

Clatsop Master Gardener

CULTIVATOR

December 2022 & January 2023

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The winter solstice tide pulls us in its direction. Winter clues are all around us: shorter days, drops in temperature, migrating birds.

It's all there.

Our thoughts are turning to the holidays and to family and friends near and far.

Before we begin to slip into winter, gardeners are already thinking and preparing for next year's gardens. Yes, sleeves are rolled up and the great year end clean-up is in progress - pruning projects; garden beds and soils treated; bulbs and onions planted; plants propagated or separated for next year; garden tools cleaned, sharpened and stored. Just like those migrating birds, gardeners respond to the call.

The Clatsop County Master Gardener community is also setting about its end of the year rituals. CCMGA has recognized its membership's efforts for 2022 and is preparing and planning for the new year of 2023. New names and faces are being welcomed and new ideas are being propagated and carefully nurtured for 2023. All part of the annual cycle. Keep an eye peeled for monthly updates to be included in the monthly newsletter, direct emails, and clatsopmastergardeners.org

Janet Willoughby | 2020-2021 President, Class of 2018

"How did it get so late so soon? It's night before it's afternoon.

December is here before it's June. My goodness how the time has flown.

How did it get so late so soon?"

-Dr. Seuss



Congratulations to our 2022 Master Gardener Award Recipients & those celebrating milestones!

Master Gardener of the Year

Janet Willoughby

Behind the Scenes

Len Sherp

Mighty Oak

Nancy Bouse

Green Glove Winners

Jess Sollaccio, Ruth Benner, & Mitra Rado

Golden Glove Award

Richard Elfering

Above & Beyond Awards

Jane Somerton, Susan Bowe, Andrea Kelly, Robin Wyrwitzke

10 year Milestone

Nancy Bouse

15 year Milestone

Joanie Chapel



2022 Master Gardener Graduation and Award Ceremony

It was a spectacular night celebrating the newest Master Gardener Class and the achievements of veteran Master Gardeners. It was a great turnout and fun to see folks in person!

The event would not have been possible without the efforts of our hardworking Awards & Graduation Committee Members - Joanie Chapel (Project Lead), Marlene House (Project Lead), Becky Thormahlen, Janet Willoughby, and Nancy Bouse! Thank you ladies for a wonderful evening! A huge thank you to the veteran Master Gardeners who brought delicious desserts and Linda Brim (Brim's Farm & Garden) who donated the items for the beautiful gift baskets!

If you would like to donate items for the 2023 awards please reach out to the Awards & Graduation Committee members!



Save the Date(s)!

Master Gardeners Events

Master Gardener Board Meeting

Sunday, January 8 | 1-3 PM

Join us for the first Board Meeting of 2023. RSVP on the www.clatsopmastergardeners.org website

Spring Event Planning Meeting

Wednesday, January 25 | 2 PM

The Spring Event committee welcomes anyone interested in helping to join the first planning meeting of the year! The meeting will be held at the OSU Extension Office.

Service Days

Thursday, February 23 | 1-4PM & Saturday, February 25 | 10 AM-1PM

We will be helping the City of Astoria eradicate dastardly invasive scotch broom again this year. In 2022 we had a great turnout and we're hoping for the same in 2023! Location in Warrenton and other details after the holidays. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions! Text or call Jane (208.631.4940)

Community & Learning Events

Super Saturday

Saturday, February 4

Come share your expertise with local 4H students! Super Saturday is a 1 day event where groups of children are rotated to booths for a 1 hour hands on project. Some ideas are worm composting, plant starts or terrariums. We are looking for more ideas and helpers to organize, gather supplies and to run the booth. Depending on how many helpers we have, we can do shifts. If you would like to join in on the fun, contact Tonya Hockett at hockett2007@gmail.com

DIY: Bringing Nature In for the Winter Season

Tuesday, December 13, 2022 | Join via Zoom

As the days shorten and we hunker indoors on chilly days, bring a bit of natural beauty into your home. Join the Multnomah County Master Gardener Association's Speaker Series as Master Gardener, Evie Hausman, demonstrates how to gather windfall greens, cones, branches, seedpods and/or clippings from your garden and artfully create a lovely winter arrangement to enjoy in your home or to give to a friend. Register on the OSU Extension Website at <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg/metro/events/diy-bringing-nature-winter-season-0>

Introducing Your 2023 Board

On behalf of the 2023 board, we are so excited to support the efforts of the Clatsop Master Gardeners for the upcoming year! We hope are looking forward to a great year filled with connection and community!

President Jessica Sollaccio



Originally from Florida, Jessica has found many tropical plants that she is familiar with growing in the PNW! Prior to moving to Warrenton, Jessica lived in Alaska where the growing season was quite short but enjoyed foraging for wild blueberries. After moving in November of last year, she immediately enrolled in the Master Gardener program in an effort to meet other members in the community and learn more about the local flora. She hopes to build raised planters this year with different types of produce and to teach her young son about gardening. She is also interested in learning more about local mushrooms and cultivating medicinals such as lion's mane and reishi. Environmental stewardship and supporting neighbors facing food insecurity are important to Jessica.

Vice President, Communication and Marketing Tonya Hockett



Before settling into her home in Warrenton last year, Tonya lived with her daughter and husband in their RV at the KOA while searching for a home in the heat of the housing market. Her husband worked on building the Jetty at Fort Stevens, and that is what brought them to our area. Tonya knows a thing or two about living in small spaces, she lived on a sailboat for 4 years! Tonya is your newest VP of Marketing and Communication and brings a wealth of knowledge from her experiences as a small business owner. When her daughter started to become curious about nature and plants, Tonya decided to strengthen her knowledge by becoming a Master Gardener. When she's not working on Master Gardener projects, Tonya is a 4-H leader and very involved in the local 4H with her daughter. Outside of community service, you can find Tonya planting a native garden, orchard, and creating a closed loop system in her greenhouse.

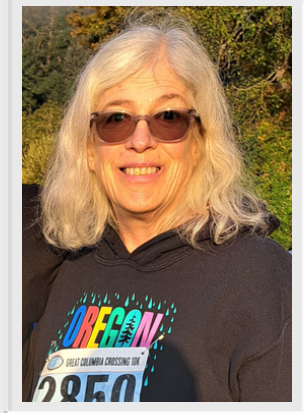
Treasurer Deborah Howe



Deborah is from the class of 2022 and will be serving as Treasurer. Last year, following a career as an urban planning professor, she moved to Astoria after restoring a Victorian house that she has owned for over thirty years. She has a passion for edible landscapes and taught a popular course on Sustainable Food Systems Planning at Temple University. She has a particular interest in raising lotus plants but has discovered that they are a challenge to grow on her property due to low temperatures and too much shade. But she will try again next year. One interesting tidbit about Deborah—years ago she built a tiny, passive solar house 90 miles north of New York City for \$3,500. She lived there for 5 years despite the home having no electricity or running water!

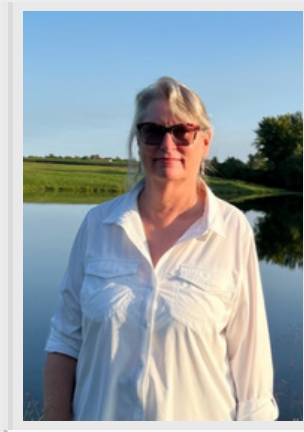
Introducing Your 2023 Board

OMGA Representative Elizabeth Schimpf



Elizabeth is our veteran on the board, she has been a Master Gardener since 2018 and supported Seed to Supper for 2 years. She has been in Astoria for 11 years but has always lived on the coast and enjoyed the water. When she was younger, she enjoyed foraging and used to dry rosehips. Her current passion lies in growing medicinal herbs such as comfrey and lemon verbena. During her time as a Master Gardener, she has enjoyed learning how to grow dahlias. You might not know that similar to medicinal herbs, dahlias are edible - Aztecs ate them as tubers! Elizabeth has not tried to eat her dahlias...yet! She is our newest OMGA State Representative!

Historian Ann Nilsson



Ann arrived in Astoria in 2017 after spending the majority of her life in the midwest. She is from southern Illinois originally where she and her husband had a large farm with 200 acres. They fell in love with the beauty of the Pacific Northwest while visiting and decided to make the move out west. Ann loves the abundant lavender that grows in the area but her favorite things to grow are herbs and dahlias. She bought her home from a Master Gardener who had enlisted Clatsop Community College students to plant the original garden that still contains two apple and two plum trees! She enjoys experimenting with growing methods for different plants. She is your new Historian and will be leading the efforts to document Master Gardener events and memorabilia through the year!

Membership Robin Rodgers



Robin is from the class of 2022 and your newest head of Membership. She and her husband moved to Astoria just over 6 years ago from California, missing the fire in Paradise by 2 years. She lived in the Chico/Paradise area for over 30 years, growing up originally in Lompoc. She learned of the MG program from friend and neighbor Jane Somerton. It just expanded her love of gardening and she and Jane worked together in the Learning Garden. Growing a native and pollinator (and deer resistant) garden is the main focus at home along with expanding her rain catchment system. She enjoys birdwatching and having bird feeders up all year, reading cozy mysteries, watching British mysteries, gardening shows, and anything about ancient Egypt. She and her husband live as environmentally conscious as possible and enjoy eating vegetarian and low carb/keto, along with watching sports.

Master Gardeners in the Community

Jane Somerton and Robin Rogers, taught the 4-H club Clatsop Sundrops all about mushrooms. The kids were able to start their own mushroom kits and make stamps from the spores. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and passion Jane and Robin!



Invasion of the **M O L E S**



Don't make a mole hill...

...but is it a mole? We know that feeling of dread of looking over the yard and see mounds of dirt scattered in garden beds and lawns. We know the main culprits are either moles or gophers, but how can you tell?

Gophers push up the dirt and it creates a flat spot on the ground with minimal rising. A mole will push up the dirt like a mini volcano or pyramid. The first part of solving this issue is determining who is the culprit. If you're not sure, contact the Master Gardener's plant clinic at 503-325-8573

If you have a mole, there's a few things to remember. Moles feed on insects, worms and grubs, so they aren't interested in your prized Dahlias or your tomatoes. However, voles use the mole tunnels to travel and they have no problem devouring the fruits of your labor.

Tips

- * Build raised beds with mesh or wire bottoms.
- * Tilling beds can deter tunneling, but can affect soil.
- * Drip irrigation attracts earth worms which attracts moles.
- * Traps placed underground
- * Poison bait should be used with extreme caution
- * Hire an exterminator for a hands off approach to pest control

By Tonya Hockett

December Garden Tips



Timely advice on garden chores, fertilizing, pest control, and more from OSU Extension for Western Oregon.

Practice preventive pest management rather than reactive pest control. Identify and monitor problems before acting, and opt for the least toxic approach. Conserve biological control agents such as predators and the parasitoids that feed on insect pests.

Maintenance and cleanup

- Do not walk on lawns until frost has melted.
- Spread wood ashes evenly on your vegetable garden. Use no more than 1.5 pounds per 100 square feet per year. Don't use if the soil pH is greater than 7.0 or if potassium levels are excessive.
- Protect new landscape plants from wind. Use stakes, guy wires or windbreaks as needed.
- Yard sanitation: rake leaves, cut and remove withered stalks of perennial flowers, mulch flowerbeds, and hoe or pull winter weeds.
- Turn the compost pile and protect from heavy rains, if necessary.
- During heavy rains, watch for drainage problems in the yard. Tilling, ditching, and French drains are possible short-term solutions. Consider rain gardens and bioswales as a longer-term solution.
- Check stored flower bulbs, fresh vegetables, and fruits for rot and fungus problems. Discard any showing signs of rot.
- Tie limbs of columnar evergreens to prevent snow or ice breakage.
- Make sure that landscape plants in protected sites receive water regularly during the winter.

Planting and propagation

- This is a good time to plant trees and landscape shrubs.

Pest monitoring and management

Use chemical controls only when necessary and only after thoroughly reading the pesticide label. First consider cultural, then physical and biological controls. Choose the least-toxic options, and use them judiciously. Some examples include insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, and organic and synthetic pesticides.

- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.
- Check for rodent damage around bases of trees and large shrubs. Remove weeds to prevent rodents from using them as hiding places. Use traps and approved baits as necessary.
- Avoid mounding mulching materials around the bases of trees and shrubs. The mulch might provide cover for rodents.
- Monitor spruce trees for spruce aphids. Treat if present in large numbers. Read and follow pesticide label directions.

Indoor gardening

- Protect poinsettias from cold. Place them in sunlight; don't let the leaves touch cold windows. Fertilize with houseplant fertilizer to maintain leaf color.
- Monitor houseplants for adequate water and fertilizer. Water and fertilizer requirements generally are less in winter.

Reference <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/techniques/december-garden-calendar>

January Garden Tips



Planning

- Plan to replace varieties of ornamental plants that are susceptible to disease with resistant cultivars in February.
- Take hardwood cuttings of deciduous ornamental shrubs and trees for propagation.
- Order a soil test to determine your garden's nutrient needs. Contact your local Extension office for a list of laboratories or view Analytical Laboratories Serving Oregon.
- Begin planning this year's vegetable garden in western Oregon and central Oregon. Check with local retail garden or nursery stores for seeds and seed catalogs.
- Keep a garden journal. Consult your journal in the winter, so you can better plan for the growing season.

Maintenance and cleanup

- Central/Eastern Oregon: To prevent winter damage from drying, water plants deeply every six to eight weeks, when the temperatures are above freezing.
- Place windbreaks to protect sensitive landscape evergreens against cold, drying winds.
- Reapply or redistribute mulch that has blown or washed away during winter.
- Clean pruners and other small garden tools with rubbing alcohol.
- Western Oregon: Water landscape plants underneath wide eaves and in other sites shielded from rain.
- Western Oregon: Do not walk on lawns until frost has melted.

Pest monitoring and management

Use chemical controls only when necessary and only after thoroughly reading the pesticide label. First consider cultural, then physical and biological controls. Choose the least-toxic options, and use them judiciously. Some examples include insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, and organic and synthetic pesticides.

- Scout cherry trees for signs and symptoms of bacterial canker. Remove infected branches with a clean pruner or saw. Sterilize tools before each new cut. Burn or send the branches to a landfill before bloom. See *Managing Diseases and Insects in Home Orchards*.
- Watch for field mice damage on lower trunks of trees and shrubs. Eliminate hiding places by removing weeds. Use traps and approved baits as necessary.
- Use dormant sprays of lime sulfur or copper fungicide on roses for general disease control, or plan to replace susceptible varieties with resistant cultivars in February.
- Western Oregon: Moss in lawn may mean too much shade or poor drainage. Modify site conditions if moss is bothersome.
- Mid-January: Spray peach trees with approved fungicides to combat peach leaf curl and shothole. Or plant curl-resistant cultivars such as 'Frost', 'Q1-8' or 'Creswell'.
- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.

Houseplants and indoor gardening

- Monitor houseplants for correct water and fertilizer; guard against insect infestations; clean dust from leaves.
- Protect sensitive plants such as weeping figs from cold drafts in the house.
- Propagate split-leaf philodendrons and other leggy indoor plants by air-layering or vegetative cuttings.
- Plant dwarf annual flowers such as coleus, impatiens and seedling geraniums inside as houseplants.
- Western Oregon: Gather branches of quince, forsythia and flowering cherries and bring them indoors to force an early bloom.

House Plants In Winter



Water

The #1 killer of all house plants is over watering, followed closely by under watering. So how do you know when to water?

It depends on many things, such as the plants needs- a succulent will need significantly less water than a tropical plant. House temperature will also greatly impact the plants needs.

A great rule of thumb is to use a water meter device, a chop stick, or a finger to probe into the soil to check for dryness. Fill a tote or a bathtub with water and sit your pot in it to soak up the water.



Fertilizer

Starting in spring, plants love fertilizer. But in winter. It can add unnecessary stress to them. This is a great time to give them a rest before their growth spurt in the spring.



Bringing the outdoors in

There is a wide variety of plants that thrive indoors. They bring a pop of color and a little fresh air inside. Tropical plants to succulents all have their individual needs, so it's important to check the care instructions for each plant.



On the Air



Recent podcasts and radio shows related to gardening and the great outdoors!



In Season

Host Teresa Retzlaff talks with co-host emeritus Jessica Schleif about the knowledge we glean from our experiences and from each other about the natural world, and being open to the rules as we understand them changing over time.

Listen at www.kmun.org/speaker/teresa-retzlaff/



Peak Northwest Podcast

Hosts Vickie and Jamie discuss their most recent Peak Northwest video shoot at Fort Stevens State Park. Guided by two rangers, who regularly lead mushroom hunting hikes, they foraged with the goal of eating some mushrooms for lunch.

Listen at <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/peak-northwest/id1486961693>

Anything we missed in this issue?

Anything you'd like to see in the next Cultivator?

If so, please reach out to Jessica and Tonya at clatsopcountymastergardeners@gmail.com! We are always looking for ideas and feedback!