

ST. TAMMANY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

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**Master
Gardener™**

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Listen to the trees as they sway in the wind.
 Their leaves are telling secrets. Their bark sings songs of olden
 days as it grows around the trunks. And their roots give names to
 all things.

Their language has been lost.
 But not the gestures.

Vera Nazarian, *The Perpetual Calendar of Inspiration*



Photo by J Blazek

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 research-based
 information on
 just about anything,
 visit our Web site:

www.lsuagcenter.com



Louisiana Multiplier Onions



Louisiana multipliers, also known as, Louisiana evergreen onion, shallots, green onions, and spring onions, can be found growing in many south Louisiana gardens. This onion is ubiquitous in creole and cajun recipes, as well as many other cuisines.



They are called "multipliers" because each onion set that is planted will grow numerous individual onions. The onion "set" is the bulb which has been previously dug up and stored in a dry area. The set can be re-planted after several days of drying, or can be stored up to eight months.



September is a good month to plant these sets. They are planted pointy side up, one inch deep, and about eight inches apart in full sun. The onions will grow all winter long in our usual moderate winter temperatures. Covered, they will withstand temperatures in the low 20's.

Use of a good balanced fertilizer, according to package directions, and irrigation will optimize onion multiplication and production.



Louisiana Multiplier Onions, continued



Harvesting can begin as soon as several green shoots have emerged and are 10 to 12 inches tall. If you cut only the green area, the onions will continue to grow and multiply. Each individual set usually becomes six to eight onions, and sometimes as many as 20! The onions can be left in the ground year round. Or if you want to plant other crops in the space, they can be dug up in spring.

These pictures were taken in late January. The sets had been planted the September before. Each set developed into about ten onions. They were covered during freezing weather, and were partially harvested late fall and all winter. By early spring, onion flowers begin to bloom.



Because it takes a lot of energy for the plant to create flowers, the group will not continue to multiply during flowering. If you want more onions, cut off the flowering stalk.

Since this is one of the first flowers to bloom in my garden in spring, I usually do not remove the flower stalk. By that time, I have plenty of onions. And pollinators are all over the onion flowers. So I leave the flowers. But this is also an indicator to me that it will soon be time to dig them up.



The flowers are edible and can be used fresh or dried in soups, salads, stews, and other dishes where you would use the onion itself. It is pretty enough to be used in a flower arrangement ... but it WILL have a strong onion smell!

The flower stalk is very tough and too fibrous to eat. But it can be used in stocks and soups to impart onion flavor. Just remove it before eating.

Louisiana Multiplier Onions, continued



By mid-spring, I need the garden space for peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, and other vegetable crops. Besides, the onion plants do not grow much as the weather warms up. So, for me, it is time to remove the onions. Some I cut up to store in the freezer for future gumbos. The rest are dried and stored as sets for my next fall garden. I do save the greens from the sets.



Using a hand trowel, the grouping of onions are dug up. Going about eight inches out and eight inches deep, dig under the bunch.



Gently lift the entire bunch up...



and out.

This group started as one or two sets planted in the fall.

One set will multiple to about eight onions, and up to 20 with fertilization and water.

Allow the soil around the bunch to dry for a day or two before attempting to break apart. You can then shake most of the soil away and separate each onion from the bunch more easily than when the soil was wet.



Louisiana Multiplier Onions, continued



Separate into individual bulbs preserving the root end.

Trim roots back and remove onion green and part of the white.

For future recipes, save the trimmed green and white parts, as well as any onion that has had the roots completely severed. Only the onion bulbs with intact root ends can grow successfully with the next planting.



The sets can be stored up to eight months in a dry area. We store them in a barn on a shelf in a wire basket that has circulating air and is not accessible to resident varmints.



I presented "Louisiana Multiplier Onions" to the Vegucators on February 7, 2024.

All photos, except where noted, taken by J. Blazek.

References:

[LSU Agcenter PDF Allium Crops: pub2318alliumcropsrevo417.pdf\(lsuagcenter.com\)](https://www.lsuagcenter.com/files/2023/08/pub2318alliumcropsrevo417.pdf)

[Louisiana Evergreen Shallots/multiplying onions \(lazydogfarm.com\)](https://www.lazydogfarm.com/)

Jamie Blazek
Master Gardener
Vegucator
Editor, *The Gardengoer*

STMGA Field Trip To Eezie's Daylily Farm

On May 23, 2024, members of the St. Tammany Master Gardener Association took a field trip to Eezie's Daylily Farm in Osayka, Mississippi. It was a beautiful day to gather together among the day lillies.



Photo by E Jaster



Photo by E Jaster



Photo by E Jaster



Photo by E Jaster



Photo by E Jaster



Photo by J Didier



Photo by J Didier



Photo by J Didier

STMGA Field Trip To Eezie's Daylily Farm, continued



Photo by J Commeaux



Photo by J Commeaux



Photo by J Commeaux



Photo by J Guillory

Earlyn Jaster
Master Gardener
STMGA, Vice-president

Key Concepts of Square Foot Gardening

The information in this article was adapted from Mel Bartholomew's book *Square Foot Gardening* first published in 1981. The book has had several updates since then. Mel, a retired engineer, developed the concept of square foot gardening and subsequently created the PBS television series.



The square foot gardening method involves using an open-bottom raised bed measuring four by four feet (1.2 meters \times 1.2 meters). These square beds are divided into a grid of sixteen one-foot squares, each dedicated to a different crop. Depending on the plant's mature size, each square can hold 1, 4, 9, or 16 plants. While the beds can be longer than four feet, the recommended width is no more than four feet to ensure easy access from the edge to the center.

After harvesting a "square foot," a new crop can be planted in its place. To promote crop diversity and deter pests, different plants are rotated through each square within the growing season. The number of plants per square is adjusted according to the size of the plant. For instance, a single tomato plant or a large herb like oregano or basil occupies a full square, whereas lettuce can be planted four per square, and smaller plants like radishes or carrots can be planted up to 16 per square.

One benefit of densely planted crops is that they act as a living mulch, reducing weed growth and germination. Different varieties of crops in close proximity also helps to prevent the spread of plant diseases.

The small size of the beds makes it practical to use covers or cages to protect plants from pests, cold, wind, or excessive sunlight. It also makes it easier to keep closer to the home, allowing for greater access to water and maintenance. To extend the growing season, a cold frame can be constructed around the square foot garden. By orienting the frame toward the equator, the garden can capture more light and heat during the colder months.

While no specific soil is required, adding compost to the garden soil is recommended. In 2006, Bartholomew began promoting "Mel's Mix," which consists of 1/3 peat moss or coconut coir, 1/3 vermiculite, and 1/3 compost. He claimed this mix produces good results even at a depth of only six inches (15 cm).

Key Concepts of Square Foot Gardening, continued

Square foot gardening in a nutshell:

- Plan your garden: determine exact number and kind of produce, taking into consideration size, growing time, and season. For example, tall crops are planted or trellised on the north side of the bed (in the Northern Hemisphere) to prevent shading shorter plants.
- Lay out the garden: Consider factors such as sunlight patterns, shape of your yard, proximity to water source, whether trellises will be needed for some crops, etc.
- Build the box and grids: The classic four by four configuration uses lumber measuring one inch by six inches.
- Select your box accessories: Plain boxes work just fine, but consider trellises, protective covers, and other things based on crop type and season.
- Create the growing medium: Mel's Mix consists of organic peat moss, coarse vermiculite, and a blend of compost in equal proportions. This is more porous and retains water more easily than traditional soils. However, traditional soils work just fine; they may just require more maintenance (watering, weeding, fertilizing, etc).
- Plant away! Keep in mind the different growing periods of different crops and plan accordingly so you can reap the benefits of continuous crops year round. Stagger your harvests.
- Housekeeping: Stay on top of weeding and pest removal.
- Harvest! Be sure to document the harvest times for each crop.



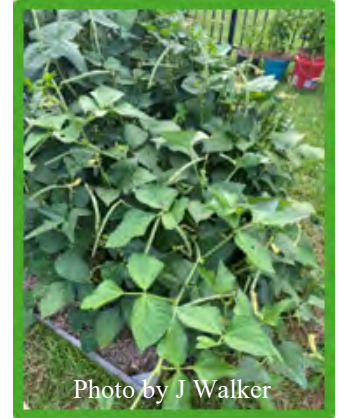
Check out the book at your local library!

Lindsay Cox
Master Gardener

Seed Saving



Despite the wide availability and relatively low cost of purchased seeds, gardeners often choose to save their own seeds. This article delves into the motivations behind seed saving and explores practical strategies for saving seeds from one's own garden and for sharing those seeds with others. The information is drawn from a presentation delivered to the St. Tammany Master Gardener Association Vegucators meeting on June 5, 2024. The content is presented in three parts: Motivation, Collection, and Sharing.



Motivation

One motivation for employing conscientious preservation techniques is to maintain seed quality over time. While purchasing seed from a reputable vendor either in person or online is a good practice, in-transit environments cannot be guaranteed. For example, if seeds are packaged on Friday, they may sit on a hot loading dock in humid conditions over the weekend. Greater seed viability and preferred varieties can be assured by saving and caring for seeds. My Irish ancestors came to America because of the potato famine in Ireland during the mid-1800s. The Irish had depended on a single variety of potatoes and had little alternative sources of food. An outbreak of *Phytophthora infestans*, a fungus, killed the crop across the country during an exceptionally wet season.

The monoculture dependence combined with weather pattern changes and political decisions resulted in devastation for Ireland. Today in the United States many farmers rent their seed from Monsanto or Syngenta. Like potato-planting practices in Ireland in the 1800s, field after field of identical, patented seeds are sown to produce identical plants. Just as Ireland's over reliance on potatoes led to catastrophic famine, today's agricultural monocultures create a vulnerability to disease, climate change, and economic disruption.

Passing on seeds and knowledge to others can play a role in providing vigorous varieties for future generations. Johnnetta Cole, PhD, an advocate for education and equal opportunity said, "We are all interrelated; whatever we do affects everyone else. When we learn and grow as individuals, we contribute to the collective good." Our work as master gardeners and Vegucators is valuable if even one person is inspired to carry on sustainable food production practices. Additionally, seed saving

- builds biodiversity into the food sources
- allows for independence and self-reliance
- helps preserve our food traditions

Dr. Johnnetta Cole



Photo from [womenshistory.org/johnnetta-betsch-cole-phd](https://www.womenshistory.org/johnnetta-betsch-cole-phd)

[Keep Your Garden Tradition Alive by Heather Kirk-Ballard, LSU AgCenter Horticulturist](#). A link that provides expert motivation and information concerning the culture of seed saving.

Seed Saving, continued



My experience bringing purple hull cowpea seeds from Oklahoma illustrates how plants might adapt. The photo at the top of this article, taken on July 8, 2024, is the second generation of cowpeas growing in Louisiana. In Oklahoma, this pea produced lush vines with brilliant purple pods and speckled cow peas for about six years. After moving to St. Tammany Parish in May 2023, I planted the seeds I had saved from my Oklahoma plants.

The first leaves produced by the pea plants in Louisiana were shaped differently from the ones that had grown in Oklahoma but changed to the usual shape in a few weeks. However, the most surprising change was the pods. At maturity they were not purple, but remained green, albeit in a lighter shade. At first, I had waited to harvest until the purple color appeared, but the pods went to tan and dried. Later in the 2023 season many of the pods began to turn purple toward maturity, but not all of them.

Now, in 2024, the vines are producing the same lush leaves as in Oklahoma, but the pods show no sign of turning purple yet. So far, all the mature, dried peas have speckles. Very few of the green harvested peas are speckled. Picking the peas between the easy-to-shuck and dry stage is sometimes a difference of one day.

Despite the changes in pod color, the peas continue to thrive and produce a good harvest, demonstrating the adaptability of this variety. These photos are of my peas almost ready for harvesting and peas that dried on the vine which can be saved for seed or for dry pea storage.

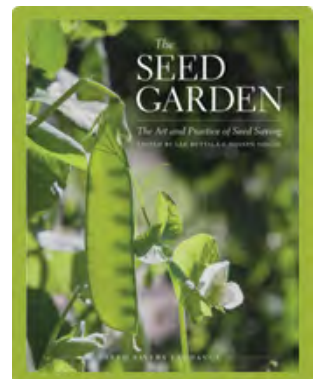


Collection

Two valuable online resources on collecting seeds are available:

- The LSU AgCenter offers a description of seed saving techniques by Heather Kirk-Ballard. [Extreme Gardening and the Art of Saving Seeds \(Heather Kirk-Ballard\)](#)
- The Seed Savers Exchange provides videos and articles specifically focused on different seed collection techniques. <https://seedsavers.org/learn/seed-saving/>

Several sites I visited recommended the book, *The Seed Garden - The Art & Practice of Seed Saving* by Lee Buttala and Shanyyn Siegel.



Seed Saving, continued



With the home gardener in mind, the following collection examples are for smaller samples of seeds. Those collecting on a larger scale might use different techniques. Make certain your plant is an open-pollinated or heirloom variety. Seeds from hybrid plants will not produce the same as the parent plant. There are two main methods of collecting seeds: dry and wet.

Steps that are important for both methods include

- ensuring the fruit has reached its full maturity
- maintaining clean cultural practices
- labeling the seed accurately
- providing a dry environment for storage

The process of dry collection depends on the plant itself. For example, pods from beans are dried on the vine. Once the beans are removed from the pods, they should be left to air dry completely before storing.



Broccoli and mustard greens produce seeds in small pods that can be removed individually by hand, in a large container, or can be collected in mesh bags placed on the plant. The pods take several days to develop after the flowering stage but produce an enormous number of seeds for saving and sharing.



Seed Saving, continued



No matter how they were collected, drying the seeds thoroughly is as important as ensuring seed maturity before harvesting. Air must circulate around the seeds as much as possible. Mesh bags, screens, paper bags, and paper plates are good tools for air drying. But use your ingenuity and what you have on hand. The seeds can be ruined by moisture, but also cannot get too dry.



Some seeds must be done by wet collection. Wet collecting is not quite as straightforward as dry. But is certainly doable by a home gardener. A quick snapshot of the process is as follows:

Remove seeds from the fruit by squeezing or scooping. Set the seeds aside to ferment. The seeds and juice will bubble and a moldy layer may appear in a day or more. This process removes the gel covering on the seed and enables them to dry thoroughly for storage.



Once the seeds have fermented, remove any mold and scum, and rinse them several times. The viable seeds will settle to the bottom. Strain the water away.



Image from gardengatemagazine.com

Dry the seeds on absorbent material such as a paper plate or a coffee filter or spread them on a screen. Move the seeds around every day to keep them from sticking together.

Mark each seed container for variety and date collected. Consider keeping a seed-saving journal and noting variations, such as how many days fermentation took, or which bean produced the most viable seed.



Image from gardengatemagazine.com

Seed Saving, continued



There are several good on-line videos demonstrating both wet and dry seed saving. Both provide techniques for choosing fruit for harvesting, removing seeds, fermentation, cleaning, and drying the seeds.

The video from Seed Savers provides a good tutorial for saving tomato seeds.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHWwwdYw_fs

For cucumbers I chose a video from Short Season Garden.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9C8_JONhWo

Sharing seeds with fellow master gardeners and friends is a wonderful way to expand your collection. Perhaps you have inherited treasured family seeds. As these seeds embark on a new chapter, consider documenting their history. You might be surprised at the rich legacy you are cultivating.



Jeri Walker
Master Gardener

Woodlake Elementary School Garden Project

Neither heat, nor sun, nor possibility of rain will keep the master gardeners from their appointed tasks. On the morning of July 15, 2024, five STMGA members, Sue McGuire, Shannon Noonan, Roberta Torman, Catherine Fabacher, Kappy Goodwin (plus one husband Ed Goodwin) joined three Woodlake Elementary School teachers to prepare the vegetable beds. The beds are horse troughs that were brightly painted by parents and grandparents of pre-K through third grade students. The students had planted and harvested vegetables in the spring. On this occasion the soil needed turning over with new compost and mulch added. Sara Parker, the kindergarten teacher, suggested we plant a few things for the children to harvest in September. We carefully planted sweet potato slips and some okra seeds. Small eggplants were still growing from the spring planting. We left those for harvesting later this season. An underground watering system was installed in each trough. The system is on a timer and runs year-round. It came in very handy last summer when we had 100° heat and no rain! The irrigation system was installed by one of Woodlake’s enterprising grandfathers who is an engineer. Thank you, Mr. Tom Left.



Left to right: Shannon Noonan, Roberta Torman, Sue McGuire, Catherine Fabacher



Kappy Goodwin
Master Gardener
Woodbridge Elementary Project, chair

Native American Gardening: Herbalism



On June 5, 2024, a lecture on Native American gardening was presented to the Vegucators. This is part two of that lecture. Part one can be found in the July/August issue of *The Gardengoer*.

Herbalism is the practice of using herbs, both externally applied and ingested. These herbs are edible, non-toxic, non-intoxicating, and non-poisonous, and are used for their medicinal properties. They are thought to support health and promote the body's own healing capacity. For most of human history, people relied on herbalism for some of their medicinal needs. Much of modern pharmacopeia has its roots in historical knowledge of medicinal plants.



Ethnobotany studies how people of a particular culture and region make use of indigenous/native plants. Researchers obtain detailed information on plants people use to treat illnesses: the species, plant part preferred, how that part is prepared and used for treatment, and the specific disease being treated. Things used as herbal treatments can include flowers, twigs, stems, leaves, bark, roots, seeds, berries, fruits, algae, kelp, mushrooms, insects, animals, fermented foods, and minerals.



Native American herbalism primarily incorporates handed-down empirical knowledge passed from one generation to the next about the healing uses of herbs. The medicine of Native cultures focuses on balancing the body in accordance with nature. A Native person understands energies and seeks spirit guidance for the application of medicinal remedies in the support, maintenance and promotion of health, wellness, and well-being.

Native medicine is 40,000 years old. Many aspects of Native American healing are kept secret and not written down. The traditions are passed down by word of mouth from elders, from spirits in vision quests, and through initiation and are based on a spiritual view of life. A healthy person has a sense of purpose and follows the guidance of the Great Spirit. Health means restoring the body, mind, and spirit to balance and wholeness. The medicine person is essential to ensuring safe healing.

Native American Gardening: Herbalism, continued



To summarize the basic modality of Native American herbalism is to understand that the medicinal herb is not fixing nor curing the body. Instead, Native cultures viewed that the nature of the herb is a part of the nature of the body which requires the herb's energies to restore balance. An Indigenous medicine man would not just ask the questions, "what does the herb do or how does an herb work?" Instead they would use intuition and seek guidance from spirit to discover where a person is out-of-balance with nature. They would then select an herb from traditional application and wisdom of the herb's energies to restore balance.

Medicinal plant successes are closely intertwined with the evolution and production of highly diverse compounds known as secondary metabolites. These are compounds that are not essential for growth and reproduction, but rather, through interaction with their environment, enhance the plant's prospects of survival. These metabolites are therefore plant agents for chemical warfare, allowing plants to ward off microorganisms, insects, and other animals acting as predators and pathogens. Such compounds may also be valuable to humans for the same purposes and may be used as medicines.



See-non-ty-a, an Iowya Medicine Man, by George Catlin, 1844-45



There are currently 20,000 known secondary plant metabolites. Humans benefit by using many of them for medicinal purposes to fight infections and diseases. About two-fifths of all modern pharmaceutical products in the U.S. contain one or more naturally derived ingredients, the majority of which are secondary metabolites such as alkaloids, glycosides, terpenes, steroids, and other classes grouped according to their chemical structure or physiological activity in humans.

Plants have been used for medicinal purposes long before recorded history. Researchers found that people in different parts of the world tended to use the same or similar plants for the same purposes. In the early 19th century, when chemical analysis first became available, scientists began to extract and modify the active ingredients from plants. Later, chemists made synthetic versions of plant compounds. Over time, the use of herbal medicines declined in favor of drugs.



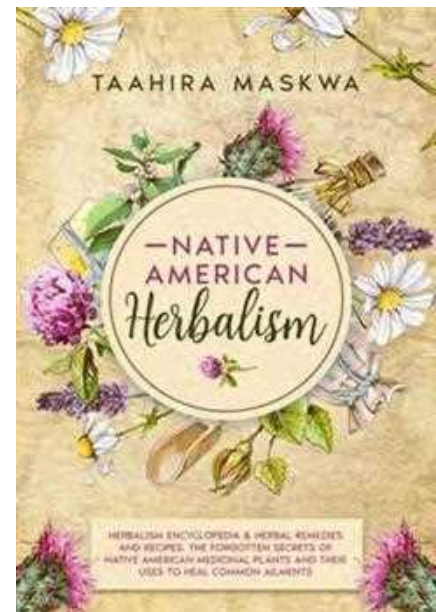
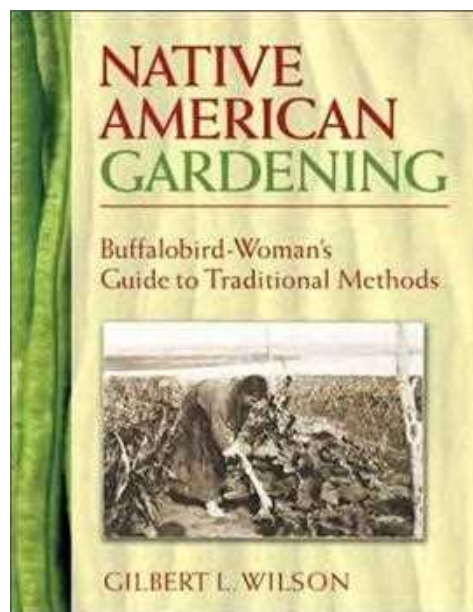
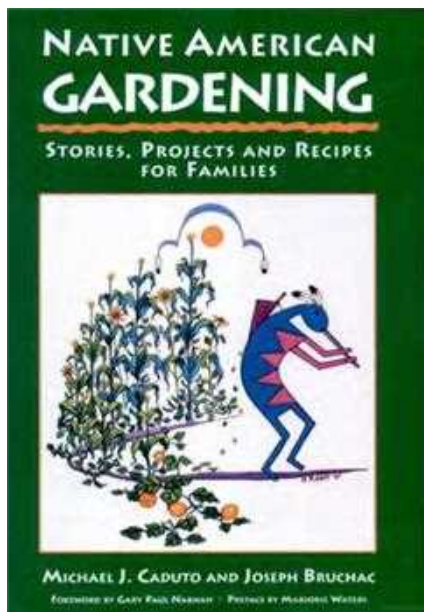
Native American Gardening: Herbalism, continued



Herbal medicine is used to treat many conditions, such as allergies, asthma, eczema, premenstrual syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia, migraine, menopausal symptoms, chronic fatigue, irritable bowel syndrome, and cancer, among others. It is best to take herbal supplements under the guidance of a trained provider. Since herbal medicines can potentially interact with prescription medications, and may worsen certain medical conditions, be sure to consult with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any herbs.



Resources: use of on-line sources
and the following books



Christine Foster
Master Gardener
Vegucator
STMGA Membership co-chair

A Virtual Visit To The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens

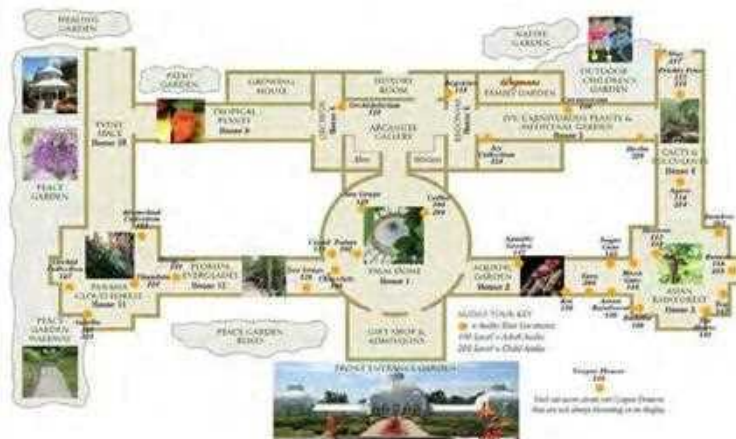
Buffalo, New York is known for its infamous snowstorms. But it also is home to a beautiful facility which is quite the opposite of this harsh picture ... The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens. This is located in the south Buffalo area appropriately named “South Park.” The Gardens’ history is as interesting as its floral displays. The concept of this conservatory began in the 1860’s, headed by David F. Day. Three initial Buffalo parks were developed by landscape designer Fredrick Law Olmstead, who was the designer of New York City’s Central Park and Brooklyn Prospect Park. In the 1890’s three more parks were added in Buffalo which included South Park on 156 acres; the nation’s third largest and the world’s ninth largest park at that time.



The greenhouse was designed by Lord & Burnham and built in 1897-1899. It is a Victorian conservatory layout with three domed features made of glass, wood and steel. There were less than a dozen of these tri-domed conservatories at the time. This is one of two designed by Lord & Burnham. It opened in 1901 for the Pan-American Exposition. A trolley was added to bring visitors to the site.

Over the years the Gardens have experienced ups and downs. In 1981 Erie County purchased the conservatory along with 11.4 acres, and in 1982 it was listed on both the Registry of Historic Places and the New York State Registry of Historic Places. In 2004 a partnership was established with Erie County and the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens Society.

Today’s Botanical Garden has exceptional collections of cultivars in environments laid out in 12 rooms/houses around two central open areas. One open area is an events courtyard for visitors. The other, a farm garden for staff only. There are five “grow-houses” which the staff use to maintain the plant collection and care for plants not yet on display.



The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens, continued



The front entrance leads into the center Palm dome which sets the tone for this adventure. For anyone who enjoys the atmosphere within a greenhouse, this almost takes your breath away. Realize this is just an appetizer for the feast to come. The conservatory is a closed loop. I chose to follow the house numbering and travel in a counterclockwise manner.

Moving from the Palm dome into the Rain Forest House we transition from palms and vines to bromeliads, crotons, bamboo and orchids.



At the far end of this House is a waterfall which keeps the humidity high and helps maintain the temperature. This is the second dome with glass opening to the sky. It is easy to appreciate the unique architecture of this historic place. Leaving the Rain Forest House, an extreme contrast awaits as we move into the Desert House.



Each of these “houses” has enough specimens to keep your interest for an entire day. In the Desert House: cacti, aloe, yucca and agave in many shapes and forms occupy the trays lining the walkway.

Night blooming cereus, *Epiphyllum oxypetalum*, is one of my favorite plants. There are several varieties which are referred to as “night blooming cereus.” I was happy to see many representative samples from the genera *Epiphyllum*, *Hylocereus*, and *Selenicereus*. This house held my attention for a long time.



The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens, continued



The Gardens promote many teaching opportunities. Integrated Pest Management is a theme which followed us throughout this visit. It is a focal point in my master gardener background. Sensor cards are placed throughout the facilities to help identify the various insects at play. Each house has cards to track any insect activity.

Next on the circuit is the Bonsai House. Several wonderful examples of the art of bonsai are found along the greenhouse walk on the back side of the facility. Here a teaching opportunity is presented which addresses color, telling the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary colors. I found myself noticing how colors were used here and throughout the conservatory. This bonsai (below right) captured the spirit of this house for me.



The Begonia House brought back memories of my time growing various cultivars of begonia (pictured left). I enjoyed many years working with these plants. This environment is also ideal for the shrimp plant, *Justicia brandegeana*, (pictured right) which I am currently growing back home in Slidell. Both plants are native to Central and tropical South America.



The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens, continued



The children's play area and access to an outside Discovery Garden is next. This gives the visitor a timely break and a chance to gather focus before proceeding through the Gardens. Stone animals live in this pond surprising and delighting visitors.



Coming back into the conservatory structure brings us behind the Palm Dome, where we initially entered, and into the Carnivorous House. This house continues the high standards of plant displays and education opportunities.



Sundews and pitcher plants show off their beauty and adaptability (left below).



The Orchids, Tropical and Seasonal House continues the balance of color and form found in many of the other Houses. It presents a pleasant atmosphere of mixed tropical specimens and seasonal plants (right). The Events & Visitors spaces, both indoor and outdoor areas (below), provide a beautiful venue for special events.



The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens, continued



The Everglades House completes the circle of Houses in the conservatory's main building. Fittingly, it brought me back home to a Louisiana swamp. This house has good representation of the plants and scenery I have seen in our swamps ... just missing a Cajun cabin!

The "grow-houses," located both in the conservatory and remotely on the grounds, are not accessible to the public. These facilities maintain and propagate for display throughout the grounds.



The outdoor gardens are spread over the 12 acre site and offer a relaxed atmosphere to enjoy the remarkable Western New York weather. Yes, I know about the harsh winter storms, having lived here the first 20 years of my life. But spring offers an awakening not experienced elsewhere. Summertime is as close to perfect as I can imagine. And the autumn colors are something that need to be experienced to comprehend.

In the Peace Garden I found a tie to the New Orleans area, the War of 1812, and the efforts here of Margaret St John in persuading the British not to burn her cabin after they destroyed the village of Buffalo during that war. The British met their ultimate defeat in that war in 1814 outside New Orleans. This defeat strengthened independence for both the United States and Canada.



If you are ever in western New York, be sure to visit the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens ... an inspiring and worthwhile visit.

References

Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens
<https://www.buffalogardens.com/>

David F Day: Buffalo city attorney, judge, and parks commissioner.
<https://www.buffalogardens.com/about/our-history/>

Fredrick Law Olmstead: 1822-1903. Landscape architect, author and conservationist.
<https://olmsted.org/frederick-law-olmsted-sr/>

Paul Andres
Master Gardener
Vegucator
Slidell Girls and Boys Club,
Project Co-chair

The Power and Science Of Plants

Continuing with the botanical garden theme ... here's some of the best in the country.

<https://www.thrillist.com/travel/nation/best-botanical-gardens-in-the-us>



Reviving a rootbound plant

<https://www.housedigest.com/1322002/revive-root-bound-house-plant/#:~:text=As%20you%20remove%20the%20plant%20from%20its%20crowded,detangle%20them%2C%20but%20sometimes%2C%20it%20won%27t%20be%20enough.>

Where did insects get their wings?

<https://scitechdaily.com/how-the-insect-got-its-wings-solving-a-mystery-that-has-puzzled-biologists-for-over-a-century/>.




What is that white stuff on your mulch?

<https://www.evergreenseeds.com/white-fungus-on-mulch/#:~:text=The%20white%20material%20often%20seen%20on%20mulch%20is,materials%20into%20nutrients%20that%20can%20enrich%20the%20soil.>

In addition to cooking, how else can you use rosemary?

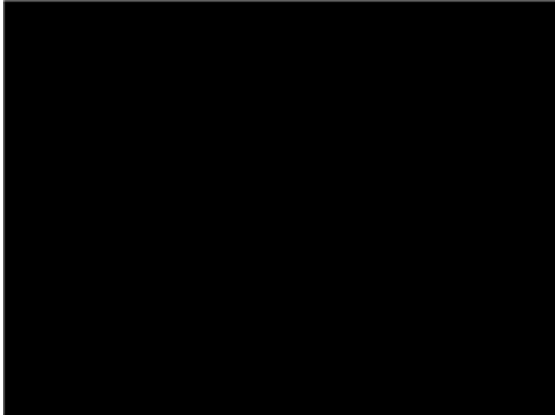
<https://theheartysoul.com/16-unusual-rosemary-uses/>

The Power and Science Of Plants, continued



Understanding how roots grow strong

<https://phys.org/news/2024-05-roots-strong.html>



Best practices on watering houseplants.

<https://www.hgtv.com/outdoors/flowers-and-plants/how-to-water-houseplants>

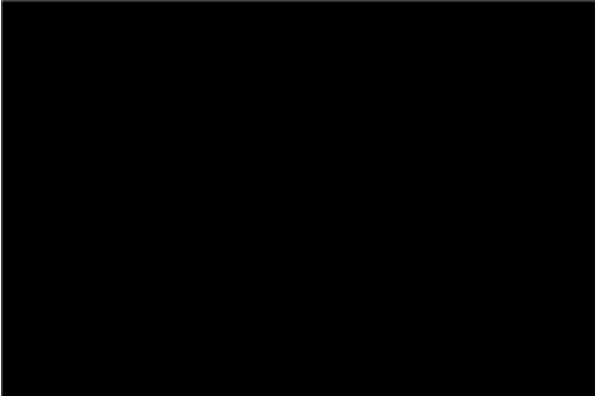



The origin and distribution of cacao

<https://www.ancient-origins.net/news-history-archaeology/cacao-chocolate-0020475>

Caterpillar "noses" may lead the way to pesticide-free protection of plants.

<https://www.technologynetworks.com/applied-sciences/news/caterpillars-have-surprisingly-sophisticated-noses-385630#:~:text=Caterpillars%20use%20their%20antennae%20to%20scan%20their%20surroundings,protect%20crops%20without%20the%20use%20of%20harmful%20pesticides.>



12 plants that prevent weeds

<https://www.southernliving.com/plants-that-prevent-weeds-7499498>

Jamie Blazek
Master Gardener
Vegucator
Editor, *The Gardengoer*

Bees: Friends or Foes



On July 3, 2024, Julie Hilker presented her award winning Powerpoint lecture on bees to the Vegucators. Julie is the granddaughter of Jay and Wendell Hilker who are both master gardeners and Vegucators. Julie created this presentation last year as a 4-H project for Pineview Middle School where she was a student in the sixth grade. She received the highest 4-H award trophy for this presentation. Here is a summary:

First bees appeared about 130 million years ago. Like all other insects a bee has three parts a head with two antennas, a thorax with six legs, and an abdomen.

Bees produce honey, pollen, royal jelly, beeswax, propolis, and venom.

Bees are important pollinators of many crops: watermelon, cantaloupe, citrus, apples, cucumbers, squash, broccoli, asparagus, and nuts to name a few. We would not be here without bees.



Amazing facts about bees:

- Bees can recognize people's faces.
- Honeybees dance to communicate.
- Bees can fly up to 15 miles per hour.
- A honey colony can contain up to 60,000 bees in its colony.
- Honeybees have five eyes: two large compound eyes and three smaller ocelli eyes.
- Bee honey promotes general well-being by helping with sleeplessness, eating disorders, constipation.

Bees' favorite flowers:

- Bee balms
- Cone flower
- Zinnia
- Common poppy
- Sunflower
- Lavender
- Borage
- Aster



Bees: Friends or Foes



There are three flower traits that attract bees: color, shape, and scent. Bees see purple, violet, and blue colors the best.

Bees live 30 to 60 days.

Bees do not like peppermint, spearmint, eucalyptus, and thyme.



Bees could be your foe if you are allergic or do not like to be stung. You could be allergic to honey, pollen, jelly, beeswax, propolis, and the venom.

Bee Pros

- Bee venom is believed to reduce pain and inflammation, especially with arthritis.
- Pollinate plants that produce food.
- Bee honey promotes general well-being by helping with sleeplessness, eating disorders, constipation.

Bee Cons

- Severe allergic reaction
- Hives.
- Itching
- Swelling
- Low blood pressure
- Difficulty breathing
- In the worst cases, anaphylactic shock.



Editor's note: Julie with her 4-H trophy: a future master gardener in the making!

Questions to ask:

Do all bees make honey? Only honeybees produce honey.

How much water do bees need? A quart of water per day on a hot day.

How fast do bees fly? 12 to 20 miles per hour.

How can I most help bees survive? Plant flowers.

So now I ask you. Are bees your friend or foe ?

Julie Hilker
4-H Student
Pineville Middle School

Fontainebleau State Park Native Plant Gardens: Native Plant Initiative Greater New Orleans Habitat Certification



A huge shout out goes to the St. Tammany Parish Master Gardener's team led by Kim Burt along with staff from Fontainebleau State Park for making this successful project possible. Congratulations to all of you on this journey of adventure and persistence, with boots on the ground, getting these three garden habitats to Gold! Well done with this obvious labor of love. Louisiana thanks you for bringing awareness about the importance of natives to locals and visitors alike.

Photo on the right is the first of three Native Gardens at Fontainebleau called 'Celebrating Pollinators' with plants chosen for their relevance to the main pollinators, bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. Gold level at 90% native with 20 different species.



At the 'Celebrating Wildlife Garden', the second of the Native Plant Habitats, plants were chosen because of their value to migratory birds and other local wildlife. The STMGA team members here include, from left to right, Susan James, Amy Grayson, Sharon Hassinger, Sharon Gunther, Kris Majnerick and Kim Burt (photo on the left). Gold level at 100% native with 24 species represented!

Fontainebleau State Park Native Plant Gardens: Native Plant Initiative Greater New Orleans Habitat Certification



The Coastal Plains Garden is the third habitat (above). Created in the autumn of 2022, it features two areas, Meadow and Wetlands. Careful research was done to include species local to our area and the Gulf Coastal Plains. Learning from the many challenges while establishing the first two Native Gardens, including their extreme popularity as foraging for Park wildlife, the master gardener team applied for and received a grant from the Louisiana Native Plant Society to build a seven foot fence. Once built the site was seeded. The team methodically eliminates volunteer non-natives on an annual basis. Currently in its second year of growth and following the perennial rule for prairie gardens, ‘first year sleep, second year creep, third year leap’, this garden will truly come into its own in the third year. Hopefully, over time, these habitats will provide seed for the surrounding areas to lessen foraging pressures. Gold level at 90% native with at least 75 species represented. Team shown, from front to back, Susan, Kim, Kris, Sharon H., Sharon G., Kevin- Park Maintenance, Amy, William- Park Maintenance, Jennifer Wallace- Park Manager, and Stephanie- Park Interpretive Ranger.

Quote from Tammany Baumgarten, President of Native Plant Initiative Greater New Orleans and immediate Past President of Louisiana Native Plant Society:

“The hard work and dedication of these volunteers, spearheaded by Kim Burt, was so very impressive, not to mention the meticulous documentation! WELL DONE ALL and THANK YOU! The Louisiana Native Plant Society is honored to have been a part of these important installations as part of their grant program and NPI is just happy to know you and be invited to certify these gardens with Wild Ones Pontchartrain Basin!”

Patricia Zebrick
Master Gardener
Wild Ones Pontchartrain Basin, president

Pollinator Garden at Burden

The Burden Museum and Gardens is located at 4560 Essen Lane in Baton Rouge. There is much to see, if you are up for a good walk. These photos were taken in August, on a very warm day. Needless to say, these plants are adapted for our summer temperatures. The Pollinator Garden at Burden is just inside the entrance.



rattlesnake master



American beautyberry



native hibiscus



Liatris



Monarch caterpillar and aphids on milkweed



White Texas Star



honeycomb play equipment

Monica Pierce
Master Gardener
STMGA Publicity Chair

STMGA Field Trip To Mayfair House And Gardens

On June 27, 2024, STMGA visited the home and gardens of one of our own master gardeners and a past president of the association, Suzanne Mayfield Krieger. And what a special treat it was! Here is a brief history of Mayfair in Suzanne's own words:

“The story begins in the early 1800’s when my ancestors traveled from England to the Northshore. After a long journey by sea and then covered wagons, they settled on the property they named “Mayfair,” after their home in England. Mayfair is now a posh area in London. Mayfair was built in 1912 by my grandfather, Henry H. Mayfield (1875-1952) for my grandmother, Adele Gazin Mayfield (1874-1963). She gave him three conditions for her to leave New Orleans and move to the Northshore: indoor plumbing, electricity, and a method of communication that would enable her to stay in touch with her friends in the city. Henry accomplished all three by installing a diesel generator that powered light bulbs in the kitchen and bedroom, providing porcelain bathroom fixtures that are still in use in the house today, and tacking a telephone line on trees by horseback. He financed the construction by selling a herd of cattle, and he built it with lumber harvested on the property and sent to a local sawmill. Henry was a foreman at Salmen Brick and Lumber Company, where he burned his own brick. Several bricks in the House bear his signature, a method he used to keep track of production. My grandfather died in his vegetable garden in 1952. My grandmother continued to live in the house until she died in 1963.”



Photo by Jeanne Comeaux



Photo by Celie Bateman

It is Suzanne’s mission to create visits to her gardens with attention paid to the smallest of details and to give memories that are cherished for a lifetime. She is happy to receive calls of inquiry for garden tours and special events.
ofckrieger@aol.com



Photo by Celie Bateman

STMGA Field Trip To Mayfair House And Gardens, continued



Photos on this page by Earlyn Jaster



Earlyn Jaster
Master Gardener
STMGA, Vice-President

Swamp Rose Mallow: *Hibiscus moscheutos*



Jamie Blazek
Master Gardener
Vegucator
Editor, *The Gardengoer*

THE GARDENGOER
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
ST. TAMMANY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION



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