



Garden Thymes

Coos County Master Gardeners™
Myrtle Point, OR 97458

Volume # 11 Issue # 4
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Oregon State University Extension Service

President's Message

We are all aware of the old saying, "Time flies when you are having fun," and it seems like this past year has been pretty much a blur. Maybe we should say, "Time flies when you are a Master Gardener!" That might be more appropriate for us.

Since this is the last issue of *Garden Thymes* for 2009, it is a good time to reflect back on all our accomplishments for the year. Our chapter members always seem to rise for the occasion when there are projects to take care of and responsibilities to fill. 2009 was no exception!

We had a great class of trainees and most of them will receive their badge in December. Our 2009 goals, while maybe not quite met, were surely given a hard try and the fact that we raised the most money ever at our annual Plant Sale, certainly indicates the strength of our chapter. Attendance at our FYM Spring Seminar was the highest so far which shows that our local population is becoming increasingly aware of our programs and commitment to sharing gardening information and expertise throughout the county. All in all, I believe we have had a very successful and fruitful year. None of it would have been possible without the efforts, perseverance, and enthusiasm of our members and trainees. At the end of the year, it is only appropriate to recognize the many who contributed to our year's success. So taking the chance of not including someone, a big heartfelt thank you to:

- All our officers and committee chairs who gave us countless hours of their time and energy in leading this organization so well throughout the year.
- All the chapter members who attend our monthly meetings contributing their interest and input, and of course, the amazing goodies they bring!
- The many members who have given their time to be speakers on our behalf, spreading the word about Master Gardeners.
- All those who grew and prepared seedlings and plants for the annual Plant Sale, as well as all those who contributed the many hours necessary to make the Plant Sale another huge success.
- The many people who volunteered their time and energy helping with the Plant Clinic and Farmers' Market. This is where the "rubber hits the road" in our face-to-face meetings with the public!
- All those who took the time to prepare the Coos County exhibit at the state mini-college and those who attended. It was great to see the Coos County badges mixed in with the 400+ attendees.
- All those who spent countless hours working, watering and producing the myriad of vegetables at our local community gardens for the local food banks and community.
- All the 2009 trainees who took it upon themselves to fulfill the 60-hour requirement to finish the job and receive the coveted orange and black Master Gardener badge.
- All the OSU Extension agents, coordinators and administration staff for lending their time, support and talents to the Master Gardener cause with their always-cheerful help and guidance, especially on Plant Clinic days.
- All our active Master Gardeners and trainees for the unwavering support and helpfulness. You are what make this organization work!

Lastly, in this final 2009 issue, I wish you all a very safe and fun holiday season as we look forward to 2010 and the new gardening year ahead of us!

Blair Holman

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Message from Kim

November is the time of year that I am busy compiling all the hours that Master Gardeners have volunteered this year. I knew that the Coos County Master Gardeners were hard workers and dedicated to their program, but now I have the numbers to prove it. So far this year I have entered a total of 3895 volunteer hours, and our program has made 8662 contacts! That is approximately the equivalent of two full-time Oregon State University employees. Thank you to everyone who turned in hours!

With a new training session just around the corner, we'll soon have more opportunities for reaching out to Coos County gardeners. I have been diligently working on the training schedule, and I think this year is going to be a great one. I am excited to meet some new instructors this year as well as reconnect with previous ones. With input from last year's Master Gardeners and Trainees, I have designed this year's training to emphasize identification. Among others, there will be courses on ornamental plant ID, weed ID, tree ID, and insect ID. Enclosed in this newsletter is a tentative 2010 Master Gardener Training schedule. Please tell your friends and neighbors about this amazing educational and volunteer opportunity made available to them through the Oregon State University Extension Service.

Sign-up packets are available now at the Extension office. Please notify us if you would like one sent to you.



Events to put on your 2010 Calendar

- January 7:** Master Gardener Training in Myrtle Point
- March:** "Fertilize Your Mind" Garden Seminar
- May:** Plant Sale
- June 26:** 2010 Oregon Coast Gardening and Landscaping Expo in Newport



Books for Christmas and Beyond

Weeds can be a nuisance, a menace in the fields, and an ecological disaster in the countryside but, for many people, they are the beginning of an infatuation with wildflowers. A brilliant mass of unknown flowers fairly begs an introduction. You might find it by Googling our Noxious Weed List but, for bigger and better pictures, see *Weeds of the West* at the Extension office. Here you'll find not only clear pictures of flowers and leaves but also of seedlings, seed pods and seeds — whatever it takes to identify a particular weed at all stages. A good supplementary book is *Northwest Weeds: "The Ugly and Beautiful Villains of Fields, Gardens, and Roadsides"* by Ronald J. Taylor. Taylor's thorough descriptions are at least as useful as the pictures and his prose is pleasant to read. He unabashedly uses words like "attractive" and "lovely". Both weed books make excellent wildflower guides except that, beyond grouping flowers by family, neither has a key.

There are, however, a number of regional wildflower books with helpful keys, some based on color and others on plant characteristics such as number of petals, type of flower cluster, arrangement of leaves, etc.



One is the classic *Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast* by Pojar and MacKinnon, which has everything from trees to lichens (no mushrooms). It leads you, with pictures, to family descriptions. There you find dichotomous keys that are well illustrated, fairly simple, helpful, and educational. Some others are:

Coastal Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest by Elizabeth L. Horn

Wildflowers of Southern Oregon by John Kemper

Wayside Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest by Dr. Dee Strickler

There's also the more technical *Handbook of Northwestern Plants* by Helen Gilkey and LaRea Dennis from the OSU Press. This has excellent line drawings and a very good glossary, making it a good place to learn new vocabulary and broaden your identification skills.

Starting Seeds for the Plant Sale

Perennials and biennials

should be started in late January or early February. Check to see if you need to use *stratification* (cold treatment to help break dormancy of seeds by putting into a wet medium and refrigerating for 3-6 weeks) or *scarification* (soaking or nicking seeds; sandpaper works well.) Check seed packets for instructions.



Annuals that have longer germination times should be started in mid-to-late February (e.g., *Asarina*, *Coreopsis*, *Petunias*, *Coleus*, and *Alyssum*). Again, check seed packets. Faster growing annuals (e.g. *Marigolds*, *Cosmos*, *Zinnias*) can be started in mid-to-late March with Sunflowers and Nasturtiums in mid-April.

Vegetables and annual herbs. Tomatoes and peppers should be started in a warm greenhouse, on a heat mat, in a sunny window, or under lights about the end of February or the first week in March for them to be 4" for the plant sale. Start peppers 2-3 weeks earlier than the tomatoes. Start parsley and sweet basil about the 2nd week of March. Start broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower the end of March or first week of April.

Renée Blom

Easy Garden Gifts for Christmas

- ◆ Propagate some of your favorite plants for holiday gifts such as fuchsias and geraniums. Pot self-seeding perennials and volunteer natives. Take cuttings from your houseplants — philodendrons, kalanchoe, sedums, wandering Jew, begonias, rosary vine (*Ceropegia woodii*).
- ◆ Gather leftover lavender stems into little bundles with lavender ribbon. Toss into Christmas packages or give as fire-starters.
- ◆ Turn your leftover apples into apple butter and packages of frozen pie slices. If you can part with some frozen berries, brighten someone's winter.



TO ANSWER OR TO NOT ANSWER

Can you tell me how to manage the weeds in my pasture?

The fir trees in my woodlot are turning brown. What should I do?

Which nursery has the best quality plants?

How do I preserve my tomatoes so I can keep them all winter?

What are the medicinal uses of this herb?

What do all these questions have in common? They are all questions that a Master Gardener shouldn't answer.

1 and 2. Timber and agricultural questions should be referred to the appropriate agent. As Master Gardeners, we answer questions related to urban horticulture, and then only giving science-based answers supported by Oregon State University. Answering questions beyond our training and expertise is a disservice to the public.

3. You and I both have our favorites. However, as representatives of OSU, we can't recommend one commercial vendor over another. But what we can and *should* do is educate folks so they can make judgments themselves about which plants are healthiest and the best buys for them.

4. Master Gardeners have been trained in growing plants, including vegetables, from selection to planting and on to harvesting. But once the vegetable is harvested, it is beyond the training of a Master Gardener. This is a good opportunity to educate the public about another one of Extension's outstanding programs—the Family Food Education Volunteers who have been specifically trained in safe and healthy food preparation and preservation.

5. And finally, we're not trained in medicine, and any ideas we have personally about using plants to treat ailments should be kept to ourselves when we're responding as Master Gardeners. Suggest instead they take their questions to a medical professional. Or, they might take one of the Extension classes in Healthy Aging or Medication Management.

As Master Gardeners, we all have a service orientation that leads us to always want to satisfy our client, whether in the Plant Clinic or informally in the neighborhood.

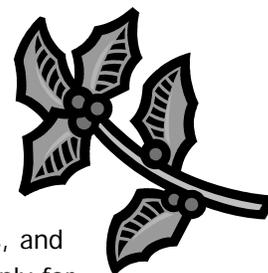
That's a really good trait. Master Gardeners have developed a reputation in the community for being able to find the answer, and the answer that can be counted on. That's a trust we should be proud of, and should guard and foster through outstanding service in urban horticulture.

Bob Reynolds — OSU Agent, Jackson County. From the Master Gardener newsletter, "Garden Beet"

How to Answer the Person Who Says

"But the Birds Just Love My Holly Berries"

People often ask what's wrong with planting non-native trees when the birds so obviously enjoy eating the berries. If you've read Douglas Tallamy's *Bringing Nature Home*, you know what to tell them. Birds need three things to survive: protection from predators, nesting sites, and food. Berries (which birds do eat enthusiastically and then spread far and wide) provide food only for fledglings and adult birds because most of them ripen in late summer, after the babies hatch. Besides, baby birds need protein, not fruit. This protein used to come from herbivorous insects that lived in the same vegetation that sheltered the birds' nests. Now bug-rich natives have given way to pest-free aliens and parent birds fly farther to find the protein their babies need to grow. Native insects — also known as pests — find the alien plants indigestible. It would take them millennia to evolve digestive systems that could process alien plants and we don't have millennia. We will not have birds in our future if we provide only two of their three essentials. Why would any bird lover do this when there are so many natives that provide all three?





Do You Use a Garden Journal?

This fall, while the withered leaves of your favorite perennials still define their territories, maybe — just maybe — this would be a good time to start a journal. Come spring, when the clues are gone, it's easy to stick a new plant in on top of the old, something you may regret. With a journal full of maps, sketches, photographs, and descriptions, though, that is unlikely to happen.

Memories fail about other things, too. You think you'll never forget the name of those juicy yellow tomatoes or which of the five varieties of peas was best but, if you haven't written it down, you just might. When the winter sun is low in the south, it's hard to remember that the tomatoes loved the north patio in July but the begonias died. The plum that shaded the basil looks innocent when bare. You know you need to rotate your heirloom tomatoes out of Number Four — or was it Number Two?

The dates of the freezes are useful information to write down.



Knowing when your plants usually bloom is useful for pruning or applying pre-emergent oils but there's also a special pleasure just in seeing the world moving along — all is well; the forsythia's blooming. When you look back at your casual notes about birds, weather, the first trillium, insects, the abundance of certain flowers and not others, you may start seeing patterns. For instance, if a flower bloomed early and its pollinator was late, maybe that's why there was less fruit than usual.

Other things you might wish you'd written down at the time are any fertilizers or chemicals you used, ingenious support systems or hose layouts you devised, where you got your tools sharpened, and when you tuned up the lawnmower.

There are fancy journals that can be inspiring to some gardeners. Loose-leaf notebooks are easy to organize. Card files are compact. Even the notes scribbled on old receipts will help — if you can find them.

Meet Master Gardener

KATHY CREASON



You probably already know Kathy, our vice-president, who shows up at all the meetings and works on favorite projects such as Growin' Yer Grub and the Plant Sale. She and Blair Holman coordinate the Plant Clinic volunteer schedule at Extension -- not an easy job but she insists she enjoys it.

She started volunteering early, as a Candy Striper at Children's Hospital in San Francisco. When she and her husband, John, moved their family to Coquille in 1971 and started a business, she got involved right away with the Rebekahs. She's still active with them as well as with the local food bank and the committee to raise funds for a new swimming pool.

She worked in accounting most of her life, both for their own business and for other small ones. Seven years before she retired, she had a real change of pace – a friend started “Caboose Lady Coffee” in Coquille and needed help, so Kathy took the early morning shift as a Barista.

While they were working and raising dogs and kids, gardening was mostly a matter of controlling hedges and mud. Two years before she retired, though, they bought two acres and began building and landscaping. She retired just in time to take the 2005 Master Gardener training class in Coos Bay and now gardens for enjoyment. She says their garden is a work in progress as they constantly seek the perfect perennials for all seasons. She enjoys weeding, loves planting, and finds vegetable gardening very challenging.

And is there life after gardening? Yes, plenty of it. She likes Jazzercise and hula dancing (her group performed at one of the Spring Flings). She likes to travel. She and her three sisters take an annual Sisters' Trip, most recently to Butchart Gardens in Victoria, B.C. In October, she and John took a helicopter ride into the Grand Canyon. She likes Hawaii and the place she'd like most to visit is Australia.



Feedback from the Master Gardener Class of 2009



The View From Lakeside

The past season of volunteer work has been a labor of joy and satisfaction! I worked at our annual plant sale and the Coos Bay Farmers' Market and gave talks to the Cub Scouts and kids of our community. Getting involved with the Master Gardener Association and its committed members, writing gardening columns in our local North County News paper, and interacting with the bed-holders of our community garden in Lakeside have all been rewarding.

The Harmony Community Garden of Lakeside's second season has come and gone. We now have a total of 24 raised beds of various sizes and all were taken for this season. The demand was such that we could have used 10 more! As the Coordinator, it was my pleasure to help and work with a wonderful group of citizen gardeners whose passions and commitment inspired me to make their experiences of growing their own grub a memorable one.

Our next season will see a bed assigned to the Lakeside Library's summer youth program. I hosted a tour of the garden with the kids attending this year's program and talked about worms and composting. With the enthusiasm and curiosity they showed, I'm sure their bed will be a huge success next summer.

With these successes I recently started a North County-based Plant Clinic in Lakeside to be held every Thursday afternoon in the Lakeside Senior Center. I hope to eventually bring to this area of Coos County the same resources as those offered in Myrtle Point.

Aaron P. Richards

A Dreamland for Gardeners

Since I am now retired from the National Weather Service and living in North Bend, I enjoyed attending all the Master Gardener Training classes last winter, and I was happy they were held in North Bend. I learned a lot of new ideas and about different plants we can grow here. Every class was well organized, with great information and some "hands-on" training too.

I volunteered in three main areas this summer: the Farmers' Market, the Plant Clinic, and the Community Garden in Coos Bay. I learned a lot about the growing season here in Oregon, and gained valuable information I could use myself and also that I could talk with other gardeners about. Moving down from Alaska and being used to only 3 ½ to 4 months of growing season up there, it just amazes me what a person can do here all year long. What a dreamland for gardeners!

Thanks to being connected with the Master Gardener Association, I was able to go to most of the gardening talks and workshops held around town and I had a lot of fun meeting people and asking questions. I gained a lot of new friendships this year.

This fall and winter I am looking forward to putting the Community Garden – and my own gardens – to bed, looking through catalogs, getting more information from the Internet, and taking a class or two. I can hardly wait for things to get started again for summer. But I guess gardening really never stops here, does it?

Carol Emery

Master gardener training starts January 2010

Tell your friends and neighbors



Garden Thymes is Available Electronically

To help the Coos County Extension Service save money please respond with your preference on how you would like to receive newsletters in the future. Sending the newsletter electronically saves the Extension Service time, money, and resources. **No response indicates that you would like to be removed from the mailing list.** This is the final notice being sent about the subject. If you have previously responded, thank you. If we do not hear from you before the next newsletter we will miss you.

Please send the newsletter to me by email. My email address is _____.

Please continue mailing a hard copy of the newsletter to me. Indicate on the reverse side if you prefer a different mailing address.

Include adequate postage and mail your selection to:

Kim Phillips

Oregon State University Extension Service

Ohlsen-Baxter Building

631 Alder Street

Myrtle Point, OR 97458

Master Gardening – Year One Completed!

Having just moved to the South Oregon Coast from the other (East) coast, I thought, what better way to learn how to garden here than to take the Master Gardening course? I was certainly not disappointed, as the class presenters were wonderfully knowledgeable, lively, and generous, and the class materials were very thoughtfully chosen and practical. In short, the classes were a joy to attend. The 11 weeks of training went by in the blink of an eye and soon I was wondering how in the world I would manage to do 60 hours of volunteer work in one short season.

No matter. I just jumped in where I thought I could do a good job. The Plant Clinic and Farmers' Market assignments were challenging but fun and I learned something new each time I worked. The people of our community who came forward with their questions were friendly, generous, and trusting. I met so many people who were excited about gardening – and all kinds of gardening, from potted tomatoes on the deck to large vegetable plots to orchards, from first-time growers to experienced "green thumbs" – that it was just a real pleasure to talk with them and, especially, to feel that I had helped them.

I also loved working at the Ladybug Landing Community Garden. It was a great place to see what plants and techniques work well in this climate and to watch the seasons unfold with their weather, insect, and disease challenges. It was very inspirational to hear from lots of Coos Bay residents about how much they enjoy gardening in or just visiting Ladybug Landing, and how the community garden has improved the neighborhood surrounding the garden.

My first season with the Coos County Master Gardeners has all been positive, but I think the best part has been working with and getting to know the veteran Master Gardeners. I was struck from the very beginning by how friendly and inclusive many were and I owe a large debt of gratitude to the veterans I have worked with and learned from. Thank you all for your patience, guidance and friendship!

Rhea Taylor-Russell



Garden Thymes

Coos County Master Gardeners™ Association

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Miscellaneous Comments from Trainees

- "I enjoyed the learning experience completely."
- "I value the time spent and all the friendships."
- "The training was phenomenal: professional quality, well-organized, supportive, and practical."
- "It is a great program delivered by a dedicated group of volunteers, most of whom are super role models for the trainees."
- "The Master Gardener's booth at the Farmers' Market has amazing results. Coos County residents really rely on this service."

Trainees' Suggestions for Next Year

- ◆ Let's organize car pools to Myrtle Point and North Bend to encourage sign-ups, save gas, help students bond, and provide time for discussions.
- ◆ It would be helpful if mentors kept up with their trainees through the volunteer season to make sure they are getting their hours and recording them.
- ◆ Since many different volunteers work in the Plant Clinic, understanding of procedures varies. More standardized and detailed procedures should be posted.
- ◆ Could we get a team together to update and expand the information in the Plant Clinic files?

Collected by Rhea Taylor-Russell



Coos County Master Gardener™

Training Schedule 2010

TENTATIVE

Date	Time	Subject	Instructor
7 Jan.	9:00 am	Intro to Master Gardener™ Program and the Master Gardener™ Association	Kim Phillips Coos County MG Coordinator & Blair Holman CCMGA President
	1:00 pm	Botany	Kim Phillips
14 Jan.	9:00 am	Water Conservation in the Garden	Frank Burris Curry County Extension Watershed Faculty
	1:00 pm	Ornamental Plant Identification	Pat Breen OSU Dept. of Horticulture
21 Jan.	9:00 am	Native Plant Identification	TBA
	1:00 pm	Understanding Pesticides	Steve Renquist Douglas Co. Horticulture Extension Agent
28 Jan.	9:00 am	Weed ID and Management	Jerry Darbyshire Curry County Weed Board
	1:00 pm	Small Fruits	Linda White Coos/Curry Co Horticulture Agent
4 Feb.	9:00 am	Soils and Fertilizers	TBA
	1:00 pm	Entomology	Laura Moulton OSU Horticulture/Entomology MS student
11 Feb.	9:00 am	Vegetable Gardening	TBA
	1:00 pm	Integrated Pest Management	Gail Langellotto Statewide MG Coordinator
18 Feb.	9:00 am	Tree Fruits	Ross Penhallegon Lane Co. Extension Horticulture Agent
	1:00 pm	Pruning (Field Trip)	Ross Penhallegon
25 Feb.	9:00 am	Plant Disease	Melodie Putnam OSU Plant Clinic Director
	1:00 pm	Plant Diagnosis	Melodie Putnam
4 Mar.	9:00 am	Tree Identification and Disease	Tristan Huff Coos/Curry Co. Forestry Extension Agent
	1:00 pm	Plant Propagation	Renee Blom Coos County MG
11 Mar.	9:00 am	Skills and Resources (all day)	Kim Phillips & Kathy Creason Coos County MG

For sign-up materials to become a Master Gardener, contact Kim Phillips or Rhonda Fischer at the Oregon State University Extension Service Coos County 541-572-5263. Trainings, located at the OSU Extension Service office in Myrtle Point, are also open to the public on a drop-in basis. Fees are \$10 for a half-day course or \$15 for the whole day.

Two Family Food Educator Opportunities!

Nutrition Workshop

Two-Day Workshop Presented by

Stephanie Polizzi, MPH, RD

Family and Community Health of OSU Extension

WORKSHOP INCLUDES:

- Nutrition overview and energy use
- Carbohydrates, proteins and fats
- Energy balance and weight control
- Role of exercise in health
- Nutrition and disease
- Preventing foodborne illness
- State Food Handlers' certification

WHEN:

Jan 15 & Jan 16
9 Am to 4 Pm

\$65.00

WHERE:

Bandon Library

Food Safety & Preservation Volunteer Training

When/where

Bandon Library

Orientation: Jan. 9 9am - 1pm
Practicum 1: Jan 23 9 am - 5 pm
Practicum 2: Feb 6 9 am - 5 pm

Bandon 7th Day Adventist (on Elmira)

- Food preservation principals & problem solving
- Canning fruits, vegetables, meats, fish and game
- Drying, freezing, smoking and pickling techniques
- Making jams, jellies and preserves
- Food Safety
- Preserving for special diets
- Food storage for emergencies
- Oregon State food handler certification

\$135.00

TO REGISTER FOR EITHER TRAINING:

- Call 541-572-5263 or 800-730-4978 ext 291
- E-mail stephanie.polizzi@oregonstate.edu Or
- Stop by Coos or Curry Extension offices to sign up in person



<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/coos>