

# In Season with MGPW

the quarterly of the  
Master Gardeners  
Prince William

Spring 2022

*Sanguinaria canadensis*; bloodroot  
photo by Jason Alexander

## Spring

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A gardener's favorite season is finally here! Blooms are popping, frogs are peeping, and early bees are buzzing. Those envelopes of seeds we have meticulously gathered over the cold months will soon be ripped open with the expectation of beautiful flowers and bountiful vegetables. New planting beds that were scribbled on paper will start to take shape in our yards. Enjoy the excitement of renewal as the Master Gardeners slide into our busiest season. Many opportunities to teach, train, and volunteer are being distributed monthly. All of these opportunities are ways that we are helping our towns and neighborhoods understand, assist, and benefit from the biodiversity of nature.

I hope all Master Gardeners (MGs) were able to participate in the annual Recertification event on 28 February. The Cooperative Extension office highlighted that we had contributed over 14,640 volunteer hours in 2021, and that has the value of \$42,661 for Prince William County. We are making a significant difference in our communities. Please remember to enter all of your volunteer hours in our Better Impact website so your volunteer hours can be counted. Hopefully we can meet in person for the 2023 Recertification event. It will be fabulous to see you all in person again.

Your Master Gardeners of Prince William (MGPW) Board of Directors is looking for a few volunteers. Since the plague is effectively over, we would like to re-establish the Social committee. The Social committee recommends activities or events that are open to all MGs to participate in. Zoom has been a lifesaver for the past two years, but there is nothing like meeting fellow MGs face-to-face and establishing new friendships and connections. We would also like to start a Membership committee that has a focus on diversity. The Membership committee will recommend activities that will help MGPW membership be more representative of the Prince William community we serve. If you are interested in either of these committees, please contact me or Patrick Lucas ([janenecullen@gmail.com](mailto:janenecullen@gmail.com), [patlucas@gmail.com](mailto:patlucas@gmail.com)).

See you in the garden. Stay Safe – Stay Healthy  
-Janene Cullen, PhD, President, MGPW Board

### VMGA REPRESENTATIVE'S MESSAGE

by Jeanne Lamczyk, Virginia Master Gardener Association (VMGA) Representative for MGPW

Hi Everyone,

This is the time of year that things start to ramp up. VMGA will be meeting in person for our next meeting in April. MGPW will be co-hosting with the Piedmont MG unit at Mary Martinez-Rigo's farm located at 670 River Ridge Rd, Dillwyn, VA 23936. Mary is the co-chair of the fund raising committee and a former member of MGPW. You may have received a prior email about this event. All are welcome and we hope you will consider joining.

Many of you know that in June each year Virginia Tech offers Master Gardener College. This year it will be in person in Blacksburg, VA from June 22-24. registration opens the first of April 2022. All of the college information can be found on the VMGA web site: [vmga.net/wordpress/](http://vmga.net/wordpress/) as well as the Virginia Tech web site: [mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/college/](http://mastergardener.ext.vt.edu/college/) This gives registration costs, room rates and food plans for those staying on campus.

This is a good opportunity to meet other MGs from around the state, the people who are involved with our program at the state level, and learn from interesting speakers. VMGA offers a scholarship that is open to all certified MGs. The application can be found on the VMGA web site: [vmga.net/wordpress/vmga-diane-relf-scholarship-guidelines/](http://vmga.net/wordpress/vmga-diane-relf-scholarship-guidelines/) There is a deadline, so if you are interested please apply as soon as possible. MGPW is also offering a scholarship, it covers registration only. Please contact Nancy Berlin if you are interested.

If you are interested in VMGA please contact me at [jeanne.lamczyk@yahoo.com](mailto:jeanne.lamczyk@yahoo.com). Happy gardening! ♦♦♦



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- In the Community
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- Conservation at Home
- Critter Neighbors
- Free Online Classes

## LAWN CARE FOR PWC

Virginia is part of a transition zone between areas where cool and warm season grasses thrive. This can make lawn care in our area challenging. If you're a first time homeowner, new to Prince William County or just looking to better manage your lawn, [Virginia Cooperative Extension can help.](#)

We offer help with interpreting soil test results, information on cultural practices, pest identification and pest control recommendations.

For more assistance with lawn care, contact the Virginia Cooperative Extension Environmental Educator at 703-792-4037 or [BESTlawns@pwcgov.org](mailto:BESTlawns@pwcgov.org).

The [BEST Lawn](#) Program can sample and measure your lawn for you and provide you with a fertilizer schedule that will help promote a healthy lawn.



Daffodils (*Narcissus*)  
photo by Jason Alexander

## LAWN: SPRING WEEDS



**video presentation by Don Peschka, Master Gardener Volunteer and Thomas Bolles, Extension Agent VCE-Prince William**

Here are a few highlights from the presentation:

- ◆ A weed is just a plant out of place. Ralph Waldo Emerson said a weed is “a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.”
- ◆ Many plants that are considered weeds in the lawn have deep roots and are drought resistant.
- ◆ Decide what your threshold is for weeds when considering a plan to handle them. Are some weeds ok?
- ◆ Be careful to properly identify the weed. Many weeds look similar. Proper identification is important in determining the correct action. Contact the [Horticulture Help Desk](#) at [mastergardener@pwcgov.org](mailto:mastergardener@pwcgov.org) or call 703-792-7747 for help identifying weeds.
- ◆ The best way to deal with annual weeds is to mow high to create a canopy that will shade out the weeds.
- ◆ Minimize conditions that weeds prefer. For example, re-grade wet spots
- ◆ Use alternative groundcovers or mulch for areas not suitable for turf.
- ◆ For more information, view the [Full presentation available on YouTube](#); VCE-Prince William channel. ♦♦♦

## PRIZED PLANTS: DAFFODILS

**by Maria Stewart, Master Gardener Volunteer**

That happy burst of spring—daffodils! But what to do after the blooms fade? Leave foliage on the plant for about 8 weeks, to allow food to be stored in the bulbs for next season. After 8 weeks, the foliage can be removed. Or, save yourself the work, and interplant with ferns which will cover the fading daffodils. Daffodils only need to be dug about every 5-10 years, once the flowering is reduced, or the flower size is smaller.

For more information: [University of Missouri Extension, Spring Flowering Bulbs](#) ♦♦♦



Cloud City Farm reclaims a Superfund site to grow a farm at 10,000 feet and feed Lake County with fresh local produce. Discover high altitude farming.

## GARDEN TO TABLE: CLOUD CITY FARM GROWING THE IMPOSSIBLE AT 10,000 FEET

by Maria Stewart, Master Gardener Volunteer

On a recent visit with family to Leadville, Colorado, we learned about [Cloud City Farm](#). Leadville is the highest incorporated city in North America at an elevation of 10,151, USDA growing zone 4b. High elevation, plenty of cold weather - Leadville has its growing challenges.

The Cloud City Farm started with creating a composting and recycling program in local schools. Teachers and students, excited with the compost they created from school lunch waste, wanted to start a farm to put the compost to good use. But, with only 28 frost-free days, and snow possible even in July, it did not seem possible.

The pioneering spirit of these Coloradans found a way to bring the warmer weather to them, however. They got a geodesic dome greenhouse kit from [Growing Spaces](#). Not too difficult to assemble, these farmers in the mountains are able to grow a wide variety of vegetables including summer favorites like tomatoes and cucumbers.

The next time I find myself bemoaning the shortcomings of USDA zone 7a, I'll think of Cloud City Farm's creativity and ingenuity. Maybe I'll try growing that vanilla orchid after all. ♦♦



### RECIPE

#### Asparagus Mushroom Melt

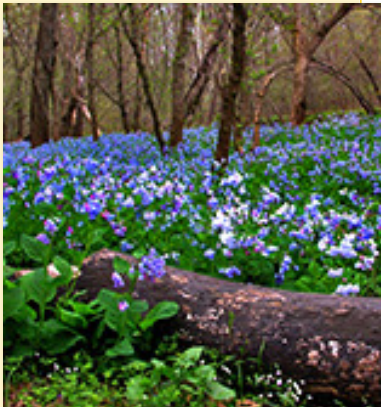
##### INGREDIENTS

- 4 English muffins
- 1/4 cup onion, finely minced
- 1 cup mushrooms, chopped
- 1 1/2 teaspoons oil
- 1/2 pound asparagus, trimmed and sliced crosswise into 1/2 inch rounds
- 1/2 teaspoon ground thyme or oregano or basil
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vinegar
- A dash of salt and pepper
- 3/4 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded (3 ounces)

##### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Toast muffin halves and place on a baking sheet in a single layer.
  2. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, sauté onions and mushrooms in oil, stirring often, until just beginning to brown.
  3. Add asparagus, seasoning and vinegar. Sauté, stirring often, until asparagus is barely tender. Season lightly with salt and pepper.
  4. Divide the vegetable mixture equally onto the muffin halves. Top each muffin with shredded cheese.
  5. Broil muffins until the cheese melts. Watch carefully to avoid burning.
- Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

source:  
[Purdue University Extension](#)



bluebells at Merrimac Farm

## OUT AND ABOUT: MERRIMAC FARM, BLUEBELL FESTIVAL

by **Maria Stewart, Master Gardener Volunteer**

If you haven't been to Merrimac Farm, in Nokesville, Virginia, the Bluebell Festival is the perfect time to visit. This year's Bluebell Festival will be held April 10th, 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

This is a free event celebrating nature and one of the largest patch of bluebells in the area. Plenty of family-friendly activities including naturalist led tours. For more information visit [Prince William Conservation Alliance](#). ♦♦♦

### MASTER GARDENERS PRINCE WILLIAM TEACHING GARDEN

The Teaching Garden is a project of the Master Gardener Volunteers. It began as a garden to grow fresh produce for the Plant a Row for the Hungry project and a place where Master Gardeners could teach homeowners how to grow vegetables. The Teaching Garden displays low maintenance gardening techniques that homeowners can implement in their own gardens. It also features plant material that grows well locally.

View the [Teaching Garden Brochure](#) which contains a map of the teaching garden bed layout. View the upcoming events at the Garden [here](#) as well as other horticulture classes offered by the Master Gardeners.

**Sign up for [The Teaching Garden](#) blog to stay-up-to-date, and get the latest *In Season* with MGPW newsletter!**



photo by Lynne Lanier Master Gardener Volunteer

*“Taking your plant collection to next level!”*

## BOOK NOOK: *PLANT PARENTING* BY AUTHOR LESLIE F. HALLECK

by **Jamie Nick, Master Gardener Volunteer**

Author Leslie F. Halleck, certified professional horticulturist, states that her book is a beginner friendly introduction to propagation, BUT it is so much more; taking your plant collection to the next level!



level!

I've been propagating plants for over 35 years and I found her book well worth the read for many levels of "plant parents."

She provides information on tools, pests, diseases, seed saving and seed starting, and supply sources.

Easy to follow instructions with good illustrations.

I bought 4 copies from my favorite source, Timber Press, and gave each daughter a copy...plus one for myself! ♦♦♦



photo by Jason Alexander

## INSIGHTS: CARBON FARMING

by Abbie & Vincent Panettiere, Master Gardener Volunteers

CO<sub>2</sub> only makes up about .04% of the atmosphere, so it would seem that it shouldn't be a big issue in affecting the climate, but if you put a mere four teaspoons of salt in a recipe that called for only two, the results may be quite unpleasant.

A report from MIT's Climate Panel of May 18, 2021, stated that "Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels of between 280 and 350 parts per million created the climate that let humanity build and feed the modern world." The level of CO<sub>2</sub> a few centuries ago, before the industrial era began, was about 280 ppm (parts per million). According to NASA, in April 2021, the amount had risen to about 416 ppm.

According to a NOAA report "Carbon dioxide levels are now higher than at anytime in the past 3.6 million years."

Worldwide, 24% of carbon dioxide emissions can be laid to current agriculture and forestry practices. The United States alone accounts for 9% of the total number. A great deal of carbon must be removed from the atmosphere to reverse the effects of climate change.

The oceans are the largest carbon sink. A carbon sink is a land or ocean mass that can take in carbon - most notably carbon dioxide - from the atmosphere. Oceans absorb about a quarter of the carbon dioxide in the air. The process depends on the difference in pressure of the ocean's and the atmosphere's carbon dioxide content. Carbon dioxide is also taken into the ocean through sea vegetation, coral and algae. Unfortunately, the absorption of excess carbon dioxide has led to acidification of ocean water which is doing harm to the creatures who live there.

Soil sequesters four times the amount of carbon stored in the atmosphere which makes it a most important place to work to improve the sequestration of carbon. Among the methods in use to improve the amount of carbon stored in the soil is carbon farming. When you take a closer look at the idea it can amaze you how many and various methods there are by which carbon can be taken out of the air and sequestered in plants and soil.

Carbon farming, according to the US Department of Agriculture, is defined as: "...the use of specific on-farm practices designed to take carbon out of the air and store it in soils and plant material." The goal involves the use of various methods to turn farming into a net absorber of carbon dioxide rather than a net emitter as it is generally now. Practices used currently in organic farming include permaculture, and regenerative agriculture.

Without human interference, the exchange of carbon in the atmosphere, the ground, oceans and living organic materials would maintain a natural flow from one space to the

**Don't give up on that dead plant:**

### *The Judean Date Palm Tree*

a team of scientists has succeeded in resurrecting the ancient tree



"Extinct tree from the time of Jesus rises from the dead in Israel."

[available on YouTube](#)

## Insights: Carbon Farming

### Sources & For More Information

<https://climate.mit.edu/ask-mit/what-ideal-level-carbon-dioxide-atmosphere-human-life>  
MIT Climate Portal  
What is the ideal level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere for human life?

<https://research.noaa.gov/article/ArtMID/587/ArticleID/2742/Despite-pandemic-shutdowns-carbon-dioxide-and-methane-surged-in-2020>  
NOAA Research News

**GARDEN TO TABLE: FORESTED** by Maria Stewart,  
Master Gardener  
Volunteer, Winter In Season,  
2022

<https://www.greenamerica.org/food-climate/what-carbon-farming>  
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Agriculture and Climate Change

<https://ethical.net/climate-crisis/carbon-farming-sequestering-carbon-in-plants-and-soil/>  
[ethical.net](https://ethical.net)  
Carbon Farming: Sequestering Carbon in Plants and Soil  
Elizabeth Waddington June 4, 2020

<https://www.marincarbonproject.org/about>  
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<https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/california/topic/soil-health-soil-amendments-and-carbon-farming>  
Climate Hubs US Department of Agriculture  
Soil Health, Soil Amendments, and Carbon Farming

<https://orchardrecycling.ucdavis.edu/what-whole-orchard-recycling>  
The University of California, Davis is a public land-grant research university near Davis, California.  
What is Whole Orchard Recycling?

<https://www.renovainc.com/en/business/biomass/>

other. Plants absorb carbon dioxide and water and use the sun's energy to split the water into oxygen and hydrogen. For plants, the oxygen is a waste product and is released back into the atmosphere but the carbon dioxide benefits the plants by combining with the hydrogen from the water to create sugars on which the plants survive. The carbon is stored in the plants until the plants decay. Some of it is stored in the ground for long periods of time. Natural decay does release some carbon back into the atmosphere.

Trees, for their size and their ability to sequester large quantities of carbon, are perhaps the most important elements to consider in carbon farming. Their ability to hold large quantities of carbon will fluctuate because of factors which include location, time of year, variety of tree and the use to be made of trees but the life span of trees for this purpose is generally considered to be 200 years and, while trees sequester great amounts of carbon over that lifetime, their most active time is in their youth, between ten and forty-five years after planting.

There are several ways in which trees are useful in aiding this effort. The first is called Forest Farming or, for larger installations, agroforestry. Trees and/or wooded land are used to help in the cultivation of non-timber products which can include mushrooms and fungi, various perennial plants, flowers, field crops and also in the raising of farm animals. Trees in a managed field of this sort are planted several rows deep, then several rows are left between these rows for the growing of non-tree crops or raising animals. To make the process more profitable for the farmer, nut or fruit trees can be used to provide a profitable side crop for this purpose.

Maria Stewart wrote tellingly of forest gardening in this year's winter In Season when, with her co-editor husband, Jason Alexander, she visited the idyllic forest garden of "Forested" in Bowie, MD. founded by Lincoln Smith. Her description of the farm showed how Mr. Smith had turned his forested area into a very productive farm and raised vegetables, ducks and other growing items in company with trees that, beside sequestering carbon, provided protection from strong winds, heavy rains, and strong sunshine.

In "silvoarable" systems, to capture carbon, trees may also be used to provide wooded areas that protect interspersed long strips of soil to grow crops such as wheat or barley. This process is called "alley-cropping".

Silvopasture systems use trees in helping to care for farm animals. Chickens may be caged in movable coops so that they can find food while finding shade from the sun, pigs can root around and other farm animals can forage around in the forested environment.

Besides trees, other permanent plantings such as shrubs and hedgerows are important in improving the sequestration of carbon. The wider and higher the hedge, the more carbon it can sequester. A properly constructed hedgerow can be ten to twelve feet wide and many miles long. Besides sequestration of carbon, hedgerows provide habitat for small animals. Hedges and hedgerows purify the air. Whether crops are grown or animals grazed, the hedgerow keeps out deer and other undesirable animals from getting into the field to eat the crops, and fences in the desired animals grazing in fields from getting out.

Perennials with deep tap or thick roots can store carbon better and longer in the soil. A choice that might seem unlikely is clumping bamboo which is actually a grass. It is the fastest growing plant on earth and has abilities to store carbon that are as impressive as those trees can provide.

Windbreaks and contour planting of trees can increase carbon sequestration by improving the conditions for growing crops in riparian (river), buffer strips. The trees with their deep roots protect the rivers from erosion and the ill effects of agricultural runoff and help to sequester carbon.

Wetlands are included in the riparian definition and, in an article in ethical.net, "Carbon Farming: Sequestering Carbon in Plants and Soil," written by Elizabeth Waddington on June 4, 2020, she states that "Wetlands store 14.5% of the world's soil carbon, and yet cover only 6% of its total land area."

Whole orchard recycling. A report from UC Davis (University of California, Davis, CA) dated 10/30/18, concerns the need for a climate-friendly way of disposing of – in this case – old almond tree orchards that have become financially non-profitable and need to be replaced. Current methods for clearing out old trees and unprofitable orchards had been to burn them in the field or send them to a biomass power generation plant.

Biomass power generation, according to Renova Corporation, "...uses biological materials

Renova Biomass Power Generation

<https://www.usda.gov/topics/forestry/agroforestry/agroforestry-frequently-asked-questions>

U.S. Department of Agriculture Agroforestry FAQs

<https://treeyopermacultureedu.com/chapter-6-trees/alley-cropping-and-silvopasture/>

Treeyopermaculture.edu  
Written by Doug Crouch

<https://civileats.com/2018/04/06/adding-crushed-volcanic-rock-to-farm-soil-could-boost-crops-and-slow-global-warming/>

Civil Eats  
Adding Crushed Volcanic Rock to Farm Soil Could Boost Crops—and Slow Global Warming

<https://e360.yale.edu/features/how-adding-rock-dust-to-soil-can-help-get-carbon-into-the-ground>

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Published at the Yale School of the Environment  
How Adding Rock Dust to Soil Could Help Get Carbon into the Ground

By Susan Cosier 9/2/2021

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[https://energyeducation.ca/encyclopedia/Carbon\\_sink](https://energyeducation.ca/encyclopedia/Carbon_sink)

University of Calgary Energy Education  
Carbon sink

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biochar>

Biochar From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

<https://www.nps.gov/thro/learn/historyculture/civilian-conservation-corps.htm>

National Park Service  
Civilian Conservation Corps

Washington Post  
Science and Health Section  
February 15, 2022  
Climate Change – This underground carbon-dioxide storage idea turns out to be cracked. That’s actually good.  
By Erin Blakemore

(called biomass) such as waste or residue from logging or agriculture as fuel to generate electricity.” Since the carbon dioxide released during the burning of the biomass is only what the plants absorbed during their growth, the process may be considered carbon neutral.

This would seem to be an excellent source of power, particularly compared to coal or oil. However, natural gas prices have fallen since 2015 and many biomass power plants have closed, but with current issues with fossil fuel prices, that may change. As for burning those unprofitable orchards, burning permits have become difficult and expensive to obtain as California seeks to improve air quality.

The method the UC Davis scientists are proposing is whole-orchard recycling, which is the “...on-site grinding or chipping of whole trees during orchard removal and incorporation of the ground or chipped biomass into the topsoil prior to re-planting.” In other words, turn the old trees into mulch. Instead of sending carbon dioxide into the air by burning the trees, sequester the carbon, improve the soil structure and, as mulch, increase the efficiency of water use.

Other steps that should be taken would involve increasing microbial activity in the soil by the use of compost and biochar. For those not familiar with biochar, it is a soil conditioner made by burning biomass (wood, waste remainders of crops, weeds, etc.) in a fire that is burned with as little oxygen present as possible, much the way charcoal is made. It is stable, rich in carbon, and can remain in the soil for thousands of years.

Rewilding of waste areas such as logged-over areas, abandoned farms, any degraded areas or the repair of existing forests by reforestation. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt first took office during the depths of the Great Depression, on March 31, 1933, Congress created the Civilian Conservation Corps. (CCC), to save portions of the nation such as the Dust Bowl and areas where the soil had been abandoned, become degraded and was subject to erosion.

The Corps only lasted nine years, until 1941, and was not connected with the climate crisis we face today, but in providing honest work for some three million young men, the National Park Department release said that it “... made valuable contributions to forest management, flood control, conservation projects, and the development of state and national parks, forests, and historic sites.” It certainly deserves mention.

Next, Multi-layer Farming. This has also been called multi-storied cropping or multi-tier farming. According to BizEncyclopedia, “...It is the method of growing compatible plants of different heights on the same field at the same time. This type of farming is mostly practiced in orchards and plantations to make optimum use of solar energy even under high plant density.”

Using this system, the farmer gets most use from the sun by planting crops in tiers according to their height and water requirements: the tallest plants, planted first, have the greatest need for sunlight and will most need to be able to evaporate water from leaves, stems and flowers. The next layers, progressively shorter, will be plants that can survive in shade or need some of it and also need higher humidity.

By this method, a farmer may grow four or five different crops in the same field at the same time, allowing the farmer greater profit from a smaller space. Seeds are sowed, depending on the ultimate size of the plant being grown, in deep depth, middle, then top, and even topmost, depending on how much room is required for their roots.

Finally, a method to improve soil that seems quite unusual involves the idea that using rock that has been pulverized to dust and spreading that on farm soil could take carbon from the atmosphere and improve crop yields. To produce the pulverized dust, the method, called “enhanced rock weathering”, imitates what it takes millions of years to achieve in nature: rain, which is slightly acidic, breaks down rock and in doing so converts carbon dioxide to bicarbonate. The bicarbonate washes into the ocean over time and is stored there for hundreds of thousands of years.

This means that pulverizing the rock used in the present day, “enhanced rock weathering” speeds the process to a great degree. The process pulverizes silicate rocks such as basalt and the minerals are ready to be released to the field to store carbon within several years.

An article published at the Yale School of the Environment covered a project to test the ability of powdered silicate rocks to benefit crops in the field, The soil extracts far more carbon from the air and crop yields increase. Basalt is mentioned often, and other, less common silicate rocks are mentioned.

## What is a Master Gardener?

Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners (VCE-MG) are trained volunteer educators who provide the public with environmental information that draws on the horticultural research and experience of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Virginia State University.

### Join Us!

[click here to learn more](#)



Master Gardener Volunteer Cynthia Long answering questions about Charlie the snake at the Manassas Farmers Market

photo by Jason Alexander

The Science and Health Section of the February 15<sup>th</sup> Washington Post covered experiments being done by scientists at Columbia University using dunite, a commonly available form of igneous rock named after a mountain in New Zealand, to achieve this purpose. The program of experiments' title is "H14C-05 – Permeability evolution during carbon mineralization in peridotite: Implications for geological carbon storage", and the technique used is to dissolve carbon dioxide in water and place it in contact with rocks so that it changes into a mineral.

Dunite, or peridotite, is common on land and in the oceans and sucks up carbon naturally and turns it into minerals. The idea here is to age the rock, pulverize it, and spread it on farmers' fields. Rock dust, depending on its variety, has been shown to improve farmers crops: it can release nutrients such as phosphorous and potassium, magnesium and calcium, and may improve the release of nitrogen, so that farmers don't need to use as much nitrogen fertilizer. At the same time it is improving the crops, minerals in the soil react with water and carbon forming bicarbonates. These are stable, make their way to the ocean ultimately and precipitate out as limestone.

The fact that there are so many ways that we may lessen the amount of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere gives us hope that can return the CO<sub>2</sub> in the air to earlier, more natural levels. ◇◇◇

## TEACHING GARDEN WORKDAYS:

TUESDAY A.M., THURSDAY P.M., SATURDAY

ATTENTION MASTER GARDENERS AND  
MASTER GARDENER INTERNS

***Teaching Garden Workdays Have Started!***

***No sign up, just show up***

***wear closed toed shoes, hat, gloves, and bring your favorite tool, drinking water, and tick protection***

***Teaching Garden Workdays 2022***

### **Tuesday Morning 9 a.m. -Noon**

April 12, 19, and 26

May 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31

June 7, 14, 21, and 28

July 5, 12, 19, and 26

August 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30

September 6, 13, 20, and 27

October 4, 11, 18, and 25

November 1, 8, and 15

### **Thursday Evening 630 p.m. to Dusk**

April 7, 14, 21 and 28

May 5, 12, 19 and 26 Also Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>  
for preparation for the Plant Sale

June 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30

July 7, 14, 21, and 28

August 4, 11, 18, and 25

September 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29. Also Friday  
the 9<sup>th</sup> for preparation for the Plant Sale

### **Saturday Morning 9 a.m. -Noon**

April 16

May 7

June 4

July 2

August 6

September 3

October 29

### **Saturday in the Garden Programs 9 a.m. - Noon**

May 14 – Plant Sale

June 11

July 9

August 13

September 10 – Plant Sale

October 8

**All Saturday in the Gardens are Workdays**



## CONGRATULATIONS:

### NANCY BERLIN PRINCE WILLIAM WOMAN OF THE YEAR

by Leslie Paulson, Master Gardener Volunteer

Nancy Berlin was selected to be one of the five Influential Women of the Year in Prince William. Nancy has truly bloomed where she was planted since she was hired in 2007 as our Natural Resources Specialist, Volunteer Coordinator, and Education and Outreach Instructor for the Environmental Natural Resource Program of Virginia Cooperative Extension. For Nancy, serving others has been a lifelong endeavor.

*“She is a mentor to all of us.”*



Nancy Berlin, left, Influential Woman of the Year; photo by Leslie Paulson

The article in *Prince William Living* can be found here: [https://issuu.com/pwliving/docs/03\\_2022](https://issuu.com/pwliving/docs/03_2022).

We all have experienced Nancy’s dynamic personality and how she puts her heart into everything she does. Whether it is working with all her Master Gardeners or reaching out to help any organization who wants to put in a community garden, plant some trees, or teach classes on the environment, she does it wholeheartedly. Nancy has mastered the way to reach

out to Master Gardeners, schools, local organizations, and anyone who wants to do more for Prince William and its residents. She is a mentor to all of us. Remember to thank her for leading us so well.

Nancy, we thank you for being a gift to us all. Congratulations!◆◆◆

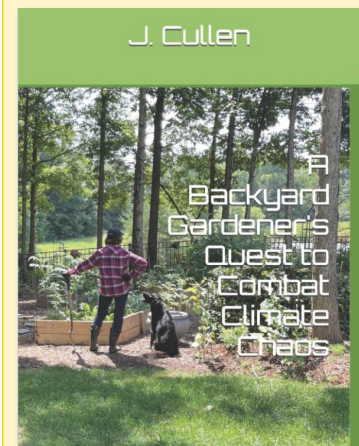
## BOOK NOOK, EXTRA:

### *A BACKYARD GARDENER’S QUEST TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHAOS* BY JANENE CULLEN, MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER

One of our Master Gardeners - Janene Cullen - just published a new book: *A Backyard Gardener’s Quest to Combat Climate Chaos*. Janene has been a Virginia Master Gardener since 2006, an Audubon Ambassador since 2011, and is currently serving as the President of the Master Gardeners of Prince William County Board of Directors.

This book combines her dedication to gardening and her training as a climate reality leader. It is about what each of us can do individually in our own yards and in our own communities to help mitigate climate change and protect our local environment.

[Available on Amazon](#)



## MASTER GARDENER COLLEGE 2022:

*June 22-26*

Extension Master Gardener College will be held at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA on June 22-26.

Join us for 5 days of speakers, tours, and advanced EMG Land Care training

[Learn more here](#)

EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER COLLEGE 2022



mapper view of the Balls Ford Road composting facility at Freestate Farms; the dark blue area represents a future vegetable garden, the green area represents the future native garden; “Freestate Farms transforms food and yard waste from cities, businesses, and individuals into high-quality compost, renewable energy, and organic produce.”

## IN THE COMMUNITY: BALLS FORD ROAD GARDEN PLANNING

**by Maria Stewart Master Gardener Volunteer**

Master Gardener volunteers Jimmie Jones, Meghan Barany, and Marcia Horgan with leadership from Nancy Berlin, Natural Resource Specialist and Master Gardener Coordinator, are working with Rich Riedel, Marketing Director at [Freestate Farms](#), to establish a native garden and vegetable garden at their Balls Ford Road composting facility.

Rich Riedel contacted Nancy for help in demonstrating good gardening practices and described his goals for the project as: “Construction of new and existing structures often leaves the soil in poor shape. On the surface, this frequently means that gardens and lawns can’t be grown in the remaining soil, but there are additional negative impacts on the air (limited carbon sequestration), water (pollutants flow through to our local watershed), and local wildlife (e.g. fewer pollinators). Freestate Farms finished construction on a new composting facility in Manassas, VA and would like to rejuvenate the soil around their main office to support local plant, pollinator and vegetable gardens. The goal of the project is to demonstrate how compost and other natural landscaping supplies can turn depleted soils into productive land as well as give an example for how it can be done.”

Freestate Farms explains: “With integrated facilities for organic waste recycling and organic food production, Freestate Farms uses state-of-the-art technology and sustainable operations to address the unique needs of its local communities. Through design, construction and operation of these full-circle solutions, Freestate Farms delivers increased soil health and productivity, reduced water use and pollution, minimized greenhouse gas emissions, and a more sustainable local community.” Learn more about Freestate Farms here: [freestatefarmsva.com](http://freestatefarmsva.com)

Be on lookout for more about this exciting project.◇◇



*Plant NOVA Natives* is the joint marketing campaign of a grand coalition of non-profit, governmental, and private groups, all working to reverse the decline of native plants and wildlife in Northern Virginia.

Our strategy is to encourage residents as well as public and commercial entities to install native plants as the first step toward creating wildlife habitat and functioning ecosystems on their own properties.

All are welcome to participate in this collective action movement!



*Tiarella cordifolia* (Foamflower) makes a great groundcover

## COURTESY OF PLANT NOVA NATIVES: NATIVE GROUNDCOVERS

***reprinted with encouragement from  
PLANTNOVANATIVES, April 22, 2019; thanks to Leslie  
Paulson, Master Gardener Volunteer***

Are you seeking a groundcover that is both beautiful and friendly to the ecosystem? Try looking beyond the old standbys to the new trend in gardening circles: native Virginia plants.

Bare ground in a garden is an invitation to weeds and erosion. The conventional landscaping solutions are either to pile on wood mulch or to plant an aggressive plant - such as English ivy, Japanese pachysandra, Vinca, spreading Liriope, or Yellow Archangel - then let it take over. The problem with those plants is that they take over more than just our gardens: they spread where they are not wanted by inexorably creeping along and by producing seeds that allow them to leap into our few remaining natural areas, where they crowd out the native plants and ruin the local ecosystem.

To prevent these unintended consequences, landscapers are now turning to plants that evolved locally, of which there are numerous examples that provide the “look” we are used to: a dense, low-growing monoculture for shade or part shade areas. Some are evergreen, others deciduous. A few have the additional feature of colorful spring flowers. Some can tolerate the bone-dry conditions under a tree; others prefer constant moisture. With the exception of Golden Ragwort (*Packera aurea*) and Common Violet (*Viola sororia*), none would be accused of being aggressive. Isn't this nicer than having a bare mulch garden?

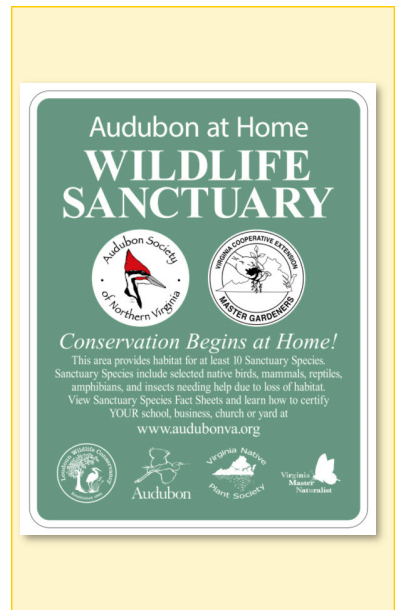
Details and photos can be found on the [Plant NOVA Natives website](#). ♦♦♦

## CONSERVATION AT HOME: WANTED! CLIENTS FOR OUR AUDUBON AT HOME PROGRAM

by **Leslie Paulson, Audubon at Home Prince William  
Coordinator and Master Gardener Volunteer**

It is the season to start thinking about making your yard more inviting to our native insects and birds. Our Audubon At Home Ambassadors are ready and waiting to come by and help you get started.

Go to this link to sign up for a visit request: <https://www.audubonva.org/aah-consultation-request-form> After that, I (Leslie Paulson) will send you an application to fill out and get started. You can ask any questions about native plants and providing food and



*“together we could create a native park larger than all our national parks put together”*

shelter for the wildlife we need to support.

If you haven't heard Doug Tallamy speak, go to this link to hear him talk about his latest book on oaks, *The Nature of Oaks*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDUJQB3GVT4>. It will help



Wildlife Sanctuary Sign. Photo: Margaret Fisher

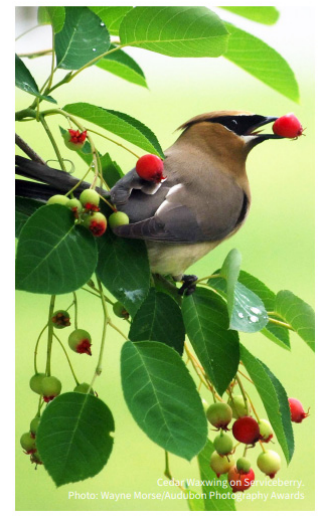
**Certify your Yard  
as a Wildlife  
Sanctuary**

you see that each yard is important, and together we could create a native park larger than all our national parks put together: <https://homegrownnationalpark.org/>

So please, sign up for a visit and you can start your homegrown native plant Wildlife Habitat. Every yard with native plants growing will help protect our native wildlife species. We can do it - one yard at a time! Any questions, let me know.  
[Ljp6651@comcast.net](mailto:Ljp6651@comcast.net) ♦♦♦

## Audubon at Home

Creating Wildlife Habitat  
One Property at a Time



Cedar Waxwing on Strawberry. Photo: Wayne Morse/Audubon Photography Awards



Prince William has a core group of trained Master Gardeners in the [Audubon at Home program](#) who have certified over 100 homes. To make more land in Prince William County wildlife-friendly, start to certify your property today! If you are ready to make your backyard or community space more environmentally friendly, give us a call at 703-792-7747 or email [master\\_gardener@pwcgov.org](mailto:master_gardener@pwcgov.org).



## Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy

### Spring Native Plant Sale

**What:** Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy's Native Plant Sale

**When:** Saturday, April 16, 9:00am – 3:00pm

**Where:** Morven Park, 17195 Southern Planter Lane, Leesburg

Thousands of beautiful spring blooming flowers, shrubs, trees, vines and ferns will be for sale from three native plant nurseries. Experts will be on hand to help you choose the right plants for your garden.

## MASTER GARDENER PRINCE WILLIAM SPRING PLANT SALE:

MAY 14<sup>TH</sup> 9:00 AM – NOON

by Leslie Paulson, Master Gardener Volunteer

Spring is almost here and that can only mean that our Spring Plant Sale is around the corner as well. The location is at our Teaching Garden at the St. Benedict Monastery at 9535 Linton Hall Rd Bristow, Virginia.

**MASTER GARDENERS:** Please start looking for perennials etc., that you can donate to the sale. No invasives please. Also, no hostas, crape myrtles, common lilac, or liriopse. If you can, please pot up at least 3 weeks ahead of time. The plants will look better for the sale. Put the plants in a gallon pot, at minimum. Please clean your pots first. Also, we are asking that you **use potting soil and not garden soil from your beds**. The reason is jumping worms. For more information, look at this site:

[https://extension.unh.edu/resource/plant-sales-and-jumping-worms?fbclid=IwAR03Awdxfeli\\_Anz8hmpIwaYYhIo48B1n2Yt6j9sv7EUM1F5sGdkwKdGNKw](https://extension.unh.edu/resource/plant-sales-and-jumping-worms?fbclid=IwAR03Awdxfeli_Anz8hmpIwaYYhIo48B1n2Yt6j9sv7EUM1F5sGdkwKdGNKw)

We do not want to be spreading jumping worms to others. Please watch carefully as you pot. For an extra precaution, you can wash the roots of the plants you dig up.

I also need empty one gallon and three gallon pots. If you have extra, please bring out to the Teaching Garden. No pots smaller than one gallon please.

We are going to make special markers this year. If you are bringing plants out and leaving them, they still need a stick in them saying what they are. **Best time to bring the plants is May 10-13.**

**Teaching Garden workdays will be on Tuesday mornings, and Thursdays 6 pm – dusk, and Friday 5-7 pm.** If you can help us on those dates, please come out. You'll have **first chance buying privileges on Thursday and Friday if you help**. Go to My Impact to sign up.

Email the Horticulture Helpdesk ([mastergardener@pwcgov.org](mailto:mastergardener@pwcgov.org)) to sign up for updates on changes to the Teaching Garden workday schedule, or to get the flyer for the Spring Plant Sale.

**For Saturday in the Garden, and other classes, visit this link:**

<https://www.pwcva.gov/department/virginia-cooperative-extension/horticulture-classes>

Personal checks are preferred, made out to MGPW. We will also accept cash, but unfortunately, no credit cards are accepted. Thank you!

**CRITTER NEIGHBORS:**  
**EASTERN-TAILED BLUE**  
*(CUPIDO COMYNTAS, AKA EVERES COMYNTAS)*

**by Jason Alexander, Master Gardener Volunteer**

Eastern-tailed Blues are a diminutive butterfly with a wingspan measuring 2.2 to 2.9 cm. They are found in weedy areas, fields, and woodland edges, April through October.

If you'd like to welcome them to your landscape, have plenty of their favorite nectar sources like asters, clover, and dogbane. And provide what they need to raise their babies: host plants like wild strawberry, cinquefoils, clover, and legumes (wild peas and beans). Eastern-tailed Blue caterpillars also overwinter inside bean and pea pods.◇◇◇



photos by Jason Alexander



males Eastern-tailed Blues often attend a puddle party

**Sources:**

[Field Guide to the Butterflies of Loudoun County](#)

[Butterflies and Moths of North America](#)

## **WANTED!**

Master Gardener Volunteers train as Citizen Scientists to help detect the Invasive Spotted Lanternfly

*training is self-paced and available online at:*

[Citizen Scientist Detection Program for Spotted Lanternfly in Virginia](#)

If you accept this challenge, let Nancy Berlin know so she can call on you to help once this pest arrives in Prince William County



## **HORTICULTURE CLASSES OF PARTICULAR NOTE:**

### **VEGETABLE GARDENING COURSE 2022**



**Virginia Cooperative Extension**  
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

# **Vegetable Gardening Course 2022**

An online class provided by  
**Virginia Cooperative Extension – Prince William**

Growing your own food, using nature as a guide and incorporating sustainable practices is good for our bodies and good for the earth. This course covers the essential topics — planning the garden from seed to harvest, using organic and sustainable techniques to develop healthy productive gardens, growing good soil, dealing with wildlife and specific techniques for container and indoor vegetable gardens. Taught by the Master Gardener Cook's Garden Team.

The course is set up to allow you to learn at your own pace. The videos and handouts will be available online. The course will be open for enrollment from February 1<sup>st</sup> to July 1<sup>st</sup>. Discussion boards will allow you to interact with the instructors and there will be 3 live question and answer sessions

**Q & A Sessions, 10:30 – 11:30 am**

Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>

Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup>

Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>

**There is a \$5 charge for this program. Enrollment is on-going starting February 1<sup>st</sup> so you can register even after the course has started. Please register at**

**<https://tinurl.com/2022-PW-Veg-Gardening>**

If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact Virginia Cooperative Extension – Prince William at 703-792-6285/TDD\* during business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event. \*TDD number is (800) 828-1120.

Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, military status, or any other basis protected by law.

**VIRGINIA MASTER GARDENER  
ASSOCIATION OPPORTUNITY:  
MEMBERSHIP DRIVE**

*Virginia Master Gardener Association  
Board of Directors Meeting  
and Membership Drive  
670 River Ridge Road  
Dillwyn, Virginia 23986  
April 9, 2022*

Unit Master Gardeners, Interns and Current Students are invited to attend the April 9th VMGA meeting in Central Virginia. Our goal is to encourage participation and growth of the state-wide Master Gardener Association. Bimonthly meetings are held at 10 a.m. the second Saturday of February, April, June (MGC annual meeting), August, October and December. There are lifetime and annual membership options.

June 22 to 26, 2022 EMGC, includes an offering of Advanced MG training for the aspiring Land Steward. This location, thirty two miles South of Monticello, certainly sets a strong example and speaks volumes to that process. Two Army Soldiers retired to Central Virginia, inheriting in their land purchase many generations of pine and hardwood forestry environmental challenges. Witness the transition to a farm that is strengthening soil health, by way of farming microbes for the last ten years, crop production, developing silvopasture and home to a herd of alpacas. Events will take place in an enclosed, unheated, second story area of a barn, accessed by stairs, yet out of the elements.

Units are encouraged to join in and share the Co-Hosting of this event with Piedmont Master Gardeners, Prince William County Master Gardeners, and the Fund Raising Committee of VMGA. This is an excellent opportunity for smaller units to Co-Host an event. We plan to provide a warm lunch and many door prizes. Master Gardener Logo apparel will be offered as a cash and carry option through VMGA Merchandise Mart.

We look forward to hosting you and supporting the strong growth of VMGA as the State Master Gardener Association. There is ample opportunity for continued growth through expanded participation and education beyond the unit level.

*Mary Martinez-Rigo*

Prince William County Master Gardener, 2008 . Piedmont Master Gardener, 2016

*703 . 216 . 1479*



### Master Gardeners Prince William

Master Gardeners of Prince William (MGPW) is the supportive organization for active Master Gardener Volunteers in Prince William County, Manassas City and Manassas Park. There are approximately 200 active volunteer environmental educators serving in various capacities.

Volunteers and volunteerism are central to the MGPW mission as we strive to make our community a more sustainable, healthy and beautiful place to live and to educate residents about the many benefits of gardening, including the opportunity to grow nutritious, healthy food, environmentally friendly landscapes, all with the ultimate goal of protecting water quality in local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay.

## FREE ONLINE CLASSES

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) is hosting classes via zoom Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m. to Noon. For a schedule of classes, click here: [Prince William County Cooperative Extension Horticulture Classes](#).

Please register for classes by contacting the [Horticulture Help Desk](#) at [mastergardener@pwcgov.org](mailto:mastergardener@pwcgov.org) or call 703-792-7747.

All classes as well as [Teaching Garden](#) tour videos can be found on our [YouTube channel](#).

Although Prince William County Buildings are closed to the public, VCE staff and Master Gardener Volunteers are working remotely to answer your lawn and garden questions. Please contact us by emailing [mastergardener@pwcgov.org](mailto:mastergardener@pwcgov.org) or call 703-792-7747.

**Help Support Master Gardeners Prince William while you shop with (click the icons to learn more):**



### Master Gardeners Prince William

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Website: [MGPW.org](http://MGPW.org)  
Website VCE: [www.pwcgov.org](http://www.pwcgov.org)



PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

-Send submissions, questions, or comments to

[MGPWnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:MGPWnewsletter@gmail.com)

The Editors,

Jason Alexander & Maria Stewart, Master Gardener Volunteers