

From the Potting Shed

Mid-December 2023

www.mgofbc.org



Leaving the leaves at Thielke



They did a lot of raking: From left, Bob Nunez, Class of 2023, Cheryl Wardrop (2018), and Herb Arbeiter (2019), Thielke site coordinator. Herb reports that volunteers raked about a “a football field of leaves” from the lawn and Doremus Avenue sidewalk and deposited them in the forest area and beds. They followed the advice of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, which promotes leaving the leaves. Click [here](#) for the article.

2024 dues are due!

It's time to renew your MG of BC membership! Please mail your \$20 check, payable to the MG of BC, to our new address: **Master Gardeners of Bergen County, PO Box 824, Saddle River, NJ 07458.**

For the renewal form, visit our [website](#). As you scroll down the home page, the “Renew your membership now” box appears in the lower right. Click on “Download membership renewal form” and read the instructions to update your information for MG of BC records. Choose either 1, 2, or 3. By choosing 2, you can submit your information online. Contact [Theresa Schneider](#), Membership chair and Class of 2016, if you have questions about membership or the web directory. **Note:** Interns don't pay dues.

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Learn more in 2024

Did you promise yourself that you're going to learn something new or deepen your knowledge of the environment or gardening? Here's training to consider.

Enviro-Stewards class begins Jan. 23

Do you want to take your MG training a step further? Registration is open for the Rutgers Environmental Stewards Program, Class of 2024. The program is designed to introduce non-scientists to the science behind important environmental issues and the impacts of climate change affecting New Jersey. Stewards then give back to their own communities by helping to tackle local environmental problems.

The class meets virtually each week from Jan. 13-June 14, though five classes will be held in person by region. Bergen County is in Region 1 with Hudson, Essex, Passaic, Morris, and Sussex counties. Participants are also required to spend 60 hours on a project of their choice. The cost is \$300 if you register by Dec. 31 and \$325 if you register after Dec. 31. Click [here](#) for more information about the program.

Smadar Shemmesh, MG Class of 2017, was a member of the 2022 Enviro-Stewards class. To read a story describing Smadar's project, sign into the “member” section of our [website](#). Under “newsletters,” click on the August 2023 Potting Shed. Certified MGs who are current on dues have access to the member section of the website. For a username and password, click [here](#) to request them.

(Training and education, continued on page 6)

IN THE GARDEN

True perennials: 2 varieties of mums with staying power

By Maggie Raywood, Class of 2022

When autumn makes its appearance each year, we see the arrival of masses of hardy mums in every nursery yard and even at your local grocery store. For good reason we flock to them, looking for bold, rich colors to enliven the waning garden season and stave off the gray days to come. But as gardeners we know that those supposedly hardy mums are often an illusion.

Without consistent watering, or with a sudden hot day, *chrysanthemum morifolium* can dry up quickly, and we are left with sad brown clumps where we had hoped for a few weeks of glowing reds and yellows. Far be it from me to discourage planting them, but they can bring some disappointment, making the word “hardy” seem deceiving. On the chance that yours do well, wait to cut them back until early spring, which will give you a much better chance of a return appearance the following fall.



Chrysanthemum ‘Rustic Glow’

The colors glow beautifully in the late autumn sunshine, and the clumps spread slowly, creating striking patches over time. The plant has a less rigid form than the hardy mum, helping it to blend easily with neighboring shrubs and perennials. They do flop over, which I personally don’t mind, as they nestle up against other plants. But if that characteristic is not to your taste, consider staking them, or perhaps cutting them back in early June to reduce their height.

Two of my favorites are chrysanthemum ‘Sheffield Pink’ and chrysanthemum ‘Rustic Glow.’ ‘Sheffield Pink’ grows to approximately 36” tall by 36” wide over time. The flowers are somewhere between a shell and apricot pink, fading to a silvery pink as the flowers age. The plant arches gracefully, and the color is one that I love, blending beautifully with other fall bloomers.

Chrysanthemum ‘Rustic Glow’ is a rich amber, fading to a paler orange as the flowers age. It is roughly 20” tall and 36” wide. The warm, amber color is striking against shrubs that are showing their fall colors. As if the color and form were not enough to recommend these plants, they are also a great source of much-needed food for pollinators.

Full sun and an average amount of moisture will serve them well, and they will reward the gardener with many years of late-season beauty.



Photos by Maggie Raywood

Chrysanthemum ‘Sheffield Pink’

Meanwhile, if you are looking for a chrysanthemum with more staying power, consider the old-fashioned *chrysanthemum x grandiflorum*, also known as *dendranthema x grandiflorum*. These are true perennials, bringing vivid colors to the garden from mid- to late fall. The flowers are the classic daisy shape with elegant, sometimes fragrant, foliage that is trouble-free all season.

(In the garden, continued on page 3)

(In the garden, continued from page 2)

Surprise! Look what was hiding beneath the leaves



Photos by Eileen Cammarano

Peter Cammarano, Class of 2023, displays a nest that revealed itself on a branch of his sidewalk tree. Matt Bickerton, Bergen County entomologist, identified the nest as that of a bald-faced hornet. “Bald-faced hornets are technically wasps — not hornets — and they are both predators and pollinators,” Matt said.

“Hornets are only aggressive if the nest is in a high traffic area, otherwise it’s best to leave them alone as most often the nest will be many feet up a tree,” he continued. “Bald-faced wasps are not as nasty as ground-nesting yellow jackets, which will nest in various places around the house and underground. In fall/winter, the worker wasps die and the used nests won’t be a problem the following year.”

There are many other wasps that will create nests near the home, and they often look for overhangs or crevices where the nest can stay dry, Matt said.

“Many wasps, like mason wasps and mud daubers, are not aggressive and should also be left alone unless the nest is uncomfortably close. If you are not allergic to stings and are confident enough to take care of a wasp nest yourself, it is best to treat the nest at night when they are all at home and resting. Apply a pyrethroid spray (like Raid) and remember to read and follow the label instructions carefully. If it’s a hornet-like nest, apply at the opening of the nest (hole at the bottom).

“You will usually spray the nest thoroughly, and quickly go away (get inside). Treat again if necessary and once all wasps appear to have died, throw the nest in a garbage bag and seal it up tightly.”

Despite your best efforts, it may be difficult to discourage yellow jackets and other wasps from building nests near your house. “Look out for early nest-building activity in the spring to mid-summer because the wasps will be less aggressive and more easily managed,” Matt advised.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Bergen County

Joel Flagler	Agricultural/Resources Management Agent/County Extension Dept. Head 201-336-6780
Karen Riede	Horticultural Assistant 201-336-6788

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HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Decorate, display, delight, dismantle

MG of BC volunteers spent two days decorating, four days displaying, and a day dismantling for the 2023 Skylands Manor Holiday Open House Nov. 30-Dec. 3. This year's theme was "A Highlands Holiday." Volunteers decorated the Manor House dining room and breakfast room to reflect the tradition of Hogmanay, the Celtic celebration of the New Year. Below from left, Lisa Yoler, Class of 2019; center, Laura DeFlora (2011) and Sue Sheridan (2013), who led the Decorating Committee, flanking the Holly King, a mythic figure important to the Druids of ancient Scotland; a "smorgasbord" with mirrored wreath. Bottom row from left: Kathy Smith, NJBG volunteer, Debbie Higgins (2017), Noel Schulz (2018), Lisa Yoler, and Sue Sheridan; center, delicate decorations sparkle; right, Suzy Basu (2023) was a docent.

Photos by Maria Bushman, Class of 2019



MG OF BC NEWS

Minimum order needed for T-shirts, hoodies

Last month, we announced that MG of BC T-shirts and hoodies with our new logo are available for purchase. We need at least 12 T-shirts (heather brown only) and 12 hoodies (charcoal heather only) to place the order. The order deadline is Dec. 29. Seana Kirk, Class of 2020, has volunteered to manage the ordering process.



Women's T-shirt: Click [here](#) for a description of the women's V-neck T-shirt. Then click on "Product spec sheet" under the photo of the T-shirt for sizing information. It's

recommended that you choose one size larger than usual for the V-neck or choose the men's T-shirt, which offers a wider fit. The cost is \$20 for a small or medium; \$21 for a large; \$22 for an XL; \$24 for an XXL; and \$27 for an XXXL.

Men's T-shirt: Click [here](#) for a description of the men's crew neck T-shirt. Then click on "Product spec sheet" under the photo of the T-shirt for sizing information. The cost is \$17 for a medium; \$18 for a large or XL; \$20 for XXL; and \$22 for an XXXL.

Hoodie: Click [here](#) for a description of the hoodie, which is available in men's sizes only. The size chart is located under the photo of the hoodie. The cost is \$38 for a small, medium, large, or XL; and \$41 for a 2XL, 3XL, or 4XL.

Ordering instructions

Send the following information to [Seana Kirk](#):

- Your first and last name and email address;
- T-shirt style and size; and/or
- Hoodie and size;
- Number of T-shirts or hoodies you're ordering; there's a limit of two T-shirts per MG or intern; and
- Payment method: Check or Venmo. See below.

Check: Mail your check, payable to Seana Kirk, for the total purchase amount to: Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Bergen County, 1 Bergen County Plaza, 4th Floor, Hackensack, NJ 07601. Attn: Karen Riede.

Venmo: Send payment to username Seana-Kirk or email address seana.kirk@gmail.com.

Congratulations to recently certified MGs

The following interns have become certified Master Gardeners over the past few months:

From the Class of 2020: Owen Fox and Seana Kirk.

From the Class of 2022: Maureen Caban, Karen Clemments, and Sharon LaMonica.

From the Class of 2023: Linda Bourke, Peter Cammarano, Kim Corroero, Linda DeWolfe, Jeanne Etter, Beverly Malabrigo, Katherine Montgomery, Dineen Policano, Karen Shaner, and Janet Stofkoper.

FROM THE INTERNET

Lourdes interviews Doug Tallamy

Lourdes Osorio, Passaic County MG and creator of the Native Plant Channel on YouTube, posted her latest video of an interview with Doug Tallamy. In it, he discusses that homeowners have a responsibility to be good land stewards and help change our culture to one that collaborates with nature to maintain sustainable landscapes that support bees, butterflies, birds, and more.



Photo by Lourdes Osorio

Doug Tallamy

Dr. Tallamy leads viewers on a tour of the Mt. Cuba Center in Delaware while discussing ways to create biologically diverse plantings that support life. He is a founder of [Homegrown National Park](#), a grassroots call-to-action to regenerate biodiversity and ecosystem function by planting native plants and creating new ecological networks. Click [here](#) to view the video.

Hydrilla threatens the Connecticut River

Learn what scientists are doing to contain hydrilla, an invasive aquatic plant native to Asia, in the Connecticut River, the longest river in New England. Click [here](#) to read the New York Times article from Dec. 10. If you're not a Times subscriber, you're limited to the number of articles you can read.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

(Continued from page 1)

NJ Audubon Garden for Wildlife webinar series begins Jan. 30

Here's an early-bird special if you register before Dec. 31. Join New Jersey Audubon experts to learn how to design and then create a bountiful garden that will attract pollinators, songbirds, and an array of other wildlife. The webinar comprises eight sessions at 7 pm on Tuesdays. Each will last about an hour. Three field trips to NJ Audubon's Lorrimer Sanctuary in Franklin Lakes will complement the virtual sessions.

The cost of this eight-week online program is \$99 for Audubon members; \$120 for non-members. Beginning Jan. 1, the fee is \$125 for Audubon members; \$150 for non-members. Click [here](#) for the course schedule and to register.

Rutgers' beekeeping course starts Jan. 15

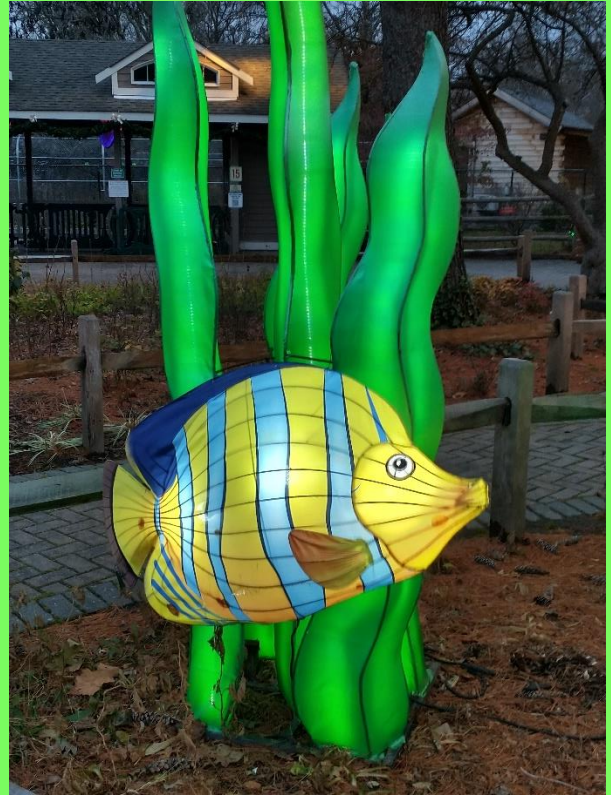
Rutgers Office of Continuing Education will offer Beginner's Beekeeping: The Basics of Apiculture as an online, self-paced program that takes about 14 hours to complete. You'll have five weeks to complete the course. The fee is \$295 for Master Gardeners; otherwise, it's \$315. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Ornamental Horticulture program Jan. 9-11

County College of Morris is the site of the 2024 North Jersey Ornamental Horticulture Symposium. Joel Flagler, Bergen County ag agent, is program chair for "Landscape Day" Jan. 11 and a member of the symposium's organizing committee.

See the brochure attached with the Potting Shed for a description of the program, fees, and registration information.

Glow show at the Bergen County Zoo



The Let It Glow holiday lantern show is taking place through Jan. 14 at the Bergen County Zoo in Van Saun Park, 216 Forest Ave., Paramus. Click [here](#) for hours and ticket information.

Coming in 2024 . . .

- Jan. 12-14: North Jersey Orchid Society show at the Douglass Student Center, Rutgers University, New Brunswick. Free. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Jan. 15: Deadline to enter your 2023 volunteer and education hours in Better Impact and have them count!
- Jan. 23: MG of BC's first meeting of 2024; it's virtual. See the January Potting Shed for the link.
- Feb. 17-21: New York Botanical Garden [Orchid Show](#).
- March 2-10: [Philadelphia Flower Show](#) indoors at the Pennsylvania Convention Center.