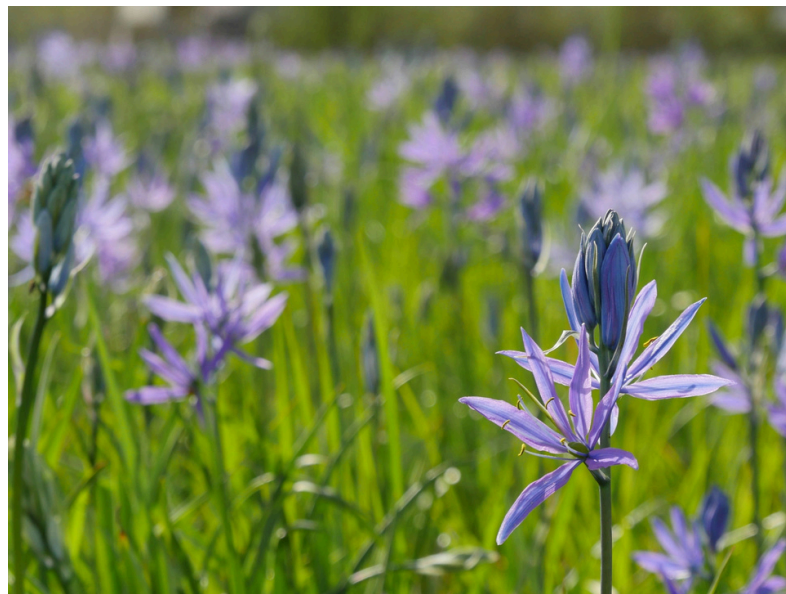


ISSUE 3 - JUNE 2025

THE REAL DIRT

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MASTER GARDENER
FOUNDATION OF LEWIS COUNTY



Veggies, Pollinators, and DIY Fun—June's Got It All

June is bursting with gardening excitement in Lewis County!

Join us for **Year-Round Vegetable Gardening** on June 7 in Salkum to learn how to extend your harvests. Then, on June 14, meet us at the Borst Demo Garden in Centralia for **Designing a Garden for All Seasons**, where you'll get hear tips for crafting a thriving landscape year-round.

Looking for a creative project? Join us June 21 at Salkum Timberland Library for **Concrete Leaf Making**, a hands-on session on crafting decorative garden pieces. Finally, on June 28 at Providence Place Demo Garden in Chehalis, we'll explore the fascinating world of **PNW Butterflies**, visiting a certified monarch habitat and sharing tips on attracting pollinators.

All workshops are free, but pre-registration is appreciated 3-4 days prior. Call 360-740-1212 (Mon-Thurs, 9 AM-3 PM) or email julie.pirtle@lewiscountywa.gov to secure your spot.

THIS ISSUE

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PRAIRIE
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UPDATES FROM
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A BLOOMING SUCCESS

Plant Sale Recap

LEAH HUGHES

The Master Gardener Foundation of Lewis County's Annual Spring Plant Sale was a fantastic success, bringing together enthusiastic gardeners, expert vendors, and a huge community of plant lovers. This year's event not only provided attendees with an impressive selection of plants but also helped us meet our budget for the year—thank you for your support!



The Lewis County Noxious Weed Control Board was in attendance providing invaluable information about eradicating noxious weeds. And the plant clinic was open and staffed with Master Gardeners as well as Trainees! We answered lots of people's questions and also had the opportunity to provide many curious people with information about the new Green School - we hope to see lots of new faces in the MG volunteer track pipeline soon.

In addition to a wide variety of plants, guests explored a selection of handcrafted garden items, including mason bee houses, trellises, planters, and unique garden art - thanks to everyone who contributed! The raffle table was also a huge hit - our most popular item was the mobile potting bench.



Thanks to the dedication of our fearless plant sale leader, Sandy, along with the incredible efforts of the plant sale committee, Master Gardeners, and trainees, this event was an overwhelming success. It was truly an outstanding achievement!

PRAIRIE APPRECIATION DAY

at the Glacial Heritage Preserve

LEAH HUGHES

Several Lewis County Master Gardeners gathered at the 30th annual Prairie Appreciation Day at the Glacial Heritage Preserve, celebrating the beauty and significance of Washington's native prairies.



Prairie Appreciation Day isn't just an event—it's a rare opportunity to experience one of the most unique ecosystems in the South Puget Sound region. The Glacial Heritage Preserve, part of a larger network of conservation lands that includes Mima Prairie and the Black River, is typically closed to the public, making this annual event the only chance for visitors to explore its breathtaking landscapes.

Acquired in 2005, the unit is dedicated to preserving the rare Washington prairie ecosystem, benefiting numerous threatened and endangered species. For one day each year, visitors can walk the maintained trails, observe wildlife and immerse themselves in the beauty

of the prairie oak savanna. It's a chance to witness vibrant wildflowers—including blooming camas, prairie lupine, sea thrift, yarrow, and golden paintbrush, which was recently removed from the endangered species list—along with the sounds of birds and the ongoing restoration efforts keeping this ecosystem thriving.

Our group of Master Gardeners had an lovely time exploring Glacial Heritage Preserve and engaging with some of the 20 learning stations, covering topics like geology, native plants, wildlife, and prairie restoration. It was inspiring to see so many people—over 1,000 attendees—coming together to celebrate and protect this remarkable landscape.



Outside of this special event, there are weekly volunteer events hosted by the [Center for Natural Land Management](#), allowing participants to contribute to ongoing restoration work. These efforts play a vital role in maintaining the health and resilience of the prairie ecosystem, ensuring its continued survival for future generations.

TRAINEE UPDATES!



A Huge Congratulations to Mary Gilbreath on officially becoming a certified Master Gardener!

Mary's journey began at Gardening For Everyone last year when she stopped by our plant clinic to chat with us. Inspired by the passion and knowledge shared that day, she took the leap and joined the WSU Extension Lewis County Master Gardener training program.

Congratulations on your achievement, Mary!



TRAINEE PROFILE - Lin Kallus



Why did you decide to pursue becoming a master gardener?

I picked up a brochure a couple years ago and didn't follow through because of feeling intimidated. In January I met El at a book club and she encouraged me to join.

What has been your favorite hands-on experience during the training?

Learning by spending time in the demo gardens. I love working alongside master gardeners, watching how they do things, hearing them discuss plants, and learning how to up pot, dig up, divide, and prep plants for the sale.

Is there a plant or gardening technique you've become especially passionate about?

At the moment I'm passionate about plant identification. I enjoy learning the names of the plants in the demo gardens. After spending a morning pulling up shotweed at Borst, I was amazed at how much of it I noticed all over Centralia later that day. I have a deeper appreciation for the plants and trees I see while out walking, hiking and biking now that I am learning their names.

What's one piece of advice you would give to someone just starting their gardening journey?

Take time to research new plants before buying to ensure they are a good fit for the space you plan to put them.

RESEARCH IN ACTION

Hugelkultur at Home

LEAH HUGHES

Heidi Freeman, Master Gardener extraordinaire, recently transformed a section of her property into a thriving Hugelkultur bed, embracing a centuries-old technique that improves


soil fertility, conserves water, and supports plant health. Using logs, branches, and organic matter, she built a raised mound designed to retain moisture and promote beneficial microbial activity. Over time,

the decomposing wood enriches the soil, creating a self-sustaining system that requires less irrigation and provides a nutrient-rich environment for plants. Inspired by the success of her project, she hopes to share her experience with fellow gardeners, demonstrating how this method can help improve backyard landscapes while supporting sustainability.



2025 UPCOMING EVENTS

LEWIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER EVENTS
JUNE - OCTOBER

Date & Time	Class	City	Location
June 7 10AM	Year Round Vegetable Gardening	Salkum	Salkum Timberland Library
June 14 10AM	Designing a Garden for All Seasons	Centralia	Borst Demo Garden
June 21 10AM	Concrete Leaf Making	Salkum	Salkum Timberland Library
June 28 10AM	PNW Butterflies	Chehalis	Providence Place Demo Garden
July 19 10AM	Growing & Caring for Hydrangeas	Chehalis	Providence Place Demo Garden
August 30 10AM	Creating a Food Forest	Salkum	Salkum Timberland Library
Sept 20 10AM	 Growing and Caring for Garlic	Chehalis	Chehalis Outfitters
October 11 10AM	Growing in a Greenhouse/Poly tunnel	Chehalis	Borst Kitchen #1

Check out the [Lewis County Master Gardener website](#) for more information about our events!



Curious about what it takes to become a master gardener? Check out the new training program at <https://greenschool.extension.wsu.edu>



Check out our **Facebook Page** and **Facebook Group** for a closer look at what we're up to!