

# Leaflet

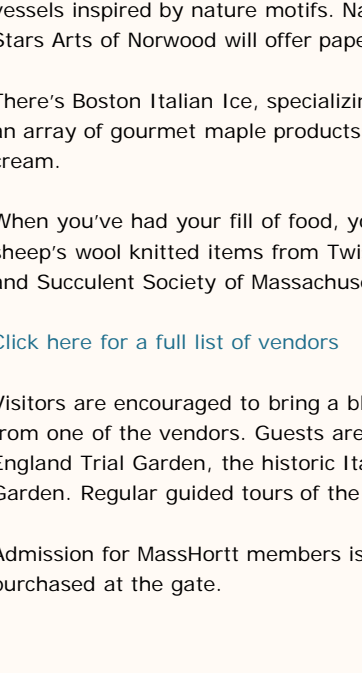
A MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY PUBLICATION

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## Leaflet - August 2010

### Massachusetts Marketplace Festival is This Saturday

What's your summer weakness? Super-rich ice cream? Marinara sauce made from fresh heirloom paste tomatoes? Jams bursting with the flavor of new fruit? Or, is it hand-made crafts? Wearable art and jewelry? Plants to brighten your late-summer garden?

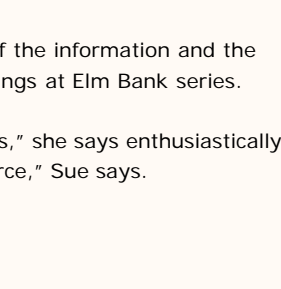


Whatever it is, New England artisans, farmers and specialty food producers will offer it at Elm Bank This Saturday, August 7 as MassHort presents the annual Massachusetts Marketplace Festival. From 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., marketplace vendors will display and sell an array of foods, plants, and crafts representing the finest products from the region's fields, farms, gardens, workshops, and kitchens.

The festival will include a full day of food sampling, shopping, and guided tours of Elm Bank's idyllic gardens. Vendors will be provided by the Nowhere Men, a Beatles cover band with a wide local following.

Over 40 music – all of whom are locally based – will bring their freshest produce and products available for sampling and purchase. There will be jewelry, homemade crafts, baked goods, teas, herbs, fine art, and plants from locations throughout New England. Master Gardeners will offer both gardening advice and programs for children.

A sampling of vendors include Boston's Notting Hill, which offers specialty loose teas from classic greens to full-bodied blacks as well as custom and flavored blends and Boborough's Coutts Specialty Foods, which will have the quality jams and jellies that have made them a New England favorite since 1938. Francis Dornic of Medford will offer hand-thrown terra cotta ceramics: eco-friendly functional bowls, mugs and vases; and hand-designed vessels inspired by nature motifs. Natural Pressings of Canton, ME Sinatra Designs of Norwell, and Blessing Stars Arts of Norwood will offer paper products in varying themes.



There's Boston Italian Ice, specializing in lemon and watermelon ice, as well as fresh-squeezed lemonade; Warren Farm and Sugarhouse with an array of gourmet maple products, salsas and pickles; and Wellesley's White Mountain Creamery with its award-winning homemade ice cream.

When you've had your fill of food, you may want to look at pottery from Weston's The Accidental Potter or try on hand-spun angora and sheep's wool knitted items from Twisted Mysteries on Amherst. There will be cactus and succulents from Teaberry Gardens and the Cactus and Succulent Society of Massachusetts, as well as lilies from Stow Greenhouses and annuals from MassHort's own stock.

[Click here for a full list of vendors](#)

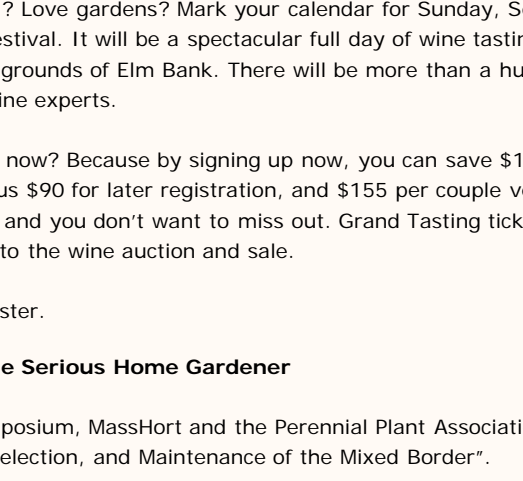
Visitors are encouraged to bring a blanket and enjoy a picnic lunch with family and friends in the gardens - bring your own, or purchase food from one of the vendors. Guests are encouraged to spend some time exploring the many gardens of Elm Bank including the colorful New England Trial Garden, the historic Italianate Garden, Weezie's Garden for Children, Bressingham Garden and the New England Herb Society Garden. Regular guided tours of the gardens will be provided by Massachusetts Master Gardeners.

Admission for MassHort members is \$4, non-member admission is \$6. For children under 12 years, the admission is \$2. Tickets may be purchased at the gate.

### Elm Bank is the Place to Be for Wednesday Evenings

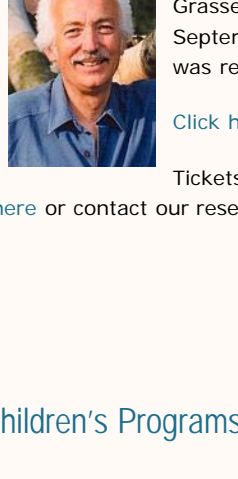
Maybe it's because there's nothing on television. Maybe it's the lemonade and cookies. Hopefully, it's the quality of the information and the first-rate presentations. Whatever the reason, gardeners are flocking this summer to MassHort's Wednesday Evenings at Elm Bank series.

For Doris Shells of Woburn, it's definitely the knowledge being imparted. "Terrific speakers and interesting subjects," she says enthusiastically. For Sue Pearson of Walpole, it's the take-away handouts from the speakers. "They're impressive and a great resource," Sue says.



Mary Arnsberg talks about Hostas at the Wednesday Evenings at Elm Bank series

Each session begins at 6:30 p.m., and early arrivals have the choice of enjoying the Elm Bank gardens in the cool of a late afternoon or getting in a few quick questions of the evening's speaker. The session formally ends at 8 p.m., but it's not unusual for the Q&A to go on quite a while longer. Mary Arnsberg, who spoke on hostas at the July 28 event, was held captive by a crowd (or maybe it was the other way around) until 8:45.



This week, the speaker is Cheryl Monroe and the topic is Clematis. For the uninitiated, Clematis is the Queen of the Climbing Vines and includes a collection of some 300 species and a thousand cultivars. Clematis is ideally suited to a New England climate and some cultivars bloom continuously for up to 16 weeks. If they're underutilized, it's because most gardeners aren't aware of them as a landscaping tool. But being underutilized has its benefits: a beautiful Clematis that will provide years of 'wow' factor in a garden can be had for fifteen dollars.

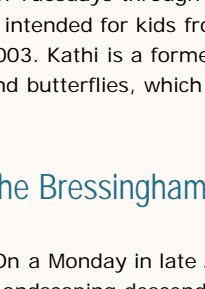
Cheryl Monroe is a Master Gardener who has 50 Clematis on her property. She'll illustrate her talk with blooms from her own garden. She's a delightful speaker who not only knows her subject, but imparts her knowledge with grace and humor.

On August 11, the Wednesday Evening series will tackle the subject of how to cope with the canopy of trees that blankets New England as noted horticulturalist Laura Eisner comes to MassHort to speak on shade gardening. A week later, on August 18, the widely admired speaker Suzanne Mahler will take attendees on a journey through the growing season with a dazzling photographic display of the hottest new perennials and the tried and true favorites for both sunny and shady sites. The seven-week series concludes on August 25 with practical advice on how to care for the trees on your property, and what to do about the growing winter moth problem in Eastern New England.

Admission for MassHort members is \$8; non-members are \$10. All sessions are held in the Education Building; signs point the way from the parking lot.

### Coming Up in September

#### September 19: MassHort Wine Festival



Love wine? Love food? Love gardens? Mark your calendar for Sunday, September 19, 2010 at Elm Bank as MassHort hosts its first Wine Festival. It will be a spectacular full day of wine tasting, superb food, a wine auction and garden tours, all held on the grounds of Elm Bank. There will be more than a hundred wines to taste, a Champagne brunch, celebrity chefs and wine experts.

Why buy your tickets now? Because by signing up now, you can save \$10 to \$20 off the price of a Grand Tasting ticket (\$80 per person versus \$90 for later registration, and \$155 per couple versus \$175). Space for the Champagne brunch will be strictly limited and you don't want to miss out. Grand Tasting tickets will include guided garden tours, the Champagne brunch, wine tastings, and entry to the wine auction and sale.

Please call MassHort at 617-933-4995 to register.

#### September 22: All-day Symposium for the Serious Home Gardener

Reprising last year's standing-room-only symposium, MassHort and the Perennial Plant Association will hold a full-day series of talks built around the theme, "Exploring Design, Plant Selection, and Maintenance of the Mixed Border".

Speakers will include Adrian Bloom of Blooms of Bressingham, Roy Diblik of Northwind Perennial Farm, Kirk Brown of Joanne Kostocky Garden Design, Kerry Mendez of Perennially Yours, Brent Heath of Brent & Becky's Bulbs, and Laura Deeter of Ohio State University.

The registration fee is \$95 before September 14, \$110 after that date.

The program includes lunch. [More information and registration forms can be found here.](#)

You may also contact MassHort at 617-933-4995 to register.

#### September 23: An Evening with Adrian Bloom



An extraordinary 'two-fer' for a great cause. Adrian Bloom is in America with a new book, "Bloom's Best Perennials and Grasses: Expert Plant Choices and Dramatic Combinations for Year Round Gardens". On the evening of Wednesday, September 23, you can meet and talk with Adrian in the extraordinary Cape Cod garden of Paul Miskovsky. Paul's garden was recently the subject of a cover article in the Boston Globe's Sunday magazine and is rarely open to the public.

[Click here for a slideshow of Paul Miskovsky's garden in Cape Cod.](#)

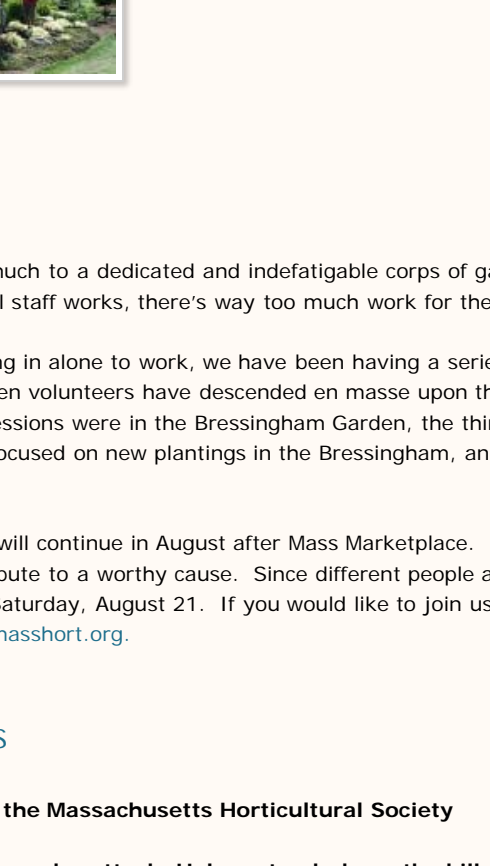
Tickets are \$150 per person for an evening of cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and conversation. To register, [click here](#) or contact our reservation line at 617-933-4995.



### Children's Programs Continue This Month in Weezie's Garden

There's still a few weeks left to take advantage of one of the most enchanting parts of Elm Bank – the Tuesday and Friday sessions for children in Weezie's Garden.

This Friday, August 6, will be the final Weezie's Summer Story Hour with Miss Gina (otherwise known as educator and Master Gardener Gina Poole) for the 2010 season. Miss Gina's 10 a.m. spellbinding sessions includes singing, poetry, garden walks, horticultural education – and stories. The forecast for this Friday is for great weather.

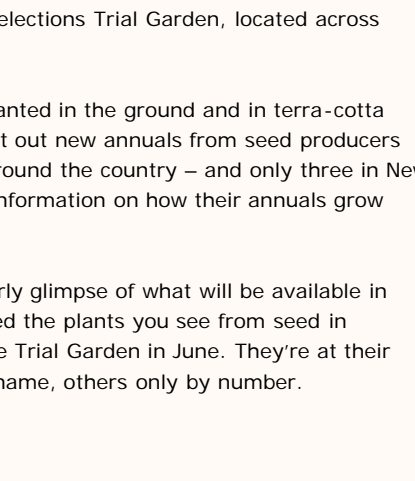


Gina Poole - Miss Gina - leads a nature walk through the butterfly garden in Weezie's Garden as part of Story Hour

On Tuesdays through August 24, the Caterpillar Club is in session. It, too, meets at 10 a.m. in the Story Circle of Weezie's Garden. The program is intended for kids from pre-kindergarten through second grade and leading the Caterpillar Club is Kathi Garlepy, who created the program in 2003. Kathi is a former pre-K and kindergarten teacher and a Lifetime Master Gardener. Sessions will include material on flowers, insects, trees and butterflies, which will be explored through reading, demonstrations and crafts.

### The Bressingham Garden Gets a Facelift

On a Monday in late July, twenty volunteers augmented by a professional crew from Miskovsky Landscaping descended on the Bressingham Garden for a mid-summer renewal.



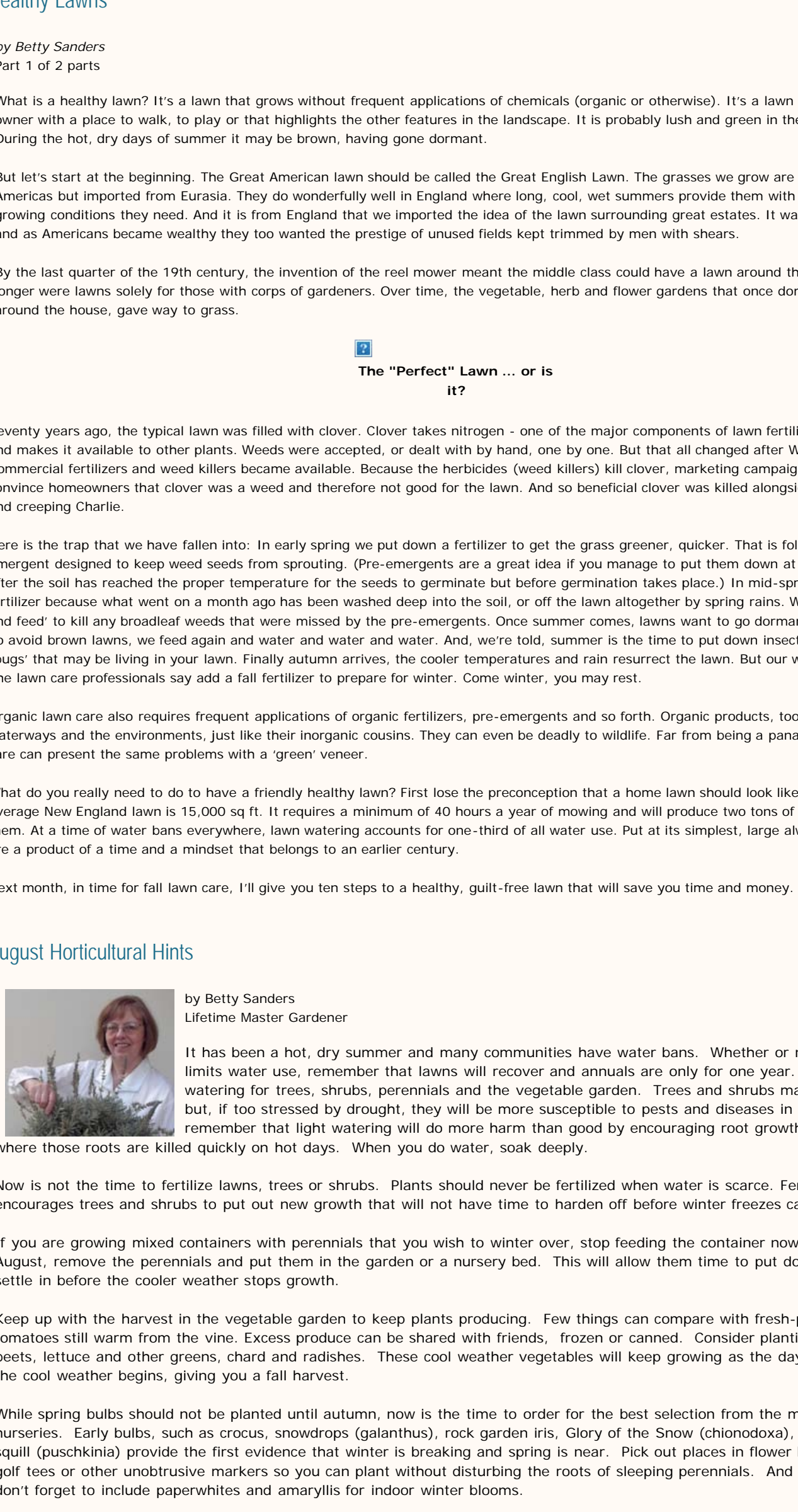
The River of Rozanne is renewed in the Bressingham Garden

First planted in August 2007, the garden is in its fourth summer and it's clear what plants have thrived and which have not. The day was spent both giving a standard, mid-season 'facelift' – heavily cutting back early-season spent blooms in order to promote a late-season surge of color – and a more fundamental renewal.

That latter effort was orchestrated by trustee and landscaper Paul Miskovsky, who worked with designer Adrian Bloom when the garden was first planted. Paul's goal was to adhere to Bloom's vision for the garden while replacing some cultivars that have not thrived in the heat or cold of New England. Bloom's signature 'River of Rozanne' was removed and, by mid-August the geraniums will flow through the garden in deep blue. Several specimen trees were added to provide part-day shade where plants were not tolerant of the relentless, all-day New England summer sun.

The volunteers were a mix of Massachusetts Master Gardeners, trustees, and MassHort members who answered a call for spend a day in the garden. Their reward: pizza, and the knowledge that the garden looks gorgeous. The accompanying photos tell the story better than any words.

[Click on the photos to see more details.](#)



### Upcoming Volunteer Events

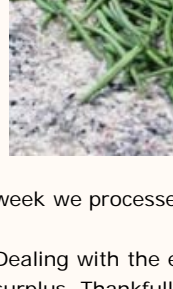
The beauty of the gardens at Elm Bank owes to a dedicated and indefatigable corps of garden volunteers. As talented as Gardens Curator David Fiske is, and as hard as his small staff works, there's way too much work for them to do by themselves.

This summer, in addition to many people coming in alone works, we have been having a series of "volunteer parties" on Saturday mornings. Anywhere from a dozen to two dozen volunteers have descended en masse upon the area needing the most attention and left it looking beautiful and polished. The first two sessions were in the Bressingham Garden, the third in the All-American Selections Trial Garden. A recent Monday session with Paul Miskovsky focused on new plantings in the Bressingham, and the last one on general maintenance and weeding around the property.

These sessions, complete with pizza for lunch, will continue in August after Mass Marketplace. They are a great way to get to know people, enjoy working in a beautiful setting, and contribute to a worthy cause. Since different people are free on different days of the week, we are planning sessions for Monday, August 16 and Saturday, August 21. If you would like to join us, please call or email Vivien Bouffard, Volunteer Coordinator, at 617-933-4934 or [volunteers@masshort.org](mailto:volunteers@masshort.org).

### Help MassHort Eradicate Killer Beetles

An important message from the USDA and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society



**Our region's trees are under attack. Help us track down the killer beetles.**

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) beetle and Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB) have destroyed millions of trees throughout the United States. The USDA and MassHort are partnering to ask MassHort members to participate in the Volunteer EAB/ALB Forest Pest Survey. We need your help to determine if these damaging forest pests are in communities in and around Boston.

Help MassHort's members become top-ranked beetle detectives.

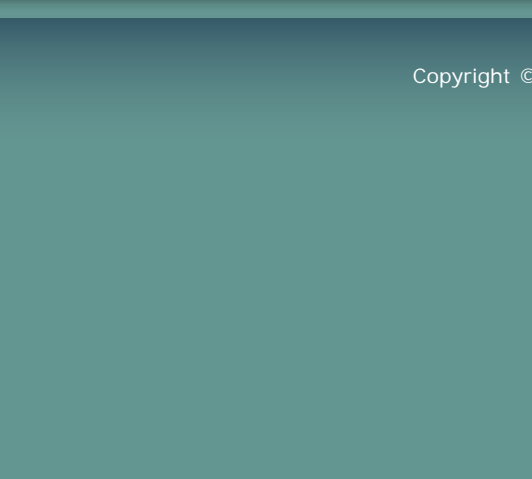
BeetleDetectives.com, will rank participating organizations based on the reports their members submit. If you know other people who would like to help protect our trees, send them to the website and ask them to report their findings as an individual.

Thanks in advance for helping protect America's trees!

[Read more about this effort here.](#)

### Flash Forward: Come See What Will Be in Your Flower Bed in 2011

Want a glimpse into the future of flowering annuals? August is the prime month for the All America Selections Trial Garden, located across from the Education Building in Elm Bank.



Those long arrays of colorful flowers – both planted in the ground and in terra-cotta pots – are a part of a nationwide program to test new annuals from seed producers and hybridizers. Elm Bank is one of 42 sites around the country – and only three in New England – to provide growers with real-world information on how their annuals grow under varied geographic conditions.

For gardeners, it's an opportunity to get an early glimpse of what will be available in 2011 or 2012. Elm Bank horticulturalists started the plants you see from seed in January and February; the plants went into the Trial Garden in June. They're at their peak this month and you can browse and make notes on plants all you wish. Some are identified by name, others only by number.



All-America Trial Garden has been planted for 2010 and is ready for your inspection

### Healthy Lawns

by Betty Sanders  
Part 1 of 2 parts

What is a healthy lawn? It's a lawn that grows without frequent applications of chemicals (organic or otherwise). It's a lawn that provides the owner with a place to walk, to play or that highlights the other features in the landscape. It is probably lush and green in the spring and fall. During the hot, dry days of summer it may be brown, having gone dormant.

But let's start at the beginning. The Great American lawn should be called the Great Green Lawn. The grasses we grow are not native to the Americas but imported from Eurasia. They do wonderfully well in England where cool, wet summers provide them with exactly the growing conditions they need. And it is from England that we imported the idea of the lawn surrounding great estates. It was a sign of wealth, and as Americans became wealthy they too wanted the prestige of unused fields kept trimmed by men with shears.

By the last quarter of the 19th century, the invention of the reel mower meant the middle class could have a lawn around their homes. No longer were lawns solely for those with corps of gardeners. Over time, the vegetable, herb and flower gardens that once dominated the area around the house, gave way to grass.

#### The "Perfect" Lawn ... or is it?

Seventy years ago, the typical lawn was filled with clover. Clover takes nitrogen - one of the major components of lawn fertilizers - from the air and makes it available to other plants. Weeds were accepted, or dealt with by hand, one by one. But that all changed after World War II. Commercial fertilizers and weed killers became available. Because the herbicides (weed killers) kill clover, marketing campaigns were devised to convince homeowners that clover was a weed and therefore not good for the lawn. And so beneficial clover was killed alongside the dandelions and creeping Charlie.

Here is the trap that we have fallen into: In early spring we put down a fertilizer to get the grass greener, quicker. That is followed by a pre-emergent designed to keep weed seeds from sprouting. (Pre-emergents are a great idea if you manage to put them down at the correct time—after the soil has reached the proper temperature for the seeds to germinate but before germination takes place.) In mid-spring we add more fertilizer because what went on a month ago has been washed into the soil, or off the lawn altogether by spring rains. We also use 'weed and feed' to kill any broadleaf weeds that were missed by the pre-emergents. Once summer comes, lawns want to go dormant in New England. To avoid brown lawns, we feed again and water and water. And, we're told, summer is the time to put down insect control to kill any 'bugs' that may be living in your lawn. Finally autumn arrives, the cooler temperatures and rain resurrect the lawn. But our work isn't finished. The lawn care professionals say add a fall fertilizer to prepare for winter. Come winter, you may rest.

Organic lawn care also requires frequent applications of organic fertilizers, pre-emergents and so forth. Organic fertilizers, too, can pollute waterways and the environment, just like their inorganic cousins. They can even be deadly to wildlife. Far from being a panacea, organic lawn care can present the same problems with a 'green' veneer.

What do you really need to do to have a friendly lawn? First lose the preconception that a home lawn should look like a golf course. The average New England lawn is 15,000 sq ft. It requires a minimum of 40 hours a year of mowing and will produce two tons of clippings if you bag them. At a time of water bans everywhere, lawn watering accounts for one-third of all water use. Put at its simplest, large always-lush lawns are a product of a time and a mindset that belongs to an earlier century.

Next month, in time for fall lawn care, I'll give you ten steps to a healthy, guilt-free lawn that will save you time and money.

### August Horticultural Hints



by Betty Sanders  
Lifetime Master Gardener

It has been a hot, dry summer and many communities have water bans. Whether or not you town limits water use, remember that lawns will recover and annuals are only for one year. Save your watering for trees, shrubs, perennials and the vegetable garden. Trees and shrubs may look good now but, if too stressed by drought, they will be more susceptible to pests and diseases in the future. And remember that light watering will do more harm than good by encouraging root growth at the surface where those roots are killed quickly on hot days. When you do water, soak deeply.

Now is not the time to fertilize lawns, trees or shrubs. Plants should never be fertilized when water is scarce. Fertilizing encourages trees and shrubs to put out new growth that will not have time to harden off before winter freezes cause damage.

If you are growing mixed containers with perennials that you wish to winter over, stop feeding the container now. At the end of August, remove the perennials and put them in the garden or a nursery bed. This will allow them time to put down roots and get into the ground before the cooler weather stops growth.

Keep up with the harvest in the vegetable garden to keep plants producing. Few things can compare with fresh-picked corn or tomatoes still warm from the vine. Excess produce can be shared with friends, frozen or canned. Consider planting new rows of beets, lettuce and other greens, chard and radishes. These cool weather vegetables will keep growing as the days shorten and the cool weather begins, giving you a fall harvest.

While spring bulbs should not be planted until autumn, now is the time to order for the best selection from the mail order nurseries. Early bulbs, such as crocus, snowdrops (galanthus), rock garden iris, Glory of the Snow (chionodoxa), and striped squill (puschkinia) provide the first evidence that winter is breaking and spring is near. Pick out places in flower beds, then use golf tees or other nonobtrusive markers so you can plant without disturbing the roots of sleeping perennials. And when you order, don't forget to include paperwhites and amaryllis for indoor winter blooms.

Visit public gardens on your vacation to get ideas for your home landscape. Type in the locations you'll be visiting plus 'gardens' into a search engine to get a list of possible sites. Plan a trip to Elm Bank to check out the Bressingham Garden, Weezie's Children's Garden, the Italianate Garden and all the rest. In the All-American Trial gardens, you'll see annuals and vegetables—now at their maturity—that may be for sale in local nurseries in a year or two—if they can pass muster.

### Wretched Excess



by Neal Sanders  
Leaflet Contributor

My wife and I have a 20-foot-by-65-foot vegetable garden where we grow corn, okra, lettuce, chard, dill, carrots, summer squash, winter squash, artichokes, tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, basil, leeks, beets, ... and green beans.

I have no argument with the first 15 items on the list. There is nothing so flavorful as sweet corn eaten minutes after it was picked or a salad topped with tomatoes still warm from the vine. These are the reasons we garden. Even when there is excess (think zucchini), there are friends with whom to share the bounty or, if your friends begin avoiding you because they know you come bearing suitcases full of the stuff, you can foist the surplus on people who unsuspectingly leave their car windows rolled down in parking lots. We have disposed of zucchini in exactly that fashion on more than one occasion.

But zucchini is a vegetable that must be eaten fresh. No one would ever think of canning or freezing summer squash because they'd find nothing but mush when they sampled it in January. Not so green beans. Green beans have pretty much the same taste and texture whether they're eaten fresh or frozen.

For reasons I cannot fathom, this year my wife planted two 'wide rows' and one 'standard' row of green beans, with the idea that we'd freeze what we didn't immediately eat. She apparently used varieties with names like 'Maxi-Yield' and 'Garden-Glut' because we began getting green beans at the beginning of July and are now picking—and I promise I am not making this up—five pounds or more of beans from the garden every day.



The first week was wonderful. The yield was maybe 20 or 30 long, luscious beans a day, perhaps ten minutes worth of picking in the cool late afternoon. Once home, we pinched off the ends, threw them in a dish, steamed them for three minutes and we had fresh, delicious green beans: high in vitamins and good for us to boot.

Then the yield bounced up to about 60 green beans a day. Fifteen minutes of picking, and ten minutes of snipping ends. OK, we cooked half and froze half (two minutes in boiling water, then rinse under cold water to stop the cooking, arrange the beans on a tray, stick them in the freezer overnight, then bag them and return them to the freezer until needed). I could cope with that.

But then both double rows went into full production. Suddenly, we were spending more than half an hour spent stooped over picking under a blazing sun with suffocating humidity, pinching ends for another 45 minutes, and then lining up green beans on trays for half an hour. First, it was one double-decked tray of beans to blanch and freeze and then two double-decked trays. One night this week we processed two double trays and still had green beans left over. Did I mention we are running out of space in our freezer?

Dealing with the excess has required ingenuity. Our town's food cupboard had only one distribution in July, which didn't make a dent in the surplus. Thankfully, there's another this week. At last week's Wednesday Evening at Elm Bank lecture, we offered green beans as kind of party favors to thank people for coming. This morning, a friend brought us two baskets of blackberries. She left growing under the unexpected weight of more than five pounds of green beans. Fortunately, she's a Vegan. Unfortunately, her children are at camp.

The last row of green beans, a standard-width one, was planted late, intended for September production. For the past week I have been guiding runners from the winter squash toward the young plants. With luck, by the time the green bean plants should be flowering, they'll instead be engulfed by squash leaves. They will not be missed.

There is joy in seeing plants first emerging from the ground in May and early June. Alas, the mind does not contemplate the work that will be involved when, as in the 'Sorcerer's Apprentice', the green beans keep maturing by the hundreds every day, demanding to be picked. The great gardening guru Roger Swain calls one of the joys of summer the 'wretched excess' from the garden. This July and August, being a grower of green beans makes it easy to understand the 'wretched' part of that statement.

*Neal Sanders is a frequent contributor to the Leaflet. We encourage you to read his contributions to our In the Gardens Blog where he focuses on interesting cultivars that can found in the Elm Bank gardens. Neal's first novel, Murder Imperfect, has been published. You can learn more about it here or order it through Amazon.com.*

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### About the Massachusetts Horticultural Society

Founded in 1829, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society is dedicated to encouraging the science and practice of horticulture and developing the public's enjoyment, appreciation, and understanding of plants and the environment.

