Master Gardeners of Ontario

What's growing on?

Join the email list and have the newsletter sent to you directly. Send an email to editors@mgoi.ca with your name, email and group.

Spring, 2009 **www.mgoi.ca**

Grasses for the Shade

Norma Evans, Peterborough

Carex siderostica

John Valleau lists as shade tolerant grasses, Carex (many varieties), Luzula, Chasmanthium, Deschampsia, Hakonechloa, Milium, Sesleria. My comments are mostly restricted to those varieties that I have in my woodland garden.

My odds on favourite is Hakonechloa or Hakone Grass. A bit slow to settle in when planted in deep shade, this woodland plant is stunning because of its waterfall mound. Now there is a new purplish variety in the Garden Import catalogue, but they all are great, particularly 'Albostriata' or 'Aureola'. I have several Aureolas growing in very deep shade. These showy grasses will grow and mound up faster in a sunnier location provided there is good moisture available.

The grass I have the most of is Carex siderostica 'Variegata' which has wide striped light green blades with a white edge. Carex is not truly a grass but a sedge. It is a reliably hardy Zone 4 plant that does not self-seed, clumps up and divides easily. It will likely be happy in any shady location. It does not require a lot of water once established, but will be

continued on page 2

In this Issue

- Grasses for the Shade
- MGOI has a New Website
- Hakonechloa Plant of the Year
- International Recogition for Toronto Group
- Summer Workshops

MGOI has a New Website

Our new website, mgoi.ca, has been expanding during the weeks since it was first launched in mid February. Anyone attempting to access the mastergardener.ca site is being automatically redirected to mgoi.ca. Suggestions from directors and coordinators have been implemented. Features include an Ask a Master Gardener form, an FAQ page, comprehensive contact information for local groups and the Board of Directors, a page of Advice articles (moderated by Wendy Fletcher), an events calendar, a slide show, and a search engine.

All directors and coordinators have been contacted by the webmaster and are now able to access password protected areas of the site by logging in with their own unique passwords. Master Gardeners may log in using a generic username (MG) and password (member). Send suggestions to webmaster@mgoi.ca. If your group is having an event, submit the details on the Events page. If you have some favourite questions you get over and over again - write up the question and answer and send it to the webmaster. If you have advice articles that you are willing to share, send them to advice@mgoi.ca. Coming soon: a members forum, photo albums and information about how groups can have a website as a subdomain of this one.

Sign Up to Get the Newsletter Today

Over 300 Master Gardeners now get the Newsletter electronically. We want you too! Just send an email to editors@mgoi.ca and let us know your name, group and email.

Mystery Plant

Do you know this plant? The answer will be revealed next issue.

Janet Trezise, Lake Simcoe and Mary Ann Gilhuly, Kitchener identified last issues mystery as the white Trout Lily, *Erythronium albidam* at about the same time.

Summer Workshops

Four summer workshops have been arranged for the continuing education of Master Gardeners. All of these are taught by well qualified horticulture instructors and professors who have created courses designed for Master Gardeners. Whether you are updating your skills and knowledge as a Master Gardener or you are still working on your education as a Master Gardener in Training, this is a great way to spend a couple of days. Niagara Parks School of Horticulture and Georgian College have courses that will assist us with an understanding of alternatives to pesticide use, a topical issue given Ontario's Pesticide Ban. Niagara MGs have offered to arrange billets (please contact June Streadwick at streadwick@sympatico.ca or 905-934-6137 for further information). The University of Guelph will repeat last year's very successful Plant Propagation Workshop at the Ridgetown Campus. Humber College will put on a course dealing with organic turf care and garden renovation. A poster with full details of the courses has been attached to the end of this newsletter. Spaces are limited so register soon.

Grasses for the Shade continued from page 2

happy in wet or reliably moist areas. Its perky appearance and 15-20 cm (6 to 8") height, makes it a good edger or groundcover. I did not have success with the gold leaf more attractive relative, 'Island Brocade'.

Carex elata 'Evergold Variegated' or 'Bowles Golden' has great colour and good form. It is planted in a couple of shady but perhaps too windy locations, where basically it looks exasperated. Late last summer I planted *Carex caryophyllea* 'The Beatles' Zone 5 which is listed as growing in full shade. It is described as a mop headed sedge. It is planted beside a path where it seemed to be struggling. We have had great snowcover here and I am looking forward to a happy Beatle singing in the spring.

Chasmanthium is a native wildflower (grass) which grows to around 80-100 cm (32 to 40"). The stalk holds a dangling flower head which is quite charming. It changes to a warm tan that lasts all winter. Listed as Zone 5, it is growing reliably in our area in an exposed, east-facing spot. It is listed as growing in full shade, but I hope to know by next year.

Wood Rush or *Luzula* is another great evergreen grass for full shade. Native to moist woodlands, it will grow in dry shade once established. Other than a light trim in early spring this grass requires no care whatsoever. It always looks healthy, so three cheers for a carefree evergreen groundcover.

I grow a number of *Festuca*, 'Elijah Blue' and 'Pepindale Blue'. Listed as Zone 3, they are fairly reliable but can die out after 3 or 4 years, and they are not useful in full shade. The tufted blue foliage makes them welcome in the spring but they have to be cut back once growth begins.

I would love to hear about other shade grass successes and "unsuccesses".

MGOI Board of Directors

President James Lee - jflee@sympatico.ca
Vice President Carol Dunk - carol@caroldunk.com
2nd Vice President - Andrew Cartmell - andrewcartmell@gmail.com
Treasurer Lynne Campbell - lcp1966@hotmail.com
Corporate Secretary vacant
Directors:
Zone 1 Ralph Bullough - ralph@tbaytel.net
Zone 2 Linda Hugli - lhugli@hotmail.com
Zone 3 vacant
Zone 4 Andrew Cartmell - andrewcartmell@gmail.com
Zone 5 June Streadwick - Streadwick@sympatico.ca
Zone 6 Valerie Liney - valerie.liney@sympatico.ca
Zone 7 Jeanne Stoness - j_stoness@yahoo.ca
Zone 8 Kelly Noel - khnoel@rogers.com
Zone 9 Don Nicholson - donald.nicholson@gmail.com
Zone 10 Merle Burston - mburston@rogers.com
Zone 11 John Craw - jonbon@sympatico.ca
MG List-serv Avalon Hamlin - hamlin@ebtech.net
Newsletter Dianne & Gary Westlake - editors@mgoi.ca

OHA Director Carol Dunk
OMAFRA Representative - Helen Scutt helen.scutt@ontario.ca
Landscape Ontario Representative - Denis Flanagan
Provincial Administrator Charlotte Vorstermans cvorstermans@rogers.com
113 Mill St., Creemore ON, L0M 1G0
Provincial Field Advisor Edythe Falconer edythelf@netscape.ca
Directors At Large Carol Dunk; Lynne Campbell

Master Gardeners in Action

Quizzes in Lanark

Thanks to Gary Westlake for the Bug and Disease Quizzes. We have taken the Bug Quiz, then each member selected a bug to research and share this information at our next meeting. Next month we will be taking on the Disease Quiz. We have found this an interesting and enjoyable addition to our monthly meetings. This kind of sharing and collaborating across MG groups is a wonderful way for us all to continue and expand our knowledge. - Dale Odorizzi

Ugliest Schoolyard Contest

The Sudbury MG group has been an active partner in a project with the city of Sudbury's Urban Landscape Committee to transform the community's schoolyards from pavement, gravel, and sun into green, natural settings. The resulting renovated yards feature spaces to play, relax, read, and enjoy nature. For more information>

United Counties

We are proud to announce that a new partnership was formed between the South Nation Conservation Authority and the United Counties MGs this past autumn. This partnership will begin with the United Counties MGs helping create and teach in the new demonstration gardens that are being started this spring at the SNC facility in Finch.

Hakonechloa Plant of 2009

Valerie Liney, Lake Simcoe South

Hakonechloa

The Perennial Plant Association Plant of the year 2009 is *Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola' or hakone forest grass is described as one of the most elegant of the grasses with arching bamboo-like leaves. It grows to a height of 1ft or 30cm tall and 2ft or 60cm wide and is slow to establish. The leaves are bright golden-yellow with narrow green stripes with its growth pattern resembling a waterfall. In partial shade the leaves will look yellow but in full shade the leaves will look chartreuse. It is not recommended for full sun as the leaves will bleach out and burn. In fall the leaves turns to shades of pink and red. Seed panicles appear in summer as airy clusters above the foliage. As the plant grows slowly by stolons, division will not be needed for many years but when you do divide it can be done in spring or fall.

Hakonechloa grows in Zones 5 and 6 in a moist rich and humusy soil. It will not grow in heavy clays or very dry soils. This plant looks great in formal Japanese gardens, growing over rocks or walls, cascading down slopes, beside ponds or water features, as mass plantings in the front of the border and with other grasses such as *Carex* 'Evergold' or if you dare 'Red Baron Grass' or as a specimen. This plant is spectacular all by itself in a container. The plant is deciduous in our climate so will die down to the ground in the winter. It will need a good covering of mulch in the winter as protection. As far as colour and contrast the *Hakonechloa* would look spectacular with its opposite on the colour wheel purple or fuchsia or with the hot colours of yellow or orange. Texturally the plant would be in good company with hosta such as 'Paul's Glory' or 'June', heuchera such as 'Palace Purple' or 'Velvet Night' or 'Marmalade' and or ferns such as *Athyrium niponicum* 'Pictum' (Japanese Painted fern) or *Adiantum* (Maidenhair fern).

A desirable attribute for this plant would be that it is deer resistant. I have heard from a friend that dogs have an affection for it and will chew it.

INTERNATIONAL MASTER GARDENER

Toronto Group Gets International Recognition

Elizabeth Stewart - Toronto

On Monday March 23, at the Alexis Park Hotel in Las Vegas, Toronto Group's Janet Ballantyne took the stage in front of an audience of some 500-600 Master Gardeners from around the world and explained why, from among the entire International Master Gardeners (IMG) group, the Toronto Master Gardeners were selected as the outstanding Community Service providers. She brings back a plaque and a small monetary award for our group.

We entered the Organic Gardening Fact Sheets and Workshop Presentation prepared for the City of Toronto Department of Public Health Pesticide Education Program (Go Natural) in support of the new Pesticide By-Law.

read the full article on our website mgoi.ca

Revenue for MGOI

The Revenue Development Committee

For the first time, we ran an email campaign late last year in which we asked MGs to consider MGOI in their charitable giving for 2008. We are very grateful to those that have donated to MGOI.

The brochure has been updated so that each group can add local contact information. We have included information on how to become a Master Gardener as well as how to donate. The brochure that is easily printed and copied, is on the website.

We plan to update the calendar and to approach sponsors as a means of fundraising. If you have contacts with companies that you think would be interested in having their logo on our calendar, please contact us.

A number of municipalities have earmarked funds for environmental projects. Your group may want to investigate and apply for funding. Kitchener MGs recently received funding for a laptop and powerpoint projector from the Kitchener Community Environmental Improvement Grant Fund.

If you are interested in helping with revenue development, please contact us.

Events

Saturday, April 4 at 9:00 a.m. at Knox Presbyterian Church, 55 Hincks Street, St.Thomas – Elgin County Master Gardeners present 'Digging in the Dirt', Tickets are $5.00. Bring a bag lunch, refreshments are provided. Information: Helen (519) 773-9621, Diane (519) 633-3213 or Richard (519) 633-3939

Tuesdays throughout April at the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa. Lecture Series include four topics – Gardening with Climate Change, Daylilies – Beauty for a Day, The 100-metre Diet – Growing your own Vegetables, and All about Herbs. The cost is $15.00 per lecture or $50.00 for the series. 613-230-3276

April 9, 10 and 11 – The Peterborough Garden Show at the Evinrude Centre, Monaghan Road, Peterborough. Entry $5.00 per day. For more information www.peterboroughgardens.ca

Saturday, April 11 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. – Oakville MGs present a Design Workshop given by Sean James at the Oakville Public Library, 120 Navy St., Oakville. For more information or to register contact Linda Brentnall, at 416-927-2787 or by email at linda.brentnall@bmo.com

April 18 and 19 – 6th Annual Scugog Spring Garden Show at the Scugog Community Recreation Centre, 1655 Reach St., Port Perry. For more information call 905-986-5330

Royal Botanical Gardens Festivals - May 3 and 10 – Tulip Celebration; May 24 and 31 – Spring into Bloom with Lilacs; June 7 and 14 – Iris and Peony Celebration; June 21, 28 and July 5 – Rose Celebration

May 9 from 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. – Technical Update – Design Seminar for Gardeners at the Oliver Road Community Centre, Thunder Bay. Contact Eloise Rodger 1-807-767-1087, fee $100 (lunch included)

May 9 at 9:00 a.m. – Guelph and Wellington County MG. Plant Sale at the Turf Grass Institute on Victoria Road South in Guelph

May 23 – Prince Edward County Master Gardeners Plant Sale featuring Plants for the County starting at 8:30 a.m. in the Giant Tiger Parking Lot on Picton's Main Street. Contact Virginia Mitchell (vkmitchell@persona.ca)

May 23 – Macaulay Lilac Fest – Macaulay Heritage Park, (off County Road #8), Picton. Free

June 13 – The Prince Edward County Horticultural Society Gardeners Gala - Picton Fairgrounds/Curling Club, Admission Free

May 30 – 10 a.m., rain or shine – Lake Simcoe South Master Gardeners Plant Sale at Newmarket Church of Christ, 230 Davis Drive, (between Parkside and Lorne). For more information, email lssmastergardeners@gmail.com

June 28, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. – Gardens on Parade Tour. Tickets are $8.00 in advance and $10.00 on the day. Contact Alex Kucharew akucharew1227@rogers.com or Lizabeth Smith 519 443 8922 Lizabeth_s@yahoo.com

July 4 – 9, 11:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. – Annual Prince Edward County Communities in Bloom Garden Tour featuring county gardens and a gourmet lunch at The Waring House. Tickets $35.00. Contact Lenore Kennedy at 613-476-1825. Buses leave Picton Fairgrounds at 11:00 a.m.

July 6 – 10 – Low Maintenance Gardening – Marsha Gettas – Haliburton School of the Arts 1-866-353-6464 for details

July 10 – 2009 MGOI AGM at the OHA Convention, Trent University, Peterborough

July 10, 11, 12 – OHA Convention at Trent University, Peterborough

September 19 – Guelph and Wellington County Technical Update at the St Ignatius Centre. The theme will be Organic Gardening.

October 17 – Coordinators Conference. Landscape Ontario, Milton

Milestones

New MGiTs
Elgin County – James Johnstone

Etobicoke – Astrid Strader and Karen Klar.

Guelph and Wellington County – Inger Knudsen, Diane Marchese, Robert Pavlis and Pam Sheldon

Lanark County – Carol Kenward, Kevin Long and Georgina Bailey-Wicher

Peterborough – Suzanne Seryck

Toronto – Josee Couture, Sylvia Green, Janet Koerssen, Cathy Kozma, Alan Malcolmson, Christine March, Doryne Peace, Sylvia Sarkus, Sheila Smith, Lesley Spencer

United Counties – Angie Bernard, Mark Daniher, and Sylvie Dirk,

New MGs
Durham – Beth Cook and Pam Love

Elgin County – Agnes Burroughs

Halton Region – Patty King

Peterborough – Lisa Stefaniak

Simcoe County – Vivian Bowman, Rhona Desroches, Kevin VanAndel

Toronto – Janet Ahier, Pat Cappelli, Yvonne Causer, Anne Chetwynd, Joseph Delarge, Caroline Greenland, Connie Hunter, Alessandra Leopardi, Rena Naraine, Brigid O'Reilly, Aldona Satterthwaite, Toni Vella

5-years
Etobicoke – Krys Angel, Carole Bell, Nancy Dattrino, Marsha Gettas, Catherine Johnson, Sandra Niemy and Cynthia O'Grady

Lake Simcoe South – Elizabeth Brimm and Mary Lou Swanson

Quinte Tweed – Karen Starczynowski

Toronto – Barbara Anderson, Jane Beck, Dawn Bell, Ellen Eyman and Deborah Vitale

United Counties – Barbara Baker, Fred Deschamps, Frieda Deschamps, Lindley McPhail, Barbara Summers

10-years
Etobicoke – Jean Sinclair and Barbara Pomfret

Lake Simcoe South – Barbara Evans

Quinte Tweed – Nancy Bardy and Peggy Vincent

Toronto – Sara Katz, Joan Lenczner, Kathy Mills, Catherine Park

United Counties – Pat Stachon

15 years
Thunder Bay – Ralph Bullough, Gert Cantley, Aileen Dampier; Marie Hynna, Susan Jaward, Carole McCollum and Carl Mirowski.

Toronto – Jack Cameron, Anne Kotyk

20 years
Peterborough – Norma Evans, Beryl Harris

Quinte Tweed – Glenn and Lois Bennett

Toronto – Ann Johnson, Anna Leggatt, Grace Muncaster, Alice Wikaruk

Emerita/ Emeritus
Peterborough – Ruth Arndt

Thunder Bay – Carl Mirowski

Windsor-Essex – Mary Coyle

Beyond the call
Canada Blooms - Valerie Liney did a great job getting us a higher profile. Thanks also to all who participated.

Toronto – Tena van Andel, Volunteer Coordinator, has organized a long list of Master Gardener events for Foodshare and spearheaded the technical update. She has also organized the Allen Gardens children's event this winter, Get a Jump on Spring at the TBG, TMGs at Canada Blooms, and the many requests for speakers and advice clinics.

Windsor-Essex – Margaret Snyder coordinated The Windsor Star's Saturday morning column for over ten years. Alan and Karen Batke will be assuming responsibility for the articles beginning in the Spring.

Rezoning MGOI

In order to even out the disparity in numbers of groups, Grey and Bruce groups have joined zone 11 with John Craw. Toronto is now zone 10 with Merle Burston as director. Haliburton moves to the existing zone 9 with Don Nicholson. Jeanne Stoness has become the new Director for zone 7. Denis Flanagan is our Landscape Ontario Representative.

Annual General Meeting

MGOI's 2009 AGM will be held during the Ontario Horticultural Association's Convention in Peterborough on July 10 at 4:30 p.m. Register as a delegate to the convention and enjoy the speakers, bus trips or boat cruises. Our own Edythe Falconer and Kelly Noel will be presenting workshops on Friday and there are lots more to enjoy throughout the weekend.

Details can be found on the OHA website.

Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.

Summer Workshops 2009

Summer's coming. Plan to attend a MGOI Summer Workshop.

Take advantage of a bargain: 10 hours of instruction by well-qualified horticultural instructors and professors, coffee breaks and 2 lunches. Register soon.

University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus
Thursday, June 25 and Friday, June 26
$195
Plant Propagation, Plant Tour
Contact: Ken Nentwig 519-674-1628
KNENTWIG@ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca

Niagara Parks School of Horticulture
Saturday, July 18 and Sunday, July 19
$250
Plant Diseases, Insects, Organic Vegetable Gardening
Contact: June Streadwick 905-934-6137
streadwick@sympatico.ca

Humber College, North Campus
Tentatively Friday, August 7 and Saturday, August 8
$195
Organic Turf Care, Renovating the Residential Garden,
Four Season Color with Woody Plants, Plant Tour
Contact: Sid Baller 416-675-6622 ext. 4467
sid.baller@humber.ca

Georgian College, Barrie Campus
Friday, August 14 and Saturday, August 15
$195
New Pesticide Legislation, Diagnosing Pest and Diseases, Treatments and Controls
Contact: Carol Dunk 705-737-0147
carol@caroldunk.com