

## **Celebrating 40 years of Master Gardener Classes in Alaska !**

In 1995 a copy of the Alaska Master Gardeners Teacher's Handbook and CES gardening publications were sent to St. Petersburg, Russia at the request of an Agriculture Director. Glasnost!

### **President's Message**

One of my favorite Master Gardener events of the year, our Late Season Plant Sale is right around the corner. Again, this year it will be held at the Alaska Botanical Garden parking lot on Saturday, August 11th from 10am to 3pm. This sale is a great opportunity to look for hard to find or unusual plants being grown by our fellow Master Gardeners, as well as some of our favorite standbys. Along with lots of plants there will be classes and demos (see Bird Chatter for details) given by garden experts willing to share their knowledge. Forest Health and I.P.M. agent Jessie Moan from CES will be on hand to answer our questions.

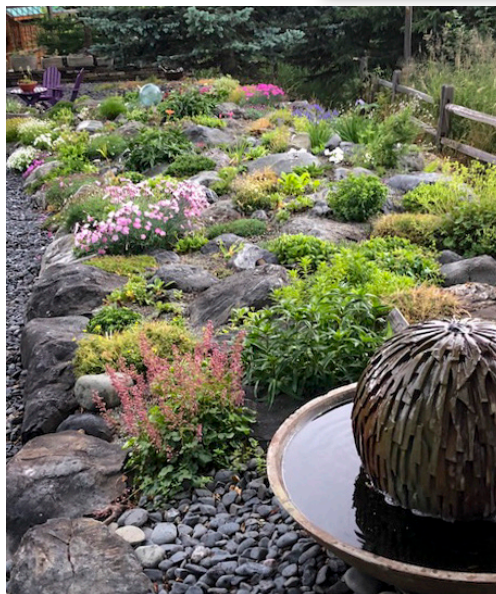
Hopefully many of you have been setting aside plants from your own garden to sell. Please see our plant sale guidelines on our website if you wish to participate. This year plants may be dropped off early at the sale site on Friday evening from 6pm to 8pm. There will be overnight security.

The word from CES is that there will indeed be a new Master Gardener course starting in September. We are still awaiting details as to dates, costs, location of classes, etc. You can be sure we will let everyone know as soon as there is some solid information to share. Of course, most of you are already Master Gardeners but we want to encourage you to get the word out to your friends, neighbors, and fellow gardeners. We don't want a repeat of last year when the course was cancelled due to lower than expected enrollment.

As of this writing (7/22) there is no definitive word about the new CES office location. The choice has been narrowed down but they are still awaiting the signing of a lease before an announcement is made. There may be a slight extension of the lease at the present location to allow time for moving out. Hopefully the new location will become a permanent home for the CES Outreach Center. There is not expected to be a large enough meeting space for our monthly board or membership meetings.

As a preventative measure we have reserved space at the B.P. Energy Center for fall meetings.

I hope you are all enjoying your summer. I was almost ready write this one off due to the cool and gloomy beginning but it looks like our July weather is trying to make up for the poor start. Am I the only one who loves to complain when we reach 75-degrees and feels the need to run through the sprinkler?



From the July 16 garden tour: Colleen Kirkpatrick's garden shed. Photo by Gina Docherty.  
One of several colorful rock gardens seen at Madge Oswald's garden tour. Photo by Mike Baldwin.

### **Inside This Issue...**

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## AMGA Board Meeting: July, Looking Forward to Plant Sale and Annual Conference

Board members of Alaska Master Gardeners, Anchorage convened at 6pm on Monday, July 9, at Lutheran Church of Hope with all except Marilyn Barker present. Jane Baldwin, MG member database custodian, and CES Urban Extension Director DeShana York of Anchorage also attended.

Treasurer's Report from Cindi Walker: MG accounts stable; maturing CD funds transferred to checking account.

CES Outreach Center, DeShana York reported: A 2018 Fall Master Gardener Class to be held in Anchorage with Steve Brown, Palmer CES agent conducting the class. Planning by Steve and DeShana is underway.

Six sites are being reviewed for the upcoming relocation of the CES Office. The current Office lease terminates July 31. Staff should remain constant, seven to nine.

Jane Baldwin reported membership unchanged, 262.

Volunteer Coordinator Harry Deuber reported: Continued partnership with Alaska Botanical Garden; A reduction in days Master Gardeners will answer questions from three to two with one 2.5-hour shift, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Broadcast Email/Constant Contact Coordinator Fran Pekar reported: Garden tour directions improved. MG online communications have 50 percent click rate.

Website Coordinator Gina Docherty discussed Photo Gallery: Thought given to how to keep website photo gallery current. No longer an MG photographer who attends tours and events consistently; Fran Pekar volunteered to receive and properly format photos from members.

2019 Master Gardener Conference Coordinator Harry Deuber reported: Almost all committee heads and leaders designated. Organizing committee meeting monthly. Budget, classes, speakers and topics being lined up. Blythe Campbell Communications will handle publicity. Conference registration begins February 1, 2019.

### Unfinished Business

August Plant Sale, Fran Durner and Lynn Opstad reported: Sale Saturday, August 11, 10 am to 3 pm, Benny Benson Secondary School parking lot adjacent to ABC. Tents, tables and signage collected; presentations in hand. Only current Master Gardeners can sell plants.

### New Business

Board Elections: Nominee names solicited by nominating committee; no Board members running again may serve on this committee. Committee members: Harry Deuber (terming out); Jane Baldwin (not a Board member); Fran Pekar (one more year in current term). Membership chooses Board; Board chooses officers. All Bylaw-stipulated deadlines will be observed.

Cindy Walker reported tuition grants for upcoming Master Gardener class might be available, depending on how class fees are structured. \$950 still available.

MG Files, CES Offices: Cabinet holding MG records must remain with CES offices to retain the Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage business address.

August Board Meeting: Monday, August 13, 6 pm, tentatively Lutheran Church of Hope, upcoming elections.

#### Balances 5/31/2018

Checking account	6,978.94
Savings account	<u>11,746.08</u>
	\$18,725.02

Dedicated Funds	8,661.54
Interest Bearing CD	<u>10,155.76</u>
	\$18,817.30

#### Revenue:

Interest	59.76
Membership Dues	<u>20.00</u>
	\$79.76

#### Expense:

Operations	559.99
Pioneer Home	59.55
Website	<u>180.00</u>
	\$799.54

#### Balances 6/30/2018

Checking account	9670.30
Savings account	<u>11,747.53</u>
	\$21,417.83

Dedicated Funds	5217.30
Interest Bearing CD	<u>10,187.41</u>
	\$15404.71



Exploring Madge Oswald's extensive grounds. Even the log cabin sports a rooftop garden. Photo by Mike Baldwin.



## Herb Study Group: When Does a Weed Become a Weed?

by Jane Baldwin and Elaine Hammes

As the growing season progresses into August, the Herb Study Group (HSG) volunteers continue ongoing efforts to maintain the Alaska Botanical Garden's (ABG) Herb Garden as a showcase of a variety of herbs that can be grown in Alaska. In addition to volunteering in the garden, MG Michelle Semerad is preparing and placing identification signage for many species. Watering and especially weeding remain the weekly focus throughout the summer, and more volunteers are always welcome to join the work parties.

The definition of a "weed" most closely related to the herb garden is from Merriam-Webster, "...a plant that is not valued where it is growing and is usually of vigorous growth; especially one that tends to overgrow or choke out more desirable plants..." Examples of well-known weeds are several chick-weeds, clovers, and plantain.

Present in the Herb Garden are a number of Alaska native plants which are commonly identified as garden weeds. The native plants creep in from the surrounding forest, or wind and birds disperse seeds or spores. Natives considered weeds in the Herb Garden include: Horsetail, *Equisetum spp.*, various invasive native grasses, wild roses, ferns, mosses, alder, birch, and aspen seedlings. A U.S. Forest service publication states that a single fireweed plant can produce 80,000 seeds. No wonder our native Fireweed, *Epilobium angustifolium* or *Chamerion angustifolium*, can also be a weed. Willow Weed or Willow Herb, possibly *Epilobium ciliatum*, *E. alpinum*, or *E. hornemannii*, are also troublesome.

Included among the introduced and difficult to eliminate weeds is Liverwort, a non-vascular plant (probably *Marchantia polymorpha*) that thrives in conditions with high nutrient levels, high humidity and a moist soil surface. Liverwort reproduces by spores and small fragments.

A relatively tiny but prolific weed known as pop-it weed, shot-weed, or flick-weed, in the *Cardamine* genus is in the herb garden. *Cardamines*, also known as bittercress, include about 150 species of annuals and perennials. Little western bittercress, *Cardamine oligosperma*, is native to western North America from Alaska to California to Colorado, where it grows in moist mountain habitats. Another species, *Cardamine hirsuta*, has been introduced through



Unidentified  
*Epilobium spp.*  
growing among  
Sweet woodruff,  
*Galium odoratum*, with  
purple Shiso,  
*Perilla frutescens*,  
in the background.  
Photo by Mary Contrary.



nurseries, and is commonly found in damp, recently disturbed soil—prevalent conditions in garden centers. One interesting piece of advice for bittercress found on garden forums was to learn to eat it. *Cardamine* was described as an actual herb with a delightfully "peppery" taste and a good addition to a mixed green salad. Tested on the spot by the day's volunteers, it did not receive a 'thumbs-up' rating. Hmmm, perhaps it is a different *Cardamine* species than what is in the Herb Garden!

Herbs themselves can meet the definition of weed: requiring definite controlling efforts. Varieties of regularly featured herbs that tend to re-seed copiously where they are not desired include: Angelica, *Angelica archangelica*; Borage, *Borago officinalis*; Caraway, *Carum carvi*; and Lady's Mantle, *Alchemilla vulgaris*. The *Tanacetum parthenium aurium* "Golden Feverfew" that bordered the north and south beds two years ago have now—after an apparent 2-year dormancy—re-seeded and grow abundantly throughout beds and along pathways.

(continues next page)



Above: Rose shoot and oak fern, *Gymnocarpium dryopteris*, among the mint beds. Astute viewers who attended the crane fly presentation in May by Dr. Fenja Brodo will notice one of her subjects in the lower right. Left: It could be... Hoary yellow cress, *Rorippa barbareifolia*, Austrian yellow cress, *R. austriaca*, or... This is a large genus in the Brassica family. Sometimes a closer look at joints or seed pods is required. Photos by Mary Contrary.



Pop-it weed.  
Photo by Mary Contrary.

## Herb Study Group: Weed continued

Some of these attractive plants have been relocated while others were thinned or removed.

Several years ago Chamomile, *Matricaria chamomilla*, was planted in the east bed. Although they were replaced, each year since Chamomile seedlings show up and are now

considered weeds among the currently designed plantings.

HSG hopes to provide more information in future articles on efforts to control some of the many weeds, especially the dreaded pop-it weed and liverwort. Any gardeners who have found successful methods are welcome to join the discussion.

*Ed. note:* If you are unsure of a plant's identity, attempt to let one sample grow so you can use the flower for identification. Taking

photos like done here will help you remember what shows up in your garden. There are many plant ID guides that contain flowers but few that contain rosettes—the seedling stage.

Further resources:

*Invasive Plants of Alaska*. Alaska Exotic Plant Information Clearing house. Alaska Association of Conservation Districts Publication. Anchorage. 2005. A field guide-style reference with complete descriptions and color photos.

*Selected Invasive Plants of Alaska*. Forest Service Alaska Region. 2009. Pocket guide.

Gino Graziano, Cooperative Extension Agent, UAF, [gagraziano@alaska.edu](mailto:gagraziano@alaska.edu)

<https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov/java/>

“Invasive Garden Species: Don't Plant a Problem” By Julie Riley and Jamie Snyder. 2006. UAF Cooperative Extension Publication FGV-00146.

## Bird Chatter

### PUT YOUR HANDS, AHH, HOOVES, UP...

Vandalism and theft occurred last week, right under the noses of the Alaska State Troopers. Member Janice Berry, who tends the flower beds at Trooper headquarters on Tudor Road, arrived one day to find stunted stalks where blossoms once flourished. Nearly everything was gone except—you guessed it—marigolds.

Thus Janice learned the lesson experience teaches us all—most moose don't like most marigolds. Member Diane Kaplan started scattering marigolds among her veggie beds several years ago after multiple ungulate feeding frenzies and reports no moose predation since. It's worth a try.

**BERRY SOON...** Don't look now, but berry season is almost here, and with it an opportunity to make a little \$\$\$ . Lots of our members consider the Kenai their summertime back yard so the fact that these particular berries are growing in Soldotna shouldn't be too much of a deterrent.

Alaska Berries is looking for Haskap pickers, probably starting this week. You have to be 16 or older and physically capable. It pays \$1.50 a pound and Laurie Olson at AB says 8-12 pounds an hour is average—but we're not average, right? So pick pick pick!

If interested, send name, contact info and age (BC gives you permission to lie about longevity) to [alaskaberries@alaska.net](mailto:alaskaberries@alaska.net). They'll call when it's time.

Note: This pick should not be confused the the U-pick AB runs later in the year, where you pick-and-pay for yourself.

**MIXED MESSAGES...** The bad news—for us—is that the Suttons have probably found a buyer for their nursery. The good news is the buyer says they want to keep the nursery in business—rather than tear everything down at that very desirable Tudor Road location and build a strip mall. The even better news—for us—is the sisters promise they will be back as usual next year if the sale falls through.

Is BC going to burn in H-E-double-hockey-sticks for hoping the sale falls through? Probably. The sisters totally deserve to retire to their Arizona estate (house, garden RV—that qualifies as an estate, right?) But. . .

**YOUR HAPPY PLACE...** Member Jane Baldwin came across this while cruising the net: “Researchers have found that contact with the soil bacteria *Mycobacterium vaccae* increases serotonin, the chemical in your brain that elevates your mood and strengthens your immune system.”

Check it out yourself, says Jane. Apparently there is scientific research supporting the concept that exposure to *M. vaccae*, which thrives in typical backyard gardens where soil is enriched with organic material, does punch up serotonin. However, the science is a little fuzzy so don't rush out to the back yard and start self-medicating.

Know something fun or interesting?  
Share it! [stoomey@ymail.com](mailto:stoomey@ymail.com)





## Volunteer Opportunities

### AMGA Board Election

The election committee is seeking candidates for 2 board positions for the upcoming fall election. These are 2-year terms beginning January 2019. Please contact Jane Baldwin 562-5451, Harry Deuber 440-6372, Fran Pekar 433-9235 or any current board member (see membership directory) to put your name on the ballot or with questions regarding board service. We want you-the involved, active, and committed!

**Pioneer Home:** Help maintain front gardens of the Pioneer Home during the summer.  
Contact: Julie Ginder jkginder@gci.net, Joyce haljoy@gci.net, or Lynne Opstad: lopstad@gci.net

#### AMGA Garden Tours Coordinator

Do you like finding special gardens and helping to showcase them? Do you have friends whose gardens you want to bring some attention to? It's fun to meet new gardeners and get the first look at their creations! Interested? Contact amga@alaska.net

### Be a part of the largest garden exhibit in Alaska!

Join the Fun, this year's theme: "Memories in the Making"  
*Volunteers make it happen!*

Entry and Judging days at the Alaska State Fair's Crops Department is a fun environment to meet new people and catch up with old friends. A great opportunity to learn something new and/or share your own gardening experiences. **You can also earn some credit for Master Gardener volunteer hours!**

#### ~ Entry Clerks

Wednesdays, August 22 and August 29  
Three shifts available: 12-5 pm, 3-8 pm, and 5-9 pm  
Help Exhibitors fill out entry forms correctly and assist the entrant in the preparation of their entries for judging by showing or teaching how to follow the guidelines of the Exhibitor Guide, and placement of entry in the display area.

#### ~ Judges Clerks

Thursdays: August 23 and August 30  
from 8 am -Noon  
Record winning results, set up and place ribbons for the final display.

#### ~ 1st & 2nd Entry Take down

Tuesdays, August 28 from 4-7 pm, and  
September 4 from 9 am- Noon.  
Looking for a few people to help with  
1st Entry take down and ribbon sorting.

For more information contact  
Kathy Liska at (907) 337-2196 or  
akliska@aol.com

**Ask A Master Gardener at the Alaska Botanical Garden**  
Answer plant and gardening questions from visitors from around the state, country, world. Our knowledge and time helps alleviate pressure on ABG staff. See our SignUp Genius. Or, Contact Harry Deuber: 440-6372, denali542@yahoo.com

A volunteer interest form is online. When you fill out this Google Form, it will automatically be sent to the Volunteer Committee and you will be contacted when needed.

<https://goo.gl/forms/FutOWGNye9KPWKd63>

### Fresh International Gardens Market Days

FIG is selling their produce at three farmers markets this season. MGs are encouraged to volunteer with the business day, including set-up and take-down. A great opportunity to learn about new vegetables that grow in our area.

Mountain View Market, Thursdays, 3pm - 7pm  
through September 27

Muldoon Market, Saturdays, 9am - 2pm through September 29

South Anchorage Market off Dimond, Wednesdays, 10am - 4pm

Contact Jesse Richardville, Refugee Agriculture Partnership Program Coordinator, (907) 222-7377,  
jrichardville@cssalaska.org



See how we love to learn!  
Madge Oswald leads inquisitive gardeners through her landscape on the July 16 MG tour.  
Photo by Mike Baldwin.

## Garden Event Calendar

### MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Thursday, August 2

Alaska Botanical Garden (ABG): Wine in the Woods,  
6:30 pm -9:30 pm, \$30- \$75. 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road

Anchorage Garden Club meeting: Garden and Wild Fruit  
Recipes, 7 pm at the Pioneer Schoolhouse, 437 E 3rd Avenue,  
907-566-0539 (voice mail)

Tuesday, August 7

The Alaska Botanical Garden: Paper Flower Making,  
6 pm-7:30 pm, \$50 - \$60; 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road

Thursday, August 9

Alaska Botanical Garden: Storytime in the Garden, 11 am -  
12:30 pm, Free; 4601 Campbell Airstrip Rd. August story is  
*Blueberries for Sal* by Robert McCloskey

Wildflower Garden Club: Herb Cultivation with Mary Shier

Saturday, August 11, 10am - 3pm

AMGA Plant Sale, Benny Benson School Parking lot by ABG.  
Bring your plants to sell on Friday between 6pm - 8pm

Saturday-Sunday, August 18 - 19

Alaska Botanical Garden: Field Journal Studies with Water Color,  
Aug. 18, 11 am; Aug. 19, 5 pm. Two days of field journaling  
with Andie Thrums. Each workshop will focus on different  
watercolor techniques to effectively chronicle your Garden  
experience. \$225 - \$250

### Some Classy Presentations at This Year's Fall Plant Sale

Compiled by Sheila Toomey

Timing is everything, so plan ahead: Schedule your visit to  
the Late Season Plant Sale on August 11 to coincide with one  
of the classes being offered this year. Or more than one!

The **free** 50-minute sessions, taught by people who actually  
know what they're talking about, are a popular feature of the  
annual sale. Although aimed at the general public, they offer  
practices and tips we can all use—no matter how many certificates  
we have hanging on the greenhouse wall.

Most of us have visited the amazing Ronsse gardens out  
Oceanview way. Bountiful vegetables, beautiful flowers.  
The details are in the dirt—and Dennis is going to tell us how  
to prepare our garden soil this fall for success next season—  
without spending a fortune.

OK, no use avoiding the ugly truth: This season is almost  
over and you know what you have to do—trim those trees and  
shrubs. Or do you? When and how should you cut back lilacs,  
forsythia, cotoneaster or whatever is growing out of control?  
Debbie Hinchey knows all, and will share.

August 23 – September 3

Alaska State Fair: "Memories in the Making," Palmer  
Crops and Flowers Entry Dates: August 22 and 29, Noon-9 pm

### OTHER WEEKLY EVENTS

Alaska Master Gardeners, Anchorage: Garden tours every first  
and third Monday, throughout the summer. Members only,  
watch your email for details and directions.

Alaska Rock Garden Society: Maintenance at the ABC Rock  
Garden: Every other Tuesday, 11am – 1pm.  
Contact Kathy Swick: swick@alaska.net for questions.

Herb Study Group: Herb Garden volunteer maintenance at  
the ABG: Tuesdays and Fridays, 1-3pm; Due to updated ABC  
safety procedures, all volunteers must first check in at the ABC  
Office. A minimum of two people are required for working in  
the garden at any time. Contact: anchorageherbstudygroup@  
gmail.com or call Mary at 907-345-1562.

Audubon Society

Early Morning Bird Walks: Thursdays, 6:30 am - 8:30 am,  
BLM Campbell Creek Science Center Parking Lot.

### MC WORKSHOP - DEADHEADING

At the Pioneer Home with Ginger. Free. Bring your hand clip-  
pers and learn to use them to benefit the plant! No workshop if  
it is actively raining—rule #7, don't trim plants in the rain! We'll  
spend 30-minutes to an hour demonstrating and practicing.

Sundays: 8/5, 8/12, 8/19 at 2:30pm

Friday, 8/10 at 6:30pm; Tuesday, 8/28 at 6:30pm

Did you have a good summer? Big beautiful flowers and  
large luscious things to eat? Want to be one of the chosen, with  
fab bragging rights? Enter the Alaska State Fair—and play to  
win! Kathy Liska, longtime Crop Superintendent for the Fair,  
will show you how to prep veggies and condition flowers for  
show, along with useful tips on when to harvest—for the best  
chance to win, win, win! She'll also talk about how to follow the  
Exhibitor Guides instructions.

What do most of us know about flower arranging? "Tall  
flowers in back, short ones in front"? Orchid and Bonsai master  
Paul Marmora laughs. He will talk about design principles—color,  
shape, positive and negative space—in both vase and container  
arrangements. Plus how to make blooms last as long as possible.

Which class is most interesting? Can't choose? Make a day of it.  
Bring a sandwich. Plop yourself down in the tent and attend them all!

CLASS SCHEDULE:

11 am Talking Dirty. Dennis Ronsse

Noon Cutting Remarks. Debbie Hinchey

1 pm Rooting for You. Kathy Liska

2 pm Beautiful Bouquets. Paul Marmora



## Deadheading, But First, the Right Tool by Ginger Hudson

So, last summer you didn't deadhead because you didn't know what it meant, how to do it, or what to do it with. You couldn't figure out why your pansies weren't blooming as much as your neighbor's. Or maybe you ventured into dahlia-land and suffered through droopy flowers that looked like faded mop-heads. Desk drawer scissors crimped the stems leaving them dangling like hoody strings. Pinching just the flowers left a bouquet of green spikes. An appropriate pair of pruners and a weekly thirty minutes, more-or-less, would check those issues. You'd seen your sister use hers and meant to borrow them the day of your kids' last shared birthday cakes. A deep recess of your mind, the one that regrets not returning borrowed purses, dog leashes, or raincoats put the brakes on your mouth. You're a homeowner now, invest in legitimate tools—tools you want to hold, treasure, and, maybe not lend out.

You'll buy a two-hundred dollar puffer jacket that might last five years—barring New Year's eve sparklers and campfire dancing. Why not invest fifty dollars into hand clippers that will outlast your garden?

We need to start with the blade. The business end makes the difference. Those scissors you tried to use, they actually represent the same construction as the best clippers: by-pass cutters. One side of the cutting device goes past, or by-passes, the other side. The scissors don't have a tight lever, and they are a straight blade. Clippers work because the curved bottom of the mouth is wide with a flat surface to hold the stem. The top of the mouth is the slicer—sharp and tight against the bottom. That concave arc combined with the angled handle you squeeze slices clean and clear—the little rose stem falls to the ground.

You do not want anvil clippers, never for trimming bushes, branches, or blooms. Have you seen how an anvil is used? You have if you are a metal worker. Anvils are pounded on. Materials are pounded between an anvil and a hammer. Reshaped, bent, crooked, not cut. That is what happens to bush branches when anvil clippers are on the scene, they mash the branch. No clean cut, a shredded joint of cellulose.

Speaking of metal, you want tools with hardened steel or stainless steel cutting parts. Hardened steel will not nick or crack as easy as soft steel. The right metal in the right structure will ensure your clippers endure. Stainless will live through the sprinkler accident and solid construction will hold up to stress.

Look for clippers where the lower mouth of the blade is one solid piece with the handle. These rarely break when used in the garden, not on your plumbing or electrical projects. Next look for models with replaceable slicing blades. Should you accidentally cut some rocks while attempting to cut roots of that obnoxious rose bush that is way too big by the front door and you didn't remove enough soil and the rock chips the blade of your favorite clippers—then you'll want to replace it.

Plastic may cause you to replace the whole pair of clippers. Don't be dazzled by plastic-handled fashion statements. Plastic always breaks, always. Or warps, or cracks. Don't even look at them unless the entire tool is plastic and it is part of a toy tool kit for your three-year old niece. Do look at clippers with metal handles wrapped in plastic. It may peel off over time, especially when you leave your tools outside because you set them on the edge of the garden bed and got distracted taking pictures of bees with your phone. One kind of clippers wears a more brittle plastic that dries out in the sun—over a long period of time, not like a day or two. But still a good investment because the handle and lower blade are continuous. Another brand of clipper wears more pliable plastic sleeves. To the sensitive, thin-fingered gardeners, this brand's plastic gives a subtle cushion.

Don't be tempted by the multi-packs or lower priced models. They may look like a bargain, only if you merely have a courtyard to putter in. To lower the price, the manufacturer might have lowered the quality or weight of materials. Multipacks tend to have one tool in there you will never use. It seemed like a good addition to the shed at the time, it might work someday on some plant with just the right tenderness, or it might make a good gift. Kind of like buying the seasonal cosmetics package filled with smears and creams you never heard of when all you wanted was the color-block zipper bag to hold your headphone cables and scrunchy because it matched your backpack.

Spend time examining the construction of the various brands of clippers. Hold every model in your hand. Feel the weight, the curve of the handles, the ease of the spring. Do your fingers wrap around comfortably? Are the handles long or short enough for your hand? These are, after all, extensions of your hands.

Losing leashes or coats is uneconomical. Replacing your tools every year is uneconomical. Investing in a tool for long term use qualifies as economical.

So about that deadheading: the action of cutting or pinching off dead flowers before they set seed. The object is to encourage the plant to produce more flowers instead of putting energy into generating seeds. If, however, you want to collect seeds, or the plant in question only flowers once per year, let the seeds mature. Also note plants that produce seed beneficial for wildlife and allow some of those to mature.



Poor dahlia, it looks as though the dead flowers were ripped off rather than clean cut. By not cutting the entire flower stem, the plant struggles to keep the stalk alive instead of putting energy into making flowers—and it is unsightly. Tears are harder for plant to heal than a flat cut.



Above: close-up of by-pass pruner cutting blades—the preferred style. Notice the cutting edge passes by the lower edge. Below: close up of an anvil-type pruner. This style struggles to cleanly cut softer stems and its wear is not easily repaired. By cutting harder woods the resting side of the anvil wears out, arrow. Lower right: snapdragons may have one flower left but you're best to cut the stalk. Otherwise they hang over, harbor mildew, and will not produce more blooms. Lower left: proper deadheading. Cutting blade toward plant, cut at stem-base or joint.



Photos by Ginger Hudson. Snapdragon deadheads courtesy of Erma MacMillan.

## Annual Plant Sale

### Saturday August 11!

Have you potted up your spare perennials?

Get them ready for AMGA's 5th Annual late-season plant sale, August 11, 10am - 3pm in the Benny Benson parking lot next to the Alaska Botanical Garden! Drop your plants off on Friday evening from 6 pm - 8 pm

Please contact Fran Durner for yellow plant tags. Plants should be labeled to ensure best use by the purchaser! For more information contact Fran: durner1@gmail.com



Many of the plants in Madge Oswald's garden were divisions from other gardeners. Her landscape features a wide variety of Martagon lilies, *Lilium martagon* hybrids, ranging in color from this blush peach to deep merlot. Photo by Mike Baldwin.

## Call to Artists!

### Garden art vendors!

Join us at the August 11 MG Plant Sale: Interested? email Fran: durner1@gmail.com

### 2018 MG Directory Update

Current AMGA members: If you'd like an update to your 2018 MG Directory, you will receive updated pages only which include members added after the January 5th cut-off date and corrections. The update is a .pdf file that can be printed and cut in half to fit neatly in your directory. Contact Jane Baldwin: ak.jbaldwin@gmail.com



AMGA regularly meets at 7:00pm every third Monday of the month, September through May (except for December).

Meetings are held at the Anchorage Cooperative Extension Office Chugachmiut Building, 1840 Bragaw St., Anchorage, AK, 99508. Monthly educational programs are free and open to the public. Visitors and guests are welcomed and encouraged.

#### AMGA Board of Directors

Harry Deuber	President
Marilyn Barker	Vice President
Cindy Walker	Treasurer
Cheryl Chapman	Secretary
Kathy Liska	At Large
Fran Pekar	At Large
Marjorie Williams	At Large
Don Bladow	At Large

#### Committee Chairs, Program Coordinators & Volunteers

CES Liaison:	Harry Deuber
Broadcast Email:	Fran Pekar
Calendar of Events:	Gina Docherty, Interim
Advanced MG:	Ginny Moore
Directory Editor:	Janice Berry
Programs:	Marilyn Barker
Field Trips:	Marilyn Barker, Interim
Google Group:	Mary Rydesky
Hospitality:	Marjorie Williams
Volunteer Coordinator:	Harry Deuber
Membership & Database:	Jane Baldwin
Newsletter:	Ginger Hudson
Website:	Gina Docherty
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The Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. Contact the editor, Ginger Hudson, at:

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#### Newsletter Submission Deadline

The deadline for submitting an item for publication in the following month's edition of the AMGA newsletter is the 20th of every month. Items arriving after this date may or may not be included.

Educational or garden related articles, Bird Chatter, calendar items and announcements are always welcome.

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