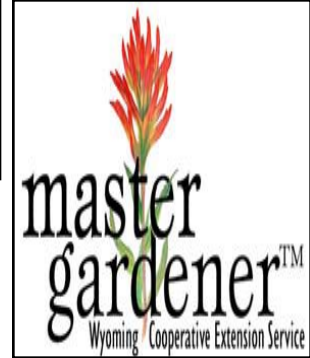




The Sage Gardener

Park County Master Gardener Newsletter



From the President... *Dan Wasp*



What daffodils are to spring and wildflowers are to summer and golden aspens are to fall, snow is to winter. Each year as I watch the first snow it renews my sense of wonder. It's the most important ingredient in the months of cold. We see it covering the mountain peaks, and molded by the wind as it sweeps down and drifts against anything in its way, and mounds in bizarre shapes as it covers the many objects that are its canvas, and records the many activities of wildlife.



More important than snow's esthetic value is the role it plays in the survival of many plants that would find it difficult living in harsh cold, windswept environments. Snow creates a microclimate that ensures survival and continued reproduction of the species. Snow's winter overcoat provides insulating cover that protects plants from extreme low temperatures, wind desiccation, loss of water, and solar radiation. Snow's insulating efficiency can't be under estimated. Take for example, if the temperature of the air above ground is 27° F below zero the temperature 7 inches below the surface is 24°F above zero when the ground is covered with only little more than a foot of snow. This is a remarkable difference of 51 °F degrees.

However, the less obvious disadvantages of a snow covering includes water logging from snow melt and the resulting loss of oxygen available to the plant. Packing snow can often cause mechanical damage to plants. The significances of the benefit and adverse effects of snow cover, depends on both the duration and depth of the snow.

For us gardeners living in the high desert, what's the significance of snow cover when we are lucky if we receive 20 inches over the winter and most of it blows into the next county? In a very direct way, snow influences the lives of all of us who live in the Oregon Basin. All we have to do is look to the snow blanketing the surrounding mountains. This snow is the all important source of the water that is vital to our gardens and livelihood of the basins farmers and ranchers.

Let's hope this winter's snow cover in the mountains reflects an old farmer's adage "A year of snow, a year of plenty".

Volume 9, Issue 1

January 2012

Forthcoming

Meetings & Events

- **February 04**
NW Area Master Gardener
Training Workshop @ Days
Inn in Thermopolis
- **February 06**
Park County MG
membership Meeting
@ 7:00pm in Powell
- **February 10**
WMGA meeting @ the
Natrona County Extension
office in Casper;
11:00am-3pm
- **February 25**
Living on a few acres @ the
Holiday Inn in Cody;
8:00am-4pm
- **March 05**
Park County MG
membership Meeting
@ 7:00pm in Cody
- **April 27-29**
Wyoming Master Gardener
Association Conference in
Gillette



Meeting Minutes... Jan Jackson

Dan Wasp, President convened the January 09, 2012 meeting to order @ 7:00 p.m. in Cody at the EOC Room of the Park County Courthouse.



Attendance... Jan Jackson, Rita Lewis, Darlene Manning, Kaye Rhoads, Teri Boyd, Suzanne Larsen, Donna Haman, Bob Prchal, Joyce Johnston, Anne Hinckley, Dan Wasp, Jo Anne Arzillo and Karen Anderson.

Approval of Minutes... The December 2011 minutes were approved without discussion.

Treasurer's Report... No December 2011 Report was presented.

Old Business

- Rita Lewis reported that the Northwest College's PCMG "Gardening Classes in Cody" were a success.
- JoAnne Arzillo provided an update on the 2012 Winter NW Area Training Workshop, 'Horticulture at the Hot Springs' in Thermopolis on February 4th.
- Bob Prchal reported on the Cody High School introductory plant science project, ensuing work with the Cody Boys and Girls Club and how the Cody High School project will translate into planting/greenhouse experiences for kid's.

New Business

- *Member feedback request:* Dan will resend a notice to the membership wanting "insights and thoughts" regarding what's working, what can be improved and what do we foresee for the future. Feedback will be shared in February.
- The 2012 budget will be finalized and presented to the membership at the February meeting.
- Rita Lewis reported that the Whole Foods store may be interested in having periodic MG classes. Needs more Follow-up.
- The Living on a Few Acres workshop is scheduled for Cody @ the Holiday Inn on February 25th. PCMG with provide a table and door prize.

Announcements

- Dan Wasp will send out a tentative Meeting Agenda electronically prior to the meeting. In the future handouts will also be "e" mailed to all; a few will be brought to the meetings to accommodate those without email.

Reminders

- **NOTE:** If any members are not receiving the Newsletter please check **YOUR** "e" mail address. If it has changed provide your new email address to Julie @ the Cooperative Extension Office. Her email address is: jalleyl@uwyo.edu.
- The **next meeting** will be @ 7:00 p.m. on February 6, in Powell. **Education program...** Nancy Ryan: Seeding Early; **Refreshments...** Rhonda Faulkner.

Adjournment... Meeting adjourned @ 7:51 p.m.

Education/Workshop ... Darlene Manning presented a program on 'Cold Bucket' composting.

Extension Musings... Joyce Johnston and Ann Hinckley

Seed catalogs are coming in and it is time to start planning our spring plantings. Flowering alliums come in colors of blue, purple, beige, white and yellow and depending on the species can bloom from spring to fall. Star-of-Persia is huge with 6 to 8 inch blooms of lavender to lilac. The Turkestan allium, *Allium karataaviense*, is noted for large blooms in beige to pink to reddish, borne above broad leaves, according to the National Gardening Association (NGA) bulletin.



The Vegetable Growers News is highlighting **Pomegranate Crunch**, a cherry-red mini-Romaine lettuce variety. **Corvair**, a dark oval, slightly savoyed dark green-leaved spinach should do well in our zone. **Soraya** (70-75 days) is a new tomato which claims high yields of extra large fruit with concentrated fruit set, good for slicing, salads, or canning. NGA also recommends **perennial flax**, *Linum perenne*, which has delicate narrow bluish-green foliage and "provides an airy note to the flower garden during the drabness of autumn". Planted in the spring, plants will produce a profusion of delicate simple sky-blue flowers. They self-sow, are very drought resistant, deer resistant and make a good choice for a water-thrifty garden.

Take time now to learn about the plants you would like to grow. What are the requirements for exposure? Do they do best in sun, shade, or part shade? How much water is needed? With the right information you can group plants with similar water and sun needs in the best locations. The Winter 2011 issue of Zone 4 magazine has an excellent article on planning your garden. The Extension Offices also have information on when to start which seeds indoors, when to transplant, and other information to make your garden plans successful.

As long as the snow cover stays on your lawn and garden they will be OK, but where it melts off you will need to water your trees, shrubs, raspberries, grape vines and perennials every three weeks to keep them from drying out.

To keep your poinsettias going as long as possible place them near a sunny window, preferably facing south. Water thoroughly when the surface is dry but don't let the plant stand in water. They can be cared for through the year but the advice from several gardening web sites suggest it is more trouble than it is worth. For those of you who like challenges, though, starting in April cut back on the watering, but not enough to let the stalk shrivel. In a week or two move it to a cool place; about 60°. In mid-May cut back to about 4 inches and repot in a slightly larger container. Water well and bring to the brightest window you have. When new growth appears fertilize every two weeks. In June move outside, pot and all, in a partially shaded location. Keep it pinched back to encourage a stout well branched plant. Bring back in the house in August and continue watering and fertilizing. Beginning in October, keep the plant in **complete darkness** from 5 pm to 8 am Stop the darkness treatment in November, bringing the plant to a bright window again. Stop fertilizing about December 15 but continue care as before.

Get out on a sunny day and enjoy the beauties of winter; check out the trees for attractive barks, textures and colors, canopy shapes. While you are admiring the landscapes of winter you can also be deciding what you need to prune to improve the shape of your trees and what you need to plant in your flower beds this year to add interest to next year's winter view. Do you need more tall ornamental grasses somewhere? Have you noticed some interesting seed head in a neighbor's garden?

Herbs & Such... Joyce Johnston

It is stated that Lemon Verbena is capable of:

- **Relieving intestinal gas**
- **Creating instant aromatherapy**
- **Adding sweet lemon flavor to foods and teas**



Lemon verbena is an herb that went from the new world (Central and South America) to the old world (Spain) and was adopted by herbalists. Lemon verbena was made into a tea and prescribed to relieve nervous stomachs, depression, headaches, and heart palpitations. Its fresh citrus aroma is a popular ingredient in perfumes, liquors, sachets and potpourri. Lemon verbena is a must as a garden ornamental.

To try the tea, steep one tablespoon of fresh leaves or one teaspoon dried leaves in a cup of hot water for four minutes, covered so the aroma doesn't escape. In Ecuador, hibiscus is added to lemon verbena, and the combination is very refreshing. Carry lemon verbena leaves in your pocket and rub to release the lemony oil. It will lift your spirits... try this!

Lemon verbena is a tree, but can reach 4 to 5 foot in our area when planted in sunny locations (6 hours a day) and soil that has nutrients and organics. Dig a hole twice the size of the root ball and water with warm water. Water once a week. Whiteflies can be a problem so keep a close check on your plant.

Lemon verbena has the intense citrus taste of lemon and is the most lemony of all herbs. Rub on a sliced piece of cantaloupe to bring out the fruits flavor. When cooking with lemon verbena, use dried leaves. Add two teaspoons to batter for a dozen carrot muffins.

To dry, cut a branch and hang in a cool dry place out of the sun. Before using, crush leaves between fingers to release the oils.

Reference: "The Good Herb" by Judith Benn-Hurley

Herbs & Such... Joyce Johnston

Apple Crisp with Lemon Verbena

2 lbs. cooking apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced	Juice of one lemon (about 1/2C)
1C rolled oats	1/2C all-fruit apple butter
2 Tbsp unbleached all-purpose flour	2Tbsp pure maple syrup or rice syrup
1/3C (not packed) dried lemon verbena leaves	

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Toast the oats in a dry sauté pan over high heat, stirring frequently with a spatula; after about 3 minutes, start watching them carefully, making sure they don't burn. When they're light brown, tip them out of the pan into a bowl. Set aside. Combine the apples, lemon juice, apple butter, and flour in a deep 9-inch glass pie dish. *If you use a dark metal pie dish, reduce the oven temperature to 325.* Crumble the lemon verbena between your hands and mix it in. Pour the maple syrup into the oats, stirring so that all the oats are very lightly coated. *It's easiest when the oats are still a bit warm.* Scoop the oats over the apple mixture and even out the top. Cover the dish with foil and bake in the center of the oven for about 20 to 25 minutes, or until the apple mixture has begun to bubble and the apples are tender. Remove the foil and continue to bake just until the oats are crisp, about 5 minutes. Serve warm or slightly chilled for breakfast, brunch or dessert.

Taste... without the salt from 'The Herb Companion'

One of the seasoning blends from an article in 'The Herb Companion'. Keep this salt substitute on the table to sprinkle on vegetables, salads, eggs or anything else to which you normally add salt.

1 tablespoon dry mustard	2 teaspoons dried thyme
1 tablespoon garlic powder	2 teaspoons paprika
2 teaspoons dried parsley	2 teaspoons ground white pepper
2 teaspoon dried dill weed	1 teaspoon dried lemon peel, finely chopped
2 teaspoons onion powder	2 teaspoons dried savory



Answers to the December Tree Quiz



Scrambled Tree Type	Unscrambled Tree Type
Kao	Oak
Neip	Pine
Crihb	Birch
Pucers	Spruce
Has	Ash
Nespa	Aspen
Dotocowont	Cottonwood
Palem	Maple
Lemhock	Hemlock
Woredod	Redwood
Wey	Yew
Malp	Palm
Pinujer	Juniper
Rimbel epin	Limber Pine
Elub eurcps	Blue Spruce
Elopegdol inpe	Lodgepole Pine
Irf	Fir
Dacre	Cedar
Cerimana mel	American Elm
Apderoson	Ponderosa

Vinegar Cure for Acid-Loving Plants... from Miracle Garden Potions

It sometimes seems impossible to grow azaleas and other acid-loving plants in the alkaline soils west of the Mississippi, but Austin, Texas landscape designer Sheryl McLaughlin has the solution: vinegar. Sheryl recommends regular additions of **ordinary white distilled vinegar, 5 percent acidity**, to soil around the plants or in containers to lower the pH. She says vinegar applications help plants through stress, particularly after blooming, when they sometimes look chlorotic. She also notes fewer problems with **thrips** and **whiteflies** on vinegar fed plants.

Ingredients and Supplies

- 1 pint white distilled vinegar, 5% acidity
- 2 gallons water

Directions

1. Mix vinegar and water well.
2. Pour the mixture directly on the ground around a 3 to 4 foot shrub.
3. Repeat every 3 months while the plant is actively growing.

Common Acid-loving plants include: Azaleas, Blueberries, Butterfly weed, Camellias, Cardinal flowers, Cranberries, Ferns, Gardenias, Heathers, Lupines, Mountain laurels, Oaks, Pecans, Rhododendrons, Spruces and Yews.

Many garden plants, both ornamentals and food-producing crops, grow best in acid soils with a pH below 6.5. They often struggle in alkaline soils, where they have trouble absorbing nutrients.

Wyoming Master Gardener Association... Bob Prchal

~~ 2012 State Conference in Gillette ~~

Location... Gillette College's New Technology Center

Dates... April 27, 28 & 29

Theme... "Rethinking Gardening"

Keynote Speaker... Pat Stone



~~ Join us in Gillette ~~

Eats and Treats... from Garden to Plate, *Better Homes and Gardens*

Beef, Mushroom & Onion Tart

Yields: 4 servings

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes



Ingredients

12 oz. lean ground beef

1 tsp. black pepper

One 8 oz. package of sliced mushrooms

One 13.8 oz. package refrigerated pizza dough

1 /2 medium onion, cut into wedges

3 oz. blue cheese, crumbled

1/4 tsp. salt

Fresh oregano and/or pizza seasoning

Directions

1. Heat oven to 425° F. In a large skillet cook beef, mushrooms and onion on medium heat about 8 minutes or until beef is browned and onion is tender, stirring occasionally. Drain off fat. Stir in salt and pepper.
2. Meanwhile, grease a large baking sheet or line with parchment paper. Unroll pizza dough on the baking sheet. Roll or pat dough to a 15 X 12 inch rectangle. Top dough with beef mixture, keeping filling within 1 1/2 inches of all edges. Fold edges over the filling, pleating as needed.
3. Bake tart 15 minutes or until crust is golden brown. Top with blue cheese and, if desired, oregano and/or pizza season.

Delight Factor: Um, um good!!




The practice of gardening has been around for thousands of years and for over a millennium, there have been hundreds of recommendations for planning, planting, fertilizing and harvesting the earth.

Even in the twenty-first century, in this age of scientific gardening, an abundance of centuries-old gardening beliefs still remains with us. And with the renewed interest in pure organic gardening, more gardeners than ever are testing “traditional” methods of planting and harvesting.



Natural Gardening

Far from being dead arts or mere superstition, many ancient methods of “*natural gardening*”... eliminating pests and fertilizing crops, for example... may be as effective and are almost invariably safer... than today’s use of  popular pesticides and Chemicals.

In any case, way before Doppler weather forecasting and chat rooms on the internet, gardeners relied on wisdom passed from generation to generation to cultivate a bountiful garden. They also relied heavily on observing plants and animals for everything from predicting weather to determining when it was time to harvest crops.

The recently renewed interest in organic gardening has given fresh life to traditional garden practices, which are emerging again as serious aids to gardeners.

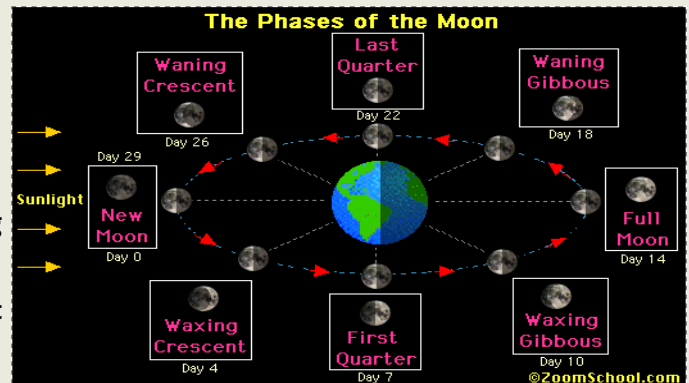
Come and explore gardening’s rich history traditions and folklore. You’re sure to find some, if not all, of it useful in your own garden!



Old Wives' Lore for Gardeners ... By Maureen & Bridget Boland

Considering the moon

Every Old Wife will tell you to sow seed and to transplant only with a waxing, never a waning moon. The Scientists have now caught up with this, discovering the efforts of lunar rhythms on the earth's magnetic field which in turn affect growth. They have established that all water everywhere, including that inside the tiniest living organism, moves in tides like the sea. The moon also affects the earth's atmosphere so that statistically it is more likely to rain heavily (*just as you would like immediately after planting*) immediately after a full or a new moon. They say that a potato grown at constant levels of heat and light under laboratory conditions will still show a growth rhythm that reflects the lunar pattern. The Old Wife, without laboratory conditions or statistical tables, learned from experience how best to get her plants off to a good start.



Sow seed generously... *One for the rook, one for the crow, One to die and one to grow.*

'Old Farmer's Almanac' ... by Robert B. Thomas

When starting seeds, Use...



- *Old ice cube trays, micro-wave dinner containers and empty plastic pudding cups*
- *Peat pellets set in the plastic trays from cookie packages*
- *Eggshell halves... once the seeds sprout, plant the whole thing*
- *Grocery store containers for cooked whole chickens as mini-greenhouses*
- *Old plastic venetian blinds slats, cut to size with scissors, as seedling markers and plant identifiers*

Recycling Tidbits... Ann Hinckley



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Reducing the amount of "stuff" that has to be handled is the first place to cut back on solid waste. When possible avoid over-wrapped items, such as single-wrap cheese slices. Buy things in reusable or recyclable containers; jelly in drinking glasses or drinks in recyclable plastic bottles (and be sure the containers get into the recycling stream)! Take your own shopping bag instead of getting another plastic bag with every purchase.

Under ideal conditions **85%** of all solid waste could be kept out of the landfill. In Park County we don't have facilities to take care of all recyclable materials but there are many ways we can reduce the amount being buried instead of being reused.

Clothing and small household items can be taken to:

In Powell: *St. John's Thrift Shop*, 128 East North Street, and *First United Methodist Church*, on the corner of 2nd and Bernard (307-754-3160).

In Cody: *The Bargain Box*, 1644 Alger Avenue (307-587-6666).



Furniture and large household items can be taken to:

In Cody: furniture and large household items can be taken to the *Bargain Box* facility at 1537 Beck Avenue (307-587-6333).

In Powell: items as well as building materials can be taken to the *Habitat for Humanity Restore* location at 509 Gateway Drive (by the West Powell Water Tower) or call 307-254-7004 for pick-up.

Recycling centers take a variety of materials, including all those corrugated cardboard boxes you got with your Christmas presents and all your newspapers.

In Cody: call 307-587-3990 or go by 602 15th Street to find out what they accept.

In Powell: call Powell Valley Recycling at 307-754-9773 or go to 946 Road 10 (turn North at the Ford Dealership).



The Sage Gardener



2012 Officers



- President...** *Dan Wasp*
Vice President... *Karen Anderson*
Secretary... *Jan Jackson*
Treasurer... *Darlene Manning*
WMGA Delegates... *Rhonda Faulkner & Karen Anderson*



Committee Chairs

- Newsletter...** *Bob Prchal*
Cody Garden Tour... *Darlene Manning*
Historian... *Jo Anne Arzillo*
Greenhouse... *Bob Prchal*
Scholarships... *Nancy Ryan*
Park County Fair... *Bob Prchal*
Volunteer Hours... *Donna Haman*
Change of Address/Phone/"e" Mail... *Julie Miner*

Volume 9, Issue 1

January 2012

**'Newsletter of the Park County
Master Gardeners'**

*~~ Content cannot be altered or
changed ~~*

Newsletter articles should be submitted
by the 15th of each month to Bob Prchal

rjprchal@tritel.net

REMEMBER... Keep it pithy!



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