This Month's Master Gardener™ Calendar

**Thursday, September 1, Insect Committee Meeting. 10am-2pm.** MG office.

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

**September 9, Deadline for October Tiller**

**Thursday, September 15, 2005. Insect Committee Meeting. 10am-2pm.** MG office.

**General Meeting Date Change Saturday, September 17. Mushroom farm tour in Yamhill 11:00am** (See info on page 7)

**Saturday, October 8, 10am** Annual YCMG Plant trade. For info email, dowling1290@msn.com

**Other Events**

**Thursday, September 22, 7:00pm Cheahmill Chapter NPSO Meeting: Adaptations of Oregon Native Plants.** Tanya Harvey will show slides and talk about some of the many ways our native plants have adapted. Carnegie Room, McMinnville Library.
From the President by Pam Dowling

This summer has sure flown by! Many of us have been busy attending classes at Mini College and staffing the plant clinics at fairs. We enjoyed a lovely garden tour/progressive dinner last month with a big thanks to Polly, Gail, Carol, Lynn, and Ray for opening your wonderful landscapes and homes.

We are in the beginning process of planning a 2006 fall symposium. Al Hanks has prepared a detailed, draft document outlining the requirements for this project including facilities and personnel. The board of directors will be working on these plans in the next few months. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings to provide input.

Hello Flower

About ten years ago I was attending the Country Fair in Eugene and as I was standing nearby, a man on stilts, dressed as a sunflower was walking around. He approached a young girl of about 4 years and said “Hello little girl.” She looked up at him and replied, “Hello Flower.” They proceeded to have a conversation about how things were going that day and finally the sunflower closed the conversation and went off to talk to other people. As he left, she turned to her mother and said “Mommy, when I grow up, I’d like to be a flower.” Over the years, this encounter keeps returning to me, and I continue to be awed by it, which is why I’m sharing it with you.

Now Recruiting for Class of 2006.

If you know of people who also aspire to be a flower when they grow up, or who are just as awed by plants and gardening as we all are, be sure to tell them about the OSU Master Gardener Program. We are now taking applications for 2006. Application forms are available in the Office or on the website. As usual, classes will begin in January 2006 and be on Thursdays during the day.

Desk Duty

We are still looking for people to sign up for desk duty. A few dedicated individuals are working very hard to keep up with the frequent inquiries from the public. I’d really like to see more people step forward to fill up the schedule. Remember, although there is a minimum requirement for hours on the desk, there is no limit. All desk hours count toward recertification or fulfillment of your enrollment agreement.

An Herbicide Story by Linda McMahan

Recently, a client came into the office and said he had crabgrass in his vegetable garden and wanted to know how to get rid of it. He had gone to a store and purchased Ortho Crabgrass Killer, and brought the bottle with him. He had also done more homework, which is typical of many of our clients. He had gone to a local garden center to figure out how to use the chemical and was told to mix it with another herbicide to make it more effective. Fortunately, he came to us for a second opinion.

Most of you are already aware that crabgrass, although it does occur in the area, is usually not a problem in cultivated situations such as lawns and gardens. It was fortunate that he brought in a sample of his “crabgrass” because it turned out not to be crabgrass at all, but yellow nutsedge, a totally different pest that will invade a garden if it has enough moisture to support it. The other chemical recommended at the local garden center would have had no effect on the nutsedge.

It turns out Ortho Crabgrass Killer will also kill sedges like the invasive yellow nutsedge, but looking closer at the chemicals reveals another problem. The active ingredients in Ortho Crabgrass Killer are two chemicals called octylammonium methanearsonate and dodecylammonium methanearsonate. The product is intended to be applied to lawns in hotter areas of the country where crabgrass invades lawns composed of burmada grass or bluegrass. Although these chemicals are quite effective at killing crabgrass and nutsedge, they are not approved for use in vegetable gardens, although the overall toxicity is relatively low. If this product is used on local lawns, injury may occur to some of the plants.
"Weather" or not for insects

This has been a very strange year for gardening as far as the weather is concerned. Our cool, rainy weather suddenly gave way to a heat spell. Then more rain, now very warm. All this uncertainty has an effect on not only our plants, but our insect population as well. Species that would normally emerge (such as the Saturniid moth I raise) are a month late in emerging from their overwintering stages. The progeny of these late arrivals may not make it to their resting stage before their food is gone and the winter sets in.

Other insects, such as the chinch bug have prospered because of the hot weather recently. They have completed their life cycle earlier this year and are beginning to invade homes because of their tremendous numbers. On the other hand, spiders have not been brought into the MG office in any quantity, lately. Maybe it’s a little early due to the unusual weather, or maybe not many of the fledgling spiders survived the rains and heat. We’ll see!

The butterflies were minimal on our property this year. I attribute this to our late, wet spring. Fatal disease in the caterpillars becomes prevalent when adverse conditions occur. This may have occurred in our swallowtail butterfly populations. Also, many other species are scarce due to the same reason. Many of the moth species I rear each year were hit particularly hard by the strange weather phenomena. Many larvae succumbed to viral insect diseases that normally would not affect them. The food plants that they feed on are stressed and diseased this year as well, decreasing the nutritional value for the caterpillars.

The ecological niches opened by the decline of insect species may invite invasive species, such as the brown marmorated stink bug, accidentally imported from Asia, to increase in number and become serious pests. Agriculture could suffer due to this type of shift in the environment and the stress put on field crops.

Look for more disease organisms on your own garden plants, fewer seeds (due to fewer insect pollinators this year) and a lot less butterflies to grace your garden. Hopefully, next year will begin a new, brighter chapter, with the seasons returning back to normal. There is hope for the future!

Herbicide continued from page 2

"Herbicide" continued from page 2

our more sensitive lawn grasses used in this area.

Aside from the correct identification, appropriate methods for controlling yellow nutsedge in vegetable gardens include using products that contain glyphosate as the active ingredient and are labeled as appropriate for use in vegetable gardens, or hand pulling or digging, although it is difficult to remove all of the “nuts” on the roots that can grow into new plants.

Take home lessons from this story are familiar, but worth repeating:
1. Clients should be advised to read the label carefully, and so should we. Having the product in hand to read the label can provide useful information.
2. Our recommendations should always rely on identification of the pest; we need to do the ID in the office from a sample provided by the client rather than accept the identification provided by the client.
3. We need to continue to follow the recommendations in the PNW books, even when these counter advice given to homeowners by another source.
4. We never recommend mixing chemicals for particular uses unless this occurs in the PNW books or on the label for the pesticide.
5. Just because a product is sold in our area does not mean it is appropriate for use in our area.
6. We need to continue to provide the high quality service that keeps our clients returning to us for the sound advice we provide.

My thanks to Susan Aldrich-Markham and Tom Cook for information about this produce and appropriate control methods for yellow nutsedge.

OREGON GARDEN MEMBERSHIP

Once again, the Yamhill County Master Gardener Association has purchased a membership to the Oregon Garden. This membership contains passes that are available for YCMGA members to use. Our pass admits 2 adults in the same household and up to 4 children under 18, plus 1 free guest with each visit.

This pass is in the Extension office at Bev Boersma’s desk. It is a good idea to call ahead to reserve it. A new requirement this year is ID for members at the Oregon Garden gate. Take your orange MG badge to show that you are a member of YCMGA and thus entitled to use the YCMGA membership pass.

Enjoy many trips this summer, fall, and winter to the Oregon Garden. Submitted by Anna Ashby
From the Greenhouse....by Gail Price

Well, the rain went away and the “too hot” weather showed up just like I knew it would. Morning and evening I run around and water a little here and a little there. The soaker hoses and a few drippers are helping with the job. I do have to keep a close eye on the pots around the house and the “plants-in-waiting” outside the greenhouse. I think some people water pots twice a day but I have managed to water just once a day. I don’t have any hanging pots because they need more water.

Speaking of water, we finally have the water system working pretty well at the demo garden at the fairgrounds. Jake Hurlbert came to our aid and fixed a couple of our plumbing problems. Sylvia Connor bit the bullet and mastered the electronic timer that we have running all the beds. There are seven different zones that she had to contend with. We still have a problem though as all of the mechanical stuff is in the greenhouse and it is too hot in there. We are probably melting everything plastic as I write this. We must figure out how to cool that place down. A new fan would help I suppose, and a very dense shade cloth would help too.

Anyway, parts of the garden have been beautiful this summer. If you haven’t seen it (and I don’t think many of you have), you should go before all the flow- ers wear out in this heat. The pots in the main garden have been particularly beautiful. We stuffed them with the leftover plants from the plant sale. Most of these plants we grew in the greenhouse. We also added some of the huge geraniums that Bailey’s Nursery donated for the sale. I must say it again -- they are beautiful.

What we call the “middle bed” is very pretty also. It too is planted with leftover sale plants. We also grew a few of those plants specifically for that bed. If you make it down to see the garden you may notice a weed cover material in this bed. We had to do this to keep the fairground feral cats (nasty things) from tearing up the newly planted flowers. The flowers have done well growing through the cloth and have nearly spread enough to cover it. The cats now get into the beds to find cool places under the large flowers. We have put gallon size flower pots in the beds to take up the space the cats might occupy. It’s not real pretty, but most are covered by the plant foliage.

Right now we are meeting the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 9:00am. We are keeping the flow- ers deadheaded, sprucing up the beds, pulling weeds and keeping tabs on the water system. About the middle of September we will start going to work every Tuesday. There is always lots to do getting the garden ready for winter. We have plans to redo some beds and fall is a good time to get that done. Perennials and shrubs can begin to get established if planted in the fall. We hope to find some interesting plants at the fall sales. At least it is a good excuse to go visit nurseries before they close down for the winter.

Oh yes, we never turn down new garden committee members. You can help us dig and divide, or dig and “chuck ‘em out”, or plan new bed designs and plant new plants -- it’s all fun. Why, you can even help herd cats. Come join us!

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Book Looks....YCMGA Library Committee Report by Janet Hanson

Grow Your Own Native Landscape
by Michael Leigh

This is an interesting book for those of you who are Native Plant lovers. It is a good introduction to native plants, collecting plant material from natural settings, and in depth instruction on propagation and salvaging of native plants. The majority of the book is dedicated to a description and detailed information on more than 80 native plants. Included are pictures of leaves, seeds, flowers, etc. to help in identification. Though it concentrates on Western Washington and Puget Sound lowland native plants you will recognize most are also found in our area.
One of the smallest of herbs, thyme has played a large role throughout history in medicine, religion, cookery and folklore. Best known now for its use in the kitchen, thyme can add beauty and fragrance to your garden landscape.

You can easily have a supply of fresh thyme for cooking just a few steps away from your kitchen door, according to Joyce Schillen, Master Gardener with the Jackson County office of the Oregon State University Extension Service.

Thyme thrives in hot, dry, Mediterranean-like climates, which makes it a winner in hot summer gardens. Out of more than 400 varieties of thyme that exist in nature, dozens are available at nurseries. There’s common thyme that forms small bushes, low-growing silver thyme, mat-forming caraway thyme that truly smells and tastes like caraway, lemon thyme in varieties that grow into both small mounds or flat mats and creeping thyme ground covers that bloom in variously-colored blossoms.

Give thyme well-drained soil, full sun and a weekly watering and it will nearly leap out of the ground in its rush to grow. A spring application of fertilizer rich in trace elements, such as seaweed, may increase fragrance and flavor. The best-flavored culinary varieties are narrow-leaf French thyme (Thymus vulgaris cv.), broadleaf English thyme, lemon thyme (T. x citriodorus), and “mother of thyme” (T. praecox ssp. arcticus).

Thyme is rich in history. It came to North America with the first colonialists to be used both as a food preservative and as a medicine. Although not native to North America, it quickly naturalized and spread across the continent.

Used to season appetizers, breads, beverages, salads, soups, sauces, meat entrees, eggs, cheeses, vegetables, oils, vinegars, and even fruits and desserts, thyme’s strong, pungent flavor is best used with restraint.

Start with a teaspoon per recipe, for instance, and experiment to see how much you like. When adding it to hot foods such as soup, stir it in during the last half hour of cooking to avoid bitterness. In general, use two to three times the amount of fresh herb as dried.

Although some herbs remain evergreen throughout the winter, she said the flavorful oils are at their best just before flowers open in late spring to early summer.

Thyme flowers are edible, let a few develop so you can surprise friends and family with the tiny blossoms floating on tea or sprinkled on a salad or casserole.

To dry thyme for future use, place rinsed and dried stems in a dehydrator at 105 degrees for two hours, then turn the temperature down to 95 degrees. It takes less than a day to reach the crisp-dry stage. A dehydrator gives best results, but if you have no dehydrator, put it in a low oven with the door left open to let moisture escape, or microwave a minute at a time until dry.

In the language of flowers, thyme means thriftiness, courage, strength, and happiness. It does, indeed, strengthen a pale pot of soup and bring happiness to the tongue.

By: Peg Herring Source: Joyce Schillen

Let Your Annuals Seed Themselves This Fall

Instead of planting flowers every spring, let annuals self-sow in the fall. Seedlings come up in the spring, when and where they are best suited to grow. Then thin the patch to allow survival of the fittest and to sculpt the lines of color you want in your garden.

Sweet peas, sunflowers, and annual delphiniums poppies, calendula, nasturtiums, clarkia, alyssum, even petunias can be nurtured to come back year-to-year. Annual herbs also are willing self-sowers. Dill, fennel, and cilantro come back every year from seed heads left to overwinter.

Annual plants love to go to seed. Most of the summer we need to deadhead and fertilize annuals to keep them blooming and to postpone seed development. Late in the season, let a few of your annuals go to seed. Let the flower heads dry and droop. The wind, the birds, and the plants themselves will scatter ripe seeds.

Some cultivars will not come back the following year ‘true to type’ due to hybridizing that will occur. That isn’t really a problem— it just means instead of having a pure stand of all white alyssum, you may end up with some splashes of purple. Serendipity.

By: Peg Herring Source: Ann VanDerZanden
There’s Still Time to Plant Greens, Garlic, Cover Crops

There’s still time in late September and into October to plant some cool season veggies and cover crops. But don’t dawdle. The earlier you plant, the more chance your seedlings get roots established before winter rains start and the sun loses its power to help the plants grow well.

Spinach (Winter Bloomsdale and Savoy) and corn salad for spring harvest can still be planted from transplants in October.

September into early October is also the perfect time to plant garlic cloves for next summer’s harvest. You should plant cloves about three inches deep so that the tip of the clove is two inches below the soil surface.

Cover crops such as crimson clover, annual rye, Austrian field peas or fava beans can still do well if planted as soon as possible. These cover crops will add organic materials to the soil and protect garden soil from the erosive action of winter rains. Crimson clover, fava beans and Austrian field peas, all legumes, also add nitrogen to the soil. And favas provide a crop of large, edible, flat beans early the following summer.

Late cabbage, cauliflower, chard, lettuce, overwintering onions or kale can still be planted from “starts” or transplants purchased from your local nursery. But be sure that the varieties are “winter” varieties, not just leftovers from summer.

All overwintering crops need well-drained soil and full sunlight.

By: Carol Savonen
Source: Pat Patterson, Ross Penhallegon

Start Controlling Garden Slugs in Early Fall

Here’s a slug control secret from an expert: It works best to apply slug bait once the cool wet weather of autumn sets in and the days get shorter.

Start baiting in late September or early October, advises Oregon State University entomologist Glenn Fisher. The early morning dews of autumn and the first few rains of fall moisten the parched landscape enough to draw slugs to the soil surface to feed, mate and begin laying eggs. Then it is the optimal time to bait.

Winter and spring can be too wet and cold, keeping slugs underground while the bait dissolves on the soil surface. Summer is too hot - slugs spend most of their time hiding.

Slugs lay eggs in the fall after the rains start. If you can kill the slugs before they lay eggs, you have won half the battle.

Metaldehyde bait kills slugs by destroying their mucous secreting cells. Without copious amounts of mucous, they dry out and die.

Research at OSU has indicated that small, compact pellets of metaldehyde bait evenly scattered over the soil consistently reduce slug populations better than liquids or large pellets.

Iron phosphate slug bait products such as “Sluggo,” “Escar-Go!” and “Worry Free” slug and snail bait are much less toxic than metaldehyde, but are not as effective.

But iron phosphate products are much better at getting rid of slugs than no slug bait at all, he said. Plus, the iron phosphate baits are a welcome choice to those who are worried about toxicity of metaldehyde to children, pets and other organisms.

• There are fewer slugs in annual crops than perennial crops. This relates to the fact that the more plant residue there is in the garden, the greater the slug population.
• Most of Oregon’s 10 species of pest slugs are native.  "Slugs" continued on page 7
OSU Extension Service September Garden Hints For Western Oregon

• Apply parasitic nematodes to soil beneath rhododendrons and azaleas affected by root weevils.
• Harvest winter squash when the “ground spot” changes from white to a cream or gold color.
• Plant or transplant woody ornamentals and mature herbaceous perennials.
• Plant garden cover crops as garden is harvested. Spread manure or compost over unplanted garden areas.
• Pick and store winter squash; mulch carrot rows for winter harvesting.
• Spray holly for leaf and twig blight, blueberries for stem canker as needed.
• Reduce water on trees, shrubs, and vines east of Cascades to harden them off for winter.
• Plant daffodils, tulips, and crocus for spring bloom. Work calcium and phosphorus into the soil below the bulbs at planting time.
• Divide peonies and iris.
• Clean houseplants, check for insects, and repot if necessary; then bring them indoors.
• Protect tomatoes and/or pick green tomatoes and ripen indoors if frost threatens.
• Use stakes to support tall flowers and to keep them from blowing over in fall winds.
• Bait for slugs with traps or iron phosphate products that are safe for use around pets.
• Dig, clean, and store tuberous begonias if frost threatens.
• Harvest potatoes when the tops die down. Store them in a dark location.
• Prepare compost pile for recycling vegetation from garden and deciduous trees. Do not compost diseased or insect-infested plant material.

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.

“Slugs” continued from page 6 to Europe and Asia. They spend most of their time underground in the soil, especially in the heat of the summer. They come to the surface at night to feed on grass seeds, rootlets and young seedlings as well as your garden plants.
• The deeper and the more often you work the soil, the fewer the slugs.
• There are far more slugs in your garden than you will ever see. When you take a flashlight out at night, you’ll see lots of slugs. Up to 40 slugs have found in one crown of perennial ryegrass.

And that’s just the tip of the iceberg, studies have shown that slugs observed on the soil represent only about 10 percent of the slug population in that area. The rest are underground digesting food, laying eggs and feeding on rootlets and endosperm of seeds. Slugs have been found as deep as three or four feet down in cracked clay, crevices and night crawler tracks.”

By: Carol Savonen Source: Glenn Fisher

Mushroom Farm Tour

Saturday, September 17th at about 11:00 AM we will have a tour at a mushroom farm in Yamhill.

Directions to the farm:
• Find your way to Yamhill.
• At the north end of town turn left to get onto Pike Rd. (signs point to Camp Yamhill and Bailey’s Nursery)
• Go approximately 7/10 mile and turn right on Bishop Scott Rd. (Polled Hereford sign at corner)
• Go approximately 1.6 miles and turn right on Lilac Hill RD.
• Turn left at first road into the mushroom farm (large complex of metal and Quonset hut buildings)
Yamhill County OSU Master Gardener™ Newsletter

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We're on the Web!
http://extension.oregonstate.edu/pages/ycmga.html

Organic Gardening
Tip of the Month

As you are cleaning up the garden for fall, be sure to add your trimmings and dead vegetable plants to your compost pile. Do not add any plant which showed signs of a disease.

The Tiller

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General meetings of the Yamhill County Master Gardeners™ Association as announced in the Tiller, Open to the Public.

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