



# From the Potting Shed October 2020

Master Gardeners of Bergen County

## Virtual meeting – Tuesday, Oct. 20

**Announcements at 7:20 pm; program to follow**  
**See the October mid-month update**  
**for instructions to log in**

## Michael Mitchell presents: Winterizing Roses

If you're a local rose lover or rose gardener, you're probably familiar with the name Michael Mitchell of Ridgefield Park. Michael has been the owner/operator of Rose Gardens by Michael since 1997. He designs, builds, and maintains both public and private rose gardens. While these gardens incorporate all kinds of plants, roses are the predominant flower.



**Michael Mitchell**

Roses produce their own "antifreeze" to protect the plant. Michael will discuss what happens when roses go dormant. He will explain when, how, and why we winterize roses and provide a step-by-step analysis of preparing your roses for winter.

Michael has been a member of the American Rose Society and a certified consulting rosarian for the society. He is a former president of the Garden State Rose Club and was chair of the Garden State Rose Show from 1997-2007. He is the curator of the Jack Lissemore Rose Garden, which is part of the Davis Johnson Park and Gardens, 137 Engle St., Tenafly.

### **Event suspensions and site closures for 2020**

All in-person events, classes, programs, club meetings, and other group activities organized by or under the auspices of Rutgers Cooperative Extension have been suspended through 2020. This includes all MG meetings and events. MGs are not required to submit volunteer hours for 2020.

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## From the President's Desk

### **By Melody Corcoran, Class of 2016**

The Master Gardeners of Bergen County are now Zooming. Thanks to Arnie Friedman and Karen Riede, an MG of BC Zoom account has been set up through Rutgers. The MG board members have had two meetings online. With only a few glitches, those meetings have worked out well. It has been good to actually see each other after all these months of coronavirus separation.



Our first online general meeting was held via Zoom Sept. 22. Our speaker was [Frank "The Beeman" Mortimer](#) who spoke about bees and honey. His lecture was informative and went smoothly. By using the chat function on the Zoom app, the audience was able to ask Frank questions after the lecture.

There were 26 participants at the general meeting. So where were the rest of you?

I do understand if some of you are webinar and/or Zoom weary; I know that I am. But still, you were missed. And if you logged in late and weren't admitted to the meeting, we will do our best to remedy that next time. If you haven't Zoomed before, it is not difficult. Zoom can be used on computers, tablets, and smartphones. Zoom has online tutorials, FAQs, and other instructions on how to use the app.

The MG of BC Speakers Bureau is using the account to present lectures to the public. Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004, presented a virtual garden tour to Bogota Library participants in August. More Speakers Bureau speakers are getting ready to use Zoom to present lectures in the future. Look for the Zoom invite to the next general meeting [Oct. 20] in the October mid-month update. Hope to see you there.

## HORTICULTURE

### Fall-blooming plants

**By Janet Schulz, Class of 1988**

When we plant bulbs in the fall, we expect them to bloom the following spring, but colchicum is an exception.

Colchicum should be planted in full sun but will grow well under deciduous trees.



Photos by Janet Schulz

Colchicum in bloom in 2020.

Colchicums have been grown for centuries because they

produce colchicine, which is made into a powder and used as an oral treatment for gout. Leaves appear in spring and then go completely dormant as the weather warms. The flowers appear in the fall. They multiply quite rapidly.

Colchicums are sometimes referred to as fall-blooming crocus, but crocus have three stamens whereas the colchicums have six.

### **Begonia grandis**

A true perennial, *B. grandis* is hardy to 5 degrees F.



Begonia grandis

The plants do not emerge from the soil until about June 1. The leaves are green on top and red on the underside. Plants are tuberous and propagate by bulbets, but they may reseed themselves. Sprays are slightly fragrant.

### Should your outdoor plants come indoors?

Read a New York Times [article](#) that explains how to decide which outdoor plants to take seeds or cuttings from; how to store bulbs and tubers; which to treat as houseplants; and which to bid “adieu.”

If you're interested in adding a houseplant or two to your collection, the Times has [suggestions](#) from a New York Botanical Garden expert.

### Fall lawn and plant care as easy as 1, 2, 3

**By Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004**

1. Don't shut your irrigation or watering system too early; wait for the first frost. It's been a very dry summer and your shrubs and perennials need to store as much water as possible in their roots. Winter winds can dry out evergreens, especially skip laurels, hollies, and the like.
2. Seeding your lawn through the fall is a good way to kick-start a healthy turf. Even late-in-the-season seeds that don't germinate will stay dormant and sprout next spring when the ground warms up again. Don't forget seeded lawns need water to germinate and grow.
3. Don't prune hydrangeas now — especially the traditional ones or you'll be cutting off the flower buds for next summer.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### Election of 3 officers set for Oct. 20 meeting

**By Karen Pennell, Class of 2009**

A Nominating Committee of three MGs — Janet Schulz, Kathleen Sullivan, and Karen Pennell — was formed to select the 2021 slate of officers who will serve a two-year term. The 2021 slate was presented and confirmed by the MG board at its Sept. 22 meeting. The Nominating Committee will present the following slate to the general membership for a vote at the Oct. 20 online meeting:

**Recording secretary**  
**Corresponding secretary**  
**Treasurer**

**Keith Mazanec**  
**Miriam Taub**  
**Pat Vellas**

Keith Mazanec, Class of 2019, is taking on his first board role as recording secretary. Miriam Taub, Class of 2011, is the current corresponding secretary. Pat Vellas, Class of 2014, is the current treasurer. Once elected, each will serve a two-year term beginning in 2021.

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Meanwhile, Melody Corcoran, Class of 2016, is the current president (and volunteer site liaison) and will serve the second year of her term in 2021. Suzanne Danzig, Class of 2008, is the current vice president (and site coordinator for Washington Spring Garden in Van Saun Park) and will also serve the second year of her term in 2021.

The reason for the election this year (when we had an election last year) is to stagger the elections so all officers' terms do not expire in the same year.

## FROM THE GREEN SIDE

**By Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004**

*Many of you have read my articles or heard my talk on lawns and replacing the water-hungry, mower-demanding, ecologically brutal, traditional bluegrass lawns with other plantings.*

*Here's a short discussion of the use of Carex, which is a grass-like sedge plant for lawn and ground cover. It would require cutting only once or twice a year and looks pretty. This article is reprinted by permission from [New Moon Nursery](#) [Woodstown, Salem County], a very respected supplier of wholesale plugs to the landscape industry.*

### Carex texensis (catlin sedge)

*Carex texensis* is gaining in popularity as a lawn replacement. Why? It is a sedge that's small in stature to begin with, and it will cross over from part shade to part sun with ease — even full sun with a little bit of moisture. Extremely drought-tolerant and deer-resistant, it creates dense mats of clean, beautiful foliage.



Photo courtesy New Moon Nursery

*Carex texensis*, aka, catlin sedge.

*Carex texensis* is a rhizomatous perennial sedge that matures into a low, fine-textured leafy mat. The shiny deep green foliage is 6-12 inches long and semi-evergreen. In late spring, dainty green flower spikes are displayed above the leaves. Plants occur in part shade to partly sunny moist or dry sandy woods. This sedge is a great woodland groundcover or lawn alternative. *Carex texensis* is not just native to TX just like *Carex pennsylvanica* is not just native to PA.

Plant 6 inches apart to create a woodland lawn that can be mowed on a high setting. Mowing can be scheduled one to three times a year, but a late winter clipping is the most important. Keep moist until established, and water as needed thereafter. Plantings will tolerate light foot traffic, but if the lawn is traversed daily, stepping stones should be added.

### Carex texensis at a glance

**Height: 6-12 inches**  
**Spread: 1 foot**  
**Spacing: 18" for a ground cover or 6" for a lawn**  
**USDA Hardiness Zone: 5-9**  
**Bloom color: Green in spring**

## VOLUNTEER SITE NEWS

### Thielke Arboretum

[Thielke Arboretum](#) will sponsor a native seed collection from 10 am-noon Oct. 4 at the arboretum, 460 Doremus Ave., Glen Rock. Spend the morning outdoors collecting native seeds for your home garden; discovering which plants support pollinators; finding out the easy way to sow seeds; and learning the best planting sites.

Jean Epiphan, Thielke's forest ecologist and stewardship director, will lead the walk.

**Fee:** \$10 members/\$20 non-members. Fee includes envelopes to collect seeds. Please bring a bag for your envelopes. Space is limited to half the usual capacity, and face coverings must be worn and social distancing observed. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

### Teaneck Creek Conservancy

Work has begun on a \$5.6 million habitat restoration project at Teaneck Creek Park, a tributary of Overpeck Lake, and one of our MG volunteer sites.

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The work will enhance the site's natural resources; increase biodiversity with native grasses, shrubs, and trees; improve stormwater management with natural infrastructure; and improve park access by repairing and replacing footbridges and addressing deficient trails that are inaccessible due to washouts.

The contractor will remove clay material; restore the way water flows across the site through natural stormwater conveyance systems; and regrade portions of the site to create wetland habitat. Additional work includes relocating and consolidating debris piles; improving trail conditions; and replacing invasive species with native grasses, shrubs, and trees.

The park is closed at all entrance points except Fycke Lane, where patrons may enter to access the nearby outdoor classroom area. Otherwise, the trails and park are expected to be closed through fall 2021. Visit the [website](#).

### ***Creativity + gourds = fantasy animals***



Arta Pagano, Class of 2016, took birdhouse gourds that she discovered in the barn at Garretson Forge and Farm and turned them into fantasy animals with Testor paints. She used Apoxie® clay to fashion eyes and the feet, beak, and comb for the chicken. For the ladybug she used pipe cleaners for antennae.

## WEBINARS

**Oct. 1, 6:30-7:30 pm:** Middlesex County's office of Rutgers Cooperative Extension sponsors Season Extension for Fall and Spring Gardens. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Oct. 1, 7 pm:** Friends of the Frelinghuysen Arboretum sponsors Bulbs in Containers. Free. Click [here](#). Then scroll down to Oct. 1 in the left column for more information and to register.

**Oct. 8, 6:30-7:30 pm:** Middlesex County's office of Rutgers Cooperative Extension sponsors Roses and Their Care. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Oct. 8, 7 pm:** Friends of the Frelinghuysen Arboretum sponsors Fight Invasives – Go Native. Free. Click [here](#). Then scroll down to Oct. 8 in the left column for more information and to register.

**Oct. 14, 1-2 pm (join at 12:45 pm):** Rutgers Home Gardeners School @Home sponsors Bountiful Bulbs for Year-Round Beauty. Fee \$35. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. Click [here](#) for a list of upcoming online workshops.

### **Improve your garden design skills**

RCE of Sussex County will sponsor a free, three-part program titled Home Landscape: Delight or Disaster taught by Bruce Crawford, program leader in home and public horticulture, Rutgers NJ Agricultural Experiment Station. Here is the schedule:

**Oct. 15, the Manual:** An introduction to the principles of design theory including a discussion on space, focalization, simplicity, sequence, and scale.

**Oct. 22, the Bolts:** Details that help align everything; a look at developing space with hardscaping (layout of walks and patios), shrub massings, and shade/small tree placement.

**Oct. 29, the Nuts:** Tightening design and providing unity; sweeps of different types of groundcovers, perennials, and ornamental grasses; and layering and detailed plant choices including using native plants to provide food and habitat.

Click [here](#) to register.

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**Oct. 15, 6:30-7:30 pm:** Middlesex County's office of Rutgers Cooperative Extension sponsors Growing Garlic. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Oct. 15, 7 pm:** Friends of the Frelinghuysen Arboretum sponsors Spring Tulip Showstopper. Free. Click [here](#). Then scroll down to Oct. 15 in the left column for more information and to register.

**Oct. 21, 1-2 pm (join at 12:45 pm):** Rutgers Home Gardeners School @Home sponsors Designing with Ornamental Grasses. Fee \$35. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. Click [here](#) for a list of upcoming online workshops.

**Oct. 22, 6:30-7:30 pm:** Middlesex County's office of Rutgers Cooperative Extension sponsors Season's End in the Flower Garden. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**Oct. 22, 7 pm:** Friends of the Frelinghuysen Arboretum sponsors Fall into Winter Gardening. Click [here](#). Then scroll down to Oct. 22 in the left column for more information and to register.

**Oct. 29, 6:30-7:30 pm:** Middlesex County's office of Rutgers Cooperative Extension sponsors Drying Flowers and Herbs. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

## FARMERS MARKETS

*All farmers markets are practicing social distancing, require masks to be worn, and require vendors to serve you (no self-service).*

**Oradell Farmers Market**, 618 Veldran Ave. (post office parking lot); through Nov. 22; Sundays, 10 am-3 pm.

**Ramsey Farmers Market**, Main Street train station; through November; Sundays, 9 am-2 pm. For a complete list of rules and other information, click [here](#).

**Ridgewood Farmers Market**, train station parking lot, Godwin and West Ridgewood avenues; through Nov. 22; Sundays, 9 am-3 pm weather permitting.

## THIS AND THAT

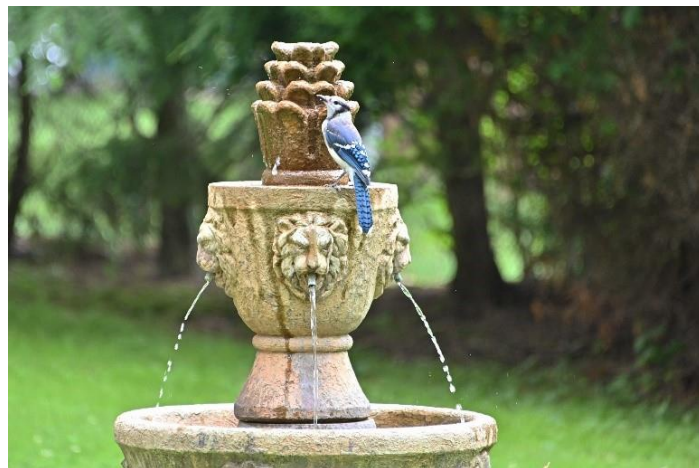


Photo by Joseph Cooper

### Water, water almost everywhere

Joseph Cooper, Class of 2008, has posted a [video](#) on YouTube featuring seven fountains nestled within plants throughout his gardens — some painted and others left natural to show the patina over time. Ranging from 3 feet to 6 feet in height, these fountains are sculpted from cement and metal. Three of the fountains sit atop a waterless pond where the water disappears through pea gravel into an underground basin where it's stored, filtered, and recirculated. Enjoy!

### Gardening ergonomically

Optimize your outdoor gardening experience for performance and safety. Click [here](#) to read this article from North Carolina Cooperative Extension about ergonomic tools for gardening.

### New feature from Rutgers AES: A 'plant of the month'

Thanks to the efforts of Bruce Crawford, program leader in home and public horticulture, Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station is launching a monthly "Plant of the Month" series. The September plant is helianthus (sunflower). Bruce provides statistics, history, descriptions, and cultivation information about this fan favorite.

You can go to the information [directly](#), or you can visit the [Home, Lawn, and Garden](#) section of the NJAES website for links to many home and garden-related resources. Click on the "New" box in the middle of the page for the plant of the month.

## HORTICULTURE GRAPEVINE

*Deadline for the Horticulture Grapevine is the 25<sup>th</sup> of the prior month. Submit information about garden club meetings that are open to the public to [Miriam Taub](#).*

**Oct. 1, 7:30 pm: Garden Club of Harrington Park via Zoom.** Speaker: Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004. Topic: Gardener to Garden Designer. Contact [Arnie Friedman](#) for the Zoom link. Visit the club's [website](#).

**Oct. 6, 7 pm: Upper Saddle River Public Library via Zoom.** Speaker: Wiebke Hinsch, Class of 2001. Topic: Gardening with Bulbs. Click [here](#) to register and receive the Zoom link.

**Oct. 22, 7 pm: Bogota Public Library via Zoom.** Speaker: Janet Schulz, Class of 1988. Topic: Preparing the Garden for Winter. Visit the library's [events calendar](#) for Oct. 22 for registration information. **Note:** As of distribution time, the registration information had not yet been added to the library's calendar.

### Gardening discounts for members only

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.

### Bergen County Rutgers Cooperative Extension Office

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