This Month's Master Gardener™ Calendar

Tuesday, October 4, YCMGA Board Meeting, 5-6:30pm, PWA, All YCMGA members welcome!

Tuesday, October 4, YCMGA Program Meeting, 7:00pm, PWA. Our guest speaker will be Kuon Hunt from Windy Hill Farm. The topics will be “The truth about Hebes” and “Making your own organic fertilizer” Kuon is an excellent speaker and a Yamhill County Master Gardener.

Thursday, October 6, Insect Committee Meeting. 10am-2pm. MG office.

Friday, October 7, Deadline for November Tiller

Saturday, October 8, 10am Annual YCMG Plant Trade. MG Greenhouse at Yamhill Fairgrounds.

Thursday, October 20, 2005. Insect Committee Meeting. 10am-2pm. MG office.

Other Events

Monday, October 17, 12:00 pm, McMinnville Garden Club Meeting, Yolanda Wilson of Vanveen Bulbs, Planting Bulbs for Year Round Color. Covenant Church, 2155 W. 2nd Street.

Sunday, October 23, 11am to 3:00pm. Garden Swap sponsored by Coldwell Banker Executive Realty, 2077 N. Hwy 99 W. McMinnville, Oregon. Plant drop-off will begin at 9am the same day. For garden furniture, garden art, books please call 503-472-9477 for pick-up. For further info call Nancy Flynn or Beth Caster at 503-472-9477.


Thursday, October 27, 7:00pm Cheahmill Chapter NPSO Meeting: Pining for Pines. John Syring, a student of Pinus phylogenetics; presentation covering the important facets of this remarkable genus. The latter half of the hour will be devoted to hands-on identification of West Coast pines. John has under graduate and masters degrees in Forest Ecology from the University of Michigan and will soon complete his PhD at OSU. Carnegie Room McMinnville Library. For info call Susan Williams 503-538-1865.
From the President by Pam Dowling

It looks like the start of a beautiful fall and we should have plenty of time to put our gardens to “bed” before the rains start. While you are moving, dividing and removing your plants, keep in mind the plant swap this month and the plant sale next year. Just bring any unwanted plants to the plant swap on Saturday, October 8 at 10 am at the Greenhouse at the Fairgrounds. The plants don’t even have to be in pots as we have plenty available. It’s a great time to get rid of your excess/unwanted plants as you never know who might want more flowers such as purple iris (really!).

It is also a great time to pot perennial divisions for the plant sale next year. If you don’t have room to store them, I can keep them at my farm until the sale. Just e-mail me for directions. Perennials from our gardens are a highlight for our plant sale customers.

Linda's Corner by Linda McMahan, Community Horticulture Faculty, OSU Extension Yamhill County

Time to Recruit for Next Year
With the leaves starting to turn color, it is a reminder that the year is drawing to a close. While the squirrels gather food for the winter months, my thoughts turn to preparing for winter training of a new class of OSU Master Gardener™ volunteers. You’ve had time for your friends to appreciate your new knowledge and skills. So now is the time to recruit your friends and colleagues into the Master Gardener Program. Training begins in January and will be similar to last year’s training. Information and applications are available in the Extension office or can be obtained online at http://extension.oregonstate.edu/yamhill/pdf/2006_letter_plus_app.pdf.

On the Desk
This week, we had a client bring in a sample of liverwort from his garden. He had quite a lot of it, and as you might expect, his garden is pretty moist as liverworts usually require moist conditions. This is the first time I’ve seen liverworts brought in that were not in a pot purchased from a nursery and it appears to be the same Marchantia species that tends to inhabit pots of plants grown in nursery conditions where there is plenty of water. Of course the client wanted to know how to get rid of it. The OSU Master Gardener on duty looked it up and recommended a vinegar solution based on research carried out at the North Willamette Research and Extension Center in Aurora. For small patches, removal by hand would be equally effective.

From the Editors, A Plea for Articles

We need to have articles in our newsletter that reflect what we are doing in this county as an organization and in our own personal gardens. Some ideas for writing an article are:

• New plants you’ve tried and the results.
• Things you do to put your garden to bed for the winter.
• Creative ways to preserve and extend fall’s bounty.
• Seasonal topics.
• Gardens you have toured.
• Your sage and wise advice.

I believe we all have one story to tell if not more. Don’t worry about grammar or spelling just get it out there. We (Beth & Sandra) will work with anyone to make sure all grammar and spelling had been corrected before publishing. "Articles" continued on page 4
“Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep!”

It’s October, and most insects and other arthropods are preparing to spend the winter in a quiescent slumber state. Some, like the silver spotted tiger moth larvae, will still feed during the winter on fir needles, but many other species will spend the cooler months hibernating. We all know the boxelder bugs will be targeting our houses for their version of the Woodstock Folk Festival gathering (remember that huge mass of people in the 60’s?). They are simply looking for a place to sleep for the winter and will then emerge next spring as a secondary scourge on people’s houses.

Ladybird beetles will do almost the same thing as the boxelder bugs, massing up in a den for the winter. Ladybirds tend to go to higher elevations, if they can, to avoid being drowned out with the persistent winter rains. In spring, they fly down from the upland regions and will again feed on our garden’s aphid population. It’s rather a search and destroy mission they are on when they awake in spring.

Most moth and butterfly larvae have formed cocoons and pupae to endure the cool, wet months. The larvae of our native giant silk moths, the Polyphemus and Ceanothus moths, have made sturdy silken cocoons in which the larvae transform into the resting stage or pupa. Next May or June, the adults will emerge from the cocoons and again grace our night sky. The naked pupae of butterflies are designed to withstand the cold and wet of the winter also.

Beetle larvae have become pupae in underground or wooden chambers and will emerge as adults next spring either as beneficials that feed on injurious insects, or as our enemies that consume our garden bounty. Some beetles actually emerge as adults in the fall of the year. One such is the rain beetle, which is an October emergent. The adult is a robust, one inch long, brown beetle. This species spends its summer as a larva that feeds on deer and elk poop, then pupates and emerges as the rains begin in October. Who would have guessed how it got its common name of “rain beetle”?

Many spiders die before winter sets in. But, if that happens, they will lay eggs in silken egg cases that can withstand the cold and rain until spring when the eggs hatch into tiny new-born spiders. Some spiders hibernate, and invade our houses to seek shelter. They then become pests.

Basically, nature conserves energy in insects during the winter to ensure survival of the species. We look forward to the diversity of our insect population when spring arrives and they awaken once more!

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**Book Looks.....YCMGA Library Committee Report by Beth Durr**

**The Northwest Herb Lover’s Handbook by Mary Preus**

This book would be a wonderful addition to anyone’s library. With its focus on the Northwest, it narrows down general information to within our local conditions, and generally personalizes the whole herb-growing experience. The author acknowledges at the beginning of the book that the plants she chose to list are easy to grow in the region, are widely adaptable, and have a variety of uses.

The book is so well put together and organized, you hardly need to use the index. Within the near 200 pages, there are about thirty pages of beautiful photographs identifying fifty herbs and references to their use in cooking, healing, crafts and home uses. This, in addition to herb-growing basics, harvesting, preserving and more. She also includes a seasonal monthly checklist.

For October it includes: Dig scented geraniums and pot them up in damp peat moss. Prolong harvests of baby dill, chervil, cilantro, summer savory and sweet marjoram with row covers. Take hardwood cuttings of rose and elderberry.

Copyright 2000 by Mary Preus
Published by Sasquatch Books
From the Greenhouse.... by Gail Price

Well, I hope you got over to the demo garden to see the color. Things are going downhill now in part because someone threw the circuit breaker and we were without power to run the water system for probably more than a week. Things like that happen at the fairgrounds.

Anyway, the committee has begun to prepare the beds for winter. At our first work day in September we cleaned out the pavilion beds. We took out three of the old Bird’s Nest spruce (Picea abies ‘Nidiformis’) that have been there since that bed was planted in the early ‘90s. That evergreen is so cute when it is little but it grows to 3’ high and 4-6’ wide. It is still a nice evergreen when it is that big providing enough room has been left for it to grow. Ours didn’t look that bad until last summer when some kind of mite got into them and turned the tops brown. I think, with pruning they would have eventually come back but we decided to take them out. We plan to plant something else -- possibly a variegated Euonymus -- to brighten up the foliage colors in that area.

We always put left over plant sale annuals in the pavilion bed making it more difficult to take care of. Our plan is to just use perennial shrubbery there and try to make our maintenance job a little easier. The garden committee is looking forward to a little field trip to one of our favorite nurseries to look for new shrubs. (I’m sure we will find things for ourselves that we can’t resist too!)

The parking strip bed has always been one of our bug-a-boos. It probably has changed the most over the years. It has gone from lots of flowers (and weeds) to what it is now. It also is more of a public area with people walking through the beds and cars and trucks parking close by. Trucks often back in to park. They can extend 3-4 feet into the beds hitting plants in their way.

Through the years we have tried to make the parking strip easier to take care of. At one end we brought in more soil and created a berm. We covered the entire space with weed cloth and then planted conifers through the weed cloth. We then covered the whole area with bark mulch. That made the bed easier to take care of and eliminated a huge weed problem.

The area on either side of the arbor was bindweed heaven. We fixed that by covering it with weed cloth and then putting 3/4 inch minus gravel on top of the weed cloth. We haven’t seen a bindweed stick its ugly head up since.

At the far end of the parking strip is the rose garden and even though we get weeds in there, they are much easier to control. On the far end of that bed we planted barberry. Barberry has thorns. It is great to use where you don’t want people or deer traffic. Now people don’t park their cars there and tramp through the rose bed, at least not from that end of the bed.

From the rose bed we have a small space of grass that George Magaki takes good care of. Our purpose for the grass was to have a transition from the rose bed to the shadier beds under two trees, the names of which I don’t know. During fair time there could be chairs or a picnic table there.

The area under the two trees is another difficult bed to contend with. Tree roots, and suckers, poor soil, and odd light situations have always caused trouble for the plant selection in that area. We have decided to stick to sword ferns, hostas and a ground cover (Ajuga). Everything else in those beds will come out. We are looking for donations of native western sword fern (Polystichum munitum) and hostas. If you can share some of these please let us know.

The rock garden, herb garden, and grass garden will all have some improvements made this fall. We will be looking hard at the plants brought to the plant swap on October 8th to see if there is anything we might be able to use in the garden.

Oh, yes, we are still looking for more committee members. How about a few men?
What is the difference between an herb and a spice? In modern times, the differentiation between the two becomes blurred. Traditionally, herbs are grown in temperate zones, and their leaves are used either fresh or dried. Spices hail from the East and tropical zones, where their parts are used dried, whole, cut or powdered. However, many spices are now grown in non-typical places. The real importance of herbs and spices is not to distinguish the differences, but rather what unites them for us. For instance, the pleasures they give us in cooking, aroma therapy, alternative medicines, and as landscape enhancers.

This month’s focus is on a plant that is both an herb and a spice. Cilantro, when used fresh, gives us a pungent, musky flavor like sage with a hint of lemon. It tastes great in a variety of dishes, exceeding the traditional Mexican fare. Cooks all over the world use it with veal, some seafood, tomato sauces, eggs, soups and some salads. Coriander is the seed that the plant produces. It also is used worldwide in cooking. Many recipes for curries, stews, lamb, chicken, potatoes, gingerbread and other baked goods call for the nutty, lemony taste of ground coriander. The root of the plant is popular in Thai cooking.

To grow this diverse annual, it is best done in successive plantings 2-3 weeks apart. It prefers moderately rich, well-drained soil with a pH of 6.6. You can plant in full-sun (suggested if growing for seeds) or part shade (if growing for the leaves). Thickly sown bands of cilantro about 4” wide are the most productive, and easily harvested. Single rows waste garden space and broadcasting creates a near weed-like culture. Fast-growing and slower-bolting varieties include ‘Jantar’, ‘Santo,’ and ‘Slow Bolt.’ The seed stalks grow quickly, topped with feathery leaves and airy umbels of edible pinkish-white flowers.

To harvest the leaves, cut the entire plant back to 6” from the ground, or pick off the lower leaves as you need them. It will regrow for a second cutting. Most cooks do not think drying the leaves or freezing them is a good idea. The flavor is just not the same. To harvest the seeds, let the plant turn brown, cut to ground level and hang up-side-down over a tray or in a paper bag to collect the seeds as the dry. Unripe seeds smell bad. They say they smell like bed-bugs, but I haven’t had that particular experience to compare it to!

Mature seeds have a pleasant lemony smell. If storing the seeds, put in an air-tight container and use them whole or ground. A word of caution: If using fresh-ground seeds, be forewarned of its old nickname “Dizzycorn.” Inhaling its dust can make you dizzy.

When used in aroma therapy, its woody, spicy smell acts as an aromatic stimulant. The essential oil is found in such perfumes as Chanel No. 5, Le Jardin d’Amour and of course, Coriandre.

Before Viagra, coriander and artichokes were a man’s best friend (aphrodisiac). Some people drink coriander tea to ease their aching joints. All in all, herbal medicinal remedies are limited with this particular plant.

Grown in the garden sometimes as a companion planting with peppers, they say its musty odor tends to repel nibbling insects. Even if this isn’t so, you have two major ingredients for salsa! It is also suggested that like dill, do not plant near fennel, as it creates an adverse flavor. There are few or no pests or plant diseases associated with cilantro, but as you all know, powdery mildew can get on everything!

Coriander justifies itself as a garden plant because it attracts bees and other pollinators. Some consider coriander honey as a real delicacy.

Coriander and/or cilantro is also known as Chinese Parsley, and in India is called dhania. But as we all know, it is better to refer to plants by their botanical names (Coriandrum sativum), to not get confused. If you want to grow it indoors, you must have lots of light and a deep pot for its long taproot. Some find it just too leggy for windowsill gardening. If you just must have it in the middle of winter, most supermarkets sell it fresh. This plant may show up in next year’s garden, if you have already been growing it. It will make me think twice when I thought it was just used for making fresh salsa!

*Articles* continued from page 4
What are the Nutrient Values of Organic Fertilizers?

Do you ever read garden books that recommend chemical fertilizers with certain N-P-K (nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium) ratios?

If you are an organic gardener, these numbers can be frustrating. Manure and other organic materials often don’t come with N-P-K ratings, especially if they are purchased in bulk quantities.

Organic gardeners are in luck. Ross Penhallegon, horticulturist with the Oregon State University Extension Service, has collected information about the nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) content of many of the organic substances commonly used as fertilizer in Oregon, including green manure crops such as crimson clover and alfalfa.

His report, “Values of Organic Fertilizers,” also contains information about how quickly an organic fertilizer releases available nutrients and a reference list on organic gardening.

“One of the most difficult things to determine for an organic gardener is how much organic fertilizer to use, say on a 1,000 square feet of garden,” said Penhallegon. “For a fertilizer with an N-P-K ratio of 12-11-2, this means 12 percent is nitrogen, 11 percent is phosphorus and 2 percent is potassium. In simple terms, this means each 100 pound bag of the fertilizer would contain 12 pounds of nitrogen, 11 pounds phosphorus and two pounds nitrogen.

“For example, using 12-11-2 fertilizer, if we knew we wanted to apply one pound of nitrogen, we would use 1/12th of 100 pounds,” continued Penhallegon. “This equals about 8 pounds of this fertilizer applied to get one pound of nitrogen out there in the soil.”

Cover crops generally release their nutrients slowly, over a period of two to six months, said Penhallegon. Nutrient values for cover crops include: alfalfa (2.5 -0.5 - 2), crimson clover (2-0.2-2), Australian winter peas (3-0-1), annual rye (1-0-1).

Bloodmeal (12.5-1.5-0.6), bat guano (8-5-1.5) and many of the manures (variable nutrient contents) release their nutrients over a period of two to six weeks.

Burned eggshells (0-5-.3), fish emulsion (5-1-1) and urea (urine) (46-0-0) are the fastest-acting organic fertilizers, lasting only a couple of weeks.

To boost the nitrogen content of your soils, apply nitrogen rich urea (42-46 percent N), feathers (15 percent N), blood meal (12.5 percent N), bat guano (12.3 percent N) or dried blood (12 percent N). Manures are usually less expensive than other animal by-products.

Organic amendments highest in phosphorus include rock phosphate (20-33 percent P), bone meal (15-27 percent P) and colloidal phosphate (17-25 percent P). High in potassium are kelp (4-13 percent K), wood ash (3-7 percent K), granite meal (3-6 percent K) and greensand (5 percent K).

To make soil less acidic, gardeners want materials rich in calcium, including clam shells, ground shell marl, oyster shells, wood ashes dolomite and gypsum (all are at least 30 percent calcium carbonate or straight calcium).

To obtain a copy of Penhallegon’s “Values of Organic Fertilizers,” send a request along with a self-addressed, stamped, legal-sized envelope to: Lane County Office, OSU Extension Service, 950 West 13th Ave., Eugene, OR 97402.

By: Carol Savonen Source: Ross Penhallegon

Cover Crops in Oregon

If you are interested in learning more about cover crops and how they perform in Oregon conditions, you might want to read “Using Cover Crops in Oregon.” This 50-page booklet, originally published by the Oregon State University Extension Service for growers, is based on input from farmers and a wide range of OSU faculty, making it particularly applicable to conditions in the Pacific Northwest. The information in the booklet is also available on the Web.

The booklet provides detailed information on specific cover crops suitable for Oregon. For more information on “Cover Crops in Oregon,” EM 8704, visit our on-line catalog. Our publications and video catalog at: http://eesc.oregonstate.edu/agcomwebfile/edmat shows which publications are available on the Web and which can be ordered as printed publications.

By: Carol Savonen
OSU Extension Service October Garden Hints For Western Oregon

- Recycle disease-free plant material and kitchen vegetable scraps into compost. Do not compost diseased plants unless you are using the “hot compost” method (120° to 150°F).

- Clean and paint greenhouses and cold frames for plant storage and winter growth.

- Harvest sunflower heads; use seed for birdseed or roast for personal use.

- Dig and store potatoes; keep in darkness, moderate humidity, temperature about 40°F. Discard unused potatoes if they sprout. Do not use as seed potatoes for next year.

- Harvest and immediately dry filberts and walnuts; dry at 95° to 100°F.

- Ripen green tomatoes indoors. Check often and discard rotting fruit.

- Harvest and store apples; keep at about 40°F, moderate humidity.

- Spray stone fruit trees to prevent various fungal and bacterial diseases. Use copper fungicides. Obtain a copy of Managing Diseases and Insects in Home Orchards (EC 631) from your local Extension office.

- Place mulch over roots of roses, azaleas, rhododendrons for winter protection.

- Place hanging pots of fuchsias where they won’t freeze. Don’t cut back until spring.

- Trim or stake bushy herbaceous perennials to prevent wind damage.

- Pot and store tulips and daffodils to force into early bloom in December and January.

- Early October: Begin manipulating light to force Christmas cactus to bloom in late December.

- Store garden supplies and fertilizers in a safe, dry place out of reach of children.

- Cover asparagus and rhubarb beds with a mulch of manure or compost.

- Propagate chrysanthemums, fuchsias, geraniums by stem-cuttings.

- Remove and dispose of windfall apples that might be harboring apple maggot or codling moth larvae.

- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Do not treat unless a problem is identified.

- Rake and destroy diseased leaves (apple, cherry, rose, etc.).

- Clean up annual flower beds; mulch with manure or compost.

- Dig and divide rhubarb. (Should be done about every 4 years.)

- Dig and store geraniums, tuberous begonias, dahlias, gladiolus.

- Control lawn weeds while they are small.

- Take care of soil drainage needs of lawns before rain begins.

- Place mulch around berries for winter protection.

- Save seeds from the vegetable and flower garden, dry, date, label, and store.

- Plant ground covers and shrubs.

- Trap moles and gophers.

- Clean and oil tools and equipment before storing for winter.

- Plant garlic for harvesting next summer.

- Register to become an OSU Master Gardener volunteer with your local Extension office, or check the Web for more information (http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg/).

Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices. Always identify and monitor problems before acting. First consider cultural controls; then physical, biological, and chemical controls (which include insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, organic and synthetic pesticides). Always consider the least toxic approach first.
Organic Gardening

Tip of the Month

Leave attractive dried flowers and ornamental grass seed heads as long as they look good. These will provide food for the birds.