

The Garden News

Witch Hazel



Through the gray
and somber wood
Against the dusk of
fir and pine
Last of their floral
sisterhood
The hazel's yellow
blossoms shine

John G. Whittier

One of the pleasures of the winter garden is seeing witch hazel in bloom in the snow. There is no better shrub for fall and winter interest than this scented floral treat. There are several species in the witch hazel family, including the Eastern North American native *Hamamelis virginiana*, the Chinese *Hamamelis mollis*, and the Japanese *Hamamelis japonica*. The blooms of the witch hazels are distinctive, strappy, bright yellow crumpled octopus looking ribbons with red centers on bare branches. *Hamamelis virginiana* blooms in late fall, while the Asian species bloom in late January to March, depending on species and variety. Most large nurseries carry hybrids of the Chinese witch hazel. The Forest Farm (www.forestfarm.com) catalog lists 18 species and varieties, including hybrids with variations in color from the "Arnold's Promise" bright yellow to the "Diane" dark red. An added bonus is fall leaf color, which is the same bright yellow or red as the flower in each variety. Many of us remember the Witch Hazel in our grandmother's medicine cabinet. This was (and is still available) as an extract of our Eastern North American native witch hazel, *Hamamelis virginiana*. The American Indians used this species as a medicinal for centuries

Calendar:

Wednesdays 10 a.m.
78th St. Greenhouse
nancysgarden@comcast.net

Thursdays 9-12
Fort Vancouver Garden

*No Foundation Meeting in
January*

"January is here, with
eyes that keenly glow,
A frost-mailed warrior
striding a shadowy steed
of snow."

- Edgar Fawcett

HAPPY NEW YEAR



WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension office.

before our grandmothers knew about it. In the 1840's a patent medicine was developed by Theron T. Pond, in association with the Oneida Indians. The witch hazel industry is now centered in Connecticut, where branches are harvested by landowners who contract with the distilling companies. The branches are chipped to take to the distillery for processing. The branches are cut at ground level, and re-sprout for harvest again a few years later. Witch Hazel extract is mainly used as an astringent to treat skin problems and insect bites, as an anti-inflammatory, and as an ingredient in deodorants, after shave, cloth wipes, soaps and creams.

Another use for witch hazel we are all familiar with is "dowsing" or "witching" for water. This use of the "witching stick" or forked witch hazel branch seems to originate from England, where an elm (*Ulmus glabra*) was called the "witch hazel tree" and was used for this purpose. Apparently our native witch hazel resembles this tree, and was used by early colonists as a substitute. The "wyche elm" or "wyche hazel" had a different root in old English than our Halloween term for witch, but perhaps the similarity of sound made it good for a spooky use. Originally the term "wyche" meant "flexible", and thus was suitable for use in dowsing.

Growing witch hazel in the garden is easy as it is a very adaptable shrub. They grow naturally in partial or light shade at the edge of the forest. They can tolerate full sun in the Northwest, and like moist, well-drained acid soil. They do not need fertilizer unless you have very poor soil, but do not like to dry out and may need water if we are in a drought. The large (10-15 foot) shrub can be pruned after blooming, and can be shaped as a multi-trunked shrub or a small tree. Propagation is easiest by tip layering. The seeds are borne on the branches and pop open explosively to distribute them in nature. If you bring a branch in to force it indoors, remove the previous year's seed pods or watch out for explosions of popping seeds! The fruits of the native witch hazel are edible, and the shrubs provide habitat for birds in a native landscape.



The most treasured aspect of witch hazel is its bright flowers in the gray of winter. The heavenly scent is an added bonus to lift the spirits and provide medicine for the soul.

References;

Hamamelis virginiana: www.floridata.com/ref/h/hama_vur.cfm

WSU Whatcom County Extension Plant of the Month: Chinese Witch Hazel: <http://whatcom.wsu.edu/ag/homehort/plant/Hazel.html>

Witch Hazel – *Hamamelis virginiana* www.stevenfoster.com/education/monogracph/witchhazel.html

Help Find Sponsors for 2010 WSU MG Conference

The Sponsors Committee is hard at work contacting corporations to sign sponsorship commitments for the 2010 Conference, and could use your help. You don't need to make sales calls or anything like that; all the committee needs is contact information.

Calling on a company is usually much more successful if you know who to talk to regarding your request, and is the most successful when you have an inside connection. Committee members are already making calls on over twenty corporations, but could use your help with some others that we think would be good candidates.

If you know anyone who works at any of the following companies who you think might help in our efforts, please contact Dean Sutera (687-1967) or email (dsutera45@msn.com). While we do not want you to make a sales call yourself, you're more than welcome to join one of our committee members in doing so.

The possible sponsors are....Monrovia, Black Gold, Proven Winners, Territorial Seed, Portland Nursery, Blooming Gardens, Home Depot, Lowe's, Rain Tree Nursery, Wilco and Hidden Gardens.

MG COORDINATOR CAROLYN'S CORNER

Carolyn's Corner January 2010

Welcome Class of 2009

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to the 60 new Master Gardener Trainees from the class of 2009. These men and women worked hard throughout the 11 weeks of Fall Master Gardener Training beginning in mid- September and culminating in their class projects presentations on December 2, 2009.

As are all Master Gardeners, they are an interesting and diverse group of warm and wonderful people.

Please take a few minutes to welcome them when you work together in Master Gardener outreach and answer clinic events.

Sincerely,
Carolyn Gordon

Organic Remedies



Tip of the Month:

Cinnamon

How to use: To prevent damping off in your seedlings, sprinkle the top of your potting mix with cinnamon.

Why it works: Cinnamon is a natural fungicide and it helps prevent the seedlings from rotting.

Green Tomato Pasta Sauce with Linguine

- 1/2 lb. dry linguine, broken into thirds
- 2-3 cloves garlic, minced (or more, if you like a lot of garlic)
- 1/2 of a hot pepper, finely minced, or a sprinkling of chili pepper flakes
- 1 lb. green tomatoes, chopped (4-5 medium tomatoes)
- 1/3 cup sun-dried tomatoes cut in slivers (if the tomatoes are dried, soak them in boiling water first)
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil (optional)
- salt and pepper, to taste
- Parmesan cheese

Cook pasta in a large pot of water while you prepare the sauce. Heat some olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and hot pepper (if using) and saute for a few seconds. Add green tomatoes and sun-dried tomatoes. Continue to cook, stirring often for 3-5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Drain pasta when it's al dente and add to tomato mixture (add the basil at this point, if using). Toss to combine well, and serve with freshly grated parmesan cheese. You can also top with cooked shrimp if you would like.

january to-do-list

January is for dreaming big dreams of the coming year's harvest and blooms – pruning, spraying, and planting for a productive year.

FRUIT TREES

Now is the time for the second application of Dormant Oil and Lime-Sulfur spraying of apples and pears. Spray peaches now with copper sulfate to prevent Peach Leaf Curl. This is the time of year to pick up your bare-root plants. Raspberries, thornless blackberries, fruit trees, and bare-root roses plus the less obvious ornamental Flowering Cherries and Golden Chain Trees, and some Hydrangea varieties.

PRUNING

This is the major pruning season. Prune off dead or damaged branches. Open up the canopy by removing crossing branches. After pruning, apply a dormant oil spray to ward off scale, mealy bugs, white flies and mites. Raspberries and Blackberries, climbing and other roses, fruit trees and other dormant trees, and many ornamental grasses but in particular the Maiden Grasses/Miscanthus are getting cut back now.

HOUSE PLANTS

Don't forget that your house plants also need attention during this time of the year. Place them in groups to raise humidity or consider placing a tray of gravel filled half way with water under them. Make certain the water doesn't touch the bottom of the pot or the soil may get too wet. Most house plants don't need fertilizer this time of year; however blooming plants such as African violets and Orchids should be fertilized according to label instructions. And keep the plants out of drafts and in the brightest spot possible.

LAWNS

Moss in the lawn can be caused by many things. It may be caused by poor drainage, too much water or rain, compacted soil, restricted air flow (thick thatch layer), heavy shade or a soil imbalance. Aerate soil, perform a soil test - pH should have an acidity range between 6-7. An application of fertilizer will help with the moss.

Contributors

- AL PAVELKO
Cookbook Committee
- MARILYN BROWN
Co-chair, Endowment
Committee
- KAREN PALMER
Foundation Exec. Admin.
- EMILY CHASE
Article Contributor
- JEANNE CADY
Newsletter Editor
- CAROLYN GORDON
MG Program Coordinator

WSU Extension Clark County Master Gardener Program

11104 NE 149th St.,
Bldg. C-100,
Brush Prairie, WA 98606

PHONE:
360-397-6060

FAX:
360-397-6122

PROGRAM CONTACTS:
The Answer Clinic
mganswerclinic@clark.wa.gov

Carolyn Gordon
MG Program Coordinator
gordonc@wsu.edu

Dr. Brun
brunc@wsu.edu

Emily Chase
Web Team
chasere986@q.com
892-1105

Ray Peterson
On-the-Road Events
rpeters@pacifier.com
573-2592
[http://clark.wsu.edu/volunteer/
mg/endowment/contribute.html](http://clark.wsu.edu/volunteer/mg/endowment/contribute.html)
Clark County MG Endowment



—
We're on the Web!

WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension office.

**Master Gardener Foundation
of Clark County**

Best wishes to Wayne and his family. We are all hoping for a speedy recovery.



Master Gardener Cook Book Project

A committee has been formed for the MG Cook Book Project. Thank you to all who offered to help.

Our next big task is collecting taste-tempting recipes from Master Gardeners and friends. Our goal is to have a finished product available for our May 2010 plant sale. All recipes need to be submitted by January 15, 2010, the sooner the better.

We hope each of you to will submit your favorite recipes so you can be represented in our memorable collection; the contributor's name will be printed with each recipe. Be consistent with the spelling of your name for each recipe you contribute. We would prefer no recipes from copyrighted cookbooks unless you have changed the recipe. If you do submit a copyrighted recipe, please include the reference name of the cookbook.

We are collecting the following for our cookbook tentatively titled "**Trowel to Table.**"

- 1) Outstanding recipes using fresh ingredients from the garden. Specialty recipes for gluten-free, diabetic and heart-healthy are encouraged.
- 2) Any excellent, perhaps **secret** tips you've discovered by experience for growing vegetables, fruits or herbs that might not be found in regular how to plant and harvest instructions.
- 3) Successful suggestions for food preservation for canning, freezing and drying.

Recipes/information can be submitted by the following methods:

- 1) Electronically via email to mgrecipes@gmail.com
- 2) By mail sent to Judy Hargreaves, PO Box 65655, Vancouver, WA 98665
- 3) Hand carried to Carolyn Gordon at the CASEE Center

Below is the preferred format for submitting recipes and a sample recipe. If you mail recipes, please type or print clearly in ink, not pencil. If sending electronically, follow the example format. Avoid sending a scanned recipe/document as it will mean a lot of extra work for the committee. Please type out or spell fractions, such as 1/4 C. or one-fourth C. Fractions are often lost electronically.

Simply provide the following for Recipes or Tips:

- 1) Food category: Appetizers, Beverages, Soups, Salads, Vegetables & Side Dishes, Main Dish, Breads & Rolls, Desserts, Cookies & Candies, Other

- 2) Your name, year you became a MG, email address, and/or phone number for follow-up questions. Your personal information will **NOT** be published.
- 3) The recipe name, ingredients, direction and if available, nutritional value.
 - All ingredients should be listed in the order of use in both the ingredient list and directions.
 - Abbreviate standard measurements using standard abbreviations, e.g., C. - cup, t. - teaspoon, T. - tablespoon.
 - Include container sizes, e.g., 8-oz. can, 16 oz. - pkg.
 - Write directions in paragraph form, not in steps.
 - Use names of ingredients in direction (e.g., "Combine flour and sugar"). Do NOT use statements like "combine first three ingredients."
 - Include temperatures and cooking, chilling, baking, and/or freezing times.
 - Include a personal recipe note if applicable, i.e., a brief comment about the recipe. Examples: "This won a blue ribbon at the fair" or "My grandmother's best recipe."
- 4) **For food preservation**, include specific food safety steps. Example: Hot water bath for 30 minutes instead of just hot water bath.
- 5) **For gardening tips**, unique methods you successfully use for growing fruits, vegetables and herbs
 - What & how to plant and when
 - What to feed and when
 - How to treat problems and when
 - Tips on knowing when to harvest
 - How to ripen at the end of the season

Keep in mind that this project is a fundraiser for the Foundation so everyone's contribution is encouraged to make this effort a big success. Proceeds from our cookbook sales will help fund future projects sponsored by the Foundation.

Our "masterpiece" cookbook will be beautifully illustrated and is sure to be treasured for years. **So, let's make this a really outstanding and successful project so we will sell lots of cookbooks!**

Sample recipe format:

Category: Canning

Recipe Title: Zucchini Pickles – Judy's Hargreaves Mother's recipe

Submitted By: Judy Hargreaves, MG 2008, email, phone #

Ingredients:

2 football-sized zucchini or summer squash.
1 C. slaked lime (hydrogenated lime)
3 pts. Apple cider vinegar
5 pts. granulated sugar
1 t. salt
2 cinnamon sticks
2 T. whole Allspice
2 T. celery seed

Directions:

Peel, scoop out seeds, slice and cut in small chunks 3/4" - 1". Soak in 1 gallon water with slaked lime dissolved. (Buy at feed store such as Wilco.) Stir often. Leave for 24 hours. Wash in clear water 3 times. Soak in clear water another 24 hours. Drain. In a LARGE saucepan heat the remaining ingredients and stir to dissolve sugar. Let stand 4 hrs. or overnight. Bring all to a boil and cook 15 - 20 minutes. Add sm. amount of green food coloring if desired. Seal in pint jars. Makes 12 pints.

Personal Note: These are really delicious pickles, similar to watermelon pickles and a nice way to use big squash.

Master Gardener Foundation of Clark County

1919 NE 78th Street, Vancouver WA 98665

360-576-6030 ext 17

MGFCClark@gmail.com

President:

Wayne Chandler

cny89172@centurytel.net

686-8328

Vice President:

Libby Adcock

adcocklibby@juno.com

910-6731

Secretary:

Nancy Funk

nancysgarden@comcast.net

798-4004

Treasurer:

Treca Selkregg

slkrggtrcslk@netscape.net

737-0848

Directors:

Dick Bernards

bernardsr@aol.com

887-3459

Dixie Jawad

ladydixie@aol.com

834-4444

Elena Kokta

ekokta@hotmail.com

835-9790

Ken Pellens

kerval1@msn.com

573-5486

Wanda Wilson

wwilsonwilson@yahoo.com

576-0539

Executive Administrator:

Karen Palmer

kpj3@iinet.com

260-5569

