



From the Potting Shed May 2020

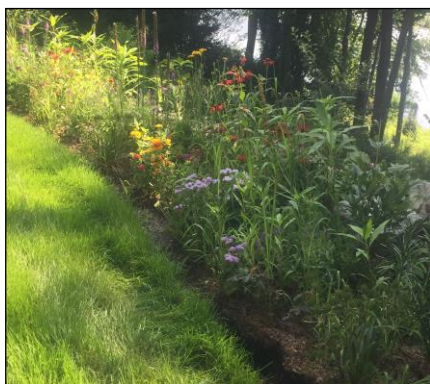
Master Gardeners of Bergen County

FROM THE GREEN SIDE

The new meadow garden movement

By Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004

Many of us attended a Master Gardener program awhile back [April 2017] when Larry Weaner, a noted landscape architect, discussed his large meadow projects. To me his work and that of Piet Oudolf of High Line fame is fascinating and very informative.



A meadow strip used to reduce the amount of lawn.

Larry has clients in the Northeast with large fields and acres of landscapes. He has created a method to strip them bare and plant groups of mostly native grasses and perennials that create a stunning, soft, and ever-evolving expanse of color and shape.

Oudolf has done large plantings in England, Europe, and the United States. In fact, soon to open is the new five acres of meadow he designed at the [Delaware Botanic Gardens](#), which promises to be spectacular. Unfortunately, most of us don't have this kind of expanse to try out his techniques.

However, what has evolved in my work as a landscape designer, as well as that of many of my colleagues and friends in the field, is an adaptation of this "new meadow movement" to much smaller areas. This new way of looking at beds and planting areas has a significant benefit for the landowner and the environment.

It requires much less regular maintenance, it is mostly natives, it requires no fertilization or chemicals, much less or no irrigation, and it is a great habitat and food source for birds and bees. It reduces dependence on the traditional lawn, which is chemical and maintenance dependent. Lawn areas can easily be reduced by these techniques.

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From the President's Desk

By Melody Corcoran, Class of 2016

With so much of our time at home right now, we can devote time to taking care of ourselves and our gardens. Gardening offers us fresh air, exercise, relaxation, stress relief, and much more. Gardening nurtures our plants. Our gardens should be in great shape this season because of all the time and effort we can give to them. My garden often takes a back seat to the gardens at the sites where I regularly volunteer. I bet that many of you can say the same.



So, we and our flora are being well attended to. But what about our fauna — the feathered, furred, many legged, and other creatures that share our gardens, yards, and live with us? My home garden and yard have been certified as a wildlife garden by the Bergen County Audubon Society. It's easy to get certified, and your garden may already fulfill many, if not all, of the requirements necessary to be certified. The requirements are as follows:

- Food sources;
- Water;
- Cover; and
- Places to raise young.

Details and an application are available on the Bergen County Audubon Society [website](#). Once your garden is approved, it is numbered and marked on a [map](#) on the BCAS website. A certificate proclaiming your garden as wildlife certified will be emailed to you. You can also arrange with BCAS to pick up a sign to display in your garden proclaiming it as a certified wildlife garden. Don't wait. Get out in your yard today and make it critter friendly.



Certified Wildlife Garden sign on Melody Corcoran's property.

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No grass: A Piet Oudolf design in Westhampton, NY.

The question is how do these meadows differ from a normal planting bed? In the short version, there are several significant points.

1. They are a matrix of native grasses and fast-spreading native perennials punctuated with splashes of color using taller flowering natives.
2. After an initial weeding or killing off the weeds nothing is done to the soil: No fertilizer, no weed killers, and no soil amendment other than an initial mulching.
3. In the early years, some weeding might be needed but as things crowd out the weeds only a fall or spring cutting back is done. Seed heads, spent flowers, and browning foliage is left for the birds and for winter interest.
4. Once established, watering is needed only in drought.

For more information, I suggest reading Roy Diblik's book "The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden" and Piet Oudolf's new book "Planting the Natural Garden." And as one of your MG friends you can [email](#) me and I will answer your questions.

Stay healthy and use these trying times to better your garden.

WEBINARS

You can use up to 10 hours of webinars to fulfill your 2020 MG education requirement. Webinars may be offered by cooperative extension services, botanical gardens and organizations, and individuals with gardening and plant expertise.

If you're unsure if a webinar will count toward education hours, contact [Donna Karpel](#). **Note:** Online garden tours don't count toward education hours.

Upcoming webinars

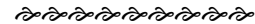
May 1, noon-1 pm: Penn State Extension sponsors Garden Hotline Live: May Flowers and More. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. **Registration deadline April 30.**

May 4, 6:30-7:30 pm: Rutgers Cooperative Extension Earth Day at Home sponsors Creating Wildlife Habitat in Your Yard, part of a free webinar series every Monday through June 29. Click [here](#) for the list of upcoming webinar topics and to register. You must register to participate.

May 6, noon-1 pm: Ecological Landscape Alliance sponsors Art and Design Principles for Ecological Landscapes, part of a free webinar series every Wednesday through May 27. Click [here](#) for more information about the May 6 webinar and to register. Click [here](#) for the list of upcoming topics.

May 12, 2:30 pm: University of Illinois Extension sponsors New Perennial Garden Theory. Free. Click [here](#) to register. Click [here](#) for the list of topics through November.

May 13, 1-2 pm: Rutgers NJ Agricultural Experiment Station: Home Gardeners School @ Home sponsors Composting and Good Soils. Cost: \$25. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.



View these webinars at your leisure

Vegetable Victory Garden: Free webinar from Charlie Nardozzi, garden writer and speaker. View on [YouTube](#). Charlie has additional [webinars](#) that you can buy.

Save the Pollinators: Webinar sponsored by the Ecological Landscape Alliance. View on [YouTube](#).

Practical Food Safety in the Garden: Webinar sponsored by Oregon State University Extension. View on [YouTube](#).

Microgreens - Tiny, Tasty, and Timely: Webinar sponsored by Ohio State University Extension. View on [YouTube](#).

These Are Not Your Grandma's Annuals: Webinar sponsored by Ohio State University Extension. View on [YouTube](#).

HORTICULTURE

Our favorite garden tools

Janet Schulz, Class of 1988



I straddle the seat of my folding kneeler stool because I cannot kneel. The seat is only 24 inches high, making it easy to reach the ground. It can also be used as a kneeler and it folds for easy storage.

The soil knife, or Hori-Hori, is popular

Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004

The Hori-Hori is great because it is multipurpose. Instead of carrying a trowel, a Shaw [drill], and small shovel, you can have one tool right on your belt. For planting bulbs and small perennials, it is effective because it has a good point. For dividing plants it easily cuts through root systems and can be sharpened when dull.



Donna Karpel, Class of 2013

I love the soil knife for getting out weeds, planting

Donna Karpel's soil knife, aka a Hori-Hori

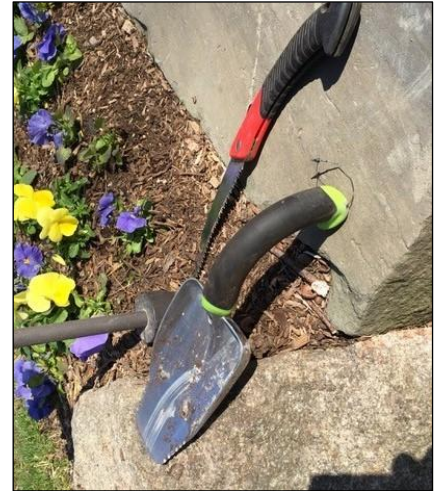
small bulbs in the fall, putting plant tags in the ground, dividing tough roots, etc.

Barbara Barbagallo, Class of 2020

My favorite garden tool is the soil knife. I didn't know what it was until Melody Corcoran showed me her soil knife at Garretson Forge and Farm this past fall and explained how much she liked using it. So, this past Christmas my granddaughter Olivia placed a wrapped-up soil knife in my Christmas stocking (my son helped purchase it). The soil knife makes weeding and transplanting perennials so much easier.

Suzanne Danzig, Class of 2008

My first favorite tool is a larger version of a garden trowel. I love this trowel for two reasons: First my good friend Fred Levitan [Class of 2012] gave it to me, so I will always treasure it, Second, the size is much more versatile and useful than our standard trowels, while the handle is so comfortable. My second most favorite tool is this hand saw. I use it to divide tough root balls as well as pruning smaller branches. They both are in my garden bag at all times when working in the garden.



ARMCHAIR TRAVEL

Take an armchair tour of 3 cityscapes

By Joseph Cooper, Class of 2008

Fell's Point Baltimore

Established in 1763, Fell's Point is a historic waterfront neighborhood in southeastern Baltimore. It is a city, state, and National Historic District with more than 161 buildings on the National Register. The streets are paved with Belgian blocks originally brought over from Europe by trade ships, and the sidewalks are brick. The area has many antique, music, and other stores, restaurants, coffee bars, a municipal market house with individual stalls, and more than 120 pubs. Fell's Point is also the last known place that Edgar Allan Poe was seen before his mysterious death. View on [YouTube](#).

Times Square

Sometimes referred to as "The Crossroads of the World," Times Square is at the junction of Broadway and Seventh Avenue and stretches from West 42nd to West 47th streets. It's known for being the hub of the Broadway Theater District as well as a tourist destination, entertainment center, and neighborhood in Midtown Manhattan. Times Square is one of the world's most visited tourist attractions drawing an estimated 50 million visitors annually. Approximate 330,000 people pass through the area daily. View on [YouTube](#).

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Las Vegas

The 4.2-mile Las Vegas Boulevard, known as “The Strip,” has approximately 51 casinos. The main section runs 2.5 miles from Mandalay Bay to the Stratosphere. In 1931, legal gambling started three miles north in downtown, referred to as old Las Vegas and currently known as the Fremont Street Experience.

For decades gambling was run by mobsters. In 1966, Howard Hughes quietly began buying casinos and real estate. He would “de-mob” Las Vegas making the city safe for legitimate business. In 1989, the Mirage Resort was the first mega-casino to open on the new Strip where others would follow. Today, most casinos are owned by venture capitalists and mega-corporations. View on [YouTube](#).



Who am I?

Melody Corcoran found this pair of Halloween-costumed critters in her yard. Each is about ¾ to an inch long. If you can identify them, send an email to [Miriam Taub](#). They'll be ID'd in the next *Potting Shed*.



“Brownie,” at left, which was pictured in the April *Potting Shed*, is a firefly larvae.

Sad news

William “Bill” Gilligan, 77, Class of 2012, died April 17. Click [here](#) to read his obituary. You may write to Bill’s family at 521 S. Maple Ave., Glen Rock NJ 07452.

ONLINE RESOURCES

The 2019 Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Bergen County annual report is available on the home page of our [website](#).

Joel Flagler was quoted in two recent *Wall Street Journal* articles about Earth Day. Read the April 22 story [here](#) and the April 25 story [here](#) (Joel is quoted in the third paragraph). You’ll need to be a WSJ subscriber or to sign in to read the April 25 story.

NJ Agricultural Experiment Station [publications](#) on dozens of topics are available in one place for your clicking pleasure.

Home, lawn, or garden questions? The NJ Agricultural Experiment Station [webpage](#) offers resources and services for homeowners.

Bergen County Rutgers Cooperative Extension Office

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