

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Knowledge for the Commonwealth



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
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VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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HOME GARDENING NEWSLETTER – January (Hampton Roads Area, VA)

This newsletter is geared to the home gardener for the care of plants that grow in the Hampton Roads Area (Eastern Virginia and NE North Carolina). It also is geared toward local gardening events. However, the plant information is based upon caring for plants anywhere in the American Horticultural Society Heat Zones 6-8 and the USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 6b – 8a, which includes a major portion of the Continental United States. Below are links to both maps in case you are not sure in which zones you garden.

<http://www.usna.usda.gov/Hardzone/ushzmap.html>
http://www.ahs.org/publications/heat_zone_map.htm#1

January is generally a quiet month for outdoor gardening. It is a time to browse catalogues and order your seeds and plants. It's also a great time to clean up and prepare your gardening equipment for the upcoming season. Now is a good time to improve your indoor gardening skills or take in some indoor garden lectures (See the mark your calendar section for upcoming lectures and major flower and garden shows). Don't forget to check other horticulture venues. If you want to see winter interest planting, take a walk through your Botanical Gardens or your local zoo. On average this month, it will be a high of 47 degrees and a low of 31 degrees and Hampton Roads will get 11 days of rain averaging 3.78 inches.

Cool Season Grasses (Fescue): Do nothing. If you fertilized properly your lawn should be green (unless it is covered with snow). Cut as necessary.

Cutting height: 2 ½ inch minimum. 4 inch optimum. pH: 5.5 – 6.5

Warm Season Grasses (Bermuda, Centipede, Zoysia, St. Augustine): Do nothing. Your lawn should be brown (unless you overseeded with an annual Rye grass). Some St. Augustine lawns may stay somewhat green in mild winters.

Cutting Heights: Bermuda ½" to 1", Centipede and Zoysia cut at 1". St. Augustine 2-3 inches.
pH: Bermuda & Zoysia 6.0 to 7.0; St Augustine 6.5 to 7.5; and Centipede 4.5 to 5.5.

General gardening tips for this month:

- Is snow good for plants? Not only does it provide us with a beautiful backdrop to the cardinal and chickadee feeding on the deck, when deep enough, it gives us a built-in reason to stay home for the day. From a gardener's perspective, it also offers warmth and wind protection to the overwintering spinach, pansies, and multitude of perennials that we had not yet mulched. Snow is an excellent insulator with thousands of tiny air pockets that hold the soil warmth around the plants it covers. A thick layer protects plants from the winds that dry and tear at leaves and buds. Snow can also be the catalyst for some turf diseases, especially, if leaves were left unraked before the snowfall.
- When was the last time you tested your soil for pH and other nutrients? Soil tests should be done at least once every 3 years.
- Take time now to relax and read all of those horticultural magazines and garden books that were put aside during the busy holiday season.
- If you are spreading the ashes from your wood burning stove in your garden, be aware that, over time, you are raising the pH of your soil. Have your soil pH tested before applying any more wood ashes.
- To make economical "sticky stakes" for trapping whiteflies and aphids, cut bright yellow cardboard or plastic, such as recycled detergent bottles or margarine tubs, into strips. Coat with petroleum jelly. Insert into unused pots or hang near problem areas.
- Dried, crushed shells from shrimp, crabs, and lobsters can be sprinkled on the soil to enrich it with calcium. A fertilizer made from crab shell wastes is already on the market.
- Plan to attend the garden and landscape meetings and clinics arranged by the Extension agents in your county or city. The latest and best gardening information will be presented.
- Looking for plants suitable for containers with roots capable of withstanding very cold winter temperatures? Try wintercreeper, white spruce, shrubby cinquefoil, yews, English ivy 'Baltica,' Vinca minor, creeping and shore junipers.
- A pot of Hens and Chicks (*Sempervivum spp.*) can liven up winter patios. These hardy succulents can remain outdoors year round and are especially prolific when placed in clay strawberry pots. Winter color can range from green to a pink or purple cast.
- If a few, consecutive, warm days have caused your bulbs to nose out from under protective mulch, plan to thicken the mulch layer as soon as cold weather returns to prevent freezing by exposure. On warm days, check to see if any perennials have been heaved by freezing and thawing of soil. Firmly press down any that have lifted and cover with at least 2 inches of organic mulch.
- In warmer parts of the state, tuberous begonias and caladiums can be started indoors now. In mountain areas, start next month. Set root starts in pots or shallow boxes of rich soil (1/3 sand, 1/3 peat, 1/3 loam). Cover with 1 inch of the mixture. Keep the pots moist, not wet, and in good light at 65 F. Transplant to larger pots in 6 weeks and set outside in the ground after all danger of frost.
- Seeds of celery, celeriac, sweet Spanish onion, parsley, anise, fibrous rooted begonia, snapdragon, verbena, geranium, and petunia can be sown indoors now for transplanting outdoors later in the spring.
- Add variety to your perennial border by planting some single or Japanese peonies. Flowers of these peonies are held erect on stiff stems and are more resistant to damage by wind and rain than the double varieties. Also, they make attractive, long-lasting cut flowers.

- Coarse materials, such as corn stalks and evergreen boughs, can be used to mulch chrysanthemums when extra protection is needed during cold winter. This is a great use for left-over Christmas tree branches.
- Consider using ferns in your home landscape. Maidenhair, sensitive, cinnamon, and Christmas ferns are good choices, especially for shady nooks. These ferns need an even supply of water throughout the growing season, so soil with a high humus content is ideal since it retains water.
- Reiger begonias are popular house plants that flower more or less continually. Their flowers resemble those of wax begonias except in size and variety of color; Reiger begonia flowers are about twice as large and come in shades of red, pink, salmon, orange, and yellow. After several months of flowering indoors, they may need their long stems cut back. New growth will emerge soon, and flowering begins again in three to four months.
- When terrarium plants become overgrown, it is best to discard them and start a new terrarium. Empty the container and wash it in hot, soapy water. When replanting, use fresh, sterilized soil and new, healthy plants.
- Gerbera seed started in January will bloom in June. Grow in full sun, providing ample moisture. Pot up a few in fall and grow in a cool, sunny window over winter.
- Geranium seeds may germinate irregularly, so take care transplanting from your seed tray until germination is complete. Do not pinch back seedling geranium plants. Pinching for shaping purposes can create a plant that looks good, but won't flower until very late in the season. To ensure bushy plants, provide bright light.
- If you want lily bulbs free from disease, raise them from seed. Start seed in flats of vermiculite in a greenhouse this month. Crows hybrids, 'Henryi,' Preston hybrids and 'Princepts Creelman' seeds will germinate within three to six weeks. When seedlings are large enough to handle, transplant them into a conventional potting soil. The second spring plants may be moved outside to flower beds dug two to three feet deep as lilies require good drainage. They will start to bloom that summer. Be careful not to overfeed lilies.
- Start ageratum, baby's breath, begonia, statice, pansy, sweet pea and snapdragon seed indoors this month or next. Provide plenty of light.
- Start seeds of these and other slow-developing flowers in January or February: alyssum, coleus, dusty miller, geraniums, impatiens, marigolds, perennials, petunias, phlox, portulaca, salvia, vinca and verbena.

Interior Gardening tips for this month:

- Research shows that a pot-in-a-pot set-up for irrigating houseplants is better than capillary action through water wicks. By using a small, unglazed clay pot placed inside a larger, glazed clay pot with a water reservoir in between, plants are better irrigated, and have higher visual quality, greater plant leaf area, and improved root growth.
- Although tomatoes, peppers and eggplants self-pollinate, to insure ample fruit set in home greenhouses, take a cotton swab or a fine paintbrush and transfer the pollen from one flower to another. Swirl the swab or brush lightly inside each flower, one after the other. Repeat this process the next day. Don't wait too long after the blossoms appear to pollinate them. For most plants, the most successful pollinating can be done the day after blossoms open. If successful, you will be able to see tiny fruits as the flowers wilt.
- To prolong bloom, protect poinsettias from drafts and keep them moderately moist.

- Turn and prune house plants regularly to keep them shapely. Pinch back new growth to promote bushy plants.
- Check all house plants closely for insect infestations. Quarantine gift plants until you determine that they aren't harboring any pests.
- **Overwatering indoor plants encourages root rot.** Water when the soil is dry to the touch.
- Keep winter fertilization of most houseplants to a minimum as plant growth is now at its slowest.
- House plants and holiday gift plants should not be placed on top of the television. This location is too warm and in most homes too far from windows to provide adequate light.
- Thin-leaved plants are very sensitive to transplant shock. If a plant wilts after repotting, encase the entire plant in a plastic bag. Twist the bag shut and punch two or three holes in it. Allow the plant to recuperate out of direct sunlight in this protected environment for two or three days. Resist the urge to water a wilted plant if the soil is moist.
- The low light levels of winter call for some adjustments in the placement of houseplants. Bring house plants that normally thrive on the north side of the house to east windows, while allowing the plants from the east more sun on the south. Also, give the plants that usually are set on the tables away from direct light a short midwinter visit to one of the less-exposed windowsills.
- When extremely cold nights prevail, draw the window shades or slip lengths of protective cardboard between plants and the glass. Move tender plants away from the window panes on the coldest nights.
- If you potted bulbs of daffodils, crocus, tulips, or hyacinths in the fall, bring them indoors now to force them into bloom. Place pots in a cool window that receives direct sunlight for at least a few hours each day. Allow soil to dry partially between each watering.
- Fluorescent tubes lose intensity with age. If you are using quite a few fluorescent lamps, change a few tubes at a time to avoid plant damage by the sudden increase in light intensity.
- Mealy bugs on your house plants can be killed by touching them with a cotton swab dipped in alcohol.
- If you are considering installing supplemental lighting for your indoor plants, the 48-inch, 40-watt fixture with two fluorescent tubes is the industry standard. Spare parts are readily available and high production volume assures lower costs for 48 inch than for other size tubes. Use one cool white and one warm white tube to obtain a light mix most beneficial to plants.
- Plants grown under lights need a nightly rest. An automatic timer is ideal to turn the lights off at night.
- When dusting the furniture also consider dusting the plants. With the short days of winter, light reduction must remain at a minimum. Wipe dust from broad-leaf plants at regular intervals using a cloth dampened with clear water.
- Give your holiday gift plants the best care so they can retain their original, attractive appearance. Keep them cool with a temperature of 70 degrees F during the day and 60 degrees at night. Set the pots on a tray of moistened gravel to maintain higher humidity.
- During the winter, most houses are too dry for house plants. Humidity can be increased by placing plants on trays lined with pebbles and filled with water to within one half inch of the base of the pot. If you heat with wood, keep a pot of water on the stove. The added moisture will be healthier for you as well as your plants.

- Force pips of lily-of-the-valley into flower; approximately three weeks at 60 to 70 degrees F are required.
- Maidenhair ferns need high humidity (at least 50 percent) so they are ideal for cultivation in terrariums.
- Hold cacti with kitchen tongs as you repot them and you won't get stickers in your fingers.
- House plants with large leaves and smooth foliage (philodendrons, dracaena, rubber plant, etc.) benefit if their leaves are washed at intervals to remove dust and grime, helping keep the leaf pores open.
- Transporting house plants between houses or in a car this time of year without protection for even "just a few minutes" can be detrimental. Wrap plants with 3 or 4 layers of newspaper or paper sleeves and staple the newspaper shut over the foliage.
- Spider plants (*Chlorophytum comosum*) need to be mature and to have short days (8 hours or less of light) to produce flower stalks, the runners on which the plantlets form.
- Leaf tip burn of spider plants can be caused by soluble salts build-up due to improper watering and too much fertilizer. Never allow the plant to dry out excessively; and when you do water, water thoroughly from the surface allowing plenty of water to drain out.
- Amaryllis bulbs may not bloom if they are in too large of a pot. There should be no more than 1 inch of space on each side of the bulb. At least one third of the bulb should be above the soil line.
- Always cut off the faded flowers of your amaryllis so no seeds form. Producing seeds robs the bulb of strength that should go to next years flowers.
- To insure next year's flowers on amaryllis, keep the plant growing strongly until mid-July before allowing it to go dormant.
- Very few conifers have been studied for potential use as house plants. For many years, the Norfolk Island pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*) and the Australian bunya-bunya (*A. bidwillii*) have been the only needled evergreens commonly suggested for growing indoors. Several cypresses, however, are proving equally good in home environments. Two are already appearing in plant shops. The columnar Italian cypress (*Cypressus sempervirens* 'Stricta') is a graceful, very narrow tree, probably the most narrow and rigidly upright of all conifers. The other, *C. macrocarpa* 'Goldcrest,' a cultivar of the Monterey cypress native to California, is widely grown there and in Europe in coastal gardens as specimens, hedges, windbreaks and topiary. Both these plants are hardy only to about 10 degrees F, so they are grown outdoors only in warm climates.
- The brilliant and velvety flowers of cineraria are shaped like daisies and come in shades of purple, red and blue. It is a plant that will flower brightly, but should be discarded when its show is past. Potted cineraria will last best in a cool, sunny window.
- The Chinese evergreen is a foliage plant that will survive even in a dark, basement apartment. Its silver-splashed leaves will grow well at very low light levels and it takes a minimum of care, as long as night temperatures don't drop much below 65 degrees F.
- Allow cacti to go semi-dormant in the winter. Water only to avoid shriveling. Place in full sun with a maximum day temperature of 65 degrees F. and a night temperature of 40 to 50 degrees F.
- *Philodendron* 'Red Venus' has uniquely shaped leaves with pronounced lobes that are distinctly hooked. The color, reddish to rich green with mahogany-colored petioles, adds to the overall beauty of the plant. In an 8-inch pot, this plant reaches a height of 18 inches with

a spread of 24 inches. Ask your local nurseryman or florist to stock this special plant.

➤ **House Plants and Safety:**

- As we look winter full in the face, as gardeners we often bring several of our plants indoors. They help to ease the winter doldrums and reduce indoor air pollution. If you have small children or pets, there are some plants that have poisonous parts and you need to be aware to prevent any accidental poisonings. You can keep these plants out of the reach of children and pets and still enjoy the plant. Below is a partial listing of common house plants with poisonous parts. For a more complete listing contact your local office of Virginia Cooperative Extension.
- Aloes (Lily family): The sap of the plant although beneficial for burns is poisonous if ingested.
- Arum Family: *Alocasia* (African Mask, Taro, Elephant Ear, etc), *Anthurium* (Flamingo Flower), Caladiums, Calla Lily, *Dieffenbachia* (Dumb Cane), Philodendron (*Philodendron spp*), Spathiphyllum (*Spathiphyllum spp.*), and Pothos (*Epipremnum aureum*). These plants contain microscopic, sharp crystals of calcium oxalate. If the leaves of any part of the plant are chewed or swallowed, they cause painful irritation and swelling of the mouth and throat. Usually the pain is severe enough to discontinue any further feeding on the plant. They can also cause skin and eye irritation on contact.
- Avocado (*Persea Americana*): Often grown from the seed of the avocado fruit, the foliage, bark, seeds, and unripe fruit is toxic to animals. Could be a problem for young children should they ingest those parts.
- Croton (*Codiaeum spp.*): The oil in leaves, stems, and seeds is highly irritating to the skin and pure oil is toxic if ingested by humans or animals. Actual poisoning cases have been rare, but due to the showy nature of the plant, caution should be used when the plant is around young children.
- Crown-of-Thorns (*Euphorbia milii*): This is a member of the spurge family; this cactus-like plant has a milky sap which exudes from the stem and leaves. This sap can cause irritation of the skin, mouth, and digestive tract. The sap is also caustic to the eyes. There are no cases of poisoning from Crown-of-Thorns on record.
- Dieffenbachia (*Dieffenbachia spp.*): Known as “Dumb cane”, this plant is also a member of the Arum family and as such contains the crystals of calcium oxalate. There have been recorded cases of severe swelling of the throat and tongue with dieffenbachia that have occasionally been fatal. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea are additional symptoms of poisoning with this plant.
- Ficus (*Ficus carica*, *Ficus spp.*): The fig family is known for “fig dermatitis” a common and sometimes quite severe skin blistering and rash. It is often seen in those who handle the foliage of the common fig plant frequently. Many ornamental fig plants cause an allergic contact dermatitis similar to what you would find with poison ivy as the sap from the plant can be highly irritating. The Fiddle Leaf Fig should be considered dangerous to humans as it has been found to be highly toxic to laboratory rats.

- Jerusalem Cherry (*Solanum pseudocapsicum*): A member of the nightshade family, the entire plant contains a toxic steroid alkaloid which acts on the heart. The attractive and brightly colored fruits are especially dangerous. Eating 3-4 of these fruits has proven fatal to children. The onset of symptoms of poisoning can be delayed for several hours after ingestion of the plant.
- Poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*): The milky juice of the plant can be irritating to the skin for some people.
- Sansevieria (Snake plant or Mother-in-laws tongue): It is fairly common and causes vomiting or diarrhea if ingested, can cause contact dermatitis and rashes from the sap.
- This is a partial listing of houseplants which could be poisonous and for more information, refer to your local Virginia Cooperative Extension Office. This is not meant to take the place of advice and assistance of qualified medical personnel. Information for this listing comes from Common Poisonous Plants and Mushrooms, Turner and Szczawinski, 2001 and Poisonous Plants of the Southeastern United States, University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Georgia Cooperative Extension, 1998.
- UC Davis has a good website for poisonous plants (Unfortunately all are listed, houseplants are not separate): <http://envhort.ucdavis.edu/ce/king/PoisPlant/Tox-COM.htm>

Herb Gardening Tips for this month:

- For an interesting ornamental plant and a culinary addition, buy a plump, unshriveled, ginger root at the grocery store and plant it in a light, sandy soil just under the surface in a 6- to 8-inch pot. Place it in a warm, sunny window and keep damp until shoots appear. Water more frequently and fertilize monthly with high-phosphorus fertilizer. Harvest your crop in about eight months saving a piece to replant.
- Parsley seeds are slow to germinate. Sometimes it can be three or more weeks before they show signs of growth above the soil. To encourage them to sprout more rapidly, soften the seeds by soaking them overnight in warm water. Then put 3 or 4 seeds in a pot full of soilless mix, such as equal parts of peat moss and vermiculite, plus a tiny bit of ground limestone and fertilizer. Keep the media moist during the entire germination time. Set plants in garden in early May.
- To invigorate potted chives, cut them back to 1 inch above soil. Place in the refrigerator for two weeks, and then place the pot in a sunny window.

Fruits and Vegetable Gardening Tips for this month:

- Know your last frost dates for your area. In Virginia, for the Mountain Area it's May 10 to 15; in the Piedmont Area (this includes Suffolk, Isle of Wright and Suffolk) it's April 20-30; and the Tidewater Area (this includes the Eastern Shore, Mid and Lower Peninsulas) it's April 10-21. This date is important to get your vegetable seeds/plants in the ground at the proper time.
- The following vegetables can be planted 60 days before the last frost date. In Hampton Roads the last frost date is between April 10-21st. Planting dates for Asparagus, Collards, Onions, Garden Peas, Radishes, Spinach, and Turnips would be in mid to late February.

- For a listing of vegetable planting dates visit <http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/envirohort/426-331/table.html>.
- Review your last year's variety selections and note which had more insect and/or disease problems. Maybe change varieties or add different varieties to see if you have better resistance to pests.
- If you haven't already done so, clean up your vegetable gardens and get them ready for the spring and summer crops. Make sure you remove old crops and other vegetative matter as they can harbor diseased and insect infested material. Tilling your garden will get many of your annoying weed seeds to the surface and the cold January/February weather will kill them for you.
- Make sure your tools are clean and sharp. Use a rasp or file to remove dings and burs from your shovels, spades, hoes, and trowels (you do not need to have a knife edge ... just a clean smooth one). Soak tools for about 15 minutes in a 9 part water to 1 part bleach solution. Cover with a light coat of 3 in 1 oil or WD40 type product to prevent rusting.
- You've heard of salad gardens. How about a gazpacho garden? As part of your garden planning, set aside an area for planting cucumbers, onions, sweet peppers, hot peppers, basil, and, of course, tomatoes, to provide the makings for a delightful, homegrown soup. Spicy salsa ingredients make a great garden, too!
- Review your vegetable garden plans. Perhaps a smaller garden with fewer weeds and insects will give you more produce.
- Continue harvesting the carrots, parsnips, turnips, and horseradish left in the garden in the fall.
- Want to grow asparagus from seed, but hate to wait the extra year to harvest? Try seeding the asparagus indoors in late winter to get two year's worth of growth in one season. Plant seeds 3/4 inch deep in flats. Sow them 1 inch apart in rows 2 inches apart. Provide as much natural light as possible and supplement it with fluorescent lighting. Fertilize the seedlings every three weeks once they have their true leaves.
- Sod ground covers in peach orchards can suppress vigorous vegetative growth while allowing fruit to attain normal size. Soil moisture is generally found to be higher under sod than in areas under constant cultivation.
- Prune grapes in January or February. If this job is left too late in the season, bleeding from cut ends will occur.
- Prune blueberry shrubs & remove dead stalks in January or February.

Don't forget to visit

Master Gardener/Cooperative Extension Programs:

<http://www.chesapeake.va.us/services/depart/agricul/master-gard.html> (Chesapeake MG Programs)

<http://www.vbmg.org> (Virginia Beach MG Programs)

<http://www.nmgv.org> (Norfolk MG Program)

<http://jccwmg.org/> (James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardeners)

<http://www.yorkcounty.gov/vce> (York County MG Programs)

www.ext.vt.edu/resources (Virginia Tech Gardening Information)

Other Horticulture sites of interest:

<http://www.virginiazoo.org/horticulture/> (Virginia Zoo Horticulture)
<http://norfolkbotanicalgarden.org> (Norfolk Botanical Garden)
<http://www.fredheutte.org/> (Fred Heutte Center Information)
<http://www.tidewaterbeekeepers.org/> (Tidewater Beekeepers Association)
<http://www.butterflysocietyofva.org/> (Butterfly Society of Virginia)

JANUARY PRUNING CALENDAR: Changes from previous month underlined. The below pruning calendar applies to all of Virginia and was compiled by Virginia Tech. Shrubs and trees have 'Best time to Prune' months, 'Do not Prune' months, or timing is not critical months. Those plants listed below are the "best time to prune" or 'do not prune'. If a tree or shrub is not listed, then timing is not critical this month. The best time to prune is based upon optimizing flowers or fruits and reducing summer/winter stresses. Deadheading or removing spent flowers on flowering shrubs is OK all growing season, for plants such as Rose, Crepe Myrtle, Butterfly bushes, etc. Pruning to remove diseased or dead branches is necessary when you see them. Contact your local extension agent if you need more detailed information about any specific plant. REMEMBER to keep your pruning equipment sharp. Make sure you clean them each time you prune with 9 parts water to 1 part bleach solution or the same ratio water to antiseptic mouthwash to prevent the spread of plant disease.

When the weather is hot and dry, try to avoid pruning your plants. If you do, the plant will require extra water. Wait for cooler days if at all possible.

(NOTE: For those of you who live in the more temperate (Hampton Roads) or coastal areas of VA or NC you may want to hold off pruning any Shrubs and Trees marked with an * until January or February as these plants produce flowers on new seasons growth. Coastal areas tend to get some sustained warm days in winter and the plants can be 'tricked' into thinking spring is here only to be hit with a frost and kill some of the new flower buds.)

Shrubs: Abelia, Arborvitae, Beautyberry, Boxwood, Chastetree, Cherrylaurel, Clethra, Cotoneaster, Crape Myrtle, Eleagnus (thorny), Euonymus (evergreen/deciduous), Holly (deciduous), Hydrangea (summer/late blooming), Hypericum (St. Johnswort), Juniper, Nandina, Osmanthus, Photinia, Mugo Pine, Privet (Ligustrum), Potentilla, Smoke Tree, Spirea (Summer Blooming), Sumac, and Yew.

Do Not Prune: Flowering Almond, Aucuba, Azalea, Barberry, Bayberry, Beautybush, Broom (Cytisus), Butterfly Bush, Camellia japonica (spring bloomer), Camellia sasanqua (fall bloomers), Daphne, Deutzia, Forsythia, Fothergilla, Harry Lauder (Walking Stick), Hibiscus (incl: Rose of Sharon & Althea), Holly (evergreen), Honeysuckle, Hydrangea (Spring Blooming), Indian Hawthorne, Jasmine (winter), Kerria, Leucothoe, Lilac, Mahonia (Oregon holly-grape), Mountain Laurel, Pearlbrush, Pieris, Pittosporum, Pyracantha, Quince, Rhododendron, Rose, Serviceberry, Spirea (Spring Blooming), Sweetshrub, Viburnum, Weigela, Pussy Willow, and Witch hazel.

Evergreen Trees: (Seldom need pruning. Most evergreen trees are pruned during the winter months.) Arborvitae, Atlas Cedar, Deodar Cedar, Chamaecyparis, Fir, Holly (evergreen), Juniper/Red Cedar, Leyland Cypress, Southern Magnolia, and Live Oak.

Do Not Prune: None.

Deciduous Trees: Alder, Birch, Crape Myrtle, and Stewartia.

Do Not Prune: (except to correct damage): Buckeye, Flowering Cherry, Crabapple, Dogwood, Elm, Fringe Tree, Hawthorn, Horsechestnut, Magnolia, Maple, Flowering (Peach, Pear or Plum), Redbud, or Serviceberry.

Mark your calendar: (open to everyone and free unless indicated)

3rd Wednesday of the Month: York extension agent Jim Orband and Daily Press gardening columnist Kathy Van Mullekom answer your **gardening questions** noon to 1 p.m. each month on the Hear/Say public radio program at WHRV 89.5. Cathy Lewis hosts the show. Typically, the gardening segment airs the third Wednesday of each month, but schedule times do change. Phone numbers for the show are 440-2665 or toll free 1-800-940-2240. Questions can also be e-mailed to hearsay@whro.org or visit online, visit www.whrv.org/hearsay.

Chesapeake Lunch and Learn Series. Noon. Each month there is a free lunch and learn lecture of various aspects of home gardening. All lectures are held at the Chesapeake Main Library starting at Noon. Below are the upcoming lectures and dates. Don't forget to bring your lunch. For more information contact (757) 382-6348.

- **January 18 (Wed)** with Jim Lachowicz, Chesapeake Master Gardener Volunteer and Turf Specialist. Topic: **Alternatives to Turf Lawns** – The use of ground covers in lieu of turf for full sun to full shade areas.
- **February 15 (Wed)** with Mike Andruczyk, Chesapeake Horticulture Agent, Topic: **Flowers of Madagascar** - slide show.
- **March 15 (Wed)** with Jim Lachowicz, Chesapeake Master Gardener Volunteer and Turf Specialist. Topic: **Spring Lawn Care**. Caring for warm season lawns (St Augustine, Centipede, Zoysia and Bermuda lawns).
- **April 5 (Wed)** – **Vegetable Gardening**. ...
- **May 16 (Wed)** with Janet Tenerowicz, Chesapeake Master Gardener Volunteer, Topic: **Herb Crafts**.

January 20-22nd (Fri-Sun): **The 2006 Virginia Flower and Garden Show**, themed "Magical Gardens". Pavilion on 19th Street in Virginia Beach. **Fees.** Visit <http://www.vafgs.org/> for more information.

- **January 21 (Sat) 1:00 PM:** Lecture on **Spring Ephemerals** with Marion Lobstein, sponsored by the South Hampton Roads Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society. Upstairs Lecture Room, Convention Center. Learn about the magic and beauty of our native spring ephemerals. These delicate wildflowers such as spring beauties, Virginia bluebells, Dutchman's breeches, troutlilies, and trilliums are some of the earliest wildflowers to bloom in nature areas or your

garden but have many special secrets of their brief time above ground in the spring. Learn about pollination, seed dispersal by ants, rhizomes and corms, and other special information about these wildflowers that bring us so much color and beauty in early spring.

January 30 - February 2nd (Mon-Thursday): Mid-Atlantic Horticultural Short Course - Ramada Inn on 56th and Atlantic - Mon-Wed is for professionals and Thursday has a homeowner track as well as pesticide recertification training. Fees based on the number of days attending. Visit website <http://www.mahsc.org/> for more information and to register.

February 9-12 (Thur – Sun): The 17th Annual Maymont Flower & Garden Show: “Table for Two”, Greater Richmond Convention Center Richmond , Virginia. **Fees.** Visit http://www.maymont.org/events/flower_show.asp for more information.

Want to be a Master Gardener? Contact your local Master Gardener program at the numbers listed below. Most classes are held starting in late winter through spring, most are held during the day. For times, dates and locations contact your local Master Gardener or Cooperative Extension Office. Many programs have fall or winter registration sessions.

- **Chesapeake** – Pre-registration is over but a few seats remain. Call the Extension office at 382-6348 to get registered. Classes begin in late January every Tuesday and Thursday morning through mid April.
- **Currituck County Master Gardener** classes begin Tuesday, February 7, 2006 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm and will continue for 13 weeks. They will be held at the Historic Courthouse in Currituck County and are sponsored by the NC Cooperative Extension. If you are interested in becoming a Currituck Master Gardener call the Extension office at 232-2262 to receive an application.
- **Norfolk Master Gardeners** are accepting applications from Norfolk residents for its Class of 2006. This 10-week training to become a Master Gardener begins on February 7, 2006. Classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:30 am to noon at the Norfolk Botanical Garden. Instructors for this training are Virginia Cooperative Extension Agents, other VCE experts, and local horticultural professionals. Cost more information contact (757) 683-2816.

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If you have any questions, you can call or visit your Virginia Cooperative Extension listed below:

Virginia (area code 757):

Chesapeake	382-6348	Eastern Shore:	414-0731	Hampton:	727-1401
Isle of Wight:	365-6261	James City:	564-2170	Newport News:	591-4838

Norfolk: 683-2816 Portsmouth: 393-5314 Suffolk: 923-2050
Virginia Beach: 427-4769 York County: 890-4940

North Carolina (area code 252):

Currituck: 232-2262 Dare: 473-4290 Pasquotank: 338-3954
Chowan-Gates-Perquimans: 482-6585

Currently, this newsletter is only being distributed electronically by e-mail. This newsletter is authored by Jim Lachowicz, a Chesapeake Master Gardener and edited by Lynnette J. Swanson, City of Norfolk Horticulture Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension. If you wish to be added to this free monthly gardening newsletter, send your e-mail address to jlachowicz@cox.net.

“We hope you find this gardening newsletter helpful.”
Happy Gardening !!!