

Whatcom County Master Gardeners

Weeder's Digest

MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The 2006 Master Gardener Training begins on March 2, 2006. At this time we still do not have a full class; we can take 15 more students. So, if you have any friends who have wanted to take the class, now is the time to recruit them. We will be holding class over in the Central Lutheran Church, so if any of you veterans wish to monitor classes, that is where to go. Remember, if you come please sit in the back of the room to give the new trainees priority seating. We have included a Training schedule in this newsletter for your use.

Hey, you know that I have plants blooming now that are

at least three weeks early! My Chinese Witch Hazel usually blooms the last week of January, This year it began the 1st of January. The weeds are growing, the lawn is starting to grow, which is causing some of us to wish for some cold weather. How about you?

Now is the time to finish your winter pruning, and applying the winter dormant spray. Don't forget to save the fruit tree scions for the grafting class in March. Now is also the time to start seeds for later sale at the plant sale.

See you at the Foundation meetings!

~AL McHENRY

EDITOR'S NOTE: NEWSLETTER LAYOUT

This month the *Weeder's Digest* receives a new look.

In 1999 a Master Gardener trainee, Toni Droscher, offered to lend her desktop publishing skills to our monthly Master Gardener newsletter. The result was the *Weeder's Digest*.

This month our office upgraded the software we use to produce this newsletter. The new software, Adobe InDesign CS2, has several new features. I decided to use the *Weeder's Digest* to test out some of the new features. Any comments or questions would be welcome, email me at karrimac@wsu.edu.

Special thanks go to Dan Coyne for the wonderful photographs he provided for the banner and for use as backgrounds throughout this newsletter.

~KARRI NEUHAUSER

Master Gardeners provide public education in gardening and home horticulture based on research-based information from Washington State University Extension.

"Cultivating Plants, People and Communities since 1973"

CALENDAR

February 2
Foundation Board Meeting
Extension Office
10 a.m. to Noon

February 8
Bus Trip to NW Flower & Garden Show
All Day

February 9
Monthly Foundation Mtg.
Extension Office
7 to 9 p.m.

February 9
Plant Sale Planning Mtg.
Tennant Lake Interpretive Center
10 a.m.

February 28
Welcoming Party
WECU Educational Center
7 to 9 p.m

March 2
First day of 2006 Class
Central Lutheran Church
9 a.m to 4 p.m.

March 6
Phytophthora ramorum Educate To Detect Program
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Snohomish County
For further information and other dates see article on page 7

March 11
Fruit Tree Grafting Clinic
Tenant Lake Interpretive Center
9 a.m. to Noon

Ongoing
Master Gardener Breakfasts
Babe's in Ferndale
Wednesdays 7:30 -9 a.m.

FOUNDATION NOTES

A DREAM COMES TRUE

We plan and scheme and even dream. Our plans are carried out. Our schemes are often frustrated. Our dreams too often remain just that. A totally unexpected, outrageously generous gift was given to the Master Gardener Foundation just as the year ended. That gift is clearly the stuff dreams are made of!

The donor, who has decided to remain anonymous, told the board simply, "I didn't want you to receive a bequest in my will, without any idea of who I am or what I might want you to do with it." He is a creative, hard-working, master composter – an amiable guy who has been dreaming of a new greenhouse for Whatcom County Master Gardeners. But he did more than dream. He did his homework, investigating costs and possibilities. He looked at the current site and talked with Dennis at Hovander about others. He gave us more than \$66,000 in stock with the understanding that we would invest his gift in an improved greenhouse, and then he sat down with the Board to share his vision. A simple thank you is far too little.

We can make our appreciation come to life by being good stewards of his gift. That is the intention of the "New Greenhouse Committee." Jean Powell has graciously agreed to pull the committee together and get it functioning before she leaves us later this spring. I liken her contribution to that of a small business incubator: she will provide the leadership and the support to ensure a successful endeavor. The committee will find its work challenging. Decisions about what, where and the ever-challenging how will need to be carefully made. The committee will need to carefully consider not only the financial requirements of the greenhouse but the ongoing demand for that all important human resource – available volunteer hours. The Committee will need to work within the constraints of the 20-year Whatcom County Parks

Plan for Hovander which is being developed. Clearly this work is as ambitious as any the Foundation has undertaken. The rest of us can make our appreciation come to life by supporting the Committee as it does its work and by giving the Committee all the time it needs to do its work. Supporting Jean on the Committee are: Judy Boxx, Linda Bergquist, Mary Etta Foster, Karen Gilliam, Chris Hurst, Dick McClure, Pat Nelson and Bill Swedberg. Feel free to share both your ideas and your thanks with them directly.

THE 2006 MASTER GARDENER CLASS

Orientation is being held Tuesdays and Thursdays for those interested in the 2006 class. So far the students are a well qualified, dedicated and totally diverse group. The numbers are small however. While we had to turn away applicants in 2005, we have ample room for a larger class in 2006. Talk to your neighbors, your friends and fellow gardeners and encourage them to join the new class. They can apply by going to whatcom.wsu.edu/mastergardener or by phoning 360.676.6736. Class starts March 2, so the sooner the better.

A DREAM THAT COULD NOT BE REALIZED

The idea of a new formal mentoring program for the 2006 class has not been realized. There simply was not enough interest to ensure success. We will continue the informal mentoring that has characterized our organization. Please plan on joining our new class members in the classroom as your schedule allows. More importantly, please plan on supporting these 2006 Master Gardener Interns as they expand their learning to hands-on experience at Hovander and in the clinics.

— GRETCHEN WHITE, MGF PRESIDENT

FEBRUARY MASTER GARDENER FOUNDATION MEETING

We are proud to present a panel of area experts at our 7 p.m. Thursday, February 9, meeting. David Simonson, Faye Agner and Karen Gilliam will share their experience and accumulated knowledge of gardening. During these dark, rainy winter days turn your thoughts to the next growing season and what questions you might have. Please present your questions in written form to the panel moderator.

PLANT SALE MEETING: FEBRUARY 9

All Master Gardeners are invited to share ideas, and concerns at a planning meeting for our Annual Plant Sale. The meeting is at The Tennant Lake Interpretive Center in Ferndale on February 9 at 10 a.m. If you are unable to make this meeting but would like to have input on the sale, please call or email Diane Rapoza. She will relate your ideas to the group.

YOU'RE INVITED!

Just a reminder about our Welcoming Party for the new Master Gardener class to be held on Tuesday, February 28.

Please bring a very small plate of finger food - sweet or savory – with appropriate serving utensils, toothpicks, etc. The hospitality committee will provide small plates, napkins, cups, coffee, tea and water.

Plan to arrive by 6:45 p.m. to allow time to set up. WEAR YOUR NAME TAGS!!!!

More information about the flow of the evening will be sent to you a week or so prior to the event.

Let me know if you have any suggestions to pass on to the Welcoming Committee. See you there, Laurel Bliss.

TIS THE SEASON

YOUR MONTHLY GARDENING GUIDE BY FAYE AGNER

Here it is February again. This is the month of chocolate and roses. Give live plants instead of cut flowers, but don't forget the chocolates! We have had our share of rain so far this year. When it comes down, it comes down. Now, maybe, we can get down to a good growing season this year with no water shortage. However, this doesn't mean we can waste this precious resource.

Slugs-friend or foe? Slugs do have some redeeming factors, believe it or not. Without the slugs, our friend the garter snake might languish, ducks and other birds might grow slack without the challenge of gummy beaks and weeds, rank and gross in nature would possess our patch of Earth. When slugs are minding their own business, eating weeds and entertaining snakes and birds, they present no problems. For unknown reasons, some of them go bad and sneak into the garden. Even a small patrol of them on a night raid can wreak havoc on vegetable and flower seedlings. They also have an uncanny knack for finding the first ripe tomato of the summer and burrowing in. Large ragged holes in leaves and fruits and glistening trails of dried slime implicate slugs, even if they've eased away from the scene of the outrage.

There are a variety of ways to control slugs. Let's start with the critters' need for hiding places out of direct sunlight. Removing nearby boards, brush piles and other refuse. Mowing weed jungles eliminates hiding places for the adults and sheltered areas for their eggs. You could use the refuse strategy by creating hiding places with boards, tarps and the like. When slugs take refuge under these traps by day, you can collect them and destroy them.

If you have cheap labor available try bounty hunting. Arm your available help with broomsticks with nails pounded through and send them out on stabbing expeditions. Agree on a per slug bounty and trust their count. You could also arm them with a squirt bottle filled with a mixture of ammonia and water. Use about a

third ammonia to two thirds water. Slugs have an appetite for beer, they seem to get drunk and drown.

Baits work very well. The drawback with the old metaldehyde baits was that they worked on cats and dogs as well. The new baits containing iron phosphate are pet safe and effective.

Spraying. Now is the time to pick a mild, dry morning, and spray for peach leaf curl. You can contact your nursery person or the Extension Office for advice on what to use. Do not neglect your fruit trees or your ornamentals for a spring spray.

Odds and ends. If you have not done so already, now is the time to put the grey, wet days to use by cleaning, sharpening and treating the handles of your tools. By painting the handles a bright color they will be more easily found where they have been dropped. Some of our Northwest seed catalogs have very good cultural information about how to grow, when to start and all that type of information. Pull any weed you see now, to prevent their spread and keep a keen eye out for slugs and their eggs.

Check out storage. Any stored geraniums and fuchsias should be watered more frequently to begin a new growth cycle. Pinch back any long spindly stems to encourage compactness. If you kept them in the dark over the winter, than they should be exposed to more light. A little feeding can be done to get them back to growing stage.

Now is the time to give your houseplants a treat. Give them a lukewarm shower to wash the dust off their leaves and snip off any yellowing leaves. When begonia, hoyo ivy and pothos get leggy, cut them back to initiate new growth and encourage bushiness (palms are an exception; if you decapitate them, they die).

Tend to your moth orchids by sniping back the stem after the last bloom has faded. Cut it back to the node that is just below where the oldest (first) flower emerged; make the cut about ¼ inch

above the node. This often triggers moth orchids to send out a secondary bloom spike. Mist the plants every couple of days and water when roots start to dry out.

Unlike some vegetables, peas and spinach readily germinate in cool soil. Sow them directly in mid-to-late February. Plant seed potatoes as soon as you find them in garden centers.

Now is the time to feed asparagus, rhubarb and horseradish by top dressing the beds with a 2 inch layer of compost or composted manure.

Cut back hybrid roses to the most vigorous three to five canes. Prune landscape roses to shape. Sturdy gloves are a good idea for this chore.

Great plants developed by the Elisabeth C. Miller Library in Seattle, the Great Plant Picks program (www.great-plantpicks.org) spotlight bulbs, perennials, vines, shrubs, and trees that excel in the Northwest. See many of the 2006 selections at the Northwest Flower and Garden Show. (February 8 – 12: tickets from \$19; Washington State Convention Center, Seattle; www.gardenshownw.com or 206.789.5333).

ALERT ALERT ALERT

The plant sale this year will be on May 6, 2006, rather than on the customary Saturday before Mother's Day. Mark your calendars now with big RED letters so you don't forget! While we are on the subject, you are getting plants ready to share aren't you?

WHO AM I?

I am a shrub and am grown for small, needle like leaves and abundant, usually small flowers that may be bell shaped, urn shaped, or tubular. I am a member of a very large family. I am only talking about my small clan, most widely known and used in this area. I am a showy plant and by judicious planning, you can have some of me in bloom in your yard year 'round.

Last month Helenium.

PLANT OF THE MONTH:

BLEEDING HEART VINE

By CHERYLL GREENWOOD KINSLEY

Family: Verbenaceae (Verbena family)

Genus: *Clerodendrum*

Species: *thomsoniae*

[Regular readers will not be surprised to learn that taxonomic and nomenclature issues may affect your ability to learn more about this plant. Instead of Verbenaceae, you might find it included in the Labiatae or mint family, which is sometimes named Lamiaceae; and there might be a “p” included in its species name, turning thomsoniae into thompsoniae. There are reliable sources on each side of these possibilities and as I write this I haven’t received an authoritative response to my inquiries. So I’m sticking with Verbenaceae and thomsoniae. My money’s on the plant’s namesake being Scottish naturalist Joseph Thomson.]

It’s not often I write in this column about plants that are unsuited to growing outdoors in the Pacific Northwest. It follows I don’t write much about houseplants. I once heard Craig MacConnell describe them as “long-term perishables” and I tend to agree, even though for almost 14 years I’ve fussed over a particular Norfolk Island pine. It’s not a *Pinus* at all, of course, but an *Araucaria heterophylla*--and it’s certainly not native to these parts. It demands more care than most plants in my yard, but I’m quite fond of it just the same. So we all have our soft spots. And if we’re about to indulge them, we could do worse than presenting our sweetheart with a nice houseplant for Valentine’s Day. Most last longer and cost less than a dozen red roses. One that stole my heart

the first time I spotted it more than 25 years ago is *Clerodendrum thomsoniae*, sometimes called bleeding heart vine or glorybower. It is indeed glorious.

Do not confuse this bleeding heart vine with any members of the genus *Dicentra* commonly called “bleeding heart.” These--including those delicate, spring-blooming woodland plants that grow so well here--are native to North America and eastern Asia. *C. thomsoniae* is a heat-loving plant, native to West Africa, and can be grown successfully outdoors in only a few areas of the southern United States. But it makes a fine houseplant anywhere. In the wild it is a vine that can grow to 12 feet. In captivity--your living room, say, or your kitchen--it’s likely to stay under three feet. So *C. thomsoniae* makes a large houseplant. It shows to best effect when it’s in a hanging container or at least placed on a high shelf. When properly sited and cared for, it will be full with lush foliage and branches that spill over the edge of whatever container you choose. Its bark is a pretty reddish brown. Its nicely shaped and patterned leaves are large, close set, and a beautiful deep, dark green. They’re really quite attractive, all on their own. But what really sets *C. thomsoniae* apart from typical houseplants are its masses of stunning red and white blossoms. Calyces of the purest white imaginable shelter blooms--sometimes called corollae--of pure red for a most striking effect.

Purchase a *C. thomsoniae* commercially or grow yours from a small start shared by a friend. Use fresh, sterile potting soil to avoid passing along any fungal diseases, including botrytis, to which this plant is known to be vulnerable. Of course, using fresh potting soil is always recommended when growing plants in containers. Water the plant when the soil surface feels dry and feed it every two

weeks with a complete, balanced, water-soluble fertilizer--except when the plant is taking its winter’s rest from Thanksgiving to--you guessed it--Valentine’s Day. Water sparingly then and don’t fertilize at all. Move your plant to a place where the temperature won’t exceed 65 degrees during the day or drop below 50 at night. Expect some leaf drop as the plant protests change before it adjusts.

Prune your *C. thomsoniae* in mid-February just before new growth emerges. You’ll want to remove old, overcrowded shoots, particularly any that are too long for your taste. Plus, those flowers grow on new wood. So don’t be afraid to cut the plant back severely. Then place it for the growing season where it will get bright but indirect light and enjoy the typical indoor temperatures of the Pacific Northwest. A bit of humidity will keep the leaves fresh so let it live away from direct sources of heat. You’ll enjoy the heaviest flower crop from early spring through mid-summer and then it will slow a bit into the fall.

Good air circulation, appropriate watering, regular feeding while growing plus proper drainage--these will help your bleeding heart vine thrive. Keep it healthy: when your friends see it, they’ll want stem cuttings to start their own Valentine’s Day surprise for next year.

The author of our Plant of the Month feature since 1997, Cheryll is a writer and an editor and a dedicated Master Gardener in Whatcom County. Next to the people in her life, words and plants--their history, their habits, and their needs--are her favorite things. When she’s not at her keyboard, you might find her helping others learn about gardening or tending her own small plot--chasing horsetail, counting ladybugs, and looking for a spot where she can wedge in just one more Cryptomeria. You can reach her, if you’d like, by e-mail: cheryll@cgwkeywordsmith.com.

GARDEN FRIENDS & FOES:



*Give me a land of boughs in leaf,
A land of trees that stand;
Where trees are fallen there is grief;
I love no leafless land."*

- A.E. Housman

Bacterial Introduction

From a production grower's standpoint bacterial diseases of plants are very difficult to control, and although bacterial diseases when compared to fungal diseases are relatively few, they can cause grim monetary fatalities. For the backyard gardener they can be just as devastating, for bacterial diseases in addition to visible symptoms manifested by the plant, can become systemic in the plant's vascular tissue making it unrealistic to try and eradicate the pathogen by pruning out the symptomatic tissues or by applying a pesticide to the plant surface. Moreover, bacteria undergo exponential growth, which means that their populations can double in several hours, depending on the bacterial species and favorable environmental conditions. To coin a catchy term, bacterial diseases are explosive; by the time symptoms are acknowledged, the pathogen is often entrenched and well on its way to not only destroying the plant but the crop as well.

Generally, managing bacterial diseases depends mostly on host resistance, which may not necessarily be available for the crop or plant you desire. Thank goodness there are cultural and sanitation practices and in some cases biological control agents and bactericides that can be effectively integrated into a disease management program.

Lets target *Pseudomonas syringae*

P. syringae is accountable for a number of significant plant diseases in whatcom.wsu.edu/mastergardener

THE QUESTION OF BACTERIA

By KRISTINE K. SCHLAMP

the Pacific Northwest. This causal agent is responsible for diseases commonly referred to as bacterial canker, bacterial blast, or bacterial gummosis (diseases are named from the symptoms they cause, the host or the pathogen). So maybe it would be easier to start with the wide array of symptoms that *P. syringae* can cause to an extensive assortment of ornamental, vegetable and fruit plants.

Wide-ranging Plant Symptoms Caused by *P. syringae*

To narrow down diagnosis of plant disease we often rely heavily on the symptoms that a pathogen causes the plant. Sounds simple right? Unfortunately, its not simple at all, that's why we keep plant pathologists employed, but don't despair for you can narrow things down and make what we call 'educated guesses' and then confirm your diagnosis with a trained professional. So what happens to complicate matters, more than one symptom can appear simultaneously on a single plant. Symptoms will vary depending on the different strain of the pathogen, the species of plant infected as well as the part of the plant infected. What do you want to look for if you suspect *P. syringae* is attacking your plants? Common symptoms include stem cankers which can exude goo, officially called 'gummosis', the cankers can enlarge to girdle the stem or branch, tip or shoot dieback, leaf and fruit spots, dead dormant buds, flower blast and necrotic leaf veins which is a result of a systemic infection. The most common of these symptoms in our area is tip or shoot dieback which has been found on approximately 40 woody deciduous plants in the Pacific Northwest. Some of the plants that were infected include aspen, blueberry, dogwood, filbert, magnolia, lilac and oriental pear.

Why is My Plant Susceptible to *P. syringae*?

The jury is still out on this one, in

other words the experts do not necessarily agree on the severity of the diseases, most feel that *P. syringae* is an opportunistic bacterium, which means that it waits until the host is weakened and then invades. But either way there are conditions that you can watch for, the first being if your plant happens to be attacked by something else and is under stress then the disease severity is greater. Wounding of any kind such as mechanical (pruning or weedwacking damage) as well as frost injury will allow the bacterium entrance. Certain factors such as soil pH and nutrient deficiencies or excesses may also predispose trees to infection. The moral of this story is "keep your plants happy and healthy" and they will better withstand attack and be able to fight off infection of a pathogen.

How is *P. syringae* spread?

Bacteria are ubiquitous, they are found everywhere and *P. syringae* can easily be moved around by wind, rain, insects, people (pruning or mechanical equipment), and infested plant material.

Where does *P. syringae* live?

There are several potential survival sources for *P. syringae*. The pathogen can overwinter in plant buds which appear to be perfectly healthy. These

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Kristine K. Schlamp is the IPM Coordinator for Whatcom County. Her background is well suited for this position; She holds a Master's of Pest Management degree from Simon Fraser University, British Columbia (BC) and has spent a lot of time in the field working on various pest problems and has been exposed to a wide variety of systems, including urban, agricultural, horticultural and even forestry projects. I have worked with a variety of field crops. With these experiences and skills, I am ready and willing to take on the challenge of applying myself to the agricultural concerns of Whatcom County.

WHATCOM WEEDS:



YELLOW ARCHANGEL

By LAUREL BALDWIN

Lamium galeobdolon

THREAT: Yellow archangel is a native to Europe, introduced as a garden ornamental and groundcover. It has silver variegated foliage and yellow flowers. It can be very invasive, spreading both by seed and by runners. It will grow in most soil types, soil pH and in dry to moist soil.

DESCRIPTION: Yellow archangel is a trailing herbaceous perennial and member of the mint family. It grows up to two feet tall and the leaves remain green throughout the winter. The heart-shaped to ovate leaves are green with silver variegation and have doubly toothed margins. Yellow archangel spreads by stolons, above ground runners that root at the nodes. It has yellow flowers, blooming in late spring or early summer. The flowers are hooded, double-lipped and occur in whorls of 5 to 15. Yellow archangel prefers shade but will tolerate sun. It also prefers well drained soil.

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS: Yellow archangel can be controlled using mechanical and chemical means. Small infestations can be dug by hand. The spread of the plant can be somewhat controlled by mowing or trimming the encroaching plants. Contact the weed control board for chemical recommendations.

*Laurel Baldwin can be reached through the Whatcom County Noxious Weed Control Board.
901 W. Smith Road, Bellingham, WA 98226. Phone: 360.354.3990
<http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/publicworks/weeds>*

GARDEN FRIENDS & FOES

Continued from page 5

latent infections, establish *P. syringae* inside symptomless tissues signify a very important source of primary inoculum. Systemic incursion of the pathogen isolated from interior tissues assumes significant environmental implications and clearly poses a major challenge in control of the disease. Cankers left over from the previous years growth can also harbour inoculum. *P. syringae* can also exist on surfaces of many plants and when environmental conditions favour disease development, it can spring into action and infect. Some weeds and grasses have been known to be hosts to *P. syringae*.

What Can I do to Control *P. syringae*?

Keep your yard a happy and healthy place for your plants, in other words the right plant in the right place. Stress

predisposes your plants to pest invasion, whether that pest be a pathogen, arthropod, weed or vertebrate. Cultural strategies such as scheduling overhead irrigation in the morning will allow plants to dry off; better yet use drip or bottom irrigation. Altering soil pH by liming can promote some stonefruit vigour. Pruning in late winter (February) can limit *P. syringae* infections. Cauterization of small cankers by a hand held propane burner limit the canker's spread so it did not girdle the branch or trunk. A certain skill and of course care must be taken when doing this, don't burn the tree down! Sanitation methods such as weeding can also help reduce inoculum levels. Plant resistant cultivars, ask for these at your local garden centre. There is also the option of biological control, but this is aimed at frost control using bacterial

antagonists, not yet developed for the home gardener. Finally, as a last resort there are chemical controls, to be used in a judicious, vigilant manner.

A fact is a simple statement that everyone believes. It is innocent, unless found guilty. A hypothesis is a novel suggestion that no one wants to believe. It is guilty, until found effective. ~Edward Teller



WSU SUDDEN OAK DEATH EDUCATION

PHYTOPHTHORA RAMORUM EDUCATE TO DETECT PROGRAM

ADAPTED FROM USDA NATIONAL PRED PROGRAM FOR WSU EXTENSION

BY, NORM DART WSU SUDDEN OAK DEATH EDUCATION COORDINATOR,
WSU PUYALLUP RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER, E-MAIL: NORMDART@WSU.EDU

Objective: To provide training on how to recognize symptoms potentially caused by *Phytophthora ramorum* and how to screen samples to determine if they should be submitted to the WSU Puyallup Plant and Insect Diagnostic Laboratory for *P. ramorum* testing.

Background: Sudden Oak Death (SOD) and Ramorum Blight are plant diseases caused by the fungal-like organism *P. ramorum*. This USDA-APHIS regulated pathogen was first identified in 2000 after killing thousands of tan oaks in California and causing a leaf blight on rhododendrons in Europe. Since then it has been found to infect many plants common to Washington's natural and ornamental landscapes, including rhododendron, viburnum, big leaf maple, madrone, grand fir, and Douglas-fir. *P. ramorum* has spread to the natural landscape in 14 coastal counties in California, and one county in southwestern Oregon. Since 2003 this pathogen has been detected in western Washington nurseries but has not been detected in Washington's natural or urban environment. The Washington State Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, is monitoring Washington's nurseries and implementing eradication efforts to keep this pathogen from spreading to the natural environment or landscapes. This program has been designed to train Master Gardeners and WSU Extension affiliates as first detectors of *P. ramorum*, in the event that this organism is introduced into Washington's landscape. Information provided will also be applicable to diagnosis and detection of other plant pathogens.

Program outline

- 1) Background and history of *P. ramorum*
- 2) Current status of *P. ramorum* in Washington
- 3) Introduction to WSU Sudden Oak Death Education program
- 4) Recognizing potential symptoms and determining if samples should be submitted or *P. ramorum* testing

MASTER GARDENER TRAINING SCHEDULE

A series of training sessions will be given to WSU Master Gardener groups beginning February 14 through March 8, 2006. The purpose of these sessions is to train WSU Master Gardeners as first detectors, in the event that *P. ramorum* is introduced to Washington's landscape. WSU Extension personnel and Master Gardener volunteers are encouraged to attend a training session at a convenient time and location, no registration is necessary.

Scheduled Trainings:

Tuesday, February 14, 2006
Our Lady of Good Help Church
200 "L" Street, Hoquiam
11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Pacific-Grays Harbor County Master Gardeners

Wednesday, March 1, 2006
Allmendinger Conference Center
7612 Pioneer Way East, Puyallup
10 a.m. to Noon
Pierce County Master Gardeners

Monday, March 6, 2006
600 128th Street SE, Everett
7 to 8:30 p.m.
Snohomish County Master Gardeners

Wednesday, March 8, 2006
1200 Fairgrounds Road, Bremerton
1 to 3 p.m.
Kitsap County Master Gardeners

FRUIT TREE GRAFTING CLINIC SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2006

Fruit tree pruning season is upon us! As you lop off those water sprouts, remember to save scion wood for the Foundation's annual Fruit Tree Grafting Clinic. The Clinic is open to both Master Gardeners and the public. We hope you will attend and bring your friends and neighbors to this rewarding event. Master Gardeners will earn three hours advanced education for attendance.

The clinic is held at the Tenant Lake Interpretive Center from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Our expert and entertaining 'Master Grafters' will review plant physiology, rootstock and fruit varieties. A demonstration will follow of commonly used grafting techniques. Finally, attendees will select their own scion wood and rootstock and we will assist you in grafting your own tree to take home! Dwarf and mini-dwarf apple, pear and a few plum rootstock and many different scion wood varieties will be available for a nominal fee.

There is much interest in Asian pears and heirloom apples, so please bring scions from any trees you may have. Scion wood should be cut from a section of last year's vegetative growth, up to 12" or so long and about a pencil-width diameter. Seal the ends with paraffin or tree-seal, or place in a zip lock bag, and refrigerate. The trick is to keep the wood from drying out and keep it dormant until it is grafted. Labeling as to variety is critical.

Contact the Extension Office at 360.676.6736 or Luana Schneider for more information.





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SPRING VOLUNTEER CLASSES

We still have space available in our spring volunteer classes. If you or someone you know might be interested, please have them call 360.676.6736 or whatcom.wsu.edu to register.

MASTER GARDENERS
 Begins March 2, 2006

Eight-week class takes place on Tuesdays & Thursdays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Central Lutheran Church. 60 hours of payback time

MASTER FOOD PRESERVER & SAFETY ADVISORS
 Begins March 4, 2006

Eight-week class takes place on Saturdays 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Location to be announced. 40 hours of payback time.

MASTER RECYCLER/COMPOSTERS
 Begins March 15, 2006

Eight-week class takes place on Wednesdays 7 to 9 p.m. at the Extension Office. There will also be 4 Saturday field trips. 45 hours of payback time

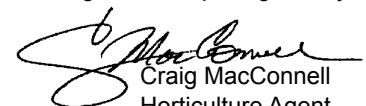
WATERSHED MASTER/ BEACH WATCHERS
 Begins April 4, 2006

Eight week class takes place on Tuesday & Thursday 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Extension Office. 100 hours of payback time.



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The Weeder's Digest is the monthly newsletter of the Whatcom County Master Gardener Program. Guest articles are encouraged. Please submit typewritten articles by the third Wednesday of each month to Karri Neuhauser (karrimac@wsu.edu) at the Extension Office. Editor reserves the right to edit for space considerations, grammar, spelling and syntax.


 Craig MacConnell
 Horticulture Agent

