



The Green Scene

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You might be a Master Gardener if...

- You have to wash your hair to get your fingernails clean.
- You arrange your entire schedule around getting your MG hours.
- You always carry a shovel and a plastic bag in your trunk as emergency tools.
- You spend more time chopping your kitchen greens for the compost pile than for cooking.

Stacy Clovis Woofler
MG Class of 2007



Pine cone birdfeeder

As enthusiastic nature and bird lovers, a gardener's budget can become a bit crimped by the increasing needs of our feathered friends. To help stretch your dollar this winter, these bird-feeding tips may come in handy:

- Offer three basic seeds, which will feed large and smaller seed-eating birds: black oil sunflower seed, millet, and cracked corn. Another budget alternative is a coarse blend of chick scratch, a crushed feed of corn and other grains.

Bird Feeding on a Budget

- Buy your birdseed in bulk, instead of smaller bags with seed costing more per pound. To lower costs of bulk seed, consider splitting costs with a neighbor or fellow bird lover.
- Ration out specialty seeds, such as niger, safflower seed and red millet, along with fruits and nuts in small quantities throughout the week.
- Allow many of your seed-bearing flowers to go to seed, such as amaranths, cosmos, bachelor's buttons, zinnias and tickseed sunflowers. Although birds will often devour these seeds by late autumn, you may put some aside for a special winter treat.
- Before tossing out any grain-based goods from your pantry, such as breads, cereals or other baked goods, consider offering them to your backyard birds.
- A large, economy-sized jar of peanut butter is a treat in winter. Try filling the gaps of a few pine cones with peanut butter, then roll the cones in cereal, bread crumbs, dried berries, or mixed bird seed.
- Chopped suet, meat scraps and small chunks of frozen raw hamburger are especially prized for their high fat content. Be sure to place the scraps on the edge of a hopper-type or closed feeder, or unwanted visitors may be attracted to your yard.
- Dried or frozen fruits and berries are an absolute treat during frigid winter weather. You may try checking for deals on reduced produce at your supermarket.

Garden Checklist for February

Taken from <http://www.demesne.info>

February is cold and dreary in many parts of the country, but it's important to do as much preparatory work as you can, because once March comes you'll have dozens of garden chores that seemingly need to be done all at once.

- Make sure all your tools have been cleaned, sharpened, and are ready to go. There is nothing quite as vexing as having a good weekend to mow the lawn, only to discover that the blades are dull or it otherwise needs service. It's your last best chance to get your implements in prime working order this month.
- It's a good time to inventory your supplies including seeds too. Seeds, if kept dry and cool, will often be just as good as they were last year. Use them up, but don't rely on them.

- Now is the time to build the trellis for your indeterminate tomatoes, squash, and gourds, so purchase materials this month.
- Have you made your plan of what you want to grow this year?
- If you plan to start from seed, have you ordered your seeds?
- Set up flats for starting seeds. Full spectrum lighting and a heat mat can facilitate growing a variety of annuals, perennials, and vegetables for this year's garden.
- Do you want to add arbors or other support structures? Order now to have them delivered before your plants go in the ground.
- If you have a garage or workshop, repair and repaint garden furniture this month.
- Once you plan your plantings, pots, and beds, you can design an irrigation system that can save you time and money in more efficient watering for a maximum yield.
- Prune shrubs and trees—especially fruit trees—this month if they don't bleed (like elms and maples) or bloom early (lilacs, rhododendron, and azalea).
- Destroy insect eggs before they hatch. Inspect, pick off, and destroy without resorting to pesticides if you can.
- Prune grapes. Trim oldest wood and leave only primary stems. Each stem should have four to six canes from last year's growth.
- Build frames for new raised beds.

Green Thumbs/Healthy Joints Grant



Once again the Agrability Program is offering \$1000 grants to Master Gardener groups to make gardening more accessible to people with disabilities and arthritis. Any public area will qualify. Every group that applied last year got a grant, including our own group for the handicapped accessible bed at Jack Roberts Park, pictured above.

Contact Kay Beamer (successful prior grant writer) if you are interested in applying! kaybeamer1@aol.com

Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints

c/o West Virginia AgrAbility

Center for Excellence in Disabilities

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February 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 <i>MG Meeting, Extension Office 6:30 p.m. "Forcing Bulbs"</i>	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 <i>Learn to Grow "Soils & Fertility" Extension Office 10 a.m.– noon</i>
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

February Monthly MG Meeting

The February meeting of the Monongalia County Master Gardeners will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 4th at 6:30 p.m. at the Extension Office. MG Barb Long will present a program on forcing bulbs for early spring color.

See you there!

Orchid Show at Phipps Conservatory

January 17 through March 8

A wonderful way to brighten the cold winter days, Phipps' annual Orchid Show features spectacular, exotic orchids of many varieties in a stunning colorful display.



