

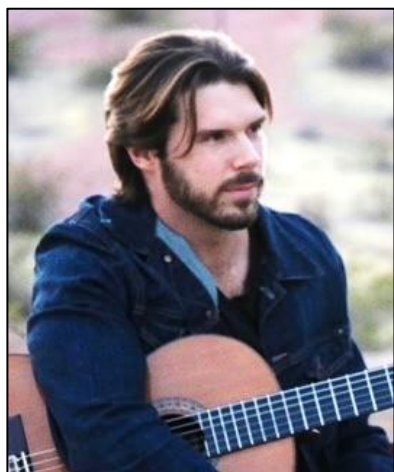
Meeting news

Eric Rohsler **Artistry in the Garden**

Tuesday, Sept. 19

1 Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack
1st-floor meeting room

Refreshments at 7 pm; announcements
at 7:20 pm; meeting to follow



Eric Rohsler

For our first meeting of the 2023-2024 season, Eric Rohsler of Rohsler's Allendale Nursery will take us on a "deep dive," as he described it, into various ways of blending and layering plant material to create plant communities and extend seasonal interest.

"Give your garden a calm and natural

look," he wrote in an email. "Create exciting, spontaneous plant combinations and cover ground to reduce the need for mulching and weeding."

Eric is a fifth-generation nurseryman and horticulturist, and he's a classical guitarist as well. He has worked with plants throughout his entire life and has a decade and a half of professional experience in the green industry, ranging from landscaping and garden design to greenhouse growing and cultivating a wide variety of plants.

He remains focused on creating and promoting better garden plants — reliable, durable ones — and obsessively studying and promoting naturalistic and native landscapes and gardens that function through sustainable, ecological processes and at the same time are aesthetically pleasing.

(Continued on page 8)

What's inside	Page
Spotlight on NJ's Deer Overpopulation	2-3
In Our Gardens	4-5
Garden Club Meetings	6
Webinars	6
Events	6
Horticulture	7
Conferences	7
President's Desk (continued from page 1)	8
MG of BC News	8
Eric Rohsler (continued from page 1)	8

Links are clickable and are noted in [blue](#).

From the President's Desk

By Melody Corcoran, Class of 2016

Every year starting in the spring there are mole hills and tunnels running through my yard. While moles are part of a healthy ecosystem — aerating the soil with their digging and eating both adult and larval pest insects such as Japanese beetles — no one usually wants them in their yard.



This year there are no mole hills or tunnels to be seen. Where did the moles go? I believe I found the answer when I saw a large garter snake in the perennial bed. Almost everyone can identify a garter snake (below).



University of Maryland Extension photo

The Eastern garter snake is the most commonly seen snake in New Jersey. An adult snake can range from 18

(Continued on page 8)

SPOTLIGHT ON NJ'S DEER OVERPOPULATION

More than a nuisance, deer cost NJ farmers millions each year

By Miriam Taub, Class of 2011

Most area homeowners plagued by deer have several strategies to keep them out of their yards and garden beds. But what if you were a New Jersey grower or farmer? Then what would you do?

Two representatives from NJ DEP's Fish and Wildlife spoke to a dozen Bergen County growers and farmers about the overpopulation of white-tailed deer in the Garden State. The two Fish and Wildlife reps — Brian K. Schumm, deer outreach biologist, and Megan Mills, northern region deer biologist, were the guests of Joel Flagler, Bergen County ag agent, who sponsored the meeting at Abma's Farm in Wyckoff last month.

In a nutshell, the solution is lethal management, the two biologists said. No other option seems to work for a deer population that's increasing at a rate far greater than the number of deer being removed. Lethal management comprises the annual hunting season (which includes special farmer's permits), depredation permits for farmers, Community Based Deer Management Permits, and other special wildlife permits.

Brian Schumm reported that in a normal year, pre-Covid, about 50,000 deer were removed from the state



Brian K. Schumm

annually. While that sounds like a lot, it's but a "dent" in the state's deer population, estimated at around 115,000. "However, this estimate is based only on the huntable population using hunter harvest numbers. The actual deer population is most likely much higher than that because we currently don't have an estimate on the non-hunted population," he explained.

The majority of those 50,000 deer are removed via the regular deer season, the state's biggest tool, Brian said. During the 2022-2023 hunting season, which ended in February, [Fish and Wildlife](#) reported that 38,324 deer were harvested via bow, shotgun, and muzzleloader. The remainder of the removals were the result of disease, vehicle accidents, and special wildlife permits.



Photo by Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004

A Rutgers Agricultural Experiment Station [case study](#) reported that within "a small pool of 27 farmers, the conservatively estimated impact of wildlife damage in 2019 was nearly \$1.4 million. This includes direct deer damage to crops and reduced yields (\$520,940); deer-related "hidden costs" that can be assigned a dollar value (\$755,200); and crop damage from other wildlife species (\$97,749).

More numbers: A deer population density [drone survey](#) in 2019-2020, commissioned by the New Jersey Farm Bureau, concluded that "Wildlife watchers, photographers, and hunters contribute millions of dollars each year to the state's economy while pursuing deer. At the same time, deer are responsible for New Jersey's agricultural producers and other citizens suffering millions of dollars' worth of damage to crops, landscaping, and vehicles annually."

According to the [New Jersey Farm Bureau](#), the state's deer population has "elevated to unhealthy levels" as a result of the following:

- Deer in New Jersey no longer have any natural predators.
- There's a lack of adequate access to land for hunting.
- Recreational hunting has declined overall.
- Deer can produce multiple offspring. [The white-tailed doe's gestation period is seven months, and she typically produces two fawns, according to the [World Deer](#) organization.]
- Agriculture and suburban landscaping provide a ready food supply, even in winter.

(Continued on page 3)

(Deer, continued from page 2)

“The current situation is not sustainable,” the Farm Bureau states on its website. “New Jersey must identify a viable solution that will enable our out-of-balance deer population to be returned to manageable levels and mitigate the significant agricultural, ecological, and human health threats posed by this problem.”



Megan Mills

Both Fish and Wildlife biologists summarized the non-lethal methods of deer removal (such as contraception, noise cannons, food plots, and fencing); their downsides; and why they’re ineffective.

Deer contraception: To be effective, most oral contraceptives require more than one dose; there’s a risk of non-target species consuming the contraceptives; and

eventually the drug works its way into the food chain. Surgical contraception is “astronomically expensive for very little reward,” Megan Mills reported. It’s also very stressful to the deer.

Noise cannons: Noise cannons require a permit from Fish and Wildlife’s Bureau of Law Enforcement, and eventually, Megan said, deer stop hearing the noise.

Food plots: Farmers can provide food sources of high nutritional value to lure deer away from their crops. “Farmers can plant a little field intended for deer. But when it’s gone, it’s gone, and the deer will turn their attention to other areas,” Megan warned.

Fencing: While expensive, fencing does work. Fencing can be permanent or temporary. Megan noted that 8-foot fencing is better than 6-foot fencing, though a 6-foot fence can be used when fences are close together and deer don’t have room to jump into protected areas.

To help with the cost, the NJ Department of Agriculture offers a Deer Fencing Grant to help eligible farmers pay for half of materials and installation of fencing on permanently preserved farms to protect against crop losses. A caveat: Brian warned that fencing should be inspected quarterly to check whether animals are burrowing beneath the fence or the fence has been damaged by fallen trees.

Some good news: Outside the hunting season (early September-early February), farmers who suffer crop damage can apply to Fish and Wildlife for a Deer Depredation Permit, which allows the taking of deer outside of the normal hunting season. Farmers who are issued the permit can recruit agents to cull the deer. “Fish and Wildlife wants to provide you the tools to farm with damage from pestilent species minimized,” Brian noted.



Photo by Joseph Paulin, Rutgers University

Direct deer damage to corn.

Meanwhile, both Megan and Brian encouraged their audience to email and call local legislators to take action and lift no-discharge ordinances to allow for lethal methods of deer removal. Educating the public and convincing legislators to act are the farmers’ best options at this time. Those who aren’t stakeholders tend to turn a blind eye, Brian noted.

“If you have a municipality that wants to learn more about deer management, you need to start the conversation and we can do the heavy lifting,” Megan concluded.

Learn more . . .

- Click [here](#) for information from Fish and Wildlife about community-based deer management for municipalities.
- Click [here](#) for Consumer Reports’ suggestions to avoid vehicle collisions with deer.

Rutgers needs your help researching deer-resistant plants

See the flyer attached to the email with the Potting Shed for information on how you can help Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Monmouth County with research into deer-resistant plants. [Bill Errickson](#), Monmouth County ag agent, is in charge of the research program.

A rose isn't just a rose; it's a piece of family history

By Edith Terzano, Class of 2018

"A rose is a rose is a rose . . ."

This popular refrain was written by Gertrude Stein as part of the 1913 poem "Sacred Emily." Now the refrain is interpreted simply to mean that a thing "is what it is." But to me, my rose is so much more than a rose.

The backstory begins in the early 1960s when my father bought three small rosebushes to plant along the side of our house. One of these bushes was a climbing rose with salmon-colored blossoms. For some reason, that's the one that captured my heart, so I tended to it until I left home to get married.

In 1971, when my husband and I moved into an apartment in a four-family house with a backyard, I asked my father if I could take the rosebush with me. He said OK without really understanding why. A few years later, my husband and I bought a house for our growing family and moved again. I took the rosebush with me.



Rose cuttings in the mini greenhouse.

I planted it along the fence on the street side of our corner property. It bloomed profusely with large,



Photos by Edith Terzano

A bloom from the original rosebush.

gorgeous, salmon-colored fragrant blossoms. Passersby loved to stop to "smell the roses" and enjoy the colorful display.

Today, the rosebush is about 60 years old. It has had its ups and downs, but it's a survivor. Recently I began to worry that my rosebush might be aging out. I wondered if I could preserve it somehow, so in September 2022 I bravely took four cuttings from my precious rosebush to try my hand at rooting them.

I read online all about rooting roses, and with anticipation I began the process: Fill a container with potting soil and use a pencil to prepare individual holes for the cuttings. Next, cut the spent blooms off the top of the chosen stems; then, on an angle, cut 4-inch to 8-inch stems each with three to five nodes (where buds, leaves, and stems emerge); trim off all but the top few leaves; place the stems in water to keep them hydrated while you work.

Finally, to encourage rooting, make two to four vertical slices through the green skin about an inch or so around the bottom of the stem, but don't remove the skin (another option is to lightly crush the bottom). To increase the odds of success, dip the stems about 1 inch to 2 inches into rooting powder (available in stores or online); slip the dipped side of the stem into the hole in the potting soil; tamp down lightly; and water gently.

To create a humid environment for the cuttings, I improvised a mini greenhouse by placing four shish kabob skewers around the interior of the pot and placed a plastic produce bag over the skewers to form a tent around the four cuttings. I cut a hole in the top of the bag for ventilation. Now the long wait began.

In October 2022, I was sad to see that leaves on two of the stems were turning yellow and brown. These two stems did not root. The other two stems seemed to be surviving, but now there were warnings about the first frost.

I had three options: Plant and mulch the "rootlings" in the ground; overwinter them in the garage; or bring them into the house. I chose to bring them into the house.

Despite my careful nurturing, one stem did not survive, but the other was doing well. I hoped for an early spring.

On May 2, with a new branch growing, my baby rosebush was ready to go outside and face the perils Mother Nature would throw at it.

(Continued on page 5)

A rose isn't just a rose; it's a piece of family history

(Rose, continued from page 4)



Photos by Edith Terzano

The little stem has produced a bud!

Sure enough, over the next few months wind, rain, and drought

came and went. Leaf-eating insects, fungus, and spotted lanternflies stalked the tender growth. This little stem fought the fight with a little help from us. We battled the invaders with neem oil and continued to hope for the best.

Then what should appear in July? A rose bud! The baby rose blossomed Aug. 3. Oh happy day! My new rosebush is nearly 1 year old.

Why is this rose so special? It's special because it represents "something more" to me. It represents things like change; generations; the passage of time; and the ups and downs, struggles, and survival instinct necessary in life. It represents the beauty that can be found in the colors, fragrances, the community that

gathers around it, and the rewards of hard work. It represents the mysteries and the hopes in life. It's so beautiful to me.



The first bloom on the new rosebush.

Right plant, right place?

By Janet Schulz, Class of 1988

I completed all the requirements to become a Master Gardener, but I am more of a plant geek than an MG. Yes, I am aware "right plant, right place." But when you are looking at a lovely yellow-leafed plant and you just know you have to have it, you are sure you can find a place for it.

I am redoing a small section on the side of my garage where I had taken down an overgrown yew tree. Oh, my goodness, there is so much light! I am sure I can fit my new plant in the corner.

Do I consider its potential size? No. I know only that this yellow-leafed plant (*Sambucus lemony lace*) will look lovely next to the plant with dark leaves that I can move from the other side of the garden.

First, I will have to remove all the groundcover that is crowding out other plants in that area plus relocate some hostas because it is a little too sunny for them now. There are more of the dark-leaved plants growing in the back garden that I can relocate here. This will make a statement with the dark leaves next to the lovely yellow leaves on the plant I just brought home.

Before I do all that, I better remove the ivy climbing up the wall. When that is done, I can finally plant the clematis I have been trying to find a home for. It will be quite pretty climbing up the 3½-foot stump left from the yew. I am sure there will be room for my new plant.



Photo by Janet Schulz

This location seemed like a good spot for *Sambucus lemony lace*.

Finally, I got it all done; it only took me 2½ days, but it looks great. Wait. That can't be right. I am sitting here with a glass of lemonade reading the label of the pretty yellow plant and I can't believe it is supposed to grow to 7 feet by 7 feet in full sun to stay yellow. So much for "right plant, right place."

Do you have a tale to share about a recent gardening experience? Contact [Miriam Taub](#), Class of 2011 and Potting Shed editor.

GARDEN CLUB MEETINGS

Sept. 7, 7:30 pm: Garden Club of Harrington Park, Harrington Park Library, 10 Herring St., Harrington Park. Speaker: Jeffrey Van Pelt, retired horticulture supervisor, Somerset County Park Commission. Topic: 10 Best Roses for Your Garden and More. Q&A and refreshments to follow.

Sept. 12, 7 pm: Ramsey Area Garden Club, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 53 Wyckoff Ave., corner of Woodland Avenue, Ramsey. Moderators: Suzy Ludwig and Barbara Doxey, club members. Topic: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Adventures and Misadventures in Our Gardens. Members can report on plants, tools, gardening methods, chemicals, etc.

Sept. 13, 7 pm: Oakland Garden Club, Oakland Senior Center, 20 Lawlor Drive, Oakland. Speaker: Mary Jo Sichak, Passaic County Master Gardener. Topic: The Wonderful World of Orchids. Refreshments to follow.

Sept. 30, 2-4 pm, rain date Oct. 1: Bergen-Passaic Chapter, Native Plant Society of NJ. Get-together and tour of the extensive habitat garden at the NY-NJ Trail Conference headquarters, 600 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah. Tour the native plant garden (an MG of BC volunteer site) and learn about the Habitat Helpers program and other Trail Conference volunteer programs. Light refreshments.

WEBINARS

All times are Eastern.

Sept. 5, 6-7 pm: AARP Virtual Community Center sponsors A Tour of Philadelphia's Magic Gardens. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register. AARP membership not required.

Sept. 6, 1-1:30 pm: University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension sponsors From Scraps to Soil: Composting Basics. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

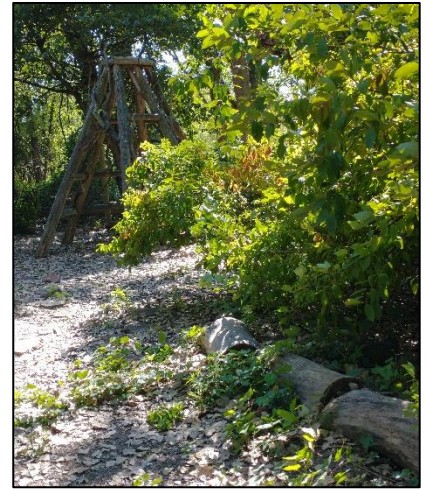
Sept. 13, 2-3 pm: American Public Gardens Association sponsors Identifying and Preventing Plant Extinction Events. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Sept. 21, 10-11 am: North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Buncombe County Center, sponsors Container Gardening-Seasonal Transitions. Free. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

EVENTS

A 'blast' at Teaneck Creek Conservancy

MG volunteers: We need you Sept. 7 to weed in the Peace Labyrinth at Teaneck Creek Conservancy, 20 Puffin Way, Teaneck. Come any time from 9 am-1 pm to continue the cleanup that began in August. Earn volunteer hours and meet other MGs.



Help get rid of these weeds in the Peace Labyrinth.

Bring gloves, bug spray, small hand tools, water, and a snack/lunch. Park in the lot in front of 20 Puffin Way. Bathrooms are located in the building. Click [here](#) to register.

Native seed-collecting workshop at Thielke

MG Smadar Shemmesh, Class of 2017, will lead a native seed-collecting workshop at Thielke Arboretum Sept. 10 from 1-3 pm at the arboretum, 460 Doremus Ave., Glen Rock. Rain date is Sept. 17. Smadar created the workshop as part of her participation in the [Rutgers Environmental Stewards](#) program.



Smadar Shemmesh

"It's a pleasure to introduce individuals who aren't familiar with seed collecting to what goes into growing plants," she said. Fee: \$10; discount for Thielke members. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Get rid of your lawn!

MG Arnie Friedman, Class of 2004, will speak on the topic of Making the Blues Go Away, Sept. 14 at 7 pm at Thielke Arboretum, 460 Doremus Ave., Glen Rock. Fee: \$10; discount for Thielke members. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

HORTICULTURE

How to hire a tree specialist

Don't mess with Mother Nature when it comes to pruning or removing large trees, especially if the work involves climbing or working from an elevated position. That work should be left to professionals.



Jason Grabosky

So says Jason Grabosky, Rutgers professor of urban forestry, who spoke at our January meeting about giving trees space and watching them grow. Jason was among the experts who recently updated the Rutgers Cooperative Extension factsheet titled How to Hire a Tree Care Professional. Click [here](#) for the factsheet.

Info about invasives



Photo by Jean Epiphan

Rutgers Cooperative Extension named Japanese stiltgrass (left) its invasive species of the month for August. Click [here](#) for photos, removal methods, and native alternatives. Jean Epiphan, Rutgers Cooperative Extension ag agent for Morris County, wrote the piece.

Michele Bakacs, statewide coordinator of the Rutgers Environmental Stewards program, wrote in an email

that "The goal of this series is to highlight those organisms that are non-native to New Jersey and cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. We can all help prevent the spread of invasives by learning which species have a negative impact on our ecosystems."

Michele is also an author of a new Rutgers [factsheet](#) titled Invasive Plants and Native Alternatives for Landscapes.

Plant of the month: Jack-in-the-pulpit

Meanwhile, Bruce Crawford, manager of horticulture, Morris County Park Commission, named Jack-in-the-pulpit as his plant of the month for August. Click [here](#) for details.

'Spotted' in Teaneck



Gross but apparently an effective way to deal with spotted lanternflies. I favor the stomping method or slapping them silly with the sole of a big, old sneaker.

- Miriam Taub, Class of 2011

CONFERENCES

Sept. 30, 8:30 am-noon: Jersey-Friendly Yards conference "Changing Climate, Changing Yards" followed by native plant sale from noon-2 pm. Ocean County College, Toms River. Fee: \$20. Click [here](#) to register and for directions. Visit the Jersey-Friendly Yards [website](#).

Oct. 21: 2023 Rutgers Master Gardeners NJ State Conference "Transforming Your Home Indoors and Out." In person at Traves Hall, Douglass College campus, New Brunswick, and online. Time and fee TBD.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Bergen County

Joel Flagler Agricultural/Resources Management Agent/County Extension Dept. Head
201-336-6780

Karen Riede Horticultural Assistant 201-336-6788

Cooperating agencies: Rutgers, the State University of NJ, US Department of Agriculture, and Bergen County Board of Commissioners. Rutgers Cooperative Extension educational programs are offered to all without regard to race, religion, color, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Rutgers Cooperative Extension is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

(President's desk, continued from page 1)

inches to 36 inches or more. They typically have three yellowish stripes, one running down the center of the back and one on each side.

The name garter snake comes from these stripes, which are said to look like old-fashioned sock garters. The background color of the body can be olive green, brown, or black. Eastern garter snakes are ovoviviparous; they bear live young from eggs that have been incubated in the female's body. Most litters range from 10 to 40 young. The baby snakes are totally independent and must find their own food.

Garter snakes are found in many habitats including grassy areas, woodlands, marshes, and gardens. Garter snakes are carnivores. They will eat anything they can catch and swallow their prey whole. Their prey includes earthworms, slugs, snails, insects, and amphibians. They will sometimes eat small birds and rodents.

So, I am happy to have a resident garter snake patrolling my garden and helping to rid it of pests and keeping the pesky moles under control.

MG OF BC NEWS

Keep your information current in our member directory

Do you ever refer to the member directory on our [website](#)? It's located in the "Member Site" section. Check your contact information to be sure it's accurate. If it's not, send an email to info@mgofbc.org with the correct/new information.

Dues-paying, certified MGs have access to the Member Site. If you don't have a username and password, send an email to info@mgofbc.org to request them. You'll also have access to past issues of the Potting Shed and other MG of BC documents.

Save the dates!

- **MG of BC fall meetings:** Sept. 19, Oct. 17, and Nov. 14 at 1 Bergen County Plaza, Hackensack.
- **Bergen County Fall Harvest Festival:** Sept. 22-24 at Overpeck County Park, 199 Challenger Road, Ridgefield Park. For details, see the flyer attached with the Potting Shed.

Spotted in Ridgefield Park



Have you seen any cute garden signs in your travels lately? Submit your photo to the [Potting Shed](#) in .jpg format. Let us know when and where you spotted your sign and include any commentary.

(Eric Rohsler, continued from page 1)

Currently, Eric curates and maintains a large naturalistic show garden at his family's nursery and garden center and designs and installs gardens. He also has started to select new plant cultivars and hopes to continue this and to learn more about plant breeding.

In all these ways, he wrote that he hopes to leave his modest mark in horticulture and share his love and knowledge of plants and nature with the gardening community.

Come and meet Eric at our September meeting!