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## ***“Message from Mariah”***

Hi everyone, spring is near! The first day of spring 2022 is Sunday, March 20! How exciting! I am really looking forward to spring this year. I am very excited to have a Master Gardener Booth at the Cherry Blossom festival at Lancaster Park this spring. If you can't make it as a volunteer, I hope that you can make it as a visitor! It truly is a nice community event.

We will have some other spring activities coming up, be sure to check your inboxes! One thing we really need to work on this year is the Freedom Garden. Last year we were not able to get to it easily because of all the covid restrictions and it has suffered. Please consider helping out this year! We are hoping to have it looking very nice for September 11 this year.

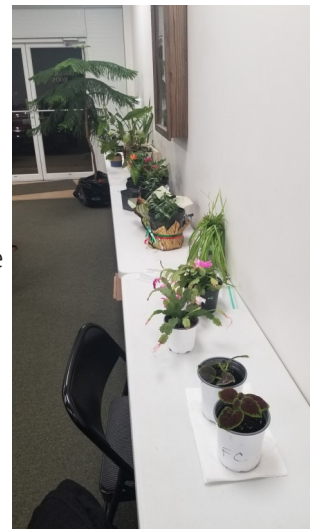
We are also hoping to have some various workshops at Historic St. Mary's City on topics such as pruning and invasive removal. Please keep an eye on your inboxes for the specific dates, times, and topics for those!

The native plant workshop at the new Leonardtown library on February 19<sup>th</sup> was a big hit! Huge thank you to Melissa Rodriguez who put it all together with the Commission on Environment! The turnout was awesome! You can read more about it in Melissa's article in this newsletter. Thank you to Debra Mayfield and Stephanie Frederiksen for presenting at it! And thank you to Bill and Marlene Smith for recording the event! Barbara Dobbins was also a huge help in figuring out how to set up the tables and chairs.

Our next quarterly meeting will be April 5. It will be outdoors at Historic St. Mary's City at the Margaret Brent Pavilion. Please dress appropriately for the weather. Please bring plants to swap with each other like we did at our last meeting if you'd like (picture of plant swap plants to the right) this time we can also bring plants that transplant well in the spring! Hope to see you at our meeting!

Thank you,

Mariah Dean, Master Gardener Coordinator



## ***Pretty Spring Flowers*** ***By: Mariah Dean***

Spring is almost here! The first day of spring is March 20<sup>th</sup>! Can you tell I'm excited? Some trees are beginning to flower which is a cheery sight for me! Below are some pictures I took of *Prunus mume* (Japanese flowering apricot) and *Hammamelis x intermedia* 'Ruby Glow' (intermediate witchhazel) on the University of Maryland College Park campus during the woody plants class I'm in. They aren't the best pictures but I hope that they still bring a smile to your face!



## ***Front Yard Project a Leonardtown Library*** ***By: Amy Henderson***

In September 2021, 55 Master Gardeners, community volunteers, Girl Scouts and high-school students worked together to transform the bland landscape directly in front of the new Leonardtown Library and Garvey Senior Activity Center. Teams laid out truckloads of compost, cardboard and mulch to create planting beds for a future "Front Yard" full of native plants and trees.

The concept of creating a beautiful "Front Yard", that also provides habitat for birds and beneficial insects, was inspired by the work of Doug Tallamy, author of [Bringing Nature Home](#) and creator of the [Homegrown National Park](#) initiative. The project was organized by Friends of St. Clements Bay and Nicole Basenback of the Univ. of Md. Extension office in Leonardtown. The design was developed by Christina Pax, Annapolis Native Landscape Design, who has provided guidance and encouragement throughout the project.

In October and November 2021, Front Yard volunteers continued their efforts, planting 37 shrubs and 29 trees, all of them native species.

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Identification signs were posted near the plants, in order to provide information about plants that gardeners could include in their home gardens. In several weeks, the remaining beds will be planted with native perennials and annuals in order to create a vibrant landscape that welcomes bees, butterflies and birds, along with library patrons, to the library grounds.

Thanks to generous donors, benches also will be placed this spring.

Upcoming related work includes digging shallow trenches around the mulched beds in order to install brick edging, preparing beds for planting, and putting 950 seedlings of flowering plants in the ground.

The Front Yard project was supported by grants from Keep Maryland Beautiful, The Chesapeake Bay Trust, The Leonardtown Library Foundation, St. Mary's Forest Conservancy District Board and the Maryland Urban and Community Forestry Committee. Additional support was provided by community donations.

If you would like to assist with the project, please contact Liz Curtz at [curtzeli@gmail.com](mailto:curtzeli@gmail.com) to receive updates about "work parties" you may join.



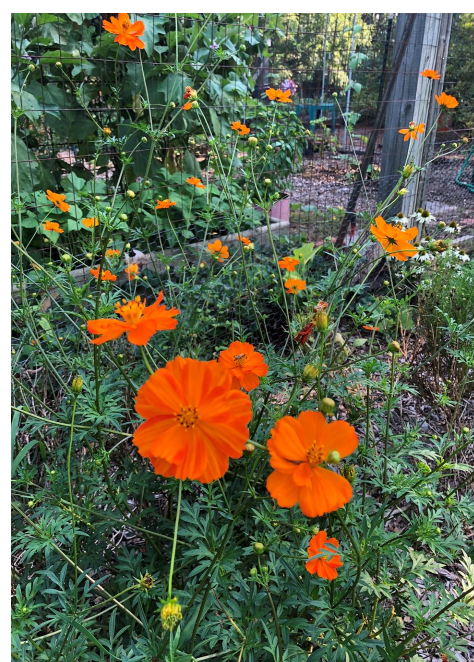
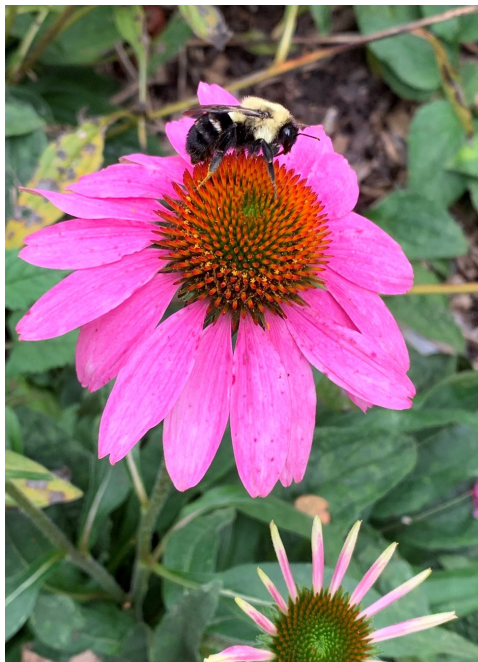
## ***Seed Catalog Reviews***

***By: Amy Henderson***

A recent article in the New York Times by gardening expert Margaret Roach highlighted some wonderful website sources for seeds, tools, information and inspiration. These online gardening catalogs are so gorgeous, and so packed full of valuable information, we might wish for a bit more cold weather, in order to have an excuse to stay inside and browse through all their offerings! They specialize in heirloom and open-pollinated seed varieties, and are committed to promoting and maintaining diversity among plants in home gardens. Along with all of the seeds for sale on the Southern Exposure Seed Exchange webpage (<https://www.southernexposure.com/>), there are helpful “Summer Growing Guides”: “What to Grow Through Very Hot Summers” and “Summer Succession Crops” caught my eye, along with numerous guides for specific vegetables and flowers. Seed Savers Exchange ([www.seedsavers.org](http://www.seedsavers.org)) “stewards America’s culturally diverse and endangered garden and food crop legacy for present and future generations. They educate and connect people through collecting, regenerating, and sharing heirloom seeds, plants, and stories.” Their website is gorgeous, and packed full of tips and inspiration for growing a multitude of varieties of garden plants, along with seeds for purchase. Johnny’s Selected Seeds (<https://www.johnnyseeds.com/>) offers a wealth of gardening items and topics with everything from flower, herb and vegetable seeds to fruiting plants, and tools and supplies. They also feature an extensive “Grower’s Library.” Pinetree Garden Seeds ([www.superseeds.com/](http://www.superseeds.com/)) provides seeds and supplies, including “Seed Collections”, including “Bring in the Butterfly Collection”, “Busy Buzzy Pollinator Collection” and “Just My Size Kids Collection”. Victory Seeds ([www.victoryseeds.com/](http://www.victoryseeds.com/)) works “to help protect open-pollinated and heirloom seed varieties during a time when the diversity of food crop cultivars on our planet is quickly shrinking.” Their webpage extensive numbers of seeds, along with tools, books and other gardening resources.

An intriguing webpage among these is The Dwarf Tomato Project ([www.dwarftomatoproject.net](http://www.dwarftomatoproject.net)). Their “goal is to create delicious tomatoes of all flavors and size variations on compact, easy-to-maintain dwarf tomato plants.” If space is a consideration in your garden, this webpage might have some solutions for you.

Here are some photos from Amy’s Garden:



## ***Starting Your Seedlings for Spring***

***By: Sara Beth and Jon Everheart***

A great time to prepare for your spring garden is during the months of February and March. Starting your seedlings and allowing them to grow in your greenhouse or in a designated area inside your house, will help you be prepared for spring time planting, without having to purchase young plants. Starting plants from seed is much cheaper than purchasing young plants. It just takes some organization and dedication.

Step 1: You need seeds, organic soil, and small containers.

Seeds can be obtained:

- From the foods you eat every day (peppers, tomatoes, beans, etc.). They just need to be dried and stored and labeled properly. This is the most cost effective way to get some of your seeds from your garden.
- Purchased from your local farmers.
- Purchased from Home Depot, Lowes, etc. Seasonally, the Dollar Tree has 4 packs of seeds for \$1-\$1.25, which is the best deal I could find in the area.
- Purchase them online (be weary of where the seeds come from, check origin)..

Organic Soil can be obtained:

- From your composting pile mixed with existing topsoil from your existing garden. About 1/5 of the volume should be mixed with peat moss to hold soil moisture.
- Purchased from your local farmers.
- Purchased from Lowes/Home Depot/Tractor Supply, etc.
- Purchased online.

Small Containers can be obtained:

- Use cardboard toilet paper rolls or paper towel rolls. Cut down to 3-inches in depth and fold bottom to hold in soil. These cardboard containers will be thick enough to withstand watering and you can plant them as is in the ground.
- Use large egg shells and egg crates to hold the eggs with soil in place - this method will require transfer to a larger container once the sprouts start to grow.
- Purchase a large shallow tray or small potting containers locally or online.



Photos 1 and 2: Examples of different types of containers to start seedlings. We keep a notebook diagram and label what we are growing. 96 seedlings have been started in the 1st photograph and 40 seedlings have been started in the 2nd photograph.

***Continued on pg. 6***

Step 2: Decide what you are going to plant.

Come up with a garden plan:

- Compose a list of desired edible foods that you want to grow.
- Determine your total square footage for planting your garden outside.
- Determine how many seeds per square foot that you can grow of each plant and compare that to your available square footage.
- Determine which plants like to grow near each other (for example, basil and tomatoes planted adjacent to each other will thrive better than apart).
- Determine which plants like more sunlight than others and compare that requirement to the areas where you are gardening.
- Draw out your garden plan.



**Photo 3:** Example of a garden planning kit that is a great visual aid (quicker than drawing out by hand). This is an older kit, but it can be used and reused for years if you take care of it. It's really the quickest and easiest way to plan your garden.

Step 3: Plant your seedlings.

Stagger your planting schedule and label your seedlings:

- Make sure you have an area of good sunlight for the seedlings.
- Determine the seedling to sprout time period and plant your seeds accordingly. You don't want to start your seedlings and have them stay in their respective containers too long.
- Water your seedlings as soon as you have planted them. Ideally you are planting them in the morning or mid-morning.
- Label each container and date planted so you can keep track of how your seedlings are progressing.

Step 4: Come up with a watering schedule for your seedlings.

Scheduling:

- Some seedlings require more water than others (daily, every other day, every 2 days, or every 3 days).
- Research your plants and determine a consistent watering schedule.
- Avoid watering seedlings at night, as this encourages rotting of the seed. Morning to mid-morning are the best watering times.

Step 5: Watch everything grow, continue to water, and plan for outdoor planting.

Outdoor Area Preparation:

- Your seedlings will soon be sprouts and will be ready for outdoor planting in 6-14 weeks (depending on what you are growing).
- In early March, get your outdoor areas ready for planting by making sure you have good organic soil mixed with compost and some peat moss. Ideally all these areas will contain the same soil composition.
- Submit a soil test to determine your pH and if minerals are lacking in the soil you are planning on using for your plants.
- After you receive the soil test results, (usually 5 business days), contact your local master gardener to explain the results to you.

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Step 6: Plant your sprouts outside.

Stagger your planting schedule, label your sprouts, come up with a watering schedule:

- If your plants grow quickly and it's not time for outdoor planting yet, you can always move your sprouts to a larger container.
- Plant your sprouts AFTER the last frost has occurred and you have a good root system present in your sprout containers. Check the outdoor planting recommendations on the UMDE website or your seed packet.
- Water your sprouts as soon as you have planted them outside. Ideally you are planting them in the morning or mid-morning.
- Label each planting area and date planted so you can keep track of how your plants are progressing.
- Come up with a watering schedule. Avoid watering sprouts at night, as this encourages root rot. Morning to mid-morning are the best watering times.



*Photo 4: Example of moving your sprouts to a larger pot for continued growth before planting outside. Make sure they have lots of sunlight and good organic soil.*

## ***Native Plant Workshop*** ***By: Melissa Rodriguez***

On Saturday February 19<sup>th</sup> the St. Mary's County Commission on the Environment hosted a free native plant workshop for the public at the Leonardtown Library. The workshop was well attended with over 45 attendees. There were presenters from the Maryland Native Plant Society, Butterfly Alley, The Friends of St. Clements Bay & The Southern Maryland Master Gardeners own Stephanie Frederiksen & Debra Mayfield. There were a wide range of topics discussed such as why people should use native plants, where to purchase native plants, the Front Yard Project at the library, practical considerations for planning and planting native plants and how to utilize pots for native plant gardening. It was an all-day affair lasting from 10 am until almost 3. Bill Smith was kind enough to record the entire event and will be making a video available for viewing. Digital copies of the presentations will also be made available. More information on that to follow soon. Thank you to Mariah, Barbara, Stephanie, Debra, Bill & everyone else who rolled up their sleeves and helped at the event to make it truly a success!



## ***Cymbidium Orchid***

***By: Ann, John, and Susanne Richards***

A Cymbidium Orchid plant is a spectacular sight in full bloom. This one prospers in the dappled Spring light and cool night temps of our small sun porch. The plant increases by growing new bulbs on the sides of mature ones. The bulbs can be removed and planted in a coarse bark/ peat mixture to form new plants and control the size of the parent plant. We add a sprinkle of Diatomaceous earth to the potting mix to discourage the invasion of slugs and insects when we place the plants outdoors in the Summer. The plants should remain outdoors until the temps drop to the low 30's but not freezing. We fertilize with a recommended liquid orchid fertilizer during the Summer and keep watered but well drained. Being on the dry side does not hurt but too much water causes root rot.

I like growing them in plastic pots which swell out with the large bulbs, which are not buried in the bark mixture but sitting half to three quarters out. The pot fills with roots and reach down for water. I like placing the pot in a large, heavy jardiniere to keep it from becoming top heavy and blowing over when outdoors.

The flowers do not have a strong fragrance, they last for 4- 6 weeks or more on the plant in cool temps and the colors are beautiful. We have a Fall bloomer that is a lovely golden color. If you have the space and the patience to seek the rewards of a Cymbidium, get in touch. You can see this plant needs to be reduced this Summer.



## ***The Joy of Fencing***

***By: Caroline Braun***

My husband Paul and I bought our house in North Town Creek in 1993, which had a perfect small garden where I did a lot of experimenting (pre-Master Gardener days!) Fast-forward to when First Colony was built, circa 2000 – all the deer seemed to migrate to my yard. As the years passed, I said goodbye to the garden and put in some dwarf Crape Myrtle, statuary, and nandina (before they were known to be invasive).

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In January 2022, I had my little garden expanded to a 30-foot by 30-foot fenced-in wonderland! I recently whacked back (and will dig up) the nandina; I'll cut back and relocate the crape myrtles. I can't wait to do my Three Sisters plantings, some raised beds – and attempt vegetables I've never tried before. Hopefully I will be bringing in some fresh veggies at our summer/fall quarterly meetings!



## ***Winterizing Worries***

***By: Jane Dionne***

Too much? Too little? Live, please, just LIVE! If you're anything like me, pruning plants raises so many questions. I am always concerned when it comes time to winterize my plants because I am so invested in them coming back in the spring, stronger and better than ever. I'll touch on two plants that I recently winterized: my butterfly bush and a Turkey Fig tree. For a little bit of background, my husband and I moved into our home during summer 2020. Everything in our landscape was gorgeous, everything in full bloom, and each plant was just full of beautiful bees that couldn't get enough of what our new home had to offer.

Fast forward six months later, and it occurs to me that these two plants need to be taken care of if I want to continue to enjoy them. First, I asked around - my mother in law and one of my close friends are great resources. Their answer? Chop it LOW! Almost all the way to the ground! I was shocked by this answer. To take my towering, 10 foot tall butterfly bush to less than a foot from the ground sounded like sedition to the King and Queen of plant-land. Alas, I reluctantly took my trusty loppers (we nicknamed our big landscaping loppers "Cyndi," get it?) I digress - I took Cyndi to work on my butterfly bush. I cut the butterfly bush to about a foot and a half from the ground and felt that was sufficient. When both my confidants came to visit they both mentioned I could've gone lower! The end result, summer 2021, was an enormous and healthy butterfly bush that was ripe for bee visitation. In winter 2021, however, we cut it even lower! I feel fairly confident that it will come back even stronger during summer 2022.

We have a beautiful fig tree that is planted on the west facing side of our home, right against the brick chimney. The previous owners of our home must have planted it years ago, because it is approximately eight feet tall. In summer 2020, we did not yield many figs which we found very surprising. It is entirely possible that the previous owners picked the ripe figs prior to leaving! Winter 2020, we pruned according to the instructions - trim each branch so that there are only four lateral branches.

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“Lateral branches?!” we thought... what in the world did that mean... we had never cared for something that needed to be pruned in that way. After some research, “four lateral branches” meant the branches making an X at their intersection. Once summer 2021 came around, we were thrilled with the yield of figs we had! We had so many that we were forced to give away many of them and dehydrate others for safe keeping.

I hope this is helpful! Best of luck to anyone doing their winter pruning on either of these plants. Happy gardening!

## **Garden Prep Checklist**

**By: Patrice Hopkins**

If you are like me, any warm day during this time of the year gets me supercharged me, making me more excited to just get outdoors and start buying items so I can get going with gardening! However, reality within the past few weeks has shown me that I need to pump the brakes and slow down to do the not-so exciting tasks – yet necessary tasks – before I get going.

Sure, there could be a “laundry list” of things you would like to accomplish, but the key is just to make a simple “Garden Prep” checklist to get organized, prioritize as well as break up those tasks into realistic timeframes that will best fit your schedule. Below are some of the main steps I have taken to “prep” for the upcoming gardening season in order to avert any showstoppers later that will slow the process of me getting the garden started:

- ◇ **Take inventory** of what you have and write it down! Look at what you already have – whether they are seeds, soil, row covers, labels, and note the quantities as well as any expiration dates, as applicable. This could save you money and time!
- ◇ **Check equipment to ensure it works or is operating correctly, repair and/or replace as necessary.** For example, I was surprised to find that one of my LED bulbs had blown out. Luckily, I was able to realize this issue early on and was able to patiently wait for it to be shipped, for once! Meanwhile, I just used the other bulbs to start some seeds.

Additionally, inspect your tools and other garden supplies such as pots, or cracks in boards to see if you need to make any repairs or purchase replacements.

- ◇ **Review lessons learned from the last season.** What worked and what did not work? Most likely, you may have an indication of what happened. Maybe a plant did not grow well in partial shade, but others did better in full sun.

Once you have evaluated your lessons learned, sketch out your plan on what changes you would like to see. In addition, take note of any vegetables that need to be rotated.

- ◇ **Order what you absolutely need (again, showstoppers) first and “wants” later.** This way, you would have prioritized your more critical items ordered and checked off your list before you get, for example, new garden lights or outdoor furniture ;-)

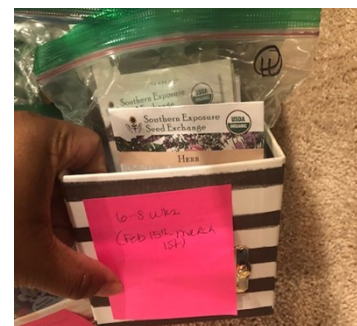


- ◇ **Wash/clean your tools/supplies:** If you did not get a chance to clean up your tools/supplies from the previous growing season, now is the time! For example, sharpen and polish your bypass pruners and wash your pots or planting trays that were emptied from last season.
- ◇ Additionally, check to see if you need to stain or refresh your raised garden bed boards or tighten and screw here or there. I accepted last Sunday that it could take three hours or a little more to stain 12 pieces of cedar wood (LOL) for my new 4 x 8 garden beds. I thought I could get it done in an hour. Plan for projects, such as these, to be one for the weekend. This way, you are not disappointed with it being a task that you needed to complete before planting your garden.
- ◇ **Get a wall calendar and label each week, counting backwards, from the last day of frost, which for our zone is, on average, April 15<sup>th</sup>.** This helps so you can stay on target with “what to plant when.”
- ◇ **Organize seeds:** Something that has worked well for me is to organize my seeds in the following order:

1. By weeks before planting (i.e. 6-8 wks). I place all seeds with this timeframe in its own box and add a sticky note with the number of weeks and the actual dates (that I would have noted already on the wall calendar—see previous step) so I can have a good idea of my timeframe in which I can start, transplant and direct sow – depending on the planting requirements.
2. Next, within that same box of seeds, I separate vegetables, herbs, fruits and flowers and place them in a simple Ziploc bag, and mark the bag as “H” for herbs, “V” for vegetable, “F” for fruit, and “Fl” for flowers. Nothing fancy really. You just use what you have in your own way to keep the seeds organized. I tried this method last year and it made gardening so much easier! I knew which week I would start planting and what I could start indoors without having to read or re-read each and every seed packet. Also, it help to decrease my anxiety of worrying that I’m “late” with planting out something. Life happen, schedules can shift – just forgive yourself, select the timing that works for you to enjoy what you love to do! You will find it a relief to see you have a window of time to plant when you write it down.
3. Get started planting when you are ready! Don’t feel pressured, even though there are seed and bulb catalogs flooding your mailboxes at the moment. Just take your time, do not stress, and just pace yourself.

Making a garden prep checklist, thinking things out, and planning ahead really takes the “guess work” out of everything! If you do the above, you will ready to commence on the fun part of gardening!

Happy Spring Gardening!! Your friend in gardening, Patrice =)



**OTHER RESOURCES:**

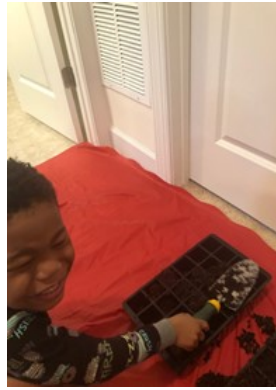
March Tips and Tasks: <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/march-tips-and-tasks>

**Winter Garden Planner:**

[https://mda.maryland.gov/resource\\_conservation/Documents/wintergardenplanner.pdf](https://mda.maryland.gov/resource_conservation/Documents/wintergardenplanner.pdf)

Last year's library presentation with Mariah Dean:

"Gardening 101 – Jumpstarting Your Home-grown Garden Indoors:" <https://youtu.be/Mib9thEDH-E>



Don't hesitate to ask for help to prepare your garden! I solicited my 5-yr old son, Titus, with adding soil to the planting trays while I cleaned the garden kit trays in the bathtub lol! He was a great help! =D



## ***Thru the Garden Gate March 2022***

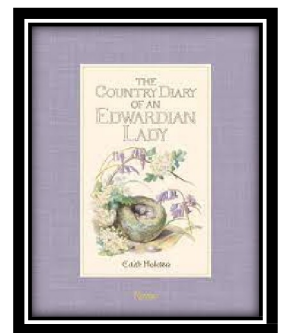


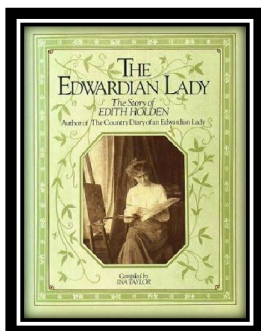
Welcome! Isn't this the perfect garden gate for March? Snow is melting; winter's back is broken (we hope), and soon spring blossoms and butterflies will abound. March is the month when we look for inspiration in pictures and photos as we dream of changes to our gardens for the growing season ahead. This issue is designed to inspire as you dream of your spring garden. It begins with an introduction to an Edwardian lady who kept a nature journal, followed by a link to help you choose the great seeds, a March "get ready for spring" tip, the featured "Cookbook of the

Month, recipes for "fat balls" for nesting birds, and amazing energy bars for you. Read to the end for the "Save the Date" from the Philadelphia Flower Show!

### **Consider Creating a Nature Journal**

This past Christmas I received a 1000 piece puzzle depicting winter birds and lovely grasses and plants from *The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady*. Some of you may be familiar with this book, first published in 1906. The modern edition was published in 1977 and has been popular ever since. As I worked to complete the puzzle, I learned that Edith Holden, the author, created the country diary while teaching art at a girls school in England. In it she painted images of garden plants, and birds and animals from the woodland countryside. Her March entry notes that there were "showers of snow and sleet" on the 25<sup>th</sup>, but a long entry on the 31<sup>st</sup> notes that on a bicycle ride she saw signs of early "primroses and sweet violets" along "the banks of fields and the roadside." The page is bordered with

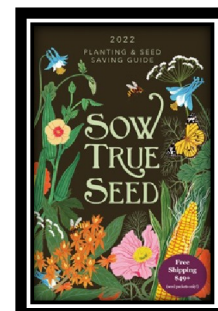




poetry about violets and snow drops. I became entranced by the diary and found a biography compiled by Ina Taylor titled *The Edwardian Lady: The Story of Edith Holden*, published in 1980. Perhaps Edith's story will inspire you to begin keeping a nature journal. It would be interesting to have excerpts from the journals of Maryland Master Gardeners published in the newsletter! No need to be a painter! Maybe cut and paste some of those gorgeous seed envelopes along with pictures of your garden.

### Seed Catalog Guide:

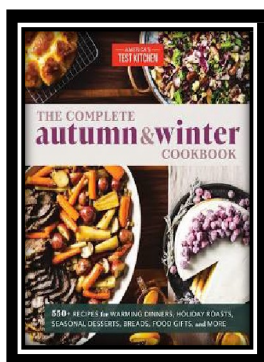
Perhaps you already have a favorite seed catalog, but if not then read on. Late winter is an ideal time to be shopping for seeds and the Almanac has a super article listing a wide variety of seed catalogs for flowers, bulbs, vegetables, fruits and more. A free gardening guide is also featured in the article. <https://www.almanac.com/content/garden-seed-catalogs-mail>



### March Garden Tip: Clean Your Garden Tools!

If your garden tools still have dirt on them from last season it's time to act! If you look after your tools they will work much better, last longer, and give you better gardening results. So, get out warm water and a cloth & give them scrub. Then use steel wool gently on the blades to remove grime and rust. This should be followed by a light application of linseed oil, and finally sharpening with a sharpening stone or a sharpening 'pen' tool.

### Cookbook of the Month: *The Complete Autumn & Winter Cookbook*



his super cookbook is from America's Test Kitchen and is chock-a-block full of 550 delicious and intriguing recipes! There are warming dinners, holiday roasts, seasonal desserts, breads, food gifts and more. For fun I made the New Year's Eve Menu: champagne cocktail, roast pork loin with sweet potatoes, black-eyed peas with walnuts and pomegranate, and southern-style collard greens. It is the last recipe that was sooooo delicious! Every recipe begins with a section entitled "Why this recipe works" where the authors describe their research on the recipe, how to approach it before you begin, and what to expect when you make it. So, this cookbook is like having a cooking class between two covers! Available at St. Mary's County Library and online from Amazon.

### March Project: Fat Balls for the Birds

The birds in your yard will thank you for making these little treats for them! Garden birds need them for energy to survive the cold weather. Robins, which are now frequent visitors here are particularly at risk. February, March and April are the important times to feed birds when summer insects have not emerged and winter food sources, like bush berries, are gone. The fat in Fat Balls must be either lard or suet as birds cannot process other fats such as polyunsaturated fats. Lard and suet also provide the most calories. Hang in a sheltered place near other feeders.

**Ingredients:** Bird seed, lard or suet, string, old yoghurt pots or other small containers.

- Mix the room temperature lard or suet with seed and form small balls.

- Put a hole in the bottom of the yoghurt pot and thread string through the hole, knotting it at the base of the pot.
- Fill the pot with the seed and suet/lard ball so that the string comes through the middle of the mixture.
- Put in the refrigerator to harden.
- Once cold cut off the plastic pot and hang the fat ball off a tree or large bush. Do not place on a feeding platform where squirrels will consume very quickly! (Recipe adapted from *The Five-Minute Garden* by Laetitia Maklouf, page 33.)



Save the Date:  
Philadelphia Flower  
Show 2022



## ***Feast Your Eyes on These Seasonal Recipes!***

### ***Homemade Energy Bars***

Just like the birds, we need lots of energy to be outside in the garden or walking during the winter months. Make up these yummy energy bars for a delicious source of nutritious delicious fuel for your body! Most ingredients are easily available except barley flour which you may need to order online. These are worth the effort! (Adapted from *Peace, Love and Fiber* by Marilyn Smith, page 203.)

#### **Ingredients:**

2 cups large oat flakes  
1 1/2 cups oat bran  
1 cup whole grain barley flour  
1 1/2 cups ground flaxseed  
1 cup mini dark or bittersweet chocolate chips  
1 1/2 cups pitted dates

1/2 cup canola oil  
2 eggs  
1 cup dark brown sugar  
2 tbsp. cocoa powder  
2 Tbsp. cinnamon  
1 Tbsp. Vanilla



- Set oven to 375 degrees. Line a 9x13 inch baking pan with wet parchment paper. (This is a great baking tip! Put the parchment paper under the faucet, wet completely and then squeeze out excess water. You'll find it molds to the pan so easily and add moisture to the bars as they cook.)
- Mix together dry ingredients in large bowl.
- In food processor fitted with steel blade pulse the dates, oil, 1/4 cup water, eggs, sugar, cocoa, cinnamon, and vanilla. It will be load and bouncy but grind away!
- Mix date mixture with dry ingredients. Stir until well combined; you may need to use your hands!

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- Dump mix into prepared pan and spread using damp hands.
- Bake for 25 minutes. Cool for 5 minutes to set.
- Lift out the bars and set on cooling rack. Cool completely before cutting into 24 bars. For storage, wrap individually in wax paper and freeze in bags. Will keep for up to 3 months.

## ***White Bean Soup with Kale***

***By: Ruth Yates***

This Recipe comes from Allrecipes.com

I have made this recipe many times. If you have kale or collards or even chard in your garden this is a wonderful recipe to try. Wonderful served with a piece of crusty bread. Enjoy!

## **White Bean Soup with Kale**

1 tablespoon olive oil or canola oil  
 8 large garlic cloves, crushed or minced  
 1 medium yellow onion, chopped  
 4 cups chopped raw kale  
 4 cups low-fat, low sodium chicken or vegetable broth  
 2 (15 ounce) cans white beans, such as cannellini or great northern, undrained  
 1 cup plum tomatoes, fresh or canned  
 1 tsp. dried Italian herb seasoning (or more to taste)  
 Salt and pepper to taste  
 1 cup chopped parsley

### Directions:

In a large pot, heat olive oil. Add garlic and onion; saute until soft. Add kale and saute, stirring until wilted. Add 3 cups of broth, 2 cups of beans and all the tomato, herbs salt and pepper. Simmer 5 minutes. In a blender or food processor, mix the remaining beans and broth until smooth. Stir into soup to thicken. Simmer 15 minutes. Ladle into bowls and sprinkle with chopped parsley.



til

**UME-St. Mary's**  
 26737 Radio Station Way, Suite E-2  
 Leonardtown, MD 20650  
 TEL 301-475-4120

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