



MASTER GARDENERS

of Hunterdon County

2026

GARDENING TALKS

To request a garden talk, or for more information about becoming a Master Gardener, Contact:

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Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; U.S. Department of Agriculture, and County Boards of Commissioners. Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.

BENEFICIAL

• **Lacewings** Larval lacewings prey on aphids, mites, mealybugs and scales

• **Dragonflies** eat flying insects

• **Lady Beetles**

• **Praying Mantis**

• **Spiders**

• **Wheel bug:** insect and eggs

Adult green lacewing

Egg mass of a Chinese mantis

lady beetle eggs

Braconid wasps kill hornworms. Note: cocoons

Rutgers Master Gardeners are volunteers who receive in-depth training in all aspects of gardening and horticulture by Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) faculty and staff. After completing this training, interns provide volunteer services to assist RCE with community education to achieve and maintain certification.

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2026 Presentations

The Butterfly Miracle will take you on a journey of the four stages of a Monarch butterfly's life cycle, its migration and how we can help their population grow. Come along as we learn about this magical transformation in the life of this amazing butterfly.

Colonial Kitchen' Gardens. As the kitchen remains the heart of every home, let's travel back to 1640 Massachusetts and rediscover our first colonial garden to table story.

Conifers. Master Gardener and Christmas tree farm owner discusses conifers and the history of their use as Christmas trees. The talk includes hints on identification and some live examples from the farm.

Coping with Deer. White-tailed deer were virtually extinct in the late 1800s in NJ. Learn about the reasons for their current population, and how understanding their biology and behavior can help the gardener with strategies to mitigate deer damage.

Culinary Herbs. Herbs smell and taste enticing. They bring texture, color and depths of flavor to a dish. They can also be used in butters, vinegars, and teas. Most herbs are inexpensive and easy to grow and store well over winter. In this presentation, the speaker will share how to grow and use herbs creatively.

Ben Franklin's Botanical Buddy. Who did Carl Linnaeus call the "greatest natural botanist in the world"? Who was Ben Franklin's plant pal? Who canoed colonial America's waterways collecting "new" plants? John Bartram, that's who. Our speaker tells you about this fascinating person and how he formed the cornerstone of colonial American botany.

Demystifying Orchids. Have you received an orchid as a gift and are unsure what to do next? Discover the basic practices involved in keeping your orchid happy and re-blooming in your home. History, cultural requirements, growth habits, and easy-to-care-for orchids will be discussed.

Destructive Insects in the Perennial Garden. Learn about some of the most common bugs, invasive and native, that can be destructive to your garden, and what to do about them. You will also discover that some insects who look like bad guys really aren't.

Fragrant Flowers. This presentation explores fragrant flowers and how to make floral smells work in your favor each season of the year. But beware! Not all flowers smell good!

Growing Native Plants. Instead of buying bird food, try gardening for wildlife by planting native plants! This talk can be tailored to cover native plants appropriate for containers or in the ground, attracting native insects, moths, butterflies and birds. If you plant it, they will come!

Harvest from Containers. Pots are the perfect solution for gardeners with limited space or little time to care for a large garden. The speaker will discuss containers, soil, plants and conditions needed to grow a variety of vegetables and herbs.

Honey Bees and Beekeeping. Learn to tell the differences between honey bees and other stinging insects, the three bee castes and their "jobs", and much more. Our speaker, also a Cornell Master Beekeeper, takes you "inside the hive" to answer all your honey bee questions.

Insect Pollinators of the Perennial Garden. This talk explores the diversity of insect pollinators including butterflies, hoverflies, moths, flies, and more. Learn exactly how pollinators pollinate and also what you can do to help them thrive in your yard and garden.

Introduction to Italian Gardens. Come join us for a journey to three beautiful and very different Italian gardens that our speaker visited in Italy. Learn about the history and influences that shaped their design and the famous people who commissioned them. The presentation also discusses how to add one or more features from the Italian garden to your own garden design.

Language of Flowers. If flowers could talk, what would they say? Although using flowers and herbs to convey sentiments has been around for thousands of years, it was in the Victorian Era when the tradition of sending coded messages with flowers became popular. This talk discusses the history, symbolism and sentiments around the flowers we love.

Making More Plants. Propagating plants is a necessity for the health of your plants. Subdivision, grafting, rooting plant cuttings and seeding will be discussed.

★ **NEW! Making a Wildflower Meadow.** Wildflower meadows are not just beautiful but are great for wildlife and ecology. Learn about their benefits and how to design, plant, and maintain a native wildflower meadow.

***Native Bees.** Approximately 400 species of native bees live in NJ. The speaker's colorful presentation shows how you can distinguish between a native bee and other flying insects as well as gives you the tools to try and identify them. *National Award Winning Presentation, American Society of Horticultural Science

Native Plant Seed Propagation. Including native plants in our home (or community) garden is becoming increasingly vital for pollinators. Learn how to collect, clean, label, store, and propagate native seeds to help add plant diversity, and pollinators, to your landscape.

New Rules for Fall Garden Cleanup. Some of our traditional routines may no longer be the best practices for a healthy and biodiverse yard. In this talk, we'll take a look at new ways of performing fall tasks that can answer our human need for order, and also the needs of wildlife and the plants themselves. We hope you'll join us in re-imagining our roles as stewards of our yards.

★ **NEW! Trees for Bees: Meadows in the Sky.** Did you know that in most parts of the country, trees provide the earliest and largest sources of nectar and pollen? Learn which few properly selected trees can provide as much, if not more pollen and nectar, for pollinators on a smaller land footprint than a meadow.

Underground Magic. Plants that store their nutrients in underground storage structures include bulbs, rhizomes and corms. Discover their rich history, folklore and unexpected uses. Learn how and why you should grow them. Find out how to select the proper type and size, when to plant, bloom times and troubleshooting solutions.

