



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

Contents

Welcome	2
Calendar	2
Rutgers Master Gardeners of Burlington County Training Program.....	2
RMGANJ 2013 Fall Conference.....	3
Burlington County Garden Expo.....	3
Burlington County Earth Fair.....	3
Burlington County Master Gardener Quarterly Meetings.....	4
Burlington County Master Gardener Newsletter.....	4
Projects.....	4
Burlington County Community Agricultural Center	4
Pineland Preservation Alliance.....	4
Medford Leas.....	4
Rancocas Nature Center.....	4
Articles.....	5
Discovering Historic Gardens in the Berkshires, Massachusetts	5
Hudson Valley Seed Library	7
Nature Deficit Disorder.....	8
Thanks for the Orchid!	9



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

Welcome

The Garden Year (excerpt)

By Sara Coleridge (23 December 1802 – 3 May 1852)

March brings breezes, loud and shrill,
To stir the dancing daffodil.

April brings the primrose sweet,
Scatters daisies at our feet.

May brings flocks of pretty lambs
Skipping by their fleecy dams.

The garden is stirring. The spring bulbs and ephemerals have started blooming. Winter weeds such as chickweeds, wild garlic, and henbit are invading lawns and garden beds. Evergreen English ivy and Japanese honeysuckle having been providing color to the winter garden but they are alien invaders as is the Callery Pear which is one of the first trees to flower.

The goal of this publication is to communicate what plants are blooming and what pests are buzzing around the County and to highlight the work of our Master Gardener (MG) project teams to both the MG community and the general public and to share information on the Master Gardener Program in Burlington County as well as general horticultural information. Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who assist the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) Cooperative Extension in its mission to deliver research based horticulture programs and information to the general public.

Calendar

Rutgers Master Gardeners of Burlington County Training Program

Unless otherwise noted, all times are 9:00 AM-12:00 noon. The schedule subject to future changes so check for updates!



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

Date	Title	Location	Speaker
04/02/13	Native Plants	RCE Barco	Frank Victor
04/04/13	MG Helpline/Volunteerism	RCE BurlCo	Marilyn Bidrawn
04/09/13	Pruning	Medford Leas	Rich Weidman
04/11/13	Plant ID - outdoor	BCCAC	Brooke McMinn
04/16/13	Composting (9:30- 10:30)	Eco Complex	Susan Konen
04/16/13	Greenhouse Tour (10:30-12:00)	Eco Complex	David Specca
04/18/13	Houseplants	RCE BurlCo	Michelle Casella

RMGANJ 2013 Fall Conference

10/05/12, 8:30 AM-3:30 PM Douglas Campus Center, 100 George St., New Brunswick, NJ

Save the date for the biggest and best MG event of the year in NJ! Keep an eye out for more registration and event details as we get closer to the date.

Burlington County Garden Expo

05/11/13, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM Burlington County Community Agricultural Center

Burlington County Earth Fair

06/09/13, 10:30 AM - 4:00 PM (rain or shine)

Burlington County's Annual Earth Fair returns to Historic Smithville Park featuring vendors, entertainment for all ages, and kids' activities with an environmental twist. This family event focuses on ways to protect and enjoy our environment



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

Burlington County Master Gardener Quarterly Meetings

2 Academy Dr., RCE, Westampton NJ)

Monday, 04/08/13, 10:00 AM-12:00 noon

Tuesday, 07/09/13, 10:00 AM-12:00 noon

Tuesday, 10/08/13, 10:00 AM-12:00 noon

Burlington County Master Gardener Newsletter

Submit articles for the June Newsletter by Friday, May 17

Projects

Burlington County Community Agricultural Center

Demonstration Plots and Raised Garden Beds

Integrated Pest Management and Scouting

Pineland Preservation Alliance

Kitchen Garden

Medford Leas

Donation Garden

Rancocas Nature Center

Butterfly and Children's Garden, on hold pending resolution of the fate the Nature Center



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

Articles

Discovering Historic Gardens in the Berkshires, Massachusetts

Margie Gorman, Master Gardener class of 2012.

Have you ever been to the Berkshires? About 15 years ago, my husband and I discovered the wonders of the Lenox/Stockbridge area in Western Massachusetts. A one-time heaven for the wealthy who built 75 Berkshire "Cottages" as summer vacation homes in the Gilded Age (between the Civil War and WW1), the area is home to a plethora of cultural institutions, music and theatre festivals, antique shops and historic homes and gardens. If you have three days to spare, I recommend the trip. Many of the cultural gems are well known, such as the Tanglewood Music Festival -- summer home of the Boston Philharmonic -- and the Norman Rockwell Museum. For Master Gardeners, I'd like to recommend three stops on a cultural tour that will take you back in time to the gardens of the Gilded Age.

First stop is The Mount, Edith Wharton's Estate & Gardens. Lenox, MA. Edith Wharton (1862-1937), a prolific author, was the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for fiction (1921) for *The Age of Innocence*. *The House of Mirth*, *Ethan Frome* and *The Custom of the Country* are among her 40 books authored over 40 years. In addition to fiction, Wharton wrote authoritative works on architecture, gardens, home design, and travel. The Mount, built 1901-1902, brought to life the concepts outlined in her 1897 book, *The Decoration of Houses*, co-authored with architect Ogden Codman, Jr.

The house and gardens today occupy 50 acres; Wharton originally owned 113 acres. A 17th Century English country house inspired the main house. Wharton believed that gardens too should be architectural compositions, and she planned her gardens as a series of outdoor rooms planned in concert with the house and the surrounding natural landscape. Beatrix Jones Farrand assisted Wharton with the design of landscape and gardens. The formal gardens include a walled garden in the Italian style; flower gardens reflecting French and English design influences, a rock garden; lime walk; grass terraces and a kitchen garden.

Approximately 5,000 trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants have been replanted as part of a multi-million dollar renovation. Nearly 3,000 annuals and perennials were planted in Wharton's flower garden. The Italianate walled garden and its rustic rock pile fountain have been completely restored. A rock garden with grass steps -- a landscape feature rarely seen in the US -- is complemented by numerous varieties of native ferns that Wharton personally collected in



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

the Berkshires. The Mount uses only organic products in the gardens and for lawn care. The Mount is one of the 5% of National Historic Landmarks dedicated to women. For further information visit www.edithwharton.org

Next stop is Naumkeag, Stockbridge, MA. Naumkeag is the historic family home and gardens of Joseph and Caroline Choate. Naumkeag was the Native American name for Salem Massachusetts, where Joseph Choate was born. Joseph Choate became the premier courtroom lawyer in New York City and was appointed by President McKinley to be the Ambassador to the United Kingdom in 1899. Caroline Choate, a trained artist, was prominent in women's education and was a co-founder of Barnard College.

The Choates built Naumkeag on a steep site, overlooking Monument Mountain, where they enjoyed the country life in the spring and summer seasons. Their daughter, Mabel Choate, inherited Naumkeag in 1929 and over the next 30 years, worked with noted landscape architect Fletcher Steele to design and maintain the Naumkeag gardens. Choate and Steele's warm friendship is well documented in the letters and journals they kept as they tinkered with Naumkeag's gardens for three decades. Steele is considered by many to be America's first modern landscape architect. In a magazine article he was quoted as saying "Why be solemn in a garden?" and his imaginative, playful nature is evidenced throughout Naumkeag, starting with the Venetian Gondola posts he used to delineate a formally planted terrace garden.

Miss Choate's 1935 travels to China and Korea resulted in another garden incorporating numerous Asian ornamental sculptures and architectural elements. This was perhaps one of the most harmonious artist/patron relationships in landscape design. Naumkeag's collection of gardens includes the Blue Steps – a series of deep blue fountain pools, flanked by steps and a grove of white birches. The steps addressed a practical problem: Mabel had difficulty negotiating the steep slope that leads down to her cutting garden. Steele devised a fanciful – yet practical – solution that is a signature of the beginning of modern landscape design. The Afternoon Garden, Tree Peony Terrace, a Rose Garden, Evergreen Garden, and the Chinese Garden make for a highly individualistic and whimsical landscape experience.

In 1958, Mabel Choate bequeathed the house with furniture in its entirety, including every book in the library, kitchen utensil, gardening tool, bed linens and fine art, to The Trustees of Reservations. Spending a few hours at Naumkeag is like being transported back to the early part of the 20th Century. Touring the 44-room, shingle-style "cottage," designed by Joseph Choate's friend, Charles McKim, of the architectural firm McKim, Mead & White, you expect that one of the Choates will soon round the corner and offer you a cool drink on the patio.



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

The Trustees of Reservations operates Naumkeag and 100 other special places in Massachusetts. The organization's mission is to "Preserve for public use and enjoyment properties of exceptional scenic, historic, or ecological value in Massachusetts". The Trustees have a paid staff spread out around the state, but rely heavily on a dedicated corps of volunteers – and the support of 100,000 members – to maintain open spaces and historic sites.

<http://www.thetrustees.org/places-to-visit/berkshires/naumkeag.html>

Let's conclude our tour at Chesterwood, Stockbridge, MA. Chesterwood is the summer estate and studio of American sculptor Daniel Chester French (1850–1931). During his long career, Daniel Chester French created hundreds of works of art. Some of his public sculpture, like The Minute Man in Concord, Massachusetts and the statue for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., are among the nation's most treasured icons. By 1896, French was so successful that, in addition to a large studio in New York City, he was able to purchase a country place and establish a second studio in the Berkshires. Noted architect, Henry Bacon, designed the home and spectacular studio. Chesterwood's location in Stockbridge, MA -- between Boston and New York -- allowed the sculptor to maintain contacts in both cities. His studio and barn contain sculptural studies for a number of his most well-known works. As at Naumkeag, French's studio is virtually as it was the last day he worked there.

The estate covers 122 acres of forest and field and includes a garden dating from the 1920s that French designed himself in the Beaux Arts style of the Country Place Era. The plan is geometrical with a cross axis running from the studio. Columns and a wrought iron arch terminate the axes. A lilac hedge runs along the eastern edge of the garden and hemlock marks the west and south edges and perennial gardens are French's own selections. Woodland walks play host to an annual Contemporary Sculpture exhibition. One especially noteworthy feature is a standard-gauge railroad track used to roll large sculpture outdoors for viewing in natural light. Chesterwood holds what is probably the largest single collection of work by any American sculptor. For further information: <http://chesterwood.org/>.

Another point of interest is the Berkshire Botanical Garden, a 15 acre site with over 3,000 species, changing exhibits and educational and community gardening programs. www.berkshirebotanical.org. The Lenox/Stockbridge area is hardiness zone 5A. Approximate travel time from Mt. Holly NJ to Lenox Mass is just under four hours (220 miles).

Hudson Valley Seed Library

Sandra Fiore Master Gardener Class 2012



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

In New York State a librarian with a passion for horticulture had a revelation; if books can be borrowed and returned why not seeds? The Hudson Valley Seed Library sprang forth from that concept. They protect the variety of seeds available by encouraging members to send those seeds from family farms. They deal entirely with heirloom seeds only and make sure anything sent to them is not a hybrid belonging to some large corporation. Each seed is going to be slightly different from the others. At first the seeds were sent out with the understanding that seeds from that year's crop would be sent back to them. They started their own seed farm nine years ago on the grounds of an old Ukrainian summer camp and now have a large catalog of seeds for sale. The seeds are sold in decorative packets that fold out into six inch works of art designed by local artists and covering a wide range of styles.

They are trying a new tack this year "Community Seeds: one seed many gardens". They are asking gardeners to all plant one seed, Purple Pod peas, and then return the seeds to them. These will be mixed together then sent back out to members, community, and volunteer gardens. For more information on the Hudson Seed Library, go to www.seedlibrary.org.

Nature Deficit Disorder

Marilyn Fishman – Master Gardener Class of 2011

Have you noticed that people who do not garden often have no connection with the natural world? Time which is not spent in an office or school room is spent in front of one or more screens (TV, PC, tablet, smartphone, or game box). A few years ago the term "Nature Deficit Disorder" (NDD) was coined by Richard Louv in his 2005 book *Last Child in the Woods* to describe a wide range of behavioral problems caused by not spending time outdoors. Louv has argued that melodramatic media coverage and paranoid parents have literally "scared children straight out of the woods and fields", while promoting a litigious culture of fear that favors "safe" regimented sports over imaginative play.

While this disorder is not recognized in any of the medical manuals for mental disorders, the concept is spreading. Some education groups have developed programs; teachers can find lists of suggested activities to combat NDD at several web sites (e.g. <http://www.education.com/topic/nature-deficit-disorder/> and <http://greeneducationfoundation.wordpress.com/2012/05/31/school-gardens-plant-water-learn>). Timothy Egan has written about NDD in a New York Time blog <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/29/nature-deficit-disorder/>, pointing out that solutions to problems of modern life such as depression and obesity could be addressed cure by going outside. He also cites studies showing that going outdoors can boost the immune system



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

As Master Gardeners we can help combat Nature Deficit Disorder through our educational programs and projects. Several Master Gardener, including Toni Price and Lavonne Johnson have been fighting Nature Deficit Disorder by fighting for our neighbor in Westampton, the Rancocas Nature Center. In December 2012 the New Jersey Audubon announced it was closing the nature center due to multiyear deficits. New Jersey Audubon announced in 2013 that it would focus web based training, an approach which would serve to stimulate Nature Deficit Disorder.

Thanks for the Orchid!

Deb Smith Master Gardener Transfer, Union County 1997

Your friends and family know that you're a Certified Master Gardener and they want to get you a gift that you'll really love--something that will impress you. Maybe it's your birthday, or you just moved, or you just entered retirement, or it's a holiday. They decide that an orchid is the PERFECT gift!

It's very lovely, but you think, "I don't know how to take care of this tropical plant. It must be hard to maintain." Think again. The first thing you need to know is what kind of orchid you have received. Usually there is a handy tag that will tell you. If not, you will have to get online and do some research. It will be critical to know what type you have and whether it is a terrestrial (forest floor growing variety) or a tree growing variety.

However, orchids are a lot like people. They thrive in the same sort of humidity, air circulation, light, and warmth that people do. Their leaves are wonderful barometers of stress and can clearly communicate what the issue may be. There are a few simple steps to keeping your new orchid happy.

Location: First of all, location is the key to success. Consider where orchids grow in nature. Orchids that grow in trees make their home where they receive good light, but not necessarily direct sunlight all day. There is usually a nice breeze up in the tree limbs for tree-dwelling varieties. The terrestrial varieties get nice filtered light and their roots ramble easily through a loose humus along the forest floor with lots of aeration and humidity.

Light: At home, orchids like light, such a near a sunny window. A nice set of light diffusing shears is appreciated in strongly sunny windows such as a south or west window. If your orchid feels hot to the touch, it needs some shading. Different varieties of orchids require different strengths of light. But, if you live in the deepest woods, do not despair. Artificial light



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

can provide all the light that an orchid needs. So do some research on your orchid and find out what light requirements your variety needs. Your orchid's leaves can guide you without the aid of the Internet or Google. Light green to medium green colored leaves (with new leaves exhibiting a soft sheen) are happy and healthy. Reddish or purplish edge tinged leaves indicate the orchid is receiving the maximum amount of light without burning or over exposure. Too much light results in a bleaching of chlorophyll, which causes leaves to turn pale or a yellowish green. Move these orchids into a bit of shade. Too rapid of a change in light, say from shade into intense light will cause spots that look burned, crispy and black charred. Finally, leaves that are dark, emerald green are not getting enough light and will not likely flower.

Water: An orchid should be watered in the morning so that it has time to absorb the water. Always water over the entire surface of the medium, not in one spot as the medium doesn't have the capacity to wick moisture throughout it—it will just run straight through. If you water your orchid with tap water and your tap water is hard, you need to flush your orchid's pot/medium with rainwater or distilled water every once in a while to prevent mineral build up in the potting medium. If your orchid acquires water spots or a spray residue, use lemon juice to remove them. This will leave your leaves clean and shiny. One thing to watch out for is trying to make sure you keep water out of the leaf axils (where the new little emerge from) and growing points. If water is allowed to collect here and doesn't evaporate, bacterial rot can set in.

Air Quality: Just people, orchids have a low tolerance for stale air or a wind tunnel. They like the air to circulate (like in the trees). They also like humidity (like on the tropical forest floor). Gardeners have had success with orchids placed near their heating vents, but placed on a tray of pebbles or rocks with some water in them. This is more efficient than trying to keep them constantly misted. The orchids benefit from the humidity surrounding them through the evaporation process without having wet feet and avoiding root rot.

Home Sweet Home: How did your orchid plant arrive to you? What did its pot look like? It is believed that root growth is a terrific indicator of the orchid plant's health. It is critical that the roots are not allowed to rot or become smothered. If your plant arrived in the usual dark green pot, how can you tell? You can't. Many orchid growers use clear plastic pots to be able to see how the roots are doing. You can also see when they are drying out as the potting medium becomes lighter in color. As it is also believed that the roots may engage in photosynthesis, the clear pots allow light into the roots. For this reason, some growers will use white pots as they are attractive and let some light into the roots. Plastic is a good material for orchids as it is easy to disinfect, clean, and reuse. It's also important to note that it is okay for tree growing orchids to have roots growing outside the pot. Think about them clinging to the bark of a tropical tree. Orchid roots do not need to be tucked into a pot like other houseplants.



Burlington County Master Gardeners Newsletter

Post Bloom Rebloom: You can get some orchids to rebloom right away without waiting another year. One online site noted that if you wait until the last bloom drops on a flower spike, you could then cut the spike halfway down with a sterile blade. Seal the cut with candle wax or cinnamon powder to prevent bacterial infection. A new secondary spike will shoot off the lower half of the original spike left behind and bear more flowers.

Fertilizer: The key thing to remember regarding fertilizing is that orchids do just fine without fertilizer in the wild. The only time that an orchid needs fertilizer is during its active growing stage. Certain orchid varieties require phosphorus rich, blossom-booster fertilizer, such as a 20-20-20 formula. Know what kind of orchid you have and what its specific requirements are. However, remember that orchids require rest periods, just like us gardeners! To fertilize during these periods can stress the plant—just like the gardeners. Once again, let the leaves be your guide. If the leaves exhibit dry, blackened leaf tips, there is too much fertilizer. To remedy this situation, you can rinse the potting medium with fresh water several times to flush out the excess fertilizer. Cut off the burned out tips with sterilized scissors.

The End: Finally, like people, orchids have a life span. They will not look their loveliest forever. So, if after a few years, yours doesn't bloom anymore and you have limited space and you don't guilt easily, go ahead and make way for something more productive. I'm sure there is another variety of orchid you're dying to try your Master Gardener gloved hand at

Sources:

"Ortho's All About Orchids", Meredith Books (1999), Des Moines, Iowa, The Scotts Company (Available in the reference collection at the Master Gardener's Help Line Office).

Orchid Care for the Novice—An Orchid's Perspective (Kobayashi, Kent), Tropical Plant and Soil Sciences Department, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii at Manoa. <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/kobayashik/orchids.html>

RePotme.com: <http://www.repotme.com/orchid-care/index.html>

Beautiful Orchids, San Francisco, California:

http://www.beautifulorchids.com/orchids/orchid_care_tips/reblooming/reblooming.html