

THE GARDEN PATCH



May 2009

Salt Lake Master Gardener Association

Vol. 11, No. 5

PURGE THE SPURGE!

By Jenny Allgrunn

Years ago, before I had ever heard of invasive plants, Master Gardeners, or even knew the difference between a native plant and a weed, a friend gave me a start of what she called "Basket of Gold." It grew easily and pretty soon I had new plants to move around the yard. It looked nice, with its grey green succulent leaves. By the first of May the ends of the stems were covered with bright yellow blossoms. I discovered that it is a euphorbia. Cool, I thought. It's from the same family as the poinsettia.

Somehow, without my bothering to transplant it, it spread around my whole yard. Once I even decided that it was the plant that offered continuity in my varied and miscellaneous garden plan - visually tying together my otherwise haphazard landscaping. A downside to it was that my husband complained about the rash on his arm whenever he came in contact with the sap from it.

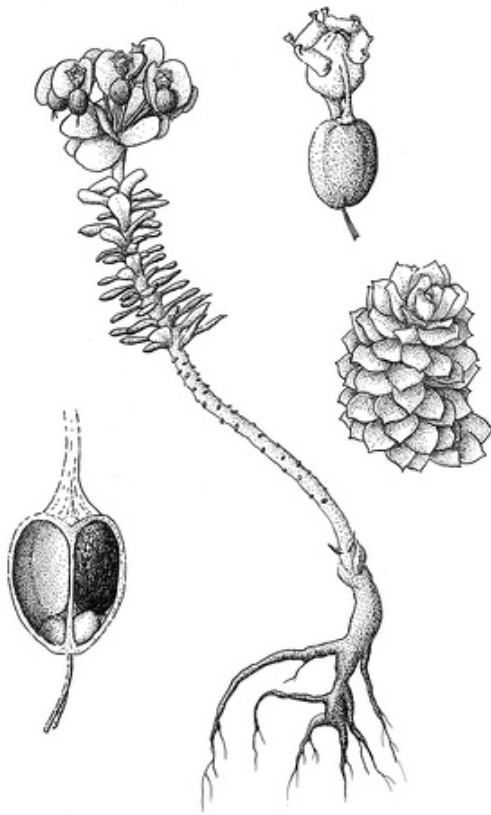
Then I became a Master Gardener. I found out that some plants are not just easy to grow. They are invasive. Some are so invasive, they get on the official noxious weeds list because they choke out the native plants of the area. *Euphorbia Myrsinites* is one of these. You may heard it also called Donkey Tail Spurge.

My overly friendly Basket of Gold turned out to be one of the bad guys.

Now I go around every spring and dig it up. I save my diggings and take them to REI where the Utah Native Plant Society trades me for some Wonderful native plants. Bring at least five spurge plants. I brought 2 garbage bags full last year. This year it is down to about ten plants. While it does reseed, eventually you win the war.

Give it a try. Dig at least an inch or two of root. The sap does indeed call a bad rash, so wear gloves. The spots that are left barren can be filled with great drought tolerant natives. The Utah Native Plant Society has been very generous with their plants at these annual events.

**Trade a bag of spurge (*Euphorbia myrsinites*) for FIVE FREE
NATIVE PLANTS on Saturday, May 9 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. –
Purge Your Spurge Weed Cleanup and Native Plant Exchange, REI
3285 East 3300 South**



NOTES FROM THE BOARD

By Cathy Miller

The Board has just approved a new project for SLMGA, the Jordan Valley Water Conservation Garden. The project will be managed by the Garden Staff and will consist of two areas: garden landscaping/maintenance and interpretive tours with the public. This is a major project located on the west side of the valley. More details will be available in The Garden Patch and also at our May meeting.

Two long standing SLMGA projects have been discontinued: Wheeler Farm pumpkin patch and vegetable garden. The current sites have been plagued with watering problems, and the trees have grown so large as to shade much of the area. We will continue with the house and herb gardens at Wheeler. We are investigating other areas for a vegetable garden project and will provide more information when it becomes available.

The June mini-conference planning is progressing well. This conference (June 12 and 13) will take the place of our regular June member meeting.

The Board is forming some additional committees: planning for the summer picnic, planning for the December awards banquet, awards criteria, and scholarship program criteria. If you are interested in participating in any of these committees, please contact a Board member.

As this is being written, we are expecting a respite from the far-too-early summer temperatures. Mother's Day is fast approaching—the day we can fairly safely plant out our seedlings. Happy digging!

May General Meeting Come to Gilgal Garden

Garden Party and Picnic

Thursday, May 21, 2009

6:30 to 8:00 p. m.

Gilgal Garden

749 East 500 South

The SLMGA Board would like to invite all of our Master Gardeners, Project Leaders, and Apprentices to a Meet & Greet Social in the Garden. A picnic will be served under the canopy. Water will be available, or bring your own drink. Retired Utah Symphony cellist Ruth Ann Spangler will supply some wonderful classical music for ambience and a Scavenger Hunt for information will be held. Participants will be entered into a drawing for a great prize!

This is a good time to meet new members, reconnect with friends, sign up for this year's projects and have fun. If you plan to attend, bring a lawn chair and car pool if you can. Bring an extra camp chair if you have one. Anyone who likes to walk and has a small, easy to carry chair can take the Trax Train to the Trolley Square Station, on the University Line, at 625 East 400 South.

This should be a really nice event and a fun chance to see the garden as well.

PLEASE WEAR YOUR NAME BADGE!

Art in Bloom

Celebrate the season and support arts education by attending *Art in Bloom*, a dazzling three-day convergence of fine art and floral design at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts. This biennial benefit features an exhibition of over 30 interpretive floral arrangements from Utah's top designers, as well as a full schedule of festive classes, demonstrations, and dining. All proceeds support the UMFA's statewide arts education outreach programs. Don't miss a minute of this colorful spring event!

When » *Flowers After Hours* dinner and preview on May 15 at 6 pm,
Art in Bloom exhibition and activities May 16 and 17 from 9:30 – 5:30 pm

Where » Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Marcia and John Price Museum Building
U of U campus

410 Campus Center Drive, Salt Lake City, 84112

Info » Registration is required for all events except the exhibition.

For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit umfa.utah.edu, or contact Erin Koelliker at 801.585.9880, erin.koelliker@umfa.utah.edu.

EXTENSION

Utah State
UNIVERSITY

By Maggie Shao, Extension Horticulturist

Last month, brave and hardy souls came to Murray Park for the April annual plant swap. I think the temperature was a cool 42 degrees. Fortunately we didn't have any rain. I hope Murray Park isn't too mad that we tripped all the electrical outlets plugging in our space heaters, hot water kettles, and speaker system. A big thank you goes to Dick Hadfield for being so generous. He was very busy this winter molding his cement plaques "All My Weeds Are Wildflowers" and molding his acorn bird houses that are incredibly clever. Thanks to Dick also for growing in his greenhouse and bringing several flats of annuals for the swap. Thanks to those who volunteered last minute to pick up all those goodies at Dick's to bring to the park. Overall, I think it was a well organized event. Thanks go to Jo Turpin and Barbara Braeden for organizing the swap, and then the other board officers for helping out. The hospitality committee has been great in providing yummy and healthy treats for the meetings.

Please come to the May meeting on May 21 at Gilgal Garden. The theme for this meeting is to "meet and greet" other Master Gardeners. We have a new crop of 52 new apprentices who have finished the classroom lecture section of the training and will begin the volunteer portion of their training. This is a great opportunity for them to introduce themselves, meet some of the project leaders and other Master Gardeners and really get to know each other. That also goes for all Master Gardeners in the Salt Lake Master Gardener Association. There are many who completed the training in different years, so this is really about getting to know each other better. PLEASE wear your name badge, so everyone can learn names and so you can participate in a "scavenger hunt" for a prize.

I had a huge thrill last Saturday. I met one of my heroes. Wangari Maathai won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004. She became the first African woman and the first environmentalist to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. It was awarded for "her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace." She is from Kenya and started the Greenbelt Movement 30 years ago. This movement empowered women to plant trees to improve their quality of life. She was also the first East African woman to receive a PhD (in 1971.) She was speaking at the University of Utah's School of Humanities, introduced by Terry Tempest Williams. Wangari Maathai has written a new book, *The Challenge for Africa*, and spoke on protecting and re-

storing the environment, protecting the Congo forest and human rights. It's amazing she is 69 years old and still so passionate and energetic and hopeful. Her ending story was about the hummingbird. She told the story of how a raging fire was moving through a forest, and the hummingbird would fly to the river, take a drop of water, and fly back to the fire. The hummingbird was repeatedly flying to the river back to the fire, each time dropping water on the fire. The other animals were running out of the forest away from the fire and beckoned to the hummingbird to leave and that its efforts were futile. The hummingbird simply replied "I'm doing the best that I can" which is Wangari Maathai's philosophy.

She was signing books, so I waited in line to meet her. She is so gracious and full of life, although she's on a whirlwind tour. I am looking at the photo of myself and Wangari Maathai in my cubicle as I write this article. I did speak with her a bit about my Peace Corps Service planting trees in Ghana and that I'm now still working with urban and community forestry and teaching gardening. She asked me if I would be interested in communicating via email. One of her many endeavors is to try and establish an Extension Service in Kenya, and would like me to offer any advice or thoughts on how to do this, with my Peace Corps service and current affiliation with Utah State University Extension experience to help the process. I look forward to helping her.

Although you won't receive this article until after Arbor Day, this year it will be on Friday April 24th. The State Arbor Day Ceremony will be at Memory Grove to commemorate the 10 year anniversary of the tornado that destroyed many of the mature trees. It is nice to see that many trees were planted in the last ten years in Memory Grove and another one will have be planted on April 24. Plant the right tree in the right place. Water it. Care for it. And one of my favorite maxims which I believe is a Greek proverb goes something like this "True generosity is when people plant trees under whose shade they will never sit". I also like this Chinese proverb "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The next best time is now."

Back to Master Gardener news: Save the date for the Master Gardener Annual Conference. Full details are in this issue of *The Garden Patch*. Thank you to the Planning Committee for all their hard work and helping put this conference together. If you are interested in how flowers can imitate art, there is an interesting exhibit at the Utah Museum of Fine Art May 15-17, 2009. called *Art in Bloom*. It is a fundraising event; however, UMFA agreed to help promote Master Gardeners as a gardening organization and resource in their promotional materials. If you are interested, go to www.umfa.utah.edu/artinbloom.

The weather is looking better every day, and if we can get through the next few weeks we may have the cold frost behind us. The last few weeks of April have been a very wet time and the tomato plants in the water walls have turned a little yellow, but as the soil warms up they should get back to the normal color. In the part of my garden that is planted, most of the seeds have germinated and are coming up. I planted a package of sweet peas along a fence line, and they are doing great so far.

My wife decided to do away with the one half whisky barrels and plant in pots this year. When taking them apart I found that the bottoms were rotting out, so I think that was a good move. I was able to take the soil out and put into the new containers with a little mixing of new soil with perlite. So I am ready to plant as soon as the frost-free nights arrive.

I have used some of the planters made out of old tires to make an area for my strawberries. I am still trying to decide weather to use new plants or to leave the old plants that have been in the garden for the last few years. So far all I can find is the June bearing and I would like to find some ever-bearing plants.

The grafting class at Bart's place went well. We had good attendance and were able share our knowledge and some of Bart's meadow dressing with those who came. We have had this class for some time each spring and had scion wood for those who wanted it. Bart and I have had a disagreement as when to hold the class. This year with my pick, the third week in April was the best choice. We had nice weather.

With the rain the last few weeks the greenhouse has not had the sun or light it needed. My tomato plants are starting to grow long and leggy because of those conditions. So I will need to replot them or cut them down so they will branch out. The rest of the plants in the greenhouse seem to be doing ok at this time, but I have been battling aphids and some white flies on a few plants. I think I am winning that fight.

I have been saving some verbena plants from last fall, and this has been the source of the aphids. Now I find that I have some verbena plants that have over wintered in the garden so I should have plenty of them for this spring. The rosemary plants I planted in the ground last year have some green stalks left but



By Wm. Golden Reeves

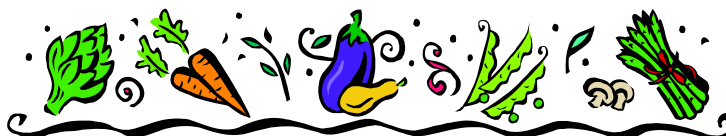
I do not know if they will survive as the weather warms up.

I watched as my neighbor had someone come and aerate his lawn. It only took them a few minutes to complete the job. I used a manual unit and it took me about four hours to finish mine but I saved money and the exercise was good for me. I have all of the weeds removed from my yard but I know there are seeds ready to take over if I let up on the surveillance. In the parking strip on the west side of the lot I was able to get enough fresh mulch to cover the ground around the plants and that will stop a lot of weeds from invading the open ground.

I still need to plant some of the spring bulbs I have and plant the hanging baskets for the patio. This year I have bought the equipment to put in a drip irrigation system to water all of the plants on the patio. This should save me a lot of time and when I decide to go fishing or on vacation I don't need to ask the neighbors to water for me.

The plants I got from Michigan Bulb Co. are growing real well. Yes Jenny, I checked them out on the internet - Dave's Garden Watchdog www.davesgarden.com/gwd and found that there were more complaints than there were good responses for that company. I guess I just lucked out on this order.

The ripe tomatoes are great. The spinach is ready to pick, the rhubarb is nice and crisp, the weather is warming up, and life is great for gardeners!



SALT LAKE COUNTY FAIR

By Val Chatwin

The Fair Book will be on the internet like last year.

www.countyfair.slco.org

It will open at 11 am. Wed. August 5,6,7, and 8. Equestrian park 11400 S. 2200 W. Master Gardeners will be needed Wednesday at 7:00 a.m. till roughly noon to help judges and check in produce. Bring vegetable at 7:30 a.m. Flower shows, ceramics, 4-H, scrapbooking, quilts, and baking are different times so look and see when they are. It sneaks up on you. The canning comes in on August 1, the Saturday before.

There is a separate division for Master Gardeners in agriculture so when you bring stuff you don't have to compete with the general public. Of course you have to compete with John Kalaski, who's nearly as good as Golden and Bart. He is my assistant. I also have Jay Fullmer helping me.



VAL'S VIEWS

By Val Chatwin

This place is beautiful in the spring! The almond, pear, prune, and peach trees have every twig and branch covered with blossoms. The apple trees are not covered but they do have some blossoms. Remember here, last year, there were no apples on three trees, which was a first for me.

I also had a 'Red Delicious' apple tree in the house before this one, at 50th S. & 13th West. It was 1968. The tree was 7 years old and had never had apples. I visited an 82 year-old man who lived on 4800 South who had an orchard and beehives. I went to see how he got honey out of the hives and mentioned the fruitless tree.

He said, "Ring it."

What! That was the silliest thing I had ever heard and didn't do it. Ringing a tree can kill it. But before the next spring one of the kids propped their bike against the tree's trunk. It scraped down and removed some trunk bark. Poor thing! I thought there was enough bark left so it wouldn't die. I wrapped a bandage around it. That spring it was covered with blossoms and we had wonderful tasting apples every year after that. The beekeeper knew that with some apple trees you have to make them think they are in danger of dying and then they will desperately go into production. You don't ring it all the way around -- about half-way.

Last fall I begged some apples from our neighbors, but backyard fruit isn't valued like it used to be so they were not sprayed. Fruit trees are a lot of work, and you can buy a bag of apples with 6 different kinds at the store and pears, plums, nectarines, etc too. If you have trees you have to pick up the dead fall, the 1st and 2nd thinnings' fall and the ripe fall. Anyway it's good for your waistline and I certainly don't have a back ache.

I try to give the good apricots away but the unusable one make a lot of winey slush. As the tree is on the lawn I have to clean the messy ones up. I've put them in the garden occasionally, but too many seedlings sprout from them so most go to the landfill. This spring I have several cute little apricot trees growing which I will weed out. I should pot them up and bring them to the plant exchange. They are wonderful apricots and apricots came back true.

The red and yellow tulips that grow without care are lining the beds. The daffodils accompany their brilliance. I have some under the back water faucet, where nothing else grows the rest of the year. They have orange cups. The chickens don't eat their emerging tips either.

Larry Sagers, in his wonderful Advanced. Master Gardener class told us you have to dig tulips up every year and divide them if you want them to be spectacular looking. They do that at Thanksgiving Point and Temple Square.

That told me why I buy bulbs and don't get them another year.

One November Wal-Mart had a lot of tulips left so they put them at 90% off. Now late November is truly late in the season, but I bought some exotic and plain ones and was out planting them, all over the place with snow flakes falling on my head.

Tulips and daffodils are so gorgeous and cheap, and well advertised that I have to restrain myself from not covering everything with them. I try to have other perennials that bloom when they fade because they look tacky pretty soon and you are supposed to leave the stems and leaves on for them to get strength for next year. Sometime I can't stand it and cut them to the ground.

A non Master Gardener told me that if you plant tulips at least 12 inches deep, they will do well and keep coming back. Hers have come up for years. I haven't tried it but it would be good to have the bulbs that far down. From the Wal-Mart batch I do have some orange ones and pink in another spot that have increased every year.

I love fall. I'm down in the dumps in March and April. So I've tried to make spring beautiful here by having spring blooming plants and bulbs to cheer me up. I think my gloom is partly due to Utah springs and getting the garden in when there are only sporadic days to do it. This year was especially bad. We had 4 days of 70 degrees in March. I was out there cleaning up and getting the vegetable garden ready. There were only a few good days the rest of the month. In April, when half of the stuff should already be in there were 3 days, not all together when it wasn't too cold and rainy and the ground dried out enough to plant. Last week I finally got in the squash, two corn patches, cucumbers, cantaloupe, fennel, basil, zinnias, nasturtiums [I put a row of each in the vegetable garden, not for bug control, for beauty. I don't have any bugs; the chicken see to that]. The very first day of planting in March I only got in a block of potatoes, then a row of lettuce, broccoli, and big salad radishes. Broccoli doesn't like being in a row so I put 6 seeds every foot, it is okay with 2 plants but likes 1 better. The big radishes need to be well apart also and lettuce has so many seeds I just sprinkle them thinly. I also put sugar peas on the UDOTS chain link fence. They are widening the road and it's their barrier. They've started the noise fences 2 blocks down, and I think the chain link will still be there in 2 months, but I'm taking a chance.

I look out now. Brilliant sunshine is streaming in my office window, and the grass is green and lush. With all the blooming it's hard to believe that 3 weeks ago it was a dead, brown landscape. I'm feeling cheerier.

Gilgal Garden

Our May General Meeting will be at Gilgal Garden. If you would like to help with garden chores, contact Bev Sudbury to find out how you can be of help.

E-mail: beverlysudbury@yahoo.com.

Utah Aids Foundation Gardens

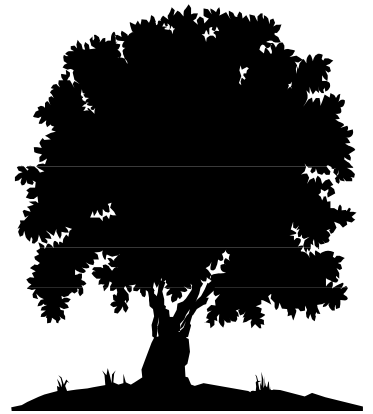
Where: 1408 So 1100 East
Each Wednesday, 5:30 pm to dusk
Weather permitting, starting May 13 and continuing until October.
Please come join us to do Spring clean-up, prepara-

MURRAY PARK

Tuesday Mornings
8:00 a.m.

If you have questions -
contact \ me - Becky
Hansen e-mail at
hansen-

pollei@mstarmetro.net.

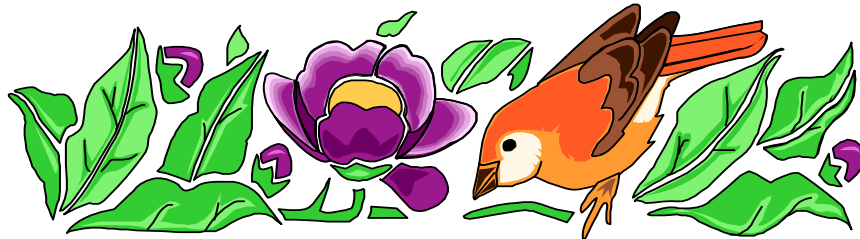


*Remember Fresh From the Heart
When you find a bare spot in the
landscape, fill it in with edibles to
share.*

SPEAKERS NEEDED

We get a lot of requests every year for gardening speakers. If you would like to do this, please contact Jennifer Knight. She will add you to the list and let you know when opportunities come up.

Contact her by email at mgvolunteers@hotmail.com



The best time to plant a tree
was 20 years ago.
The next best time is now.

---Chinese Proverb

Calendar

Thursday, May 21
6:30 p.m.

May General Meeting will be
at Gilgal Garden
SEE PAGE 2 for details

June - No General Meeting

We will be hosting the annual Statewide
Master Gardener Conference

[Click for info & registration form.](#)

Register early for best choice of tours
and classes.

Thursday, July 16

What am I going to do with all this produce?
Canning Tips and More

Thursday, August 20

Annual Summer Picnic at the Park
Murray Park

If you have not yet renewed your membership,
please send a check for \$15 made out to SLMGA to:
Cathy Miller, Treasurer
SLMGA

Contact gardenpatch2@juno.com
For mailing address

Be sure to include any change of address, phone
number, or e-mail address

Check out the USU Extension Web Site
<http://extension.usu.edu/saltlake>
Follow the Master Gardener links

Bulletin Board



Find past issues on the web at:

<http://www.slmg.org/gardenPatchTOC.html>

Please note that the current year is the first column,
not the third column.

Issues from previous years are
accessible by clicking on "Older

!!!!GOOD NEWS!!!!
YOU CAN NOW COUNT
YOUR ATTENDANCE AT
SOME OF OUR GENERAL
MEETINGS ON YOUR
HOURS! IF THE MEETING IS
EDUCATIONAL, SUCH AS
OUR JANUARY MEET-
ING ABOUT HOUSE
PLANTS, YOU CAN
COUNT IT!!!!

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LOOK BEFORE YOU PLANT

Before you plant a tree, shrub or flower ask yourself this question: Am I planting on, or near, a utility line or public easement? If you do not know where the utility lines are located on your property you could endanger yourself and your pocketbook too. Accidentally digging into a line is very dangerous and can result in serious personal injury. Having a utility company tell you to cut down your 25' spruce tree can quickly empty your checking account. Play it safe and find out where the utility lines are on your property and plant accordingly. You'll be safer and richer – just call 811 before you dig!



*Happy
Gardening!*