

# Garden Tales

Atlantic County Master Gardener Association Newsletter

## Coordinator's Comments

By *Mona Bawgus*

Hello Master Gardeners:

As we approach another year and the beginning of another Master Gardener class, I tend to look back on what has been accomplished in these past years. Our program is a fairly new one in comparison to other counties, one of which just celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> year. But in our past four years we have definitely made an impact. Besides having an impact on the community how has the program impacted you? Do you feel you are a better gardener? Do you feel that your participation in the program has made an impact in your community? If the answer is yes to both questions, great. If not, how can the program improve so you can answer yes?

During the winter break, think about what you would like to do this year as a Master Gardener. We will need your help integrating the new volunteers into the program by becoming a mentor. Also I would like to expand the demonstration garden to include information on container gardening and landscaping for four season appeal. On Jan 30<sup>th</sup> at 10AM there will be a meeting to discuss plans for the demonstration garden. If interested please let me know.

In the meantime, stay warm, and enjoy those seed catalogs.

~Mona



## Happenings

- January 30 - Demo Garden Meeting 10AM
- February 2 - Help-line re-opens
- February 6 - Computer Class 10 AM
- February 20 - MGA Meeting 12:30
- February 26 - Seed starting at Hope VI
- March 12 - Soil Testing/Lawns at Hope VI
- March 13 - MGA Meeting 12:30



## Inside This Issue

Guest Speakers	2
Winter Gardening Tips	2
Ramapo Tomato Seed	2
Green Thumb Article Info	3
Upcoming Topics for Helpline	3
2009 Master Gardener Class	4
Lantana	5
Birthdays	6



New Jersey Agricultural  
Experiment Station

## Helping Those in Need

At the November Master Gardener Association meeting non-perishable food items were brought in by Master Gardeners and the Cooperative Extension staff to be donated to the New Jersey Food Bank, Southern Branch. In the true spirit of the holiday season 9 boxes of non-perishables along with a 21 pound turkey were delivered to the food bank on November 18<sup>th</sup>. The representative that greeted us at the food bank expressed sincere appreciation for our donation during this hard economic time.

**Thank you** Master Gardeners and Cooperative Extension staff members!!!!

## Guest Speakers on the way

February's guest speakers will be Patti Brehler and Barbara Kennedy. Barbara is one of our Master Gardeners. Their program is titled "Thelma & Louise's Houseplants."

In March we will have **Mike Hogan** to speak on 'Wildflowers' after our regular meeting.

\*\*\*Remember that when filling out your timesheets the association meeting counts as 1 hr Community Education and the speakers talk counts towards Education (Community Education for those not yet certified).

**Ramapo tomato seeds** will be coming soon. Seeds will be available from Anita as a Master Gardener Fund Raiser. More information to follow.



## Winter Gardening Tips

By Teresita Doebley

Do not, for one minute, think that gardening ends in the fall! There is still a host of tasks you can accomplish—some without even leaving the sofa.

1. Take a walk around your garden to look for "holes" where an evergreen would lend color and structure to your winter landscape. There are many new dwarf and miniature evergreens available.
2. Maintain your gardening tools by first cleaning them thoroughly. Sharpen digging tools with a file, a sharpening stone for pruners, and then rub everything down with all-purpose oil. For wooden handles, sand any splintered areas and rub with linseed oil.
3. For branches on hollies and evergreens that have broken off or gone "astray," give them a light pruning and display them in your home.
4. Peruse all the catalogs that you will be receiving after the holidays. Using the list or diagram that you made in the fall (right?), select plants that are butterfly- and bee-friendly to this area.
5. Be vigilant of the weather forecast! Stake bamboo sticks within bushes and hedges that are susceptible to injury under heavy snow- or ice fall. Cover those more tender perennials with mulch or branches.
6. You saved some seeds, correct? Make your own seed packets and decorate the covers. Doing an Internet search on "seed packet template" will give you many choices. Surprise friends or business acquaintances for New Years or Valentine's Day with this very thoughtful gift.
7. And lastly, read a good gardening book, whether fiction or non-fiction, perhaps it'll take you to that place you so long to be—the garden.

As you can see, gardening doesn't have to stop after the fall season. One doesn't have to stare longingly out the window wishing desperately for spring. And if you are anything like me, your catalogs will be dog-eared before spring arrives and your garden will be ready for another growing season!

## Help-Line Hibernating for Winter

It has been decided that the Master Gardener Help-Line will close for the months of December 2008 and January 2009. With not much going on in the gardens, Mona and Anita will take care of any calls that the office might receive.

### “Green Thumb” Articles

With the help-line being closed you can look for the Green Thumb articles in the Press of Atlantic City to keep you updated on what might be occurring with inside/outside plants during these cold months. Here are some of the latest:

- January 9 - Bittersweet
- January 2 - Squirrels
- December 26 - Lemon Verbena
- December 19 - Live Christmas Trees
- December 12 - Leaf Mulch
- December 5 - Christmas cactus
- November 28 - Pruning Grasses
- November 21 - Poinsettia
- November 14 - Winter Watering  
Evergreens
- November 7 - Forcing Bulbs
- October 31 - Woolly Galls

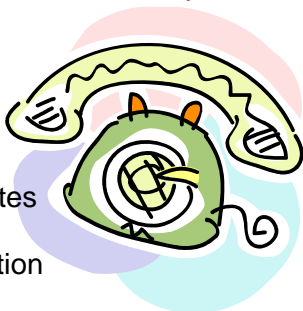
Help-Line Re-opens  
**February 2009**  
Be sure to get all your  
hours in to certify  
before June!!!

### Winter Word Search

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

### Topics to look forward to on Help-Line in February/March:

- Large Pine Aphid
- Houseplant insects
  - scale
  - spider mites
- Scentless plant bug
- Soil Testing Information
- Lichens
- Wood ashes in garden
- Oak gall
- Starting seeds indoors
- Fig Trees - when to uncover
- Coffee grounds in the garden



### Find the following hidden words:

- |               |         |           |
|---------------|---------|-----------|
| catalogs      | ashes   | burlap    |
| antidesiccant | pruning | evergreen |
| wintersowing  | forcing |           |
| frost         | dormant |           |
| protection    | tender  |           |

## *2009 Master Gardener Class*

As you all know we have been preparing for our new class. To date we have 29 Master Gardeners enrolled. Included in that number are a couple of participants from Ocean County as Ocean County will not be hosting a program this year. You will see from the schedule below that we have added a tour of the Eco-Complex and a new Horticultural Therapy class for the 2009. Be sure and check those new classes out as we are sure you will find them to be very interesting. Let Anita know if there is a class that you would like to attend, whether it is a new one, one you missed last year, or just to refresh your memory.

Remember how you felt as a new volunteer when you see the new folks walking around with their name tags on or anxiously waiting on the pot of coffee to finish being brewed, and make them feel as welcome as you always have. Share your positive thoughts and experiences with them.

### Current Class Schedule

Date	Class	Instructor
6-Jan	Insect Identification	Joe Mahar
13-Jan	Basic Botany	Mona Bawgus
20-Jan	Weed Identification	Bill Bamka
27-Jan	Soils	Ray Samulis
3-Feb	Eco-Complex Tour	Mona Bawgus
10-Feb	Plant Propagation	Mona Bawgus
17-Feb	Garden Design for Homeowners	Bruce Crawford
24-Feb	Native Plants/Invasives**	Bruce Barbour
3-Mar	Backyard Habitats	Pat Sutton
10-Mar	Horticulture Therapy	Madeline Flahive-Dinardo
17-Mar	Earthwise Lawn Care	Bill Hlubik
24-Mar	Plant Pathology	Rich Buckley
31-Mar	Pesticide Safety	Pat Hastings
7-Apr	Arboriculture	Mickey Riggan
14-Apr	Perennials/Annuals/ Field Trip	Mona Bawgus/Walt Off
21-Apr	Helpline/Working with Youth	Mona Bawgus/Debi Cole
28-Apr	Vegetables I	Richard VanVranken
5-May	Vegetables II/Field Trip	Richard VanVranken
12-May	Small Fruits I	Gary Pavlis
19-May	Small Fruits II/Field Trip	Gary Pavlis

If you missed one of these classes in the past, or just want to refresh your memory, please contact Anita to let her know you would like to attend.



## **Propagating & Wintering Over Lantana**

By Patti Cassidy

One of my favorite summer plants is lantana. It is one of the most colorful, low maintenance plants I have encountered. Although it is not native to our area, it attracts a variety of butterflies and bees. And hummingbirds just love it.

Lantana, which is native to the tropics and subtropics, is a shrub in warmer climates. It is typically grown colored flowers, ranging from white and yellow to deep red and hot pink. Some varieties are very bushy in habit, others are love growing and spreading. Lantana does best where it will receive at least a few house of full sun, and it seems to do well even in poor soil. It is very drought tolerant.

I began wintering over lantana many years ago. Wintering them over has allowed me to have much larger plants than what would be available for sale in nurseries. I keep most of my plants in pots, and just bring them in before a hard frost hits. This plant seems to have few insect pests, so I've never had any problems introducing outdoor pests to my house plants. I keep my plants in rooms that receive a few hours of sunlight, though some of this is indirect light. I also have a small bench with a plant light to accommodate the larger pots. Lantana does not seem to mind being pot bound.

I generally prune back the plants before bringing them in. Although lantana is an evergreen shrub in the south, I have found that it does drop most of its leaves between January and March. Fall pruning reduces the number of leaves I have to clean up. It will continue to flower until January if not pruned, but the blooms are not as numerous or vibrant in color. My plants go back outside after the danger of frost.

Lantana is very easy to propagate from tip cuttings. I have had some success with mid spring a fall cutting, but the cuttings to best when taken in July and August. Take the cutting from the green, tender part of the stem, just below a leaf node, leaving 2-3 sets of leaves. Remove any flowers or buds from the tip. Dip the end in Root Tone and place the cutting in a small container of potting soil. I usually place 3-4 cuttings in a 4 inch pot. I then place the pots in a shady area of my yard. I don't cover the pots; I think the humidity of our summers is probably enough for these plants. Keep the soil moist but not wet. Remove any tips that die (they drop all their leaves and turn black). You'll know within a few weeks which of your cuttings have rooted. Repot your babies in their own pots and enjoy!

**Atlantic County  
Master Gardener Newsletter**

Published by:  
Rutgers Cooperative Extension of  
Atlantic County  
6260 Old Harding Highway  
Mays Landing, NJ 08330  
(609) 625-0056 ext. 6123  
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Edited by:

*Mona Bawgus*

Mona Bawgus  
Program Associate - Agriculture



Estelle Berkowitz – Jan 3  
Janet D'Alessandro – Jan 15  
Evonne Kaminski – Jan 9  
Anna Schleifer – Jan 17  
George Lonkart – Jan 20  
Rita Wenig – Jan 23  
Bessie McGowan – Jan 26  
Mona Bawgus – Feb 6  
Grace Wagner – Feb 10  
Robert Varrelmann – Feb 21  
Marie Benoit – Feb 25  
Raven Ahmed – Feb 29



Cooperative Extension  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
88 Lipman Drive  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8525  

---

Official Mail



Atlantic County Master Gardener Program  
Newsletter