

2012 North Carolina Master Gardener Conference Programs
Last updated January 14, 2012

50 (OK, fifty-nine, but who's counting) Great Natives for the Southeast Presented by Bill Cullina		
Special Session	Sunday, May 20, 2012	6 PM
<p>You don't need to look to China or England to find beautiful, functional, enduring plants trees, shrubs, and perennials for our northeastern gardens. From the coastal plain to the Appalachian chain, the eastern U.S. is home to a bewildering variety of native plants that bring with them grace, hardiness, and an adaptability to our climate and soils unmatched by most exotics. In this talk, Bill will profile 50 or so of his favorite native wildflowers, ferns, trees, shrubs, and vines for gardens in the Southeast.</p>		

Biltmore Estate: Frederick Law Olmsted's Landscape Masterpiece Presented by Bill Alexander		
General Session	Monday, May 21, 2012	8 – 8:45 AM
<p>Frederick Law Olmsted, America's "Father of Landscape Architecture," is perhaps best known as the designer of New York's Central Park, his first great work. His extensive career culminated with the planning and design of George W. Vanderbilt's Biltmore Estate (1888-1895), his largest private undertaking and his last major project. At Biltmore, Olmsted brought together more disciplines than with any other project, public or private. In addition to an extensive landscape with pleasure grounds and gardens, lakes and ponds and waterfalls, a deer park, and miles of carriage drives, his plans included America's first large-scale, scientifically managed forest, a state-of-the art farm, a major arboretum, nursery, and an herbarium. This presentation will detail the key elements involved with the planning and implementation of Olmsted's landscape masterpiece.</p>		

Containing Our Stories: Simple Soft-Cover Journals and Exercises to Fill Them Presented by Robyn Josephs		
Workshop	Monday, May 21, 2012	9 AM – noon
<p>Join Robyn in using beautiful papers, fibers, and inks to create simple books to contain the complex stories of your lives. You'll fold, color, and stitch, and enjoy journaling exercises to fill your pages. No experience necessary!</p>		

The Art of Nature Printing Presented by Lori Loftus		
Workshop	Monday, May 21, 2012	9 AM – noon
<p>In this workshop you will learn to print the delicate surfaces of natural materials, choose paper and ink, and print with the West Virginia Stomp press (stocking feet required for this process) and the Bottle Jack press.</p>		

Fun With Flowers!! Presented by Cynthia Gillooly		
Workshop	Monday, May 21, 2012	9 AM – noon
<p>Join Cynthia for a hands-on class where everyone will have the opportunity to create a one-of-a-kind, fresh arrangement to take home. Featuring floral materials native to North Carolina, with an emphasis on creative natural design, this seminar is certain to stimulate your creativity!</p>		

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Weaving Appalachian Baskets Presented by Joe Bruneau		
Workshop	Monday, May 21, 2012	1:30 – 4:30 PM
Learn the basket techniques of weaving through the creation of one of two types of Appalachian Baskets: the melon basket or the potato basket. You will use natural materials for the frames of the baskets, and natural and hand-dyed rattan, seagrass, and other materials in weaving your basket. Each participant will learn the basic principles of building a solidly constructed basket.		

The Illustrated Garden Journal Presented by Marilyn Brandenburger		
Workshop	Monday, May 21, 2012	1:30 – 4:30 PM
Record the beauty of your garden in a personal watercolor journal. You'll learn to simplify garden subjects, render them quickly in pencil, and enhance your drawings with ink and watercolor. You will work from real life and garden photographs. Subjects will include flowers, fruits, vegetables, and some simple garden tools. Activities include demonstrations and step-by-step guidance in sketching and watercolor.		

Ikebana Presented by Norma Bradley		
Workshop	Monday, May 21, 2012	1:30 – 4:30 PM
Come back soon for more information on this workshop!		

Evening Reception Entertainment by Balsam Range		
Reception	Monday, May 21, 2012	6 PM - ?
Join everyone for a great reception with nibbles, a no-host bar, and great entertainment by the Balsam Range band!		
From deep in the Appalachians where the Great Smoky Mountains meet the Blue Ridge comes the Balsam Range band, creatively blending Bluegrass, Folk, Gospel and Jazz into a new American acoustic music experience.		

Sugar, Sex, and Poison: Shocking Plant Secrets Caught on Camera Presented by Bill Cullina		
Keynote Address	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	8:30 – 9:30 AM
<p>As we all know, plants are at the base of both the human and non-human food chains. Everything eats them directly or indirectly, which may or may not be a good thing as far as plants are concerned. Because they do not move around, it is easy to forget that plants are not helpless. They have evolved an incredible arsenal of chemicals, camouflage, spines, hairs, and waxes to discourage herbivores. On the other hand, they spend a huge amount of their energy on pollen, nectar, edible fruits, and sugary root exudates designed to attract and nourish animals, insects, fungi, and bacteria, so they can perform services such as pollination, seed dispersal, defense, and nutrient acquisition. It is a carefully balanced natural economy and community, based on the products of photosynthesis that is amazing in its complexity and efficiency. Strengthening this natural economy through sound horticultural and agricultural practices is in essence what the organic movement is all about. In this talk, Bill will show how this world of pollen, poisons, pigments, pheromones, sugars, and sex translates to sound organic practices we all can benefit from.</p>		

Introduction to Beneficial Insects Presented by Patryk Battle			
Session #1	Track A	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	9:45 – 11 AM
<p>Focusing on pest predator dynamics and the role diversity plays in achieving a healthy balance in the garden, this session may well introduce you to some new insect allies. It will hopefully temper your view of garden pests/prey and inspire you to facilitate nature's diversification mission. It will end with an acknowledgement of the limits of this approach, a discussion of some of our garden's hard cases (nominations accepted), and what current best practices in this insect/plant-intensive approach to small o “organic” pest control are.</p>			

Outdoor Living: Trends in Design, Styles, Materials, and Elements Presented by Andy White			
Session #1	Track B	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	9:45 – 11 AM
<p>“Outdoor living” means the pursuit of leisure, relaxation, recreation, food preparation and dining, and social engagement in an outdoor setting. Landscape design is the process of melding your needs and wants for this pursuit with the inherent conditions and characteristics of your particular site for the purpose of developing your landscape. Andy will explore desirable and value-added components and characteristics, two key aspects of any outdoor living space, using photographs of outdoor living areas from four different regions of the United States. You will learn to select and combine ideas to transform your own outdoor space into a truly unique and functional outdoor living area.</p>			

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Easier Gardening by Working with Nature Presented by Randy Burroughs			
Session #1	Track C	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	9:45 – 11 AM
Realizing that the beautiful forest, savanna, and grassland landscapes across our state exist without “maintenance,” you’ll look at some natural techniques you can use to create easier <i>and healthier</i> gardens. Your horticultural skills can be used to the fullest, while giving you more time for the things you enjoy. The art of design opens to a new aesthetic: just as the English Landscape School grew out of the hard line symmetry of Renaissance Europe, we can evolve our design palette to include new elements of color, texture, movement, wildlife and delight. Native plants will be emphasized. However, you’ll also look at the eclectic mix. The best of both worlds!			

North Carolina Public Gardens Presented by Peter Loewer			
Session #1	Track D	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	9:45 – 11 AM
Come back soon for more information on this educational session!			

What's New on NCSUgarden.com Presented by Lucy Bradley		
Lunchtime program	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	11:30 AM – 1 PM
Bring your own lunch and learn about new resources available on NCSUgarden.com, including the wonderful Searchable Database on NCSU web resources, generating online reports, and much more.		

DIG IT! Soil Basics Important for Plant Growth Presented by Dr. Ron Gehl			
Session #2	Track A	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	1:15 – 2:30 PM
This presentation will discuss the fundamentals that make soils what they are – from soil-forming processes to the variability in our soils that affects what we are able to grow. Ron will also discuss nutrient cycling in soils, soil testing and nutrient recommendations, and fertilizer basics.			

Vertical Gardening and Living Walls Presented by Erin Thompson			
Session #2	Track B	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	1:15 – 2:30 PM
A living wall is created for two purposes: functionality and artistic value. It is typically used in urban gardening where space is limited, where vertical walls abound, and where plants can reduce the overall temperature of the building. It is also an attraction for all to admire – a living wall is often created for its beauty and seen as art. What began as a “green movement” in cities now has applications that can be used in any household. Erin will discuss the many techniques involved in building a living wall, and will show you how to make any dull space, indoors or outdoors, come to life!			

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Native Medicinals in the Landscape Presented by Juliet Blankespoor			
Session #2	Track C	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	1:15 – 2:30 PM
Juliet will discuss the cultivation requirements for some of our easier-to-grow native medicinals, including siting, soil, and amendmets. In addition, you will briefly explore the traditional and contemporary uses of our medicinal flora. Many of these plants have been historically over-harvested, and the home gardener can help their populations by expanding their local ranges.			

Digital Macro Flower and Insect Photography for the Beginner Presented by Bill Cullina			
Session #2	Track D	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	1:15 – 2:30 PM
Close-up photography has the ability to reveal details about the natural world invisible to the naked eye, but for many people, mastering digital macro photography can be baffling and frustrating. In this talk geared for novice and intermediate photographers, Bill will explain the basics of digital photography, as it relates to close up work with plants and their pollinators, in a clear and non-technical way. He will cover equipment from point-and-shoot cameras to high-end DSLRS, tripods, lenses, filters, and lighting, and then delve into camera settings and tricks for getting professional-quality pictures on a non-professional budget.			

Growing and Enjoying Unusual Vegetables from Mountains to Sea Presented by Marc Williams			
Session #3	Track A	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	2:45 – 5 PM
In this class you will discuss and sample some unusual vegetables, both cultivated and wild. These plants offer the chance to increase diet diversity and interest while offering potential economic opportunities too. Come try something new!			

The Square Foot Garden: From 4 ft x 4 ft to 44,000 sq ft Presented by Ron Arps			
Session #3	Track B	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	2:45 – 5 PM
This hands-on workshop will cover the principles of the Square Foot Garden and how they can be used in all gardens, large and small. The participants will construct a Square Foot Garden, make Mel's mix, and go through the mechanics of planting. Bring your gardening gloves – you'll be digging in the dirt!			

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How Master Gardeners Can Rescue Native Plants and Promote Their Use in Gardens Presented by Alan Mizeras			
Session #3	Track C	Tuesday, May 22, 2012	2:45 – 5 PM
Commercial and residential development is depleting the populations of many of our wildflowers, shrubs, vines, and trees across our state. If you are up for a new gardening challenge, then let Alan show you how these plants can be saved! If you can learn of development plans early enough, you can approach landowners for permission and plan forays to dig desirable plants and rescue them from destruction. They can be replanted in your gardens for further enjoyment, while preserving the gene pool and promoting their virtues for future native plant enthusiasts. Alan will discuss how to form a group, set forth simple rules for operation, make your presence known in the community, and how to get landowners to allow you to safely dig plants before logging, clearing, and burning begins. This session offers practical, real world experiences to help you get started on a most rewarding aspect of gardening.			

Organic Pest Management Presented by Debbie Roos			
Session #4	Track A	Wednesday, May 23, 2012	8:30 – 9:45 AM
Debbie will discuss cultural, physical, and biological controls as well as organic pesticides. You will learn about effective control strategies for the primary insect pests found in vegetable gardens.			

Four Seasons Container Gardening Presented by Nancy Duffy			
Session #4	Track B	Wednesday, May 23, 2012	8:30 – 9:45 AM
Learn how to compose interesting and beautiful containers for every season of the year. Nancy will show you how to use everything, from bulbs to conifers to vegetables, to make containers that will add beauty to your home and garden.			

Plant Propagation Methods for the Home Gardener Presented by John Murphy			
Session #4	Track C	Wednesday, May 23, 2012	8:30 – 9:45 AM
Plants respond differently to various plant propagation techniques, but most can be successfully grown from either seed or by cuttings. We'll cover the basics on how to use these methods in a home environment using simple materials.			

Life Is Too Short for Boring Plants Presented by Mark Weathington			
Session #4	Track D	Wednesday, May 23, 2012	8:30 – 9:45 AM
Our home landscapes are the canvases on which we paint our lives. Why should we be constrained by out-of-date convention to plant a row of azaleas, boxwoods, or Japanese hollies along our foundation? This talk will explore some of the wild plants we can use to really let our personality and artistic flair shine through and create a masterpiece out of our personal garden.			

Green Invaders Non-Native Invasive Species Management, Identification and Control Presented by Paul Merten			
Session #5	Track A	Wednesday, May 23, 2012	10:15 – 11:30 AM
Non-native species have been transported around the world for hundreds of years. While the vast majority of introduced non-native plants stay within their prospective landscapes, some escape and become major ecological pests. This discussion will address the basic processes of plant invasion, and principles of invasive plant control and management. Paul will also discuss several more recent emerging non-native invasive plants important to North Carolina.			

Trees, Trees, and More Trees: The Best Small Trees for the Modern Landscape Presented by Brian Upchurch			
Session #5	Track B	Wednesday, May 23, 2012	10:15 – 11:30 AM
Brian will take a look at the best small ornamental trees for the modern North Carolina landscape. As our landscapes become smaller and require lower maintenance plants; the nursery industry has responded by providing proven varieties, new selections, and even new ways to grow old plants. Compact, dwarf, and upright cultivars are now the new normal. The “best of the best” offer year-round interest, disease and pest resistance, and the ability to withstand the extreme whims of nature.			

Enjoying Wildlife in Your Yard and Gardens Presented by Steve and Kit Schmeiser			
Session #5	Track C	Wednesday, May 23, 2012	10:15 – 11:30 AM
This program will explain how to provide the four key elements in your yard and garden – however large or small – that are friendly to wildlife and which therefore attract wildlife for your enjoyment. Steve and Kit will discuss the advantages of incorporating native plants and natural landscaping; choosing themes, such as butterfly and hummingbird gardens; and just allowing some areas to go “wild.”			
The Schmeisers will provide applications for certifying your property, church, school, or workplace as a Wildlife Friendly Habitat with the North Carolina Wildlife Federation and the National Wildlife Federation.			

Open Mic: Discussion of the NC Extension Master Gardener Program Facilitated by Lucy Bradley			
Session #5	Track D	Wednesday, May 23, 2012	10:15 – 11:30 AM
Have a question? Want to share a suggestion? Join us for this round-table discussion of the Extension Master Gardener Program in North Carolina.			

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Gardening in Modern Times: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly Presented by Bryce Lane		
Luncheon	Wednesday, May 23, 2012	Noon – 1:30 PM
Gardening is not complicated ... it's hard! The gardening world has changed drastically over the past 30 years, yet we face many of the same challenges we did when we started this rewarding lifestyle years ago. We'll talk about what makes gardening good, what makes it hard, and what we can do to make it better.		

All day workshop with Co-op Agents Presented by Lucy Bradley		
Note: schedule is tentative!	Thursday, May 24, 2012	11:30 AM – 1 PM
Agents from across the state will gather to share strategies & resources.		