



# Master Gardener Thymes

WWW.LAKELANDSMASTERGARDENER.ORG

November 2014

## President's Message

By Sandy Orr



I am a recent convert to permaculture. Hopefully, our November Speaker meeting with Nathan and Eliza Lord will define this for everyone, but whatever it is, I am a "permie". Permie's podcasts are the most exciting, their gardens are the most productive, and their You Tube videos are beautifully produced. Who even cares if it's good science, it's just great fun.

The first sign that you are a "permie" is if you have livestock in your backyard or even more likely, the living room of your Earthship house. Some "permiess" keep quail eggs in their

family rooms to hatch, since they must be turned hourly. Unusual animals are grown and "harvested" for protein. Rabbits and squirrels make delicious stews without generating much methane. Even I am trying to figure out how to raise wild turkeys and keep them in the general vicinity.

You might be a "permie" if you're obsessed with keeping every drop of rainfall on your land; either in creative attractive 50 gallon recycled plastic rain barrels connected to your gutter downspouts, or through hiring a backhoe to sculpt your land into swales and catch basins. I'm starting small, taking a pickaxe to chop gulleys across an eroding slope. Although if we collect all the water in place, how will we fill Lake Greenwood?

You might be a permie if you try to use every bit of paper and cardboard waste on your own property. This was fun for a few years when I was using it as a barrier under truckloads of bark mulch dumped by tree services. Lately, it's been too time consuming, but I'm still composting all kitchen scraps and leaves.

You certainly are a permie if you "chop and drop" your weeds and plants. This has been my practice before permaculture became the rage. It's pure laziness, and probably lazy science. My theory was that plants are cannibals and would like to eat what is already in their leaves, so that if you have magnolia leaves under magnolias, leave them there. This soon extended to every bush that I trimmed and every weed I pulled (unless it had already made seeds). All got chopped and thrown under shrubs. It looks messy for awhile, but EVERYTHING ROTTS. If the weeds that you chop and drop are things like comfrey, or other deeply tap-rooted plants (permiess call them bio-accumulators), they will act like fertilizer with wonderful mineral elements from deep within the rock-nourished soil depths.

DISCLAIMER: This author has no business being the President of an organization associated with Clemson University which has rigorous scientific standards. So, if you see a lush, green, odd-looking, and messy landscape, chances are a permaculturalist lives there. Come hear the Lords talk about their Urban Food Forest Farm in downtown Greenville on November 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the library. There will be a quick membership meeting at 6PM beforehand. Thanks to all who participated in the Extension Office Rain Garden cleanup day. A special thanks to the new class members, Donny and Jim.

## Dates to Remember:

- NOVEMBER 8TH CITY GARDEN CLEAN UP 8-11 AM
- NOVEMBER 13TH SPEAKER MEETING ELIZA AND NATHAN LORD 6:30PM MEMBERSHIP MEETING 6:00 PM
- DECEMBER 11TH HOLIDAY SOCIAL GMD
- FEBRUARY 28TH JOY OF GARDENING SYMPOSIUM SEE PAGE 2 FOR DETAILS

TIMES AND LOCATIONS WILL BE POSTED WHEN EVENTS ARE CLOSER. MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE EVENTS IN 2015

## RAIN GARDEN CLEAN UP TEAM

See article p. 5



The mission of the Lakelands Master Gardeners, in association with the Greenwood County Clemson Extension office, is to extend to the public research-based education, horticultural programs and activities that enhance our environment, lives and community.

The Lakelands Master Gardeners Association is a volunteer organization made up of Master Gardeners from Abbeville and Greenwood Counties in SC.

# Weeds or Wildflowers?

By Janet Ledebuhr

See if you can ID the following wildflowers-



Plant 'A' - woody stems, blooms in August, simple leaf arrangement



Plant 'B' - vine, blooms in late summer, compound leaves

Plant IDs can be made online at [namethatplant.net](http://namethatplant.net)

Send your guesses to [thequeenofseaford@gmail.com](mailto:thequeenofseaford@gmail.com)

Joy of Gardening Symposium— Rock Hill, SC February 28th. Program and speaker information at this link- <http://symposium.yorkmg.org/program>

This will be a great experience for all garden enthusiasts, an all-day event you don't want to miss!

We are very pleased to feature **Bryce Lane**, distinguished Professor Emeritus and Emmy winning TV host, as our keynote speaker and six amazingly knowledgeable guest presenters included in a choice of three breakout sessions in the morning and another three breakout choices for the afternoon.



The new SC MG logo



Many of the Master Gardeners are participating in the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow reporting. This is a citizen volunteer program to report your precipitation amounts. The reporting area is not just the United States but Canada and just recently Puerto Rico is also joining the ranks. To participate you just order their rain gauge (they like uniform measuring instruments) and then report your precipitation between the hours of 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM. On your way out the door and can't get to your computer before 9:00? They have apps for Android and Apple smart phones.

<http://www.cocorahs.org/>

Each month I will share some of our local stations' rain fall amounts— like they say— rain doesn't fall the same in every location!

**Oct. 1-31, 2014**

SC-GW-15	2.31 inches
SC-AB-4	1.87 inches
SC-GW-13	2.07 inches
SC-GW-14	1.49 inches

Think about joining!!





# A "Feathery" Plant for Fall!

Janice H. Haldeman, PhD



Tall "plumes" of Dog Fennel are blooming along roadsides and in fields. Some reach 6 or more feet tall, with finely divided bright green leaves early on and then with a silvery hue with its many tiny cream white flowers. The stems also change from green to reddish

as plants bloom and age, adding to Fall color. Dog Fennel is butterfly and bird friendly, and ladybugs sometimes overwinter in these plants.

Dog Fennel is a member of the ubiquitous Aster family, and there are three species found in our eastern states and southwest to Texas. Two species with the widest distribution have botanical names *Eupatorium capillifolium*, "Common Dog Fennel," and *Eupatorium compositifolium*, "Coastal Dog Fennel." Both species are soil disturbance indicators. The third species, *Eupatorium leptophyllum*, "Limesink Dog Fennel," grows in Carolina bays. The genus name *Eupatorium* honors a first century BC Greek King, Mithridates Eupator, famous for developing a poison antidote containing 54 herbal ingredients. Species names refer to small differences in leaf structure.

Dog Fennel has an attractive growth habit and appearance reminiscent of a pattern on Victorian wall paper. This has not gone unnoticed by folks in horticulture. There is actually a variety of Dog Fennel aptly named "Elegant Feather" available in some nurseries. It is recommended for Xeriscaping (landscaping with drought tolerant plants ) and has been planted in at least one arboretum in Kentucky.

See image at: <http://www.hort.net/gallery/view/ast/eupcaef00>

Have you ever wondered how this native "weed" got its common name? Most likely "fennel" comes from the resemblance of Dog Fennel's leaves to the Mediterranean herb fennel, *Foeniculum vulgare*, a member of the carrot family. Both have very thin feathery leaves and produce pungent odor when crushed. Edible fennel contains non toxic oils, whereas Dog Fennel contains chemical defense toxins. One suggested use for dog fennel is as a "strewing

herb" to control insects. And insect repellent chemicals (alkaloids) have been isolated from this plant. So it follows that "strewing" plants in dog pen and dog house might help control fleas and ticks!

A friend who grew up in Alabama reported this story. She and childhood playmates would find a patch of tall Dog Fennels and tie the tops together to make a shady shelter, sort of like a tee pee. Then wherever their imagination took them, it might turn into a fennel clubhouse, tea house or a NASA space cabin.

And to top it off, there's a fascinating story of Dog Fennel's chemicals and their relationship to a particular moth. Scarlet Bodied Wasp Moth males feed on Dog Fennel just prior to mating, and store up insect repellent alkaloids in a special "bundle." When a guy finds a mate, he bathes her with alkaloids to protect her from predation during their long mating process and beyond, during egg laying. Even the eggs retain some protective chemical!

Read more about this "Gift of Poison for Safe Sex" at: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2000/12/001228091049.htm>



## A DIRTY EXPERIMENT

By Sandy Orr

The best thing about gardening is getting to play in the dirt, excuse me, soil. I've never thought much about my soil. I accepted the organic gardening religion set out by Rodale Institute, that very little can go wrong if you just throw some compost or composted manure in to the mix. Supposedly, Rodale was personally extremely economical and really just wanted to minimize more expensive soil inputs. More recent studies are showing that even with high percentages of organic matter, soil can be deficient in minerals which can lead to less nutritional food.

So, we're all back to square one in the Master Gardener manual, which is, TAKE A SOIL TEST. I'm reading a fascinating book, called "The Ideal Soil". It is a downloadable ebook by two Phd horticulturalists who extol the virtues of a proper Calcium/Magnesium ratio.

I always thought that you should put dolomitic lime in a vegetable garden every spring for the cabbages. Additionally, if any plant had yellowing leaves, you should throw some Epsom salts around wildly. These might not be good things to do. Both of these actions increase the magnesium to unknown levels. One of the authors attributed his loose teeth to an imbalance in the Ca/Mg ratio of his garden and food. The loose teeth were corrected when he moved to Tanzania to garden in soil with a superior Ca/Mg ratio.

Not wanting loose teeth, but unwilling to move to Tanzania, I am submitting two soil samples from my vegetable plot and from a barren wasteland where I want to plant a permaculture food forest. I will show you the results when I get them and explain what I am going to do to correct any deficiencies (grow dandelions as a cover crop?). Then we'll follow the plots through time to assess the results. Hopefully, my newly mineralized kale and arugula will give me insane levels of energy so I can keep up with Ann Barklow and Sue Monaghan.



Great Finds-  
Jimmy McInville found this bargain at  
Ollie's for \$8  
Helpful with fall cleanup!



## A GREAT MG-WORKDAY SUCCESS

**Before MG Workday on Rain Garden ---**  
Takeover of space by River Birch and Willows



**After MG Workday on Rain Garden ---**  
Room for other plants



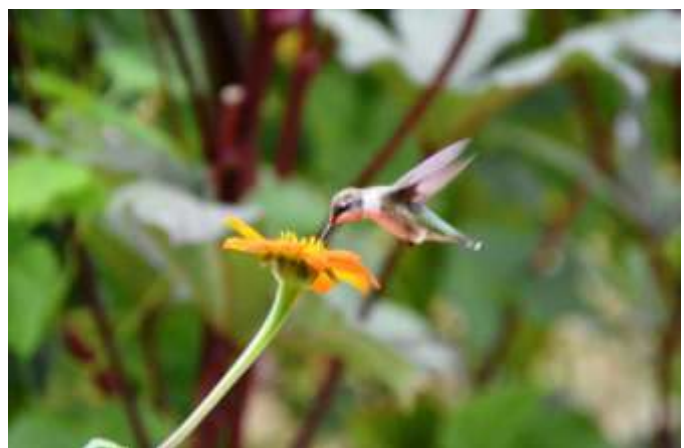
**Pile of Debris removed from the Rain Garden Area**

**THANKS MASTER GARDNERS –MORE FLOWERS**



**MORE SPACE FOR THE BEES,BUTTERFLIES & INSECTS**

**THANKS MG'S -MORE SPACE FOR THE BIRDS**





LAKELANDS MASTER GARDENERS PRESENT

# INTRO. TO PERMACULTURE

Thursday, November 13, 2014

6:30 p.m. @ Greenwood County Library

*Featured Speakers:  
Eliza and Nathan Lord*



Join us at the Greenwood County Library on November 13, 2014 as Eliza and Nathan Lord discuss permaculture and their urban farm. Whether you're looking to cut down your watering bills or you want to save the planet, permaculture is the solution. Permaculture techniques can give you a garden free of pests, disease, and the need to haul out the garden hose. Learn how to get your plants to fertilize themselves and your crops to plant themselves. The reasons to adopt permaculture are abundant.

For more information on Eliza and Nathan, visit their website at : [www.appalachianfeet.com](http://www.appalachianfeet.com)

For Information Contact: Bill Aaron  
Phone: 678-464-5996  
E-mail: [bill.aaron13@gmail.com](mailto:bill.aaron13@gmail.com)

**ADMISSION IS FREE!  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Enter in back of Library  
LMG Member Meeting at 6:00 pm





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

Shutterfly - <http://lakelandsmastergardeners.shutterfly.com>

Clemson Cooperative Extension Office– Greenwood– 864-223-3264



Don't forget the photos from our Christmas social and other LMG events are on our Shutterfly page. (see link above) You can leave comments or download photos from the Shutterfly page. The password has been sent in the email with this newsletter attached.

LAKELANDS MASTER GARDENERS

Lakelands Master Gardener Name Badge Order Form

Master Gardener Information			
Last Name		First Name	
Mailing Address			
City		Zip Code	
Home ( )	Cell ( )	Other ( )	
e-mail address			
For Office Use Only	Received	Confirmation	Delivered

**Orders are filled upon receipt of order form. There is no deadline to send money and form to Chuck.** Please *Print* Information the way you would like it to appear on your name badge

Cost: \$10/badge  
Cash or Check accepted  
Make Checks payable to: Lakelands Master Gardeners  
Remit Payment and Order Form together to:  
Melody McInville  
345 Klugh Rd  
Abbeville, SC 29620



☹ **Missing a newsletter?** Looking for an earlier edition? All of our newsletters can be found at our website at— <http://www.lakelandsmastergardener.org/newslet2014.html>

**THE LAKELANDS MASTER GARDENER BOARD 2012**

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