

LPMGA MAY

SOCIAL

Wednesday

May 4, 2016 - 5-7:30 pm

LPMGA BOARD

MEETING

1 PM MONDAY,

MAY 23, 2016

**IRA NELSON HORTICULTURE
 CENTER (INHC)**

The **LPMGA May Social** will take place May 4 from 5-7:30 pm at the home of Ruth Moncus, 211 Meridian Ave., Lafayette.

A **Garden Stroll** at the home of Dr. Richard Howes will take place Saturday, May 7, 1—3:30. The stroll is at 104 Allée des Chênes in Lafayette. Please come and bring a friend. This is a beautiful setting, and Dr. Howes has worked so hard to make his garden beautiful. You will also be able to see miniature horses! Directions: From Lafayette, take Evangeline Thruway North to I-49. Take Pont des Moutons exit and go right (east) to light at Moss Street. Take left on Moss then right on Maryview Farm Road. Go 0.2 miles and take left at first street sign- Allée des Chênes. Go to THE END OF THE BLACK TOP and turn right through gate onto gravel drive.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Gerald's Retirement picnic was a huge success. We had 80 people present, and the fried chicken, salads, and homemade desserts were delicious. Gerald talked about Master Gardeners who had made a difference to him, and we all know what a difference he made to us. Big thanks to our Social chair Pam Womack and to Gail Wakefield who worked hard to get the Demo beds ready and organize the event.

This has been THE VOLUNTEER month for our organization. It has been crazy! Thank you to the members who welcomed the Arkansas

Hosta and Plant Shade Society. Maryann Armbruster and her Vermilionville medicinal committee taught the 58 visitors about the uses of the medicinal plants in the bed. Then Gail Wakefield and her committee members escorted the group through the Ira Nelson Greenhouse and answered questions about the Cottage demo beds and our organization. Everyone was impressed with the graciousness of our members.

Sharon Bakay had over 50 Master Gardeners who volunteered to help with Festival des Fleurs. There were also nine members who spoke on various horticultural topics; Master Gardeners sold tomatoes and peppers and provided information on vegetable gardening at the Ask a Master Gardener booth. Master Gardeners were everywhere!

Of course, the next weekend was our Plant Sale, a culmination of many hours of cutting, snipping, repotting, bumping,... The propagation team did an outstanding job and the community turnout was impressive.

I spoke to Sarah about her Southern Garden Festival. She had at least 25 volunteers helping to plant, creating a children's scavenger hunt, speaking on horticultural topics, and answering gardening questions.

I know you are worn out! Take a break and relax!

Linda Beyt

2016 BOARD:

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AGENT JEREMY'S ADVICE



Home lawns can be an attractive aspect of any landscape across South Louisiana. We can take pride in growing a healthy and vigorous lawn. A healthy and vigorous lawn can require routine and timely maintenance. As I drive across southern Louisiana, I see lawns greening up and people beginning the maintenance required for the grass they have chosen to grow.

Bermuda grass, centipede, zoysia and St. Augustine make up the majority of grasses that are grown in home lawns in our area. One of the key factors in having a successful lawn is to maintain soil fertility. It is best to conduct regular soil tests in order to evaluate the soil fertility; LSU AgCenter recommends soil testing about every three years. Depending on the lawn, the fertility requirements will vary based on what type of grass is grown.

Centipede does not require as much nitrogen as other turfgrasses so less fertilizer is needed. For a centipede lawn, fertilizers can be applied starting in April with follow-up applications made in June and August at the rate of 0.5 pounds of actual nitrogen per thousand square feet per application. For example, in order to get 0.5 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet, an application of a fertilizer such as 13-13-13 at the rate of 3.75 pounds per 1,000 square feet is required. Bermuda, St. Augustine, and zoysia can withstand fertilization rates of 1 pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per application. As a result, 7.5 pounds of 13-13-13 fertilizer per 1,000 square feet will yield 1.0 pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. The first application should be applied in April with follow-up applications in June and August. When considering fertilization of lawns and any other plants, applying the proper amount of fertilizer is critical because over fertilization can lead to poor plant growth and even death.

Mowing height is another key factor when maintaining a healthy lawn. Each grass requires a slightly different mowing height for it to perform properly. Bermuda requires a mowing height of $\frac{3}{4}$ " – 1.5"; mowing at even 2" is acceptable. Centipede and zoysia prefer a 1 – 2" mowing height. Of the southern turfgrasses, St. Augustine is the least tolerant of lower mowing heights and it performs best at a mowing height of 3". When mowing, it is recommended that one should not remove more than the top one-third of a grass blade at one clipping. This is one of the key elements homeowners do not follow most frequently, and probably one of the most important. By mowing at the correct height and allowing a taller canopy of grass, it is harder for sunlight to reach the soil surface, which makes it harder for weeds to germinate.

Soil compaction is another issue that plagues many homeowners. Soil compaction is a result of soil compression from traffic over the ground surface, which includes equipment, humans, and animals to name a few. Over time, compaction can become severe and the compaction can limit the growth of home lawns. A compacted soil limits the movement of water, nutrients, and oxygen into the soil profile. Therefore, a compacted soil reduces the growth capability of the grass, and in many situations encourages grassy weeds and broadleaves to infest the yard.

By maintaining the health of the soil, one is giving their lawn everything that it needs to perform its best. The grass will be greener, thicker, and will have less weeds present if proper care is managed through the year.

EVENTS, REPORTS, AND BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

2016 LPMGA Meetings: (First Wednesday Except in July) Daytime—noon/Evening—6 pm	2016 LPMGA Board Meetings, 1 pm: (Fourth Monday except for July & Dec.)
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MAY 4, 5-7:30 pm (Social)	MAY 23
JUNE 1, Noon	JUNE 27
JULY No meeting	JULY No Meeting
AUGUST 3, 6 pm	AUGUST 22
SEPTEMBER 7, Noon	SEPTEMBER 26
OCTOBER 5, 6 pm	OCTOBER 24
NOVEMBER 2, Noon	NOVEMBER 28
DECEMBER 7, 6 pm (Social)	DECEMBER 12

3rd Saturday Garden Talk

Tommy Hayes will give a presentation on soils at the Third Saturday Garden Talk on Saturday, May 21 at 10:00 A.M. at the Ira Nelson Demo Beds. Garden Talks are free and open to the public.



PLANT SALE REPORT

Spring Sale Succeeds!

Your LPMGA Propagation Team, along with a small army of hard working MGs, again pulled off a stellar spring plant sale. A rewind to fall and winter reminds us that the greenhouse was not operational for several months as repairs to the hundreds of glass panes were made, then followed by a thorough cleaning and repainting of the interior and re-installation of the irrigation system. Fast forward to late February when we were finally able to move back in and start growing. There were cuttings to be taken, seeds to be sown, plants to be repotted, and the general duties of soil mixing, plant health, tag writing, and record keeping.

I feared the many other plant sales in the weeks preceding ours, along with a monster sale being held in Baton Rouge the same day as ours, would overshadow and diminish our efforts. A constant stream of customers, however, quickly dispelled my pre-sale anxiety. On hand to help out were our newly certified Junior Master Gardeners. The Seed Swap table was a well-received addition to our sales. The offering of bare root (aka ‘naked’) bulbs and rhizomes gave our customers an economical means of acquiring many more plants. And acquire plants they did, with the day ending as a near sellout! First estimates from our treasurer are that sales exceeded \$9,000.

There was an atmosphere of festivity on that beautiful Saturday morning as garden friends gathered to buy plants, visit with each other, ask lots of questions, and linger in our beautiful demo garden. One customer likened our ‘driveway sale’ to a huge block party for plant lovers. I can proudly say we stayed true to our LPMGA mission of providing horticultural enrichment and education for the public and for our members, while at the same time generating funds to operate our Lafayette Parish Master Gardener Association. Congratulations to all who participated!

Becky Taylor



COMMITTEE REPORTS

THE HEALER'S GARDEN COMMITTEE REPORT

May 2016

The Healer's Garden Committee continues to be quite active this year. In addition to our regular committee meetings on Monday mornings to maintain our Demonstration Garden at Vermilionville, we have been giving tours, supporting our lecture series, 'Healing Traditions of Acadiana', giving talks to the community and doing research on plants and their uses in our area.

TOURS One example of our tours was visiting with the Ouachita Hosta and Shade Plant Society of Arkansas. Fifty-six of their members came to tour the Healer's Garden and learn about our plants – even though most of them are not shade plants. We received repeated thanks from the members of the group who said that they greatly enjoyed and appreciated learning about the Healer's Garden. Another example was when eleven of our committee members toured 242 visitors at the Earth Day festivities at Vermilionville that were held last Sunday, April 17th.



Master Gardener Beverly Fusilier informing visitors about the Healers Garden



May Waggoner, Mary Perrin, Joy Young, Bobby Keeland and visitors in front of the Healer's House.

HEALING TRADITIONS OF ACADIANA We are extremely proud to report that our lecture series, 'Healing Traditions of Acadiana', celebrates the end of its third year on June 18, 2016 with an encore presentation by the knowledgeable and entertaining herbalist, Lanier Cordell. The lecture series has enjoyed the presentations of speakers ranging from the well-known traiteur, Alain Simon, to local anthropologist, Dr. Ray Brassier and the well-known author and naturalist, Bill Fontenot. Other speakers have been scientists, historians, herbalists, pharmacists and authors, all of whom had special knowledge of the healing/medical happenings in the region at different times in our history. The last presentation was by award-winning film-maker, Glen Pitre. If you haven't had a chance to attend, do yourself a favor and earn some continuing education hours by joining us next time, 18 June 2015 at 11:00 am at Vermilionville. There is no charge to enter Vermilionville and the lecture is free. Donations are appreciated, but voluntary.

PRESENTATIONS Our committee members give lectures and presentations on Medicinal Plants of Acadiana when requested by organizations in the community. We have presented this information to many organizations including the Abbeville Garden Club, members of the community at the Garden Talk, Avec Souci and the Lafayette Master Gardeners.

RESEARCH We continually research plants to add to the garden. The work is sometimes done in groups, but can often be done individually with the results brought to the group later. This is an activity that fits committee members who have conflicts that prevent their joining us on Monday mornings, so if you would like to join the Healer's Garden Committee, just let us know. We send out an email on Sunday confirming the time of our meeting on Monday, or simply show up. We are usually there about 9:30 unless the weather is terrible or it's a holiday that has the park closed. (That the reason for the email.) If you would like to join our committee but cannot be there on Monday, contact MaryAnn Armbruster. We'll determine a research project for you. We love new members. We **adore** our current members. They are the absolute BEST, and you can be, too, if you join us.

JR. MASTER GARDENER CLASS

Junior Master Gardener Class gets DOWN AND DIRTY



We held our first week long Junior Master Gardener Camp from March 28 - April 1, 2016 at the demo gardens and Ira Nelson from 9:00 am - 1:00pm. We had 9 campers: 2 of them attended our first 2 day camp last year, 2 were Master Gardener's grand kids, 2 are in our School Garden Initiative schools, 1 was home schooled, and 3 were from different schools. The age range was 8 years old to 11 years old. We had over 30 Master Gardeners help with the camp! The Junior Master Gardeners received their certificates and their certified Junior Master Gardener pins at the Plant Sale The Junior Master Gardeners were required to do a service project to earn their certification. The campers either sold gourds that they had painted or they worked with Master Gardeners in the plant holding area to help our customers during the plant sale. The Junior Maser Gardeners earned \$160.00 with their gourds. This money will go to providing scholarships for future campers that cannot afford camp.

Thank you to all who donated their time, their expertise, snacks, and their smiles with the Junior Master Gardeners! Thank you to Billy and Kristy for allowing us to use Ira Nelson!



UPCOMING EVENTS

LOUISIANA



Master Gardener™

an educational program of the LSU AgCenter

PLANT SWAP

For the latest research-based information on just about anything, visit our Web site: www.lsuagcenter.com

Lafayette Parish Master Gardener Association
www.lpmga.org



SPRING PLANT SWAP

Saturday, May 7th, 2016

Ira Nelson Horticulture Center

By Blackham Coliseum, Coliseum Road at Johnson St, Lafayette

Swap sign up starts at 8:30am

Numbers are drawn randomly

Formal Swap 9:00am

With free trading before and after

The public is always welcome.

Bring one rooted and identified plant to enter in the Formal 1-to-1 Swap, and as many as you'd like to trade and share before and after. Sign in and get your ticket, numbers will be called starting at 9am.

You never know what will show up, but people are looking for:

Heirloom Roses-Amaryllis-Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow-
Louisiana Irises ("Our Dorothy", "Extra Dazzle" or any shades of blue)-Jewels of Opar-Red Crosomia-Minnie Pearl Phlox-Daylilies-true Byzantine Gladiolas-Mamou-Sassafras trees-Passion Flowers-
Hurricane Lilies (Lycoris)-Rain Lilies-Swamp Orchids-Nuns
Orchids-Gingers

Please remember to tag your plant(s) with name, variety, planting info and color if possible.

For more information, or to include a plant request, contact Louann Long at mglouann@gmail.com

Plants that do not find a home will be offered to interested swappers. If you have "extra" foundation plants/shrubs, especially sun foundation shrubs, please consider bringing them to be collected for donation to Habitat For Humanity.

Like Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners on FaceBook and visit our website: lpmga.org

Next Swap will be the Fall Plant Swap & Seed Exchange in October

BETWEEN THE ROWS

BY MARY ANN ARMBRUSTER



It's almost summer now. Those peas that I planted early – Oregon Sugar Pod II are finished and the Mammoth Melting Sugar are in full production now. Planting them early (November) didn't seem to hurt production at all. The Oregon Sugar Pod II are almost finished, but the Mammoth Melting Sugar are still going strong. I'm also getting good production of broccoli, cauliflower, and most other spring vegetables.

I have been plagued with flea beetles from time to time. Flea beetles are tiny beetles from 1/16 to 1/4 inch in length that chew small, round holes in leaves. The books say that they jump when disturbed, but mine seem to drop and disappear into the mulch. They can be black, brown, bronze, green, striped or patterned, as well as red-headed. While they were completely destroying my mustard leaves, they were ignoring the Swiss chard, broccoli and cauliflower planted within inches of the mustard. It seems that these plants develop a waxy coating on their leaves when adults, something that the mustard does not have, making the mustard more attractive to the flea beetle. That also makes mustard a good trap/indicator crop for flea beetles. If you want to try using a trap crop, you have to prevent the flea beetles from migrating from the trap crop into your main crop. To do this you must check the trap crop often and deal with the insects soon after they arrive on the trap crop. That usually means using insecticides.

If you want to grow mustard, however, try using floating row covers. These covers must be well sealed so that the flea beetles cannot crawl inside. You can use sticky yellow traps to monitor for flea beetles, but you may find that beneficial insects are also being trapped.

Since repelling or avoiding these pests is much easier than handling them, it's better to follow as many cultural options as possible, like planting late to avoid the early-appearing flea beetles, cultivating before and after transplanting to destroy as many eggs and larvae as possible, mixing your plantings with herbs, such as Queen Anne's lace, dill and parsley, to attract beneficials like tachinid flies, soil-dwelling nematodes and braconid wasps, and mulching to confuse the female making it harder for her to find a place to lay her eggs. You can also try using larger transplants rather than growing from seed, since the tiny seedlings are more susceptible to the flea beetle damage. It can require only two flea beetles per leaf to seriously damage or kill a small seedling, while an older transplant can tolerate that number with little long-term damage. Another option is diatomaceous earth (DE). DE looks and feels like powder to humans, but it is composed of the shells of tiny sea creatures that died long ago. These shells are spiky and sharp. When the insect crawls across the DE, the spiky bodies puncture the insect's exoskeleton leading to dehydration and death. DE is harmless to people, pets and most beneficial insects. You can use neem oil if you already have an infestation. If you want to use synthetic insecticides, choose one containing pyrethroids or carbamates. Follow the label directions exactly. Always remember, the label is the law.

I believe the insects in my garden are Spinach Flea Beetles since mine are all about 1/4 inch. This is a photo of a single flea beetle.



Now you know what it looks like, but that photo doesn't give you any real, useful information. For one thing, it's not life size. Life size is more easily seen with a comparison, here:



So it's tiny. But there were THOUSANDS of them. This is what they really look like:



Now imagine them all over large mustard leaves. There were, literally, thousands on each leaf. So, because I had not used any of the methods mentioned above, I lost my entire mustard crop. I won't make that mistake in the future.

Between the Rows continued on pg 8

BETWEEN THE ROWS: WITH MARY ANN ARMBRUSTER

Continued from Page 7

Now is the time to plant your summer veggies. If you hurry, you can get Swiss chard, hot peppers from seed and tomato transplants into the ground before the first week in May. Up until the middle of May you can plant snap beans (bush or pole), sweet corn and bell pepper transplants. All month long you can plant Lima beans (bush or pole), cantaloupes, cucumbers, eggplants from seed or transplants, okra, peanuts, Southern peas, hot pepper transplants, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, summer squash and watermelon.

The recommended varieties of cantaloupes for our area are: Ambrosia (DM, PM), Aphrodite (PM), Athena (PM), Primo (DM, PM) and Vienna. If you want to grow Honeydew melons, try Earli-dew (PM), Honey Brew (DM, PM), Lambkin AAS, Passport (ANT) and Temptation.

Now I will continue with the medicinal plants.

LEMON BALM *Melissa officinalis* French: Citronelle

Lemon balm smells more lemony than lemons, or more precisely, it smells like Lemon Pledge. It is an easy to grow groundcover that is delightful when planted where passing hands and feet can crush some leaves and release the scent.

Lemon Balm



The whole plant of Lemon Balm, dried or fresh, is used to make cool refreshing drinks or warm relaxing teas. Lemon Balm is still used extensively in alternative medicine. The leaves and young flowering shoots are antibacterial, antispasmodic, antiviral and sedative, among others. Lemon Balm leaf tea was used for fevers, colds, sleep, relaxation and headache.

BITTER MELON *Momordica charantia* French: Mexicain

Bitter melon is a beautiful annual vine. The leaves are light green and well divided. The fruit looks like a warty cucumber to start, but then when it ripens, it begins to look like something out of the film 'Alien' with the red-coated seeds bursting from the opening fruit. The interior contains the seeds and a red gel that is delicious. The fruit itself, as the name of the plant states, is BITTER. I can't get past it, but it is a gourmet delicacy in some areas of the world, used to make soup or in stir fries. There are many recipes available on the web for using bitter melon in cooking. Plant the seeds in full sun to light shade in early spring. Maintain even moisture and wait for the fruits to develop. The flowers attract many different pollinators.

Between the Rows continued on next page

What Plant Am I?

I'm a small annual, native to Egypt, Greece, and parts of Asia. I'm mentioned in ancient Egyptian records. I was carried to Rome, where I was used as a medicinal. My seeds were used in rich ceremonial cakes to aid digestion, and to reduce flatulence. These were served at the end of a festive meal, and is thought to be the origin of the wedding cake. I grow to about 18 inches tall. My leaves are rounded and toothed when young, becoming finely cut and feathery as they mature. They have a strong flavor, rather like licorice.

I grow in light fairly rich soil in full sun, and have slender stems. These produce small white flowers in umbel form, which attract beneficial insects. The flowers produce small crescent-shaped, brown, ovate, hairy seeds, with ribs and a little tail. I am propagated by seed.

My leaves and seeds are used as flavoring in liquors such as ouzo and Pernod. A tea can be made as a sleep aid and a digestive. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a face pack made from my ground seeds will fade freckles.

**Do you know what plant I am?
See page 9 for the answer**

Between the Rows Continued from previous page.

The fruit was used to treat wounds by the Acadians by soaking it in whisky - in other words, they made a tincture. In other parts of the world, the flesh or juice of the fruit is used to reduce blood sugar in diabetics. Science has shown that both uses are valid. Bitter melon contains anti-inflammatory compounds that help combat inflammation and pain in wounds, and it does reduce blood sugar in diabetics.



Bitter Melon

YARROW *Achillea millefolium* French: Unknown

Yarrow is another plant that has been used for a long time. In fact, its scientific name refers to the Greek hero Achilles, who used the plant repeatedly to treat the wounds of his men. Yarrow is referred to as the 'battlefield plant' because it has been used for centuries to treat wounds. The plant was collected in huge quantities before battles in preparation for the wounds that would be expected. Science has shown that yarrow contains compounds that are antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory and hemostatic. Thus, yarrow used as a tea or a poultice would promote blood clotting and reduce fever by promoting perspiration, it also prevents infections by stopping the growth of microbes.



Yarrow

ELDERBERRY *Sambucus canadensis* French: Sureau

Elderberry forms a lovely small tree that will be at home in most urban or suburban landscapes. Full sun to partial shade will make this plant happy. It is a frequent volunteer along fence lines.



Elderberry

Our friend, Chief Meaux, tells us that his tribe considered the elderberry to be their pharmacy. They used every part of the plant medicinally, as did our Acadian and Creole ancestors. The parts were used in various ways, as teas, decoctions, syrups, tinctures, and these were used to treat many conditions. One that is still being used commercially is as a cough suppressant. Go into most pharmacies and look for Sambucol, a cough medication that is a simple elderberry syrup, or make your own. You can also use the flowers, roots, bark, and berries, but DO NOT consume the berries raw. Once cooked they are fine, as those who consume elderberry jam or elderberry wine can attest.

Until next time – Happy Gardening!

WHAT PLANT AM I? ANSWER:

Anise : *Pimpinella anisum*



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LPMGA Calendar MAY 2016

- May 4: Master Gardener Social, 6 pm
- May 7: Garden Stroll, 1—3:30
- May 7: Spring Plant Swap, 8:30 am Ira Nelson
- May 7: Sunset Herb Festival, 9am—4 pm, Sunset
- May 12-14: Louisiana Master Gardener Convention
- May 15: Hibiscus Show and Sale, 8am—4pm, Cathedral Carmel Gym
- May 17-19: Master Gardener spring field trip
- May 21: Third Saturday Garden Talk, 10 am Tommy Hayes, Soils
- May 23: LPMGA Board meeting, Ira Nelson Center, 1 p.m.
- June 18: Healing Traditions of Acadiana, 11 am, herbalist Lanier Cordell



Gardener's Gazette is issued to all members of the Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners' Program. All members are encouraged to submit news, educational features, and photographs. The deadline for all submissions is the 17th of each month for publication in the next month's issue unless otherwise noted.

Please send newsletter items to:

Theresa Rohloff thescottherald@aol.com Please include:

"MG NEWSLETTER" in your subject bar.

The Master Gardener program is a division of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Agency and can be contacted at:

1010 Lafayette Street/Suite 325,

Lafayette, Louisiana 70501

Telephone (337) 291-7090

fax (337) 291-7099

The Web site is www.lsuagcenter.com

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Please note: All meeting and event dates, times, and locations are subject to change.