

HAVE QUESTIONS? WE HAVE ANSWERS

By Maritta Perry Grau, Frederick County Master Gardener, September, 2023

If you have gardening questions, we have answers! Whether you're wondering about what kind of native plants will work best in your sunny or shady garden, you want advice on how to create a pollinator garden, or you want to know what practices you can implement around your house and garden to help protect the Chesapeake Bay, you can find answers with the University of Maryland Extension Frederick County Master Gardeners. September is crammed with activities and seminars to help you resolve any questions you might have.

One event that I always look forward to is the Great Frederick Fair, to be held this year from September 15th to the 23rd. Frederick County Master Gardeners have created a permanent garden at the Fair with both native plants and pollinators, along one side of the "City Streets, Country Roads" Building (#44), just across from the animal birthing center. In addition, we'll have a booth inside, highlighting window box plantings and small-space plantings, as well as exhibits from several master gardener committees, notes Amy Rembold, committee chair for the master gardeners' Bay-Wise committee and coordinator of this year's Fair teams.

For the elementary-level students, the master gardeners' Youth Gardening committee will provide a short informational program "on peanuts—how they grow, their history and uses," Ms. Rembold said. We'll also have displays that explain how Frederick County contributes to the health of the Chesapeake Bay, how to use containers for gardens, how best to attract pollinators, and how to grow the best vegetables.

Another master gardener event May through October is our "Storytime in the Garden," held the first Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m., with a rain date for the following Wednesday. It's always held outside in the Children's Garden, part of the demonstration gardens at the back of the UMD Extension Offices, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick.

You and your munchkins have one more chance this year to participate. According to Beth Molesworth, the next Story Time will be October 4; Ms. Molesworth noted that "If the weather is iffy, we cancel via Facebook by 8 a.m., with the following Wednesday as the rain date." If you miss October's story time and its activities, you'll have to wait until May for the series to start up again.

Speaking of garden beds, if you've been eyeing your beds with thoughts of moving, renovating, or starting fresh beds, you may find yourself with questions as you go about your fall garden chores. This month and October are probably your last chances to plant spring bulbs, new trees and shrubs, and to divide and replant perennials. If your perennials or established bulbs didn't bloom much last spring, or if you've noticed bulbs popping up out of the soil, it might be they are too crowded—very likely they need to be redistributed.



You may want to mark your calendar for our free Saturday seminars for advice about these tasks and others. The seminars run from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m., all at the Extension Building on Montevue Lane.

Upcoming seminars include:

- September 9, “Mindfulness in the Garden.” MG John Schlee will discuss the benefits of plants to your well-being and then lead a walk in the demonstration gardens for mindfulness activities.
- September 16, “Advanced Gardening Techniques.” Comfortable growing standard vegetables? Ready to grow the more difficult and demanding options? MG Don Ludke will give you tips and techniques to expand your options and growing seasons.
- September 23, “Pawpaws, a Little Known Treasure.” Discover a native fruit you can grow right in your own backyard! MG Kim Leahy will show you how to grow this large, tasty fruit, *Asimina triloba*, which has a flavor somewhat like a cross between a banana and mango, and how native plants can help your entire garden thrive. Then she will lead a tour of the pawpaw patch in our demo gardens.
- September 30, “Fall Cleanup and Winterizing the Garden.” MG Tiger Waddell will discuss the best way to start the spring season—with fall clean-up! She’ll teach you about final harvesting, plant overwintering, soil preparation for next year, and planting onions and garlic for harvest in the spring.



The **pawpaw** (*Asimina triloba*) is a fruit tree native to the U.S., found in zones 5 to 9. Its taste is often described as creamy with a banana/mango-like flavor. In Maryland, the fruits ripen in mid-September. (*Photo courtesy of the University of Maryland Extension Service, Deanna Karras*)

For more information about the Frederick County Extension Master Gardener/Horticulture Program, gardening information and advice visit: <http://extension.umd.edu/frederick-county/home-gardening> or call Susan Trice at the University of Maryland Extension Frederick County office, 301-600-1596. Find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/mastergardenersfrederickcountymaryland>. UME Home & Garden Information Center, <https://extension.umd.edu/programs/environmentnatural-resources/program-areas/home-and-garden-information-center>.

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