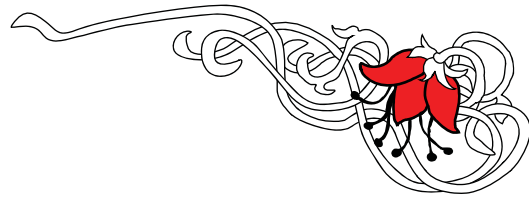


Anchorage Chapter



Volume 12, Issue 10

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER October 2010



Message From Jane

Wow. October. How did it get here so fast? With those couple of glorious sunny weeks, I forgot it was September when I should have been shutting my garden down. Instead I just went on gardening in the sunshine - dividing, transplanting, rearranging, taking some primrose cuttings for rooting, and finally got some of the little pots in the ground that had been hanging around since spring. Then wham! A whole bunch of 24°, 22°, 25° mornings put me into a state of anxiety about taking care of things before freeze up and the white stuff arrives. Rosemary reported a couple of 18° mornings from the Peninsula. I even blew out a favorite water wand by leaving my hose out and water on (duh) when it froze and cracked. (Be sure to remove your hoses from faucets NOW to avoid water freezing in them and doing inside pipe damage.)

Then came wind and then rain. Some leaves are on the lawn, but there are still way too many leaves on my birch trees to put away my lawn mower and move the snow blower to the front of the shed.

Monthly meeting programs are back in swing. Programs are listed in your MG directory and email notices are sent and posted on the AMGAA Alaska Master Gardeners in Anchorage Alaska group site: <http://groups.google.com/group/AKMGAA>

IMPORTANT NOTE: The October 18th AMGAA meeting will be held in the new Cooperative Extension Service location: 1675 C Street, ground floor of the Kaloa Bulding. Access is off of 16th Ave between C and A Streets.

More important news: End of the year membership renewal is coming up; January elections for AMGAA Board of Directors vacancies, more information on this coming soon; November monthly meeting program will be where MGs can share the best & worst of the past gardening season, new favorite plants to recommend, etc.; February program includes a seed exchange; planning for next year's garden tours begins soon after the first of the year (think about hosting an MG garden visit).

Did You Know? Two blue-flowered hardy geraniums look alike: Rozanne and Jolly Bee. Growers and Gardeners couldn't tell them apart. Genetic testing revealed that there are no or virtually no differences. Because

Rozanne was introduced first, its name will be preserved and Jolly Bee will gradually disappear. (American Horticultural Society, Sep/Oct 2010, pg 46)

Slugs #1. Check out the ghost slug discovery http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ghost_slug

Slugs #2. From somewhere online: One study done in the Pacific Northwest estimates that there are 20 more slugs in the area for every single slug you see.

Advanced Master Gardener Training Course: "Soils and Soil Amendments"

The Advanced Master Gardener Training course, "Soils and Soil Amendments", is being offered in November. Registration for that class is underway now from October 1 to October 20.

Registration is being handled electronically with paper copies mailed to those AMGAA members who do not have email addresses. By this time, members should have received either the paper copy or the Emailed electronic registration form. Paper copies can be hand completed and mailed to: AMGAA Attn AMGT, P.O. Box 221403, Anchorage, AK 99522-1403.

Check your email in-boxes. If you are over quota, emails will bounce and you won't receive the registration form. A reminder email to those who haven't responded will be sent out.

Opting out. If you previously 'opted out' on survey monkey mailings, you did not receive the electronic registration form. By opting out you have been removed from ALL survey monkey emailings -regardless of who may be using this service (AMGAA, CES, churches, other clubs, companies, governmental organizations or any other entity who may use this service).

What can you do if you expect to hear from the Master Gardeners, and you have eliminated your Survey Monkey access? Simply go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/OptOut.aspx> and enter your email address, using the same one you provided to Master Gardeners (on your membership form or through updates sent to Membership during the year.)

Continued on page 3

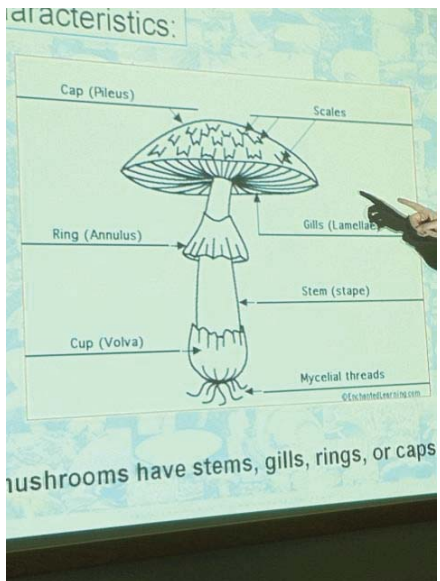
AMGA September Meeting Report;
Kate Mohatt Presents "Mushrooms"
 Mary Rydesky, Master Gardener

2010 has been a damp year for growing in Southcentral Alaska but the fungi have flourished. With presenter Kate Mohatt's enthusiasm for the fungi - especially for mushrooms - even the damp season can be appreciated.



What is the difference between mushrooms and fungi? A mushroom is a fruiting body produced by a fungus. A fungus is primarily underground and it produces mushrooms above ground (or below ground in the case of truffles) to reproduce via spore protection and dispersal. Fungi comprise a Kingdom, having four main phyla: water molds (chytridiomycota); sugar molds (zygomycota); cups, truffles, clubs, molds, asexual molds (ascomycota); and mushroom producing fungi and plant

pathogens (basidiomycota). Fungi, then, are not plants -plants being of a separate kingdom!



The anatomy of mushrooms provides both terminology for identification of various kinds and also the shorthand for describing any specimen you might find. Not all mushrooms sport all of these parts, but all have spores.

In talking about mushrooms, be ready to say whether one is gilled or non-gilled by looking under the cap. If gilled, check for spore color (place cap over a half black half white piece of paper and cover with a bowl over night), and check how the gills and stem relate. Are they free, attached, or decurrent? And if you are collecting mushrooms for the dinner table, stick to the non-gilled versions for starters. They are easier to identify and you will rule out numerous poisonous choices....but not all of them.

Kate's photos ranged from edible to non-edible mushrooms and she warned to be careful. Cook your mushrooms (in butter!) - eating them raw can affect you. Some carry volatile carcinogens that can be removed by cooking, including the store bought button mushroom. If you intend to eat one picked in the wild, first know exactly what species you have and then eat only a small amount. Make sure it is fresh, young and picked from a pristine environment (not roadsides or chemically

treated lawns). Keep a representative sample in the refrigerator. Wait 12 hours and do not mix collections (different species). If feeling ill, take the sample with you to your health care provider: there are 8 or more toxins that you could have ingested and they need to know which one it is in order to treat you. If you know exactly what species you have (as you should!), then this shouldn't be an issue. However, many species listed as "edible" in popular field guides can cause GI upset in some, probably due to allergic or idiosyncratic reactions. One of the more commonly reported culprits is a choice edible, the morel. Yes, even the mushrooms that are considered edible can affect individuals differently. Further, an individual can respond differently at different times. There are many species of mushrooms that are outright poisonous and consumption is fatal, but only one or two of those are known to occur in Alaska. In the thirty plus years that NAMA (North American Mycological Association) has been tracking poisoning cases, only 1% of roughly 1,641 poisoning reports resulted in death. Bottom line? In the words of Smokey the Bear, "Have fungi, but be careful".

Mushrooms have more uses than just culinary. Some have medicinal properties; others are used as dyes for wool and other fibers. Today, they are being studied for use in bio-remediation and as plant growth enhancers. And there is no doubt, they are absorbing to photographers! Several good collections of photos on the Internet include:

Pictures of Mushrooms in and Around Anchorage <http://alaskanmushrooms.blogspot.com/>
 Alaska Mushrooms <http://travel.webshots.com/album/57952742HuOgqt>

If you take photos, upload them to the Google Group at AKMGAA@googlegroups.com to share with other Master Gardeners. There are countless species of mushrooms (30 - 40,000 known, of which fewer than 2000 are described in published field guides). Alaska boasts the Alaska bolete (*Leccinum alaskanum*) - and many more may be added to published texts as research continues.

Want to know more? Join the Southcentral Alaska Mycological Society google group at: <http://groups.google.com/group/kpms> and don't forget your field guide. Ms. Mohatt suggested several texts, especially by Arora and Trudell.

All That the Rain Promises and More: A Hip Pocket Guide to Western Mushrooms (David Arora)
 Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest (Steve Trudell)
 North America Mycological Association (NAMA) <http://www.namyc.org/> has lots of information on nationwide events, poisonings and educational materials.
 Alaska Mushroom Guide for Harvesting Morels (CES Publication) www.uaf.edu/ces/publications-db/catalog/hec/FNH-00021.pdf
 David Fischer's American Mushrooms <http://american-mushrooms.com/basics.htm>

Mushrooms <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mushroom> (great list of references under Links).

Kate Mohatt is a mycologist, stationed with the US Forest Service Girdwood Office (USFS, Glacier Ranger District) (907) 754-2348

Letting Gardens "Be" by Fran Durner

There are two schools of thought about putting gardens to bed: Clean it all up now and add mulch as a protection against the freeze/thaw cycle, or leave plants be (they become their own mulch) and clean up in the spring.

Two years ago when I was writing the garden blog for the ADN, gardener Debbie Hinchey sent me her observations in an email. I thought this would be a good time to share it with everyone again while we are wistfully putting our gardens to rest for the winter.

Dear Fran,
I stopped for a moment to look out the window into the garden. It is beautiful. (Yes, I am writing this in January.) So beautiful that I thought I would write you and tell you about it and my old practice of not "cleaning"



the garden in the fall. The garden in winter is most beautiful to me when it snows or heavy frosts decorate the "mess" - a term I have heard others call the dead branches of perennials that lay haphazardly

here and there.

The giant onion blooms (*Allium aflatunense* 'Purple Sensation') are five-inch balls next to the spikes of the twisted seed pods of spuria iris (*Iris spuria*) on four-foot stems. The contrast is just as pleasing to me as when they were green and growing in summer.

Another part of the garden has stems of Asiatic lilies sticking out of the snow with pom-poms of snow caught on the web of short flower stalks that stick out, forming in a rhythmic pattern.



Another part of the garden has the six-foot brown spikes of what used to hold the yellow flowers of 'The Rocket' *ligularia* this summer. At the base of the *ligularia* are two varieties of *astilbe* that get about two feet tall. They are a little more of a bushy type of spike and catch frost and snow well. Not far away are the stiff, lacy, almost black fertile fronds of the ostrich fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*) giving another nice show in the snow.

Even the lilacs are looking good. I have been pruning them to not extend beyond the long, four-foot wide bed

they are planted in and to look good in the winter. And they do look good. They are about ten feet tall and wide (east to west) and unless I point out that they are only four feet wide (north to south) you would probably not notice because they are pruned in a naturalized way. The dark branches offer a nice architecture feature against the whiteness and they collect snow and frost nicely when available.



The architectural features of the wire mesh trellis and posts add another visual pleasure. I particularly like art made of metal in the garden because of what they contribute in the winter. The metals seem to collect frost exceptionally well and seem to change with the temperature. I can get a good estimate of the temperature by the amount of frost on a steel raven sitting on a post above the garden.

There are many more examples of joy I find in my January garden from indoors. We have winter, after all, just as long as we have summer, so I plan my garden to give me pleasure year round. In fact, I actually have more time to sit and enjoy the garden in winter, so it better look good.
Debbie Hinchey

"Master Gardener Focus" will return next month. Cheryl Chapman is taking a month off. Thanks to Fran Durner for filling in for Cheryl. (and also writing other wonderful articles for the newsletter!)

Advanced MG Course cont. from page 1

Easy enough - and now you can receive registrations, satisfaction surveys, and ballots for Master Gardener events and elections.

There have been changes in the registration process described in last month's newsletter. There will be one registration period (Oct 1-20) and all registrations will be accepted during that period. The contact for registration questions is Dana Klinkhart at 346-1631 or klinkhart@gci.net (not Sharon Hoffbeck)

Registrations will be processed in accordance with email registration date and/or postmark and the three tier registration priority as described in the September newsletter article.

From Truck Driving to Gardening in Bethel, Alaska

By Herb Spencer

One of the benefits of volunteer work as a Master Gardener is that one learns as much as – or more than – one teaches. Even if I didn't enjoy the "work", learning from others is enough of a reason to continue volunteering despite having completed my MG requirements years ago. This year was no different; volunteering at the Alaska State Fair for 3 hours this year turned into yet another opportunity to learn more about gardening in Alaska.

An older couple came into the 4H building for protection from one of the downpours happening at the time. They introduced themselves when they saw my Master Gardener's badge and proceeded to tell me an amazing story from their experiences living in Bethel. The couple had lived there for six years and had become friends with a truck driver and gardener.

The truck driver would spend his winters driving loads from Anchorage or Fairbanks up to the North Slope. His truck driving job provided enough income over the winter to allow him to spend virtually the entire gardening season at home in Bethel. But he wasn't a gardener – or at least didn't start out as one.

One of the problems of living in Bethel was that fresh produce is hard to find, and quite costly if it could be found. This truck driver was, however, an optimist. Someone told him about the free and low-cost Cooperative Extension Service handouts. So one winter about 20 years ago (?) he stopped by the CES office. He talked to someone about the possibility of gardening around Bethel. When he left he carried off a lot of advice and fistfuls of CES flyers.

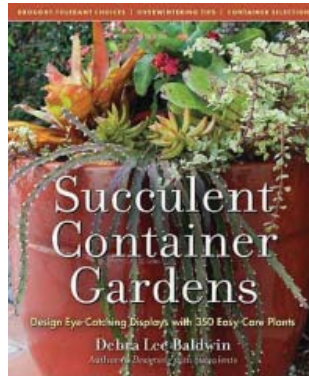
Once he returned to Bethel, he built a raised bed, lined it with heavy plastic [the soil there is mostly peat], added commercial soils and seeds and began his garden. His raised bed was large enough that he grew more vegetables than he could eat. He began trading his "leftovers" to others for items he'd normally have to purchase: lettuce for moose, cabbage for caribou, and the like. His gardening and trading was so successful, he began building additional raised beds – one each year – all dedicated to fresh vegetables.

He even devised his own fertilizer as a less costly means of promoting his crop. Bethel is a fishing community despite being hundreds of miles from the nearest sea. At least one fish processing plant operated there, with commercial fishers traveling up the Kuskokwim to Bethel to deliver their loads. Our truck driver/gardener would go to the processing plant and pick up the ground waste from the fish processing plant. Once he got it home, he poured the ground waste into barrels (1/3 waste, 2/3 water) and let it sit in the sun for seven days. That gave time for the waste to settle to the bottom of the barrels and release much of the fish's mineral content into the water. He used the water for his raised beds and buried the remaining waste on his property. Ultimately that waste decomposed completely, leaving viable soil.

Within a few years, our truck driver/gardener was selling the produce he couldn't trade to the local grocers. Within a few more years he discovered that he didn't need the income from driving the Haul Road any longer; the income generated by his "garden" was more than sufficient to allow him to "retire".

Succulent Container Gardens: Design Eye-Catching Displays with 350 Easy-Care Plants

Book Review by Fran Durner



With fall upon us and frosts about to nip every little bud, is there a gardener among us who isn't torn between the relief of taking a break from tending their patch and the desire to extend the growing season a little longer in some easy and fulfilling way?

Some of us do that by growing orchids, African violets and streptocarpus under lights during the winter. But have you ever considered venturing into indoor succulent gardening?

If you love your sedums, sempervivums and lewisias outdoors, why not bring them, along with other unusual succulents, inside with you for the winter. *Succulent Container Gardens: Design Eye-Catching Displays with 350 Easy-Care Plants* by Debra Lee Baldwin (Timber Press, hardcover, \$29.95) could help you do that.

Baldwin demystifies succulent plants and what it takes to grow them in containers with her clear, friendly prose. Although this book is not intended as an indoor succulent gardening guide, it is easy enough to glean the knowledge you will need to do it from the practical information supplied.

The book is divided into four sections: The first part guides you in matching your choice of plant to the pot. Think of your plant as a piece of architectural art and the pot as its frame. Unleash your creativity and the choices are limitless.

Part two lists potential plants picks alphabetically. It includes their likes and dislikes, habits and other information. Companion plants that share the same requirements are also mentioned. You will be surprised at the cold hardiness of some of these succulents.

Part three presents award winning design ideas. Whether you want an all-succulent container garden, a wreath of sempervivums, a succulent bonsai or a hanging basket of trailing fleshy plants, you'll find examples in this section.

The last section is devoted to soil mixes, watering and fertilizing, light requirements, how to winter over plants outdoors and in, pests, diseases and propagation.

I really liked this book but then, I'm partial to succulents. Copious full-color photos beautifully illustrate every idea and provide strong visual encouragement.

Growing a succulent container indoors may offer a new gardening challenge for winter, perhaps just enough to keep our fingers green until the next growing season begins.



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News

By Rosemary Kimball

It's not fair to have summer come in September, as nice as all this sun has been. It also means colder temperatures at night and when I came home from the first

ANC MG meeting the zucchini were toast. If it had waited just one more night I would have covered the plants that night. The air around us smells like deceased vegetation.

What's irritating is to pick cat-faced tomatoes, the result of a greenhouse too hot at the time of pollination and then having their ripening delayed by last August's ugly gloom.

The pet banty chickens have moved to the greenhouse and are wreaking their havoc there with vigor: wastebaskets knocked over, stuff on the work bench on the floor and "other stuff" on the floor which causes me to put on flip flops before I go out to feed them. We added a neighbor's pullet, and when I let her out of her cage, she was driven out by our lap rooster, Brownie. I caught her later and put her back in her cage for a few days and now she's out, not quite integrated yet, but no one is trying to kill her. That's progress in the pecking order. When Phil goes out to the greenhouse, Brownie starts following him like a puppy dog. They went for a walk the other day and I didn't have my camera! I've got composting worms in the growing beds to eat the kitchen detritus so I put it out for the chickens and if the worms get there first, my good.

LaVonne Rhyneer wrote to me of the large number of spruce cones cut by the squirrels--more than she's ever seen. She said it was like walking on marbles. She's right! I was going out to get the newspapers one morning and got hit on the head by a cone from a squirrel way at the top of the tree. We live in bear country, big time, and when I'm in the garden I'm aware of "foreign" noises. The hair on the back of one's neck rises and you look around to see where the noise comes from-- a squirrel at the top of a tree slinging cones for winter use. There seems to be a real heavy cone set between Sterling and Anchorage.

This from MG Margaret Simon in Nikiski: "Maybe you can write about the fog? I've had lots of robins and thrushes in the yard of late. Don even saw a hummingbird the other day, probably a Rufus passing through. Sorry I missed it. Leeks are looking good. Beets performed poorly. Carrots mediocre. Brussels sprouts coming on like gangbusters. The head of cabbage I picked the other day was very bitter--couldn't believe that after our rains. Sweetness must require sun?"

The Homer Farmer's market interview on KDLL, our local PBS talk show, spoke of lots of potatoes as well as good greens. MG Mark White said his potatoes were half the yield and half the size of usual production. He comes from a heritage of LOTS of potatoes grown so this is a good reference for the Central Peninsula.

The first fall MG meeting in ANC on mushrooms was wonderful. I didn't know we had that many edible mushrooms and I want to know more. I'd like to be able to ID 'chicken of the woods' and the 'honey mushroom'. I got back from the meeting to a yard full of mushrooms I'd never seen before growing in a random pattern in the

lawn. My assumption is that they are feeding off dead roots of a spruce that my husband cut down several years ago. I can't ID them and there are so many and they look so "good"... Back to Amy Green's quip that they are all edible, once.

On the way out to get the newspapers in the morning I don't bend down any more for Orange Delicious mushrooms but when there's one perfect 'shroom of a certain size that is "livestock free", and there is one scallion that needs using - it's omelette time!

The experiment of growing tomatoes and peppers outside on the deck in ceramic pots against the house worked well enough...better than the greenhouse, I think because they weren't so aphid prone. I did bring the jalapeño in and put it in the kitchen bay window but I'm bored with the aphid dandruff and the plant is back outside minus its fruit.

Bringing plants and my composting worm bin into the house brings in other "livestock". We got one of the electronic (two AA batteries) fly swatters. Talk about FUN!!!! We don't have any more flies--yet-- and that's really a lack in our daily entertainment. They make such a very satisfying zapping sound when they hit the electrified wires.



From the Editor: We're not Alone

An article from the Associated Press (It's not just Oregon: Summer is late across Northwest, June 21, 2010) relates that Oregon, Washington and Idaho have had similar weather patterns as we in Alaska have had, at least in June.

Seattle hit an all time record for the longest stretch of time without a 75 degree day. Portland, Oregon, related the wettest June since 1940. (Some people dubbed June as "June - uary") Boise, Idaho, reported that the average temperature since April 1st of this year has been nearly 3 degrees colder than the 40 year average. Someone reported that their lawn was doing great, but 'so were the slugs'. Sound familiar?

If I remember right, our weather was fairly nice through June, but progressively got worse as the summer wore down.

Nick Bond, the Washington state climatologist, said there's really not much to explain why this June has been so cool and gray. You can't blame El Nino, he said, "We've just been dealt a pretty bad hand." There's no reason to despair, he said, "it's a new deal of the cards every few weeks."

Hopefully next year will bring a better 'deal' of cards for us.



Bird Chatter

Casey and the Eagle By Kathy Wartinbee

Just about 6:00 one morning, the paper arrived and the lady tossed it on the cement pad in front of the garage door. The paper was patiently waiting for one of us to go pick it up to bring inside when David heard this thumping sound outside and wondered what the heck all that noise was about.

He looked out the window to find a juvenile eagle sitting on the newspaper, leaning down to pick at it as an eagle does a fish. Confused, the eagle jumped up and down trying to get the paper repositioned but each time the blue plastic wrapped paper wasn't any tastier.

It decided that it would carry it off to a tree to examine more closely.

Casey, the 12 lb calico wonder cat, was sitting on the front deck while all this thumping was going on. Attracted to the motion and the noise, Casey was on the hunt. She did her very best crouching down-stalking-mode and then dashed at the eagle just as the eagle was getting ready to abscond with the paper.

The eagle dropped the paper and disappeared from my view. Casey disappeared as well. Wondering whether the eagle had exchanged a newspaper for a cat, I went to the front door but she had not returned.

Just as I was getting shoes on to go outside to check for the cat, she came to the slider door on the deck. We now have the newspaper to read as well and one attack cat. I asked her what she was going to do with an eagle if she caught it. She didn't comment on it.

I'm off to plant some garlic. The sun's up and I should to get some warm rays.

It's always something.

Annie Nevaldine reported having her sliding glass doors all muddied up from a porcupine scratching at it; he was trying to visit with her cat on the inside, who was safely watching from the inside.

Many gardeners experienced an unusually cool summer in Oregon this year, and crops were affected by it. Some vineyards are still waiting for more heat to sweeten their grapes, and some earlier varieties have been wasted because of the lack of heat.

Producing and Planting Bare Root Trees Workshop
Thursday, 21 October 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM
Alaska Division of Agriculture,
Plant Material Center
5310 S. Bodenburg Spur
Palmer, AK 99645

Bare root trees offer many advantages over balled and burlap and containerized trees. Bare root trees retain a higher percentage of their roots compared to balled and burlap trees, helping them establish quickly. No soil or growing medium means a reduced chance of spreading unwanted weeds and seeds, and proper planting depth is easy to determine. This workshop will explore how to produce, store and plant bare root trees. It is intended for nursery growers, landscape designers, contractors, arborists, public and private land managers and other who are interested in growing and planting trees. A classroom presentation will be followed by a root washing and tree planting demonstration.

Instructor Jim Flott is an ISA Certified Arborist with more than 25 years experience in the nursery and landscape industry, including 12 years as urban forester for the City of Spokane. He holds a bachelor of arboriculture degree from Iowa State University and a master of forest pathology degree from the University of Arizona. Jim founded Community Forestry Consultants in 2000 and provides urban forestry and horticultural consulting services to individuals, corporations, municipalities, golf courses, and states. He is an ISA Certified Municipal Specialist, member of the American Society of Consulting Arborists, and a registered consulting arborist.

Agenda

9:15 - Refreshments

9:30 to 12:00 - Bare root trees revealed: How to produce and store bare root trees

12:00 to 1:45 - Lunch on your own

1:45 to 4:30 - Bare root trees revealed continued, tree planting demonstration

For more information, contact:

stephen.nickel@alaska.gov

Registration fee is \$15 and is required so we can order food and beverages. Please register before 5PM on 15 October 2010 by completing the registration section and sending a check or money order to the address below. Make check payable to Alaska Community Forest Council (We are unable to accept credit card payments) and mail with form to:

Alaska Division of Forestry Community Forestry Program
550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1450 Anchorage, AK
99501-3566

Producing and Planting Bare Root Trees Registration
Name _____

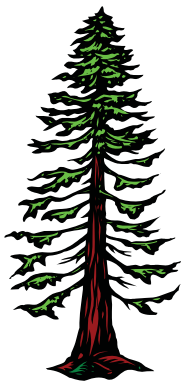
Agency/Business _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____ Email _____



Our Gift of an Indian Summer Nickel LaFleur ISA certified arborist

What an awesome September! I hope everyone had a chance to buy some of the apples that were grown in Bob Boyer's orchard as well as to see this fabulous tree-fruit arboretum.

It's not too late to plant a fruiting tree in your yard. The Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers have a website where you can access information on varieties that have worked in our area as well as names of the very knowledgeable people

in this group that may be able to help answer your questions. You can always get good information at www.treesaregood.org or www.isa-arbor.org.

A lot of the apple trees that grow outdoors in south central Alaska are grafted and it is important to know that where the graft is located on your tree is not where the soil should be located. Plant the tree slightly above where you find the first root on the root stock- there should be a noticeable flare on the trunk. Remember to error on the side of planting too shallow than too deep. Don't be afraid to disrupt the root ball when you plant the tree because often times the roots are encircled and you need to get them headed in the direction to give the tree its stability - and avoid it from strangling itself. Give the newly planted tree moist soil. And remember before you plant, to read the label on the mature size of the tree or shrub. They may be tiny and immature today - but it's amazing how fast a decade goes by and how much it will grow. Be sure to look up before planting to make sure you aren't planting under power lines or under eaves. Adding soil amendments is not necessary and not recommended when you plant. You want the planting hole to be a saucer shape about one and a half times larger than the root ball. Loosen up the existing soil and whatever medium your tree was planted in and mix that thoroughly. Scoop the soil in around the root ball and insert a hose with a light stream of water into the planting hole to help get out the air pockets in the soil. And then water thoroughly and put mulch three to four inches thick and keep it away from the trunk of the tree - this is very important!

Once the tree is planted, it's a good idea to cage it in for the winter to keep it away from the hungry moose. The fencing doesn't have to be unsightly. I've found that the moose will respect anything that stops them from investigating further. My recommendation is to buy black bird netting and 10 foot long pieces of rebar and pound the rebar into the ground a foot. Be sure it is far enough back to not touch the branches and then zip-tie the bird netting to the very tip top of the rebar. For small trees I use three rebar, medium sized tree use four rebar and those with a large canopy, use five or more. If necessary with the large trees, I use fishing line to weave a couple pieces of bird netting together to give me the length I need. Remember to get the netting as high as you can on the rebar. It's not too often that the moose get on their knees to crawl under it, and it's easier to shovel snow when you don't have netting that is near the ground.

Take the time now, if you haven't already done so to take a look around at your landscape and get those end-of-the-season projects taken care of. Your trees and

Garden Event Calendar

October 1-20

AMGAA Advanced Master Gardener Training Course (Soils & Soil Amendments) registration period. Register online by responding to Survey Monkey registration email which is being sent to all AMGAA members with email. Paper copies will be mailed to those members without email addresses. See newsletter item for complete information on registration.

October 5

The Anchorage CES office will open its doors in their new location at 1675 C St. - the corner of 16th and C street - on the first floor of the Kaloa Building. Access is off of 16th Avenue (between C and A Streets). The new location will provide better parking (YEA!). Office phone numbers are expected to remain the same.

October 10

Eagle River Nature Center: "Wonders of Lichens", 2:00 p.m. Volunteer Lilly Goodman introduces folks to the world of lichens with a short indoor presentation, followed by a walk of approximately 1 mile. Free, but parking is \$5 for non-members. The Eagle River Nature Center is located at the end of Eagle River Road, Eagle River. <http://www.ernc.org/>

October 18

AMGAA Meeting: new CES location 1675 C Street, Suite 100; entrance off of 16th Ave. between A & C - 7pm. Program: Leslie Shallcross, CES Anchorage Office, presents a program on Healthy Food from your own Backyard.

October 20th

Alaska Rock Garden Society Slugs: How to deal with and plants they don't like. Held at the MTA conference room, 480 Commercial Drive, Palmer.

October 21

Producing and Planting Bare Root Trees (See article on page 6)

October 25-26

Invasive Plants of Alaska for Educators Workshop, Fairbanks Princess Lodge; held in conjunction with the Alaska Invasive Species Conference 201, a combined meeting of Alaska Committee for Noxious and Invasive Plant Management (CNIPM) and the Alaska Invasive Species Working Group (AISWG). For info: CNIPM <http://www.uaf.edu/ces/cnipm/> and AISWG <http://www.uaf.edu/ces/aiswg/>



The Anchorage Chapter of the Alaska Master Gardeners Association welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. Contact the editor, Gina Docherty, at:
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To send concerns or information to the AMGA directly, mail to:
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For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:
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"Even if something is left undone,
everyone must take time to sit still
and watch the leaves turn."
- Elizabeth Lawrence

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