



June 2018

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Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

Spring is flying by and June is bursting with color. It's a great time to visit gardens. Our Garden Party Benefit "**A Night in Napa**" is right around the corner and it's not too late to purchase a ticket. Your support helps Mass Hort provide educational courses and steward this beautiful property. Thank you to our Garden Party Committee: Penni Jenkins, Stephanie Chlan, Annette Lee, and Suzanne McCance.

This past weekend celebrated the opening of a special garden in Wellfleet, the **Wellfleet Memorial Garden** funded by Live for Lou and designed by Jean Brooks Landscapes. I stopped by on my bike ride from Truro and enjoyed this quiet space on Main Street, which features a beautiful fountain and many benches. If you are on the lower Cape this summer, I encourage you to visit.

On Sunday, June 10, two local garden tours will take place: [Needham Garden Tour](#) (1-4 pm) and the [Bacon Free Library South Natick Garden Tour](#) (1-5 pm). We hear there are some very special gardens on these tours. Have a garden tour coming up? Please share with us.

Warm regards,

Kathy

P.S. The Rhododendrons at the Cape were especially brilliant this past weekend (although dappled with lots of pollen). Check out this Scintillation Rhododendron blossom!

Upcoming Classes & Events:

[Hands-On Floral Design](#)

Wednesdays,
June 6 - June 20
7 - 8:30 p.m.

[Bio-control of the Lily Leaf Beetle](#)

Thursday, June 7
7 - 8:30 p.m.

[EcoPrinting: Fiber Art Workshop](#)

Tuesday, June 12
1 - 4:30 p.m.

[A Night in Napa: Mass Hort's Garden Party](#)

Thursday, June 14
6 - 8:30 p.m.

[Explore the Teaching Herb Garden](#)

Tuesday, June 26
10:30 a.m. - noon

[The Art of Planting Design](#)

Wednesdays, July 11 -
July 25, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

[Summer Stroll: Garden Tour](#)

Wednesday, July 18
7 - 8:30 p.m.

[Arts on the Green](#)

Thursday, July 26,
5:30 - 8 p.m.



Opposites Attract: Sculptures in Bloom

Saturday and Sunday, June 30 and July 1, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Plan a visit to view amazing floral interpretations of 15 unique sculptures now on exhibit at The Gardens at Elm Bank. This non-judged design exhibition will feature 15 designers from several Massachusetts garden clubs.

The floral designs will be on view Saturday and Sunday, June 30 and July 1 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visitors will be challenged to match the floral display to the sculpture it is interpreting. Submissions of answers can be entered to win a drawing for a \$25 gift certificate for a Mass Hort educational program.



June Programs



This June, we have several classes planned to help inspire your gardening and horticultural passions.

This week, we will start a three-session course with instructor Barbara Rietscha of Stow Greenhouses. In **Hands-On Floral Design**, Rietscha will show you how to make beautiful, seasonal arrangements. She will bring all the plant material you need to take home a design each week. Wednesdays, June 6 - 20, 7 - 8:30 p.m., \$150/member, space is limited so please [sign up today](#).

Consider registering for our **fiber art workshop** on Tuesday, June 12 from 1 - 4:30 p.m. In this class, fiber artist, Mary DeLano will show you how to arrange fresh cut plant material to create fantastic floral prints. Each participant will go home with a silk scarf and table linen. \$75/member, [learn more and register here](#).

Explore what's in our gardens and learn something to apply in your own landscapes. A great success story for lily growers, the development of a **biological control of the lily leaf beetle**, has its roots in our gardens. Dr. Richard Cassagrande will share this story, as well those about other controls being developed for invasive plants and insects in New England. \$12/member, join us Thursday, June 7, 7 - 8:30 p.m. [Sign up here](#).

On Tuesday, June 26, **tour the Teaching Herb Garden** with members of the New England Unit of the Herb Society of America. Susan Leigh Anthony and Lucy Dean will lead you through this garden and highlight interesting plants and review their stories and growing needs. [Register Today!](#)

Look ahead to our other summer programs in our [online course catalog](#). There are many interesting classes, like **The Art of Planting Design** with Maria von Brincken. Her three-week class will help you design a three-season garden full of color and visual interest. [Learn more and register here](#)

F O U R T H A N N U A L

Arts ON THE Green

— AN EVENING AT ELM BANK —



Thursday, July 26, 5:30 - 8 p.m.

Join us for this popular annual event! Wander the gardens, enjoy live music, and stroll through our Art Walk. Support local artists showcasing and selling their work throughout our grounds. There will be activities for kids and tours for all! Bring a picnic, and chairs or blanket. Wine and beer will be sold. This is a FREE event for all!

Music by: LiveWire Boston
Jazz, Blues and Bossa

CALL TO ARTISTS

If interested in being one of our showcased artists, please complete the [Artist application](#) and return it as soon as possible to reserve your space. For more information, visit www.masshort.org/events, email Amy Rodrigues at arodrigues@masshort.org or call 617-933-4934.



Lemonade for Sale!

A shot from The Gardens at Elm Bank on Memorial Day of Mass Hort's youngest entrepreneur, Cole, selling fresh-squeezed lemonade.

From the Stacks:

By Maureen T. O'Brien,

A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.

- A Greek Proverb



We all have happy memories of trees. We may have played and climbed them, sat in their shade, marveled at their majesty. I remember memorizing Joyce Kilmer's paean "Trees" and I fondly recite (in my head of course!) its opening lines "I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree" whenever I see a beautiful tree. The poem, although at times criticized, is much loved and has survived fondly in our golden-aged collective memories.

Memorizing poems and especially "Trees" is no longer part of our children's curriculum but the love and respect for our trees is imparted to our younger generations here at the Society and, I hope in our schools, in new and novel ways.

The Working Group of the Society's Library Committee ventured out to its off-site archives and rediscovered a book created by the Society in 1892. The book, plainly titled, ***Old Trees of New England*** on its cover was more akin to a scrapbook. It took 10 years to complete and inside it was titled *Large, old and interesting trees of New England; collected and arranged by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society*.

In 1882, the Society issued a circular seeking information on large, old and interesting trees to preserve the information for the future. This book is the result of that effort. While the front of the book has printed text, much of the book has typewritten pages and photographs affixed to backing paper. It includes the "Original Bartlett Pear tree in Roxbury, Mass." (*Pyrus communis*,) imported in 1806 from England to Brewer's Garden at Dudley Square. Mr. Bartlett was the owner of the estate and decided to name the tree after himself. One tree stood out to us—a *Pyrus malus*, an apple tree in Cheshire, Connecticut. The tree (pictured above) was in the dooryard of Delas Hotchkiss and was reputed to be the largest apple tree in the United States. It was huge—at least 145 years old—with a symmetrical trunk that measured 13' 8" in circumference and bore no scars or other blemishes. At 60' in height with a 100' spread, its eight large branches, the largest of which was 6'8", bore up to 100 bushels of fruit.

This book preserves these heritage trees in print and it would be a wonderful project to see if any of the trees remain. The book is also an ideal subject for our digitization efforts so we can share this treasure with the public. Stay tuned...

Featured Book

Remarkable Trees of the World (New York: Norton, 2002) by historian Thomas Pakenham is a fabulous coffee table book that honors champion trees throughout the world.

Over a five-year period, Pakenham photographed 60 trees with a 30-pound Linhof camera. I remember hearing him lecture at the Arnold Arboretum after the release of the book. Pakenham claimed he took only one photograph of each tree. But that was only after spending days studying the tree, getting to know it and deciding the best vantage point, time of day, etc. to take his photograph. Whether this is true or not, the remarkable photographs in the book clearly reveal Pakenham's intimate knowledge of his subject. Like the Society's book, the trees are interesting, not necessarily champion trees. Rather he chose them and organized the book according to what he characterizes as the trees' personality. The accompanying text is engaging and adds to the enjoyment of the book.

Pakenham lives at his estate **Tullynally** in County Westmeath, Ireland. There, Pakenham treasures the oak, beech and sweet chestnut trees he inherited as "... living landscapes. And with the joy of possession went the duty of looking after them." Pakenham passionately believes that the trees he plants "will give comfort and pleasure to children yet unborn." Tullynally Castle Gardens are open to the public.

In the Windows – Trees!

Trees were very important to the founding members of the Society. A simple search of “trees” in our online catalog brings up 1078 titles. The oldest dates from 1543. This month we will be featuring historic and recent books on trees in our windows. Drop by and browse our collections. A benefit of membership allows members to borrow our most recent books. You may return your borrowed books at the Visitors’ Center.

Our Collections are Growing...

Since its inception in 1829, the Library relied on the generosity of its members to build its Collections and often had a “Want List” in its *Transactions*. We thank Alice Tangerini for her generous donation of books to the Library and our Book Sale. This donation allowed the Library to add books not in the Library’s collection or replace missing and deteriorated books.

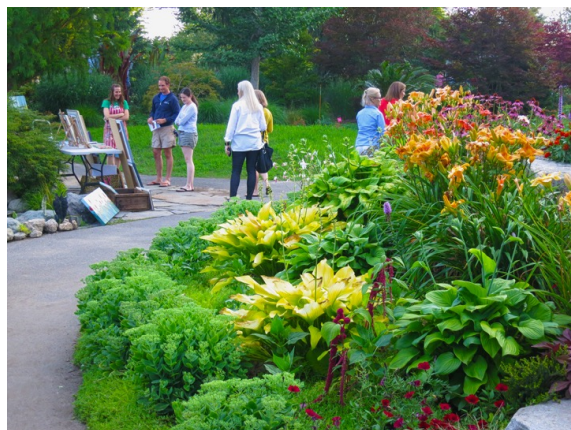
Thank You for Buying Our Books at the Gardeners’ Fair!

The Sale Continues in the Library and at the Visitors’ Center!

The Library’s Book Sale at the Fair netted very respectable sales, although we were forced inside due to the inclement weather. It is interesting to note what sold. We sold most of our vintage, inspirational and scientific books along with the typical horticultural titles. While we sold plenty of books, we will continue to offer the remaining used books for sale in the Library when it is open and at the [Visitors’ Center](#). All are at bargain prices of \$1 to \$5! We have books on design, garden travel, plant specific and how-to books.

The Library is open on Thursdays from 9 am to 1 pm, at other times by chance or appointment. Before you venture over, we suggest you email mobrien@masshort.org or call 617-933-4912. Reuse is one of the most effective ways you can save natural resources, protect the environment and save money. Get books, be inspired and then get to work on your garden.

Calling All Artists!



Be a part of the **Fourth Annual Arts on the Green** Evening at The Gardens at Elm Bank

On **Thursday, July 26, 5:30 - 8 p.m.**, visitors will wander the gardens, enjoy live music, and stroll through our Art Walk at this popular community event. There will also be activities, tours and refreshments. Artists are invited to participate in the Art Walk in our gardens -- display your work, offer your work for sale, and/or showcase your talents *en plein air*.

If you are interested in being one of the showcased artists on our Art Walk, please [complete this application form](#) and return it as soon as possible to reserve your space. If you have any questions, please contact Amy Rodrigues at arodrigues@masshort.org or 617-933-4934.

2018 Honorary Medals Awardees Named

Save the Date for the Award Ceremony: October 18

The Board of Trustees of Massachusetts Horticultural Society has announced its 2018 Honorary Medals Recipients for 2018. The Society’s Honorary Awards program continues a 118-year tradition of awarding medals to individuals and organizations for their contributions to excellence in horticulture for the public good. The Honorary Medals dinner is scheduled for **Thursday, October 18, 2018. Save the date!**

Margaret Roach is the 2018 nominee for the George Robert White Medal of Honor, the highest honor given by the Society. Ms. Roach will be honored for her distinguished career in horticulture as a garden writer for publications, such as *Newsday* and *Martha Stewart Living*, where she was able to reach millions of people as she shared her knowledge of gardening. The author of three books, *A Way to Garden*, *And I Shall Have Some Peace There*, and *The Backyard Parables* and her web site, *A Way to Garden*. She also hosts a public-radio show and podcast which all continue to make meaningful connections between people, plants, and their beloved gardens.



The George Robert White Medal of Honor was established in 1909 and is among the most distinguished horticultural awards in the United States. The first honoree was Charles Sprague Sargent, Director of the Arnold Arboretum. Other recipients have included Gertrude Jekyll, Jens Jensen, The Royal Horticultural Society, Massachusetts General Hospital and Tasha Tudor.

Dale Deppe of Spring Meadow Nursery is the 2018 nominee for the Jackson Dawson Memorial Award. This award is given for exceptional skill in the science or practice of hybridization or propagation of hardy, woody plants.

William Cannon is the nominee for the Thomas Roland Medal, which honors men and women who have shown exceptional horticultural skill. Mr. Cannon is honored for his expertise of holly and his garden in Brewster, MA.

Betsy Ridge Madsen will receive a Gold Medal for her leadership as Chair of Massachusetts Horticultural Society and her dedication to help continue the Society's legacy. Betsy's volunteerism at the Flower Show as a judge, clerk, and many other positions helps continue Mass Hort's tradition of promoting Amateur Competitions for passionate designers and plants people. As a floral designer, gardener, horticulturist and spokesperson, Ms. Ridge Madsen has advanced the art and science of horticulture by example and her willingness to share her expertise with others.

Carol Stocker will receive a Gold Medal in recognition of her work as a garden writer for the *Boston Globe* and other publications which has promoted the art and science of horticulture to thousands of readers.

Karen Perkins is nominated for the Silver Medal for her efforts in the propagation and promotion of Epimediums. She is the owner of Garden Vision Epimediums, and has demonstrated her dedication to the science of horticulture and promoting plants for people to enjoy in their gardens.

Trish Wesley Umbrell is nominated for the Silver Medal for her extraordinary skill as a garden educator, both formerly with Mass Hort and currently with the Natick Community Organic Farm.

We hope you will help us celebrate with our 2018 nominees at the October 18 event!

Fragrant Abelia

By R. Wayne Mezitt
Mass Hort Trustee Chairman

As June begins and the flamboyant explosion of spring bloom recedes into memory, a number of later-flowering plants step in to fill the color voids. Fragrant (or Korean) Abelia (*Abelia mosanensis*) is one of the most appealing June-flowering shrubs, surprisingly only recently beginning to appear in horticultural display gardens and at garden centers. For many years a number of less winter-hardy *Abelia* species and cultivars have been popular

landscaping choices in southern gardens, but those (like grandiflora, kaleidoscope and 'Edward Goucher') are only reliable where winters are less severe.

Abelia mosanensis is the sole species cold-hardy to USDA Zone 5, making it suitable for gardens in much of New England. A 2017 Cary Award winner with multi-season appeal and a great pollinator plant for butterflies and hummingbirds, this is a "must have" shrub in my garden, and it cries-out to be more widely appreciated.



White star-like, trumpet-shaped flowers at the ends of each branch begin opening from pink buds as early as late May, continuing into June. With a distinctive, sweet and spicy fragrance, it reminds me of the early-May-flowering Korean spice viburnum (*Viburnum carlesi*), enveloping the garden with perfume over a period of a couple weeks. Some other descriptions of its aroma include lilac flowers, lily-of-the-valley and even citrus blooms; it must be experienced to be fully appreciated.

Once the flowers fade, long, arching branches begin their growth period, reaching 4 feet or more in length, with red-toned new foliage, maturing glossy-green for the summer. It grows to be six feet or more high and wide, mound-like, and can be quite rangy; because it sets bloom on old wood, pruning immediately after it finishes blooming is recommended. Depending upon the season, fall foliage color ranges from pink to red-orange before leaves drop for the winter. It is reportedly deer-resistant, tolerates dry conditions once established and is not bothered by many pests or diseases.

We've learned about stories claiming that the fragrant *Abelia* species originated in the Baltic Republic of Latvia; in reality it is native to Korea, first assigned a name in 1926, but taking many decades to reach the market. Because it was so little-known for so many years, it's likely that the plant discovered in Latvia is a seedling or clone actually originating from an Asian source. The species, along with a cultivar Sweet Emotion®, is now becoming more readily available in many garden centers.

Choose a sunny location, giving it room to spread and reasonably rich soil, near an outdoor sitting or walking area where you can enjoy its fragrance; you'll be rewarded with terrific season-extending enjoyment every year, just as summer weather begins.

R. Wayne Mezitt is a third generation nurseryman and a [Massachusetts Certified Horticulturist](#), now chairman of [Weston Nurseries of Hopkinton and Chelmsford, MA](#) and owner of "[Hort-Sense](#)", a horticultural advisory business. Wayne currently serves as Trustee chairman for Massachusetts Horticultural Society at The Gardens at Elm Bank in Wellesley MA.

Grave Landscapes: The Nineteenth-Century Rural Cemetery Movement

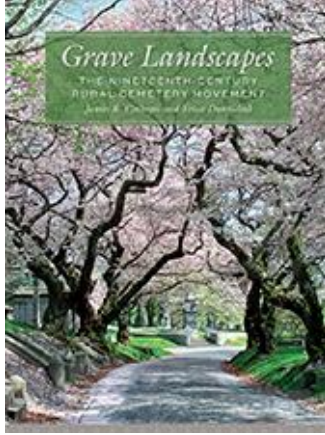
by James R. Cothran and Erica Danylchak

The University of South Carolina Press, 2018

Reviewed by Patrice Todisco

This autumn Mount Auburn Cemetery will host Death Salon Boston, a festival of intellectuals and independent thinkers engaged in the exploration of our shared mortality through knowledge and art. Offered in the spirit of an 18th-century salon, the event will include curated public discussions about death and its anthropological, historical and artistic contributions to culture.

America's first rural cemetery, Mount Auburn is a fitting location for such conversations. Its establishment, by members of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, created something entirely new and its design, a sensitively realized synthesis of natural and cultural features, reshaped attitudes about death and the American



landscape.

Grave Landscapes: The Nineteenth-Century Rural Cemetery Movement tells the story of Mount Auburn within the framework of the rural cemetery movement, whose extent and impact on the American landscape is not widely appreciated. Comprehensively researched and illustrated, the book provides an introduction to the influential movement through which more than 175 rural cemeteries were established, placing their creation within the broader context of American and European landscape design.

In America, the rural cemetery movement began in the densely populated industrial cities of the Northeast. Here, most residents were buried in churchyards contiguous to, or nearby, churches or in vaults below. Overcrowded conditions (as an example the 37 vaults in Boston's Old North Church held more than 1,000 bodies) combined with concerns about public health advanced the desire to locate new churchyards beyond the city center.

In 1796, the first privately incorporated burying ground was established in New Haven, Connecticut when 31 local citizens purchased a ten-acre parcel of land outside of the city proper. Unencumbered by church or government regulations, they established a voluntary association of private citizens empowered to make decisions, secured by their financial investment to assure the safety of their dead.

The New Burying Ground, also known as Grove Street, provided an important precedent for the rural cemetery movement. Unlike traditional urban burial places, family lots, often centered around a central monument inscribed with the family name, were allowed. Burial plots, systematically numbered, provided accurate records of burials and ownership, and a consciously designed layout was augmented with plantings, including those associated with mourning and death.

The need to secure physical space for burials coincided with changing attitudes about death and a growing interest in romanticism, naturalistic gardening, commemorative landscapes and horticulture. In 1831 Mount Auburn Cemetery was established by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society merging the creation of an experimental garden with a public burying ground, and introducing the term "rural cemetery" in the process.

Located four miles from Boston on a tract of land purchased from George W. Brimmer, Mount Auburn Cemetery was the first large scale landscape in the country which was open to the public. Incorporating the naturalistic features of the glacial moraine in which it was sited, Mount Auburn's dramatic landscape provided the perfect counterpoint to the moralizing influences of its founders. Here, the dead would provide a civilizing vision for the living, properly set within an English landscape garden complete with winding avenues named after plants, a maze of footpaths, ponds, dells and commemorative features punctuated by temples, chapels and a monumental Egyptian Revival gateway.

Quickly capturing the public's imagination, other cities soon followed Mount Auburn's pioneering model. More than twenty rural cemeteries are profiled in *Grave Landscapes: The Nineteenth-Century Landscape Movement*, each accompanied by historic images and plans.

A chapter is dedicated to the physical and design characteristics which differentiated rural cemeteries from urban burial grounds. Illustrative examples of planting lists are provided including one from Laurel Hill Cemetery (Spring Grove Cemetery and Arboretum) in Philadelphia whose diverse plantings inspired Andrew Jackson Downing to deem it "a better arboretum than can be found anywhere in the country" in 1849.

Additional chapters include overviews of symbolism in rural cemeteries and one devoted to the impact of rural cemeteries on the American landscape and the evolution of the profession of landscape architecture. As staggeringly large numbers of visitors viewed rural cemeteries as landscapes for pleasure, their contemplative qualities eroded, prompting the consideration of an alternative – the public park. Abetted by other social forces, the public park movement was ignited, building upon the naturalistic and cultural features pioneered in the rural cemetery movement.

Thoroughly researched and eminently readable, *Grave Landscapes: The Nineteenth-Century Landscape Movement* is dedicated to students of historic landscapes and their teachers. Its content was envisioned and researched by James R. Cothran, who passed away in 2012, and Erica

Danylchak, one of his students in the Heritage Preservation Program at Georgia State University. A fitting legacy to their collaboration, the book provides fresh insights into the study of American landscape history and the previously undocumented role that the rural cemetery played in its evolution.

Patrice Todisco writes about parks and gardens at www.landscapenotes.com
She can be reached at landscapenotes@gmail.com.

Volunteer with Us!



Check out our [volunteer opportunities](#) for the summer.

We hope you can join us!

Is your business or group looking for nonprofit volunteer opportunities? We invite you to join Mass Hort for a [team building day](#) in The Gardens at Elm Bank.

To learn more, contact:

Amy Rodrigues, Volunteer Engagement Manager, arodrigues@masshort.org,
617-933-4934



The Siren Call of the Instant Garden

By Neal Sanders,
Leaflet Contributor

Several moves ago, Betty and I purchased a 'doctor's home'. It was relatively new and at the end of a suburban cul-de-sac in Alexandria, Virginia. The home had been professionally landscaped perhaps five years earlier, and the good doctor (or his landscaper) apparently had a thing for azaleas.

Our first act as homeowners was to remove at least 30 of those shrubs. The doctor's landscaper had installed double rows of medium-sized azaleas on two-foot centers. In the perfect growing conditions of northern Virginia, the shrubs had doubled and tripled in size. What had looked 'perfect' when first planted, now was not only wildly overgrown; plants were dying as they competed for light, food, and water.

I was reminded of that long-ago landscape this past week as we planted two *polemonium* in our rear garden. The perennials, commonly known as Jacob's Ladder, were being added to an area once contemplated as the site of a water feature. That idea has been shelved for the time being, and perennials will instead anchor the site.



Betty planted the *polemonium* on two-foot centers – 24 inches between what are (for now) fairly small plants. To the untutored eye, there is a vast, empty plain between the two specimens. Why not put in half a dozen and "make a statement"? Your local garden center will love you for it.

The answer can be seen all over our garden. Three years ago, it was a blank slate. Even after a dozen trees and sixty shrubs, it still looked bare. We've since added roughly 2,000 perennials. That may sound like a lot but, when spread out over 20,000 square feet of garden, it works out to give each plant ten square feet... like putting everything on *three-foot* centers.

The wonderful thing about plants is that they spread, and seed, freely. Three years ago we carefully transplanted a single Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) into a shady area of our garden and surrounded it with protective ferns. The following year, we found two plants. This year, there are at least six in glorious bloom. Those 125 tiarellas and heucheras [Betty procured at the 2016 Boston Flower & Garden Show](#) have more than tripled in area and number. Twenty native asters planted in 2015 have completely colonized and carpeted a dry, shady slope where nothing would seem to flourish. Today the area is a verdant green, and we are pulling out asters where they are encroaching on other perennials.

What we've learned is patience is a virtue. Everyone loves that "perfect garden", but when everything goes in at once, the result is an image that makes for pretty wall calendars and postcards, but not much else. And, there's another problem: the next year, the garden won't look the same way because some plants are bullies and some are shrinking violets. A gardener will spend his or her weekends trying to maintain the "status quo", always unsuccessfully.

Giving plants time to settle in is a much better idea. Some won't make it; some will flourish. It is up to the gardener to maintain balance while allowing for the serendipity that makes gardens great. So, that pair of *polemoniums* will have eight square feet of garden to themselves this year. I'm counting on there being siblings and offspring come next June.

Neal Sanders' latest mystery, [Fatal Equity](#), was published in March. You can find it at Amazon and in bookstores.



June Horticultural Hints

by Betty Sanders,
Leaflet Contributor

Now that Memorial Day is past, plant your warm weather vegetables — tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, and basil-- as well as the warm weather annuals in your flower beds. Marigolds, petunias, zinnas, salvia, and coleus will appreciate the hot weather to come and brighten your garden containers all summer long.

Putting down too much mulch is injurious to plants because it excludes oxygen. Yes, roots need oxygen to do their work. Keep mulch at two inches and it still excludes virtually all weeds, holds in water on hot days — and lets the garden or tree breathe.

What's the best mulch for your vegetable seedlings? A layer of heat-treated straw, shredded leaves, newspapers or untreated (weed control agents in many lawn products will also kill or stunt vegetable seedlings) grass clippings placed around your vegetable seedlings will conserve soil moisture without introducing weed seeds. Ordinary straw or hay is inexpensive, but it contains weed seeds that will happily germinate in your garden.



Use row covers to exclude pests such as Mexican bean beetles, white cabbage butterflies that lay the eggs for cabbage worms, and Colorado potato beetles. Row cover can be used over vegetables that do not need to be insect pollinated. Put covers over squash plants to protect them from squash borers and other pests, but remove them when you see the first flower bloom—they will need to the bees to produce squash.

After you finish harvesting asparagus, fertilize with compost or aged manure, not chemical fertilizers. Then apply a mulch to suppress weeds, but do not cut down the fern stalks—they are feeding the roots to grow next year's crop!

If you are **growing vining plants** — cucumbers, tall (indeterminate) tomatoes, pole beans or flowering vines, construct and install sturdy supports now. While seeing a small tomato plant inside a large cage may seem strange, training the vines to the cage while they are young is relatively easy. The plants will resent you trying to weave them through the supports as they get older and less flexible. Velcro strips are an easy way to attach the plant quickly without damaging the stems. And if you buy supermarket lettuce, they come with Velcro-like strips that do the job for free.

Weed, weed, weed because some weeds are already setting flowers (then seeds) in order to multiply by the thousands. Pulling, digging or cutting weeds off at ground level is worth all the time you put in to it. Weeds in a vegetable or flower bed should never be ignored. They are weeds because they steal light, water and nutrients from the plants you want to grow.

Avoid the temptation to treat your lawn now We all want to keep our grass looking lush and green for June, but adding fertilizer this month will give a leg up to any weeds that have sprouted, and they grow faster than grass. Herbicides and pesticides will kill beneficial insects (those who eat other insects!) and earthworms in your turf grass, accelerating any pest outbreaks.

Set summer house plants out this month. Most require some shade, on a porch or under a tree, at least until they have adapted to their new environment. Remember to keep saucers under plants placed on the ground to reduce pests entering the containers and entering your home in the fall.

Parsley and dill are food for swallowtail caterpillars and so attract swallowtail butterflies. Add few extra 'sacrificial' plants in your flower garden or near your house to enjoy these beautiful creatures and applaud the young caterpillars as they chew through them.

Betty Sanders is a noted horticultural speaker and writer. You can learn more about her and see additional gardening tips at www.BettyOnGardening.com.

Connect with us



www.MassHort.org - 617-933-4900