	D	E	T	A	N	I	M	R	E	T	E	D	N	I
E	R	S	Z	E	Q	F	U	Z	X	D	H	F	J	Y
N	A	I	R	E	T	C	A	B	O	N	I	T	C	A
U	H	R	Z	J	Q	J	E	N	I	L	A	K	L	A
S	I	I	P	I	N	O	C	U	L	A	N	T	L	E

AERATE
ALKALINE
BARE ROOT
BEES
BENEFICIAL
BOLT
BRACT
COMPOST
CORM
DECIDUOUS
ESPALIER
FLOWER
FOLIAR
GENUS
GEOSMIN
GRAFT
HARDY
HUMUS
INOCULANT
IRIS
LOAM
MONOECIUS
MULCH
NODE
PLANT
ROOT
RHIZOME
SEEDLING
SPRING
SWEET PEAS
TULIP
WEEDS
ACTINOBACTERIA
DETERMINATE
ERICACEOUS
HERBACEOUS
INDETERMINATE
OPEN POLLINATED
PERMACULTURE
SCARIFICATION

GEOSMIN

a distinct earthy flavor and aroma and is responsible for the earthy taste of beets and contributes to the scent, petrichor, in the air when the rain falls after a dry spell of weather. It is produced by a type of actinobacteria.

Did you know...

ACTINOBACTERIA

advanced group of bacteria that helps decompose the organic matter of dead organisms so that the molecules can be taken up by plants and also helps fix nitrogen.

ERICACEOUS

It is an acidic compost, and suitable for growing rhododendrons, camellias, azaleas, heathers, and other plants that dislike alkaline soil, also known as lime-hating plants. The name 'ericaceous' comes from the Latin name for heathers, Erica.

Three Major spring Bulbs and their stories

...by Dr. Leonard Perry, University of Vermont Extension Professor

The **tulip, hyacinth,** and **narcissus** are the spring flowering bulbs you see most often in catalogs and in gardens. Most plants have interesting stories, and these three are no exception.

The **tulip** we know today is quite varied, represented by many species, and well over 2,000 hybrids in 15 subdivisions. But the simplest few species, from which all these have come over the years, were originally found centuries ago growing in present-day Turkey and Central Asia. Resembling a turban, they were called such by many, the Turkish word, ***tulbend***. It is from this word that our word "tulip" has come.

Tulips had been grown for many years in the Turkish Empire before the mid-1500s when the Austrian ambassador, Ogier Busbecq, sent some seeds to his friend Carolus Clusius. Clusius was a French botanist, who maintained the imperial gardens in Vienna. He germinated the seeds, sending bulbs to England in 1578. Then in 1593 he moved to the university botanic garden in Leyden, Holland, and took his tulips with him. Others multiplied these few tulips, leading to the exorbitant prices and speculation on tulips in the 1630's called "Tulipmania."

In the Victorian Language of Flowers, red tulips signify "a declaration of love," yellow tulips "hopeless love," and streaked tulips "beautiful eyes."

The **hyacinth** originally comes from Central Asia, the species name *orientalis* of our common hybrids being a clue to this fact. The genus name *Hyacinthus* is from the Greek *hyacinthos*, which was the name used by such famous Grecian poets as Homer and Ovid for a plant very unlike present day hybrids.

In the Victorian language of flowers, hyacinth signified sport, game, or play. If purple, it signified sorrow. Blue stood for constancy and fidelity. To the Greeks, the hyacinth stood for youthful male beauty.

Hyacinthus in Greek mythology was a handsome young prince, son of the Spartan King Amyclas. He also was loved by the sun god, Apollo. Zephyr, the god of the west wind, was jealous of this love, so one day when Apollo was showing Hyacinthus how to throw the discus, Zephyr caused it to return and kill Hyacinthus. From his blood, and in his memory, the hyacinth flower sprouted. Scholars believe this hyacinth, though was not the one we know, but rather was a gladiolus.

Originally the plant we know as hyacinth was in the genus *Endymion*, taken from the Greek mythological youth loved by the goddess Diana. When you find hyacinth in classical literature, it might refer to any number of other plants such as fritillary or iris. Jacinth of jacynth was the name used in Elizabethan England, with a similar name used be the Greeks for a precious blue stone such as sapphire. For this reason the typical color of hyacinth is blue.

There are hundreds of varieties of **daffodils**, in the genus *Narcissus*, which represent about 50 species in 12 sections of this genus. These originally came from various parts of the Northern Hemisphere, in particular Mediterranean countries. In the southern states these are often called jonquils, referring to the narrow foliage which resembles that of the rush or *Juncus*.

There are two versions of the origin of this name. The famous Romans Pliny and Virgil said the name narcissus comes from the word *narke*, meaning narcotic effect and referring to the strong fragrance of the flowers. The famous Swedish botanist Linnaeus who came up with the scientific system of plant names, took this genus name from Greek mythology.

Narcissus was a beautiful youth, loved by the nymph Echo. When he refused her love, saying he'd love no woman, Echo got Cupid to make Narcissus fall in love with his image in a reflecting pool. He spent the rest of his days there, gazing at his image, and on his death his body was transformed into the flower we know as the narcissus. Unlike this story, in Victorian times the narcissus signified chivalry.

This spring when gazing on these bulbs in your gardens or the gardens of others, think of these stories and the hundreds of years of history behind them.

Plant sales around the state

April Plant Sales:

Lane County Annual Plant Sale & Silent Auction
Saturday, April 27, from 10 am - 3 pm
Lane County Fairgrounds Horse Barn—SW corner, west of the Ice Arena
796 W. 13th Avenue, Eugene

Washington County Gardenfest Plant Sale
Saturday April 27, 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM
PCC Rock Creek Campus
17705 NW Springville Road, Portland.
washingtoncountymastergardeners.org

Columbia County MG Plant Sale
Saturday, April 27th
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
St. Helens High School
2375 Gable Road
St. Helens

May Plant Sales:

Benton County Plant Sale & Clinic
Saturday, May 4th, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Benton County Fair Grounds, Solar Barn
110 SW 53rd Street, Corvallis
extension.oregonstate.edu/benton/events/benton-county-master-gardener-plant-sale

Jackson County Spring Garden Fair
May 4th 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
May 5th 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
1 Penniger Road,
Central Point, OR
Jacksoncountymga.org

Central Gorge MG Plant Sale
May 11th 9:00 AM-1:00 PM
MG Greenhouse
OSU Extension
2990 Experiment Station Rd.
Hood River

Clackamas County Spring Garden Fair
May 4th 9:00 AM–5:00 PM
May 5th 9:00 AM–4:00 PM
Clackamas County
Event Center$5.00 Admission
694 NE 4th Ave., Canby

Clatsop County MG Association " Spring Plant Sale & Garden Fair"
Saturday, May 11th, 2019, 8:00AM - 3:00PM,

Douglas County Master Gardeners Plant and Garden Expo
Saturday, May 4, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Josephine County Annual Spring Garden Fair
Saturday May 5, 2019 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Sunday May 6, 2019 from 10:00 AM to 3:oo PM
OSU Extension Office Greenhouses

Marion County MG Plant Sale
Friday, May 3rd 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM
Saturday May 4th 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Oregon State Fairgrounds, Columbia Hall
Red Gate Entrance

Multnomah Incredible Edibles Plant Sale
Saturday, May 11th 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
1624 NE Hancock Street
Multnomahmastergardeners.org/edibles

Yamhill County Annual Master Gardener Plant Sale
Saturday, May 4th from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Sunday, May 5th from 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Yamhill County Fairgrounds
2070 Lafayette Avenue, McMinnville
www.ycmga.org/events/2019PlantSale/PlantSaleFlyer.pdf

Lincoln County Annual Plant Sale
Saturday, May 18th,
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Fairgrounds in Newport

Polk County Plant Sale
May 10th - 11th,
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Rickreall

Tillamook County MG Association's Plant Sale
May 4th, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
4H/FFA Pavillion,
Tillamook County Fairgrounds

Eductional Events around the state

Lane County Seminars for 2019 are held on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 - 8:30 PM, at the Lane Extension office, 996 Jefferson Street, Eugene

May 21 - Greenhouse Pest Management and Sanitation by Brooke Edmunds

- June 18 - Tips and Tricks for Preserving Your Garden Produce Safely, Nellie Ohler
- July 16 - Diagnosing Plant Problems, MG Plant Diagnostic Specialists
- August 20 - Let's Start Your Winter Garden, Shirley Betourney
- September 17 - Introduction to Mushrooms, Bruce Newhouse
- October 16 - International Pruning, Ross Penhallegon

For more information, go to: **https://extension.oregonstate.edu/program/mg/lane/events**

Central Oregon MG Spring Gardening Seminar
16 Classes plus a Garden Market and Silent Auction

Saturday, April 20th at 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Deschutes County Fair & Expo Center, Redmond
For more information, go to: **www.goCOMGA.com**
or call 541-548-0789
$10.00 per class w/advanced registration $15.00 day of event

30th Annual Seeds of Spring Seminar... This past Saturday, the Josephine MG's in cooperation with Rogue Community College, Redwood Campus, outdid themselves. There were 39 speakers all INCREDIBLY knowledgeable about their subjects. There were four sessions, each with choices that were nearly impossible to even narrow down. I'll drop some names, Neil Bell, Bernadine Strik, Judi Maxwell, and Tom Landis to name just a few of the 39. The topics were widely varied too; from how to grow orchids, updated technology for the garden, designing a firewise landscape, companion planting, to monitoring your backyard stream health. The list just went on and on. Oh, I can't forget the beer making demo and home wine making instruction session. There truly was something for everyone.

BTW...Jackson County has a wonderful winter garden seminar that a bunch of us always attend. We get to see some people we may not see but a couple times a year. I would encourage you to attend your own Extension's seminars or one in a nearby county. Get your friends and attend. Road Trip! *...Jeana Schorr, MG Josephine County*

Central Gorge Master Gardeners
invite you to

'Save the Date'
Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the

Japanese Heritage Garden

Friday, May 17, 2019
3:00 p.m.

The Learning Garden
at the
OSU Extension Service Office
2990 Experiment Station Drive
Hood River

Portland Taiko will be featured

Reception to follow

Central Gorge Garden Tour garden

2019 Central Gorge Garden Tour -- Saturday, June 22, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Tour includes a visit to nine area gardens and is presented by the Central Gorge MG Association. Tickets for the tour are $15 per person or $100 for a group of eight and includes admission to all nine gardens on the day of the event. Cash and checks only please.

- *Ticket outlets in Hood River include; Waucoma Book Store, Good News Gardening and the Hood River Extension Office, 2990 Experiment Station Drive.*
- *Tickets are also available at Klindt's Bookstore in The Dalles, Dickey Farms in Bingen, WA and Bloomsbury in Stevenson, WA.*
- *For online tickets visit **www.eventbrite.com/e/central-gorge-garden-tour-tickets-56715308013**.*
- *Group tickets can be purchased in advance by contacting Central Gorge MG, Renee Taylor **rcitlau@gmail.com**, 714-595-9158.*

On the day of the event, tickets will be available at the Columbia Gorge Hotel, 4000 Westcliff Drive, Hood River, one of the garden's featured on the **Central Gorge Garden Tour**. Your ticket will include a map and addresses of the gardens on the tour. This is a fundraiser for the CGMGA.

splinters from the Board

...by Marcille Ansorge, OMGA Secretary, Tillamook

1st Quarterly Board of Director's Meeting
March 2nd, 2018 at Marion County

- Patrice Sipos, Treasurer, explained changes in the way the financial report would be given and answered questions about the finances of OMGA.
- An internal audit will take place and a committee formed to perform it. Contact Eric Bosler if interested in serving on the committee.
- Gail Langellotto, State Coordinator, reported on staff changes and procedures for hiring new staff.

  Gail reported that most chapters are handling Best Practices for Plant Sales well.
- Eric Bosler made a presentation with photos on how chapters used 2018 Extension Educator Grants.
- Chapters are encouraged to apply for OMGA grants. Deadline is May 15, 2019.
- Eric Bosler shared results of survey sent out earlier and led discussions on how to improve communication between OMGA and chapters.
- Eric led a discussion on Webinars available through OSU Extension and how members and chapters were using them.
- A discussion was held on Mini College, why it was postponed this year, and the need for a 1st Vice President to coordinate the event.
- Next Leadership Forum and Board of Directors meeting will be in Jackson County, June 7 and 8, 2019. Leadership Forum topic is fire-wise gardening.
- Contact your OMGA representative for more information about the meeting and a copy of the minutes.

Many Thanks!

to 2018 OMGA President, Sue Nesbitt, for her superb leadership strategies and consistent communication methods have resulted in immeasurable benefits to OMGA, its membership and local chapters. You have made a significant difference to all MG's in Oregon.

Executive Committee Meetings
Friday, May 3rd Linn County Extension - Tangent
Friday, August 2nd Linn County Extension - Tangent
Friday, October 4th Linn County Extension - Tangent

Leadership Forums		Board of Directors Meetings	
Date	**Location**	**Date**	**Location**
Friday, June 7th Topic/Speaker:	Jackson County Firewise Landscapes	Saturday, June 8th	Jackson County Contact: Barbara Davidson
Friday, September 6th Topic/Speaker:	Linn County Membership Survey	Saturday, September 7th	Linn County Contact: Janice Gregg
Friday, November 1st Topic/Speaker:	Tillamook County Grant Writing	Saturday, November 2nd	Tillamook County Contact: Linda Stephenson
Watch for announcements of times, topics and speakers at the Leadership Forums			

some gardening solutions...

Grab a bar of soap and wet it down a bit. Then, scrape your fingernails along the soap, creating a barrier that keeps dirt from getting trapped down deep under your nails. When it's time to clean up, just grab and nail brush and scrub out the barrier. Manicured nails and a manicured garden—it's win-win.

Have any of these around? Just cut 4 slits at bottom and fold for plants starts.

Have a few stones or rocks laying around? Instant dragonfly!

Repotting Issues? See what a couple of chop sticks can do.

Think you need a workout but have no time to go to the gym? Just workout in your garden.

We are online at: www.omga.org

OMGA oregon master gardener™ ASSOCIATION we grow gardeners

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The Gardener's Pen Newsletter is published three/four times per year: April, July, October and December/January by the Oregon Master Gardener Association.

Deadline for the July 2019 issue is: No later than June 9th, 2019.

Theme: "*Firewise Gardening*"

Please send your articles and photos to: Marcia Sherry, Managing Editor

GardenersPenNewsletter@gmail.com

OMGA™

2019 OMGA Executive Committee

President:	**Eric Bosler**
President Elect:	**Chris Rusch**
1st Vice President:	**Vacant**
2nd Vice President:	**Julie Huyhn**
Secretary:	**Marcille Ansorge**
Treasurer:	**Patrice Sipos**
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Historian:	**Barbara Davidson**
Newsletter Editor:	**Marcia Sherry**
Statewide Coordinator of the Oregon Master Gardener Program:	**Gail Langellotto**