

GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday

March 4, 2015 - noon

South Regional Library

6101 Johnston Street

INFORMAL SOCIAL

See front page highlight!

LPMGA BOARD

MEETING

1 PM MONDAY,

MARCH 16, 2015

IRA NELSON HORTICULTURE
CENTER (INHC)

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2015 BOARD:

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Mary Ann Armbruster 2010

Newsletter Editor:

Theresa Rohloff 2012

Plenty of clover on ...

St. Patrick's Day



Join Us at our General Meeting—March 4 and learn about
“The Louisiana Wildflower Project”

Mary Courville, Horticulturist, Mark Simon, Project manager, UL Cade Farm, and Jim Foret, Horticulturist, UL, will share information about the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LaDOTD) Wildflower Seed Bank project at the UL Cade Farm. The seed bank project identifies, collects, and generates seeds of selected Louisiana wildflower plant species suitable for highway beautification, welcome centers, state parks and tourism promotion. The speakers will present a brief history of the project and its accomplishments in growing, harvesting, and research.

Come join us for lunch at the Olive Garden Restaurant after the Master Gardener meeting on Wednesday, March 4. The noon meeting will take place at Southside Regional Library. Please let Linda Beyt know by March 2 if you plan to attend (337-278-1258 or lbeyt@att.net).



March 21st: Pine Straw Deliveries, Ira Nelson behind Demo Beds, 9 a.m.—1 p.m.

March 28th– 29th: Festival des Fleurs, Blackham Colliseum , Please volunteer!

April 18th: Spring Plant Sale, Ira Nelson Horticulture Center

Demo Beds, 10 a.m. Be Prepared! (See page 3)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Heather Finley

Last month, I wrote a brief note about the first goal the Executive Board set for 2015: to address questions about Master Gardeners relocating. Our second goal is to **increase our member engagement and participation**. It's no surprise that the board sees this as a big issue. We're a volunteer organization, and without our members we won't exist. We're also a service organization so it isn't simply a question of figuring out what members want to do. It's also a question of what members will be willing to do to further our mission.

One obstacle to member engagement is a perceived lack of transparency in board actions. It's important that members' opinions are heard and heeded, and the board recognizes that. We are determined to improve members' access to information about LPMGA policies and activities. If you have a question, an idea, a bee in your bonnet, please tell us.

Everyone who becomes a Master Gardener is, by definition, interested in horticulture. Many of us bring skill sets to the organization other than gardening expertise. LPMGA has such a cross section of people and talents: we have designers, we have vegetable gardeners, we have writers, we have teachers, we have engineers, we have managers, and a host of other talents. These can be assets to the organization, and I hope that if you have a skill set that would help us accomplish our mission, you will consider stepping up and volunteering your time.

LPMGA also needs to be more successful at retaining our new Master Gardener program graduates each year. We have a lot of interesting things happening, and I urge you to reach out to new Master Gardeners. They have a lot to teach us!

Please also remember that Festival des Fleurs will be held on 28-29 March 2015. Please support the Ira Nelson Horticultural Center by volunteering your time (and shopping, of course). Contact Sharon Bakay for volunteer information. Thanks.

Heather

GERALD'S CORNER

A lot of calls are coming into the office relative to citrus fruit production in home landscape settings. Most of the questions center around what type of citrus is recommended and when is the proper time to plant. It is common knowledge among gardeners that the biggest factor to consider when making a decision to plant citrus is the fact that citrus are directly impacted by cold or freezing temperatures. It is important to note that the age, maturity, health, and type of citrus can influence the extent of the damage. A common saying among older gardeners is that sweet citrus fruit are more cold hardy than sour citrus fruit. Further research conducted by me by consulting the LSU AgCenter's pamphlet called "Louisiana Home Citrus Production" indicates that the order of citrus in regards to cold hardiness is kumquats and satsumas are the most cold hardy – followed by sweet oranges, navel oranges, grapefruit, with lemons and limes being the least cold hardy. That is why satsumas are so popular in home landscapes followed by sweet oranges.

Two of the most popular types of satsumas are "Brown's Select" and "Owari." Some sweet oranges that are popular are "La Sweet" and "Hamlin Sweet". Washington Navel oranges are also popular. The next question becomes when is the best time to plant citrus trees? Because of the susceptibility of citrus to cold or freezing temperatures it is common to wait until the month of February to plant citrus trees. The idea is that trees planted in February are less likely to be exposed to hard freezes that could severely damage or kill trees. An appealing aspect of citrus production is that once the fruit are mature they can be left on the tree and picked as needed unless there is an extended hard freeze prompting removal of the fruit from the trees. Surprisingly I've gotten eight to ten calls from people that still have satsumas or sweet oranges on their trees and are asking is there any problem with leaving the fruit on the tree. I rarely recommend leaving satsumas or sweet oranges on trees past the month of January. Experienced citrus growers says that leaving fruit on the trees into February and beyond negatively impacts the next crop of fruit because it causes decreases in bloom, which translates into decreases in fruit. Needless to say, for those people who still have not picked fruit off of their trees, they need to pick them as soon as possible so as not to impact the next crop of fruit. Another factor is the warmer the temperatures become the more the quality of the fruit left on the tree may be diminished.

As I ride around Lafayette Parish on some of my home visits to assess or evaluate landscape problems I'm noticing more improper pruning of crape myrtles. It is not uncommon for some gardeners or landscape maintenance professionals to severely lower the height of crape myrtle by pruning with pruning saws or even chain saws, thus the saying "Crape Murder!" Pruning of crape myrtle should primarily consist of removing any crossing or rubbing branches which should be removed at its point of origin. Any small growth such as suckers that sprout at the base of the trunk or water sprouts that come up on branches, should be removed with hand pruners or loppers. Anytime I see gardeners using a chain saw to prune crape myrtles it tells me that they're probably going to employ some improper pruning techniques. As Master Gardeners you'll need to not be shy about giving advice regarding proper pruning of crape myrtles. Improper pruning definitely destroys the natural character that makes crape myrtles so beautiful in south Louisiana landscapes.

If you've ever noticed small pencil size holes neatly arranged in the bark of primarily oak trees but also occasionally on pecan trees, this is caused by a small bird called the yellow bellied sapsucker, a woodpecker that drills holes in the bark of trees. These holes penetrate the bark causing sugary sap to ooze which the sapsucker comes back to feed on, along with any insects that the sap may have attracted. The damage usually doesn't threaten the tree and no control is recommended or necessary; however, since it is unsightly many gardeners call out of concern for the tree or because they would like to know what caused the holes.

When buying pesticides be sure that you know what pest you're trying to control so that you get the correct pesticide. If it's a fungus disease then you need a fungicide!! If it's an insect then you need an insecticide!! If it's a rodent then you need a rodenticide!! Never buy a container of a pesticide larger than you can use within a year or two. I usually tell people that it's highly possible depending on how it is stored that pesticides older than three years old may have lost most of its effectiveness. Most importantly read all label directions in terms of how to mix and apply. Remember the label is the law and it's there not only for your safety but the safety of others and the environment!!

As spring approaches and day and night time temperatures begin to moderate the temptation to fertilize our lawns begins to intensify. However, keep in mind that our lawns are warm season grasses, and until the soil warms its root system, much of the grass won't be very active in absorbing nutrients. If lawns are fertilized too early, winter weeds that thrive in cool soils will absorb much of the fertilizer meant for the lawn. That is the problem with applying weed and feeds too early. Remember weed and feed materials are a combination of a fertilizer and a herbicide in the same bag. While it is okay to control weeds in late winter and early spring, it's too early to apply fertilizer. The first application of fertilizer should be no earlier than the first or second week in April here in South Louisiana. Another factor is that as long as we're having cool night time temperatures in late winter and early spring, the pathogen that causes brown patch disease in lawns is active (especially in St Augustine lawns) and can become very aggressive, especially if we experience a rainy spring. Fertilizing too early will aggravate or stimulate brown patch activity because of the nitrogen in fertilizer.



<=Crape Murder

Crape Myrtle
with proper
pruning ..=>



HAPPY GARDENING!

Gerald P. Roberts

Horticulturist/Master Gardener Program Coordinator
LSU AgCenter
1010 Lafayette Street, Suite 325, Lafayette, LA 70501

GRoberts@agcenter.lsu.edu, Office (337) 291-7090 /Fax (337) 291-7099

EVENTS, REPORTS, AND BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

EMBRACE THE CHALLENGE

BRING YOUR REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE TO MASTER GARDENER FUNCTIONS!

2015 LPMGA Meetings:
(First Wednesday
Except in January & July)
Daytime—noon/Evening—6 pm

2015 LPMGA Board
Meetings, 1 pm:
(Third Monday except for
Jan., Feb., Jul. & Dec.)

March 4—South Regional
Library, noon

March 16—INHC, 1 pm

APRIL 1

APRIL 20

MAY 6

MAY 11

JUNE 3

JUNE 8

JULY—NO MEETING

JULY—NO MEETING

AUGUST 5

AUGUST 17

SEPTEMBER 2

SEPTEMBER 21

OCTOBER 7

OCTOBER 19

NOVEMBER 4

NOVEMBER 16

DECEMBER 2 Social

DECEMBER 14

LPMGA SPRING PLANT SALE & PLANT SWAP

SATURDAY, APRIL 18· 10 am @ our Demo Beds

It's not too early to start those cuttings for the Spring Swap! The Spring Plant Swap and Sale has been scheduled as the April 18th Garden Talk, 10am in our Demo Beds at the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center.

Bring one rooted and identified plant for the formal Swap, some to trade before and after the Swap, and any "extras" you have (especially foundation plants) to be collected for Habitat For Humanity.

Also, bring along extra seed packets you might have, or seeds that you have collected (please label them), and we'll have a Seed Exchange.

Contact Louann Long at mglouann@gmail.com if you need more information, have questions, or would like to volunteer to help at the Swaps.



Save the Date

Saturday & Sunday
March 28-29, 2015
Blackham Coliseum

Helping to fund overhead for the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center. Contact Master Gardener Sharon Bakay about volunteer opportunities to help at this only fundraiser for our current home base. MG Collette Anzalone is hugely involved.

Looking Ahead

March 4, 12 noon: "A Louisiana Wildflower Project," (See Page 1).

April 1, 6 PM: "Gardening for Birds," Jack Must, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited, South Regional Library

April 18, 10 AM: Plant Swap @ Ira Nelson Demo Beds.

May 6: Master Gardener Social; location to be determined

June 3, 12 noon: "School Garden Initiative," Charles Hebert and teachers and students from participating schools

August 5: "Bamboo Gardening," Judge Edwards

Have you recorded any hours lately?

If you have, then you know the choices have become much simpler — six in all. These include 1. 4-H & other Youth activities, 2. Civic & Community Activities, 3. Continuing Education, 4. Extension Activities, 5. LMG Teaching Activities, 6. Meeting & Business Administration. Expect these to be addressed at our upcoming meeting on March 4, following the presenter's program. Our business meetings are important for keeping abreast of what is happening with Master Gardeners.

Strawberries!

By March 27 order your fresh Louisiana Strawberries! Lafayette 4-H Foundation is selling strawberry flats for a fundraiser. They are being sold for **\$20.00** a flat which weighs eight pounds (equivalent of 12 pints). In April, they will be picked fresh from the grower in Independence, LA and delivered the next day. Pick up is tentatively scheduled for one day between **April 6-10, 2015 from 2 – 5 p.m.** at **FRESH PICKIN'S MARKET at 907 Kaliste Saloom Road.**

Once the date has been set with the supplier, expect an email reminder to everyone who placed an order. Two forms of contact information (phone, email or address) are requested when your order is placed. Pre-orders are required and checks should be made payable to the Lafayette 4-H Foundation. Payment can either be mailed or dropped off at 1010 Lafayette St., Suite 325, Lafayette, LA 70501. Payment must be received to guarantee your order by the deadline.

Any strawberry orders not picked up, will be sold on a first come first serve basis. No refunds will be given. We encourage you to forward this email to friends and family members that may support our **"Buy Local, Buy Fresh Louisiana Produce Sale."** We appreciate your continued support to the local 4-H program. Thanks once again!

Pine Straw

Pine Straw will be delivered Saturday, March 21st at 9:00 in the parking lot behind the demo gardens. Please be there between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. to pick up your pine straw and remember that the ladies there will not be able to load everyone (be prepared to load your own). :)

If your order has not yet been paid, please submit your check made payable to LPMGA to:
Yvonne Domas
100 Supreme Court
Lafayette, LA 70503

What Plant Am I?

What Plant am I?

I am a herbaceous, deciduous perennial whose genus includes many species. Some are indigenous to this region. I thrive in shady spots with moist soil and am a natural for water/rain gardens. My roots prevent erosion on the slopes of ponds and creeks. Under normal conditions, I grow 30 to 40 inches tall and 8 to 12 inches wide, but have been known to grow to five feet high. My one-foot-wide fronds arch gracefully from clusters of stalks occurring at intervals along my rhizomes and reach in all directions. They are lime to medium green in spring and summer, but take on a bronze cast in the fall. Cut me back before new spring growth begins. I spread easily but am not overly invasive. My natural habitat is Zones 6 to 9.

Because my fronds die back in winter, plant me with spring-flowering bulbs. By the time my fronds begin to grow, the bulb's foliage has begun to die. Transplant me in late winter to early spring in soil high in organic matter. I'm very deer-resistant, but sometimes suffer from rust, scale insects and leaf curl.



Junior Master Gardener Report

February is a time to implement our plans that we have set in motion to have our first Junior Master Gardener Camp, April 6-7 from 9-1 at the Demo Beds. The cost of the camp is \$70.00 for children ages 9 - 11 or in grades 3- 5. Applications for the camp can be found on our website and facebook page, as well as here in the newsletter, below this report.

Campers are starting to register and we hope to have 35 kids. Please help us reach this goal by sharing this information with your friends on facebook as well as emailing the information to your friends!

Thank you to the master gardeners who have volunteered to teach a topic at camp, provide snacks or act as a helper! Please come and join the fun as a helper for an activity. Thank you to the master gardeners who are helping with locating supplies needed, and those who are helping to build the garden and working in the Junior Master Gardener bed. We plan to have the beds built by the end of the first week in March as well as having the tepee built! This program takes many master gardeners to make it a success, SO THANK YOU for helping us fulfill our mission statement!

Learn to Grow Vegetables and Herbs

Lafayette Parish Junior Master Gardener

CAMP April 6-7

For Ages 9-11 or
Grades 3-5



9am to 1pm

Location: Ira Nelson Center/Master
Gardener Demonstration beds across
from the Coliseum on Johnston Street.

Cost: \$70.00

For information on all camp activities:

Contact Candy Bienvenue

337-291-7090

Visit our website: www.lpmga.org or

Facebook: Lafayette Parish Master
Gardeners Association

Please Detach and Send Money and
Information To:

Lafayette Parish Master Gardener (JMG)
LSU Cooperative Extension Service
1010 Lafayette Street, Suite 325
Lafayette, LA 70501

Please Make Checks Payable To: LPMGA

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Child's Grade (Age): _____

Email: _____

Enclosed Amount: \$ _____



ANNUAL BAMBOO WEEK

February 27-March 1

*American Bamboo Society**Gulf Coast Chapter*

Social mixer starts the fun on Friday evening followed by a meal and brief meeting. Saturday at 8:30 AM, Avery Island grooming of Moso bamboo groves. End of day, Moso bamboo poles to those who helped. Saturday PM, a tour of Shadows on the Teche gardens and dinner at Clemintines, New Iberia. Sunday 9 AM, Avery Island for bamboo culture presentations, arts and crafts .

To register contact Judge or Elizabeth Edwards at judgedwards@bellsouth.net or call 337-652-7469 .

March Tidbits

The March Garden Stroll will be announced at the Master Gardener general meeting, March 4. Preparation with landscape designer Megan Montgomery for Sarah Schoeffler's Southern Fest (April 11), 3502 E. Simcoe will begin March 5 at 2 p.m. (approved for volunteer hours). The Louisiana Society of Horticulture Research will hold its annual spring meeting on March 21 at 8 a.m. in the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center.

SCHOOL GARDEN INITIATIVE *Candy Bienvenu*

We had a social at the end of January for teachers and Master Gardeners! The food was prepared by master gardeners and was enjoyed by all. We had new master gardeners attend as well as a special guest Molly Richard with the Horse Farm. We were able to get an update from each school involved in the program and had an open discussion on what was working and what was not and an overview of our culminating activity "MyPlate Junior Iron Chef Cook Off". Teachers provided valuable input for this activity. We are trying to put together a field trip to New Orleans to an Edible School Yard, however, we may have to put this on hold due to field trip restrictions placed on the schools.

February is a downtime in the garden. The winter produce has been harvested. Students have been learning about spring vegetables they can plant in their gardens, space requirements for the plants, and how long it takes to harvest their crops. They are cleaning their beds and getting them ready for spring planting. Students will be planting crops that they want to use to create dishes for "MyPlate Junior Iron Chef Cook Off"!

Students have been planting seeds that are being housed in the greenhouse at Acadiana High School. They will then transplant their plants into their gardens in March! At the end of this month students will learn how to plant seed potatoes in their gardens since February is the time to plant the potatoes. Students are also using this downtime to plan their service activities for spring.

Students /school ambassadors will have a lesson on MyPlate presented by Celeste Hay, LPSS Nutrition Program Coordinator, focusing on nutrition to meet the requirements for "MyPlate".

WHAT PLANT AM I? ANSWER:

Thelypteris Kunthii:

Kunth's maiden fern, Marsh fern,
Southern shield fern, Wood fern.



BETWEEN THE ROWS

VEGETABLE GARDENING WITH
MARY ANN ARMBRUSTER



Well, the weather is being annoying - AGAIN!! I seem to remember writing about this last year, too. Here it is mid-February, we've had some absolutely beautiful days - days that I simply could not stand being indoors - and now it's COLD again. I am SO ready for spring. I guess most people are, especially us gardeners. We get eager for that last frost date. I guess most of us have some knowledge about the first and last frost dates, but when I started looking into it, it's a little confusing. There are different percentages given with "last frost date", most often 10%, 50% and 90%, with 50% being used the most often. When you hear March 7, or 15th or whatever, is the average last frost date, it means the 50% frost date. What that really means is that half the time, we have another frost and half the time we don't. Likewise, the 10% and 90% dates mean that 10% or 90% of the time we do not have another frost. As much as we want it to mean 'no more frost', the average last frost date is pretty much just a good guess based on historical records and statistics. So use the information to decide what to plant when, but be a little conservative so you don't lose all of your plants to an unexpected frost.

Frosts come or not, but we want to PLANT stuff. So let's look at some of the things we can plant now.

You can direct seed a number of things outside now and through the month of March, like lettuce, radish, Swiss chard, Kohlrabi okra, Southern peas, hot peppers, summer squash and beans. Believe it or not, you can also plant sweet corn now. In fact, planting corn early can get production with less insect pressure than you will have from later plantings. Another plant that does better if planted early is snap beans. The flowers tend to fall off in high heat, so planting them early allows you to have good production before the high heat sets in.



If you want a bean that produces continually through the heat try Yardlong Asparagus Bean. This is a very vigorous pole bean that produces a very long pod. A yard long pod is not an exaggeration, they are more tender if you pick them at about 18 inches. These pods can be prepared any way you normally prepare your beans, but they are very good grilled or sautéed with garlic and soy sauce.

You can set out transplants of tomatoes, peppers and eggplants after mid-March. If you started your seeds between Christmas and the New Year, they should be perfect for planting in the last half of March, but remember, that's the **average** last frost date. We might still have another frost or even a freeze, so only plant a few of the heat loving plants early. Save most of them for an additional week or two. That way you can compete in that 'First Red Tomato of the Season' contest, but if there's a freeze you will not have lost all of your precious seedlings. Now is also the time to start cucumbers and watermelon indoors to set out later after it warms up enough. You could also try one or two early cantaloupes, again saving the bulk for the latter part of the month.

Before the middle of the month you can plant mustard and more tomato seeds. After mid-March plant collards, peppers, pumpkins and watermelon.

Right now I am picking enough broccoli for us to eat it two or three times a week from the side shoots produced on just five plants. These are the little heads that are produced after the large center head has been harvested as shown in photo 1 (above). Photo 2 shows what I picked in one day from just these five plants.

You should watch the side shoots fairly often. You want them as large as possible but you don't want them to start to open, although they still taste fine, they just look different. Even the fully opened flowers are edible and very tasty. They look and taste great in salads, particularly. Watch the shoots, before they start to open, the stem will often elongate dramatically and the buds will no longer be tight and compact. Especially when the stem elongates, go ahead and harvest that shoot (See photo 3). I snap the stem just above a leaf; this encourages a new shoot to form. If the stem is elongated, I have no problem harvesting the stem and eating it, too, but sometimes the skin may be a bit tough. In that case I just peel it.

Now is a great time to be refreshing mulch to keep the weeds down. Doing this now will make your work later on in the season when it's hot and you really won't want to be out in the heat, weeding.

Enjoy the warming weather, and until next month,
Good Gardening.
MaryAnn Armbruster



LPMGA Calendar March 2015

March 2nd: Call Linda Beyt to reserve spot at Olive Garden lunch! (Page 1)
March 4th: General Meeting, South Regional Library, noon
Optional Lunch (see March 2)
March 5th: “In the Garden” first run at AOC, broadcast on channels LUS and Cox
March 5th: “Southern Garden Fest” approved workday, 3502 E. Simcoe, 2 p.m.
March 16 th: Board Meeting, Ira Nelson Horticulture Center, 1 p.m.
March 17th: Happy St Patricks Day
March 21st: Pine Straw Deliveries, Ira Nelson behind Demo Beds, 9 a.m.—1 p.m.
March 27th: 4-H Strawberries Order deadline (See page 4).
March 28th– 29th: Festival des Fleurs, Blackham Colliseum (Page 3).
April 18th: Spring Plant Sale, Ira Nelson Demo Beds, 10 a.m. (Page 3)



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

The Louisiana cooperative extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. Louisiana State University and A&M College, Louisiana Governing Bodies, Southern University, and the United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating

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If you have a disability which requires special assistance for your participation in our meetings, please call
337-291-7090

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

