

MONROE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension



From the Ground Up.....Paul Russeau



Each year Spring is always a surprise to me even though many springs have come and gone in my life. I always know what to expect but “wow” I am always amazed and delighted by that

first winter aconite, *Eranthus hysmalis*, snow drop, crocus, swelling buds, pussy willow catkins, and spring ephemerals such as the pink spring beauty, *Claytonia virginica*.

The Vernal Equinox occurs on March 20 this year marking the beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere. The word ‘equinox’ is derived from the Latin word meaning “equal night” and refers to the time when the sun crosses the equator. At these times, day and night are nearly of equal length everywhere in the world.

Beginning late February, I start my garden chores. First up is pruning trees and shrubs with sharp pruners, loppers, and pruning saw so the cut is as clean as possible. I start by removing the dead and crossing branches then prune to shape. Every two to three years I prune back hard the red twig dogwood, *Cornus sericea*, to maintain height and keep that red color for winter. If I need to brush up on my pruning techniques I can always consult the website, MSU Gardening in Michigan, to review pruning techniques: <http://www.migarden.msu.edu/>.

March is a busy time for trimming and tidying to be done not only at my house but at the Extension demonstration gardens as well. With the changes that have taken

place last year, and sadly no Master Gardener class in 2011, we will miss that much needed help from the “newbies” trying to get those 40 hours of volunteer time for certification. So, MG volunteers will have to step it up a notch to make sure our extension gardens stay in great shape along with any other projects we undertake in 2011. I know we will be up for the challenge because, as proven in the past, we can always count on the dedicated



members of our Association. Thanks for all of your hard work—we do this because gardening is our passion.

During the February meeting we clarified which projects we plan to continue in 2011 and you will be getting copies of the sign-up sheets from Jennie by e-mail. Perhaps we will have our own website one day to post these, but in the meantime, we’ll send them around to remind you to let us know when and how we can count on you! One other thing to mention is the addition of the MCMGA bylaws to the Monroe



County MSUE website. www.msue.msu.edu/monroe Click on Home Yard and Garden and the link to the Association bylaws is lo-

Inside this issue:

Jennie's Corner	2
Invasive Pest, Wm Robinson's Gardening Heritage	3-4
January MGA Meeting	4
Educational Opportunities	5-6
Importance of Being Jekyll	6-7
Meet a Monroe MG	7
Activities & Dues	8

cated in the Horticulture section.

I try not to get too anxious and impatient in the early spring even though I have a renewed energy after the long winter. So, I let the soggy and muddy soil alone and do other jobs until things dry out a bit. I tie a bungee cord around each clump of ornamental grass and use my hedge trimmers to cut the clump back 4-12 inches from the ground depending on the type of grass. I throw the cuttings on the compost pile which is towering above me by the time I am completed with this chore.

I also start to cut back perennials that were left last fall for winter interest. I enjoyed watching the finches eating the coneflower seeds, *Echinacea purpurea*, and seeing the snowcapped *Sedum* ‘Autumn Joy’. But now it is spring and so last year’s growth is also ready for the compost pile. The new growth is already peeking out at the base of the plants. I also divide perennials and grasses that have started to decline in vigor and had fewer flowers

Jennie's Corner.....Jennie Stanger



What wonderful attendance we had at the Jan and Feb meetings! Those who came are learning what

great people we have to work with in our group. New friends are making plans to travel to educational opportunities around the state that members alerted us to. New officers and committees are already planning and working toward the voted goals and I am very optimistic at this point that we can meet many of them this year!

Good ideas are flowing as to having our own website or at least circulating e-copies of sign-up sheets for the various volunteer projects, including articles for the newsletter. Several members contributed articles, photos and ideas for this issue, which I think you will enjoy.

You should have re-

ceived an e-mail message by now with the proposed sign-up sheets. Please be willing to commit to projects so that we'll have better communication and planning, even if there's a possibility you'll need to reschedule. There are pros and cons of having a website...the main con being that someone needs to keep it updated regularly. For the immediate future, please keep checking and referring people to the Monroe MSUE website, where the newsletter is posted, www.msue.msu.edu/monroe. The Home Yard and Garden page, particularly, describes the Association, and our bylaws are posted there as well as links to important MSU informational resources.



Spotted Winged Drosophila

Everyone should try to make at least one Monday am or pm available during the growing season to get updated on current pests/problems and resources in our little diagnostic lab. We'll be really busy there



Marmorated Stink Bug

the first 4 Mondays in May and June, perhaps into the evenings, if that is a good time for you.

New invasive pests to watch for in the 2011 growing season, **found in Michigan last fall**, include the spotted-wing drosophila and brown marmorated stink bug. You need to prepare to answer questions about these and learn how to scout for them.

If Mondays are impossible

due to your work schedule, think about the Thursday evening work-n-learn sessions, Saturday work sessions and meeting days as times you can come, learn what needs doing and spend hands-on time productively with others here. We will often work in the gardens or office for an hour or so before and/or after meetings in spring and fall if folks continue to find that convenient. Or join a work group that may come at other times or work on particular projects in other places. It won't be quite as simple to come on odd days without planning ahead, because the office is closed Wed and Fri, and working by yourself you may have needs or questions no one is available to answer.

If you were short on hours, either ed or volunteer, you will automatically be marked "suspended" until you catch up, but don't be discouraged...keep in touch! There are many ways to regain active status if you don't wait too long! Call or e-mail me if you are unsure about anything regarding your certification or need a badge or certificate! --Jennie

From the Ground Up....con't.from page 1

last season. I need plants for our spring plant exchange, which is another great reason to divide perennials. I always come home with great plants, great memories, and more plants than anticipated. I even name the perennials I have gained after members, such as my Carol Koesel miniature daylily and the Georgeann Brown yellow violet. There are always MCMGA memories in my gardens thanks to the plant exchange.

So, spring is a busy time in my garden and the extension demonstration gardens. There is always something to do but the reward is well worth the work involved, and we MG volunteers are always up to the task at hand.

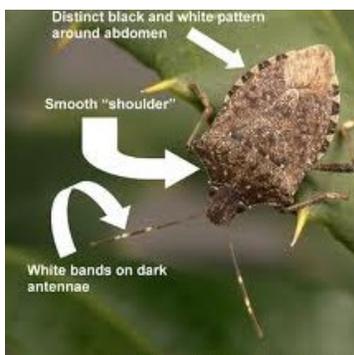
I am looking forward to working with all of you in 2011. Happy Gardening!

Paul



Paul's winter aconite

A Threat to Michigan Agriculture....Kathleen Brunt



Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs were discovered in Eaton and Berrien Counties by students from MSU. These specimens' id was verified by the United States Department of Agriculture. The BMSB are native to eastern Asia and were first discovered in Allentown, Pennsylvania in 1998. The Marmorated Stink bug is a serious threat to the agri-

food industry and the

53,000 farmers in our state. This insect satisfies its appetite on apples, peaches, and mulberries. It can also have an impact on ornamental plants, weeds, soybeans, and beans.

The adults are approximately 17mm long with a mottled brownish grey color. There is a white band on the antennae segment, and the abdominal segments protrude from under the wings. The true identifying feature is their typical "shield" shape. They have patches of coppery or blue-

ish-metallic colored punctures or depressions on their head and pronotum. These insects derive their name from the scent glands that are located on the dorsal side of the abdomen and the underside of the thorax. Stink bugs can be a significant nuisance in a home, and they may enter a home in the fall for protection from the winter.

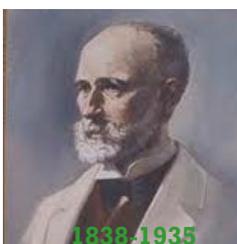
If these insects enter your home, the best way of controlling them is to use a vacuum and sweep them up.

William Robinson's Gardening Heritage by Peggy Zdila

One of the most influential persons of the Victorian garden world was William Robinson. As a young man he was a professional gardener who worked for important estates in Ireland and England. He moved on to employment at the Botanical Gardens of Regent's Park, London. There he specialized in hardy herbaceous plants, including British wildflowers. One of his tasks in this post was to collect botanical specimens. He made trips into the English countryside to accomplish his work, developing a love of the countryside and cottage gardens. He was very much a self-made man in the vein of his American contemporaries, with many personal achievements. He taught himself French. This aided him both in employment with a French horticultural-related firm, and also in travels on the

Continent.

Before the age of 30, he was sponsored for membership in the Linnean Society, the world's foremost organization for the study of taxonomy



(classification of species), by Charles Darwin and nine other important men of science, botany and horticulture. He left

Regent's Park to write for The Gardener's Chronicle and The Times. Robinson went on to author a number of horticultural books (the first of which was published in 1868) including The Wild Garden, and The English Flower Garden, as well as others. He became a publisher of an im-

portant journal of his own creation called The Garden. It included articles by many prominent Victorians, including Gertrude Jekyll, who became a frequent contributor and a lifelong friend. Robinson also published two other garden journals.

Though not all of his ideas were original, through his writing Robinson revolutionized 19th century gardening, which at the time was dominated by the formal carpet bedding. The English Flower Garden went through fifteen editions in Robinson's lifetime alone, and is considered his most important book. He has been credited with "inventing gardening as we know it," and his ideas are now considered commonplace. Robinson is particularly well known for introducing the herbaceous border (mixed border), a combination planting of

Con't on page 4

January MG Meeting and New Officers



Jennie was the featured speaker at the January meeting. Her topic was **“Keeping Produce Without Processing it.”** This lesson is an example of one of the ready-made presentations that MGs can share with other groups and we are all encouraged to use these resources .

“The attendance at Saturday’s meeting was outstanding...I counted over 30, and I thought we had super candidates and now super elected officers and program folks.”



2011 Monroe County MGA Officers (from left):

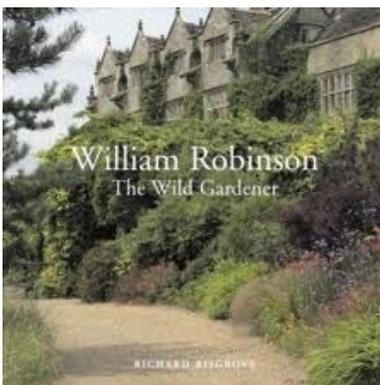
Cathy Beville, Secretary
Paul Rousseau, President
Chris Eddolls, Treasurer
Jackie VanHouten, 2010 President
Diane Michaud, 2010 Vice President
(Not pictured: Georgeann Brown, newly elected VP)

Free Newsletter

Interested in receiving a free weekly e-newsletter by **Janet Macunovich**? Anyone can subscribe (or unsubscribe) simply by sending an email to JMaxGarden@aol.com.

William Robinson’s Gardening Heritage.....

con’t from page 3



shrubs, perennials and half-hardy* plants. He advocated dense planting, leaving no bare earth, utilizing what we now call ground covers in a cottage garden style. Robinson also popularized rock gardens and taught his readers how to use alpine plants in gardens.

Robinson referred to himself as “The Wild Gardener” and to many gardeners his advocacy of the use of natural-

ized plantings, such as drifts of daffodils is his most significant contribution to gardening and landscaping. He championed using native plants, but was not against using other plants that could be naturalized. Robinson especially recommended naturalized plantings for transitional spaces such as between yard and adjacent woodland. A 21st century British journalist writing about Robinson's ideas said,

“I was struck by the seeming modernity of his approach. We are all Robinsonians now, even if we don't know it.” Read more about William Robinson in William Robinson: The Wild Gardener, by Richard Bisgrove, c. 2008, Publisher: Frances Lincoln, ISBN-10: 0711225427.
**annuals able to take temperatures down to 32 degrees*

Educational Opportunities

2011 Stuck on Gardening Conference

Saturday, March 5

Devos Place, Grand Rapids, MI Sponsored by: MSU Extension/Kent County

Join gardeners across Michigan for this refreshing break from the winter doldrums! Keynote presenter and nationally known garden personality and author Felder Rushing will provide a humorous look at "Why the Rules Stink!" (The rules of Horticulture that is.) Rushing is known across the nation as having a quirky, over-stuffed garden and doesn't hesitate to go "off script" with his captivating presentations. He will be joined by the esteemed Dr. Laura Deeter of Ohio State University whose tag line is "The Garden Hoe". It is sure to be a scintillating experience! Log on to www.stuckongardening.com for a brochure. Or contact the Kent/MSU Extension office at (616) 336-3265 to have a brochure mailed to you.

The 2011 Spring Symposium, "Tools of the Gardener" will be held Saturday, March 19, 2011, at the Cornerstone Church in Clyde, MI.

The brochure and map to the location at the St. Clair County website on the MSU Extension homepage can be found at <http://msue.stclaircounty.org/>. Speakers include Ken Druse "Secrets of the Garden", Lee Reich "Special Pruning Techniques" and "My Weedless Garden" and Ian Adams "Ohio and Pennsylvania's Public Gardens" a road trip. There will be gardening books for sale, various gardening vendors as well as plant sales by Earthly Arts. Advance registration is required. Seminar fee of \$70.00 (after March 1, \$80.00) includes continental breakfast, lunch and snack break. Registration and payment by check or money order only must be mailed to: Alicia Cannon, 7200 Drexler Rd, St. Clair, MI 48079. Seating is limited and this event has always sold out. For more information call Lisa Sharrow (810) 329-3722, or Alicia Cannon (810) 367-6966.

"Growing Great Gardens", Saturday, March 19, Wayne County Community College District, Taylor, Hosted by: The Taylor Garden Club, Taylor Conservatory Foundation and WCCC. 8:00am to 4:00pm, 21000 Northline Rd, Taylor, MI.

Janet Macunovich, of Perennial Favorites, kicks off the morning with **Edible Landscapes**. Janet is known throughout the country for her exceptional plant knowledge and enthusiasm. Paired with her husband Steven Nikkila's beautiful photographs and delivered in her easy to understand style, this presentation is not to be missed! Afternoon speaker is Nikki Schmith, nationally known daylily judge and avid collector, as she inspires us with her energetic and passion for all things daylily. If you think daylilies mean Stella D'oro, hold on to your seats and get ready for an amazing display of variety, color and fun with Nikki's **A Girl & Her Garden: Adventures with the Daylily**. Conference cost is \$30 for two keynote presentations, two workshops, a box lunch, a garden info goodie bag and a chance to win many beautiful door prizes. There will be a Garden Marketplace, which is filled with garden-related books, soaps, herbal products, plants, tools, etc. You will also be able to see some of the outstanding work that non-profit organizations are doing in their community. Register on-line at www.taylorconservatory.org.

"Spring into Gardening Conference and Yard & Garden Expo"

Saturday, March 26, 2011, Ugly Heights Country Club, Ugly

Sponsored by: MSUE Huron County Master Gardeners

Speakers include Janet Macunovich, professional gardener and writer (Perennials for the Collector and Naturalized Gardening); Mark Torregrossa, NBC25 Chief Meteorologist (Weather and your Garden); Coleen French, French Garden Creations (Herbs: In the Kitchen and Around the House); and Cheryl English, Black Cat Pottery (It IS Easy to be Green). This year we are providing an extra room for vendors at our Expo. More information is available at www.msue.msu.edu/huron (click on the Master Gardener link on the sidebar) or contact Carol Holtrop at 989-553-2992 or holtropc@gmail.com

Educational Opportunities—con't

2011 Master Gardener College On The Road June 24-25, 2011 Prince Conference Center at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI

Hosted by Kent MSU Extension and the Kent County Master Gardener Volunteers

Plans are underway for another exciting Master Gardener College for 2011. This year, we'll travel to Grand Rapids to be hosted by Kent MSU Extension and the Kent County Master Gardener Volunteers. Friday, June 24th, will feature six educational daylong tours throughout West Michigan learning about horticulture. We'll visit nurseries, garden centers, the dunes, bogs, orchards, private gardens and more. I guarantee the choice will be difficult but you won't be disappointed. On Saturday, we'll offer numerous concurrent sessions sure to pique any gardener's interest. There will be sessions on diagnostics, beneficial insects, square foot gardening, plants of distinction, inspirational design, and much more! On Friday night, the Kent County MGVs will host a Garden Party in the MSUE Grand Ideas Garden. Also, for those able to extend their stay in Grand Rapids, everyone is invited to participate in the MSUE Stuck on Gardening Garden Tour. Cost is yet to be determined since we're still working on speaker and tour costs. Registration will again include a one or two-day option. This year, MGVs will also be allowed to bring one adult guest

Mark Your Calendars! Garden Day 2011 at MSU—August 5

Key Note Speakers will be Allan Armitage and Rufus Isaacs
<http://www.hrt.msu.edu/2011-garden-day/>



The Importance of Being Jekyll by Peggy Zdila

Gertrude Jekyll is now remembered as one of the most important individuals in garden design. She trained as an artist and botanist and her teachers included the great artist/designer Christopher Dresser. She is known to have made a particular study of the paintings of Turner. She traveled on the Continent like a great many artists of the 19th century, and created commissioned work for clients in embroidery, wood-inlay, and stenciling. She also painted, worked in metal, and pottery, and embraced the ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

She became seriously involved in garden design during her thirties while continuing her pursuits of fine arts and handicrafts. Her background in color theory helped her to select striking planting combinations like white flowers or gray tinged foliage combined with more brilliantly hued flowers. Around age 50, her vision problems became so serious she decided to devote herself more completely to garden design and photography. She also owned a successful nursery business. Few of her gardens survive but her many books remain. She also contributed in excess of 1,000 articles to journals and magazines such as Country Life and Garden Illustrated. Her design work shows some influence of William Robinson. She elevated gardening to a fine art.

Her influence cannot be underestimated. In her own time she was recognized among leading gardeners and horticulturalists, as well as a garden designer. She is credited with the creation over 400 gardens in the UK, Europe and America. She made gardening an acceptable occupation for women as early as the 1890's when schools in England were established to provide this education. Her writing and designs were imported to America. She designed gardens for three American clients (though she is not known to have visited the States) and wrote prefaces to books by Francis King of Alma, MI. King was a founder of Garden Club of America and was inspired by Jekyll's work. Also inspired was Geatrix Farrand, an important



1843—1932

Meet a Monroe MG: Patricia LaLone

Hometown: Lake Orion, Oakland County

MG Class of: 2006

Day Job: Senior Administrator, Owens Corning

Gardening Style: Informal, Eclectic, Chaotic

Describe your home gardens: City lot with more shade than sun and roses occupying all sunny areas. I have raised beds for vegetables and am always trying new plants and moving existing ones with the goal of always having something in bloom.

What is your "wish list" for gardening: That all of my lawn is removed and replaced with beds and walking paths. I want to include more conifers, ornamental grasses and natives.

Favorite MG volunteer projects: Hands-on work in the demonstration gardens with MGs and working with the public.

Favorite garden tool: Leonard deluxe soil knife (works great even in clay!)

Gardening Pet Peeve: My clay soil. Also those loud gas-powered leaf blowers I think should be banned!

Current Favorite Plant: My roses. I have about 40 and a favorite is a Grandiflora 'Dream Come True'. Clematis, Heucheras and Sedums also make my favorites list.



Importance of Being Jekyll—cont. from pg 6

American landscape designer who visited Jekyll at her home.

Jekyll worked in a design partnership with architect and landscape architect Edwin Lutyens which began when he was just 20 years old. The two shared an appreciation for traditional local building styles or "vernacular," and craftsmanship, such as stonework, tilemaking, and using local materials. Hestercomb house in Somerset, England is considered

The work of both fell into the aesthetic of the Arts and Crafts Movement with its emphasis on using natural local materials. They collaborated on approximately 50 projects. Experts now say it is difficult to tell where the work of one stopped and the other started. Jekyll was more than capable of designing and specifying hardscape for gardens. Jek-

yll's work was also in demand by other architects of the Arts and Crafts aesthetic. She worked with them after Lutyens moved on to designing public buildings in the classical style. He is now recognized as one of the most important English architects, but we will never know how much debt for his residential landscapes he owed to Jekyll.

Gertrude Jekyll's books are still available, many of them more than 100 years after they were written, and books are available with design maps and photos of her gardens as well.



Jekyll Manor House, Hampshire UK



Border garden at Jekyll Manor House

Activity Calendar

Day/Date	Time	Event	Location	Details	Ed Hrs	Contact
Sat-03/19/11	Our usual meeting postponed due to >	Great ed opps in	Clyde, MI Taylor	See p 5		Naida
Thurs Mar 24	6pm or earlier	Work & learn on Pruning shrubs	Extension	Hands-on	.5	Frank Deutsch
Sat -03/26/11	10:00am	Regular Meeting	Extension	Report from 3/19 Conference	1	Jennie
Sat April 9	9:00 am	Work & learn	Extension	Garden clean-up	.5	Frank
April ?		Four Star Greenhouse tour	Carleton			Jennie
Sunday May 1	2 pm	Wildflower walk	Dundee	Unusual woodlot	1	Jennie
Sat May 7	9:00-10:00 am	Plant Exchange	Extension			Paul Russeau
Sat May 7	10:00 am	Regular meeting	Extension			Paul
Thurs May 26	6	Work & Learn	Extension	TBA		Frank
Sat June 11	9:00 am	Work & Learn	Extension			Frank

Editors Pat LaLone and Dick Brunt

Once again, it is time to pay your annual **\$10 Master Gardener Association dues** (for 2011). You can bring this form along with dues to the next event you attend, or make out a check payable to **Monroe County Master Gardener Association** or **MCMGA** and mail both to Association treasurer **Chris Eddolls, 4262 Secor Road, Ida, MI 48140**.

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Cell Phone _____

Be aware, black & white paper copy Newsletters are mailed to members who do not have email.

PLEASE CHECK ITEMS BELOW:

I need to be mailed a paper copy of the newsletter.

I get Association update notices via email and would be happy to phone one person who does not have email service. I will call _____, or Let me know of someone who needs to be called.

Remember – Dues must be paid prior to April 15, 2011