

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS? REMEMBER RESOLUTIONS FOR THE GARDEN!

By Maritta Perry Grau and Theresa Furnari, Frederick County Master Gardener, January, 2024

Do you make annual New Year's resolutions? Do these resolutions extend to the lawn and garden or to special plants on the porch of an apartment?

As you sit warm and cozy in your house or apartment, sipping tea, coffee, or some other favorite beverage, staring out the window, do your fingers itch to get started on this year's gardening plans? Do you want to expand a narrow bed? Change out the plants in a bed that has become too shady as nearby trees and shrubs have grown, or too sunny because an old tree or shrub had to be taken down? Do you want to add more native plants? Grasses? Vegetables? Shrubs or trees?

One way to satisfy that gardening itch is to browse those wonderful gardening catalogs, online or by mail, from all over the United States, not to mention other countries. Often, you'll see pictures of great garden or lawn plans. Perhaps best of all, whether you're looking for vegetables, flowers, vines, trees, or shrubs, you'll usually find all of the information you need about the plant—growing zones, blooming season/color, height and spread, amount of sun/shade/water needed, even the plant's U.S. region or country of origin, just in case you're looking for natives.

You don't have to rely only on online catalogs from far-away places, either. Most of the local nurseries in the Frederick-Baltimore area include pictures, if not whole catalogs, of the plants and garden accessories they carry. The nice thing about browsing online is that you can often enlarge the pictures to see details more clearly. One drawback, however, may be that even if you sign up for just one catalog, you're likely to be inundated with many more!

You'll probably also want to note a few dates from these web sites—when is the best time to order? When do the plants need to go into the ground? When is the last frost in your area?

While you're at it, resolve to watch the Community Calendar (page 2, *Frederick News-Post*) for announcements of upcoming Master Gardener free Saturday seminars and other activities, such as the April 27 Master Gardener Plant Sale and the June 22 Earthfest. See master gardener Theresa Furnari's comments below for more information about the June Earthfest.

More details on both these events—and others—will be announced as we grow closer to the events.

--Maritta Perry Grau, Master Gardener

EarthFest scheduled for June 22

Every year, as mentioned in the earlier section of this column, many of us are deep in thought about our New Year's resolutions and schedules. Is this the year we will visit every baseball stadium in the U.S., lose that holiday weight, or visit our family or friends more frequently? Or, is this the year we are going

to consider our role as stewards for the environment and learn why native plants and biodiversity are so essential to the needs of our environment?

It is timely to mark your calendars for EarthFest 2024. Formerly known as Earth Awareness Day, and not to be confused with the traditional April 22 Earth Day, this free, family-friendly open house will take place on June 22 from 9:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. at the University of Maryland Extension Office, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick.

The open house will offer a variety of activities that are fun, interesting, and educational. Activities are already planned for residents of all ages to learn about native plants; when and where to plant; who/what pollinators are and about their habitats, especially the butterflies and bees; how to create composting bins; and how to identify birds. You will also be able to collect ideas for landscaping to protect our waterways, obtain information about the Potomac River Basin, and take tours of the demonstration gardens in bloom at the Montevue facility. Activities will be held both inside and outside on the grounds of the Extension Office. Be on the lookout for more information to come in our May column.

--Theresa Furnari, Master Gardener



Bioretention sign: The demonstration gardens at the University of Maryland Extension Building, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, have lots of explanatory signage, such as this one, which shows native plants that can help to address on-site stormwater issues. (Photo courtesy of master gardener Ms. Chris Renshaw)



Demo gardens: The demonstration gardens at the University of Maryland Extension Building, 330 Montevue Lane, Frederick, are open to the public (9 to 4) for self-guided tours or tours led by a master gardener. As well as explanatory signage around the gardens, flyers located in the gardens help identify plants or provide other information about individual plants and gardens. *(Photo courtesy of master gardener Ms. Chris Renshaw)*

Also check our website or Facebook for upcoming free seminars, Master Gardener certification classes, as well as other announcements. 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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