



Garden Thymes

Coos County Master Gardeners™
Myrtle Point, OR 97458

Volume # 11 Issue # 3
September 2009

Oregon State University Extension Service

President's Message

Wow! What a time of year! We continue to have many busy days of tending our own gardens as well as helping others with theirs. It is a great time to be a Master Gardener! Especially in Coos County! Have you ever thought of just how many mini-climates we have within our county? We have the coastal fog and wind of Charleston and Bandon, the influence of Tenmile Lake in Lakeside, fog, wind and sun and everything in between in Coos Bay and North Bend, then the moderate warmth of Coquille, Gravelford and Myrtle Point, and the more extreme hot weather in the valleys of Allegany and Powers. The fact that we have all these mini-climates in our area makes some of the answers more complex at the Plant Clinic. For instance, the MG may need more information as to where the gardener is growing his plants in order to be of more help. It makes for interesting and thoughtful responses to the questions.

Lots of questions . . . Earlier this summer, while working at the Plant Clinic, I came across a request for information on soils and soil testing from a gentleman who had stopped by our table at the Coos Bay Farmers' Market the week before. However, there was no address included so I called him to acquire it and our conversation soon developed and ranged from soils, to gardens, to moles and back to soils. His closing comment to me is one that I will remember, "Frankly," he said, "I never expected to hear from your organization again after I stopped by the Farmers' Market." I replied that we try very hard not to let that happen. And I believe we do! It was a refreshing comment for all our work and I am sure that we will continue to pleasantly surprise our public.

The Annual Mini-College . . . My recent attendance at the 2009 Master Gardener's Mini-College in Corvallis was an eye opener. Besides all the great people I met, I got to see what their chapters are doing and to compare their activities to ours. After listening to 24 individual chapter reports, (and by the way, Anita did an outstanding job presenting the Coos County report), I could see that our chapter does quite well. Comparing our 55 active members to 800+ in the Metro area and 400+ in Jackson County, the multitude of projects we take on every year is nothing short of awesome. We certainly qualify as one of the most ambitious and successful chapters in the state.

And most importantly, the home garden! . . . At mini-college, the awards banquet keynote speaker was Anne Bettman, an assistant professor of Landscape Architecture from the University of Oregon. (A DUCK in the middle of Beaver Land!) Her topic was "Victory Gardens" and how they came about and what it takes to make them winners. She related that during World War II, one in four people living in the United States were in rural areas and more than likely had gardens versus the current figure of one or two out of 100 who now live in a rural area. With the reawakening interest in home gardens, there are a lot more people entering the world of gardening and therefore, more information and knowledge are needed to be successful. And who is there most able and ready to do that teaching and leading, but the Master Gardeners?! That's us!

Blair Holman, President, Coos County Master Gardeners

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Message from Kim

As the season moves into fall, I hope all of you are busy harvesting your hard work in the garden. Its time to cut and dry sunflower heads for yourself or wild birds, can your tomatoes, and dig and store your potatoes.



Along with harvesting in your garden, it is nearing that time of year again when Master Gardeners get the opportunity to show Oregon State University how hard they've been working. Payback hours are due October 31, 2009. The policy for payback hours and blank Master Gardener Volunteer Log Sheet are both available at the Oregon State University Extension Service Coos County office or at the website:

[http://
extension.oregonstate.edu/coos/
Mg.](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/coos/Mg)

If you have any questions or concerns about your payback hours, please contact me.

Kim

Master Gardener of the Year



Joanne White, left, well-known and loved for her work at the Ladybug Landing Community Garden, the Plant Clinic, and the mentoring program, was surprised with a certificate and bouquet of flowers at the Farmers' Market on September 8, 2009.



Cut Flower Clinic

***How to perk up florists' rosebuds that wilt before they open:** At the bottom of the stem, use a sharp knife to scrape off 4-6" of the outer layer. Re-cut ends at a 45-degree angle. Immerse the stems in nearly boiling water for one minute, protecting the flowers by angling them away from the steam or covering with a paper bag. Then let them sit in deep tepid water for two to eight hours before re-arranging.

***Here's a preservative for cut flowers:** Mix 1 pint water, 3 teaspoons sugar, and 1 drop bleach. This solution not only provides food for the cut flowers but acts as a bactericide. Although a similar substance is available commercially, making it yourself takes seconds. You can condition flowers in this solution and also use it in the final arrangement.

Ellen Johnson

While weeding your faded flower beds this fall, you can always tell a weed from a desirable plant by tugging at it firmly but gently. If it uproots easily, it was a desirable plant

Surprise! The World's Fastest Bird May Be in Your Garden

You might have thought the fastest bird was a peregrine falcon but it's not; it's an Anna's hummingbird! That magenta and green garden sprite snapping up your gnats and sipping at your fuchsias isn't as delicate as he looks. When courting a female, he soars 30 meters into the sky, then roars down so fast his tail feathers chirp. He pulls out with nine times the force of gravity on his little body. His speed gets up to 27.3 meters per second (61 miles per hour). That's 385 body lengths per second compared to the peregrine's 200 body lengths per second, a fighter jet's 150, and a returning space shuttle's 207.

Consider this next time you see one in action. And don't stand in his way.

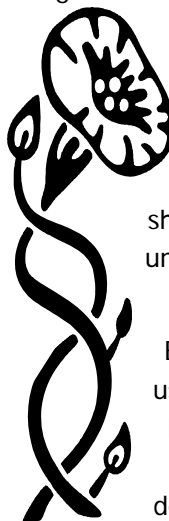
Science News 7/4/09



Get Rid of Bindweed Now!

Hedge bindweed, *Calystegia sepium* (occasionally *Convolvulus sepium*), is one of the most serious weeds in our mild coastal region. The plant regrows and spreads from energy stored in deep roots, as well as from its seed. If allowed to spread, it will take over gardens, hedges, fences and untended roadside areas.

Hedge bindweed, also called Wild Morningglory, is a perennial vine that trails along the ground or climbs over objects up to ten feet or more. It is an aggressive plant that requires consistent and patient removal for eradication. Many of its roots grow shallowly, particularly at cultivated edges and underneath landscape fabric, but are also reported as deep as ten feet.



Elimination of hedge bindweed depends on using up the stored food in the roots. Use a hoe or shovel to remove the above ground parts, including roots if you can; the deeper, the better. Try to remove all of the visible whitish root, including any broken pieces. Destroy – do not compost – the root pieces. Allow the bindweed plant to emerge again with new leaves and regrow for about one week. During this week, food is being pulled from the roots to regrow leaves. Then it is time to cut or pull the above ground growth again before the leaves start sending food back into storage in the roots.

Repeat and repeat this process. It may take two or three years to weaken and kill the entire plant.

A version of this article will be placed in Plant Clinic files, to distribute to those who ask for help with controlling this weed.

Thanks go to Renee Blom and Ladybug Landing Community Garden for permission to start this article with their posted flyer. Additional facts were gathered from [Weeds of the West](#) and online documents such as <http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedguide/singlerecord.asp?id=620>.

Rhea Taylor-Russell



Mini-College Notes

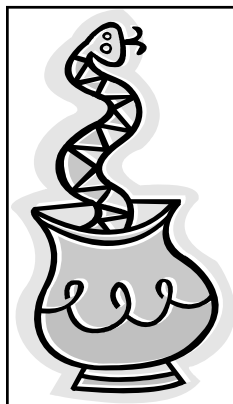
BLAIR HOLMAN — Master Gardener Mini-College was certainly an eye opener. Besides all the great people you meet from the other MG chapters, you have the opportunity to see a bit of what other chapters in the state are doing and a chance to compare their activities to those of Coos County. After listening to each of the 24 individual chapter reports, (and by the way, Anita did an outstanding job presenting the Coos County report), it was very apparent to me that our chapter does quite well in the number of projects we take on every year. Considering our relatively low number of active members in comparison to the member numbers in the Metro area (800+) or Jackson County (400+), the multitude of projects we take on every year is nothing short of awesome. This most certainly qualifies our chapter as one of the most ambitious and successful in the state.

BROOK SETTLE: — I loved the garden tour, and learned a lot. Being with Coos-County 'ites' was the highlight for me.

VALERIE COOLEY — Mini-college is fun, but tough. First of all, they offer 24 enticing classes but you can choose only five. They turn out great but when your friends rave about the bee and the invasive plant classes, you wish you could have been there too. Happily, some of the most popular presentations are in the large ballroom with no classes scheduled at the same time. There we heard about MG projects around the state, Rosalind Creasy's astonishing edible landscaping, and Ann Bettman's Victory Gardens. It's rather strenuous, really, trying to absorb facts and principles all day. It's exciting, too — learning always is — and inspiring. Over meals we plotted against invasive species and after dinner one night we toured gardens that exemplified this year's theme: "Backyard Food Solutions. I came home tired but exhilarated, thinking of all the things we can accomplish.

ANITA STRAUS — This is my second time at mini-college and I will plan on attending again next year. It's informative, relaxing, and I loved being there. There is a certain connection with other MGs that takes place at mini-college.

CAROL DOMINICK — I missed mini-college last year because it conflicted with the Fair, so going this year felt like a real treat. The dorms were familiar — sparse but comfortable — and, as they're not air-conditioned, the cool weather was wonderful. It's nice to have your meals provided and your days filled with wonderful options. All the classes I chose were filled with good information and well presented, but the one that left me wanting to go out on a personal crusade was on invasive species. Many of those lovely ornamentals we've bought at nurseries are wreaking havoc with our natives and our ecosystem and costing huge sums to control. In many cases complete

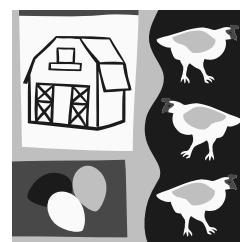


eradication is impossible. A great class like this stirs me to think seriously about the potential harm created by things I plant in my own small area and the need for more widespread education. I chopped down my butterfly bush several years ago and continue to search out and destroy its progeny. I wonder what unwitting damage I have

caused with other now-forgotten landscaping choices over the years.

Another highlight was Rosemary Creasy's talk on edible landscaping which inspired me to line up to buy one of her books and get it signed. And I wasn't going to buy *any* books this trip! My biggest smile came from the outrageously funny vase I got for \$13 at the silent auction. I want to go again next year!

TERRY MILLS — He was there too, taking classes, going on the garden tour and the great Corvallis Chicken Coop tour.





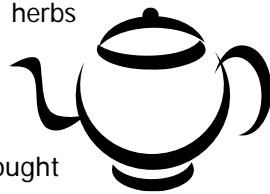
More Mini-College Notes

MARY ANNE KREUTZER — **What a great experience!** Mini College is a must-do for next year. What can one say about gardeners? We are all totally committed to it and, though we might do it differently, we get to the end one way or the other. I went to talks on Mason Bees vs. Honey Bees, Improving Soil with Fall Cover Crops, Edible and Sustainable Gardening, and Canning the Fruits of our Labor. On Saturday I went to a 3 hour workshop on herbal teas. I know very little about herbs. This workshop really appealed to my interest tastebuds and I love tea.

The Mini-College Herbal Tea Workshop: From your Backyard to your Teapot

Sue Sierralupe, the instructor, is a medicinal herbalist from Lane County. She groups herbs into eight categories:

Weeds, Native Plants, Fruits, Vegetables, Teapot Herbs,



Flower Garden Herbs, Drought Garden Herbs, and Trellis Herbs. Each plant in each category is described in terms of its use, which part of the plant should be collected, and in what time of year you should collect it. For example, Kinnikinnik or Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), is a Native Plant that is used as an antiseptic and one should collect its leaves in the summer. Dandelions (*Taraxacum officinale*), are in — guess what category! The roots, collected in the fall, and the flowers and leaves, collected in the spring, are used for detoxification.

Drought Garden Herbs are watered once and left alone to let the essential oils and scents get sweeter.

All teas should be harvested when the sun comes up. Teas are steeped at different temperatures: Black teas are at 175 degrees, green teas at 160, and herbal teas at 125. Too hot a temperature can make the tea bitter and bland.

Can You Get There from Here?

Sure you can. See, for example, how easily you can change a dog into a cat, one letter at a time.



D	O	G
D	O	T
C	O	T
C	A	T



Now change weed to bane and then home to yard. Then you'll be ready to change a frog into a toad.

W	E	E	D
B	A	N	E

H	O	M	E
Y	A	R	D

F	R	O	G
T	O	A	D

Hint: there are two abbreviated names in there. The answers are below. Have fun.



Seed, send, sand, sane;
Home, come, came, care, yard
Grog, grow, glow, slow, show, shaw, that, That



Growing Asparagus from Seeds

I always knew one day the time would be right to grow asparagus. Asparagus requires two things: lots of space in full sun and a commitment to live in a house long enough for it to grow. Neither of these things happened in my life until now.

So I have been mentally planting the asparagus bed for the last year. I knew that I would order the roots to plant in February and I had a nice raised bed all ready for them to grow in.

But in January I was killing time in a bookstore and I picked up the new edition of Growing Vegetables West of the Cascades by Steve Solomon. He recommends growing asparagus from seed directly in the ground. His premise is that Asparagus (from the Lily family!) is essentially a root crop because it stores up food reserves all summer in large fleshy roots and then sends up the shoots in the spring. If you start the seeds where they will never be disturbed, you will get a more productive, longer lasting bed.

This made a certain amount of sense to me. I have never liked the looks of the asparagus roots I have seen in nurseries; they always look like they have lived hard lives. So I decided to try doing seeds. He feels that, done correctly, seeds will start to produce even earlier than crowns.

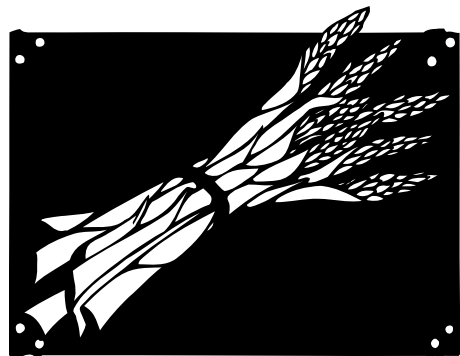
I started by making the bed extra fertile in early spring but I didn't plant the asparagus seed until late April. I added more fertilizer when I planted the seed. They took about 20 days to sprout and were so teeny that it was several days before I was aware that they HAD sprouted. It didn't seem like an auspicious start. I kept watering and fertilizing them and they started to look like real plants.

The best asparagus patch I have ever seen was on an old dairy pasture. This is probably the most fertilizer I have ever put on any vegetables. They are heavy feeders.

Except for a brief setback when the gas barbecue blew off the deck and landed upside down in the bed, the asparagus is growing very well. Mine are short but they send up many fronds. They seem to be very healthy plants. I am dubious that I will have asparagus next year though.

I have to say that if you are easily discouraged you shouldn't do this. The catalogues, the seed packages, the books -- in short, every single place besides this particular book -- tell you not to start the seed in the ground. Pretty much they tell you that you are wasting your time even messing with the seed. You are supposed to plant crowns!

Cathy Denton



Ivy Extirpation Time

English ivy is blooming now. Many people don't recognize it when it climbs into the sun, changes its leaves, and gets flowers. You can help. Be as conspicuous as you can while pruning ivy in your yard and vacant lots. Politely offer to help your neighbors with theirs. Explain that you're doing this to help the flowers of the forests and the poor suffocating trees.

County Fair Thank You!

We need to give a very big thank you to Kay Davis and Carol Dominick for all their hard work and leadership with our booth at the Coos County Fair. And a big thank you to all those who helped with the set-up and take-down, led demonstrations, and worked the Plant Clinic table. Our booth took second place (in my opinion it should have been first) but Kay and Carol are certainly *Number One* in my book!

Blair Holman



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 notice will be sent out with the November newsletter as well.

- 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



NEW! Identify Landscape Plants Online

Master Gardeners and the general public have a new resource for identifying unknown landscape plants and for finding pictures and growing information on plants important in our region. The OSU Department of Horticulture is in the process of creating a wonderful site called **Landscape Plants – Images, Identification, and Information**. The site has lots of information, from an alphabetical list of over 900 landscape plants (mostly woody) and about 75 herbaceous plants (annuals and perennials), to a glossary, reference list, and climate zone info – both USDA and Sunset.

One of the best features of the site helps you to identify unknown woody plants (broadleaves, conifers, and some vines). Enter the plant features you know about in an easy checklist and look through the results to find the one that matches your specimen. The results usually include pictures of the form of the plant, close-ups of leaves, flowers and fruit, fall color and an interesting info sheet. This should be very useful for our Master Gardener Plant Clinic volunteers. And, unlike most plant “keys,” you can get results even if you don’t know all the important features (like bark, fall color, fruit, flowers, etc.).

The site creator at OSU welcomes any suggestions for improvements to the site and, especially, asks us to point out any errors. His e-mail address is at the bottom of the Landscape Plants home page. This summer he has been working on adding images of plant characteristics to help the user in filling out the search checklist.

This site is scientific enough for advanced reference yet easy enough to use that we can recommend it to less technical gardeners. You will find the **Landscape Plants** site from the OSU Extension Coos County page by clicking the **Horticulture** link, then **Home Horticulture**, and then **Landscape Plants**. Or go right to the home page at <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/ldplants/index.htm>.

Rhea Taylor-Russell



Garden Thymes

Coos County Master Gardeners™ Association

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Master Gardeners Judge Landscaping Contest

One day in June, invited by the Coquille Indian Housing Authority, Joyce Weare, Sandy Gonzales, and I met at Kilkich to judge their landscaping contest. This is the third year the Master Gardeners have been so honored. We got our maps, a list of participants, and tally sheets and went to work. Some of the criteria we were to judge by were the use of annuals, perennials, containers, hanging plants, natives, raised beds, trellises & arbors, and vegetables. We also looked for "backyard paradises", "creative use of wind reduction/control", and "inviting entrances". In honor of the upcoming Tribal Restoration Celebration, we also looked for salmon-colored plants.

That Monday was beautiful and sunny and it took us three hours to complete the tour of about 80 homes. I can't think of a better way to spend a few hours. Everyone we met was friendly and some of the residents were obviously excited to have someone looking at and appreciating their hard work; they wanted to make sure we didn't miss a thing. When we finished, we returned to the Housing Authority office for refreshments and to tally our votes. I loved that some residents planted their herbs and vegetables right in their flower beds and it was amazing to me that more than just a couple of residents met most of the criteria on the tally sheet; some in both their front **and** backyards. I also found it interesting that Joyce, Sandy and I did not vote the same on all of the homes and it was fun to share comments and point out the things that stood out for each of us. We saw some amazing landscaping, some very creative ideas, and a couple of fun vegetable gardens (one particularly outstanding).

Once we turned in our votes we received Certificates of Appreciation and VIP invitations for us and our guests to attend the 20th Anniversary of Restoration Celebration at the Bandon Community Center on the following weekend. My husband, sister and I went and felt honored to be there. We had a great time, ate some great food and well . . . that is another story for another newsletter . . .

What a great experience.

Lily Betzing



Coos County Master Gardener™

Training Schedule 2010

TENTATIVE

Sign up packets for the 2010 Master Gardener Training are now available at the Extension Service. Classes will be held in Myrtle Point at the Oregon State University Coos County Extension Service on Thursdays beginning January 7, 2010. Below is a tentative schedule of classes you will be likely to see. This schedule is subject to change.

Date	Time	Subject
7 Jan.	9:00 am	Intro to Master Gardener™ Program and the Master Gardener™ Association
	1:00 pm	Water Conservation in the Garden
14 Jan.	9:00 am	Botany
	1:00 pm	Botany
21 Jan.	9:00 am	Plant ID
	1:00 pm	Understanding Pesticides
28 Jan.	9:00 am	Entomology
	1:00 pm	Weed ID and Management
4 Feb.	9:00 am	Soils and Fertilizers
	1:00 pm	Small Fruits
11 Feb.	9:00 am	Vegetable Gardening
	1:00 pm	Forestry/Trees
18 Feb.	9:00 am	Tree Fruits
	1:00 pm	Pruning (Field Trip)
25 Feb.	9:00 am	Plant Disease
	1:00 pm	Plant Diagnosis
4 Mar.	9:00 am	Integrated Pest Management
	1:00 pm	Plant Propagation
11 Mar.	9:00 am	Skills and Resources (all day)