



# Trumpet Vine

Knowledge for the Community from Loudoun County Master Gardeners

Winter 2013 - 2014

Volume X, Issue 1

[www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org](http://www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org)

## LOUDOUN COUNTY MASTER GARDENER LECTURE SERIES

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, 7PM  
RUST LIBRARY,  
380 OLD WATERFORD RD, NW,  
LEESBURG

Jan. 9. *Champion Trees* with  
Joe Howard, Montgomery  
County Forestry Board

Feb. 6. *Monet's Garden* with  
Margery Erickson, Landscape  
Architect

Mar. 5. *Designing and Installing  
an Organic Garden* with  
Meredith Sheperd, 2013  
Mayor's Sustainability Award  
Recipient

April 3. *Dragonflies* with Kevin  
Munroe, Manager, Huntley  
Meadow Park

Save the Date:

2014 GARDENING SYMPOSIUM,  
March 29-30, 2014, Ida Lee  
Recreation Center, Lower  
Level

For more information, please  
visit our web site at  
[loudouncountymastergardeners.org](http://loudouncountymastergardeners.org)

Visit us on Facebook:  
Master Gardeners of Loudoun  
County, Virginia.

## Winter – The Gardener's Off Season

As winter approaches there's always that apprehension surrounding the potential severity of the coming season. We check the Farmer's Almanac, look for woolly-bear caterpillars and try to discern other indicators of what winter might bring. But this year the ground is already frozen and we've been visited by snow, sleet and freezing rain. We may have a mid-winter thaw or an early spring but right now, it's time to curl up with a good book.

If you are a vegetable gardener you may want to check out:

*Rodale's Ultimate Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening: The Indispensable Green Resource for Every Gardener*, or

*The Edible Garden: How to Have Your Garden and Eat It, Too* by Alys Fowler.

If your focus on ornamentals? Try these:

*The Perennial Gardener's Design Primer* by Stephanie Cohen & Nancy J. Ondra, or

*The Essential Garden Design Workbook* by Rosemary Alexander.

And for woody plants:

*Dirr's Encyclopedia of Trees and Shrubs*, by Michael Dirr.

Enjoy!





The Loudoun County Master Gardeners are hosting the Fifth Annual Gardening Symposium the last weekend in March at Ida Lee Recreation Center in Leesburg. This is a non-profit event held for the education and enjoyment of everyone interested in the various aspects of gardening.

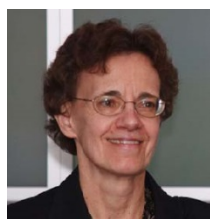
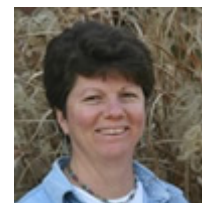
Our Saturday spotlight speakers are:

**Melanie Choukas-Bradley**, is a Washington, D.C. author and naturalist who leads field trips and tree tours for the Audubon Naturalist Society, the United States Botanic Garden, Casey Trees, the Maryland Native Plant Society and the Nature Conservancy. She is the author of *City of Trees: The Complete Field Guide to the Trees of Washington, D.C.*



**Peter J. Hatch** is a professional gardener and historian with 38 years' experience in the restoration, care, and interpretation of historic landscapes. A celebrated author of four books on the gardens of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, where he served as Director of Gardens and Grounds for 35 years, Hatch lectures on Jefferson and the history of garden plants. His latest book is *A Rich Spot of Earth: Thomas Jefferson's Revolutionary Garden at Monticello*.

**Cynthia Brown** is the Smithsonian Gardens' manager of horticulture collections and education. She is a regular contributor to *Washington Gardener* magazine and the Washington Post blog AllWeCanEat/Groundworks. She is a frequent speaker at many venues and enjoys entertaining the public with her gardening trials and tribulations. She believes that every garden should be a mix of ornamentals and edibles for a truly gourmet garden!



**Paulette Royt** taught biology and conducted research at George Mason University for 31 years, specializing in microbiology. When she retired, she became a Master Gardener at Green Spring Garden where she volunteers with the Fairfax Virginia Cooperative Extension program. Paulette combines her interest in gardening and soil biology with her extensive knowledge of microbiology. She is a popular speaker who applies her teaching skills to fascinating garden topics.

The Sunday Symposium schedule allows attendees to choose from a variety of speakers. A sampling of the speakers are: **Robert McDuffie**, a horticulture professor at Virginia Tech who will lead a 2-part session on small scale landscape design; **Janet Davis**, a native plant grower who will talk on native groundcovers and **Nicole Hamilton**, who will describe how to raise endangered Monarch butterflies from eggs.

For more information see <http://loudouncountymastergardeners.org/> after January 1. Registration will open February 1st via paper and on-line February 5th.

*The Symposium Team*

## The Care of Evergreens in Winter

Ah, Evergreens in the winter! There's something about them looking green and alive in the winter landscape to complement the bare branch structures of deciduous trees and shrubs. And the fragrance from the aromatic needles and scales of pine, cedar, spruce, juniper, cypress, arborvitae, and firs matches well with the cool breeze on our face that bring pleasant calm or nostalgia for the season.



But don't be fooled that evergreens, like the deciduous trees that also provide wintery landscape interest, are fully dormant, just sitting there and not needing any care. Remember, they're green and fragrant and are not mere bare branches that happen to be architecturally decorative in the cold of winter.

Evergreens have leaves in the winter that still need care, especially when they are outside in containers or are newly planted in the ground. The established ones in the ground will be fine with no fussing needed in the winter—except, be on the lookout for those pesky bagworms in case they show up. But remember to give some care to evergreens that are not quite established in ground. Their leaves need protection from cold drying winds, fluctuating temperatures, frozen ground and hot winter sun. Just remember a few things to do throughout the cold winter, and those potted or newly planted evergreens will grace your landscape for a long time.

When we think of evergreens, usually what comes to mind are the needle- or scale-leaved ones (also called conifers ... Christmas trees!). But there are of course also broad-leaved evergreens such as holly, rhododendron, varieties of azalea and magnolia, camellia, boxwood, euonymus, nandina, aucuba, leucothoe, laurel, mahonia, cotoneaster, glossy abelia and many more. It would be sad if they beautifully decorated your garden one season and then they died because a few steps weren't taken for their protection during the winter.

Let us focus on those in containers in challenging locations or exposures, and also those newly planted in the ground. Those are what really need care.

- Location: Move those you want to keep in containers to a more protected area while keeping them visible in the winter landscape. Problematic locations would be where the containerized or potted evergreens are exposed to direct sun and strong drying winds. If possible move them close to the house, but do not position them where they will be directly sitting on stone or cement or similar hardscape materials because such cold surfaces will easily conduct the cold/freeze to the plants.

Also consider temporarily sinking the containerized evergreens in the ground for the winter or mulching them deeply up to the container's rim. Come spring, they can be displayed where you prefer to have them.

- Watering: During the fall, if rain is absent, infrequent or not sufficient, water newly planted or potted evergreens well a couple of times (in intervals to avoid root rot) before hard freezes. When the ground freezes, plants can no longer absorb moisture through their roots while leaves continue transpiration. This means evergreen leaves lose moisture faster than the plant can keep supplying water to them.

When frozen ground thaws, take advantage of that window to water evergreens. For evergreens to survive through a tough winter, they will still need water, hopefully from melting snow and rain, which is usually sufficient if established. But if evergreens are potted or newly planted, definitely supplement watering by hand.

- Added Protection: Spray leaves with an anti-desiccant. Spray when temperatures are above 40 degrees, during daylight, and when no rain or snow is expected within the next 24 hours so the protective liquid adheres to the leaves properly. See

[http://urbanext.illinois.edu/gardenerscorner/issue\\_01/fall\\_05\\_04.cfm](http://urbanext.illinois.edu/gardenerscorner/issue_01/fall_05_04.cfm).

*Maria Daniels, Master Gardener*



## Winter Gardening Educational Classes

Did you make a resolution to eat more fresh vegetables in 2014?

January can be long and cold, especially for the vegetable gardener. While we appreciate the break from working the garden, the dearth of fresh garden produce makes the hardiest of us wish fervently for the warmer days of spring and summer.

*There are positive attributes to January though!* This month gives the gardener time to reflect on past successes and failures as well as the opportunity to plan for the next season. Seed catalogs will fill the mailbox and entice us to open the pages to witness the possibilities of what next season may hold for our garden.

To assist you in planning for your next season or maybe your first season, the Gum Springs library and the Loudoun County Master Gardener's Garden to Table team will be holding educational classes in January and February with a series called "Love Vegetables...Let's Get Started!" These classes are open to the general public and offer something for both new and experienced vegetable gardeners.

The first of the series will be held on Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup> and will consist of 2 afternoon classes. The first class, from 1:30 PM to 2:45 PM, is "Vegetable Seed Selection and Basics of Seed Starting." The second class, "Building a Backyard Vegetable Garden" will be from 3:00 PM to 4:15 PM. In addition, MGs will be on hand to answer general garden questions. Door prizes and giveaways will also be part of the fun!

*But hold on* because in February the fun will continue at the Gum Springs library as the MGs present another class on Saturday, February 22 titled "Wildlife in the Vegetable Garden." This class starts at 2:00 PM and will end at 3:30 PM.



*Winter weather can interfere with the best of intentions so if weather gets in the way and you would like to know about weather cancellations or would like more information about these classes please contact the Gum Springs library or send an email to [G2T@loudouncountymastergardeners.org](mailto:G2T@loudouncountymastergardeners.org).*

We look forward to sharing our love of gardening with you in January and February!

*Denise Palmer, Master Gardener*

## Tropical Plants in Virginia

What a great time of year to dream of the tropics. Maybe this article will inspire you to take it to the next level and plant a little tropical fun in your yard so you can enjoy it year-round, rather than in a magazine or on the travel channel! There are a few tropic plants that actually do well here in Virginia. With some proactive care for overwintering, they will thrive in your garden as seen here on the right. These are banana plants growing in the Children's Garden at our LCMG Demo Garden in Ida Lee Park, Leesburg.



Virginia's hardiness zones range from 5 to 8. Depending where you reside in Loudoun or surrounding counties, you are 6b or 7a realizing temperatures as low as -5 F and 0 F respectively. There are three very hardy palms (among other plants) recommended in the area that can withstand freezing temperatures.

The Needle palm (*Rhapidophyllum hystrix*- pictured), the Chinese windmill palm (*Trachycarpus fortunei*) and the Dwarf palmetto (*Sabal minor*) can all withstand temperatures in the lower single digits. There may be some scorching of leaves over a harsh winter or until they get established but they bounce back in the spring. These palms like good drainage, protection from winter wind and soil rich in manganese and magnesium. Plan out where you would plant them and get a soil sample kit from the extension office to test your soil and enhance as necessary. The best time to plant is March through early July so you have time to plan for them in your landscape now.



Other tropical plants to consider are banana plants, hardy eucalyptus, hardy yucca and the rice paper plant. Banana plant varieties are marginal in this area and require winter sheltering. The plant is 90% water so its leaves fold down with the first frost but this actually protects it. At the Demo Garden, we secure a small fence around the plants and mulch with leaves or pine needles to insulate them from any sub-freezing temperatures. Remove all insulation in the spring.

The eucalyptus and yucca are hardy to zones 6b. These plants provide dramatic contrasts in the landscape. Eucalyptus is best when planted using small, well-rooted plants to get started, and can reach heights of 20 feet, so plan where you want this one! The yucca is native to Virginia and can add some distinctive lines to your landscape. There are many different types of yucca so do some research to find what suits you.



And lastly, look at this beauty on the left - the rice paper plant, hardy to zone 6. This one is growing in the Grinnings' yard in Falls Church, VA, zone 7. It thrives in full sun and clay soil. Check out the expansive 2 to 3 foot wide leaves.

So take some time this winter and plan a little tropical paradise in your yard. I bet you'll be glad you did! For more information, see [VCE VT publication 3005-1446](#).

*Barb Bailey, Master Gardener*

## What's Sheltering in that Leaf Litter?

Master Gardeners promote the use of leaf mulch because it nourishes the soil, reduces weeds in the lawn, and breaks down quickly creating high quality humus soil. But what about the un-mulched leaves in the woods, naturalized areas and other spots in our yards? In addition to adding organic material to the soil they also provide a winter habitat to many beneficial organisms in various stages of their life cycles. Here are a few that depend on leaf litter:

### Gray Tree Frogs



Gray tree frogs overwinter under leaf litter. They are abundant in our woodland garden during the summer months where they perch on both shrubs and perennials waiting for their meal of beetles, flies, bugs and bees. Tree frogs help keep insect populations in balance.

Wood frogs also overwinter in the woods. Wood frogs feed on beetles and crickets.

### Goldenrod Soldier Beetle

This late summer garden visitor is an important pollinator of native perennials as they feed on pollen. The larvae of goldenrod soldier beetles feed on soft bodied insects such as aphids and are considered to be beneficial to garden systems.

Goldenrod Soldier Beetles lay their eggs in leaf litter in the fall. The emerging larvae are food for spiders and beetles.



### Hummingbird Clearwing Moth



The Clearwing Moth is a beautiful hovering, day-flying moth that nectars on flowers, and aids in the pollination of many of our native plants.

Their caterpillars feed on viburnums and other native shrubs providing food for birds rearing their young.

The Hummingbird Clearwing Moth pupa overwinters in a cocoon in the leaf litter.

### Bumble Bees

As summer winds down, all bumble bees die except for the mated queens. The queens hibernate for the winter under leaf litter or in abandoned rodent holes.

The queen builds a nest in the spring, often in leaf litter where she lays eggs in the waxy cells.





**Isabella Tiger Moth Caterpillar (Woolly bear)**

The Isabella Tiger Moth caterpillar overwinters under leaf litter. During cold winters the woolly bear can freeze solid and survive until spring. Woolly bears are one of the first caterpillars to emerge in the spring.

**Luna Moth**

The Luna Moth lays its eggs on sweet gum leaves. The caterpillar feeds on the leaves until it is full size, then wraps a leaf around itself and silks the leaf shut creating a cocoon with the pupa inside. When the leaves fall to the ground in the late fall, so does the Luna Moth cocoon. It winters safely under all the accumulated leaves. In the spring the adult Luna Moth emerges from this cocoon.

**Mourning Cloak Butterfly**

Mourning Cloak Butterflies are one of the first butterflies to emerge in spring because they overwinter as adults, seeking shelter under leaf litter or behind bark.

**Round Lobed Hepatica**

Round Lobed Hepatica ~ *Hepatica Americana*, one of the first woodland spring ephemeral natives to flower, it relies upon a thick blanket of leaves to protect it from freezing during the winter. Tiny native bees, such as the small carpenter bee, depend on these early flowering natives as a source of nectar.



An array of wildlife makes their home in leaf litter including insect eggs, larvae, spiders, salamanders, toads and other wildlife. Consider preserving as many leaves as possible to preserve the web of life in your garden.

*Carol Ivory, Master Gardener*

## Overwintering Potted Perennials

You may have potted ornamental plants on your deck or porch or perhaps you bought some plants that you didn't have time to plant this past fall. In any case potted plants — perennials, small trees and shrubs — need some special attention to keep them alive and healthy through the winter months. Unlike plants growing directly in the garden, container grown plants cannot take advantage of the temperature-buffering effect of the soil. The roots of plants growing in containers tend to circle around the inside wall of the container which provides varying protection depending on the container. A sturdy glazed ceramic pot provides more protection; a thin plastic pot from a garden center provides the least protection. Glazed pots, which are usually fired at higher temperatures, tend to withstand freezing better than terra-cotta pots.

If the air is 20 degrees the root ball in an unprotected plastic pot may also be close to 20 degrees, increasing the probability of injury or death to roots of plants otherwise considered winter hardy.

The key to plant health while overwintering is maintaining an even temperature, keeping the plants cold and alive, but not actively growing. When plants are allowed to freeze and then thaw repeatedly, there is a greater risk for plant loss from heaving and root damage. Successful overwintering begins when plants are potted. Perennials should be potted up and allowed to establish themselves for several weeks prior to overwintering. The better the root system, the better the chance the plant will survive the winter. When possible, use large containers for plants that must remain outdoors—the greater volume of soil surrounding the plants will provide increased insulation around the roots.

Whenever possible, pots should be clustered together in a sheltered spot and away from the winter sun to prevent temperature fluctuation. Gather them against a north facing wall or fence or under a large shrub and then cover them with leaves, mulch, straw, pine branches or even topsoil. Depending on the location, the pots can be bound by chicken wire or burlap to contain the leaves or straw, or large, empty pots stuffed with leaves. Place the most cold-sensitive plants at the center of the group so they receive additional protection from the hardier plants. In larger locations, bales of hay or straw can be used to encircle the pots.

Soil moisture should be checked periodically; dry soil freezes much more quickly than wet soil. But avoid overwatering plants during the winter. If you keep the plants too wet, diseases such as root rot will become a problem. Make sure the pots can drain.

In early spring begin to unearth the pots and watch for new growth.

**Carol Ivory, Master Gardener**

## Winter Garden Clinics

Master Gardeners will staff Saturday clinics January 4 - March 29 at the *Rust Library in Leesburg*, 10:30 - 12:30, and at the *Gum Springs Library in Stone Ridge, VA*, 10-1. Stop by with your questions and plant problems.





## Whiskey Barrels 101

Some of us have had the sad experience of creating a beautiful whiskey barrel garden only to have the barrel rot away at the bottom and eventually fall apart after only a few years. While no whiskey barrel garden will last forever — they are made of wood, after all — we can construct our gardens so that they last longer and are easier to use. It's not hard or time consuming (if you're just making one or two) but it's a job you'll want to do in cool weather, not the heat of summer.

For my latest whiskey barrels I've combined wooden whiskey barrels, plastic pond liners, heavy duty plant dollies, and (of course) planting medium to create barrels that are not exposed to damp soil, contain moisture efficiently but also drain well, and are easily movable. You may not think portability is important, but these planters are really *heavy*. Whiskey barrels alone weight 45 pounds or more; add soil and plants and they become almost impossible to move if you change your mind about placement.

**For the whiskey barrel:** Whiskey barrels (or rather, half barrels) are widely available at most garden centers. They come in a fairly standard size, generally 16 inches tall by 26 inches wide at the top. Look around until you find one you like — some of them may be extremely discolored or even in poor physical condition. Hoops should be securely attached to the barrel, and staves should be tight not loose. When I made my barrel



gardens, I looked at three garden centers before I found five that all had the same basic color tones and were in good condition. Since they were going to be very close together, this was important to me.

Occasionally you may find barrels with a hole already drilled in the bottom. You'll still need to drill more holes. The goal is to drill eight ½ inch holes evenly spaced around the bottom of the barrel to provide good drainage.

Photo: [www.TheCavenderDiary.com](http://www.TheCavenderDiary.com)

**For the liner:** Barrel liners come in one color: black and are widely available at many nurseries or garden centers. The liners nest inside the whiskey barrel with the lip covering the edge of the barrel and protect the wood from contact with wet soil. Since liners are generally used for growing water lilies, they naturally don't have drainage holes in the bottoms, so you'll have to drill them. It takes only a minute to do. Be sure to drill plenty of holes for good drainage; I find that eight holes, ½ inch in diameter, evenly spaced do the trick. During a rainy spell, they will be needed. Your liner may not fit as perfectly as the one in the photograph on the right, but it should be a reasonably good fit. The main points are to keep damp soil away from the wood and prevent the wood from leaching moisture from the soil during dry weather.



Photos: [www.KentuckyBarrels.com](http://www.KentuckyBarrels.com)

**For the base:** Years ago when I made my first whiskey barrel planters, I bought casters at the hardware store and attached them directly to the bottoms of the wooden barrels. Bad idea! The wood bottoms eventually rotted, and the barrels ended up resting on the sidewalk, with the casters inside the barrels. It was impossible to move them. This time I did it differently — I used plastic bases and it has worked out perfectly.



Ideally, the base should be round, solid plastic, 24 inches in diameter, with shallow (about one inch) sides to prevent the barrel from slipping from the

base. It should have six rubber (not plastic) wheels with steel ball bearings — they roll easily and the base won't tip over. The 24-inch size will generally hold up to 500 pounds, which is more than adequate for your whiskey barrel garden.

Generally, bases are available in either clay-pot red or black. My favorite style doesn't have drainage holes, but it was easy to drill half-a-dozen ½ inch holes in the base to prevent standing water (a sure way to attract a family of mosquitoes) and cause the barrel bottoms to rot. The bases roll easily on our aggregate sidewalk and they undoubtedly would roll even more easily on a deck or porch.

When I purchased my bases, they weren't locally available; in desperation I turned to the internet and found exactly what I was looking for, although shipping was expensive. Now at least one "big box" store has them available in smaller sizes, but the large, 24-inch bases are available as an on-line item only. If you order them and have them shipped to the store, you will avoid the cost of shipping (provided you exceed the store's minimum order amount). The base may seem expensive, but you're building a whiskey barrel garden which should last for a number of years. It's worth the extra cost to be able to move your garden if necessary.



Photo: [www.heavydutyplantdolly.com](http://www.heavydutyplantdolly.com)

**Finishing off:** With the whiskey barrel, liner, and base all in place, it's time to cover the drainage holes and fill the barrel with your favorite potting soil. After filling, I like to let the barrel rest for a few days to let the soil settle before I plant. Sometimes it does and I have to add a little more soil.



And now the fun begins — planting time! And perhaps time to experiment with new ideas. We're all familiar with barrels brimming with petunias and other annuals, but perennials? Not so much! For some new ideas, search images using the terms "perennials in containers" on the internet. Inspiring!

This mixture of liatris, purple coneflower, dahlias, and other plants is dramatic and beautiful.

Photo courtesy <http://perennialpassion.blogspot.com>

*Lina Burton, Master Gardener*

## **Apps for Sustainable Eating**

There are lots of apps for those interested in eating more healthful food, wasting less food, finding sustainable sources of seafood, or buying seasonally. Here are nine that might interest you. For more apps and sustainable food information see <http://foodtank.org/>.

### **Locavore** (Hevva Corp.) [FREE]

Locavore helps consumers find what local foods are in season, and locate the closest farmers markets that provide them. The app has tons of information on individual producers in a user's area, and provides seasonal recipes to best use fresh, local ingredients.

### **Wild Edibles** (WinterRoot LLC) [US \$7.99]

The Wild Edibles app helps to identify and provide information about the uses of wild edible plants. The app offers harvesting methods, preparation instructions and recipes, and medicinal information for foraged plants, as well as a botanical glossary for reference.

### **Food Community** (Nommunity.com) [FREE]

With the Food Community app, consumers can search and discover local vegan, vegetarian, kosher, gluten-free, locally-grown and organic restaurants. They can also connect and collaborate with a community of people with the same dietary choices.

### **Seasons** (What Is It Production Ltd.) [US \$1.99]

The Seasons app helps eaters follow the natural growing seasons of fruits and vegetables in their region. They can also search a database of fruits, vegetables, herbs and nuts for descriptions, information on seasonality and photos.

### **NRDC Eat Local** (Smart Tools) [FREE]

The Eat Local app helps locate nearby farmers markets, and provides seasonal recipes for the ingredients found there. Users can also submit and edit information for their local and favorite farmers markets in the Eat Local database.

### **Mother Earth News Library** (Ogden Publications, Inc.) [FREE]

This virtual library of different resources from Mother Earth News includes such important tools as How to Can, the Garden Insects Guide and the Food Gardening Guide.

### **Clean Plates – Healthy Restaurants** (Clean Plates) [FREE]

Search or browse the Clean Plates app database to find restaurants offering vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free and organic dining options. Professional reviews offer insight and suggestions for different dining experiences.

### **What's On My Food?** (Pesticide Action Network) [FREE]

Use this app to identify chemicals found on foods commonly sold at the grocery store. Search the database to find out which pesticides are the most dangerous and for a crash course on pesticides for amateurs.

### **What's Fresh?** (Mobile Simplicity) [US\$0.99]

The What's Fresh? app tracks fruits and vegetables that are in season regionally. It offers a regional Freshness Calendar, and a locator to search the different parts of the country in which produce items are in season.

*Recommended by Debbie Dillion, Extension Agent, Culpeper, Madison, & Orange Counties*

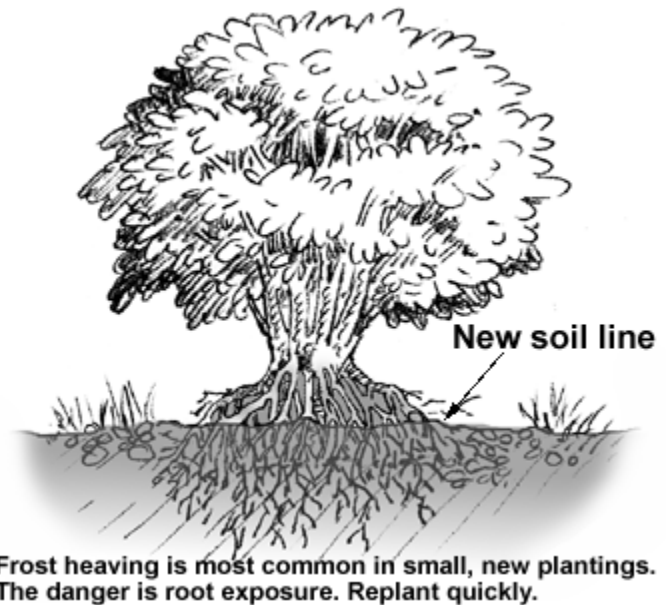


## Notes from the Help Desk:

**Q:** I have heard a lot about 'ground heaving' during the winter, can you elaborate?

**A:** When the temperatures continually freeze and thaw, so does the ground or soil. With this change in climate, the soil expands and can push up shallow roots and expose them or expose so much of the root system that the tree/shrub falls over. This is called **heaving**. If the roots are exposed to the winter winds, they will dry out and cause damage to the entire plant.

If a plant has been exposed or heaved from the ground it is important to replant it as soon as possible. If it is a larger plant, you may need to dig another hole rather than just push the roots back down into the original hole. It is also important to protect the ground around the roots with 3 to 4 inches of mulch to prevent this from recurring. The layer of mulch will also help the plant retain moisture



Kale, spinach, evergreen bunching onion, lettuce, parsley, parsnip, and carrots *may* survive all winter in the garden. Mulch these overwintering vegetables with 8 inches of mulch to prevent heaving of the soil and exposure of the roots. ([VCE VT Publications 426-334](#) and [426-500](#))

**Q:** Tree pruning schedule?

**A:** (Reprinted from Chesterfield County MG) Fall is the right time to prune some trees and shrubs, while others benefit from a mid-winter or spring pruning. To find out the right time for your particular plants follow the links below to three pruning calendars from Tech. Check out the links to pruning tips as well.

- [Deciduous Tree Pruning Calendar](#)
- [Pruning Deciduous Trees](#)
- [Evergreen Tree Pruning Calendar](#)
- [Pruning Evergreen Trees](#)
- [Shrub Pruning Calendar](#)
- [Pruning Shrubs](#)

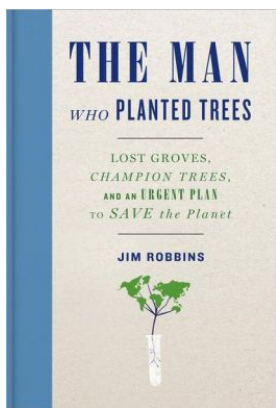
Is your tree too large for you to prune? Not sure if it needs pruning? Consult a Certified Arborist. Additional information can be found at the ISA Consumer Tree Care Website:  
<http://www.treesaregood.com/>

*Barb Bailey, Master Gardener*

## The Man Who Planted Trees: Lost Groves, Champion Trees, and an Urgent Plan to Save the Planet, by Jim Robbins

The blurb on the back cover of this book, *The Man Who Planted Trees*, speculates that "this book might just save the planet." The statement, no doubt, is overblown, but it is likely that if the project described in the book continues to its conclusion, the benefit to the planet would be considerable. The man at the center of the book, David Milarch, had an end of life experience, one in which he believes he died and then returned to life.

Milarch's family was in the nursery business, his personal life was a shambles and his professional life had no focus. This changed after his near death experience and after a later vision when he was visited by "light beings" who told him the big trees of the world were dying and that his mission was to clone champion trees and to plant them far and wide.



After this experience, Milarch became one of the cofounders of the Champion Tree Project, whose object is to clone the champion of each of 826 species of trees in the United States and plant the clones around the US as a means of preserving their DNA and generally benefitting mankind and the planet.

To start, with funds he has raised from several benefactors, Milarch planned to clone 100 champion trees and to make the clones available for reforestation projects. Milarch's notion in cloning the champion trees is that those trees, having survived so long and having reached maximum size, have genetic components that allowed them to survive over a range of climatic conditions. From the standpoint of mitigating climate change, very large trees can store more carbon than smaller ones. Milarch estimates a single fully grown Sequoia or red wood tree can sequester four hundred tons of carbon.

The book is written by a reporter for the New York Times, not a scientist. The author draws out the story and overarching theme with side excursions into the opinions and research of those who have studied trees. The looping narrative explores what we know about trees both from rigorous research results and from observations and anecdotes of people who simply love trees. The author admits that some of the claims contained in the book are seriously questioned by scientists who have examined them. Topics range from tree chemistry, phytoremediation, impacts of global tree loss on the spread of diseases and psychological problems, communication among trees, and carbon sequestration. The book also includes digressions into visions, near death experiences, and commandments by God.

At its core though, this book is about what one man was able to accomplish. A man who at the outset had no knowledge or resources to apply, and against the advice of experts in the field, successfully cloned some of the world's oldest trees, including giant redwoods, and the oldest tree in the world, the bristle-cone pine, Methuselah.

The final paragraph neatly summarizes the central theme of this book: "We can wait around for someone else to solve the problem of climate change and the range of environmental problems we face, from toxic waste to air pollution to dead zones in the oceans to the precipitous decline in biodiversity, or we can take matters into our own hands and plant trees. It may not be the best time to plant a tree, but as the proverb says, there is no better time."

*Arthur Osteen, Master Gardener*