

MAY

Pulaski County Master Minutes

May 2006

<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org>, <http://www.uaex.edu/pulaski/>

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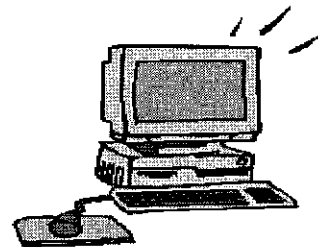


Ode to Nut Grass

I see you standing there
Beautiful and green,
Gently swaying in the breeze.
You never wilt, or even bow your head,
Even during the very worse drought.
Chemical Sprays
Just cause you to Yawn
I gently tug at you and pull you free
But what do I see?
Another Nut Grass just waiting to be.
Now I have decided that you are
Smarter than me.
I give up; I'll just let you be.



I know God had a reason for your very existence,
But so far it has eluded me.
Could you be the cure for some terrible disease and we
Just can't see?
I am sure when I'm gone and someone else is tending
This garden, there you will be.
Still standing, beautiful and green
But now not one, but
Three X Three.
Susie Gillihan



Master Minutes Via The Web

We have only heard from a small group who are interested in receiving the newsletter via email rather than snail mail.

Please email Jennice at jenniceratley@sbcglobal.net if you are interested!

Arkansas Is Our Campus

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Arum italicum By Libby Thalheimer

One of my favorite foliage plants growing in the partly shady areas of my yard is *Arum italicum*. While I do have some that live in the full sun (they die back quicker as the days heat up), they thrive in the moist, well-drained beds under the oak trees on the northeast side of our yard where leaves are allowed to pile up in the fall and compost naturally.

As winter grey sets in, the arum starts to poke through the leaf litter, appearing in a tightly wound curl. The dark green fleshy foliage unfurls to reveal spade shaped leaves with pale green or white along the margins. In the coldest years, snow or ice can make the foliage a little limp looking, but it usually recovers quickly. The foliage (up to 12") can be cut and brought in for foliage or flower arrangements from November through June.

In May, arum sends up a 6" flower spike topped with a yellow spadix of tiny flowers. This spadix is surrounded with a lime green hooded spathe. Often times, these flowers are not even noticeable as the foliage continues to be outstanding until it dies back totally in early July.

After flowering, the flower spike becomes a stalk topped with bright green, big-fat berries that slowly turn orange red. At this time, they resemble a shucked ear of super-sized orange corn on a stick. These berries are long-lasting in the summer garden, eventually dropping off and forming new tender tubers.

This tuberous perennial comes from Europe and North Africa and is hardy in zones 7-10. Propagation is by division of the tubers after the foliage dies back, or from seeds (the super-sized berries) in the fall.



A mature clump of Arum italicum growing in part shade



Under the foliage, a view of the spadix and spathe of the arum



The arum stalk with bright green berries

Plant Profile

Jasmine

By Lorraine Hensley

If you enjoy a truly heady aroma in your garden think jasmine for a single jasmine vine can bring a sweet fragrance to an entire room or to your landscape. Most species grown today were originally native to tropical Asia and some areas in China. Although there are more than 200 species grown all over the world only a few can be grown indoors.

Requirements for both varieties are pretty much the same: they all need bright light with at least 4 hours of direct sun daily. Water regularly and fertilize every other week using a high phosphorus fertilizer to encourage developing flowers. If necessary, prune and repot indoor varieties in the early spring.

Jasminum officinale grandiflorum is the famous French perfume jasmine grown in the fields of southern Europe. Potency of the plant oils is so strong that even after being picked the flowers continue to produce fragrant oils. Indoors, it needs a cool 40 to 50 degree greenhouse where it can climb. Heavy feeding is required in the spring as it begins to set buds for summer and fall blooming.

Jasminum nitidum, the angel-wing or star jasmine, does well in temperatures ranging from 65 to 80 degrees *J.sambac* (Arabian jasmine) and its two well-known cultivars, "Maid of Orleans" and "Grand Duke of Tuscany" are prized for the fragrance they lend to tea.



Jasmines like full sun to partial shade and a warm site. They do well in regular garden soil with moderate levels of soil fertility and moisture. Although relatively problem free they do need frequent pinching and shaping to control growth. The low-growing variety make good hedges but should be planted with ample room to grow. If uses as a shrub border plant them at least 8 feet apart for they bush out and need the space.

Plant an outdoor variety near the house or near a garden walk in order to enjoy the fragrance and the acrobatics of the hummingbirds and butterflies attracted to the flowers. Common jasmine reaches a height of 10 to 15 feet when grown as a semi-vining shrub. When grown as a vine it must be supported by an arbor, fence or trellis. If grown as a shrub frequent pruning is required. Fragrant white flowers up to 1 inch in diameter grace your landscape all summer and into fall and the beautiful deep green leaves have from 5 to 9 leaflets each up to 2 inches long.

Beautiful to look upon while inhaling their heady aroma these plants literally provide both a visual and scented delight for the gardener.



Checklist By Linda Moyer

Annuals

Annuals are widely available now. If possible, purchase smaller plants without flowers or pinch off the blooms when you plant. This will allow the plants to build good roots instead of spending their energy on blooms. Choose shorter bushy plants because the larger ones are more established already and may not transplant as well. A dark green color is generally a good indicator of a strong healthy plant (Make sure that they are not light colored or yellowing. Nor should they have brown patches.) When planting your annuals if you loosen up the roots a bit before planting it will stimulate stronger growth.

General Yard

Many gardeners plant useful vegetable gardens OR beautiful fragrant flower gardens. Try combining the two by planting nasturtium and marigold in with your vegetables or herbs around your flower garden. Plant lily-of-the valley or other flowering bulbs around the trunks of your trees to enhance the yard's natural beauty. Plant corn with strawflower for a colorful border and instead of building a fence.

Indoors

Hopefully, all of your houseplants are outside and enjoying the warm weather. Most want to be in shade or part-shade. Pay careful attention to watering, especially on porches and roofed patios.

Lawns

If your soil is well prepared, it is still not too late to lay turf or sow lawn seed. Feed lawn with high nitrogen fertilizer from April to September for really green grass. Make sure you use a spreader to ensure the fertilizer is spread evenly.

De-thatch, edge and weed as needed.

If you have pine trees on or near your lawn, make sure that you rake the needles regularly. Pine needles will kill anything underneath them. They pack so tight that light is unable to get through. This also makes them an excellent mulch and natural weed killer under trees and shrubs.

If you wish to use weed killers you should do so now while the grass is growing rapidly. Do not use a weed killer if your soil is too wet, too dry or if you have a young lawn. Do not mow your lawn for at least a week after an application. Never add your cuttings to the compost after a treatment.

When mowing your lawn, make sure your mower has a sharp blade. If the blade is dull it will tear the young seedlings from the soil.

Add gentle curves to your lawn for the appearance

of a larger area. Gentle curves are also easier to mow than sharp curves or corners.

Fruit Trees

Long grass around fruit trees will slow the establishment of young trees. Keep it well trimmed.

Vegetables & Herbs

Remember to rotate vegetable crops to help control pests, disease and keep the soil in good shape.

Remove runners from strawberries for more fruit production or use this growth method. Plant new strawberries on top of old ones. Allow the runners to cover the beds as thick as they can get. Later in the fall cover them with about two or three inches of soil. The following spring you will be surprised at the strong production of foliage. The first year may be less productive than years to come.

Monthly Blooms

Abelia, allium, azalea, Canterbury bells, chives, clematis, columbine, coreopsis, cornflowers, late daffodils, early daisies, daylilies, deutzia, blue fescue, forget-me-not, foxglove, gaura, golden rain tree, heather, French hollyhock, honeysuckle, hydrangea, wild indigo, bearded iris, Siberian iris, flag iris, kerria, lamium, Asiatic lilies, Peruvian lilies, mock orange, milk weed, money plant, nicotiana, nierembergia, oxalis, pansies, peonies, phlox, pinks, poppies, English primrose, evening primrose, roses, rosemary, culinary sage, salvias, sedum acre, Japanese snowball, Solomon's seal, spiderwort, spirea, strawberries, hybrid teas, thyme, sweet William, veronica, viola and yarrow.

Linda Moyer writes a monthly column and feature articles for the Master Minutes. She is also active on the Jacksonville City Hall Committee with her husband, Mike.





May Calendar

by Laurie Pierce



Janet Carson's Radio Show will travel to Garvan Woodland Gardens, Hot Springs 10-11 a.m. May 20. Bring your gardening questions to Janet in person. Regular garden admission applies. Janet will return with her radio show on Oct. 14. garvangardens.org

The Gov. Mike Huckabee Delta Rivers Nature Center, Pine Bluff, will host a plant swap 10 a.m.-noon May 20. Bring labeled plants, cuttings, seeds or bulbs to trade with other plant lovers. Free. (870) 534-0011. deltarivers.com



Van Buren County Master Gardeners Garden Festival and Plant Sale will be 9 a.m.-3 p.m. May 27 at Ed Leamon Park, Fairfield Bay.

Memphis Botanic Garden will host a wine Tuesdays on the Terrace, a wine tour of the garden 5:30-7:30 p.m. May 30. Wine Tour of The Garden, May 30, 5:30 to 7:30 pm. The cost is \$20 for members, \$30 for nonmembers. Advance reservations are required. (901) 685-1566, Ext. 130 or memphisbotanicgarden.com.



Mount Magazine Butterfly Festival will be June 23-24 in Paris. Of Arkansas' total 127 resident butterfly species, at least 91 occur on the mountain's plateau-like summit. And the nation's "showcase butterfly," the Diana Fritillary (seen only occasionally in other parts of the U.S.) consistently reproduces on the mountain. Festivities will include concessions, horticultural and butterfly seminars, nature walks with interpreters and more. butterflyfestival.com



Compton Gardens, 312 North Main Street, Bentonville, will host a native plant sale 8 a.m.-2 p.m. June 3. (479) 271-0947, boni@comptongardens.org, comptongardens.org.



Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, will host National Children and Youth Garden Symposium July 27-29 featuring educational sessions, garden explorations and networking. Open to anyone with an interest in youth gardening programs, including horticulturists, educators and home schoolers. Fee. Advance registration required. youthprograms@ahs.org, (703) 768-5700, Ext. 132, mobot.org.



Gardening in the Bayou, a plant competition, show and sale will be June 10 at Gov. Mike Huckabee Delta Rivers Nature Center, Pine Bluff, The event will feature speakers and vendors, and the plant competition will include professional, children's, and seniors divisions. Free. (870) 534-0011, dmneal@agfc.state.ar.us, deltarivers.com

A forest landowner clinic sponsored by Reynolds Forestry will focus on non-industrial, family forestry May 19 in Magnolia. (870) 234-0200 Ext. 1203 or colleen@reynoldsforestry.com

We can complain because rose bushes have thorns or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.

--Abraham Lincoln



Pulaski County Master Gardener Meetings' Highlights By Jackie Wright

The Pulaski County Master Gardener Board met on Wednesday, April 18, 2006 at 10 a.m. at St. James Methodist Church. Present were Dick Blankenbeker, Marilyn Tilley, Jackie Wright, Sandy Harrison, Don Davis, Jim Dyer, Jet Cuffman, Mary Freeman, and Beth Phelps. Trudy Kumpe, Three Ps Committee was also present. Chair, Sandy Harrison, presided.

- The minutes were approved as circulated.
- Treasurer, Mary Freeman, reported that our balance is \$20,255.36. Fifty-eight members have not paid their dues. The report was approved.

OLD BUSINESS

- Jacksonville Greenhouse: The Jacksonville Greenhouse was discussed with Lois Corley and she thought it is a great idea. There could be an overall committee and two subcommittees. Beth will meet again with Pathfinders to discuss the project.
- Beth and Don will meet and discuss long range planning.
- Trudy Kumpe, for the 3Ps Committee, presented a report on the proposed pictorial directory. Dick moved that we publish a black and white PCMG pictorial directory and place the printing contract with the University of Arkansas. Jett seconded the motion. The motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

- The County office sprinkler system needs repair.
- Any Sanders requested reimbursement for garden supplies and food for lunch. Consensus was that only garden supplies should be reimbursed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Beth announced that there needs to be a change in the Master Gardener Logo. This will cost us \$55.90 upcharge for screen printing for our "stuff."

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Wright, Secretary

The Pulaski County Master Gardeners met on Tuesday, April 18, 2006 at 11:30 a.m. at St. James Methodist Church. Chair, Sandy Harrison, presided. She Introduced the Pulaski County Master Gardener TV celebrities, who appeared on KTHV's "Positively Arkansas," Phyllis Barrier, who presented on April 3rd and Susan Rose on April 17th.

Sandy Harrison introduced a visitor, a Master Gardener from Saline County; and announced that last month we had a visitor from Sweden.

The following Committee Reports were given:

- Social Committee Co-chair, Wincie Hughes announced the May PCMG Picnic, at 6:30 on Thursday, May 11 at Camp Aldersgate. May 5 is the deadline for sending in registration. There will be a plant exchange.
- Greenhouse Committee chair, Lois Corley announced that \$1258.80 was made at the plant sale and another plant sale will be at 8 a.m. on April 29.
- 3 Ps Committee member Trudy Kumpe announced that pictures of committee chairs will be made after the meeting; and that the committee is planning a Pictorial Directory of PCMG members.

Other announcements:

- Kate Althoff announced that Little Rock and Central Arkansas Water at Lake Maumelle is at 86 % capacity. We have a 590 day water supply. Lake Winona has an 85% capacity. They do not anticipate any voluntary or involuntary water restrictions.

Beth Phelps made the following announcements:

- Master Gardeners who do not pay dues by May 1 are no longer members in good standing and will have to submit application for reinstatement. Letters have been sent.
- Please Check Announcement Board and calendar in Master Minutes for special events
- Master Gardener State Meeting is in Hot Springs, May 21-23, 2006: Door Prizes and Silent Auction items are requested. Beth will transport them to the meeting if needed.
- The Saline County Flower and Garden Show will be on Saturday at 8 a.m. at the Saline County Fairgrounds.

- If you have not received a post card stating that you are registered for the annual meeting then call the conservation office, 671-2000.
- There will be a plant sale to support the Little Rock Adopt-A-Park project. Three of the PCMG projects are Adopt-a-Park projects.

Program: Jim Dyer introduced PCMG Sandy Lubin who presented a program about Heifer Project and South African Women's Vegetable Growing.



Sandy Lubin speaking at the April meeting
Photo courtesy of David Werling

MY JOURNEY INTO THE FASCINATING WORLD
 OF PLANTS

By Carol Randle

My journey into the fascinating world of plants began when our sixth grade son came home from school one January day talking about a new unit in class. His teacher brought in his sister who was really "into" houseplants. The class was going to have a unit on houseplants: different kinds; plant needs; and how to grow them. To continue the unit the sixth graders would take a field trip to the plant nursery (conveniently located next door). There they would pick out plants of their own. They would be responsible for taking care of the plants in the classroom for six weeks; part of their grades would depend on how well they took care of their plants. The children were all excited . . . even the boys! Mrs. Sanderson knew how to pique their interest. She took them to their house so they could see her "jungle". Our son, Ed, was so impressed that he insisted I go

see her house. What a treat that was! There were plants everywhere; vines growing up the sides and across the tops of open doorways; pots of green as far as the eye could see!

Ed picked a Purple Velvet (*Gynura*) plant as his own. He even named it and talked to it (because Mrs. Sanderson said that made them grow better). As a part of their unit on plants, the class members also learned how to care for sick plants, what to look for and how to treat different problems. The children then brought their plants home and took sick plants back to school. Mrs. Sanderson "diagnosed" each sick plant and the students took the appropriate action to get them back to a healthy state.

On February twenty first, a tornado came through and took part of the roof off the school building. The next day many people came to work on the grounds . . . cutting up tree limbs and cleaning debris. A few parents were allowed to go to the sixth grade room and remove the plants, hoping to keep them alive and flourishing. Since it was snowing, we had to be careful to shield them from the cold. Our car was full of plants. That was the beginning of my love for plants . . . both indoor and outdoor. My journey came full circle when I began to take my third graders next door to the nursery so they could buy their own plants, just as the sixth graders had done a year earlier. Ultimately, my journey has led to completing Master Gardener training and enjoying helping to make the grounds of the Amy Sanders Library more beautiful.





Thank you all so much for the support you have shown me in the past few weeks. Thanks for being so understanding when I canceled meetings with you and didn't follow through as quickly as you may have liked. It was the end of Mom's long struggle with cancer and she is finally at peace. The cards, the emails, the food and flowers have all been amazing! I am so fortunate to work with co-workers and volunteers who are my extended family. I can't tell you how much this has meant to me and my family. I am truly blessed to be surrounded by so many thoughtful people. Your care and support mean more than words can say. Thanks again.

Janet Carson



Weed Watch

*Yellow nut sedge

As every garden in Arkansas knows one of the most stubborn weeds that we have to contend with is the Yellow nut sedge; the weed we all love to hate. It can come up between the cracks in the sidewalk, right in the middle of your beautifully planned patio, and certainly in any and all flowerbeds. I have a healthy crop growing in the middle of my Daylilies. What a pain.

Yellow nut sedge is a perennial weed with slender, 1/2-inchwide leaves that grow up to 2 feet long. It sprouts in early summer and matures by fall. Triangular stems up to 3 ft. tall rise from the center of each plant topped by clusters of yellow-flowering spikes.

While yellow nut sedge does grow from seed, its corms, often called "nutlets," are the structures that reproduce most quickly. Each plant sends out underground runners that produce runners that produce clusters of nutlets. After these nutlets are ready to grow on their own, the parent plant disconnects and the nutlets sprout. When you pull plants, the nutlets break free and are left behind.

This weed thrives almost anywhere it receives full sun, especially in wet and compacted soils. And it's damaging to crops: Yellow nut sedge host a soil-dwelling bacteria that can destroy that can destroy soil-borne nitrogen.

The plant releases its nutlets before chemical herbicides are able to kill it.

It's tempting to pull the weed when you see it, but pulling it in the spring just snaps off the plant above the nutlets and encourages new growth. Instead, dig everything you can in early summer when the nutlets are "worn out" from producing growth all spring and before new ones form.

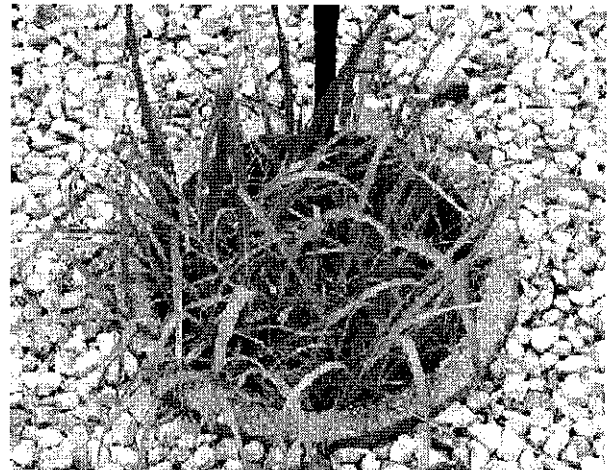
To prevent it from taking hold in a new bed, try putting down a layer of landscape fabric before planting. Avoid plastic because the new shoots can poke through the plastic, as it gets brittle with age.

One thing about having nut sedge in your garden, you always have something to do in the summer. I do wish I had a magic answer on how to rid our gardens of this pest, but I don't, so I guess we as Arkansas gardeners will just have to dig, dig, and dig.

Happy gardening, Susie Gillihan

*Yellow nut sedge
Cyperus esculentus

*Garden Gate
[www. GardenGateMagazine.com](http://www.GardenGateMagazine.com)



Yellow Nut Sedge

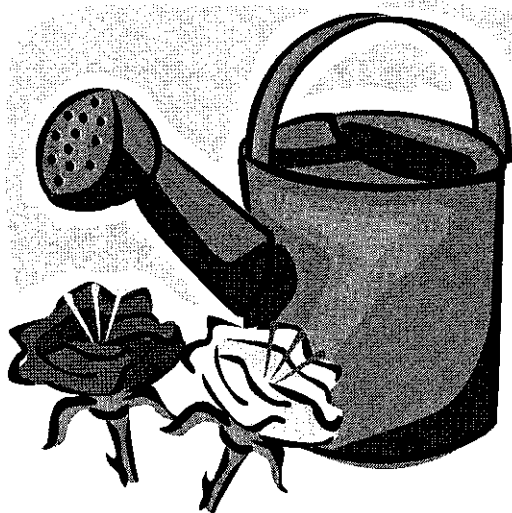


Project Spotlights

By Carol Randle

Master Gardener Retention Committee

The Retention Committee was started about four years ago. The Master Gardener Board needed some input on ways to keep Master Gardeners happy and active. Committee members Sally Garrison, Hilda Boger, Breck Campbell, Pat Green, Ruth Gibson, and Sarah Henson join Jane Gulley, who was on the original committee and is Committee Chairman. The members call Master Gardeners who do not get their hours and drop out after the first year or two. Their goal is to make certain their group is not missing problems that keep new members from wanting to continue as Master Gardeners. This is an important job and is greatly appreciated by your fellow Master Gardeners.



Jess Odom Community Center in Maumelle Project

In March of 2005 a proposal was made to the Master Gardener Board that the Jess Odom Community Center in Maumelle become a Master Gardener Project. The board accepted it and in January 2006 the work began. Committee members Bill and Jan Bowen, Judy Gregory, Lorraine Hensley, Ron Robinette, Frances Searcy, and Larry Stobaugh to begin the work of enhancing the beauty of the Community Center joined James Alberson, project chairman.

People going to the Community Center on the first and third Mondays of each month may stop to watch Master Gardeners working hard on the ten flowerbeds that make up the project's work. Since this is a new project the work on the grounds is a novel sight. The project's goal is to add additional plants and shrubs to the existing landscape. The project members are working to design and plant different types of plants and to maintain the flowerbeds once they are planted. Since the Jess Odom Community Center is a vital educational center for the citizens of Maumelle, plans are to include in the project students at the Academic Plus Charter School. This school is located next door to the Community Center. Plans are to teach Horticulture and Environmental Science concepts to these students. The hope is that this will someday lead to a Junior Master Garden Program at the charter school. Other plans for the future include conducting gardening classes and seminars at the Community Center. Plants and supplies for this project are funded by the city of Maumelle Parks and Recreation Department, which also installed the watering system.

The citizens of Maumelle will appreciate the efforts of the project members for many years to come. We wish them great success and many happy hours working to improve their community.



The Farmers Market is now open!
Get your fresh fruits and vegetables on
Tuesday and Saturday mornings from
7 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Need education hours?

Research a new plant for your garden,
and then submit your research to the
Master Minutes. We will write the article;
or if you write it up, you earn education
hours as well as volunteer hours.

Master Minutes Staff

Dig In Here...

For answers to your gardening and
horticultural problems, try these helpful
resources:

- Master Gardener Website:
<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org/mastergardener/mastergardeneronly>
Username: mastergardener, password: compost
- PC Cooperative Extension Website:
<http://www.uaex.edu/pulaski/mastergardeners/default.asp>
- U of A Cooperative Extension Website:
<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org>
- Pulaski County Cooperative Extension
Service
2901 W. Roosevelt Road,
Little Rock, Ark. 72204
340-6650

OOPS!!!!

In the April newsletter, Lorraine Hensley's
name was left off of the Astibe Plant Profile.
We apologize for the error!



Pulaski County Master Gardeners
are trained volunteers working with the
University of Arkansas Cooperative Service
and Pulaski County Government to provide
demonstration gardens and horticultural -
related information to the residents of the
county. In 2005, these volunteers gave
13,370 hours of service and community
outreach.

Elisabeth J. Phelps, County Extension Agent,
Staff Chair

News & Notes

Everyone is encouraged to submit interesting
information, committee reports, newsworthy
photos, etc. to the newsletter.
Bring your information to the Master
Gardener meeting, or send it to:

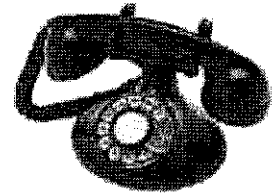
Jennice Ratley
22 Cobble Hill Road
Little Rock, Ark. 72211
jenniceratley@sbcglobal.net
217-9671

The deadline is the second Friday of each
month. For late breaking news after the
deadline, send information to:

Beth Phelps
Pulaski County CES
2901 W. Roosevelt Road
Little Rock, Ark. 72204
bphelps@uaex.edu
340-6650



Attention New Master
Gardeners!!
Have you signed up for
your first phone time?
Remember that you are
required to have 20 hours
our first year and less than
½ of the class has started
their hours. Call Tom at
the extension office on
Mondays or Tuesdays to
sign up!



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