

GardenTalk

The Official Monthly Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County and UT Extension

January 2014

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President's Thoughts

With the approach of another new year, now is an appropriate time to reflect on the past year.

2013 began with a new round of Master Gardener classes, Winter School and Boxwood Trimming at the City Cemetery. The Lawn & Garden Show followed next, and our move to a new location for Lawn & Garden offered new challenges and opportunities, but Master Gardeners came together and we had another great display.

Planning for our major projects got underway when suddenly we were into Spring! As we began to plan for our Urban Gardening Festival in May work remained to be done to prepare the Demonstration Garden while we worked at our regular projects. Master Gardeners always make things happen!

The weather this past Summer was strange! The Hermitage had to replant some of their garden because of the rain we had during the start of the season. Lessons were learned and they made the most of what they had already accomplished. We had a great May meeting at The Hermitage and enjoyed a tour of the Gardens. June brought us our Junior Master Gardener Camp and what a great time I had at my first camp with the kids! And in July we took our usual trip to Jackson for Summer Celebration.

Fall, too, was busy, with the Living History Tour at the City Cemetery, great success at the Tennessee State Fair, Harvest Days at Grassmere was fun, and Music & Molasses could not have been better! We even got a field trip to Don Shadows in Winchester.

We also lost very special Master Gardeners this year. They will be sorely missed but we will continue to have great memories of working alongside each of them.

Our new board has gotten together and started making plans for this new year. I think we will have a very good 2014 at DCMG. Our First Vice President, Becky Fox Matthews, has already booked some very interesting programs for us. Planning for the Lawn & Garden Show is underway. And project chairs are already planning activities for the coming year as well.

I hope you will be as active as you can manage this year, in your own gardens as well as with DCMG, as we have many opportunities for our volunteers to apply their time, knowledge and experience while helping others to learn. This is what Master Gardening is all about!

Now is a great time to get outside and look at your gardens and enjoy them! ♡

*~ Robert Mather (2000)
President, Davidson County Master Gardeners*

**MASTER GARDENERS OF
DAVIDSON COUNTY**

Monthly Meeting

**Thursday, January 09, 2013
at 6:30pm**

in the

**Ed Jones Auditorium,
Ellington Agricultural Center**

featuring

The 2013 ACT Awards

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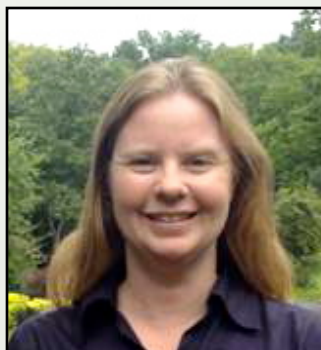
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Inside this issue...

President's Thoughts	1
February: Cheekwood's Dynamic Dogwoods	2
Winter Discoloration of Evergreens.....	3
Projects Directory	3
Learning to Shoot: Taking Photos in the Garden	4
Grassmere Historic Gardens at the Nashville Zoo	7
Kitchen Gardens at The Hermitage	8
Volunteer Needed	8
Holiday Meeting Photos.....	8
Calendar.....	9
Recipe of the Month	10

February: Cheekwood's Dynamic Dogwoods



In February, learn what you can look forward to when Cheekwood's magnificent flowering dogwoods begin blooming late March!

Our February 13th program will be presented by Leigh Anne Lomax, Botanical Garden and Horticulture Manager for Cheekwood, the 55-acre botanical garden and museum of art located on the historic Cheek estate just 8 miles south of Nashville.

With Cheekwood since 2006, Leigh Anne oversees operations of the botanical garden, including plant collections, seasonal color displays, gardening programs, outdoor garden exhibitions and Cheekwood's garden staff. She previously served as the associate director of horticulture at the Audubon Zoo and Park in New Orleans. She received a B.S. in Horticulture from Virginia Tech in 1996.

Our guest will discuss Cheekwood's treasured dogwood collection that was recently granted membership to the North American Plant Collection Consortium (NAPCC) — the first NAPCC Collection in Tennessee and also the first dogwood collection in North America to be recognized by the organization.

The dogwood collection highlights species and varieties native to both North America and Asia that thrive in Middle Tennessee's climate, with particular emphasis on varieties exhibiting superior disease and insect resistance, bloom, foliage, growth habit, hardiness, and vigor. Mark our monthly meeting of February 13th on your calendars and look forward to a wonderful program! 🌸

~ Becky Fox Matthews (2005)

Winter Discoloration of Evergreens

Browning or bleaching of evergreen foliage during winter occurs for any of four reasons:

1. Winter sun and wind cause excessive transpiration (foliage water loss) while the roots are in frozen soil and unable to replace lost water. This results in desiccation and browning of the plant tissue.
2. Bright sunny days during the winter also cause warming of the tissue above ambient temperature which in turn initiates cellular activity. Then, when the sun is quickly shaded, foliage temperature drops to injurious levels and the foliage is injured or killed.
3. During bright, cold winter days, chlorophyll in the foliage is destroyed (photo-oxidized) and is not re-synthesized when temperatures are below 28°F. This results in a bleaching of the foliage.
4. Cold temperatures early in the fall before plants have hardened off completely or late spring after new growth has occurred can result in injury or death of this non-acclimated tissue.

Foliar damage normally occurs on the south, southwest, and windward sides of the plant, but in severe cases the whole plant may be affected. Boxwood, Yew, arborvitae, and hemlock are most susceptible, but winter browning can affect all evergreens. New transplants or plants with succulent, late season growth are particularly sensitive.

Keeping evergreens properly watered throughout the growing season and into the fall is one way to reduce winter injury. Never stress plants by under- or overwatering. Decrease watering slightly in September to encourage hardening off, then water thoroughly in October until freeze-up. Watering only in late fall does not help reduce injury.

If an evergreen has suffered winter injury, wait until mid-spring before pruning out injured foliage. Brown foliage is most likely dead and will not green up, but the buds, which are more cold hardy than foliage, will often grow and fill in areas where brown foliage was removed.

If the buds have not survived, prune dead branches back to living tissue. Fertilize injured plants in early spring and water them well throughout the season. Provide appropriate protection the following winter. 🌱

~ David Cook, UT Extension Agent

Project Chairs, 2014

Demonstration Garden at Ellington Agricultural Center
Alisa Huntsman, ahuntsman@bellsouth.net

Extension Office Liaison
Judy Burnette, judyrburnette@gmail.com

Garden Tours
Anne Carpenter, hapcarpenter@comcast.net

Grassmere Historic Farm at the Nashville Zoo
Cathie Long, cathielong@comcast.net (Chair)
Susan Brown, susanbrown1@yahoo.com
Jean Buffer, jean.buffer@comcast.net
Gwen Day, gwenmartindale@yahoo.com
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Bill MacLennan, (615) 354-8156
Rich Shiavi, schiavi2@bellsouth.net

Harding Garden at Belle Meade
Muff Cline, muffcline@yahoo.com

Historic Nashville City Cemetery
Catherine Atwell, (615) 297-0600 (Co-Chair)
Robert Mather, rmather321@aol.com (Co-Chair)

Hospitality
Vacant

Junior Master Gardeners
Barbara Ann Drake, bsdake@comcast.net
Pam Swoner, connectingtngardeners@gmail.com
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Kitchen Gardens at The Hermitage
Laura Kraft, lkraft1212@gmail.com
Mary Langford, langfordlaw@hotmail.com

Master Gardener Class Liaison
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Merchandise
Barbara Adams, babstn@bellsouth.net
Susan Brown, susanbrown1@yahoo.com
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Music & Molasses Festival
Tyann Chappell, tyann.chappell@comcast.net (Chair)
Don & Jean Hover, hoeverdj@charter.net (Co-Chairs)

Nashville Lawn & Garden Show
Barbara Ann Drake, bsdake@comcast.net (Chair)
Anne Carpenter, hapcarpenter@comcast.net (Co-Chair)

Tennessee State Fair
Russell Kirchner, mudking52580@yahoo.com

Urban Gardening Festival
Alisa Huntsman, ahuntsman@bellsouth.net (Co-Chair)
Robert Mather, rmather321@aol.com (Co-Chair)

Visit DCMG projects online at
www.dcmg.org!



Learning to Shoot: Taking Photos in the Garden

by Alisa Huntsman (2008)

Everywhere you look, people are taking photos. A quick check of social media outlets will provide more photos than you care to see.

The good news is that as cameras become more popular, the technology continues to improve and so do the prices. Whether you choose a simple point-and-shoot camera, a digital single lens reflex or DSLR camera (what I use), or a cell phone, the available options suit just about every skill level as well as budget.

For those of you that know me, you are well aware that if I am in the garden, my camera and my cell phone are nearby. To keep the Demonstration Garden's blog updated, I take photos nearly every time I visit the garden.

My camera is a large part of who I am and taking photos is something I truly enjoy. It is also a great way to document the progress of the garden. It isn't odd to see me crawling around on the ground or even lying on the ground while I try to get the shot.

Before you proclaim that you simply cannot take good photos, let me give you a few helpful hints and suggestions as well as explain a few things about cameras.

Settings

First of all, the type of camera you use is not as important as is the way you use it.

What this means is that you need to understand how to use your camera, so be sure to actually read

Clematis seed heads on the gazebo.

the entire manual and, if it comes with a DVD, watch it!

Secondly: practice, practice, and practice by taking lots of photos.

When I go out to the Demonstration Garden to take photos, I almost always use a macro lens. What that means is that the lens is designed to take close-up shots, and with it I can get within inches of the subject.

Before I take a photo, I set the camera control to manual so that I can have more control over the camera settings.

Then I set the white balance to the most appropriate lighting for the scene. Next, I decide how much of the photo I want to have in focus.

Once I have set the f-stop (focal-stop which determines how much light enters the lens; also called the aperture) and the shutter speed, I start shooting. Since I only use natural light and no flash it can get tricky to get the proper exposure.

Equipment

The truth is, not everyone wants to lug around a camera like mine. Even more important is that the camera body and the various lenses are not necessarily cheap.

Professional grade cameras and lenses cost thousands of dollars. Luckily, the newer point-and-shoot cameras can be purchased for a lot less and, for the beginner, they do a lot of what I do without the work of changing settings.

Many of these cameras have macro features which means you can get out there and get that close up shot. For you iPhone users, there are gadgets you can clip onto your camera lens to turn it into a macro lens giving you the perfect close-up shots using your phone.

Lighting

Equipment aside, let's talk about getting that shot. First of all, what is the light like? When the sun is up high in the sky and as bright as can be, it is the worst time of day to take a photo. The shadows and the bright spots will be harsh.

The best time to take photos is either early in the day or later in the afternoon when the sun is not directly above you. Even better is if it is cloudy or overcast; the



Rose hips.

lack of direct sun gives you lots of diffused light and very little in the way of shadows and bright spots.

Where are you positioning yourself? Is the subject lit from the front, back or side? Back lighting means that you will have a bright background and your subject will be dark in front.

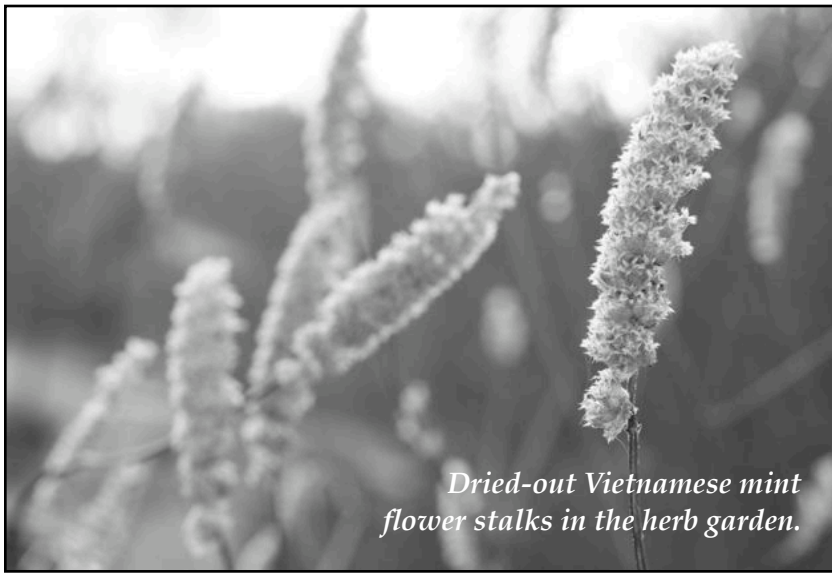
When the light comes from the front, it is easy to cast your shadow into the frame so be careful to look for it before you shoot. Side lighting is one of the best options, especially if it comes in from a 45-degree angle.

Positioning and settings

Getting the subject in focus can be tricky. Especially if you have vision issues like I do. When I take photos, I almost always use autofocus because I have a hard time getting the focus manually. But did you know that most cameras use a point system?



The calyxes of these tiny blooms look like flowers now that the seeds have dispersed.



*Dried-out Vietnamese mint
flower stalks in the herb garden.*

New cameras usually have a series of dots in the viewfinder that you line up over your subject and, when you press the focus button, one or all of the dots will light up and set the focus. If you are lucky, your camera will let you choose which dot to use for the focal point. What this means is that the exact spot on the subject that you choose will be in the sharpest focus.

Other settings, such as macro or white balance can have a huge impact on the photo. The macro setting, allows you to get in close to focus on details such as insect wings or tiny flowers.

White balance settings give you the option of changing the color balance to match or correct the light available. If shooting indoors under fluores-

cent lights, the photo can have a funny green cast to it while tungsten lights will turn it yellow. Outdoors can be tricky, too, as sunlight and shade have very different color values. Adjusting the white balance can correct all of these situations.

Lastly, point of view is also very important. Photos with the subject right smack in the middle may be considered by some to be a little boring.

To change things up, try positioning yourself in ways that change where the subject is. Imagine a tic-tac-toe board over your subject: avoid the middle square and put your subject in any other square, then take the photo!

If you can adjust the f-stop on the camera, try different settings to either blur the background or bring it into focus. And be sure to check out some of the other settings on the camera I love to shoot in monochrome setting, which is just a fancy way of saying black and white.

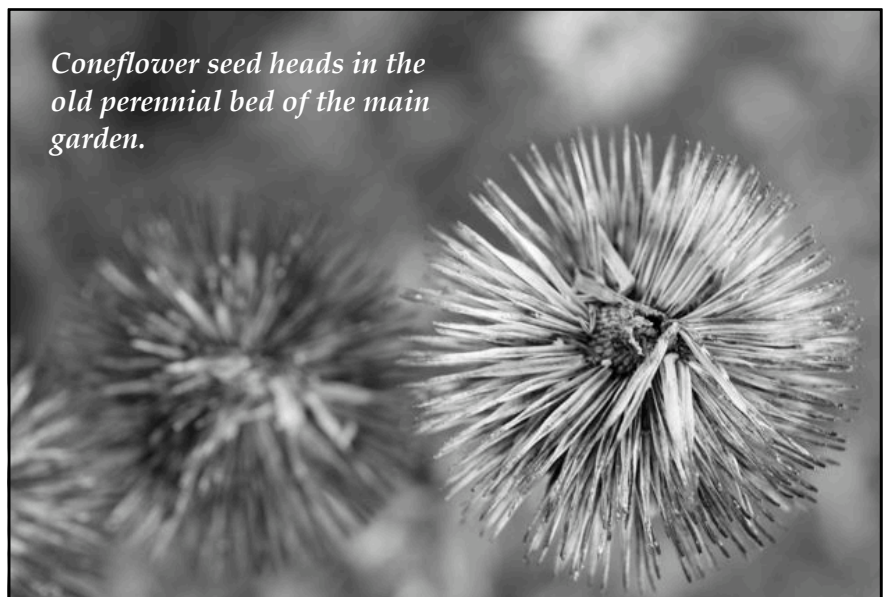
While this it just a small amount of information, hopefully I have inspired some of you to try taking photos or helped you to improve your photography.

For those of you with the desire to learn a little more about taking photos, I suggest taking some classes. The Watkins School of Art, Design and Film located at MetroCenter has continuing education classes for Digital Photography.

The classes are designed for the beginner and do require a Digital SLR camera, but are well worth the time and money if you truly want to learn how to take a photo properly as well as how to use your camera.

In the mean time, feel free to ask me for suggestions. Better yet, come on out to the Demonstration garden with your camera, we can take some photos together! 📷

~Alisa Huntsman (2008)



*Coneflower seed heads in the
old perennial bed of the main
garden.*

Grassmere Historic Gardens at the Nashville Zoo

Attractions in the Garden during January

Heavenly Bamboo—*Nandina*

A member of the Barberry family, native to eastern Asia. Not a bamboo, it is an erect shrub with numerous, usually unbranched stems. Evergreen leaves with bi- to tri-pinnately compound structure. The young leaves are brightly pink-red in spring and turn green then back to red and purple in the fall. The bright red berries are a beauty in the winter garden.



Lords and Ladies Cuckoo Plant—*Arum italicum*

This woodland species, native to Europe, likes a moist, humus soil in part to full shade. New leaves appear in autumn and make a strong winter interest in Zones 6 and greater. Flowers appear in spring and are followed by bright orange-red berries. The leaves die back in the summer.



What to do in January

This is a special month for the gardener. A cup of tea, a stack of seed, and plant catalogues is not just an enjoyable afternoon. It is a good starting point for planning your garden. Here is a list of activities to consider:

- ✓ Place your seed orders early to ensure that your favorites are available.
- ✓ Review last year's journal or purchase a new one if you have not had one in the past. Ask: 'what worked?' and 'what was lacking this past year?' for instance, our butternut squash at Grassmere was a huge success yet we need more fencing.
- ✓ Sketch the garden plots and plan for rotation in the vegetable terrace. Estimate key planting dates for both spring and summer vegetables and flowers.
- ✓ Inventory, clean and sharpen garden tools and purchase new ones, if needed.
- ✓ Plan the classes. The co-chairs and other interested Master Gardeners will meet to talk about subjects that will be presented at Grassmere every Saturday during March and April. Materials for handouts need to be reviewed and prepared in advance.
- ✓ Cool season plants can be started in doors for transplanting in the early spring.
- ✓ Attend Master Gardener classes to meet new interns and talk about the volunteering opportunities. (Take cookies!)

No, it is not a time to rest! My head is spinning with thoughts of all that needs to be done before actual planting can take place.

We invite you to join our list of dedicated volunteers for Grassmere. Here's hoping you make that one of your resolutions! 🍪

~ Cathie Long (1999)

DCMG Name Badge Policy

Come prepared! Remember to wear your name badge at our monthly meetings!

If you forget your name badge, for a \$1 fine, we'll be happy to forget, too!

Kitchen Gardens at The Hermitage

Winter has visited our gardens and covered the grounds with a solemn color scheme.

The gardens have taken on a silence of the morning and the sounds of nature seem sharper as we stroll the grounds. We look forward to spring time, feeling the earth soften, the buds sprout, the birds singing again.

It's a new year and we've started thinking about our next gardening adventure, even if it's cold outside. We will begin our 2014 Season at The Hermitage with a planning session **January 25th at 10am**. Come join us! We will be meeting at **Panera Bread, 5552 Old Hickory Boulevard in Hermitage**.

Wishing everyone a healthy and happy new year! 🍷

~ Laura Kraft (2010)

Volunteer Needed!

DCMG is in need of a volunteer to work with Master Gardeners and coordinate our hospitality efforts for our monthly meetings. Contact Robert Mather at (615) 525-5293 or rmather321@aol.com! 🍷

~ Robert Mather (2000)

Holiday Meeting Photos



Calendar & Coming Events

- **January 23, 2014** 2014 Davidson County Master Gardeners training class begins (through April 24, 2014)
- **February 20-21, 2014** 2014 Master Gardener Winter School at the Agricultural Center in Murfreesboro
- **February 27 to March 02, 2014** 25th Annual Nashville Lawn & Garden Show
- **May 17, 2014** Davidson County Master Gardener 2014 Urban Gardening Festival

January 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>* Please remember to check with project chairs in the event of changing weather conditions!</p> <p>* Work at Grassmere will continue as scheduled, however only when temperatures are ABOVE freezing.</p> <p>* Demo Garden work days will begin at 10am during January.</p>			1 Grassmere 8am-12 noon	2	3	4 Grassmere 8am-12 noon
5 Demo Garden 10am	6 Grassmere 8am-12 noon	7	8 Grassmere 8am-12 noon	9 DCMG Monthly Meeting 6:30pm ACT Awards	10	11 Grassmere 8am-12 noon
12 Demo Garden 10am	13 Grassmere 8am-12 noon	14	15 Grassmere 8am-12 noon	16	17	18 Grassmere 8am-12 noon
19 Demo Garden 10am	20 Grassmere 8am-12 noon	21	22	23 2014 DCMG Training Class Begins 6:00pm	24	25 Grassmere 8am-12 noon Hermitage Planning Session 10am
26 Demo Garden 10am	27 Grassmere 8am-12 noon	28	29	30 2014 DCMG Training Class 6:00pm	31	

Snickerdoodles

Recipe of the Month

Ingredients:

- ▶ 1 c shortening
- ▶ 1½ c plus 2 Tbsp sugar
- ▶ 2 eggs
- ▶ 2¾ c sifted flour
- ▶ 2 tsp cream of tartar
- ▶ 1 tsp baking soda
- ▶ ½ tsp salt
- ▶ 2 tsp cinnamon

Instructions:

Blend together shortening, 1½ sugar and eggs.

Sift together flour, cream of tartar, soda and salt; add to creamed mixture. Roll dough into balls the size of walnuts. Roll in mixture of cinnamon and remaining sugar.

Place balls two inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake at 400°F for 8 to 10 minutes. Remove to rack to cool.

A recipe from Mrs. Frank G. Clement, former First Lady of Tennessee, published in Favorite Recipes of America: Desserts, Including Party Beverages.