



Dutchess Dirt

A gardening newsletter from:



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Cooperative Extension
Dutchess County

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THROUGH THE HEDGEROW: AT DRAYTON GRANT PARK ON BURGER HILL

By Sue Grumet, Master Gardener Volunteer

This winter is proving to be quite a different experience than we had last year, punctuated by freezing cold days and frosty bone-chilling nights. As gardeners and environmentalists we know that this is a good thing, since the extreme cold is how winter is supposed to be in our area. Having said that, there are times when being indoors for such prolonged periods of time can make you go quite stir-crazy. Should you feel the need for a respite from your winter hibernation, (and perhaps work off some of that “winter weight”) my suggestion would be to wrap yourself in some insulated layers, strap those hats and mittens on, and head on out for a hike through Drayton Grant Park on Burger Hill in Rhinebeck.



Fear not, intrepid snow birds, for this park can be navigated in as short or as long a time period as you wish. Located off of Route 9G in the town of Rhinebeck, Drayton Grant Park is owned by Winnakee Land Trust and is maintained by a dedicated group of volunteer Park Stewards. This scenic park was established in the 1990's as a backlash to the threat of residential development on its picturesque 76 acres. A community-minded group of local residents were spurred into action; teaming together with Winnakee Land Trust and Scenic Hudson, they purchased this lovely parcel to insure that it stays protected forever. Named after local environmental attorney Drayton Grant, the park owes much of its existence to her skill and passion in bringing the community together to establish this local treasure. Sadly, Drayton lost her courageous battle with cancer in 2012, but her spirit continues to live on at Burger Hill.





After a snowfall this park is one of the most popular places for families with children, thanks to the beautifully rolling hills that make sledding a pleasure. Hikers, too, will enjoy scaling the heights (at 550 feet!) for breathtaking views of the Catskill and Taconic mountain ranges as well as glimpses of Stissing Mountain and the Hudson River. And for those of us who would prefer a more leisurely and scenic stroll, the summits can also be reached by a more circuitous route along pathways that follow the lovely rock walls. As you make your way to the top of the ridge, you will be rewarded with views of the surrounding farms, fields, silos, and

paddocks. Be on the look-out on these busy winter weekends, since the Burger Hill Committee has been known to supply free hot cocoa to visitors who need to recharge. The park also offers opportunities for cross-country skiing and snow shoeing on the many ungroomed trails.

Come springtime, the park provides the ideal grassland habitat for ground-nesting birds, such as bobolinks and meadowlarks, and is a favorite spot for bird watching enthusiasts. Dogs on leashes are also welcomed, and the park stays open from 9 A.M. until dusk. No matter what the season, Drayton Grant Park on Burger Hill is a wonderful resource that should not be missed! For more information, please visit the Winnakee Land Trust site at www.winnakeeland.org. Sledding photo courtesy of Scenic Hudson website.

We're looking for interesting local gardeners & gardens! If you would like to be interviewed or have a lead for a potential "Through the Hedgerow" article, please contact Cheryl at cah43@cornell.edu.

RADISHES

By Mary Nisley, Master Gardener Volunteer

Radishes are a vegetable that can be planted very early in the spring. They provide a crunchy, colorful, spicy addition to a salad or a meal. According to the [Cornell Growing Guides](#), radishes are "Easy to grow". So why do so many of us, even very experienced gardeners, have difficulty growing radishes?

Spring radishes are a cool-season crop, maturing in three to four weeks. Last spring I planted April 1, 15, and 30. Only my last planting was successful. The first two plantings, sprouted but then the plants languished and disappeared.

It turns out that radishes are easy to grow if you provide precisely the right conditions. The most important is a loose, well-drained soil with *plentiful, consistent moisture*. Radishes appreciate a soil rich in organic matter which helps retain moisture, and a good, organic mulch to cool the soil and prevent evaporation.





Harvest radishes at about 1” diameter. Roots do not keep well in the garden. Full sized roots tend to split, particularly after sudden, heavy rain. They also get tough and woody when a hot day causes them to bolt and send up a flower stalk. And worst of all, the longer the time roots are in the ground, the more likely they are to get infested by tunneling cabbage maggots – the larvae of a vegetarian fly.

Radishes grown in optimal conditions are crisp and juicy and don't get too pungent. Water stress causes radishes to get spicy hot or it may cause them to bolt before forming a root. Too much nitrogen fertilizer will cause lots of leaves and stunted roots.

So what happened to my radishes last spring? Weather records for last year show spring was very dry: only 2.9” of rain fell during the eleven weeks from Feb. 1- April 20. By April the soil was so dry that when I watered the radishes, the water instantly disappeared into the surrounding dry area. To keep those radishes moist I should have watered an area much larger than the planting.

Normal rains resumed in late April and my last planting of radishes flourished. Spinach was also badly affected by the 2012 drought – the spinach crop failed for many gardeners (including me). In contrast, peas did OK with the same watering the spinach got. The best strategy with radishes is to make a small planting every 1-2 weeks. Packets of radish seeds contain lots of seeds – enough for several plantings. That way, when conditions are right, you'll get a crop. Plant them around the sides of the tomato, squash and cucumber beds. The radishes will be harvested by the time the bigger plants grow to fill the space.

RAIN GARDEN SMART PHONE APP

Have you heard? The [University of Connecticut Center for Land Use Education and Research \(CLEAR\)](#) has developed a [Rain Garden smart phone app](#) that is now available for download from iTunes.

The app is targeted to homeowners and contractors, and leads the user through the proper siting, sizing, construction, planting and maintenance of a rain garden. It includes nifty tools to help the user figure out the proper size of the garden, find out about local soil conditions, get a handle on the price of construction, and customize a plant list that will delight the eye while soaking up stormwater. In addition, there are 6 short video segments explaining various aspects of rain garden care and feeding.



The app is only for iPhones at the moment but they will have an Android version out soon. Also, the imagery and plants are specific to CT (CT is similar to NY), but they are starting work on a national version that will have extensive databases for each area of the country.

WEBSITES TO VISIT

- [Thriving since 1960, my garden in a bottle: Seedling sealed in its own ecosystem and watered just once in 53 years](#)
- [How to Grow an Energy Saving Curtain](#)
- [A Winter's Label Tale, or A Rose by Any Other Name... Might Just Have the Wrong Label](#)
- [Weathering the Storm: Horticulture Management in Brooklyn Bridge Park in the Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy](#)
- [Farm School NYC Seeds Local Urban Food System](#)
- [ZAP! Lightning, Gods, and Mushrooms](#)
- [Plants Flower Nearly a Month Earlier Than They Did A Century Ago](#)
- [Botanical Fashion at Cornell](#)
- [Growing Free Food and Community in Front Yard Farms](#)
- [In Defense of Native Bees](#)
- [Biologists Unlock 'Black Box' to Underground World: How Tiny Microbes Make Life Easier for Humans](#)
- [The Relationship Between Trees and Human Health- Evidence from the Spread of the Emerald Ash Borer](#)
- [Urban Vertical Farm and Pick-it-Yourself Market](#)- The wave of the future?
- [Pill Could Join Arsenal Against Bedbugs](#)
- [The American Chestnut Foundation](#)- Dolly Parton has new a song about the American chestnut- free download.
- [Grow Your Own Tomatoes From Seed](#) (Not now though, waaaay too early!)
- [Organic Concrete For Living Green Facades](#)

MASTER GARDENER PLANT SALE GIFT CERTIFICATES

A great gift for your special Valentine!

Gift certificates are now available for our [Master Gardener Plant Sale](#) on May 17 & 18, 2013. Our plant sale features a wonderful selection of healthy annuals (flowering and foliage), perennials, vegetables and herbs. All plants are grown by our Master Gardener volunteers. We offer personal service! Volunteers will be available during the plant sale to answer gardening questions, to help make plant selections and to help bring plants to cars if needed.

These certificates are a welcome gift for any gardener! Certificates may be purchased for any amount and are not redeemable for cash. In 2011, all funding for our Community Horticulture Program was cut by the county and has not restored to date. We depend on the continued success of the plant sale to continue our educational programming. Your support is needed and greatly appreciated!



LEARN TO GROW VEGETABLES

By Mary Nisley, Master Gardener Volunteer



Are you interested in growing vegetables? No matter what your current skill level, this year the Cooperative Extension is offering a course to fit.

Grow Your Own Food! Vegetable Gardening for Beginners is new this year. If you've never planted a garden of any sort, or have very limited gardening experience, this course is for you. In six sessions Dutchess County Master Gardeners will teach you how to choose your location, prepare your site, protect it from the critters, plant with seeds or transplants, weed, mulch, thin, trellis, and harvest.

Grow Your Own Food! Is a *Learn It and Grow It* course, helping you develop the skills to successfully grow vegetable favorites like peas, radishes, cucumbers, beans, herbs, onions, tomatoes, squash peppers, beets and all kinds of greens. **Grow Your Own Food** is scheduled for Saturday afternoons, 1-3PM, April 6 to May 4 will a follow-up session June 1.

The second course, **Vegetable Gardening A-Z** is for those with some gardening experience. I will talk about most of the vegetables that can be grown in Dutchess County, from old favorites to surprises like Edamame, Kohlrabi, and Sweet Potatoes. We will look at pest and disease problems and how to defend against them. The class covers techniques like growing beds, floating row covers, integrated pest management, crop rotation, garden design, and growing your own transplants. This is my third year teaching A-Z and I've found that the more gardening experience people have, the more they get out of this course.

Vegetable Gardening A-Z is being offered in two locations:

- Saturdays, 9:30-Noon, Feb. 16 – March 16 at the Dutchess County Farm & Home Center, Rt. 44, Millbrook
- Mondays, 6:30 – 9PM, Feb. 18 – March 18 in Poughkeepsie, at St. John's Lutheran Church, class room 205, 55 Wilbur Blvd.

All courses are \$95, paid in advance (cash, check, MC/Visa). Register by calling Nancy at CCEDC 845-677-8223 x115.

MARCH 6- CCEDC'S ANNUAL BUS TRIP TO PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW

In 2013, the PHS Philadelphia Flower Show will glow with the majestic beauty and creative genius of Great Britain- Brilliant! The cost is \$70 per person which includes transportation and admission. We will be leaving from the Farm & Home Center on Rt. 44 in Millbrook *promptly* at 8 AM and returning home at approximately 9:30 PM.

Pre-registration is required. Please call Nancy Halas at 845-677-8223 x 115 to register. Visa/MC, cash, checks accepted. Checks should be made out to Cornell Cooperative Extension and mailed to 2715 Rt. 44, Suite 1, Millbrook, NY 12545 Attn: Nancy Halas. Seats will only be reserved upon **payment in full**. No refunds after February 14th. Substitutions are allowed. **Don't delay- seating is limited!** www.ccedutchess.org

VANDERBILT GARDENS FUNDRAISER



The FW Vanderbilt Garden Association has a new [online bulb fundraiser](#), from now thru April 26. Click the "Shop Now" button to choose from: Freesias, Dahlias, Windflowers, Hostas, Daylilies, Anemones, Gladiolus and Peonies. Orders over \$40 receive 10 free Gladiolus.

RANDOM TRIVIA...

White-tailed deer:

- Along with cows, hippos and pigs, they belong to the huge group called artiodactyls – animals with an even number of toes on each foot.
- Size: 3 to 3.5 feet tall at the shoulder, 125- 200 pounds, although males can get up to 300 pounds.
- They can run at speeds of up to 30 mile an hour. They are also good swimmers and leapers, leaping as high as 10 feet and as far as 30 feet in a single bound.
- Most white-tailed deer live about 2 to 3 years. Maximum life span in the wild is 20 years but few live past 10 years old.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out <http://www.hvgardencalendar.com> for more events

February 2, Seed Starting with Jesse Eldrid. 1PM. Fee: FREE. Adams Fairacre Farms, 765 Dutchess Turnpike, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603, (845) 454-4330

February 12, Verplanck Garden Club Meeting- This month's program: "Design For Gardeners" with professional gardener and co-founder of Hudson Valley Garden Association, Laura Wilson. 7PM - 8:30PM. The Verplanck Garden Club, a not-for-profit environmental education garden club, meets the second Tuesday of each month. Guests and new members welcome. Note: Meetings are held on the lower level of Fishkill Town Hall, 807 Route 52, Fishkill, NY 12524. Enter the building from the Millholland Drive parking lot. Walk down the ramp to the entrance which may be locked - please knock. For more information, e-mail verplanckgardenclub@yahoo.com.

February 16- Vegetable Gardening A-Z (Millbrook location) begins. See pg 5 article.

February 18- Vegetable Gardening A-Z (Poughkeepsie location) begins. See pg 5 article.

February 24, New Varieties of Flower and Vegetable Plants with Mark & Sue Adams, Adams Greenhouses. 1PM. Fee: FREE. Adams Fairacre Farms, 765 Dutchess Turnpike, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603, (845) 454-4330

February 24, Design a Four Season Garden. 1-2 PM. Who wouldn't want to look out their window in any season and see a beautiful garden? You can have a great garden in any season if you follow a few simple steps. Discover plant choices to help you achieve the succession of bloom you're looking for. With Diane Watt, Watt's Bloomin. Fee: FREE. Adams Fairacre Farms, 160 Old Post Rd, Wappinger, NY 12590. (845) 632-9955.

March 5, Vanderbilt Garden Day at Coppola's. 12AM - 10PM. Coppola's Restaurant in Hyde Park is hosting a special "Vanderbilt Garden Day". A portion of the proceeds from a selection of appetizers, entrees and desserts will be donated to the FWVGA to support the garden rehabilitation. When you arrive, be sure to let Coppola's staff that you are there to support the garden. 4167 Route 9, Hyde Park, NY 12538. (845) 229-9113

March 6, CCEDC Bus Trip to Philadelphia Flower Show (fundraiser). See pg 5 article.

March 9, Mid- Hudson Orchid Society Spring 2013 Orchid Show & Sale. 11AM to 3PM, Union Presbyterian Church, 44 Balmville Road, Newburgh, NY. Free Admission. Education for beginners at 1PM. Orchid experts available all day for your questions. For further information, call Elisabeth Mansfield at 845-294-1000. www.mhos.us.com.

March 9, Mad Gardeners Symposium. 9 AM- 3 PM. Housatonic Valley Regional High School, Falls Village, CT. Come join Mad Gardeners at their annual garden symposium, entitled Making An Entrance! The symposium will feature three presentations about gardening in the 21st century. Steve Silk, writer, editor, photographer and exuberant gardener will present compelling plant combinations. Steve considers the "art" of planting partners for your entrance areas in this lecture. David Buchanan manages an organic farm in Maine. How to choose and arrange edible plants for style and practicality near your front or back door, you'll learn from David. Our third speaker is Danilo Maffei, principal of Maffei Landscape Design, LLC in Kennett Square, PA. Danilo will demonstrate how to design your front yard as your own, based on environmentally sound design principles. This lecture will show how to repatriate the front yard to the home, resulting in vibrant, useful places that support life and lifestyles. Registration is \$70 for members, \$80 for non-members. Lunch, Botanical Art Show, Vendors and Exhibits included. For further information go to: www.madgardeners.com. See also our March 8 workshop, March 1 and March 13 satellite events on our website.

April 6, Grow Your Own Food! Vegetable Gardening for Beginners begins. See pg 5 article.

SAVE THE DATES! May 17 & 18, Master Gardener Plant Sale. Fri 10-4 & Sat 9-2. Offering a wonderful selection of annuals, perennials, tomatoes, eggplant & peppers. This sale is the primary fundraiser for the Community Horticulture Program at Cornell Cooperative Extension, Dutchess County. Location- Dutchess County Farm & Home Center, Millbrook, NY, 12545. [Click here](#) for details.

PLANT ID QUIZ



Answer to last month's plant ID is Pink Bush Clover, Lespedeza thunbergii. In our climate it is considered a "subshrub", dying back the ground in most winters. It does best in an open, sunny location with well drained soil.



This unusual looking fruit grows on a vine (annual) that is easy to grow from seed. It needs a sunny location and a trellis for support. Do you know what it is? (It's not a cucumber.)

GARDENING QUESTIONS

Have any gardening questions? The Horticulture Hotline, (845) 677-5067 is now closed for the season. Samples for identification or diagnosis can be submitted all year long. Visit our [Horticulture Diagnostic Lab website](#) for reliable resources and information on our services.

Websites mentioned in Dutchess Dirt are provided as a courtesy to our readers. Mention of these websites does not imply endorsement by Cornell University, Cornell Cooperative Extension or by the author.

HELP SPREAD THE DIRT! Please forward a copy to anyone you think might be interested. To be added or removed from our e-mail list, or submit upcoming gardening events, contact Cheryl Hearty at cah43@cornell.edu, www.ccedutchess.org.



Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County provides equal program and employment opportunities. The programs provided by this agency are partially funded by monies received from the County of Dutchess