



Kentucky Extension
Master Gardener
Fayette County

Newsletter

Fall 2022

Fayette County Master Gardener's
Association

Newsletter Committee

Susan Miller, Chair
Mary Miller, Co-Chair
Sharon Bennett

The Prez Sez:

Dear Fellow Gardeners,

The picnic was a great success. It was a wonderful opportunity to be together and catch up in Helena Taulbee's grand yard. Helena made everyone feel welcomed and a big thank you to her for hosting this event.

Your FCMGA Board has been hard at work getting caught up and there is some information we need to share with you.

- First, our annual meeting will be on January 22. We are planning to meet in person and will take every precaution to keep everyone safe. It will be at the Fayette County Extension office. Please look for more details as we get closer to the date.
- The Vice President position on the Board has been vacant. **Susan McDaniels** has agreed and been confirmed to the position. Thanks, Susan!
- The FCMGA Executive Committee is in the process of updating our bylaws. This will be an agenda item for the annual meeting. All FCMGA members will receive a copy of the recommended update prior to the meeting for your review.
- Also at the annual meeting, it will be time to approve a new slate of board members. Please contact Graham Rowles (growl2@uky.edu) or Judy Worth (jkworth@icloud.com) if you are interested in serving.

I wish everyone a great fall and may your favorite football team win!

Happy Gardening,

Ann



Do You Know?

What is the Persephone Period in gardening?

Look for an answer somewhere in the Newsletter!

Hitchhikers and Migrants: My Garden Surprises

by Judy Worth

The truth is out. I'm not really a gardener—I just grow things. And it would be a stretch to say I have a garden—I have a yard, a deck with paint pails, and a sun porch with pots. And as I grow older, I'm inclined to let mother nature help choose what grows and stays, and what leaves. In that context, I'd say that a fair number of the plants in my yard today are either hitchhikers or migrants. **Hitchhikers** are the plants that arrived typically along with a plant or plants shared with me by a friend or neighbor. Many of them I like—a few (like porcelain berry vine) are beautiful but incredibly invasive. **Migrants** are plants that showed up here mysteriously—maybe via the wind, a bird, a squirrel, or something else. If I like them, they get a home here. And sometimes, like wisteria, they get a home here whether I want them or not.

So here are a few of my favorites—first the **hitchhikers**.



Datura innoxia (Jimson weed)—I love this because it blooms at night, smells a lot like my mother's Pond's Cold Cream, and serves as a pollen source for a type of night moth. And most of all, because George O'Keeffe painted a species of it, and the Santa Fe Opera created a beautiful poster from her painting.



Oenothera biennis (Evening primrose)—Another evening bloomer, a native, and a pollinator. You can actually watch the plant start to sway at dusk as the blooms slowly open and then gracefully close in the morning. Sadly, the blooms last only one day.



Hesperis matronalis (Dame's Rocket)—One of my favorite spring flowers—with a delicate scent.



Saponaria (Soapwort)—Not sure who gave me this or which variety it belongs to. This one starts out pink and fades to white. The bees love it when it's in full bloom.



Aster tartaricus 'Jendal' (if there's a common name, I don't know it). I love this one because it blooms in the late summer/fall when a lot my other perennials have lost their steam. But the bees love it as well as monarchs if they make a pass through my front yard on their way south.



And the now the **travelers** (all came up from seed).



Erigeron (Fleabane)—Lots of folks hate this native plant and consider it a weed. But I love it . . . it blooms relatively early and mixes nicely with other spring blooms scattered around the yard.



Magnolia grandiflora (Southern magnolia)—I know this is a traveler because I've seen these around the 'hood. This one came up from seed in the back yard, struggled until I moved it to its third home, and now it's thriving even after sacrificing a few limbs to an ice storm. It's taken a few years to produce blooms, more each year.



Acer palmatum? (Japanese maple)—This little guy blew in from across the street. It struggled for the first couple of years, and I almost cut it down. But it LOVED this spring's weather. I should have moved it when it was smaller, but I think it likes where it is.



Not a clue as to this one--maybe *Cornus drummondii* (rough-leaved dogwood). It's a small native tree with a lacy, elderberry-like bloom in the spring and very dense branches.



And as we enter autumn, there's *Aster pilosus* (frostweed) or *Symphotrichum pilosum* (frostweed aster). (Note: I think Symphotrichum is a new name for a group of flowers that used to classes as aster.) It spreads like wildfire, but the bees and wasps love it as they race to gather pollen before the blooms end for the year.

And so the garden grows – travelers and hitchhikers together – and who knows what surprises the next season will hold.



Garden Tour for Master Gardeners

All Master Gardeners and guests are invited to tour the seven-acre garden of the Unitarian Universalist Church located at **3564 Clays Mill Road** (near the intersection with Man O'War). The tour will be led by Master Gardener and church member Mary Miller and Susan Cohn, leader of the UU Seven Acre Team, a group of volunteers who spend countless hours working on the grounds and collaborating on decisions on developing and maintaining the property. Topics covered will include using native plants, creating low maintenance garden areas, dealing with invasives, and efforts to control erosion and runoff that impact the South Elkhorn Creek which runs through the property.

The UU Church grounds feature:

- a wildflower garden funded by local native plant group Wild Ones
- a Monarch Waystation garden, filled with pollinator plants
- a Memorial Garden
- a garden area near the church entrance
- garden areas near the Richard Allen Fellowship House, built in 1790, the second-oldest standing structure in Lexington



There will be two identical tours of about an hour on Tuesday September 27th at 1:00 and 2:30 , with a rain date on Sept. 29. To register, email Mary Miller at marykrautt@gmail.com or text to 859-333-4174 – be sure to include the time you want to attend, your name and contact information, and how many will be attending. This tour requires walking up to one-third of a mile, with some uneven surfaces. Closed toe shoes advised. Optional: a walk through the woods path under construction, with uneven footing and some poison ivy.



A recently planted young Swamp Azalea

Go Native—with Azaleas

by Sharon Bennett

If you are looking for native plants that add structure to your landscape, bloom in a variety of colors, and attract pollinators and hummingbirds, look into native azaleas. These deciduous shrubs flourish in woodland gardens with light or dappled shade and well-drained acidic soil. When planning for these shrubs, toss out your 'standard' azalea image of a low, mounding, evergreen foundation plant. Native azaleas have an open, airy form and can reach heights of 3'-8'.

Varieties

There are numerous azaleas native to the eastern United States with bloom times from early spring through late summer. Flower colors range from white to shades of pink, red, yellow, white and orange. Some bloom in early spring while others bloom in summer. Most are fragrant. Their flowers are tubular with flaring petals and long stamens. The native azaleas have great fall color before their leaves drop for the winter.

Here are some azaleas that have worked well in my landscape.

Alabama (*Alabamense*) is a fragrant 3-6' azalea which will take some sun. It blooms in late spring and has white flowers with a yellow blotch.

Coastal (*Atlanticum*) is smaller, growing 1-4'. It blooms in late spring with lightly scented white or pink blossoms that are favorites of the bumblebees. This variety also tolerates sun.

Cumberland (*Cumberlandense*) is native to Kentucky. While not fragrant, it bears loads of red or yellow blooms in early summer. This variety is a woodland plant and requires some shade from the afternoon sun. The mature height ranges from 2-8'.

Oconee (*Flammeum*) bursts into bright orange to red bloom in early spring. Although it is not fragrant, the early pollinators really enjoy it. At maturity it can reach 6-8'. This will tolerate some afternoon sun.

Piedmont (*Canescens*) is one of the earliest bloomers with pale pink flowers in early spring. This variety grows well in light shade and reaches about 6' in maturity.



Plumleaf blooms in mid-July

Pinxterbloom (*Periclymenoides*) bears lightly scented pink flowers in late spring. It will tolerate morning sun and reaches a mature height of 3-8'. This variety is native to Kentucky

Plumleaf (*Prunifolium*) is one of the latest bloomers, sporting scores of white or pink blossoms in July-August. This 6-8' is a versatile plant in that it tolerates afternoon sun.

Swamp (*Viscosum*) this 6' azalea likes moist, shady conditions. It sports white to pink flowers in mid-summer. It too is fragrant.

Planting

When choosing a site for a native azalea, morning sun and afternoon shade will be best. In general, those that flower in June or later may need more shade, as the delicate flowers don't tolerate the hot summer sun. For overall health, keep the soil moist to help compensate for excessive summer heat.

Native azaleas need acid soils with a pH 5.2 to 5.8. Unless directed by a soil test, you should not lime the soil near these plants, because their foliage may become yellow or chlorotic.



A mature Plumleaf Azalea

These shrubs must be planted at the same level in the soil as they were in the container, or slightly higher if the soil is poorly drained. Mulch the plants with a three-inch thick layer of pine bark, pine needles or leaves to help keep the soil cool and to conserve soil moisture. They will need to be watered weekly during the first growing season if there is insufficient rainfall.

Fertilization

Fertilize native azaleas lightly in the spring and early summer with a balanced, extended-release, acid-forming, azalea fertilizer.

Sources

Native azaleas are a little hard to find at retail outlets. Springhouse Gardens often has a variety of good-sized plants in early spring. Typically they will offer Plumleaf, Pinxterbloom and Swamp azaleas.

Mountain Mist Nursery carries a wide array of native azaleas for sale and shipping in spring. <https://mountainmist-nursery.com>



In the Extension Gardens

Master Gardener activities have been increasing as Covid restrictions are lifted. Jake Karnes leads the vegetable garden group. The gardens at the Extension office are producing well and the flowers are looking fabulous. This is a Jackson Oxheart tomato grown from a grafted plant in our extension office demo garden by our volunteers (water bottle included to give an idea of the size). This whopper weighed 2 pounds 13.7 ounces and along with our other produce will be donated to food pantries.



Master Gardener Daylily Tour

On July 8th, Master Gardeners gathered at Graham's Daylilies in Lancaster for a tour of Willie and Brent Graham's beautiful gardens – and many of us added to our daylily collections. If you would like to suggest a possible tour for the future, we would love to do tours of member gardens or other gardens. Email Mary Miller at marykrautt@gmail.com to share tour suggestions.



Master Gardener Picnic

On August 14, Master Gardeners gathered for a picnic was in Helena Taulbee's beautiful garden. About 40 members and guests attended, with some new members from the incoming MG class. Wonderful food and great company! We were all so happy to get together.



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Tips from Jamie

If you have ever grown tall garden phlox, you know what an issue powdery mildew is. I am always on the lookout for truly disease resistant cultivars. I have grown the white 'David' for years and while it does hold up better than most, I would always have mildew by season's end. I then found the loud, coral pink 'Glamour Girl' which is the best I had found to date and a shorter size to boot. I would still get some limited powdery mildew late in the season. Last year we distributed a very loud, bright pink called 'Candy Store Bubblegum Pink' at a class. I planted 3 of the leftovers to see how they performed. Granted, this

has been a much drier year with significant reduction in fungal pressure but as of July 20th, these plants are cranking out flowers like mad and not one speck of powdery mildew. I selected this variety because of it being one of the top performers in MT. Cuba Center's Phlox trials which specifically measured resistance (wonderful place that trials cultivars of native plants). Their information reported high mildew resistance, but weak growth of the plants. I have not found this to be the case. Although, I am sure this would mildew some in a high-pressure year, I think we have a winner! For those of you who are about to ask....the annual black grass in the planting is Pennisetum 'First Knight'. It will reach 4-5' by season's end and doesn't flower in our climate. It's another new-found favorite of mine.

Happy gardening and stay cool.

Jamie

FAYETTE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors

Draft minutes for BYLAWS WORK SESSION

8.10.2022

PRESENT: Ann Henry, Kay Fisher, Graham Rowles, Judy Worth

Lack of quorum prevented the Board of Directors (BOD) from taking any formal actions. However, the four BOD members present discussed several items that will need future action by the BOD.

ANNUAL PICNIC: Currently 46 are expected. Ann needs help with set up at 3:00. The guest list includes 3 new MGs (enrollees in new FCEMG course).

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Kay Fisher presented the FCMGA Financial Status Report for 7/31/22.

- 1) FY2023 Expenses: \$29.87 sent to Pat Petro as reimbursement for a purchase for the herb garden; \$20.00 refunded to Jeannie Moore*
- 2) FY2023 Income: Interest (\$13.00)
- 3) Total Assets: \$28,192.83 (\$17963.86 checking account; \$10,228.97 CDs)

*The previous minutes indicated no expenses. They should be updated to reflect the \$20.00 refund to Jeannie Moore.

Ann will circulate the Financial Report to all BOD members and ask for electronic approval.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Graham presented an initial list of 12 EMGs as potential candidates to fill the position of VP vacated by Clare Farnau for the remainder of this year and to serve as President for next year. BOD members discussed the list, pared it down to five, and prioritized them in the order in which Graham will approach them.

BYLAWS REVISION:

BOD members noted that the Bylaws should be revised to include a section on the Executive Committee, including the purpose, composition, and responsibilities. Ann will look for boiler plate verbiage from other organizations' Bylaws to use as a model.

Graham noted that only the description of the Nominating Committee included a term limit for its members. He suggested that all standing Committees include a similar term limit.

That led to a discussion of term limits for Officers and Board members as well as Committee term limits. We discussed increasing terms to two years for all positions with a potential limit of two consecutive terms for Officer and Board positions and a requirement that members roll off the Board for a period of two years before serving again. However, we realized that, to make that work, we would need to consider staggering terms for BOD members and Officers so that all positions are not vacated at the same time. Those changes would enable to Officers/BOD members/Committee chairs to have enough time in their position to learn their jobs and increase their contribution to FCMGA while opening up options for new members and new ideas.

Graham serves on a board that uses a similar system for their elections. He will research the mechanics and report at the next BOD Work Session.

These proposed changes will be discussed at the next work session.

Ann will survey BOD members re potential dates for a September work session.

The next regular BOD meeting will be held on November 9.

Draft minutes prepared by Judy Worth subbing for Mary Miller



Answer to Do You Know?

The Persephone Period is the time of year when daylight falls below 10 hours per day. It references the daughter of Demeter, goddess of the harvest in Greek mythology and is a guideline to planting fall and winter harvests.

Nancy Davis shared this lovely photo of her lilies. We'd love to have your photos too! To share photos, contact Susan Miller at gourmetgoats@msn.com.