OFF TO A GREAT START

The Master Gardener class of 2015 is off to a great start. We have 16 students who are again taking in enough information to create volumes of material. Remember: don't get overwhelmed by what you are hearing and trying to take in—you have a lifetime of learning ahead. What often occurs is that you don't remember the lessons until you need them for yourselves in your own world of plants and gardening!

Attending with the trainees has been an encouraging number of veterans who are joining in for the 2nd (or more) ‘go round’; reports so far have been very positive, with one of you stating that you learned more on the class about landscaping then you did on the first try. You confirmed what was stated above. It has been exciting to see so many of you joining in to ‘relearn’ what you may have missed the first time that you attended the course.

A note to those of you who are taking the course for the first time. One of the most useful things that you may want to try out is to connect to the links that are given to you in class each week. Although your handbook will provide you much useful information, it is helpful to go back to notes after each lecture to see that there is so much more out there that you can research easily on your own.

This will become especially useful to you later in the year in the plant clinic work that you will do as a volunteer here in the office after the course is over.

An example given by John Punches was: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg/. When I went to this site, I found the following publication about what trees to plant under power lines that won’t grow into them under the “Ask an expert” entry: http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/19522/ec1438.pdf. Handy, huh? And there are so many more publications that are listed. The amounts of information you can find on specific topics is limitless.

One last thought: You are not meant to be a walking encyclopedia. But learning how to use the existing resources will serve you well. OSU has provided us a great place to begin research online. If you can't find the answer there, you will have many more publications to check out that are provided by one of many other land grant colleges and universities where we always can turn to first to learn about the latest research available on all sorts of topics.

The world is your oyster—or can be, with a bit of Googling!

~ Scott Thiemann ~
Meeting Called to Order 10:02 am
Present: Saloma Clarence, Debbie Carroll, Mary Jacobs, Terry Olin, Diana St. Marie, Scott Thiemann, Lana Larsen, Bobbie Gross, Janet Janowicz, and MaryAnne Buckles
Guests: Tony Baron (City of Brookings Parks and Rec Services), Margie House (OSU Extension, 4-H program)

OLD BUSINESS
Donations of $25 were made to Gold Beach and Pacific School Districts for a Safe and Sober Graduation.
Status of Jr. Master Gardener Funds:
The Plant Sale Committee spent $157 on new carts
Purchases can still be made by K School ($128.10) and Riley Creek Gardens ($75.02) with receipts to Cheryl for reimbursement. The account needs to be closed as soon as possible for tax reasons, and these funds should be utilized ASAP.

NEW BUSINESS
4-H Programs in Brookings
Margie House gave a presentation on the status of the 4-H programs in Brookings. The YTP program continues to be a success. The grant from the Gardens Market project has 3 of the students taking produce to the Farmer’s Market in Brookings. These students have benefitted greatly from the program and are showing improved confidence and making friends and regular customers at the Market.

The Brookings School District is moving forward with a new garden at the high school that will specifically be for the school kitchen. This project has been named “The Bridge.” Gold Beach and Port Orford are also pursuing grant funds for kitchen gardens.

Through various donations and grants, the Brookings schools are pursuing ADA accessibility improvements and repairs at the Little Bear Patch Garden and funding for The Bridge project. Margie requested a $2,000 donation from the CCMGA for lumber for raised beds at The Bridge. She offered that students would take plants left over after the annual Plant Sale and hold their own Plant Sale, with proceeds returned to CCMGA.

Projects at Azalea Park
Tony Baron gave a presentation on Azalea Park projects that the Parks and Rec Department is actively doing. The azaleas are in various states of decline throughout the Park. In cooperation with the Azalea Park Foundation, the City would like to develop a project to rejuvenate the azaleas. The City has invited an expert, Dick Cavender, to visit the Park and assist in developing a plan to improve the health of the azaleas. Tony requested support from the CCMGA in this program. He is looking for assistance from the group to dispel the public perception of the City just going into the Park and chopping on the plants. Debbie Carroll and Bobbie Gross expressed interest in supporting this project.

In addition to the azalea rejuvenation project, The Foundation is pursuing a community garden at the Park in the location of the volleyball field. The project would be an incubator for plants and volunteers. The Foundation will manage this project, Tony suggested that it may also be a projects master gardeners could be involved with.

Budgets
Terry Olin presented a budget of $720 submitted by Cathe Barter for the Brambles Newsletter and historian costs; Mary Jacobs presented a budget of $2,385 for projects including raised bed construction and greenhouse repairs at Riley Creek Garden; Diana St. Marie presented a budget of $3,000 to support the 2015 Plant Sale.

Mary Jacobs made a motion to approve the budgets; the motion was seconded by Diana St. Marie, and passed. The Plant Sale committee also requested to be reimbursed $150 for soil purchased for the Plant Sale that was used for other purposes. A motion was made by Saloma Clarence to approve the request; the motion was seconded by Debbie Carroll, and passed.

There was a discussion of using the $1,040 Chuck Stanton memorial fund to contribute to the 4-H programs in Brookings. Saloma and Debbie will attempt to contact Chuck’s widow (Audie) to see if she likes that idea. A memorial plaque at the garden would be a condition of that donation.

TREASURERS REPORT
Terry Olin presented the new protocol for reimbursements; she has developed a new form for reimbursement request. She has also set up bill pay with the bank, which will reduce the turnaround time for reimbursements and allow her to process requests from anywhere. Terry requested that one person from each committee submit requests, so she knows who to contact for questions. She also reminded the group that annual CCMGA membership payments are currently due. (See page 4 for payment details).

COMMITTEE REPORTS
Kalmiopsis School—no report
Riley Creek Garden—Mary Jacobs reported that seeds have been ordered to start brassicas and herbs in February and tomatoes in late February to early March. She is working to get the remaining wintering crops in the garden to the cafeteria. Glen Crawl continues to work on maintenance at the greenhouse and garden. Head Start program still has kids at the garden one day per week doing primarily carpentry.
COMMITTEE REPORTS (Cont.)

Ritchey Garden--no report

Plant Sale Committee--Diana St. Marie reported that the construction of compost bins at the high school is moving forward. Janet Janowicz volunteered to help with this effort. Students have been starting lupine seeds in the greenhouse and are excited to see them start to sprout. Plants in the greenhouse were not thriving, half of them have been moved outside and the plants seem to be doing better now. The greenhouses at Riley Creek are full with succulents and they are now using a supplemental private greenhouse to house them. Carol and Diana are at the high school greenhouse on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and invited anyone interested to stop in. Terry indicated she welcomes guests at the Riley Creek greenhouse as well, but due to space considerations it would be best to have just one other person there at a time.

PROGRAM ASSISTANT’S REPORT
Scott Thiemann reported that there are 16 new students for the 2015 class. He wants to engage these students in volunteer projects early this year. Ten of the 16 students have already submitted their information for background checks. Scott would like for veterans to contact their fellow students and solicit support for upcoming projects and Board activities.

Scott is also pursuing monthly presentations at the library. He is considering 8 to 9 programs from March to October. Possible topics include ornamental gardening, bees, and CSA’s. He invited the membership to suggest additional topics that may be appropriate.

Scott also reported that we are close to rolling out a Facebook page for CCMGA.

Finally, there was a discussion about the March meeting in Brookings; it was decided to hold the Board meeting from 10 am to 12 noon, and the presentation from 12 noon to 1 pm. Attendees are invited to bring a sack lunch. Gold Beach will be hosting our February 18 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 pm.

Secretary, Debbie Carroll

Meetings ~ 3rd Wednesday of every month at 10 am ~ will alternate between Brookings and Gold Beach. [Odd months in Brookings and even months in Gold Beach]
ANNUAL PLANT SALE

Diana St. Marie and Terry Olin

Things are starting to pick up a little at the greenhouses. We had so many plants in the high school greenhouse on the tables, counter and floor, we were tripping over them and having a heck of a time watering. As much as we didn't want to, we moved many outside and are praying for temps above 40 degrees. It is now much easier moving around the greenhouse. Carol and I spent a couple of hours last week transplanting into gallon-sized pots. We have not scheduled a “potting party” yet. Carol did send out some dates and times she will be in the greenhouse and I will be doing the same soon. These are the times veterans and trainees could come to the greenhouse and help with whatever we are doing on that day which generally would be transplanting but we do have cleaning days occasionally. All of our watering is now done by hand. A couple of trainees have expressed an interest in learning our process and helping with the watering which will be GREATLY appreciated!!

Terry has been working in the Riley Creek greenhouse caring for all the succulents. One of the new trainees informed Terry she had a lot of succulents she would like to donate for the Plant Sale. Thank you so much Ali. I received a call from a local resident who also has plants to donate. We will be visiting her soon.

When Carol is not transplanting, she has been busy putting together our three new carts that were ordered with $157.23 we were allocated at the last meeting. They are going to be a blessing when moving plants, soil, compost material etc.

If any of you would like to learn our procedure and join the rotation to check greenhouses, let us know. You can email me dstmarie65@gmail.com or Terry yantis@gmail.com or give me a call at 541-247-6250.

♥♥  ♥♥

CURRY COUNTY GARDEN LOCATIONS

RILEY CREEK GARDEN, 94350 6th Street, Gold Beach, contact Mary Jacobs at 541-698-7703 jacomary@gmail.com

GOLD BEACH HIGH SCHOOL, 29316 Ellensburg, greenhouse, contact Diana St. Marie 541-247-6250 stmarie65@gmail.com

DRIFTWOOD ELEMENTARY* in Port Orford

PORT ORFORD COMMUNITY GARDEN, Contact George Bennett 541-332-0239, georgebennett@frontier.com

KALMIOPSIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
aka K School Garden aka Little Bear Patch aka The Patch
650 Easy St, Brookings, OR Contact Bill Eller 541-469-1878 ellerlinda@hotmail.com
** See us at Little Bear Patch Garden
kschoolgarden.blogspot.com Help needed for KASPER (Kids After School Program for Education and Recreation at Kalmiopsis Elementary); Michelle Prudden's YTP (Youth Transition Program at Brookings High School) group funded by a 4H grant

 RITCHEY GARDEN, 29390 Ellensburg, OSU Ext. Office, right side of the building and on the front left. Contact co-chairs Saloma Clarence 541-373-0170 salomadee@gmail.com and Karen Sinkala, 541-25-5255 karty_san@hotmail.com
Riley Creek School Garden

January seems to be the month to do theoretical gardening. I've browsed the catalogues, looked at my records, and perused comments and emails from teachers and fellow master gardeners. Some seeds have arrived from Territorial seeds. As usual, Cathy Boden has secured a donation of 2014 seeds from 101 plants. This year, I am hoping to use reasonable discretion in choosing what to plant with the express goal of increasing the amount of food raised for the cafeteria.

The plan is to start cool weather crops around the first of February—brassicas, lettuce, and celery in the greenhouse and peas outside. Later in February and early May, I will be starting herbs and tomatoes. I will be starting 500 Sungold tomato plants this year. They are much in demand. The goal is to have healthy vegetables and herbs for sale in the school lobby, the Plant Sale, and a few for our garden. Please call or e-mail me with specific requests.

The garden beds are mostly covered in straw for the winter. The kids helped harvest and shuck last year’s fava beans. We harvested enough to plant three additional beds in favas for our current cover crop. Paul Smith donated rust-free garlic and the young plants look healthy. The bok choy bolted over the winter but there is a bed of healthy kale and quite a few wintered-over carrots that I hope to bring to the cafeteria in the next couple of weeks.

Due to Scott’s encouragement, I have signed on with the Wwoofer (Worldwide Opportunities in Organic Farming) Program. Starting in April and in conjunction with Jorden Gail, I will be hosting two Wwoofers at a time for two weeks at a time. The plan is to have then help at Riley Creek for at least one half day per week. I have been sorting through applications for this spring with the intent of finding help with bed and trellis construction.

Glen Kraal continues to fix electricity, doors, water issues, and whatever else needs maintaining. Please thank him, if you see him.

The Riley Creek Garden received a myrtlewood plaque for Gardener of the Year. My most consistent summer helpers, Carol Hobbs and the Thomas kids (Floyd, Rachel, and Flynn) came to the presentation at the fairgrounds and were taking the plaque back to Riley Creek School.

Please contact Mary Jacobs at 541-698-7703 jacomary@gmail.com 94350 6th Street, Gold Beach.

Riley Creek at rest 2015; fava bean cover crop. Photos courtesy of Mary Jacobs.

“It always amazes me to look at the little, wrinkled brown seeds and think of the rainbows in ’em,” said Captain Jim. "When I ponder on them seeds I don't find it nowise hard to believe that we've got souls that'll live in other worlds. You couldn't hardly believe there was life in them tiny things, some no bigger than grains of dust, let alone colour and scent, if you hadn't seen the miracle, could you?" L.M. Montgomery, Anne's House of Dreams

“Seeds have the power to preserve species, to enhance cultural as well as genetic diversity, to counter economic monopoly and to check the advance of conformity on all its many fronts.” — Michael Pollan, Second Nature: A Gardener's Education

“Today you are planting seeds to your dream. Be patient because it will be a large harvest.”— Chris Burkmenn
GARDEN PATCH POINTERS

Most of us are patting our backs for preparing for freezing and rainy weather by covering valuable plants during any very cold and wet weather. Except for deciduous bushes and trees, do not prune until after the 15th of March at the earliest. Do not prune tropical bushes or fuchsias as more damage could be done if we have more cold weather. Check with your Chamber of Commerce for annual freeze dates in your area.

The beginning of February is a good time to finish up the chores outlined for January. How much you can accomplish will depend on how cool or rainy the weather is during the next few weeks. The last two weeks of February are a prelude to spring. A mild February should allow you to turn under winter mulches, throw in fertilizer, and prepare the garden beds for late plantings.

If you have a shrub that did not do well last year, try relocating it to a different spot and working some good amendments into the soil. Make sure the area has good drainage and proper sun and wind requirements. February is the last time to replant existing dormant camellias, azaleas, and other deciduous plants. Look for new varieties at the nursery for planting now.

PRUNING: All major pruning chores need to be done by mid-February. Do not prune spring flowering trees until after they have bloomed. Tropicals and frost-tipped plants should be left until mid-March or after the last freeze. Crape myrtles will flower more profusely this summer after a light shearing this month. Fuchsias and hydrangeas that were not pruned in the fall should be cut back up to 50% of the bush. I like to stagger the lengths of different branches for a neat, hanging appearance. Prune geraniums by tip pruning branches at the ends if in containers and rotating for a balanced shape. Christmas cactus and fuchsias will benefit with a tip pinch to keep them bushy and balanced.

PEST CONTROL: Moist leaves and debris are rich breeding grounds for pests and diseases. Keep the ground raked and cleared around all plants, including camellias. Potted and hanging plants should be weeded, and cleaned, covering any exposed roots. If you have had problems with fire blight on pears, pyracantha, loquat, or cotoneaster, now is the time to spray with streptomycin for control. Continue the war against snails and slugs.

PREPARE BEDS for spring bulbs such as dahlias by turning the soil, add humus with equal parts of superphosphate and sulfate of potash. Buy the tubers when they are available, plant last year’s crop and the new bulbs in late March or April.

SPRING BULBS: Plant summer blooming bulbs of amaryllis, gladiolus, tuberous begonias, tidigrias, tube-roses, and others when they are available at the nurseries.

PERENNIALS: Pony-packs of many perennials are still available to place in the garden, carnations, columbine, coral bells, single and double daisies, delphinium, fox glove, gazanias, marguerites, penstemon, primroses, and sweet William are among those you will find. The following seeds can be sown directly in the ground (they should be reseed for next year): bachelor buttons, California poppies, larkspurs, lupines, nasturtiums, etc. This is a good time to plant ground covers so they will be established before the hot summer.

ANNUALS: Spring and summer annual seeds can be planted now or plant in small containers in a warm place: ageratum, Alyssum, asters, balsam, bells of Ireland, celosia, cleome, coleus, cosmos, English daisy, gomphrena, helianthus (common sun flower), heliotrope, hollyhock, lobelia, marigold (tagetes) mimulus, nicotiana, petunia, phlox, portulaca, salvia, scabiosa, verbena and zinnias are among those found on the pages and pages of annuals from the catalogs. You can still set out calendula, candytuft, cineraria, Iceland poppies, pansies and violas plants in protected areas.

VEGETABLES: Plants of broccoli and cabbage planted when the ground has reached a temperature of 40º should give you a harvest before mid-May. (When the soil temperature reaches 40º, seeds of beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, carrots, cabbage, celery, chard, garlic, parsnips, peas, potatoes, turnips, and Pakchoi (Asian greens) can be planted in successive plantings of 1 or 2 weeks. When the soil temperature reaches 35º, plant seeds (in 1 to 2 week successions), of: beets, carrots, chard, herbs, kohlrabi, leek, lettuce, onions, parsley, radish, and spinach. Wait for warmer 60º ground temperature before planting seeds of beans, corn, eggplant, okra, peppers, squash, and tomatoes. Plant seeds of: corn, cucumber, eggplant, okra, and summer squash when the soil temperature reaches 80º (usually late May).

BARE ROOT PLANTS of artichokes, asparagus, horseradish and all berry plants should be planted as soon as possible (before they leaf out hopefully). Plant onion, shallot and leek bulbs after the ground reaches 35º, if you did not plant last fall.

WATERING of plants under overhangs and in hanging baskets should not be overlooked during February. Keep cacti and succulents dry for another month. Do not over water your house plants. More house plants die from over watering this time of the year than at any other time. Use the water meter you received for your holiday gift.

FERTILIZING programs start in earnest this month. The principle ingredients of fertilizer include N-nitrogen which encourages growth in the leaves; P-phosphorous for increased bloom production; and K-potash to maintain a healthy root system. A “balanced fertilizer” equates to equal parts of these three nutrients as well as secondary nutrients of calcium, magnesium and sulfur. Micronutrients that plants need include: boron, chlorine, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum, nickel and zinc. Either liquid or slow release fertilizer with micronutrients can be used. Not all plants like or need added fertilizer.

If you have horse or animal fertilizer available to you, this is a good time to add it to your compost pile or in the garden. It gives the soil good humus as well as some nitrogen. (Cont. page 9)
Butterfly Gardening -- Attract Butterflies to Your Garden

Butterfly populations are declining worldwide due to loss of habitat. Consequently, their food sources there are being lost. Butterflies are a part of the web of life. They help pollinate flowers, and are a source of food for amphibians, birds, etc. Many species of California native and non-native plants provide food and nectar for butterflies and their larvae. You can help conserve butterflies in your own backyard by providing the necessary nectar and larval plants they require to survive during all stages of their life cycle. Here are eight easy steps to follow in creating your own butterfly garden:

- Choose a sunny location.
- Shelter the garden from wind with a screen of shrubs or a fence.
- Add rocks to absorb the sun’s heat and serve as a perch for butterflies to warm their wings.
- Include a small pool of water or mud puddle as a source of mineral nutrients.
- Choose a diversity of plants that will create a long series of bloom as a food source and plant in large clumps.
- Include plants that provide both nectar for the adult butterfly and leaves, flowers and seeds for the larvae to feed.
- DO NOT SPRAY ANY PESTICIDES in your garden.
- Leave a corner unpruned and unweeded for additional habitat.

Common California Butterflies and Their Larval Plants

The female butterfly searches your garden for the specific larval food plants on which she must lay her eggs. Some butterflies, like the Monarch, will lay a single egg on a leaf while other butterflies may lay clusters of eggs together. Here is a sample list of Larval Plants and the butterflies they attract:

- **Aristolochia californica** – Pipevine Swallowtail
- **Asclepias species** – Monarch
- **Ceanothus sp.** – Pale Tiger Swallowtail, California Hairstreak, California Tortoiseshell, Brown Elfin
- **Diascia** – Common Buckeye
- **Eriogonum ‘Grande Rubescens’** – Acmon Blue
- **Foeniculum vulgare ‘Smokey’** – Anise Swallowtail
- **Grasses including Festuca sp., Muhlenbergia sp., Stipa sp., Carex sp. and similar ornamental bunch grasses – California Ringlet and variety of skippers including Sachem, Fiery, Woodland, etc.
- **Lavatera & Mallow sp.** – Painted Lady, West Coast Lady and Common Checkered Skipper
- **Penstemon heterophyllus** – Chalcedon Checkerspot
- **Quercus sp.** – California Sister, Gray Hairstreak, Great Purple Hairstreak and Mournful Duskywing
- **Salix sp.** – Mourning Cloak, Lorquin’s Admiral and Western Tiger Swallowtail
- **Sidalcea malviflora** – West Coast Lady
- **Spiraea sp.** – Spring Azure

Common Nectar Plants for Adult Butterflies

Be sure to have plants in your garden that provide a food source to a variety of adult butterflies year-round. Providing nectar plants in the early spring is important for the early emerging Pipevine Swallowtail while the Monarch and Skippers benefit from the late season bloomers. Many larval plants perform double duty as great nectar plants for adults.

- **Achillea sp. (Yarrow)** – Spring/Summer/Fall
- **Aster sp. (Aster)** – Summer/Fall
- **Bidens sp. (Bur-Marigold)** – Spring/Summer/Fall
- **Buddleia sp. (Butterfly Bush)** – Summer
- **Convolvulus sabatius (Ground Morning Glory)** – Summer
- **Erigeron karvinskianus (Mexican/Santa Barbara Daisy)** – Spring/Summer
- **Lantana sp. (Lantana)** – Spring/Summer/Fall
- **Lavandula sp. (Lavender)** – Spring/Summer
- **Leucanthemum maximum (Shasta Daisy)** – Summer/Fall
- **Nepeta sp (Catmint)** – Summer/Fall
- **Origanum sp. (Oregano)** – Summer
- **Salvia sp. (Sage)** – Spring/Summer/Fall
- **Scabiosa sp. (Pincushion Flower)** – Spring/Summer/Fall
- **Sedum ‘Autumn Joy’ (Stonecrop)** – Summer/Fall
- **Solidago rugosa ‘Fireworks’ (Goldenrod)** – Summer/Fall
- **Verbena bonariensis (Verbena)** – Spring/Summer/Fall

**SHAMROCKS**

GARDEN PATCH POINTERS

By Robert and Hoberley Schuler, M. G. Oregon State University; and NGC & CGCI Garden Study and Landscaping Design Master Consultants

Q: Where does the three-leaf symbol for Saint Patrick’s Day come from and where can I buy the plant? Robert Lowry, Yreka

A: The SHAMROCKS have been the symbol for St. Patrick’s Day because the leaves are divided into three

(Cont. on page 9)
Be on the lookout for azalea-damaging pest

CORVALLIS, Ore. – March 29, 2013  Gardeners and nurseries should be on the lookout this spring for a relatively new pest in Oregon that damages azaleas and rhododendrons, according to experts with the Oregon State University Extension Service.

The azalea lace bug was first confirmed in Oregon in 2009 by OSU researchers after it was found in Washington in 2008.

"On the East Coast, it's caused significant damage and since it's been here, certainly in the Portland area, I've seen a lot of damage," said Weston Miller, an OSU Extension horticulturist.

The pest, known as Stephanitis pyrioides, can survive the winter and breed multiple generations each year, making it particularly worrisome, said entomologist Gail Langellotto, the statewide coordinator of Extension's Master Gardener program.

It becomes active in mid- to late May and early June, when it starts laying eggs. So starting in mid-May, gardeners should keep an eye out for the eggs, which are partially embedded in the tissue underneath leaves, Langellotto said.

With its piercing-sucking mouthparts, the bug feeds on plants in the Ericaceae family, which includes the rhododendron, azalea and piers. Adult and immature bugs eat the leaves, leaving a yellow dot-like pattern on the surface and black fecal spots underneath. Large populations can cause azalea leaves to turn white. On rhododendrons, severe damage may look like iron chlorosis with yellow leaves and green veins. Heavy feeding can kill plants.

Some azaleas are immune to the pest, including Indica alba, Flame Creeper and Delaware Valley White. But Langellotto cautioned that these and other resistant varieties have not been tested in Oregon's climate. Monitoring for the pest and dealing with it early in the season is a gardener's best defense, she said.

Extension educator and entomologist Robin Rosetta noted that azalea lace bugs could be managed using a combination of techniques.

"Hopefully, we will begin to see biological control over time," Rosetta said. "I would hate to see people removing plants that might one day have acceptable biological control."

Biological control is a strategy to reduce pest populations using techniques like introducing natural predators.

Azalea lace bugs are more likely to damage plants in hot, sunny locations or in drought-stressed conditions. So for new plants, choose a partially shaded spot in your yard. Water and fertilize the plant according to the instructions for it.

Natural predators such as tree crickets, earwigs, green lacewings, minute pirate bugs and spiders kill and eat azalea lace bugs. These "good bugs" are more abundant in areas with a variety of trees, shrubs and understory plants, so plant your rhododendrons or azaleas among them, Langellotto recommended.

You can also apply insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils and neem-based products regularly to the bottom of the affected leaves to reduce or prevent further damage, but they will not restore the plant to its untouched appearance.

Additionally, you can spray pesticides that kill insects on contact, such as pyrethroids or carbaryl. Coat the leaves well, including on the underside. Note that some insecticides can harm beneficial insects that eat pests or pollinate plants, Langellotto said. If using pesticides wear protective clothing and follow all label directions.

Rosetta has written a fact sheet for gardeners with information on how to control the pest and what varieties of azaleas resist it. She wrote a similar fact sheet for commercial growers that is available.

Find her photos of the bug and links to other resources.

Author: Denise Ruttan       Source: Gail Langellotto

Winter flowers make a heady statement in the garden

Camellia flowers-- Camellia sasanqua -- appear as early as December.

CORVALLIS, Ore. -- Just as the worst of the weather makes an appearance, the flowers of winter arrive, blooming as cheerfully as the show offs of spring.

“One of the coolest things about gardening in the Pacific Northwest is winter gardens,” said Neil Bell, a horticulturist with Oregon State University's Extension Service. “We have the opportunity to plant things that people who are not aware of or even interested in gardening will look at and be amazed. The way to do that is with flowers and scents.”

One of the most showy of the cold-weather shrubs, Bell said, is Mahonia ‘Charity,’ a relative of native Oregon grape with bountiful spikes of yellow blooms as big as baseball bats. The large evergreen leaves give the plant a tropical look and make it a standout in the shady perspective it thrives in. Snow is no deterrent for this easy-care, 10-foot shrub that will take temperatures down to minus 5. A bonus is the multitude of dark purple berries that feed birds when they especially need the nutrients.
SHAMROCKS (Cont)

Leaflets, a symbol of the trinity. Oxalis acetosella is a perennial and is the most common variety sold at nurseries. It can be kept on a sunny windowsill or planted in the garden. Beware that the new plant you might purchase is likely to be invasive and is considered a weed.

This wonderful article by Master Gardener Valerie Cribbs of Cherry Valley was previously published in this column.

The Meaning of the Green

Every year at this time we see them in abundance with their leaves of threes and fours and we proclaim ourselves lucky when we wear them on our lapels. You can buy them at the florist’s and this is where I started in my quest to discover the meaning of the green.

First of all, I wanted to know, what is the relationship between these lucky green plants called shamrocks to the four-leafed clovers I found as a child that were pressed between the leaves of a book. Sometimes I still open an old book and thrill to the flutter of a small green clover preserved from some day of the past and I wonder, is the good luck valid upon finding a four-leaf clover the second time around?

The shamrock was first used by Saint Patrick as he explained the holy trinity to his followers but the history of its somewhat magical attributes dates back further than St. Patrick. The druids considered the four-leafed clover good luck and the Celts considered the shamrock an effective charm against evil. It’s even rumored that Eve wore a shamrock in the Garden of Eden! (Perhaps she needed some luck after that unfortunate snake incident.)

Each leaf on the clover stands for something different; one stands for hope, one for faith, and one for love and the fourth for luck.

If you like to bring some luck into your garden you can try planting some shamrocks. They’re definitely cool-season plants because they need mild weather to do their best. Planted in January, you could have some nice-sized plants for St. Patrick’s Day. They like fairly moist soil and won’t take kindly to being placed in the hot sun. Keep them in partial or afternoon shade. They’re quite easy to grow. Sow some seeds or transplant into amended soil and may the luck of the Irish bless your garden!

GARDEN PATCH POINTERS (Cont.)

Loose garden soils and potted plants require more nutrients as they are watered more frequently and the nutrients are leached out of the soil. Most plants benefit from a light balanced fertilizer every few weeks. Camellias, epiphyllums, and iris do not require nitrogen this month, so we feed them 0-10-10 fertilizer.

Azaleas, gardenias, and roses may develop yellow foliage in cold weather because of a magnesium shortage. This situation can be fixed with a dose of one tablespoon of Epsom salt per gallon of water before warm weather arrives.

LAWNS— cool-season grasses need a high nitrogen application every 6 weeks to keep them green. Water thoroughly and mow 2 inches high, be sure the mower blades are sharp. If your mower needs a tune-up, now is the time to get it done before the grass season begins.

By Hoberley and Robert H. Schuler
rhcshuler@frontier.com
UC Davis & OSU Master Gardeners and NGC & CGCI
Garden Study and Landscape Design Master Consultants

Growing a Watercress Container Garden

Garnish your food with tasty, shiny watercress leaves — or make a yummy salad

This super-healthy plant is full of many of the vitamins and minerals that your body needs and will help to keep you in tiptop shape. The secret of growing watercress is to keep it in full sun and the soil damp, but make sure it’s never saturated, since overwatering can kill your crop. This project takes four weeks to complete.

Materials Needed: recycled container, seed compost, plastic tray, plastic bottle, watercress seeds, and scissors

1. Fill a recycled container -- After putting holes in the base of the container, fill it 3/4 full of seed compost. Place it onto a plastic tray and wet the soil, using a plastic bottle with a few holes in its lid as a spray.
2. Add watercress seeds -- Sprinkle watercress seeds over the surface of the seed compost. Gently press them into the soil. Cover the container while the seeds germinate.
3. Keep soil moist at all times -- Make sure there’s always water in the plastic tray. Tap water contains many of the minerals watercress needs to grow. The growing process will take four weeks.
4. Trim the watercress -- Snip the top shoots off with a pair of scissors. At this time the watercress will be 6-20 inches (15-50 cm) tall. When you cut it, the plants will regrow quickly and become bushier. Always wash watercress well before eating it.
Ten questions to ask to diagnose a plant problem

OSU entomologist Rick Hilton uses a magnifying glass to examine a female codling moth. (Photo by Lynn Ketchum)

CORVALLIS, Ore. – You may immediately want to know “What’s wrong with my plant?” when your tomatoes or azaleas appear wan.

But don’t stop there. Ask a series of systematic questions to diagnose and effectively address the cause of the malady, advises Neil Bell, horticulturist with the Oregon State University Extension Service.

“The principles of diagnosing a plant problem are very similar to going to a doctor or an auto mechanic," Bell said. "The doctor and the auto mechanic are looking for evidence of the root of the issue."

Asking a series of questions is a practical process that’s flexible and generic enough to accommodate problems with ornamental plants, vegetables, fruit trees and even turf grass, Bell said. This approach will help you decide if the culprit is an insect or a disease, or whether non-living factors such as too much watering or not enough nitrogen triggered the problem. Perhaps the condition you are observing is not really a problem after all.

"Once a client came to me with a strange discoloration of his arborvitae hedge. The hedge had turned a rusty brown color and he was accustomed to a green hedge," Bell said. "But it turned out to be its winter color. In response to cooler temperatures, conifers change color. Some conifers have really spectacular winter color, but for arborvitae, it just looks off color."

Bell suggested some important questions to ask as you begin your investigation:

- What's the identity of the affected plant? Determine whether a "real" problem exists; maybe whatever the plant is doing is normal. What are the characteristics of the plant? How does it display them throughout the year?
- How many plants of the affected species are present?
- How many plants in that group are affected?
- What is the pattern of damage within the population? A uniform pattern indicates non-living, environmental causes of the problem. A random pattern indicates that diseases or pests could be culprits. But don't over-analyze "uniform" versus "random."
- Which part or parts of the plant are affected? Just the leaves, fruit, shoots, a combination of those, or the whole plant?
- What’s the pattern of damage on the leaves and stems of the individual plant? If the damage pattern is uniform or random it can often indicate the cause is non-living or caused by pests.
- What's the pattern of damage on the plant parts?
- What time of year did the symptoms appear?
- Are the symptoms spreading, improving or constant? Pest or disease problems often become worse with time. Environmental problems in some cases look bad for a while but may start to improve.
- Are any signs of a pest present? Signs of a pest could include slug slime trails, rodent mounds or holes, fungal fruiting bodies, or distinct notches cut from the leaf margin "Plant problem diagnosis helps us get to the bottom of the problem so we can address it successfully," Bell said. "You don't want to waste resources on a problem you don't have. Sometimes people spray first and ask questions later. It should be the other way around."

For more information, go online to the PNW Plant Disease Management Handbook and the PNW Insect Management Handbook. You can also bring in samples and photographs of the affected plant for your local Master Gardeners to examine. Find your OSU Extension office. Or submit a question and photograph to OSU Extension's "Ask an Expert" service.

Author: Denise Ruttan           Source: Neil Bell
February Garden Calendar

Planning

- Tune up lawn mower and garden equipment before the busy season begins.
- Have soil tested to determine its nutrient needs. For more information, contact your local Extension office for a list of testing laboratories or view Laboratories Serving Oregon: Soil, Water, Plant Tissue, and Feed Analysis (EM 8677).
- Select and store healthy scion wood for grafting fruit and nut trees. Wrap in damp cloth or peat moss and place in plastic bag. Store in cool place.
- Plan an herb bed for cooking and creating an interesting landscape. For example, choose parsley, sage, chives, and lavender. Choose a sunny spot and plant seeds or transplants once the danger of frost has passed (late-April or early-May in the Willamette Valley and central Coast; June or July in eastern and central Oregon).
- Plan to add herbaceous perennial flowers to your flowering landscape this spring. Examples include candytuft, peony, penstemon, and coneflower.

Maintenance and Clean Up

- Repair winter damage to trees and shrubs.
- Make a cold frame or hotbed to start early vegetables or flowers.
- Fertilize rhubarb with manure or a complete fertilizer.
- Incorporate cover crops or other organic matter into soil.
- Prune and train grapes; make cuttings.
- Prune fruit trees and blueberries.
- Western Oregon: Prune deciduous summer-blooming shrubs and trees.
- Western Oregon: Prune and train trailing blackberries (if not done the prior August); prune back raspberries.
- Western Oregon: Prune fall-bearing raspberries (in late-February or early-March).
- Western Oregon: Prune clematis, Virginia creeper, and other vining ornamentals.

Planting/ Propagation

- Plant windowill container gardens of carrots, lettuce, or parsley.
- Plan to add herbaceous perennial flowers this spring: astilbe, candytuft, peony, and anemone.
- Good time to plant fruit trees and deciduous shrubs. Replace varieties of ornamental plants that are susceptible to disease with resistant cultivars.
- Plant asparagus if the ground is warm enough.
- Plant seed flats of cole crops (cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts), indoors or in a greenhouse.

Pest Monitoring and Management

- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.
- Use delayed-dormant sprays of lime sulfur for fruit and deciduous trees and shrubs.
- Remove cankered limbs from fruit and nut trees for control of diseases such as apple anthracnose, bacterial canker of stone fruit and Eastern filbert blight. Sterilize tools before each new cut.
- Control moles and gophers with traps.
- Western Oregon: Elm leaf beetles and box-elder bugs are emerging from hibernation and may be seen indoors. They are not harmful, but can be a nuisance. Remove them with a vacuum or broom and dustpan.

Houseplants and Indoor Gardening

- Pasteurize soil for starting seedlings in pots or flats, or use clean sterile commercial mixes.
- Central Oregon: Gather branches of quince, forsythia, and flowering cherries; bring indoors to force early bloom.

Choose disease-resistant roses for your yard

CORVALLIS, Ore. March 15, 2013—Roses have such fanciful names and alluring colors, so how do you choose which ones to plant?

"If I'm going to grow roses I tend to grow roses that have fragrance," said Barb Fick, a horticulturist with the Oregon State University Extension Service. "Some people go for color. I also go for disease-resistance."

Fick advises buying roses that are immune to the fungal threats of rust, powdery mildew and black spot. The Pacific Northwest Plant Disease Handbook offers a list of disease-resistant varieties. The handbook cautions that roses that are resistant in one location may be susceptible in another region because different fungal strains may be present.

Roses that smell sweet and are moderately resistant to black spot, powdery mildew and rust include the dark-red Mr. Lincoln; the Double Delight with its shades of reds, pinks and whites; and the pastel pink Tiffany. The orange-red Fragrant Cloud is highly resistant to rust and is moderately resistant to powdery mildew and black spot. The sunset-orange Voodoo has high resistance to all three, according to the handbook.

Floribunda roses, or shrub roses, that resist rust and have moderate resistance to powdery mildew and black spot include the classic pink Cherish and the smoky-orange Marina. The white Class Act is immune to rust and powdery mildew and moderately resistant to black spot. The sunshine-yellow Sunsprite is moderately resistant to all three. One advantage to shrub roses is that they're low-maintenance and hardy, Fick said.

If you want a climbing rose, keep in mind that they require more pruning than shrub roses, Fick said. Install a trellis or use an archway for a climbing rose, which needs space to grow vertically as well as horizontally.

Disease-resistant climbing roses include the fire engine-red Altissimo, which is resistant to rust and has medium resistance to black spot and powdery mildew. The lemon-yellow Golden Showers and the Joseph's Coat in its rouge and peach hues possess moderate resistance to all three. The rich apricot-hued Royal Sunset resists all three.

At the nursery, roses come with bare roots or in a plastic container. For container plants, dig the planting hole twice as wide as the container. For bare-root roses, dig the hole wide enough so you can spread the roots horizontally.

February and March are the months to plant bare-root roses in western Oregon. Plant them in a spot with well-drained soil that will receive six to eight hours of full sun. Water your newly planted rose.

For planting and care tips, view this Extension guide. Although it is geared for high-desert gardeners, the advice also applies to western Oregon.

Author: Denise Ruttan Source: Barbara Fick
The next Curry County Master Gardeners Association Meeting will be February 18—Gold Beach

Curry County Master Gardeners Association
Po Box 1326
Gold Beach, OR 97444

Oregon State University Extension Service offers educational programs, activities, and materials without discrimination based on age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran’s status. Oregon State University Extension Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer.