

**Inside this issue:**

Photos from DIEI meeting	2-3
St. Mary's Caring Soup Kitchen Curb Appeal	4
Maryland Day at University of Maryland College Park	4-5
Are You Bay-Wise?	6
Mistycal Garden 2023	7-10
Weeds, Weeds, What to do With Weeds?	11
NOT a Zinnia!	12
Prolific Tomatoes	13
Beneficial Insect Sheet	14
Podcast Recommendation	14
The Barns at New Market	15
Recipes	16-17

***"Message from Mariah"***

We hosted the state wide Grow It Eat It Meeting on July 12. It was great! Many St. Mary's County Master Gardeners attended as well as a good amount of our neighbors and friends in Calvert and Charles Counties. Deb Mayfield gave tours of the container garden that she, Vivian White, Stephanie Frederiksen, and Ruth Yates put a lot of time into. Ann Richards shared the history of stuffed ham at the potluck. John Richards led introductions for everyone. There were updates by Jon Traunfeld on current happenings in the vegetable and small fruit gardening world. He also mentioned the Ask Extension service and how great of a resource it is. Carol Allen gave a great talk on food safety. We also got to show the video on constructing a garden arbor that Deb Mayfield starred in and Bill Smith recorded. That video is on our Facebook if you'd like to see it.

Debra Mayfield was recognized as the volunteer of the season this year by the state office. There is a nice article about her in the state newsletter. Congrats Deb! Thanks for all you do!

The County Fair is coming up. Please consider volunteering at that. I have sent the sign up form out. Volunteering at the fair involves answering people's gardening questions. It is a nice chance to meet other Master Gardeners and help educate the public.

Our summer quarterly was August 15. It was at Sotterley. Big thanks to Kim Husick and Nancy Easterling for hosting. Thank you to Bob Aldridge who also helped host and helped us close up the barn. Thank you to Master Gardener Kimberly Dean who presented on rose care. She is a local rosarian and hoping to do a sort of open house next year for people to see all the beautiful roses she tends.

Below are photos from the GIEI meeting, mostly from John Richards. As you can see, many St. Mary's County Master Gardeners were in attendance! Thank you Debbie Mayfield, Vivian White, Stephanie Frederiksen, Macy Hovland, Deb Pence, Ann Richards, John Richards, Ann Buckler, Shannon Dyson, Ruth Yates, Deb Kole, Barbara Dobbins, Miriam Bonk, Bill Smith and Marlene Smith for attending! Many of you who were not able to attend because of various other obligations were there with us in spirit.

We are still ironing out our fall activities. Please keep checking your emails. We have been posting a lot of upcoming events to our Facebook as well. Thank you all for your continued dedication to the Master Gardener program and your service to the community.

Look forward to seeing you all this fall,  
Mariah Dean



*Photos from GIEI meeting*



*Photos from GIEI meeting*



***St. Mary's Caring Soup Kitchen Curb Appeal  
Submitted By: Karen Doherty***

This is me in the final stages of providing a little curb appeal for the new St Mary's Caring Soup Kitchen in Great Mills The ribbon cutting is tomorrow afternoon. While I worked, so many clients and staff voiced their appreciation. How wonderful was that?!



***Maryland Day at University of Maryland College Park  
Submitted By: Bill and Marlene Smith***



On Saturday, April 29, Charles County Master Gardener Marlene Smith joined Esther Bonney and Sam Rutherford of the Nurture Natives team.



In distributing 400 free native trees and shrubs at Maryland Day at the University of Maryland in College Park.



Nurture Natives is a teen-led environmental conservation organization dedicated to increasing biodiversity through the planting of native trees and the eradication of invasive plants.



Tree and shrub selections at Maryland Day included: flowering dogwood, redbud, red maple, willow oak, river birch, serviceberry, buttonbush, and sweetbay magnolia. The line for the trees stretched down the courtyard and around the sidewalk, at times even longer than the line for ice cream!



4H educator Amy Lang assisted with coordination of the day's event. Also assisting at the event were master gardeners from St. Mary's and Prince Georges counties. Bill Smith, St. Mary's County master gardener provided videography, and master gardeners from Prince Georges County helped with tree distribution and the master gardener outreach table: John David, Larry Clements, Anthony Carr, Christopher Pohlhaus, and Christy Regenhatdt.

Esther, Sam, and the master garden volunteers also had the opportunity to meet and speak with University of Maryland and University of Maryland Extension faculty, including:

- Dr. Craig Beyrouthy, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Maryland
- Mike Raupp, The Bug Guy, Professor of entomology at the University of Maryland
- Dr. William Hubbard, UME Assistant Director and State Program Leader, Natural Resources, Environment & Sea Grant (Was unable to get photo )
- Jon Traunfeld, UME Program Director, Home and Garden Information Center



For more information on the Maryland Day Event or the Nurture Natives journey and future events, follow them on Facebook:

**CCMG:**

<https://www.facebook.com/UMEGCharlesCountyMasterGardeners/posts/pfbid05wPeUjLqJ41zaJiqVqKdEsJujtB61Um2Ck5oBAntxq7Da5p6Se3gUiH5KemHvJtl>

**Neighborhood Creative Arts Center (NCAC):**

<https://www.facebook.com/neighborhoodcreativeartscenter/posts/pfbid02Whq7bxKkQdqFEdtrdts6M2cZRNgrYEoV2mfxKfrhQhFDruudiENoaUYwaAJaHQbXI>

Nurture Natives:

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=pfbid02UUJmhbD3Msh49HCTCiwuMyGA5eFXkF71faeFPEJfAE4gXaiH5GBkaQVCUcux5SvPI&id=100092384580210](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02UUJmhbD3Msh49HCTCiwuMyGA5eFXkF71faeFPEJfAE4gXaiH5GBkaQVCUcux5SvPI&id=100092384580210)

Photos Courtesy of SMMG: Bill or CCMG Marlene Smith

## *Are You Bay-Wise?*

*Submitted By: Linda Brooks Crandall*

On the University of Maryland website, it says... "The University of Maryland Extension Master Gardener Program is designed to train volunteer horticultural educators to support the University of Maryland Extension mission by educating residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes, and communities." Master Gardeners can do this by staffing a, "Ask a Master Gardener Plant Clinic", or doing workshops and other community outreach. While we are weeding community gardens and connecting with local residents, we can do it as well. But, the easiest way I know you can do this is to have your yard and garden Bay-Wise certified, put up your Bay-Wise sign, and be prepared to answer the questions of your neighbors.

The Bay-Wise Program is a mainstay of the Master Gardener program and it hits all the subjects covered by our Master Gardener Mission Statement. All sizes and styles of yards can be Bay-Wise. The Bay-Wise Yardstick is designed to be an easy to use checklist for anyone trying to implement and maintain a safe, healthy, and sustainable yard and garden. Our process when making Bay-Wise visits is designed to be both painless and helpful. While we help you review the maintenance and design items on the Bay-Wise Yardstick, we can also answer questions, give advice, listen to your vision for your yard and also make suggestions. I especially like to recommend great gardening books that blend sustainable practices with aesthetically pleasing appearances.

Most Bay-Wise trained Master Gardeners are full of information and ideas to help you be a part of "growing a greener world" here in St. Mary's County. We hope you will be in touch with us to set up an appointment at your convenience. We would love to visit your yard and garden this year and put another St. Mary's County property -especially one that is maintained by a Master Gardener- on our 'certified gardeners' map.



**Master Gardener Monika Lee with Bay-wise sign**



**Jonathon & Cynthia Sullivan-Brown**



**Ben Hance, Rosa Pinnola Hance, Debra Pence, and Linda Brooks Crandall**

UNIVERSITY OF  
**MARYLAND**  
EXTENSION



**BAY-WISE**

A MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

***Mistycal Garden 2023: Our Garden Evolution***  
***Submitted By: Bill and Marlene Smith***

This will be the fourth year for our vegetable garden. Let me recap the past three years.

**2020**

Prior to 2020, we had tried various locations and types of gardens. We had issues of too much shade or wild-life eating the plants. The only location that was suitable for a garden was the sunny front yard. Like 55% of American households in 2020, we decided to plant a vegetable garden. This would be a proof of concept to see if the area in the front yard/mulch bed would be viable as a garden. We tested the soil and found that it was rich and did not need anything amendments. We planted tomatoes, cucumbers, summer squash, zucchini, butternut squash, peas and okra. Watered, weeded, waited and watched.

We only got a handful of peas, but the tomatoes and cucumbers produced a lot of fruit. The okra was good, but something (we think deer) snacked on it, robbing us of okra for the frying pan. We also saw where other pest fed on some of the other plants.



Garden Proof of Concept 2020

We had a successful harvest, comparable compared to the size garden we had planted. We were excited and already making plans for the next year's garden. We realized from the 2020 growing season we wanted to expand the garden and needed to do something to create a barrier, keeping the forest critters out.

**2021**

Having success in 2020, we decided our expansion would include raised beds, soaker hoses and deer fencing. We created 6 raised beds, 3 on each side. We connected the 3 beds together along one side and mirrored the same configuration on the opposite side. The inside ends of the beds were connected by cattle panel trellises. The trellises would be used for vining plants. We ran soaker hoses to all beds.



Raised beds connected (2021).



Cattle Panel Trellis connected ends of raised beds (2021).

We installed a 4 foot high deer fence around the garden and used chairs as a gate for access to the garden to attempt to keep deer and other critters out of the garden. As we kept watch we could see evidence of something getting into the garden, but that had little impact on the harvest. As you can see the plants in the photo on the left (west side) did great, but the plants on the mirroring bed on the right (east side) needed more sunlight. We got tomatoes, okra, cucumbers and squashes for ourselves, friends and family.



Garden Going Crazy with 4 foot deer fencing (2021)

## 2022

2022 was a somewhat disappointing year. While maintaining the same size garden, we increased the height of the deer fence from 4 feet to 5 feet and replaced the chairs with a gate. We re-used the soaker hoses from the previous year and trimmed branches from the oak tree covering the east side of the garden. Winter sown plants were planted and doing great.



Garden in May 2022

As the tomatoes were starting to ripen, something was getting into the garden and taking a bite out of the tomato and dropping on the ground. We would find several tomatoes daily that had been damaged. Other plants were being attacked and losing fruit and vegetation as well. We checked the fencing and found small holes that the squirrels had created to access the garden. We would repair or block the opening, but the damage was still occurring. We found the culprit via video. A deer was getting in and out on the side of the garden that did not have anything growing. We were able after several attempts to finally block the deer from entering the garden. The critters caused considerable damage to the plants, and the soaker hoses started failing. Repairing the hoses were only temporary fixes until another leaked would spring up. The failing hoses and the critters decreased our yields from the previous year, but we had enough to make various tomato-based sauces, freeze some tomatoes, and share some with neighbors.

We learned several lessons. The first was about sunlight; even though we had trimmed branches from the nearby tree, we felt the need for more sunlight in the garden. The second was we needed to replace the soaker hoses. Lastly, we learned a lot about the habits of deer, squirrels and turtles.

## Now for 2023

In 2023 we decided to go all out by adding two more raised beds, expanding the garden into the front lawn to give us more sun light for the sun loving plants. We added an irrigation system with supplies from a local Amish vendor. And to combat the deer and other critters, we added electric fencing.

### Expanded Beds:

We expanded the garden to get more sun light for the plants. We realized that just trimming some branches in 2022 helped, but we felt it was not enough and more sunlight was needed.

*Continued on pg. 9*



The new beds are now setting on prior turf of the front yard. In 2021 we built the raised beds with screws and corner supports; the 2023 expanded beds were put together like a Lincoln log set. We purchased concrete retaining wall blocks and 2x6x8 foot boards. We put together the blocks and boards to create two 4x16 foot raised beds.



Front yard stakes out



Raised beds built and cardboard for sheet mulching

The cardboard was laid down over the grass in the raised bed, which is not reflected in the picture because we needed to get more cardboard to finish. After acquiring enough cardboard, we covered the raised bed area with compost and the surrounding area with first grind mulch from the Charles County yard waste facility. We then installed a cattle panel trellis to match the other beds.

#### Irrigation System:

The soaker hoses we installed in 2021 were good, but time and weather caused leaks in the lines, making the hoses ineffective and requiring them to be replaced. While researching more expensive soaker hoses, we looked at irrigation systems and realized that the cost was nominal for the irrigation system. We purchased the hard pipe, irrigation line, elbows, T's, shutoff valves and pressure regulators.



Irrigation installed

It looked so easy when a sample was put together in the store. The first attempt, we had such a difficult time. None of the connections were water tight. After a few hours, we packed it in for that day, re-watched videos, re-read the online information, but could not figure out what we were doing wrong. The next day when it was 20 degrees warmer, everything went together like magic. The secret was the warmer temperature, which warmed up the tubing and allowed it to slide easily onto the fittings.

#### Electric Fencing:

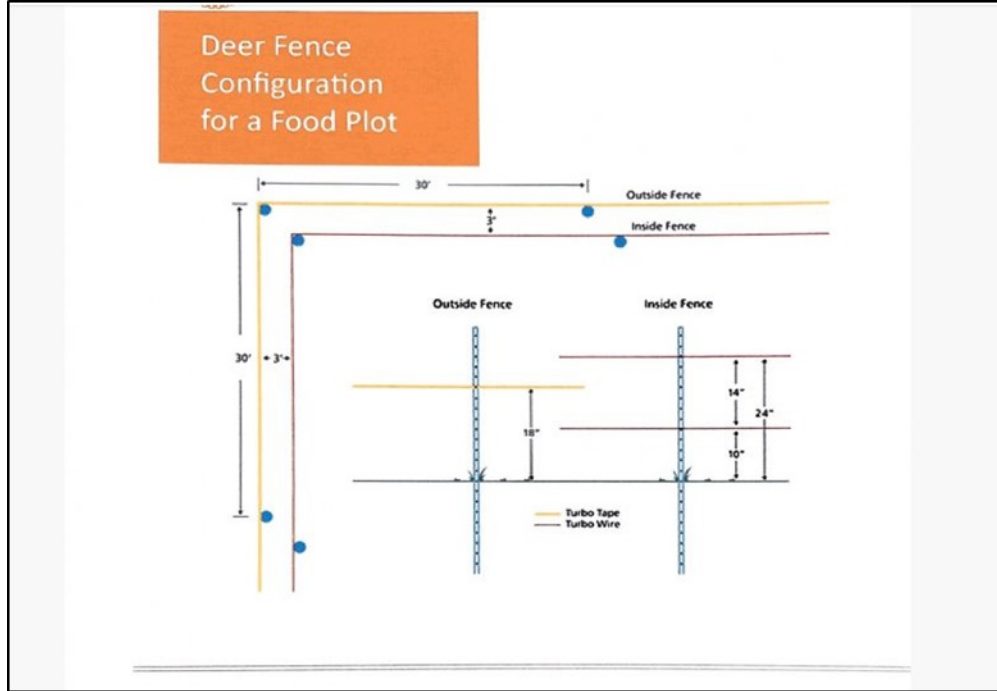
In 2021 and 2022 we used deer netting fence. The first year it was good, but the second year we were constantly working a losing battle against our forest friends. After talking to fellow gardeners and doing our research, we decided to go with a solar-powered electric fence.

The fencing method is called 3-D, offset or double fence. I used three websites for reference: North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission (ncwildlife) <https://www.ncwildlife.org/Learning/Species/Mammals/Whitetail-Deer/Fencing-to-Exclude-Deer#7093700-offset-or-double-fence>

National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) <https://www.ncat.org/electric-deer-fence-tips-and-resources/>

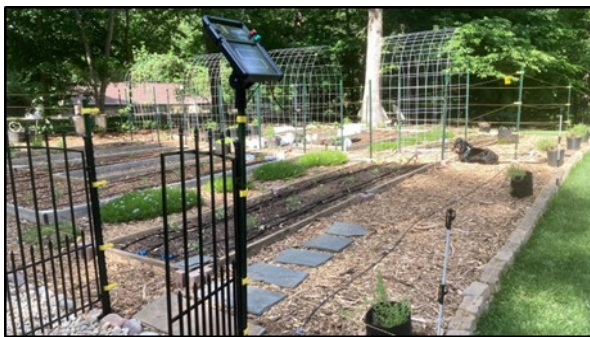
Stoney Ridge Farmer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wm9QvbgryRg>

The fencing is based on the deer's poor depth perception and involves running two fences around the perimeter of the garden. The outside perimeter is a single run at a height of about 18 inches. The inner perimeter is at a height of 10 and 24 inches, as recommended by NCAT. Stoney ridge included another line at 54 inches. We did not feel comfortable with any of the inner perimeter heights, so we modified the number of lines. We have a total of 4 lines for the inner perimeter at heights of 7, 17, 34 and 52 inches. We did not only want to deter deer, but other small critters as well.



Fencing configuration, Courtesy of NCAT

The inside perimeter used 6-foot T-posts and the outside perimeter used 4-foot fiber glass posts.



View of garden with electric fence.

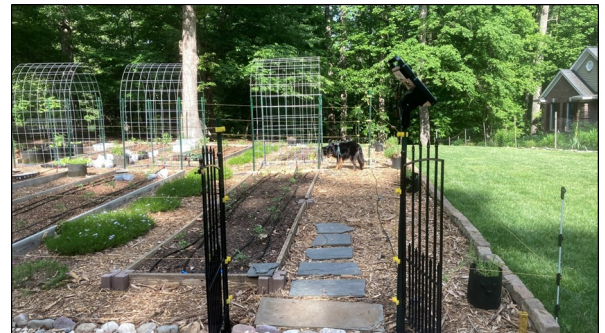


Solar charger

It is hard to make out the wires, but if you look closely at the back of the "View of garden..." photo, you can see the different heights of wires.

Winter sown plants are in the ground and doing well. Time will only tell if all of these changes (expansion, irrigation and fencing), will make an impact to the garden to deter the critters and produce more vegetables. I will be doing a follow up article for the fall Vine to report on the outcome of these changes.

And finally, Misty enjoys her garden and likes giving tours.



Unless noted photos courtesy of: SMMG Bill and CCMG Marlene Smith

## ***Weeds, Weeds, What to do With Weeds?***

***Submitted By: Linda Brooks Crandall***

In the spring it seems that weeds – those “plants out of place”, are coming up everywhere. Garlic Mustard is one of them. It is a non-native invasive that threatens the biodiversity of our local, Middle Atlantic ecosystems, and it comes up each spring all over my yard. The good news is that it is easy to identify, and as it appears in the spring weed it out. The even better news is that it is an edible.

Garlic Mustard is a biennial, which means a plant that lives or lasts two (2) years. The first year, garlic mustard produces a somewhat small rosette formation at ground level and the leaves are fairly round. The second year the plants shoot up and the leaves become more triangular with a somewhat serrated edge. The second year they also produce small white flowers in the spring as they are emerging. The plant is like many other non-natives and was introduced by people on this continent intentionally. It was brought here for several reasons, one of which was erosion control. Garlic Mustard usually spreads its seeds in the wind, and then next spring the new growth appears before most native plants emerge. Because of their earlier arrival they are able to out compete later bloomers for sunlight, moisture and other resources. Garlic Mustard is also a plant whose roots release chemicals that can modify the chemistry of the soil. This modification then alters the underground network of fungi that is an important part of the soil food web and that connects nutrients between native plants.

For help with weeding out garlic mustard, try to pull it when the ground is wet (after a good rain) and remember to get the plants before they set seed. Unless you are weeding to harvest, this is a good weed to bag and get rid of, so as not to increase it's spread.

If you are harvesting to use as an edible, here are just a few of ideas to include it into meals. You can find plenty more along with plenty of cooking demos on the internet. Happy harvesting!

### Garlic Mustard 'Horseradish'

Harvest and clean around 2 cups of washed roots, put in your food processor and finely chop adding a few teaspoons of white wine vinegar in the beginning to help with processing. Add salt to taste... and use in place of horseradish. [Some tips; Use only small, fresh roots that are not stringy, For spicier mix add the vinegar as you mix and at the end, for less spicy, add all the vinegar at the beginning. Under proper conditions you can keep this in a clean jar in the refrigerator for three (3) or four (4) weeks.]

### Stir Fried Garlic Mustard

Harvest young fresh, garlic mustard shoots. Wash thoroughly and cut to the size of small asparagus. Chop or cut into long slices one or two onions and begin to saute in a mix of EVOO & butter. As onions begin to soften and glisten, add Garlic Mustard stalks to the mix and stir fry until tender.

### Garlic Mustard Pesto

I have several recipes for this, and what I make depends on what I have on hand. Garlic Mustard pesto, is like most pesto's, a mix of mostly flavorful leaves, olive oil, nuts, cheese, and perhaps some seasonings. I suggest you look online to discover all the options that are recommended and then experiment to discover which mix you like best. Enjoy!!



***Two royalty free garlic mustard photos***

***NOT A Zinnia!***  
***Submitted By: Sue Gibbs***

This past spring, I received a seed tape with various garden flower seeds embedded in it. I wrote the names of the different flowers on the tape under the individual seeds and gave part of the tape labeled “zinnia” to my daughter. After planting the seed, she sent me a picture of the seedling, writing “I don’t think this is a zinnia.”

We checked out our plant that had had a similar label, and it didn’t look anything like a zinnia. After sending a photo via an online plant ID app we had the answer –

The mystery plant was a Mexican Sunflower, variety unknown. The plant quickly grew to 6+ feet and began to produce brilliant red orange flowers that attracted many bees. I thought this was interesting and amusing, and decided to take some photos for our upcoming Vine issue.

Here are some Mexican Sunflower facts from my online searches.

There are actually two plants that qualify as Mexican sunflower, both of which are *Tithonia* species (the genus *Tithonia* is in the daisy family, *Asteraceae*). *Tithonia rotundifolia* is also called the “red sunflower,” but *Tithonia diversifolia* (yellow) has a slew of names ranging from “Japanese sunflower” to “tree marigold” or “Mexican tounesol.”

For both types of *Tithonia*, the adult size is 4- 6+ feet high and up to 4 feet wide. *Tithonia* thrive in well-drained soil, but will also grow in poor soil. They do best in full sun and are drought tolerant. Their blooms attract butterflies, bees and hummingbirds. At the end of the season the stems are an excellent choice for chop and drop mulch. The plants are deer-resistant and relatively unaffected by pests.

*Tithonia diversifolia* has a serious downside. One Hawaiian gardener describes this plant as “nothing but a nuisance ever since it showed up on my property.” It propagates and spreads very quickly despite efforts to control it.















***Prolific Tomatoes***  
***Submitted By: Cary Braun***

My tomatoes are officially exploding. I had a late start, but they certainly caught up (and I haven't been galavanting all over creation like last summer). I picked these about an hour ago. Brandywine Pink, Steak Sandwich, SunGold cherries, Flamme Orange...it's glorious!



## ***Beneficial Insect Sheet*** ***Submitted By: Kimberly Dean***

Hopefully all of my fellow Master Gardeners are enjoying time in the gardens and seeing beneficial insects! I created the following quick info sheet to learn more about beneficial insects. Photo credit: Kimberley Dean, The Rose Geek on YouTube

<b>Beneficial Predatory Insects</b>		
 <p><b>Aphid Midge</b></p> <p>Aphids</p> <p>Attract by planting Dill</p>	 <p><b>Assassin Bug</b></p> <p>Aphids and Beetles</p> <p>Attract by planting Queen Anne's lace, daisies, Dill, Fennel, and alfalfa</p>	 <p><b>Braconid Wasp</b></p> <p>Aphids, Caterpillars, Beetles, and Flies.</p> <p>Attract by planting Dill and Parsley</p>
 <p><b>Damsel Bug</b></p> <p>Aphids and Mites</p> <p>Attract by planting Caraway, Spearmint, and Fennel</p>	 <p><b>Green Lacewing</b></p> <p>Aphids, Whiteflies, Leafhoppers</p> <p>Attract by planting Dill, Angelica, and Coriander</p>	 <p><b>Ladybug</b></p> <p>Aphids, Leafhoppers, and Mites</p> <p>Attract by planting Dill and Fennel</p>
 <p><b>Hoverfly</b></p> <p>Aphids and scale insects</p> <p>Attract by planting Yarrow, Dill, or Basket of Gold</p>	 <p><b>Minute Pirate Bug</b></p> <p>Aphids, Spider Mites, and Thrips</p> <p>Attract by planting Alfalfa and Daisies</p>	 <p><b>Praying Mantis</b></p> <p>Moths, Beetles, Crickets</p> <p>Attract by planting Dill and Marigolds</p>
 <p><b>Soldier Beetle</b></p> <p>Aphids</p> <p>Attract by planting Perennials</p>	 <p><b>Spider</b></p> <p>Aphids, Caterpillars, Grasshoppers</p> <p>Attract by planting plants within 3' to spin webs</p>	 <p><b>Tachnid Fly</b></p> <p>Japanese Beetles &amp; Sawflies</p> <p>Attract by planting Dill, Parsley, Clover, and Herbs</p>

## ***Podcast Recommendation*** ***Submitted By: Linda Crandall***

This is a great podcast for those wanting to learn about native plants, "Native Plants, healthy planet Podcast from Pinelands Nursery. The hosts are both experienced native plant nursery owners and do wonderful -long form- interviews. The podcast is usually new information, but occasionally - when the hosts are not available, they will do a rebroadcast. The show on August 4th included an interview done with Claudia West (Phyto Studio and a co-author of "Planting in a Post Wild World") that i think those looking to work more with native plants will enjoy.



the **BARNs**  
at New Market

Southern Maryland RC&D presents:

# **SUNDAY ECO-SCHOOL**

**ALL AGES AND ABILITIES WELCOME!**

Jul 9th - Maryland Forests  
Aug 13th - Soil Health & Conservation  
Sep 10th - Wetlands  
Oct 15th - History of Agriculture

**1pm - 2:30pm**

Free guided walk with a Maryland Master Naturalist & a craft sponsored by the St. Mary's County Arts Council. Register at the link below or use the QR code above:  
<https://forms.gle/4DL5vrThvW3PnrF38>



29133 Thompson Corner Rd, Charlotte Hall, MD 20659

## **Maryland Summer Succotash with Fish Pepper**

**Recipe Submitted By: David Thomas for Food & Wine Test Kitchen**

This summer-y dish features fried pickled okra and utilizes Fish Pepper, a variety the Smithsonian Gardens describes as "a spicy heirloom pepper with deep roots in African-American history, the fishing industry, and the food traditions of the Chesapeake Bay region....a workhorse plant that's pretty enough to show off in the front yard as an ornamental and produces peppers with a mellow heat all summer long."

### **Fish Pepper Vinaigrette**

1 fish pepper (or jalapeño), stemmed  
 1/3 cup pickled okra brine (reserved from pickled okra jar)  
 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard  
 1/4 teaspoon granulated cane sugar  
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper  
 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt  
 1/3 cup olive oil

### **Fried Pickled Okra**

Vegetable oil, for frying  
 1 large egg  
 2 tablespoons water  
 1/2 cup corn flour (about 2 1/2 ounces)  
 1/4 cup fine yellow cornmeal (such as Indian Head)  
 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste  
 1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
 8 ounces jarred pickled okra, patted dry and sliced into 1/2-inch pieces

### **Succotash**

3 quarts water  
 3 large tomatoes (about 1 3/4 pounds), cored  
 1 cup black-eyed peas  
 1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt, divided, plus more to taste  
 2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
 1 yellow onion, finely chopped  
 1 small red bell pepper, chopped  
 1 small green bell pepper, chopped  
 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
 3 cups fresh yellow corn kernels (approx. 4 ears)  
 1 tablespoon berbere (Ethiopian spice blend available at specialty spice stores or online at [spicewallabrand.com](http://spicewallabrand.com))  
 Black pepper, to taste  
 Microgreens, for garnish (optional)

### **Directions**

#### **Make the vinaigrette**

Cut fish pepper in half lengthwise, and place one pepper half in a blender. Reserve remaining half for another use. Add pickled okra brine, dry mustard, sugar, black pepper, and salt. Process mixture; with blender running, slowly drizzle in olive oil, processing until a smooth and creamy dressing forms, about 30 seconds. Set aside.

#### **Make the succotash**

Bring 3 quarts water to a boil in a large saucepan over high. Meanwhile, fill a large bowl with ice and water; set aside. Score a small (1-inch) "X" into bottom of each tomato. Add tomatoes to boiling water; cook, undisturbed, until skins start to peel back, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Immediately transfer tomatoes to ice bath. Reserve saucepan of water. Let tomatoes stand 2 minutes. Dry, peel, seed, and chop tomatoes; discard skins and seeds. Set tomatoes aside. Return saucepan with water to a boil over high. Stir in black-eyed peas and 1 tablespoon salt. Return to a boil over high. Reduce heat to medium; gently boil, stirring occasionally, until peas are tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Drain and set aside. Melt butter in a large, deep skillet over medium-high. Cook, stirring occasionally, until butter just begins to brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Add onion, red bell pepper, green bell pepper, and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are softened, about 6 minutes. Stir in drained peas, corn, berbere, and remaining 1 1/2 teaspoons salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, just until corn is tender, about 3 minutes. Stir in chopped tomatoes. Transfer mixture to a large serving bowl. Season with additional salt and black pepper to taste. Set aside.

#### **Make the fried pickled okra**

Pour vegetable oil to a depth of 3/4 inch into a large cast-iron skillet; heat over medium-high to 375°F. Meanwhile, whisk together egg and 2 tablespoons water in a shallow bowl until well combined. Stir together corn flour, cornmeal, salt, and black pepper in a separate shallow bowl. Working in batches, dip okra pieces in egg mixture; remove okra, letting excess drip off, and transfer to flour mixture, tossing to fully coat. Transfer coated okra to a small baking sheet. Working in two batches and returning oil to 375°F between batches, fry okra, stirring occasionally, until light golden and crisp, about 2 minutes. Transfer okra to a paper towel-lined plate, and immediately sprinkle with salt to taste. Add 1/4 cup vinaigrette to succotash, and toss. Top with fried pickled okra, and garnish with microgreens, if desired. Serve with remaining fish pepper vinaigrette on the side.



<https://www.foodandwine.com/summer-succotash-from-maryland-7563630>



***Upgrade Your Summer Drinks!***  
***Recipe Submitted By: Liz Ward***

My first year gardening, I added borage to one of my raised beds with the understanding it was an effective pest deterrent. I fell in love with the added bonus of it's whimsical blue flowers, which turn out to be edible! That year, for my daughter's birthday party, we added a flower or two to each space in an icecube tray and heard lots of "ohhhs and ahhs" from adult and child guests alike. Upgrading your summer drink is as easy as adding a pop of color to those cubes and there are lots of other options, no matter the drink or party theme. Try citrus slices, mint leaves, rosemary sprigs, or small berries. Just remember to boil the water and let it cool before adding to your trays. This will prevent the water from turning cloudy as they freeze. Et voila! As for the borage, it's an annual, but consistently reseeds and has become a regular part of our garden since that first summer, 10/10 recommend as a multipurpose garden component.



UME-St. Mary's  
 26737 Radio Station Way, Suite E-2  
 Leonardtown, MD 20650  
 TEL 301-475-4120  
 FAX 301-475-4483

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 GARDENER** 

Check out MG Web site and the Facebook,



<https://extension.umd.edu/st-marys-county/home-gardening/master-gardener-program>

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Marys-County-Master-Gardeners-University-of-Maryland-Extension-111823550482511>

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