Our Annual Meeting has a Special Presentation

Climate Solutions: the Drawdown Framework and Hudson Valley Progress presented by Melissa Everett

Join us on Wednesday, December 11, at 6:00 PM for our 2019 Annual Meeting with a special presentation from Melissa Everett on Project Drawdown and the progress that the Hudson Valley has made so far.

Project Drawdown is a comprehensive and accessible point of entry into a newly energized movement to reverse global warming over a generation. Drawdown is a movement and an expert network that supports creative action in our communities and workplaces. Melissa Everett will outline the Drawdown solutions and the range of actions already underway in the Hudson Valley.

Melissa Everett is an author, career counselor and sustainability leader in the Hudson Valley working at the intersection of the green industry, sustainable development, and climate action. She has advised the U.S. Dept. of Labor, state agencies, inter-municipal alliances, county legislatures, community colleges and community groups on a variety of climate and clean energy topics.

Please RSVP to Jennifer by Monday, December 9th. (845) 429-7085 ext. 119 or jas946@cornell.edu. Light refreshments will be served.

Don’t miss Margaret Roach, this year’s keynote speaker!

more on page 3
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland County presents:

**Gardener’s Day 2020**

Wednesday, April 1, 2020
8:30 AM – 2 PM

featuring

**Margaret Roach**

Author/Podcaster of A Way to Garden
former Garden Editor of *Martha Stewart Living*

Come hear Margaret’s keynote lecture,

**Nonstop Plants: a Garden for 365 Days**

Other presentations include:

* Right Plant, Right Place:
  Harmonizing Garden Design & Ecology
* (un)Paving the Way:
  the How & Why of Pollinator Pathways
* Minimizing the Waste-stream:
  Home & Garden Edition
* IPM: Managing Garden Pests the Smart Way

*Early bird rate: $40  |  After March 13: $50*

*Book Early, Space is Limited!*

Visit [www.RocklandCCE.org/GardenersDay](http://www.RocklandCCE.org/GardenersDay) for more information and to buy your tickets.
(845) 429-7085 | jas946@cornell.edu

*New location in Tappan, NY this year!*
SNAP-Ed Plays CATCH with Kids at Rose Memorial

Eight children participated in an after school CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) workshop. The children learned the importance of including fiber in their diet. They each made their own turkey veggie wrap, a great recipe to use after Thanksgiving. They also had fun playing a physical activity BINGO game as they learned the importance of physical activity.

For more information on SNAP-Ed programs and how your organization can implement them, contact our SNAP-Ed educators by calling (845) 429-7085, option 2 or email Steven Alihonou at sa2277@cornell.edu.

Give the Gift of Gardening Education & Inspiration this Year!

Gardener’s Day is a special event full of all things garden and it makes the perfect gift for that hard-to-shop-for nature lover in your life. Give your favorite gardener the chance to learn from the incomparable Margaret Roach, author and podcaster of A Way to Garden. Former Garden Editor for Martha Stewart Living, Margaret has had quite an accomplished gardening career and is full of insight. Her presentation on “Nonstop Plants: a Garden for 365 Days” is one not to be missed!

In addition there are 4 other lively speakers, a garden market, and more. You’ll also receive a printed gift certificate to give to your giftee!

For more information, to register yourself, or to purchase a gift certificate, visit: www.RocklandCCE.org/GardenersDay

SUEZ Residential Customers can get a $75 Rain Barrel for $25!

If you are a residential SUEZ customer you can buy a rain barrel for $75 at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland County. You can then submit a rebate form to SUEZ who will reimburse you $50. Each residential SUEZ account in Rockland County can apply for a rebate for one rain barrel.

The rebate form can be downloaded from the My SUEZ Water website (www.MySUEZWater.com/...ResidentialRebateApplication2.pdf.)

SUEZ provides rebates on additional water-saving devices.
Youth Explore Tower in HSP

On our last hike of the season, seven Young Explorers trekked through Harriman State Park to the old fire tower. Led by 4-H STEM & Nature Volunteer Jeff Solomon, the explorers found many examples of how organisms in the forest prepare themselves for winter.

The Young Explorers series is designed to get youth aged 10-12 out into nature, active, and learning. On their hike, the children learned to look and listen for signs of wildlife. This was the third hike for the season and we had so many eager youths, many whom participated on more than one excursion. The series will continue in the spring when the weather warms up and the forest life reawakens.

For more information about the Young Explorer series or to learn more about our 4-H & Youth Development programing, please contact 4-H Educator Kristin Ruggiero at or at klf37@cornell.edu.

Upcoming 4-H Events

To find more information on these and future events, visit our Event Page (RocklandCCE.org/events).

Fun with Public Speaking!

Wednesdays, January 8 – February 26, 6:30pm-8:00pm
CCE Education Center

Join the Fun with Public Speaking! series, offered by the Rockland County 4-H program, where children ages 9-12 can play games and learn how to effectively create and present a public presentation! After the program, youth can prepare a presentation for the Rockland County 4-H Public Presentations Event on February 29: a chance to present in front of trained evaluators who will help identify strengths and areas to improve upon for their next performance.

Cost: $75, includes materials
For more information, contact Kristin Ruggiero at (845) 429-7085 ext 103 or klf37@cornell.edu. Register Now!: www.RocklandCCE.org./FPS20
From the Archives: Ask the Master Gardeners

Q. Last winter I came across a blooming evergreen shrub with glossy leaves and a fragrant scent. What is it?

A. The plant you mention was probably *Sarcococca hookeriana humilis* (Himalayan Sweet Box), one of the few plants that bloom in the cold months of the year. Himalayan Sweet Box is often planted near entry ways, where its fragrance can be fully enjoyed, or as a groundcover plant in low borders and foundation plantings. Native to the Himalayas, *S. hookeriana humilis* grows only to 18-24 inches and spreads slowly to 8 feet through stolons. To keep it compact, you can shear it back in the spring and remove any suckers.

Unlike *Sarcococca ruscifolia*, a species that can reach 3 ft in height and is hardy only to USDA zone 8, Himalayan Sweet Box is cold tolerant to 0 deg F in USDA Zone 6. *Sarcococca* is attractive mainly for its dark-green elongated and glossy leaves and for its fragrance, as the white flowers, which usually appear in February and are followed by black berries, are rather small and hidden by the leaves. *Sarcococca* thrives in moist, well-drained soil, rich in organic matter. It favors partial shade and is especially attractive as groundcover in a woodland setting, and is the perfect companion to other acid-loving plants such as azaleas, rhododendrons (*Rhododendron* sp.) and andromedas (*Pieris japonica*). As an added bonus, Himalayan Sweet Box is highly resistant to pests and is drought tolerant.

by Cristina Malinverno

References:
- [http://web1.msue.msu.edu/imp/modzz/00002083.html](http://web1.msue.msu.edu/imp/modzz/00002083.html)
- [http://oregonstate.edu/dept/ldplants/sahoh.htm](http://oregonstate.edu/dept/ldplants/sahoh.htm)

Upcoming Gardening Events

To find more information on these and future events, visit our [Event Page](http://RocklandCCE.org/events).

Cacti & Succulents

**Thursday, December 19, 7:00 - 8:30 PM**

Piermont Public Library

This program is designed to introduce growing cacti and succulents to gardeners in Rockland County. The presentation will include the proper techniques of watering and fertilizing, the soil requirements needed for indoor and outdoor plants and the propagation methods to produce different varieties. Also included in this program is a discussion of containers and pots needed for healthy growth.

This program is being presented through South Orangetown Continuing Education. Please call the office at (845) 379-1012 for more information and to register. You must register in advance and there is a fee for this program.
As I was cleaning up in my yard and evaluating some plants to use for holiday greens, I took note of two Rhododendrons in the front yard that are not deer protected. They have never been browsed despite heavy deer traffic and were planted 25 years ago. They are two different cultivars of *Rhododendron yakushimanum*, but now have been reclassified as *Rhododendron degronianum* ssp. *yakushimanum*. They are native to the Yaku-shima Island in Japan.

But why are they deer resistant? Michael Dirr in his *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants* describes the leaf as dark green with a woolly indumentum beneath the leaf. In addition to this tomentose underside that give

continued on page 7

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Our Board Secretary, Stephen Fromson, has served six terms on our Board of Directors over the years. As 2019 concludes, so does Steve’s latest term. We found this article on him from our October 1988 Extensions newsletter. We’re sad to see him go, but based on the evidence, he’ll be back. Enjoy your (temporary) break from directorial duties, Steve!
Deer Resistant Rhodies?? (continued from page 6)

the leaves a thick, woolly brown hair underneath, the leaves are stiff, leathery, and tough. These characteristics will make the Rhododendron leaves un-palatable to deer and they may browse it out of necessity if starving.

The requirements for growing Rhododendron yakushimanum are similar to other Rhododendrons. They prefer moist but well drained soil and can tolerate periods of dry spells. This shrub can grow 4 to 8 feet, however most of the cultivars and varieties are dwarf; growing to a 3 foot range. It will also tolerate part shade and prefers a little bit of sun for good bloom. The ones that I grew never flowered well until I started giving it a small handful of Holly-tone once a year. There are many different varieties available on the market and sources for Rhododendron yakushimanum are available on the internet. Although, it is always best to check with your local nurseryman to see if they can supply you with one or more.

For more information on Rhododendrons, contact the Horticultural Lab by calling 845-429-7085 ext. 110 or email mw767@cornell.edu.