



# The Sage Gardener

## Park County Master Gardener Newsletter



**From the Editor... Bob Prchal**



### GARDEN FEVER

*February is also a time to start thinking about landscaping. Why so early? If you're in a warm climate, it's not too early at all. In Florida, trees and shrubs can be transplanted. Evergreens and summer flowering shrubs can be pruned, but just as in cold climates NEVER prune spring flowering shrubs until after they bloom. You'll be cutting off the future buds.*

*In colder climates there is something important we can be doing. Since the trees and bushes have shed their leaves it's a good time to look at them and make notes of what needs pruning. You can look at the bare branches and determine if they look properly shaped. Keep a notebook and make sketches of what you want to do when it warms up. Keep in mind that large pine trees often do better if the lower branches are trimmed so they aren't touching the ground.*

*It's also a great time to look at your landscape as a whole, and plan what you want to add or change this year. Again, takes notes, sketch out plans, and look through nursery catalogs and websites. Be sure to make a budget because purchases can get out of hand very quickly.*

From [oldfashionedliving.com](http://oldfashionedliving.com)

**Volume 2, Issue 10**

**February 2014**

#### Forthcoming

#### Meetings & Events

- **March 03**  
MG mtg. at Cody Library  
@ 6:00pm
- **Note:** Training /Brown Bag seminars in this newsletter
- **March 13 to 15**  
**2014 WMGA /WFMA**  
State Conference in  
Sheridan @ the Sheridan  
Community College
- **March 29**  
Common Sense  
Conservation @ Powell  
Armory  
8:30 am to 4:30 pm
- **April 07**  
MG mtg. in Powell  
@ 7:00pm
- **April 18**  
Powell Arbor Day  
@ **Commons**  
7:00pm
- **April 26**  
Cody Arbor Day  
@ **Cody Auditorium** 9:00 am  
to Noon



## Meeting Minutes... submitted by Valerie Bates

Sariah Bronson, President convened the February 03, 2014 meeting to order in Powell @ 7:03 p.m. in the Park County Fairground Extension meeting room.



**Attendance...** Sariah Bronson, Karen Anderson, Teri Boyd, Nancy Ryan, Kendra Morris, Bob Prchal, Rhonda Faulkner, Joyce Johnston and Valerie Bates, Guest: Elton Tophoj.

**Approval of Minutes...** The January minutes were approved.

**Treasurer's Report...** The Treasurer's report was presented and the budget was discussed.

### Old Business

- **Recognition/Awards:** Awards for Community Service and Outstanding Master gardener.
- **2014 PCMG Projects:** Primarily concentrate on Canal Park and the Cody Garden Tour.
- **Meeting site change:** The members approved a motion to hold the March meeting in the Cody Library. Linda Pettengill will discuss Grant Writing.

### New Business

- **Master Gardener Week:** Sariah suggested August 3rd to 9th. There was No consensus.
- **Event signage:** Members discussed making or buying sturdy signs. Tabled until a cost estimate is provided.
- **Inactive Member:** Discussion limited until member can attend and address the membership.
- **Meetings:** Sariah suggested inviting family members, etc. to change things up. At our monthly meetings.
- **Getting out the Word:** PCMG should and can do more advertising as a non-profit.
- **Garden Tour Post Cards:** Suzanne designed a card that can be mailed to prospects inviting them to participate.

### Committee Reports and/or Announcements

- **2014 WMGA/WFMA Conference:** It will be **March 13-15** in Sheridan @ the Sheridan Community College. The Conference will be a joint Conference with the Wyoming State Farmers Market Association.

### Reminders

- **Lectures/Educational Opportunities:** Please refer to the Newsletter for times and place.
- **WMGA Education Grants:** *Park County Master Gardeners should assess their educational needs and if there is a worthy project that needs assistance, consider applying to the WMGA.*
- **Background Checks:** All members who work with kid's need to undergo a background check. See Rachael Olsen (Powell) or Colleen Renner (Cody) @ the Extension offices for details and paperwork.
- **Volunteer Support Activities:** When activities are planned, please respect ALL requests for assistance by responding **yea or nay**. Let's respect and help the event organizer (s).

**Next Meeting:** In Cody @ 6:00 p.m. March 03, 2014 @ the Cody Library.

**Refreshments:** TBD. **Educational Program:** Linda Pettengill will discuss Grant Writing.

**Adjournment...** 8:20 p.m. **Education/Workshop...** None

## Extension Musings... Joyce Johnston & Ann Hinckley

There is still some winter weather to contend with and the UW has some tips when you are walking about: Wear proper footwear; something with good traction and rubber or neoprene soles. When walking on slippery surfaces bend your knees slightly and take slower, shorter steps. Make sure your footing is clear when you get out of a vehicle; be careful of transitions like curb to sidewalk. Beware of black ice! Avoid short-cuts through snow or over icy areas. You can buy "ice cleats" for your shoes for added traction. Don't feel confined to the indoors for the duration of winter, but do use special care when walking on snowy or icy surfaces .



### Here are some suggestions from the Regional Gardening News

#### Keep Cyclamen Blooming:

If you receive a cyclamen for the holidays, keep it in a cool but brightly lit location for the longest bloom. This flowering plant does best in a north or northeast window at temperatures as low as 45 degrees. It likes moist soil, but avoid soggy conditions. Fertilize lightly once a month. The plant will go dormant in April and send up new growth in September.

#### Spread Winter Mulch:

Spread organic mulch around perennial flowers and shrubs for additional winter protection. Often termed "winter mulching," this is done to prevent the alternate freezing and thawing that can occur with our region's fluctuating winter temperatures. It is important to wait until the ground is frozen before applying the mulch. Use organic materials such as pine needles, coarse compost, shredded cedar shavings, or aspen mulch.

#### Test Soil Before Spreading Fireplace Ashes:

Disaster can be the outcome when too many wood ashes are sprinkled onto Rocky Mountain garden soils. The majority of soils throughout the region, with the exception of some mountain soils, are alkaline. Wood ashes have the same effect as lime, sweetening the soil or increasing the alkalinity. This will aggravate mineral and nutrient availability to plants. Test your soil first to make sure you won't be overdoing it by adding ashes.

#### February is a good time to start planting cool season plants in high tunnels or other protected places (i.e. lettuce, spinach, radishes, kale).

#### Pruning:

You can get started on your pruning on fruit trees, ornamental grasses, rose bushes, forsythia, cotoneasters, Nanking cherry. Lilacs can be pruned back now, but it will mean no blossoms this spring as they produce their blooms on last year's wood. Fertilize spring-flowering bulbs when you see the first flower buds emerge and any winter annuals. Now is also the time for taking grape vine cuttings.

#### Tomato Dirt suggestions:

As you are looking forward to tomato season keep the following suggestions in mind. Where will the plants be growing... containers? Outside or indoors? Do you want a steady supply (choose an indeterminate variety) or a crop you can harvest more or less at one time for preserving (determinates). Check for season length. In our area you will want short season plants that mature in 65 days or less. If you kept information on your varieties and how they performed last year you are ready to keep some tried and true varieties, experiment with something new this year and still be assured of a good crop. Remember if you plan to save seeds you should have an heirloom tomato to be sure you will get the same results next time.

Some suggestions to try out this year: Burpee's Supersteak hybrid; the original "giant" tomato with beefsteak flavor.

⇒ **Big Rainbow...** sweet, mild beauties with striking yellow and red streaked flesh.

⇒ **Brandywine...** considered the best-tasting heirloom tomato of all time.

*Happy Days*

# Brownbag Montage



## Recycling Facts from RecyclingFacts.org



### Here are a number of fun and interesting recycling facts

- ⇒ It takes 80-100 years for an aluminum can to decompose (break down) in a landfill.
- ⇒ Aluminum cans can be recycled into: soda cans, pie plates, license plates, thumbtacks, aluminum foil, and many other items.
- ⇒ Recycling one aluminum can save enough energy to power a TV for up to three hours.
- ⇒ In the year 2000, 13,500 aluminum cans were recycled every minute in California.
- ⇒ Glass takes over 1,000,000 (one million) years to decompose in a landfill.
- ⇒ Glass can be recycled into jars, jewelry, bottles, dishes, drinking glasses, coffee mugs and many other items.
- ⇒ It can take up to 700 years for plastic to decompose (break down) in a landfill.
- ⇒ PET plastic can be recycled into: clothing, fiberfill for sleeping bags, toys, stuffed animals, rulers and more.



## Importance of Volunteer Service... 2014 Park County Master Gardeners

### How does it help Park County Horticulture & The University of Wyoming?

*Redoubles number of contacts... increased service to the public*

*Expands 'pool of resources'... increases manpower*

*Increases the number of 'work' hours to address questions/yard calls*

*Permits the Horticulturalist to work one-on-one with more clients*

*Allows more time for development of educational materials and programs*

*Extends the Horticulture season... extra, available resources*

**Brown Bag Seminar... *Dan Wasp: Creating a Garden with Nature in Mind***



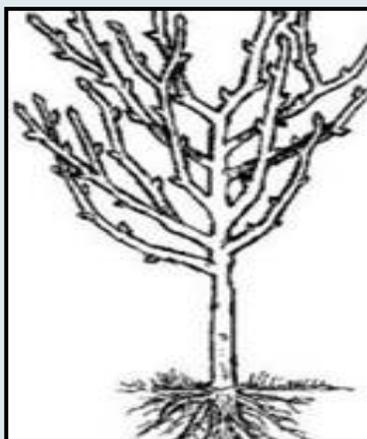
**Brown Bag Seminar... *Nancy Ryan: Early Seeding for our Growing Season***



**Interesting Garden Stuff...** keep dreaming gardeners!



**What are we doing?** from Joyce Johnston and Ann Hinckley



## How do you know you are a Master Gardener?

- ◆ *There is a decorative compost container on your kitchen counter.*
- ◆ *You would rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothing store.*
- ◆ *You prefer gardening to watching television.*
- ◆ *You plan vacation trips to arboretums and public parks.*
- ◆ *Dirt under your fingernails and calloused palms are matters of pride.*

## Gardener's Word's to Live By... Sow the seeds of joy

**Earth Laughs in Flowers** ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson ~



**A garden is a friend you can visit anytime** ~ Anonymous ~

**Where flowers bloom so does hope** ~ Lady Bird Johnson ~

**A garden is the best alternative therapy** ~ Germaine Greer ~

**I perhaps owe having become a painter to flowers** ~ Claude Monet ~



## Cool Tool for Extension Educators & MGs who do yard calls

Probably some of you already have a steel rod to use as a “moisture level” probe in yards and gardens. I just made one today out of an old screwdriver with a 12 inch long, 1/4” diameter shank that I cut the tip off of... to make it blunt. With this primitive tool you can test the moisture level in the ground and visibly demonstrate how deep or, in most cases, how shallow the irrigation water has infiltrated into the soil.

I just did a yard call for a gentlemen who takes great pride in and care of his landscape and spends a lot of money and effort on it. He has a 20 foot blue spruce that wasn't looking very healthy and that had pine needle scale in the far corner of his yard. He asked me to come look at it as he was worried about it. I asked him about the amount of water he was giving his trees and he said that with all the rain Laramie had had recently and as good as the lawn grass looked he didn't think the trees needed additional water. I took my home made moisture probe and the farthest I could push it was 4 inches into the ground under the drip line on the side closest to the lawn and only 2 inches everywhere else. The client was quite surprised.

Being an entomologist I am usually asked “what bug is killing my tree?” When I tell them lack of water is stressing your tree, which is making it more vulnerable to pests, people look at me like I have turnips growing out of my ears. This quick visual aid helped me communicate my point today. My only warning is that you should ask the homeowner if there are any underground water lines or other hazards near the tree and only push gently with a blunt probe.

Scott Schell, Asst. Extension Entomologist

CES, College of Agriculture UW

1000 E. University Ave., Laramie, WY 82071

307-766-2508

## Fruit Fly Alert... from Park County Weed & Pest



### Spotted Wing Drosophila

#### *Drosophila suzukii*

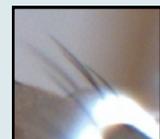
**Pest of:** a broad range of fruits, including tree fruits, berry fruits and vegetable fruits.

**Damage:** Females lay eggs in ripening fruit. Larvae hatch in 1 to 2 days. Egg laying produces scars and larval feeding quickly collapses fruit. Secondary pest infection further damages fruit. This fruit fly is from Asia and its first US appearance was in California in 2008. It is now found in many states, including Montana, Utah, Idaho, Colorado and **Wyoming**.

#### Distinguishing Characteristics:

**Adults:** Typically about 2-3mm long with bright red eyes, a pale brown thorax, and an abdomen with black horizontal stripes. Similar to other *Drosophila* flies but males have a dark spot along front edge of wing, near wingtip (A). Females have a serrated ovipositor (B).

**Larvae:** Small, white and cylindrical maggots.





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Volume 2, Issue 10

February 2014



## 2014 Officers

- President... *Sariah Bronson*  
 Vice President... *Karen Anderson*  
 Secretary... *Valerie Bates*  
 Treasurer... *Mickey Waddell*  
 WMGA Delegates... *Donna Haman & Rita Lewis*



'Newsletter of the Park County Master Gardeners'

~~ Content cannot be altered or changed ~~

Newsletter Articles should be submitted by the 15th of each month to Bob Prchal

[rjprchal@tritel.net](mailto:rjprchal@tritel.net)

REMEMBER... Keep it pithy!



## Committee Chairs

- Newsletter... *Bob Prchal*  
 Cody Garden Tour... *Darlene Manning*  
 Historian... *Jo Anne Arzillo*

- Greenhouse... *Bob Prchal*  
 Scholarships... *Nancy Ryan*  
 Park County Fair... *Bob Prchal*  
 Change of Address/Phone/"e" Mail... *Rachael Olsen (Powell)*  
 or *Colleen Renner (Cody)*

**Sandra M. Frost**

**University Extension Educator**

**Master Gardener Advisor**

**655 5th Street**

**Powell, Wyoming 82435**

**(307) 754-8836**

**Bobbi Holder**

**Horticulturalist**

**1002 Sheridan Avenue**

**Cody, Wyoming 82414**

~ ~

**(307) 527-8560**

**Joyce Johnston**

**Horticulturalist**

**655 5th Street**

**Powell, Wyoming 82435**

~ ~

**(307) 754-8836**

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