

# Master Gardeners of Bergen County March 2021 – Mid-Month Update

---

## *MG virtual meeting – Tuesday, March 23 via Zoom*

**Announcements at 7:20 pm; program to follow**

### **Bill Kolvek presents: Native and Exotic Grasses and Grass Relatives**

To attend the meeting, click [here](#) before 7:15 pm to allow the meeting organizer enough time to let attendees into the meeting.

*Bill Kolvek has been gardening in some form for more than half a century and formerly owned a nursery in Chestnut Ridge, NY, frequented by many MGs.*

Are you ready to try grasses? Bill will identify and discuss some of the most garden-worthy grasses for the landscape. Grasses offer a range of height choices from under a foot tall to 15 feet. Most true grasses prefer sun, but there are a few exceptions. Then there are grass relatives, like the sedges, and many of them luxuriate in part shade.

Grasses, Bill said, are great choices to extend garden interest late in the season. In the wind they add motion to the garden. Many grass choices have been around and are tried and true. There are newer selections and introductions to feast upon as well. He will review growing information and general maintenance techniques.



**Bill Kolvek**

---

## **Spring chores reminder**

**By Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004**

We're all eager to get into the garden. Here's where to start:

1. Get your tools ready: Sharpen your pruners. Clean your tools with alcohol or hydrogen peroxide to avoid spreading fungus. Sharpen mower blades.
2. Start pruning: Prune shrubs that flower on new growth like *Hydrangea paniculata*, spirea, roses, etc. Don't prune plants that set their buds last summer like rhododendrons, azaleas, and *Hydrangea macrophylla*.
3. Clean up yard litter: Get rid of twigs and sticks from storms. Leaf litter can be ground up with the mower and put back in beds as mulch.
4. Cut down ornamental grasses: If they have bare centers divide them leaving one piece and transplanting others to different sites. Give pieces to friends and neighbors.
5. Try not to walk on soggy lawn as it compacts the soil.



**Arnie's pick axe is ready for 2021.**

## Snowdrops – the start of the garden symphony

*Bruce Crawford, program leader in home and public horticulture at Rutgers, has chosen snowdrops (Galanthus) as his March plant of the month.*

### **By Bruce Crawford**

Every autumn, gardeners visit their favorite garden center and are confronted by rack upon rack of rather unappealing appearing “bulbs.” Occasionally, a gardener will take a leap of faith and buy a few of the dry, papery brown objects in the hopes that flowers, similar to those prominently presented on the display, will magically appear the following spring.



*Rutgers University photo*

And magically, appear they do! With the first promise of warmer weather, bulbs begin to awaken and start their spring “symphony” of color. Of the bevy of bulbs available to brighten your garden, there is none as iconic nor as willing to lead the symphony, as the white flowering snowdrop. . . Click [here](#) to read more.

---

## Frelinghuysen Arboretum is having a virtual plant sale

You can place your orders online now through April 27 for the annual plant sale sponsored by the Friends of the Frelinghuysen Arboretum. The Friends are selling shrubs, trees, and perennials. Click [here](#) for more information and the list of plants for sale. **Note:** Prices will increase April 1. Timed pickup will take place April 30 and May 1 at the arboretum, 353 E. Hanover Ave., Morris Township.

---

### Webinars

**March 16, 7-8 pm:** Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Ocean County sponsors Pruning - Not a Mysterious Art. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**March 18, 10-11 am:** North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Buncombe County Center, sponsors Feed the Soil - Using Soil Amendments and Conditioners. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**March 18, 7 pm:** Fine Gardening sponsors Tomato Tips, Tricks, and Myths. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**March 19, 3-4 pm:** Duke Farms sponsors Lettuce Begin. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**March 20, 10-11 am:** Duke Farms sponsors Bald Eagle Basics. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. Click [here](#) to view the Duke Farms live eagle cam.

**March 24, 7-8 pm:** Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Warren County sponsors Common Invasive Plants in Northern New Jersey. Free. Click [here](#) to register.

**March 25, 6:30-7:30 pm:** Rutgers NJ Agricultural Experiment Station sponsors Selecting Seeds for Your Vegetable Garden Needs. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**March 25, 7:30 pm:** Thielke Arboretum sponsors Beneficial Insects in the Garden. Fee: \$10. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**March 29, 6:30-7:30 pm:** Rutgers NJ Agricultural Experiment Station sponsors Spring Babies - Tips for Helping Injured or Orphaned Wildlife. Free. Click [here](#) for more information. Click [here](#) to register.

**March 31, noon-1 pm:** Ecological Landscape Alliance (ELA) sponsors Foliage and Focal Points - Ideas for Budgets and Gardens of All Sizes. Free. Click [here](#) for more information, to register, and to join the ELA.

**April 1, 2 pm:** The Garden Conservancy sponsors Under Western Skies. Fee: \$5 Garden Conservancy members/\$15 non-members. Click [here](#) for more information, to register, and for membership information. Registration ends 2 pm March 31.

---

### **[Horticulture Grapevine](#)**

**March 25, 7-8 pm, Westwood Free Public Library via Zoom:** Speaker: Janet Schulz, Class of 1988. Topic: Down and Dirty - Planting Ideas for Your Shady Spots. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

**March 29, 7:30 pm, Ho-Ho-Kus Garden Club via Zoom:** Speaker: Stephanie Sharo, two-time recipient of the club's garden scholarship. Topic: Sustainable Living - Focus on Vegetable Gardening. To receive the Zoom link, send an email to [Debbie Saunders](#) by March 28.

---

### **[This and That](#)**

**Philadelphia Flower Show:** June 5-13, FDR Park, 1500 Pattison Ave. and South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19145. Click [here](#) for more information and to buy tickets.

**Garden Club of Teaneck plant sale:** May 8-16. Details to follow when available.