

From the Potting Shed

May 1, 2025

www.mgofbc.org



MG gardens on display

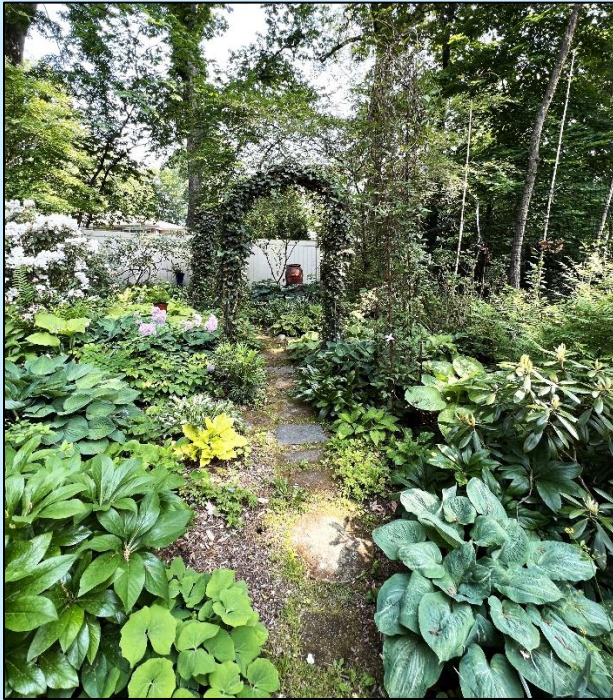


Photo by Janet Schulz

Save May 17 from 10 am-4 pm to visit the gardens of MGs Janet Schulz in Wyckoff and Noel Schulz in Waldwick. They're showing their gardens under the Garden Conservancy's Open Days program. The visit is free for MGs and interns. Above are some of the 125 varieties of hosta in Janet's backyard. See page 6 for a photo of Noel's crevice garden and their addresses. Enjoy!

Earth Day events continue . . .

Goodbye April, but Earth Day-type events continue this month. See Outdoor Events on page 7.

What's inside

Page

Webinars	2
Horticulture	3-4
Video Tours	4
Plant Sales	5
Ted Szczawinski (continued from page 1)	6
Meetings/Library Events	6
Outdoor Events	7

Links are clickable and are noted in [blue](#).

Meeting news: Tuesday, May 20, 7:15 pm

Ted Szczawinski: A brief history of propagation and cultivation of plants

Plants have been a source of food since the beginning of time, initially through the practice of hunting and gathering. In the past 10,000-12,000 years the importance of growing plants for food has evolved, said Ted Szczawinski, our May speaker. The propagation and cultivation of plants, he added, has become the means for expanding the food supply. The growth of all major civilizations depends upon farmers producing an agricultural surplus to support the growth of its people.



Ted Szczawinski

Ted Szczawinski, who's worked in the field of arboriculture for more than 40 years, will discuss the history of plant propagation; important dates and legislation affecting plant propagation in the United States; and the most common types of plant propagation and their pros and cons.

(Continued on page 6)

WEBINARS

All times are Eastern.

May 1, 7-8:15 pm: Penn State Extension sponsors Invasive Plants in My Garden. Fee: \$10. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

May 5, 6:30-7:30 pm: Rutgers Cooperative Extension sponsors Wildlife Recovery in New Jersey with speaker Kathleen Kerwin, wildlife biologist. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register for this and other webinars in the Earth Day Every Day series.

May 6, 7-8:30 pm: Penn State Extension sponsors Rain Barrel Discovery: Explore and Learn. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

May 7, noon: National Garden Bureau sponsors Ask the Experts: Why Grow New Varieties? Free. Click [here](#) to register.

May 8, noon: National Garden Bureau sponsors Ask the Experts: Fun Facts About Horticulture. Free. Click [here](#) to register.

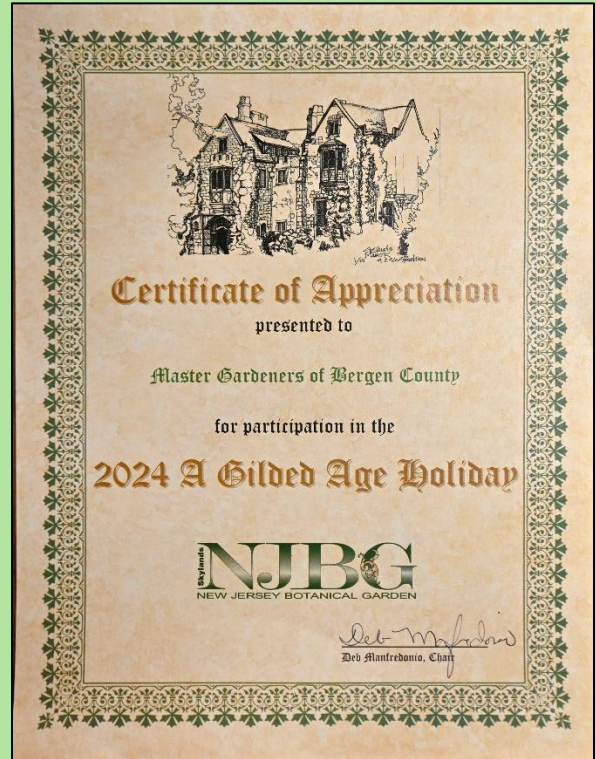
May 12, 6:30-7:30 pm: Rutgers Cooperative Extension sponsors Dam Removal/Restoration with speaker Carl Alderson, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register for this and other webinars in the Earth Day Every Day series.

May 19, 2-3 pm: AARP Virtual Community Center sponsors Houseplants 101 with Phipps Conservatory. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. AARP membership is not required.

May 19, 6:30-7:30 pm: Rutgers Cooperative Extension sponsors Shellfish and Marine Habitat Restoration with speakers Dr. Christine Thompson, Stockton University, and Capt. Alek Modjeski, American Littoral Society. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register for this and other webinars in the Earth Day Every Day series.

May 21, 7-8:30 pm: Native Plant Society of New Jersey sponsors Plant Survival Strategies: Using Grime's Triangle to Create Resilient Gardens. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Accolades for the 2024 HOH team!



The New Jersey Botanical Garden has awarded this Certificate of Appreciation to the MG of BC for participating in the 2024 Skylands Manor Holiday Open House. Laura DeFlora and Sue Sheridan are chairs of the design committee and were assisted by Maria Bushman, Cynthia Drennan, Josie Ko, Sandy Pancrazi, Deb Sweet, and Lisa Yoler. The following MGs and interns assisted with set-up, transportation, and as docents during the four-day event: Suzy Basu, Maureen Caban, Karen Clemments, Linda DeWolfe, Ed Drennan, Debbie Higgins, Seana Kirk, Charlene Mariano, Mary Orlando, Susan Petrillo, Jennifer Polidori, Lynne Proskow, Penny Readie, Noel Schulz, and Paul Sisko.

HORTICULTURE

Go with tall fescue, a plus for the environment

By Arnie Friedman

Last time [April 1], I discussed the use of a mulching blade to cut our lawn and leave the clippings to improve the soil. I pointed out that the “cut it and leave it” approach is a much more sustainable practice. It allows the natural ability of microbes and small soil organisms to enrich the soil without the use of added fertilizers and saves on the use of fuel because the lawn does not need to be cut as often.

This time I will cover what type of grasses to grow and how this change can greatly aid our environment.

Typical grass seed mixes have, until recently, been a



mix of perennial rye grass, blue grass, and in shady areas, mixes with fine fescues. The problem with these mixes is that these grasses are not at all drought tolerant, demand regular watering, and have very shallow roots.

In recent years new cultivars of **tall fescue** have been developed that are much better choices for a more sustainable “green friendly”

lawn. These new grass types are known as **turf-type tall fescues**, which distinguish them from their older parents, which were course-bladed, bunching-type plants used by farmers to grow in fields. The new versions have great color, finer texture, and knit well into a lawn.

These new varieties are great to use because they have much deeper roots than the traditional lawn grasses. Deeper roots mean less frequent watering needs and much better drought tolerance. Also, these new grasses need much less nitrogen and other nutrients to stay healthy and good looking.

When buying, look for new sustainable mixes that prominently say that they are blended mostly with tall fescues. When using a tall-fescue mix be prepared to wait a bit longer for your lawn to germinate and fill in.

They do take a while to establish. Adding about 10%-20% of perennial rye mix to your tall fescue will help with this longer establishment period. The rye will sprout early giving you green cover until the tall fescues begin to grow and dominate the lawn.

The watering requirement for tall fescue is about 1-1½ inches a week. However, these grasses prefer one or two heavy soakings a week as

opposed to the more frequent watering of the other grass mixes. This will encourage the roots to go down deep to stay in touch with the water that has soaked into the soil several inches down. Frequent shallow watering is very inefficient. Too much more water is wasted through evaporation from the surface, which never reaches the plants.

Cutting tall fescues is less frequent, too, as they are slower-growing plants. They should not be cut lower than 3 inches so set your mower height at this level. Leaving grass a bit higher helps it produce more food because longer blades can photosynthesize more and there is more tissue to store water. Remember to keep your mower blade sharp so cuts are clean and the pieces can be cut twice by your mulching blade. These smaller pieces will not be noticeable and will break down quickly as mulch that holds moisture and enriches the soil.

When shopping for a tall-fescue grass mix look for a mixture of cultivars that are rated by the National Turf Grass Evaluation Program (NTEP). Its tall-fescue trials test dozens of cultivars in 11 places around the United States and assign a score of 1-9. Pick a mix



Pixabay photo

(Continued on page 4)

VIDEO TOURS



Photo by Joseph Cooper

Who knew garage doors could be so colorful? This scene is from the Wynwood Art District video.

Miami art, a tour of Sleepy Cat Farm, and gardening for butterflies

Joseph Cooper recently posted two videos on YouTube of a trip to Miami.

The Wynwood Art District was created in 2003 in Miami's Wynwood neighborhood and features art walks, tours, galleries, and more. Joseph gives us a sampling of the walls, buildings, and graffiti in the district. Click [here](#) for the video.

Wynwood Walls is an outdoor street-art space. Since its inception in 2009, it has gained international acclaim among street-art enthusiasts. The museum has more than 35,000 square feet of walls covered in colorful, hand-sprayed murals crafted by artists from across the globe. Click [here](#) for the Wynwood Walls video.

Meanwhile, Joseph has shared a link to a recorded [webinar](#) about Sleepy Cat Farm's evolution. The link will be available until May 25. Located in Greenwich, CT, he described Sleepy Cat Farm as a stunning 13-acre private garden that has been developed over 28 years.

Joseph said it boasts a variety of features, such as a Chinese pavilion; a tranquil reflecting pool; elegant boxwood topiaries; a charming stone grotto; a French Normandy barn; a pebble mosaic terrace; fountains and artistic statuary; a Japanese spirit bridge adorned

with 10,000 irises; and many more enchanting elements.

Joseph produced a five-minute video for the owners of Sleepy Cat Farm about eight years ago. Click [here](#) to view Joseph's video.

Finally, Lourdes Osorio, creator of the Native Plant Channel and a member of the Certified Gardeners of Passaic County (formerly the MG of Passaic County), advises us to plant host plants for butterflies, not just pollinator plants. Click [here](#) for Lourdes' new video on her Native Plant Channel on YouTube.

(Horticulture, continued from page 3)

with grasses that have high recommendation scores. These ratings are available by googling "NTEP."

Today you can find mixes of tall fescue blended by the big companies or mixes at local nurseries from regional suppliers. You can special order from seed suppliers by mail or through your local nursery. Special ordering allows you to specify the exact cultivars and quantities in your mix. However, you might find that a special order requires a large minimum order, but you could order in bulk with your friends or local garden club to save money.

Arnie's steps to a 'greener' lawn

For a healthy, chemical-free environment, less wasted water and fossil fuels, and a pretty lawn that tolerates drought follow these simple steps:

- Seed heavily with a tall-fescue mix.
- Water deeply and less frequently.
- Don't cut your lawn below 3 inches.
- Use a mower with a mulching blade and "clip it and leave it."
- Don't fertilize or, if you must, fertilize once a season, at most, with a balanced mix.
- Don't add amendments like lime without doing a soil test.
- Have tolerance for other green plants in your lawn; clover is a great nitrogen producer.
- Enjoy the extra time in your garden.

PLANT SALES

May 2-4 and May 9-11, 10 am-6 pm: Garden Club of Teaneck, in the greenhouse, 300 Lindbergh Blvd., Teaneck. Herbs, vegetable, tomatoes; annuals and



Robyn Lowenthal, in the Garden Club of Teaneck greenhouse, displays one of the 60 varieties of coleus for sale. Robyn lectures about coleus for the MG of BC Speakers Bureau.

perennials; figs; houseplants; container arrangements. Cash, check, and credit card.

May 2-4: New Jersey Botanical Garden, Morris Road, Ringwood, at the Carriage House. May 2, 4:30-7 pm: NJBG members only, but you may join on arrival. May 3-4: 9:30 am-4 pm. Park in Lot A to your left as you enter; follow signs for additional parking. Assorted

perennials, annuals, vegetables, and herbs; trees, shrubs, and vines; ground covers; potted plants and hanging baskets. MGs on hand to advise. Cash, check, and credit card.

May 3-4: Frelinghuysen Arboretum, 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township. May 3, 9 am-4 pm; May 4, noon-4 pm. Huge variety of houseplants, annuals, perennials, shrubs, and trees. Click [here](#) for more information.

May 4, 9 am-2 pm: Ramsey Area Garden Club, Ramsey Farmers Market, Main Street train station, Main Street at Erie Plaza, Ramsey. Hanging baskets; perennials (many from members' gardens); annuals; Mother's Day gift items. Cash and check.

May 8, 10:30 am-5 pm: Bergen New Bridge Medical Center, in the greenhouse, room 230, second floor, Building 6, 230 E. Ridgewood Ave., Paramus. Proceeds benefit the long-term-care horticultural therapy program. Cash and credit card.

May 9-10, 10 am-3 pm: Tenafly Garden Club, two locations, greenhouse at Davis Johnson Park and Gardens, Westervelt Avenue and Engle Street;

Oresko Park, Tenafly and Riveredge roads opposite the post office, Tenafly. Annuals; flats; hanging baskets and patio planters. Cash only.

May 10, 10 am until all plants are sold: Garden Club of Bergenfield, Cooper's Pond Park, 115 W. Church St., Bergenfield.

May 10, 9 am-3 pm: Sundial Garden Club, Hillsdale train station, Broadway, Hillsdale. Annuals and perennials; members' perennial plants; hanging baskets and decorated gift baskets. Cash and check.

May 10, 10 am-4 pm, Garretson Forge & Farm, 4-02 River Road, Fair Lawn: Variety of tomato plants; variety of perennials, natives, and pollinators, many deer resistant. Examples: Bee balm, nettle, Solomon's seal, Jerusalem artichoke, St. John's wort, chives, canna, lamb's ear, lemon balm, spiderwort, tansy, valerian, agrimony, wild ginger, orris, and May apple; ferns; milkweed.

Everything is organic, many are heirloom varieties. MGs available to assist. Spring Festival at the same time; see Outdoor Events on page 7.



Liz Scholl, MG and Master Herbalist, during a "walk and talk" in the Garretson herb garden April 27. Liz is holding onto a mullein stalk. Mullein has been used for centuries to ease respiratory issues.

May 10, 9 am-noon: Ho-Ho-Kus Garden Club, Town Green, Sycamore Avenue and Franklin Turnpike next to the Ho-Ho-Kus Inn. Perennials from members' gardens and hardy for our region; annuals; shrubs and trees; houseplants; window boxes; garden ornaments, tools, and pots. Cash, check, and Venmo.

May 17, 8 am-noon: Allendale Garden Club, Lee Memorial Library grounds, 500 W. Crescent Ave., Allendale. Rain or shine. Variety of native and pollinator plants from members' gardens; nursery plants. Cash and check.

May 17: 2 MG gardens on display



Photo by Noel Schulz

Don't miss Noel Schulz's crevice garden, one of the many features of his Waldwick property. His garden, and that of Janet Schulz, will be on display May 17 from 10 am-4 pm through the Garden Conservancy's Open Days program. Admission is free for MGs and interns. Be sure to identify yourself.

- Janet Schulz, 16 Colonial Drive, Wyckoff.
- Noel Schulz, 108 Lincoln Place, Waldwick.

(Ted Szczawinski, continued from page 1)

Ted is a graduate of both Rutgers University and Seton Hall University. He started teaching industry programs 30 years ago at Rutgers University's NJ Agricultural Experiment Station, Office of Continuing Professional Education. Currently, he's a faculty adjunct at the Office of Continuing Professional Education and an adjunct in the Horticulture Department at Bergen Community College where he teaches plant science.

In 2002, he founded Sterling Consultants LLC, which provides cutting-edge arboriculture and horticultural education and training.

Our May 20 meeting is at 1 Bergen County Plaza, fourth floor, Hackensack. Refreshments are at 7 pm with announcements at 7:15 pm. The speaker will follow.

MEETINGS/LIBRARY EVENTS

May 1, 7:30 pm: Garden Club of Harrington Park, upstairs in the Harrington Park Library, 10 Herring St., Harrington Park. Speaker: Mary Jo Sichak, Passaic County MG. Subject: Garden Safari (a photographic look at the growing importance of our home gardens as a habitat for wildlife).

May 3, 1 pm: Elmwood Park Public Library, 210 Lee St., Elmwood Park. Speaker: MG Lynne Proskow. Subject: Introduction to Seed Starting and Microgreens. Click [here](#) for more information.

May 5, 6:30 pm: Sundial Garden Club, Hillsdale Public Library, 509 Hillsdale Ave., Hillsdale. Speaker: MG Paul Sisko, who's also a sculptor. Subject: My Life as an Artisan and Gardener.

May 12, 7 pm: Cresskill Garden Club, 67 Union Ave., Cresskill. MG Lynne Proskow. Subject: A Natural Journey, Bee-ing Curious, and Enjoying Herbs.

May 13, 7 pm: Ramsey Area Garden Club, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 55 Wyckoff Ave. (corner of Woodland Avenue), Ramsey. Speaker: Frank Mortimer, adjunct instructor at Cornell University and certified master beekeeper. Subject: The ABCs of Honeybees: Why They Are So Important to Us.

May 14, 7 pm: Wyckoff Area Garden Club, Wyckoff Public Library, 200 Woodland Ave., Wyckoff. Speaker: [Leslie Parness](#), garden historian and writer. Subject: We Grew It Here: 100 Years of New Jersey's Horticultural History. Refreshments at 6:30 pm. This is a joint meeting with the Oakland Garden Club.

May 19, 7:30 pm: Ho-Ho-Kus Garden Club, Sycamore Church of Ho-Ho-Kus (formerly Ho-Ho-Kus Community Church), corner of Warren Avenue and Sycamore Street. Enter on Sycamore. Speaker: Rebecca Davis, botanical artist. Subject: A demonstration of her painting technique and a look at some paintings from her most recent exhibitions.

May 21, 6 pm: Hasbrouck Heights Garden Club, second-floor meeting room, Hasbrouck Heights Library, 320 Boulevard, Hasbrouck Heights. Speaker: Suzy Ludwig, fern gardener. Subject: Ferns. Refreshments and greetings at 5:30 pm.

OUTDOOR EVENTS

May 3, 11 am-3 pm: Secaucus 14th annual Green Festival. Rain date May 4. The Xchange at Secaucus Junction, 4000 Riverside Station Blvd., Secaucus. Interactive activities and exhibits; music and entertainment; local vendors including a native plant sale.

May 10, 10 am-4 pm: Garretson Forge & Farm annual Spring Festival and Plant Sale, 4-02 River Road, Fair Lawn. Open pit cooking demonstration; spinning demonstration; New Jersey Revolutionary War re-enactors; children's activities; and tours of the home and gardens. For information about the plant sale, see Garretson's entry on page 5.

May 17, 10 am-2 pm: Native Plant Day, Richard DeKorte Park, 1 DeKorte Park Plaza, Lyndhurst. Information booths; walks and talks about native plants beneficial to birds, wildlife, pollinators, and habitats. Click [here](#) for the flyer.

May 18, noon-5 pm: EarthFest Overpeck, Overpeck County Park in the amphitheater, 40 Fort Lee Road, Leonia. Sponsored by the Hackensack Riverkeeper and the Bergen County Parks Department. Fishing derby; kayaking; children's activities; music; green vendors; food trucks. Recycled regatta at 10 am at the paddling center. Click [here](#) for the flyer.

Visit us on social media

- [Facebook:](#) Visit Master Gardeners of Bergen County | Hackensack NJ | Facebook. A pop-up box will appear requesting that you log in or create an account. If you don't have a Facebook account, click on the "x" in the upper right corner of the pop-up box to close it, and you'll have access to the MG of BC Facebook page.
- [Instagram](#)



Cannabis lecture and a plant sale



Clare Kennedy in the Bergen Community College greenhouse. Clare spoke to the MG of BC on the topic of cannabis April 30. Afterward, attendees were the first to shop at the college's plant sale. The sale continues May 1 until 3 pm and May 2 from 10 am-1 pm. Below, Dan Coviello and Bernadette White.



Photos by Miriam Taub