



# MASTER GARDENER connection

A JOINT MONTHLY PUBLICATION FROM THE MASTER GARDENERS OF KING COUNTY  
AND THE MASTER GARDENER FOUNDATION OF KING COUNTY

JANUARY 2024



## **Growing Groceries: Winter Series Opens in January**

*...by Extension Master Gardener Susan Busch*

The Growing Groceries Team is excited to kick off their Winter 2024 Series by welcoming authors David Montgomery and Anne Biklé. Together, they will present the webinar *Healthy Soils, Healthy Plants, Healthy Food* on January 31. Their work in the area of agriculture, microbiomes and soil health can be referenced at [Dig2Grow.com](https://Dig2Grow.com).

Montgomery and Biklé's latest book, *What Your Food Ate*, marshals evidence from recent and forgotten science to illustrate how the health of the soil ripples through to that of crops, livestock and ultimately us. This lively and thought-provoking event is sure to make all gardeners excited about growing nutritious and delicious food in the upcoming growing season and for years to come.

[Read the full article](#)

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## **Bellevue Demonstration Garden Workshops for 2024**

*...by the Bellevue Demonstration Garden Workshop Team*



As we look forward to a new year of workshops, the Bellevue Demonstration Garden (BDG) Workshop team would like to begin by thanking the people who have participated in our workshops in past years. It's a pleasure to present to such an enthusiastic and appreciative audience.

This year, BDG Workshops will continue to focus on sustainable and regenerative gardening. Our workshops will incorporate how to build soil health, promote biodiversity and increase resilience to climate change. We will be presenting a wide range of pertinent, yet enjoyable, topics specifically tailored for gardening in the Pacific Northwest.

[Read the full article](#)



*This is the beginning of an occasional series of interviews featuring the unique people who volunteer as Extension Master Gardeners.*

### **Meet Master Gardener Gia Parsons: *Working to Expand Inclusion***

A hard-working member of the Program since 2008, Extension Master Gardener Gia Parsons shares some of her cultural gardening heritage and her experiences as a Master Gardener.

[Read the interview](#)

*Photo: EMG Gia Parsons*

## **2023: A Year of Change for the Master Gardener Program**

*...by Sarah Moore, WSU Extension King County Master Gardener Program Coordinator*

2023 was a year of change for the WSU Extension King County Master Gardener Program. In June, we added Program Assistant Nora Larson, who has been reaching out to volunteers every day, meeting as many people as she can and helping to remove obstacles and celebrate successes.

The most visible change is that the Program office will have a new address in 2024. Over the past year, under the leadership of Extension Director Alyssa Bowers, WSU King County Extension invited the King County Master Gardener Program to share the Extension office space in Renton. The Program office relocated to the Renton Extension office as of January 1 with the support of the Foundation Board, led by President Joan Baldwin and Vice President Joe Jennings.

[Read the full article](#)

## **MGFKC 2024 Annual Board Meeting: *Save the Date***

*...by Foundation Vice President Joe*



**2024 Annual Meeting**  
10-11 AM Jan. 27, 2024

Foundation President Joan Baldwin and the Foundation Board of Directors will host our 2024 Annual Meeting via Zoom on January 27, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. This is a one-hour business meeting to review our 2023 financial performance and 2024 budget. Program Coordinator Sarah Moore will also provide a brief look forward at Program plans for 2024. The Zoom link and the Foundation financial package will be emailed to all members prior to the meeting. Please take time to review the package and attend the meeting if possible.

## King County Master Gardeners are Moving!

*...by Foundation Vice President Joe Jennings*



The WSU Extension King County Master Gardener Program Office and Diagnostic Laboratory are moving from the University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture in Seattle to the WSU Extension King County offices in Renton. The move was announced by Program Coordinator Sarah Moore. This move will enable the Program to build closer working relationships with other Extension Programs and will reduce the annual office rent paid by the Master Gardener Foundation of King County from \$35,000 to \$0.

The Program Office move was completed December 31, 2023, and the Diagnostic Laboratory will move by March 31, 2024. The Foundation will also receive mail at the new Program Office location. The new address is:

WSU Extension King County Master Gardeners  
560 Naches Avenue SW, Suite 130  
Renton, WA 98057-2219



## Northwest Flower & Garden Festival Early Bird Discount Tickets

Come see the WSU Extension Master Gardeners at the 2024 Northwest Flower & Garden Festival scheduled for February 14 – 18 in Seattle!

### Quick Links



[MGFKC](#)



[King County MG](#)

[Become a Master Gardener](#)

[MGF Washington State](#)



Take advantage of a \$5 early bird discount on your tickets by purchasing through this link: [https://bit.ly/24NWFG\\_MasterGardeners](https://bit.ly/24NWFG_MasterGardeners).

Additionally, for each ticket bought via this link, \$2 will be contributed to support the Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State.

The discounted advance price of \$22 is available through February 13, 2024.

## Record Impacts

[GivePulse Login Page](#)

*Volunteer hours must be entered monthly.*

## Staying Smart

[BDG Workshops](#)

[Education Events for the Public and Master Gardeners](#)

[Growing Groceries](#)



**2023 Fall Appeal**  
**\$25,272 Raised!**

## Annual Fall Appeal: Update

*...by Foundation Board Vice President Joe Jennings*

The Master Gardener Foundation of King County's 2023 Fall Appeal raised \$25,272 as of December 23, 2023. The Fall Appeal campaign pays for the operating costs of the Foundation and the WSU Extension Master Gardener Program in King County. It also helped reduce the 2023 budget deficit. The 2023 Fall Appeal had 85 donors, 20 more than in 2022. We want to thank all of the donors and volunteers who helped make the annual Fall Appeal a success.



[Ways to donate to MGFKC](#)



[MG Program Priorities](#)

## Chestnut vs Horse Chestnut

*...by Extension Master Gardener Bruce Caredio*

It is easier to remember and use common names for plants rather than the more specific Latin binomials. But common names can be confusing on many levels depending on region, generation and translation; so it is with the "chestnut" tree and its fruits.

The traditional holiday chestnut, roasted and used as turkey stuffing, was originally the native American tree *Castanea*



*dentata* (Fagaceae or Beech family). The horse chestnut, *Aesculus pavia* (Sapindaceae family), is also native to the United States and produces **inedible** fruit that resembles the shiny brown **edible** chestnut, adding to the confusion. Horse chestnut fruits can be toxic if eaten, containing a poison called esculin. Ironically, the horse chestnut gets its name from the practice of feeding the ground up fruit to horses to treat coughs in the days before modern veterinary medicine. The fruit is now considered toxic to horses. Another difference between the trees are the leaves. *Castanae* leaves are simple and serrated while those of *Aesculus* are palmate with five to seven leaflets. Both trees produce spiny fruit but usually *Aesculus* contains one round fruit, while *Castanae* has two to three per husk and have flat sides.

[Read the full article](#)

*Photo: Edible chestnuts in a market. Photo credit: EMG Bruce Caredio*



## A New Year and a Change in the Air

*...by Extension Master Gardener Bruce Bennett*

Welcome to yet another year of the fun and challenges in the Pacific Northwest world of gardening. I'm still trying to decipher the post-Christmas instructions and ramifications for one of our newest presents from the federal government – the report that the western part of our state is now categorized in USDA Hardiness Zone 9a. My, how we have grown. I can remember back to the early 1980s when I first moved to Seattle which was in Zone 7b (average winter low between 5°F and 10°F). In 2012, that was raised to Zone 8b (an average low of between 15°F and 20°F). How quickly they grow! So, what are the ramifications of this climatic news and what does it mean in our roles as home gardeners? This thirty-year warming trend, which meteorologists talk about during the evening news, continues as the related heat and horticulture issues evolve around us. Let's take some time to consider where gardeners need to be more aware, more pro-active. Let's start by looking at our current winter weather.

[Read the full article](#)

*Image: 2023 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map*



Find out about the WSU Extension Master Gardener Program in King



Discover the many ways contributions help the King County

County, how to become a Master Gardener, a list of speakers and the Puget Sound Tip Sheets.

<https://extension.wsu.edu/king/gardening/>

For **MG-only** information, log into the "KCMGs, Only" area.

Master Gardener program operate public gardens, diagnostic plant clinics for the public and offer low-cost classes and workshops to the public.

<https://www.mgfk.org/>

For **MG-only** documents, Foundation policies and clinic resources, log into the Foundation "Members Area". See the MGFKC May 23 email for the password.

## Our Facebook Presence has Expanded!

*...by Marty Byrne, Extension Master Gardener and Communications Committee Co-Chair*



The Facebook Refresh group has been working hard to bring more gardening content from here in the Pacific Northwest, WSU Extension and beyond. We also post announcements about upcoming classes and workshops.

We now have an Instagram page also!

[Read the full article](#)



### News Shoots: Short Subjects

## Schedule Changes for Diagnostic Lab and Email Clinic

The Diagnostic Lab will be closed January 1 through March 31, 2024. The Email Clinic will be closed during the month of January to allow time for training new clinic members. The Email Clinic will resume answering Ask-a-Master-Gardener emails in February.

## Of Interest to You

### Tip Sheets for KC

Browse tip sheets about Puget Sound Gardening

[Garden Tip Sheets](#)

### WHERE am I?

Find King County Master Gardener clinic and garden locations using the [MGFKC map](#)

**Sign up to receive the  
Master Gardener  
Connection**

## ***What Counts as CE?***

Classes that will improve a volunteer's knowledge and skill base for performing work as a horticultural advisor and serving as a resource on issues of sustainable gardening for home gardeners.



## ***Staying Smart!***

### ***Education Opportunities***

Master Gardeners can earn Continuing Education credit from a wide selection of online classes, webinars, and online workshops. Check out the offerings on the MGFKC Education page:

[kingcounty.mastergardenerfoundation.org/education/](http://kingcounty.mastergardenerfoundation.org/education/)

### ***Growing Groceries Classes***

Growing Groceries classes are Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Please visit the [Growing Groceries](#) page for information and registration for all classes.

**January 31: Healthy Soil, Healthy Plants, Healthy Food**, presented by David Montgomery and Anne Bicklé.

### ***Bellevue Demonstration Garden Workshops***

Workshops are online Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Registration is required. For information and workshop details, please visit the [Bellevue Demonstration Garden Workshops](#) page.

**January 20: Gardening with Ferns**, presented by Richie Steffen, executive director of the Elisabeth C Miller Botanical Garden.

**February 3: Trial by Fire! Propagation: From Seed to Spore and Cuttings**, presented by Dell Brummet, head gardener at Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden.

### ***WSU Master Gardener Online Workshops***

**Tuesdays in January at 12:00 p.m.** WSU Master Gardeners present **free** weekly online programs. *No need to register, just pop in.*

Connection information (To attend you must have a Zoom account, sign up for one at [zoom.us](https://zoom.us)), then join from

**Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS, or**

**Android:** <https://wsu.zoom.us/j/7756056320?pwd=RzVxbTI0dXpyUjJjSDdsWnJuTXdydz09>

Meeting ID: 775 605 6320

Password: 12345

Phone Call: +1 253 215 8782, 775 605 6320#

For help, call Gary Fredricks at [garyf@wsu.edu](mailto:garyf@wsu.edu) or 360-577-3014 Ext. 3.

**January 16: Caring for Fruit Trees** presented by Extension Master Gardener Alice Slusher. A comprehensive approach to fruit tree care including a



management calendar.

**January 23: Fruit Tree Pruning** presented by WSU Extension Director Gary Fredricks. Guidance on the art of pruning fruit trees.

**January 30: Planning Your Seed Starting Schedule** presented by Extension Master Gardeners Sara Clark and Heidi Hubler. Timing your planting for success.

***Save the Date:***

***Virtual WSU Master Gardener Advanced Education Conference***

**September 27 – 28, 2023** The conference planning team is already at work. Watch our [website](#) for more information coming in early spring.



***Elisabeth C. Miller Library Selection***

***The Weeds: A Novel***

While your garden sleeps, enjoy this month's book selection – a suspense-filled novel – in your favorite chair with a cup of hot tea.

*The Weeds: A Novel*, by Katy Simpson Smith was published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux in April 2023. Rebecca Alexander, Librarian and Manager of Reference and Technical Services, reviewed the book.

[Read the review](#)



***Events and Coming Attractions***

**MGFKC Board Meeting** on Thursday, January 11, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. online Zoom meeting. Information and details at <https://kingcounty.mastergardenerfoundation.org/board/>.

Zoom Meeting

-<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88172076722>

Meeting ID: 881 7207 6722

One tap mobile - +12532158782,,88172076722#

Dial in - +1 253 215 8782 Meeting ID: 881 7207 6722

**MGFKC Board of Directors Annual Meeting** on Saturday, January 27, at 10:00 a.m. A Zoom link will be emailed to all Foundation members prior to the meeting.

Attend the **Northwest Flower & Garden Festival** on February 14 – 18, 2023, at the Seattle Convention Center, 705 Pike Street, Seattle, WA. Find more information at [gardenshow.com](http://gardenshow.com).



## Contributing to The Connection

Do you have an event or CE opportunity to share? An article of interest to Master Gardeners? Deadline for announcements or article submissions is the 15th of the month prior to publication (ex: May 15 for the June edition). For more information or to submit items for consideration, please contact us at [communicate@mgfkc.org](mailto:communicate@mgfkc.org). All published photos have the photographer's permission or are sourced from free-to-use sites.

## WAIT! Don't unsubscribe from all mailings if you are an active Master Gardener!

If you wish to unsubscribe, be selective and identify the email lists you wish to receive. **All active Master Gardeners in King County are expected to subscribe to the current year's "KC Master Gardeners" Email List** to continue receiving information about Program activities, updates and recertification notices. Other email lists are optional.



The Master Gardener Connection is a joint publication from the King County Master Gardener Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and the WSU Extension Master Gardener program in King County to provide research-based education about urban horticulture to the residents of King County.



Like us on Facebook!

Master Gardener Foundation of King County | c/o WSU Extension King County, 560 Naches Avenue SW, Suite 130, Renton, WA 98057-2219

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