



From the President's Desk

By Melody Corcoran, Class of 2016

Weed \wēd\ *n*: a plant that is not valued where it is growing and is usu. of vigorous growth; *esp*: one that tends to overgrow or choke out more desirable plants.



Weeds — we know them when we see them — and all yards and gardens have them. Some are natives, some are non-natives, and some are plants that were introduced to our gardens on purpose and then got away from us. Can you identify all the plants in your yard that you consider weeds? Rutgers has an online [New Jersey Weed Gallery](#), which includes the pictures and both the common and Latin names of 133 weeds.

Our state flower, the common violet, is among the plants on Rutgers' weed list because it can invade lawns. On the positive side, however, it is an early spring pollinator plant visited especially by bees. The seeds have a soft, oily, sugar-rich appendage that is a food source for ants, which then spread the seeds. Various birds and small animals also eat the seeds.

Violets have certain medicinal properties and are edible. In the right location, the common violet makes an attractive native ground cover.

Other native weeds that are food sources for insects, birds, and animals include nimblewill, yellow wood sorrel, clear weed, white vervain, and path rush. There are many more. If you can, identify your weeds. Get rid of the ones you don't want. Then find a corner of your yard where some native weeds can be allowed to grow. Your wildlife will thank you.

Reminder: MG education and volunteer requirements have been suspended through Dec. 31, 2020. While there may be opportunities throughout the remainder of the year for online volunteering or continuing education, there will be no total hour requirements for MG recertification for this year.

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Links are clickable and are noted in **blue**.

Name of mystery insect revealed



The mystery insect that we asked you to identify in the May *Potting Shed* is *Ailanthus* webworm moth. It

was correctly ID'd by Barbara Barbagallo, Class of 2020, and Tammy Laverty, Class of 2015.

HORTICULTURE

Deer control my way

By Janet Schulz, Class of 1988

I am a shade gardener and, as you know, one of the best plants for shade is hosta. About 25 years ago I started collecting and, as of now, I probably have 125 different varieties.

As years passed, I noticed a few of the hosta were being nibbled. During the last few years, they have become a deer smorgasbord. What to do? After trying many different deterrents including Irish Spring soap (a bar of soap will help with one plant so if you have 10 plants you need 10 bars); garlic/egg spray (washes off after every rain); and many other things, I have found two solutions that work for me, and I think I am winning.

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I use Deer Stopper. When I first started using it, it was only available online. Yes, it is expensive, but purchased by the gallon and used with a pump sprayer it lasts me an entire season plus. I only spray it on the plants I know the deer will eat, skipping ferns, hellebores, alliums, peony, and mints of any kind. My property is approximately 75 by 125 feet.

I start spraying once a week as soon as the plants emerge in spring. Deer Stopper is organic and is systemic. After the first month you need to spray only every three to four weeks and, because it is systemic, it does not wash off in the rain.

Adult deer have a very sensitive sense of smell, but the babies only develop this as they grow. Occasionally, I see some nibbles because of this.

My second solution is a fence. I know this is not for everyone, but it can be an affordable do-it-yourself project. You will need:

- Eight-foot conduit pipe spaced every 8-10 feet;
- A spool of nylon rope;
- Deer netting;
- Tie wraps; and
- Irrigation pegs.

Purchase and install conduit pipe every 8-10 feet around what you want to protect. String nylon rope from pole to pole. Hang deer netting using tie wraps, and peg the netting at the bottom.

Never said it would be easy.

FROM THE GREEN SIDE

Pandemic gardening from kitchen scraps

By Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004

While staying home during this corona crisis with my wife, my two grown daughters, and a son-in-law, we have — like many others — turned to activities and chores we never seemed to have time for before. One thing we have tried is growing plants from seeds and cuttings around the kitchen.

It all started before we even heard of COVID 19 last Thanksgiving. I was cutting Brussels sprouts off their stalk in preparation for our traditional side dish of sprouts and pearl onions when my son-in-law sawed off a few inches of the stalk and put it in a plastic cup with soil. It sat on a sunny window sill in the kitchen for a while, and

I laughed. I thought how is a scrap of stalk going to grow? Well I was wrong.

In a week or two, it grew a little round green leaf from a spot where a sprout had been. As time went on, more leaves grew, and by late March the little plant was too big for its little cup and we potted it up and put it outside. Looking up Brussels sprouts online I learned that they are hardy, cool weather growers. Today the plant has grown to be a robust mass of curly leaves. I think by fall we will see a big stalk of eatable sprouts.



Brussels sprouts in November?



Lemon tree very pretty...

Our next foray into kitchen-scrap gardening was my daughter's saving some pits from a lemon she picked from the lemon tree I keep in the house during the winter. Wrapping the pits in some wet paper towel and Saran, she left them on the counter for a few weeks until little sprouts came out of the seeds. I put them in a pot for her, and soon we had this little tree growing.

The next project was romaine lettuce. I salvaged the bottom two inches of the head when prepping a salad and stuck it in some potting soil. In a couple of days, I got this amazing little green shoot that now has miniature leaves.

What's next? There's Boston lettuce for dinner tonight. It's one of those hydroponically grown ones with roots at the base.



Romaine lettuce

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I think I'll cut them off with the plant base and see if it can be grown in some soil, too.

There are so many food items that can be started into fine plants: Potatoes, yams, maybe fennel, and certainly onions will easily sprout. My daughter has an avocado pit that she is waiting to sprout now. Have fun. Some day they may call us Produce Friedmans.

But wait, there's more!

Is peanut farming in your future? What about a banana tree?

Maybe not, but you'll love seeing how to get peanuts to grow and how to use a ripe banana as a growing medium for an aloe. Watch how seeds from dragon fruits, squash, and pomegranates sprout easily, usually with no more than a wet paper towel, plastic wrap, or soil.

Visit [YouTube](#) for these and other ideas among "27 Gardening Hacks You'll Want to Know."

THIS AND THAT

Joel talks hort therapy

Joel Flagler was quoted in an online article titled "Horticultural Therapy to the Rescue" on the Modern Farmer website. Click [here](#) to read the article. The site also has sections on animals, the environment, plants, recipes, how-to, lifestyle, and more.

Teaneck Creek and NJBG trails are open

Walk through the **Teaneck Creek Conservancy** trails. Use the entrance on Fycke Lane, Teaneck, across from the Thomas Jefferson Middle School (between Teaneck Road and Howard Street) since Teaneck Creek's parking lot is closed. Click [here](#) for a trail map and current modifications, such as one-way hiking along its three trails.

The **New Jersey Botanical Garden** is open for walking. All buildings are closed except the public restrooms in the Carriage House. Visit the [website](#) for more information. The NJBG is located at 2 Morris Road, Ringwood. A state parking fee of \$5 for NJ-registered cars and \$7 for non-NJ-registered cars applies on weekends and holidays through Labor Day weekend.

Brooklyn Botanic Garden resources

Read a variety of gardening-related articles on topics such as collecting rainwater, growing fig trees in small spaces or containers, and are your old seeds still good. Click [here](#) to visit the BBG's "how-to" section. If you missed cherry blossom season you can stroll through the BBG's [Cherry Esplanade](#).



Photo by Joseph Cooper

A peek at a private garden

Ah, what would you do with seven acres? Take an armchair tour of the Warden private garden (above) in Bedford Hills, NY, as photographed by Joseph Cooper, Class of 2008. Click [here](#) to view.

Container gardening taken to a new level

New York City-based floral designer Lewis Miller and his design team have been secretly creating what they call "Flower Flash," flower arrangements in Manhattan trash cans and at street corners to honor medical personnel and other first responders and bring joy to New Yorkers. Click [here](#) to view these and other gorgeous floral arrangements.

*Submitted by Patty McDonald,
Backyard Garden Club, River Vale*

Rutgers online resources

Home, lawn, and garden information

From foliage to figs to the brown marmorated stink bug: The Rutgers NJ Agricultural Extension Service offers almost everything you want to know about the great outdoors and many indoor topics, too. The website will keep you busy for hours. Click [here](#).

Meanwhile, the Rutgers Soil Testing Lab has resumed its fee-for-service analysis of soil samples. Click [here](#) for information about the lab's services and instructions to have your soil tested.

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Read Don Torino's blog about natives

Don Torino, president of the Bergen County Audubon Society, weighs in about the importance of native plants to our wildlife. Visit the [Meadowlands Nature Blog](#).

A walk through the NYBG

See the highlights of spring during a virtual walk through the New York Botanical Garden. Click [here](#) for the tour.

Just for fun – visit the fan exhibit

The Fan Museum in London offers this online [exhibit](#) of fans (the kind you wave to keep yourself cool). The exhibit is referred to as “a liaison between street art and fan making.”

A virtual visit to Europe

Take a [tour](#) of the 72-acre Keukenhof Park, one of the world's largest flower gardens. The garden, located in Lisse, Holland, is closed for the first time in 71 years, but you get a front-row seat

*Submitted by Ann Ingrid Millikan,
Garden Club of Harrington Park*

On a different subject: Medicare

Are you turning 65 soon? Are you over 65, retiring, and in need of Medicare coverage? Do you have Medicare questions?

Miriam Taub, Class of 2011, is a volunteer Medicare counselor with the Bergen County Division of Senior Services' SHIP program. State-certified volunteers offer free Medicare counseling to Medicare beneficiaries, their family members, and caregivers. SHIP stands for State Health Insurance Assistance Program.

Since the office is closed, counseling is being done by telephone. Call the SHIP line at 201-336-7413 and a counselor will return your call. Or, you can send an email to [Miriam](#) with your question or issue.

Who doesn't love a discount?

Visit our [website](#) and, in the “For Members” section, click on “Shopping Discounts” for the list of area nurseries and garden centers that offer a discount to MGs. Click on each business's website for more information.

She's on egg patrol



Donna Faustini, Class of 2012, captured a robin nesting on the tulip wreath at her Montvale home. Visit the Cornell University online [bird guide](#) for almost everything you want to know about wild birds.

WEBINARS

Here's a sampling of free webinars available online for your educational enjoyment.

June 2, 6-7 pm: Ocean County RCE sponsors Vegetable Growing in Containers. Free. Click [here](#) to register.

June 3, noon-1 pm: Ecological Landscape Alliance sponsors Let Them Eat Flowers: The Gardens of Paris, part of a free webinar series every Wednesday through July 1. Click [here](#) for more information about the June 3 webinar and to register. Click [here](#) for the list of upcoming webinars.

June 3, 3-4:15 pm: Penn State Extension sponsors Pollinator Series: Health Challenges from a Bee's Perspective. Free. Click [here](#) to register.

June 3, 6-7:30 pm: Penn State Extension sponsors Gardening for Birds. Free. Click [here](#) to register.
Registration deadline June 1.

June 9, 2:30 pm: University of Illinois Extension sponsors Tomato Problems. Free. Click [here](#) to register. Click [here](#) for the list of topics through November.

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June 10, noon-1 pm: Ecological Landscape Alliance sponsors Landscaping with a Purpose - What's Diversity Got to Do With It, part of a free webinar series every Wednesday through July 1. Click [here](#) for more information about the June 10 webinar and to register. Click [here](#) for the list of upcoming webinars.

June 10, 7 pm: Bergen-Passaic Chapter of the Native Plant Society of NJ sponsors Super Native Plants for Deep Shade and Dark Recesses, as part of its Wonderful Wednesdays monthly webinars. Free. Click [here](#) to register.

June 16, 6:30-7:30 pm: RCE of Ocean County sponsors Best Deer-Resistant Plants for Your Garden. Free. Click [here](#) to register.

June 16, 7 pm: Mercer County Park Commission presents Living with Urban Coyotes. Free. Click [here](#) to register. Click [here](#) for more nature lectures.

June 24, 3-4:15 pm: Penn State Extension sponsors Pollinator Series: Bee Nutritional Ecology from Flowers to Landscapes. Free. Click [here](#) to register.

Rutgers Community Garden lunch and learn webinar series

Rutgers Cooperative Extension's community garden free lunch and learn webinar series will help gardeners and garden managers meet the challenges of community gardening during the 2020 growing season.

Participants will learn strategies for growing vegetables and fruits while being able to ask questions of the experts at Rutgers Cooperative Extension. All sessions are scheduled for noon-1 pm Wednesdays through July.

Here are the dates, topics, and instructors:

- **June 3:** People and Food Safety in the 2020 Growing Season; Meredith Melendez, Mercer County agent;
- **June 10:** Soil Management Basics; Rebecca Magron, Hunterdon County horticultural consultant;
- **June 17:** Compost Considerations for the Community Garden; Michele Bakacs, Union and Middlesex County agent;
- **June 24:** Tree Fruit in a Community Garden; Megan Muelhauer, Hunterdon County agent; and
- **July 1:** Looking Ahead to the Fall Crops; Madeline Flahive DiNardo, Union County agent.

Click [here](#) to register for each webinar.

FARMERS MARKETS

Ramsey Farmers Market

The Ramsey Farmers Market will reopen for the season at the Main Street train station from 9 am-2 pm Sundays, beginning June 7, with temporary rules in place for social distancing. Among the rules are:

- Masks are required;
- Only one member per family allowed;
- No dogs;
- No sampling allowed; vendors will serve you;
- Order and pay in advance when possible;
- The number of people allowed into the market will be limited;
- Observe social distancing while waiting on line.

For the complete list of rules and other information, click [here](#).

Teaneck Farmers Market

The Teaneck Farmers Market will reopen for the season from noon-5 pm Thursdays through Oct. 22 in the municipal parking lot at Garrison Avenue and Beverly Road with social distancing rules, which include:

- Masks or face coverings required;
- Only one adult per party, where possible;
- No children, strollers, or pets;
- Wait until the shopper before you has left before approaching a table; and
- Do not touch products; allow vendors to serve you.

Updates will be announced as the situation changes.

Bergen County Rutgers Cooperative Extension Office

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