

International Master Gardener Conference 2011



Wednesday Featured Speakers (10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.)

W-1: Going Green – Leading by Example, Brian Jorg

Going “Green” is currently one of the strongest movements worldwide, but what measures are being incorporated in new commercial landscapes? The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, which is known as the Greenest Zoo in the United States, is making strides to become an even better environmental steward. See the efforts of a major Zoo, from the use of rain gardens and green roofs, to reducing utilities and solid waste, solar panels and rain gardens, permeable pavements and geothermal power and plant selection for sustainable landscape. See the latest and greatest ideas being put into practice for sustainable infrastructure and landscapes, and learn ideas you can take back to implement into your own home landscape.

W-2: Sugar, Sex and Poison: Shocking Plant Secrets Caught on Camera, Bill Cullina

As we all know, plants are at the base of both the human and non-human food chain. Everything eats them directly or indirectly, which may or may not be a good thing as far as plants are concerned. Because they do not move around, it is easy to forget that plants are not helpless. They have evolved an incredible arsenal of chemicals, camouflage, spines, hairs, and waxes to discourage herbivores. On the other hand, they spend a huge amount of their energy on pollen, nectar, edible fruits, and sugary root exudates designed to attract and nourish animals, insects, fungi and bacteria so they can perform services such as pollination, seed dispersal, defense, and nutrient acquisition. It is a carefully balanced natural economy and community based on the products of photosynthesis that is amazing in its complexity and efficiency. Strengthening this natural economy through sound horticultural and agricultural practices is in essence what the organic movement is all about. In this talk, Bill Cullina will show how this world of pollen, poisons, pigments, pheromones, sugars and sex translates to sound organic practices we all can benefit from.

W-3: Wiser Living Through Gardening – Advice from Mother, Barbara Pleasant

Award-winning garden writer and contributing editor for Mother Earth News Barbara Pleasant says that organic gardening is just the beginning for a new generation of food-minded gardeners. When food gardening becomes a central element of your life, the pursuit of a truly sustainable emerges as a primary goal. In this lively presentation, Barbara will explore what these changes mean in terms of soil care, crop selection, and favored varieties.

Wednesday Breakout Sessions (1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

W-4: Landscaping with an Environmental Focus, Carrie Murphy

Learn how to shift your focus away from high maintenance landscapes, to natural, low-maintenance, environmentally sensitive landscapes. Together, we’ll define a sustainable landscape and discuss “green” maintenance techniques easily adapted for use in residential and commercial sites.

W-5: Hortus Mustus – The Plants You Gotta Get, Jim Nau

This presentation will cover a number of the more recent introductions of annuals, perennials and tropicals.

W-6: Smart Yard Care – Being a Hero for Your Home, Dave Close, Frank Reilly, Barb Stewart

This session will demonstrate how the Three R's of Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, can be intuitively combined with Firewise landscaping practices to mitigate against wild land fire damage to your property. Reducing unwanted fire starts by offering sound alternatives to debris burning. This effort is worthwhile and so is giving people alternative tools to help them protect what they value. To get this word out takes information, committed people and money. The Virginia Cooperative Extension Advanced Master Gardener Land Care Steward Program trains trainers and offers useful information to homeowners and community leaders. Now there is also a practical resource for homeowners in the publication "Smart Yard Care: Big Rewards from Small Investments in Land Stewardship."

W-7: Look Back to the Future: New and Great Old Plants for Today's Garden, Bill Hendricks

History tends to repeat itself. Looking back at old catalogs from the 1880's through 1950 it is interesting how gardening trends have repeated themselves. A few plants remain unchanged but many have new and better forms and cultivars. Join Bill for a look at some of the new and trendy woody plants for use in today's gardens and landscapes.

W-8: Eating Green in Schools with JMG®, Randy Seagraves, Lisa Whittlesey

Growing and eating fresh veggies through JMG® teaches youth the importance of healthy active lifestyles. This workshop objectives are: to expose participants to broad overview of research documenting success of gardening in schools and how the JMG® is being used to improve nutritional choices, increase academic achievement, improve parental involvement and leadership in youth; engage participants in hands on activities from the JMG® curricula – Health and Nutrition for the Garden; introduce participants to existing JMG® implementation success stories and linking of school garden programs with community volunteers through the adult Master Gardener program; empower participants to think of school garden programs as a community garden and a living kitchen that can be an effective teaching tool to impact children and families on improved nutrition; and engage participants on how to develop school based JMG® programs and lead participants in an implementation model and evaluation tool to measure program impact.

W-9: Gardening is for the Birds, Roseanne Sherry

Landscaping with natives and other plants to attract birds is a way to extend the gardening season throughout the year. The benefits of enhancing home landscapes to attract birds, both residents and migratory, range from environmental improvements on a local scale to the personal well-being and enjoyment of the gardener.

Various ways of attracting birds with extensive plant lists, feeding stations, container plantings and enhancements like water sources increase the chance of enlarging a yard list to well over 50 species throughout the year. When creating habitat for the birds, other creatures benefit from the same ecological niche.

Local and online resources abound to help the gardener anywhere in the country build the plant lists appropriate for their area. A resource list will be provided for the WV area.

W-10: Planting on the Airwaves, Kathy Cropp, Randy Atkins

Co-hosts will share from their experience gained with the start and continuation of their Virginia Cooperative Extension – master gardener radio program “Here’s the Dirt”. The content is designed around the ideas of program options, how to sell the program to local stations, formatting for allotted time, prerecording vs. live broadcasting, program content, arranging guests, advertising, keeping it new and fresh. Their goal would be to teach participants to replicate their program as an educational opportunity for their community.

W-11: Garden Kaleidoscope: The Garden Through Rose Colored Glasses, J. Macunovich, S. Nikkila

What you want determines what you do. This workshop looks at 20 different gardens of varying types, from large public garden to private individuals’ ornamental-, vegetable- and enabling gardens. It focuses on how each gardener’s purpose affects what things are done in that garden and how they are done. It celebrates the revelations we ourselves have had in working with gardening clients, to see that every garden is unique and every way of doing things is “right”. We visit the 20 gardens over a 10 year period and so include some very interesting before/after images and lessons.

Wednesday Breakout Sessions (3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

W-12: Diagnosing Soil Physical Problems, Dr. Richard Rathjens

It has been estimated that approximately 80 percent of landscape plant problems can be attributed to the plant’s soil environment. Planting too deeply, compaction, excessive mulch, poor drainage and interface are just a few of the soil conditions that challenge plant growth.

The session will help the attendee diagnose unfavorable soil conditions for plant growth. The discussion will include a review of plant symptoms as well as soil indicators that that unfavorable soil conditions exist. Likewise the presentation will also provide recommendations as to how to correct soil problems.

W-13: Plant Breeders and Nature: The Inventors of Green, Dr. Rick Schoellhorn

Where do new plants come from? Who is choosing them and what are they being chosen for? How can we tell if the plants we buy are the best for our region? Join Dr. Rick Schoellhorn of Proven Winners for a journey through time and plant breeding and how we got to where we are today. From the beginning man and plants have developed together, the plants we use and love have been with us for thousands of years, so how do we learn their history, or know their stories? So much of the past is lost in the overwhelming information we process each day, so take a deep breath and relax as we move from early plant discoveries to today’s molecular world. How are things changing and how can you learn more. Dr. Schoellhorn will focus on how we move from native wildflowers to new varieties, what the reasons are for advances in plant breeding and why we try to improve on Mother Nature. There is humor and there are some timely warnings in a few notable successes and failures along the way! But the best part is learning the stories and the lessons they have to share.

W-14: Rainwater Harvesting: More than Just Rain Barrels, BJ Jarvis

Four different methods for gardeners to collect and reuse water in the garden include: rain barrels, cisterns, rain gardens and green roofs. From the easy to more intricate methods of conserving water while having a beautiful garden despite periodic droughts or longer term water shortages.

W-15: Greening Your Garden While Protecting the Planet, Joe Lamp'I

This presentation is based Joe's popular book, *The Green Gardener's Guide*; simple significant actions to protect and preserve our planet. Gardeners enjoy a connection with the earth unlike anyone else. Ironically as we create and maintain beautiful gardens and landscapes, many unknowingly are doing so in a way that is harmful to our environment. Updated for Master Gardeners and with new information, in his highly popular presentation, Joe Lamp'I will entertain and stimulate your thinking as he shares seven significant concepts we all can do right now to make our gardens and community 'greener' while protecting the planet too.

W-16: Luscious Landscaping with Fruits, Dr. Lee Reich

What could be more pleasant than picking luscious fruits from a plant that you also admire for its beauty? This presentation will introduce some of the best trees, shrubs, and vines for this purpose, plants that require little maintenance yet provide stunning flowers in spring, attractive shape and color through summer, bright colors in autumn, and/or neat form in winter. For landscaping, the ideal is a plant that also is low maintenance, being pest-resistant and requiring little or no pruning. Luscious landscaping is the way to both landscape and put (very) local, healthful, flavorful food on the table.

W-17: Landscaping with Native Trees & Shrubs, Vincent Simeone

This lecture will discuss many native trees and shrubs that can be used in a natural setting. Special applications such as using plants to attract wildlife will also be discussed. Ornamental value, culture and maintenance considerations will also be discussed.

W-18: Engaging Master Gardeners to Enhance Community Garden Efforts, Karen Neill, Lucy Bradley

Most of the country has faced a "perfect storm" of factors that has accelerated the growth of community gardening. Community gardening provides an excellent tool to address nutrition, youth development, physical wellness, environmental education, community development and more. Community gardens are a bridge between many cultures, races, ethnicities, age groups and social backgrounds.

Learn how Master Gardeners can assist in addressing community garden inquiries from the initial phone calls through the development of community leadership teams. Next learn how Master gardeners assist each garden in the role of educator and mentor. We will share ideas of both formal and informal types of education.

W-19: America In Bloom, Dr. Marvin Miller

Promoting beautification programs with community involvement is what the America in Bloom organization is all about. Participating towns and cities receive benefits ranging from making the town a better place to live, work, play and visit, to increased civic pride to increased property values.

America in Bloom is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting nationwide beautification programs and personal and community involvement through the use of flowers, plants, trees, and other environmental and lifestyle enhancements. The organization provides educational programs, resources, and the challenge of a friendly competition between participating communities across the country.

Thursday Featured Speakers (10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.)

T-1: Gardeners – 21st Century Shamans, Janet Macunovich, Steven Nikkila

Many gardeners are more attuned to the natural world than the average person. As a result, many non-gardeners view gardeners as special people, the shamans and wisewomen of the modern world. Here's a look at how and why that happens, and the opportunity it affords the gardener to increase his or her contribution to the community's well-being.

T-2: Creating Sustainable Landscapes, Vincent Simeone

Now more than ever, it is important for gardeners to develop sustainable ways to manage the landscape. With limited natural resources and growing challenges in the garden, finding long-term ways to sustain our landscapes is essential. This lecture will provide ways to create a more sustainable environment around us including promoting Integrated Pest Management, recycling, habitat management, managing invasive species, turf mowing practices, composting and proper plant selection.

T-3: My Weedless Garden, Dr. Lee Reich

This presentation introduces a novel way for caring for the soil, one that results in fewer weeds. Nurturing the ground from the top down, avoiding compaction, maintaining a soil cover, and pinpointing watering emulates rather than fights Mother Nature, keeping plants healthier and minimizing weed problems. This presentation describes how this 4-part system is applied to establish new plantings as well as to maintain existing plantings. The principles and practices are rooted in the latest agricultural research and are applicable to sustainable, small farm systems.

Thursday Breakout Sessions (1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

T-4: Why Trees Matter: Environmental, Economic and Social Benefits of Trees, Jim Chatfield, Pam Bennett

From iTree analysis to tree-stories, why and how trees matter to Master Gardeners and communities.

T-5: Native Wildflowers for Eastern Gardens, Brian Jorg

Native Wildflowers for Eastern Gardens Session will cover the best commercially available native plants that can be grown in home landscapes. Developing the soil for native gardens, propagation, even conservation can be covered as well. Handouts of the species covered will accompany the talk.

T-6: Revolutionary Home Composting, Barbara Pleasant

If you're tired of hauling yard and garden waste to a hidden corner, why not move composting into the heart of your garden, where it belongs? Award-winning coauthor of the best-selling Complete Compost Gardening Guide will share dozens of simple ways to bring more benefits of composting to your garden, with much less work.

T-7: Going Green with Junior Master Gardener Literature in the Garden, Randy Seagraves, Lisa Whittlesey

The Junior Master Gardener program and curricula is an award winning program that is offered that grows good kids through igniting a passion for learning, success and service. This workshop is designed to engage “hands-on” group and individual learning experiences that promotes a love of gardening, develops an appreciation for the environment, and cultivates the mind while teaching science academic standards. This presentation showcases hands-on garden activities that empower teachers and volunteers to cultivate the connection of children’ garden experiences to inspiring children’s books.

Using the Junior Master Gardener curricula, Literature in the Garden, participants will explore the curricula and award winning children’s literature to inspire children’s learning through outdoor activities, creative expression and open exploration. Participants will learn to use books, writing and reading exercises to make science and reading more relevant to children.

T-8: Food Among the Flowers: The Basics of Edible Landscapes, John Porter

Edible landscaping has garnered much interest in the gardening world, especially for those gardeners with limited space. Participants will learn the basics of incorporating edible plants into the landscape, including discovering the ornamental potential of edibles, the benefits of growing your own food and the care required for edible plants.

T-9: Why You Can’t Buy a Forest in a Can, Bill Cullina

Eastern North America is blessed with some remarkable forests; forests that have suffered from 400 years of logging, plowing, pollution, and invasive pests. As our human population grows, so does pressure on our remaining forested lands, and we as individuals, communities, and nations need to act now curb their continuing degradation, for the sake of the trees and all that depend on them, including ourselves. It would be nice to think that you could just scatter a handful of seeds around in a degraded forest and come back a few years later to find the understory teeming with wildflowers, birds, and insects. Of course, nothing is that simple, but in this talk Bill Cullina will look at what makes our eastern forests special and what we can do in our own backyards and communities to restore the diversity of our woodlands.

T-10: Storybooks + Kids + Gardening = Innovative Programming, Pam Hosimer

University of Maryland’s Grow It! Eat It! for KIDS program uses children’s literature as one of its sources of inspiration to develop programming and get kids interested in gardening! Come discover ways to use books as a springboard to create a fun environment to integrate science, hands-on activities and more into a stimulating learning experience for young gardeners.

SYNOPSIS: Discussion of how to take a children’s storybook and use it to create a gardening lesson. Introduce the Grow It! Eat It! for KIDS program. Demonstrate the “Jack/Kate and the Beanstalk” program & activity. Have participants do the activity. Familiarize people with the range of resources available to use. Let people try their hand at making up a lesson plan to go with a book they like.

T-11: Appalachian Culture and West Virginia’s Botanical Gems: Native Orchids, Doug Jolley

West Virginia has over 40 species of native orchids growing within its borders. Also the two newest orchid species have been found in West Virginia. This program combines the allure and beauty of our native orchids with the impact which our Appalachian culture has had upon them: favorable and otherwise. From the early pioneers to modern issues, the two topics have interacted upon one another in interesting ways.

Thursday Breakout Sessions (3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

T-12: The Benefits of Beneficials, Jessica Walliser

Understanding the cycle of predator and prey is an integral part of growing organically. Using information assembled for her newest books, *Good Bug, Bad Bug: Who's Who, What They Do, and How to Manage Them Organically*, Jessica shines some light on the methods needed to attract beneficial insects to the garden – and keep them there. She presents ground-breaking university research regarding the intricate connection between plants and insects, and explains the need for maintaining the garden's natural balance. Jessica describes over a dozen species of beneficial insects found across North America and accompanies the lecture with beautiful images of the predators themselves and their favorite host plants. You'll never look at bugs the same way again.

T-13: Cut Flowers for Profit and Pleasure, Dr. Barbara Liedl

Flowers are an integral part of our lives and people with skills in the garden are well-placed to profit from their toil in the soil. Cut flowers are a profitable business in many parts of the world and even someone with a small garden can grow cut flowers for sale with local establishments. Gardeners new to this enterprise are warned to do their homework and in this session we will discuss potential markets and flowers that are good starts for a home grown cut flower business.

T-14: Go Green, Grow Green & Save Greenbacks, Larry Sagers

Want a free greenhouse? Well not quite free, but almost. Using recycled glass and lumber, taking advantage of solar tax credits and adding some sweat equity made it possible to create greenhouse that pays me instead of me paying to operate it. Growing plants is a fun and practical hobby. The class will learn from my experience the do's and don'ts of low-cost greenhouses. Mine is a solar-heated, cool-season greenhouse, meaning it has not heat source other than the sun and it has served to grow and maintain plants for more than 25 years.

T-15: Tough Plants for Tough Places, Bill Hendricks

Are you troubled by what plant to choose for that problem area of your design? Here is a chance to take a closer look at some problem solving plants to meet the landscape challenge.

T-16: Make Your Garden Work for You: The Visual Guide to Growing Healthy Vegetables, D. Deardorff, K. Wadsworth

Grow healthy, organic vegetables at home. Many of us seek safe, clean, chemical-free, and locally grown food without spending the whole paycheck. And we crave that moment when the flavor of a freshly-picked tomato explodes in our mouths. We want all these benefits of growing our own, but don't want to waste time, energy, and money getting them. Here's the simple truth – the most effective way to grow the healthy food we all desire is to create gardens that replicate nature.

Beautifully illustrated with extensive photographs, we share with you the benefits of working in concert with the natural world. From the lowly earthworm that enriches the soil to the humble bee that pollinates our crops, wild creatures work hard for our benefit. In return let us provide them with a safe and healthy habitat. Creating an intact, albeit artificial, ecosystem that functions the way a natural ecosystem does just makes sense. After all, nature is your silent partner that makes the garden work for you.

T-17: Pollinator Gardens: How Home Gardeners Can Help Conserve Bee Biodiversity, Dr. Gail Langellotto

This session will describe how home gardens can help to conserve beneficial bees, as well as the ecosystem service of pollination, in urban and suburban gardens. The session will begin with an overview of the importance of bees to home gardening, as well as to surrounding ecosystems. Regional research on plants and gardening strategies that favor pollinating bees will be reviewed. Garden plans for pollinators will be presented.

T-18: Garden Photography, Wil Hershberger

Maximize your efforts photographing your garden or others gardens. Learn about exposure, composition, depth of field, what are f-stops and why should I care. All these and more to increase your familiarity with your camera and hone your talents to capture the images that you envision.

T-19: A Different Green: California Native Plant Landscaping, Lucy Warren

Warren is currently co-authoring a book on a new, practical approach to native landscaping. Isolated geologically, California is almost the Galapagos of the North American continent with many wonderful endemic plants. It is a Mediterranean climate with moderate temperatures, winter rain and dry summers. Within short distances you can drive through multiple climate zones. Because of the state's climate, Californians garden differently than most of the rest of the country, but most of gardening follows traditional horticulture. As the state faces water shortages, gardeners are looking to more ways to conserve this precious resource and one of those ways includes using more native plants in the landscape. The talk will discuss our special conditions, the effects of using traditional landscaping methods, and why it should not be difficult to create native landscapes. Of course, it will include a number of our great plants and how they have been used successfully in beautiful regional landscapes.

Thursday Breakout Session (4:45 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.)

T-20: Garden Fitness – Workout Session, Nan Quinlan

One hour of aerobics, Pilates, power yoga and stretching to introduce attendees to exercises to help strengthen key muscles and our core muscles that enable us to bend, stretch, twist, push, reach, pull and maintain our balance as we approach everyday tasks in the garden. The session offers varying levels of the exercises to accommodate basic to medium level participants. Mats and towels are needed.