

NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS

UPCOMING MONTHLY MEETING

- **Sunday, March 19th, 4pm, Shenandoah County Government Office Building.** Guest speaker Alison Sloop is a Conservation Specialist with the Lord Fairfax Soil and Water Conservation District, working with agricultural and urban landowners to increase soil health and water quality throughout Clarke, Frederick, Shenandoah and Warren counties and the City of Winchester. Before working with the district, Alison spent three and a half years as a Biologist with the National Park Service, on Fire Island National Seashore and Manassas National Battlefield Park. Her work with the park service was diverse, ranging from grassland bird surveys to stream bank stabilization to tick surveys. She is a novice birder and enjoys wildlife photography and hiking with her husband and two pups. One of her favorite plants is a mint variety from her grandmother and she makes a delicious tea with it in the summer. You can check out the Lord Fairfax Soil & Water Conservation District Website, <http://lfswcd.org/>. Shenandoah County Master Gardeners will be hosting this meeting and we will have a potluck after the meeting, so bring something good to share!

Directions: From points north: Take I-81 South towards Roanoke. Get off at the VA 651 exit, EXIT 291 heading towards Tom's Brook. Turn **Left** onto VA 651/Mount Olive Rd. Then turn **Right** onto Old Valley Pike/US Route 11 South. The Shenandoah County Government Office Building will be located on the left at 600 N. Main St., Woodstock, VA.

From points south: Take I-81 North towards Mt. Jackson. Get off at the VA 42 exit, EXIT 283 heading towards Woodstock. Turn **Right** onto W. Reservoir Rd/VA 42. Turn **Left** onto S. Main St/US-11 South. The Shenandoah County Government Office Building will be located on the right at 600 N. Main St., Woodstock, VA.

- **Sunday, April 23, 4pm, Corhaven Graveyard** Sarah Kohrs, Corhaven Graveyard Project
- **Sunday, May 21, 4pm, Belle Grove Plantation,** Myron Kremer, Stone Mason, Hardscaping
- **Sunday, June 11, 4pm,** TBA
- **Sunday, July 16, 4pm, Blandy Library,** Paula Brownlee, Fall/Winter plantings
- **Sunday, August 20, 4pm, Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit,** French Price, Shenandoah Valley Farm to Table, Buy Fresh, Buy Local
- **Sunday, September 17, 4pm, Shenandoah University Cool Spring Campus,** Gene Lewis, Going native process & research at Cool Spring Campus
- **Sunday, October 15, 4pm,** TBA
- **Sunday, November 2pm, 11/19, Warren County Govt Center,** President/Volunteer Coordinator, Election/Business Meeting

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Monday, March 6, 7–8pm, Fort Valley Series—Plants for Problem Areas,** Fort Valley Nursery, 1175 Hisey Ave Woodstock VA
- **Saturday, April 1, Gardening in the Valley Symposium 2017, Lord Fairfax Community College** (see article below)
- **Tues & Thurs, Apr 11 & 13, 9am-2pm, How to Use the Flora of Virginia.** Blandy Experimental Farm. A 2 day class to learn how to use the [Flora of Virginia](http://www.virginia.edu/flora) to identify wildflowers, led by Marion Lobstein and Sally Anderson. Information at http://www.virginia.edu/blandy/blandy_web/all_blandy/2017SpringPrograms.pdf.

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- **Sat. & Sun., May 6 & 7, Wildflower Weekend at Shenandoah National Park.** Appreciate the diversity of wildflowers growing in the Blue Ridge. More than 1,300 species of plants thrive in Shenandoah National Park, a haven for native woodland wildflowers. Choose from among many activities at the Park website, <http://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/event-details.htm?eventID=3747987-307230>

MG TRAINEE CLASS OF 2017 by Sharon Bradshaw

With a full class of 16 students, we've been most impressed with the background skills each brings to the group. Their questions to the presenters are thoughtful and on target. We are looking forward to getting started on the class project of mapping the New Market Rain Garden, with an introductory presentation in class and a follow up visit for hands-on work. The county break-out for the Trainees is Frederick five, Page three, Shenandoah seven, and Warren one. Many of you met several Trainees at the February monthly meeting. Thanks to all the MGs who came to our first class meeting on Valentine's Day to welcome them to our Master Gardener family.

MASTER GARDENER CLASS OF 2017 SCHEDULE by Sharon Bradshaw Shenandoah County, VCE Classroom

- Mar 2:** Plant ID: Randy Fogle
Rain Garden Project: Elena Lycas
- Mar 7:** Animal Damage Control: Fred Frenzel
VMS: NSVMGA Volunteer Coordinator and Time Keeper, Bob Carlton and Ann Levi
- Mar 9:** Lawns: Dr. Mike Goatley
- Mar 14:** Soils, Nutrient Management: Bobby Clark
- Mar 16:** Composting: Michael Neese
Public Speaking: Anne Dewey Balzhimer
- Mar 21:** Annuals & Houseplants: Chris Schmidt
- Mar 23:** Perennials: Chris Schmidt
- Mar 28:** Berries: Lee Draper
Fruit Trees: Ed Clark
- Mar 30:** Water Quality: Francis Reilly
- April 4:** Pruning: Lynne Phillips
- April 6:** Trees: Bart McDowell
- April 11:** Vegetables: Dr. Allen Straw
- April 13:** Propagation: Seeds: Lynn Hoffman
Division: Stacey Smith
- April 15:** Propagation and Pruning Workshop, TBA
- April 18:** Landscaping: Dr. Robert McDuffie
- April 20:** Green Help Line Demo and Green Help Line Practicum
- April 25:** PMG: Mark Sutphin
- April 27:** Plant –Insect ID Apps; Internet research: Stacey Smith
Physical Tools for Plant-Insect ID: Sharon Bradshaw
Green Help Line Practicum
- May 2:** Pesticide Safety: Mark Sutphin
Green Help Line Practicum
- May 4:** Habitat Gardening for Wildlife, Carol Heiser webinar
Pollinator Habitat Gardening: Marie Marajov
- May 9:** Volunteerism: NSVMGA Committee leads and Unit project leads
Youth in Horticulture, Carol Nansel, Helen Lake and Lynn Hoffman – Junior MGs
- May 11:** Green Help Line Practicum

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May 16: Green Help Line Practicum
Distribute Exams

May 18: Grade Exam: Management Team

June 3: Garden Fest and Graduation

2017 GARDENING SERIES AT NSV REGIONAL LIBRARIES by Sara Carp

Come learn from your fellow MGs. Entrance is free to all. For more information, contact sarigardens@gmail.com. You get MG education hours for attending any talks. or see (for the Handley series) or countylib.org (Shenandoah County series).

- **Frederick County/Handley Regional Libraries** <http://handley.libcal.com/event/2992655>
 - **Secrets of the Garden** Handley Library, 100 W Piccadilly St., Winchester
 - **Saturday, March 11 @ 2 pm:** *Spuds (A Potato Story)*, by Pat Casey
 - **Saturday, April 8 @ 2 pm:** *Successfully Growing Vegetables and Herbs in Containers*, by Paula Brownlee
 - **Saturday, May 20 @ 2 pm:** *From Monticello to Your Backyard: Growing Your Own Historic Garden*, by Sari Carp
 - **Success in the Garden** Bowman Library, 871 Tasker Rd., Stephens City
 - **Saturday, June 10 @ 2 pm:** *I Love My New Home, But Where are the Flowers?*, by Anne Dewey-Balzhiser
 - **Saturday, July 8 @ 2 pm:** *Water Wise Gardening*, by Carolyn Wilson
 - **Saturday, August 12 @ 2 pm:** *Save Seeds, Save Money, and (Maybe) Save the Planet*, by Elaine Specht
 - **Saturday, September 9 @ 2 pm:** *How Not to See Your Neighbors: Successful Tree Screens*, by Sari Carp
- **Clarke County/Handley Regional Library System**
 - **Sustainability in the Garden** Barns of Rose Hill (sponsored by the library), 95 Chalmers Court, Berryville
 - **Saturday, April 15 @ 2 pm:** *Natives in the Garden: Identifying, Planting and Encouraging Native Trees and Shrubs*, by Sari Carp
 - **Saturday, July 15 @ 2 pm:** *Swat, Spray, Squash - or Smile? How I Learned to Love (Some) Garden Bugs*, by Pat Casey
 - **Saturday, October 21 @ 2 pm:** *Happy Soil, Happy Plants*, by Elaine Specht
- **Shenandoah County Library System**
 - **Adventures in Gardening** This series will alternate monthly between the main county library in Edinburg (514 Stoney Creek Blvd.) and the branch library in New Market (160 E Lee St.). Fort Valley Nursery has kindly agreed to donate topic- or season-appropriate plants to be raffled off as door prizes each month, and there will be monthly seed and seedling giveaways as well!
 - **Saturday, April 1 @ 10:30 am (Edinburg):** *Plants are Cliquish Too: Fun with Companion Planting*, by Sari Carp
 - **Saturday, May 6 @ 3 pm (New Market):** *Swat, Spray, Squash - or Smile? How I Learned to Love (Some) Garden Bugs*, by Pat Casey
 - **Tuesday, June 6 @ 6:30 pm (Edinburg):** *Water Wisdom in the Garden - A How-to Guide for Saving Time, Money and H2O*, by Sarah Pak
 - **Saturday, July 1 @ 3 pm (New Market):** *Corhaven Graveyard: Using Plants as Tribute in an Historic Burial Ground for Enslaved African Americans*, by Sarah Kohrs
 - **Saturday, August 5 @ 10:30 am (Edinburg):** *Enjoying the Harvest: Choosing and Growing the Right Produce to Preserve*, by Stacey Morgan Smith

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- **Saturday, September 2 @ 3 pm (New Market):** *From Monticello to Your Backyard; Growing Your Own Historic Garden*, by Sari Carp
 - **Saturday, October 7 @ 10:30 am (Edinburg):** *Bring Your Containers Indoors! Grow Fresh Herbs, Greens and More for the Winter*, by Paula Brownlee
 - **Saturday, November 4 @ 3 pm (New Market):** *Happy Soil, Happy Plants*, by Elaine Specht
 - **Saturday, December 2 @ 10:30 am (Edinburg):** *Joy to Your Houseplants: Tips for the Holidays and Beyond*, by Carolyn Wilson
- **Page County/Massanutten Regional Library System**
 - *Page County Library, 100 Zerkel St., Luray*
 - **Wednesday, April 19 @ 12:30 pm (Brown Bag Lunch):** *Natives in the Garden: Identifying, Planting and Encouraging Native Trees and Shrubs*

WINCHESTER JUNIOR MASTER GARDENER SCHEDULE by Lynn Hoffman

| Date | Topic | Teacher |
|----------------|--|--|
| March 7 | Introduction/Propagation | Lynn Hoffmann |
| March 14 | Water | Tricia Boyd |
| March 21 | Botany | Student Talks Rodney Dowty Helen Lake |
| March 28 | Soil | Student Talks Angie Hutchinson Helen Lake |
| April 4 | Planning Your Vegetable Garden | Theresa Krause |
| April 11 | Pollinators and Insects | Student Talks Russ Watkins Helen Lake |
| April 18 | Trees The Forest Floor | Tammy Epperson Larry Haun |
| April 25 | Alternative Gardening | Shan Kilby |
| May 2 | No Class Apple Blossom week | |
| May 16 | Herbs | Student Talks Ginny Smith Helen Lake |
| Week of May 22 | plan on planting at the C-CAP garden. Date depends on the weather. | |
| May 23 | Native Plants and Nature Walk at Westminster Canterbury | Frank Baxter |
| May 30 | Submission and Review of Science Journals and Garden Talks | Lynn Hoffmann, Ginny Smith |
| June 3 | Gardenfest and Jr. MG Display table Journals and Garden Talk Displays | |

FROM THE PRESIDENT by Cy Haley

How about this weather? Great, isn't it? But don't let Mother Nature fool you, it's not spring yet. No one seems to be able to predict the long-term weather this year, so no telling if we'll get March in like a lion and out like a lamb.

If you're getting an itchy finger to start growing something you can begin now by starting seeds. Whether inside or a protected area outside, now is a good time to start seeds. If you attended the Seed Exchange then you probably have some great seeds just waiting to germinate. I've set up my unheated greenhouse with flats for starting squash, peppers, and cucumbers. I'll also start some pollinator loving flowers for GardenFest. It has already been so hot this year that I've had to prop open the greenhouse doors during the day.

Don't let the nice weather fool you into doing too much too soon though and be sure you stretch those muscles first before beginning any gardening tasks.

This issue of our newsletter has something new. It's a "Did you know" article that we hope to feature each month with information for Association members. If there is a guideline or bylaw

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you think needs further explanation or would be a good reminder for the members, please let Susan Garret know and we'll try to work it in.

If you haven't signed up for the Symposium, be sure to do so soon. You can either sign up on line through PayPal or print out the form and mail it in with your check.

Stay happy and enjoy the sunshine!

DID YOU KNOW? By Susan Garrett
what it means to be an "Adjunct Member" of the NSVMGA?

1. Adjunct Status is granted upon **petition to**, and **approval by, a majority vote** of the Board.
2. It is available to those who have been **certified by VCE** as Master Gardeners.
3. It is for those members who have pressing circumstances such as conditions of employment, health, family situation, etc., which makes them unable to meet all requirements for recertification (**20 project hours and 8 education hours**).
4. It is for those who **wish to continue** Master Gardener **activities**.
5. Adjunct members **must pay annual Association dues**.
6. Adjunct status is available for a **maximum of three (3) consecutive years**.
7. Adjunct status is meant to be a **temporary status**. After the three years in Adjunct Status, the member **must meet all requirements for active MG status** or be removed from the Association rosters. That is, in the **third year of Adjunct Status, the member must earn 20 project hours and 8 education hours**, so that in the fourth year they will be in active status once more.
8. In the NSVMGA Membership list **on the "Members Only" section** of the www.nsvmga.org website, the status of Adjunct Members will be listed as **D1, D2, or D3, depending on the year of their Adjunct Status**

SHENANDOAH COUNTY REPORT by Sharon Bradshaw

Our ongoing projects, such as Green Help Line, are continuing and seasonal projects are being reviewed by visits to the particular sites and evaluation of needs. Woodstock Community Garden, our newest undertaking, has gone through intensive planning. The goal is to provide information and hands on experience in planting vegetables in containers and raised beds for county residents who are not familiar with our Zone 6 conditions. Speakers and topics have been identified and dates and classroom site are set. We're looking forward to the first workshop.

Project applications are in and in the process of approval. We'll clarify discussion points and recruit new project participants at our Shenandoah County Planning Meeting on Monday, March 20, in the VCE Classroom at 6:00 PM.

GARDENING IN THE VALLEY SYMPOSIUM by Sandy Ward

It's almost here!

NSVMGA Symposium 2017 at Lord Fairfax Community College!

Spring is here and so is Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardeners Association's Gardening in the Valley 2017. We are using a great new location—Lord Fairfax Community College in Middletown. And we have a new format, so we can bring in six speakers instead of just four:

- Alex Hessler, Director, Dining Services Farm, Virginia Tech:
Organic Soils and Enriching the Garden

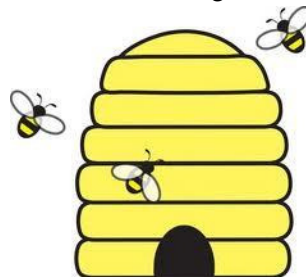


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- Jim Douglas, former extension agent in three states: Organic Gardening: an interactive presentation
- John Eckman, Executive Director, Friends of the North Fork: Green Infrastructure for Water Quality
- Julie Borneman, owner of Watermark Woods nursery: native plants for a native garden
- Chris Schmidt, Arboretum Specialist, Blandy Experimental Farm: new invasive pests to watch for
- Nicole Hamilton, Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist: the magic of monarch butterflies



And then there are door prizes—including a beehive (bees not included). For bookworms, we'll have a used book sale.



Time is running out to register: please sign up by March 17. You can register on-line at our website <http://nsvmg.org/projects/garden-symposium/>. Registering on-line gives you the opportunity to pay electronically by using PayPal, or you can mail your check (\$55 for NSVMGA members) to Bob Gail. If you register on-line you can select your preferred break-out session. If you have any questions or need help registering, please contact Bob Gail (bobgail21@gmail.com). Come celebrate spring with us! April 1, 8 AM to 4:00 PM!

PUBLICITY by Lynn Hoffman

The publicity committee will be attempting to keep up with pictures from our MG events. If you have pictures of events from the past and can identify the people in the pictures please email them to me. If there are children in the pictures, the parents have had to give permission. Permission could be via 4-H, the school, or a parent. We don't keep the permission in writing, but a verbal OK is what we have been going with. Email them to gwendydog@gmail.com.

GRASSY THUGS—Jocelyn Sladen

[Jocelyn Sladen has served on many national and regional boards, including Defenders of Wildlife, Center for Plant Conservation, The Nature Conservancy, and the Virginia Native Plant Society]

As if our natural habitats were not enough under siege from Japanese Stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*), here comes Wavyleaf Basketgrass (*Oplismenus undulatifolius*). We need a broad-based effort to detect occurrences and, to the extent possible, check the spread of this highly aggressive and shade-tolerant grass from Southeast Asia. While we're at it, we should touch upon the Japanese Stiltgrass invasion again and Joint-head Grass (*Arthraxon hispidus*), a third invasive grass from southeast Asia that invades low, disturbed habitats across the state and is especially common in the Piedmont.

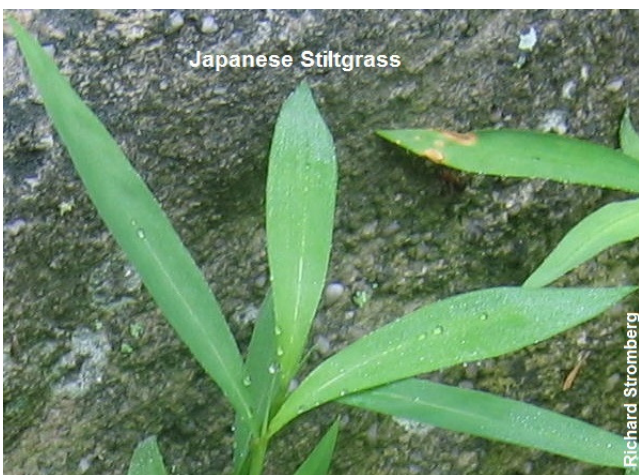
Wavyleaf Basketgrass is a perennial, native to warmer regions of Southeast Asia and Africa. It was first detected near a central Maryland landfill in 1996. In 2005, an 80-acre infestation was discovered in Shenandoah National Park. By 2009, it had become a rampant forest weed covering 200 acres. It has since been discovered at multiple sites in the northern Blue Ridge and northern Piedmont. In the past few years volunteers have been removing stands from Ovoka Farm in northern Fauquier County. The Digital Atlas of Virginia Flora lists it in 12 counties, including Warren, but notes that "populations are being detected with increasing frequency".

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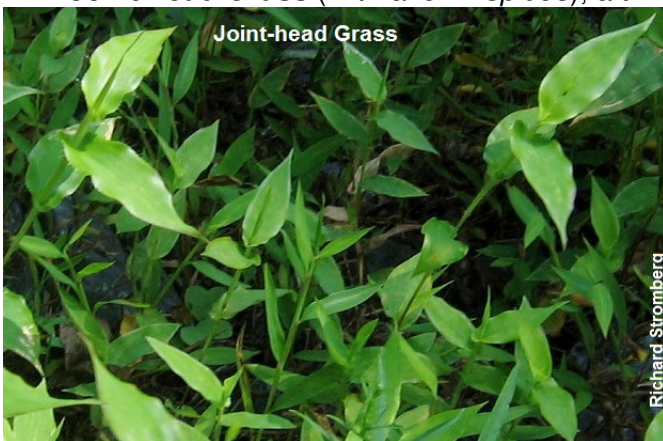
Wavyleaf Basketgrass has a branching, trailing habit, rooting at nodes along creeping stems but can grow up to 3 feet tall. Leaf blades are flat about one-half to an inch wide and up to 4 inches long, deep green with distinctive rippling waves across the blades. Leaf sheaths and stems have short hairs. When it blooms (mid-August into November) a sticky substance appears on the pointed awns (extended pointed tips of the flower bracts) that adheres to whatever brushes them. The perennial growth habit and efficient seed dispersal system make it a serious threat. Look for it especially in low, wooded areas, especially those that have been disturbed. It has been found among

stands of Japanese Stiltgrass, as they thrive in similar habitats.



Japanese Stiltgrass, another Asian import, has become prolific throughout the region, its sprawling mats of delicate, pale green grass growing thickly along roadsides and trails or in ditches or making stealth attacks on our gardens, but most aggressively invading vegetation in woodland areas. Highly shade tolerant, its dense infestations are associated with disturbed areas, with moist soils preferred. It can completely displace other vegetation, forming dense carpets. Like Wavyleaf Basketgrass, it is a sprawling plant but can grow over three feet tall. Its pale green, alternate, lance-shaped leaves have a silvery line down the center.

Joint-head Grass (*Arthraxon hispidus*), a third Eurasian invasive grass, has been quietly making itself at home here for a longer time.



Less aggressive so far, it is nonetheless a troublesome weed of low, moist areas and is easily confused with the other two. They sometimes grow together. Note the clasping leaf base and conspicuous hairs along its leaf margins. It can be confused, with native Deertongue Grass (*Dichanthelium clandestinum*). Deertongue has a paniced seed head, lacking in *Arthraxon*. *Arthraxon* has stems that root at the nodes.

Controls—A small occurrence of any of these invasive monsters can be removed by hand. All three are shallow-rooted, although Wavyleaf Basketgrass has a survival advantage because it is a perennial. In hand removal, some care is important. Seeds can stick to you to be carried elsewhere. Disturbing soil by pulling rooted plants can create a fresh seed bed for new infestations. As for chemical control, do plenty of homework in advance, and observe the known cautions.

