



# BLACKSTONE VALLEY GARDENERS

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March 2011

Volume XIII - No 9

**March 10, 2011**

**6:30 p.m.**

Alternatives Unlimited  
(Elevator access to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)  
50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville, MA

**"Sustainable Plants, Sustainable Gardens"  
David Hughes**

A sustainable garden is one that thrives with minimal inputs of labor, water, fertilizer and pesticides. Sustainable gardening is a straightforward concept that requires only slightly more planning than conventional gardening. It may mean, however, altering your perception of "the perfect garden" – lawns that are lush, green and weed-free; plants with zero insect damage; and unblemished fruit.

David Hughes will share with us the basics necessary to make your garden thrive, as well as his personal plant preferences for achieving a thoughtful balance between resources used and results gained. David will pay special attention to sustainable trees and shrubs in his discussion.

## February Recap:



Frank's website describes that he is "inspired by the grace and beauty in the natural forms of wood" and we were fortunate enough to see him at work creating this rustic garden trellis. Frank has been making rustic furnishings and garden structures for over 12 years.

<http://www.frankhamm.com/>

## Mass Audubon Outdoor Almanac

<http://www.massaudubon.org>

### March 4

New moon.

### March 5

On warm days watch for flights of mourning cloak butterflies, among the few hibernating insects.



### March 7



Salamander migrations begin about this time. Watch for them crossing roads in wooded areas on the first warm rainy nights.

### March 20

Vernal equinox, first day of spring. Days and nights are equal length.

## February Munchies:



A Thank You to Beth Howder, Annie Smith, Penny Nelson, and Val Kara for February's treats, everything was yummy and a Speedy Recovery to Renate Milgroom, we hope to see you at the March meeting at Alternatives if you are able, we missed you. *Faye*

## April Potluck and Soil Testing:

We will have the signup sheets for our annual potluck dinner out again at our March meeting. We still need volunteers to prepare dishes for the following courses: hors d'oeuvres, salads, entrees, or desserts.

Bring soil samples from your garden: All you need is a half cup of soil from each area you would like to have tested. Keep your samples separate for each area.



## What is a Green Roof?

<http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/wastewater/grnroof.htm>

A "green roof" is a permanent rooftop planting system containing live plants in a lightweight engineered soil medium. These systems are designed to retain precipitation where the water is taken up by plants and transpired into the air. As a result, much less water runs off the roof compared to conventional rooftops.

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## April Family Fun Day and Tri-River Cleanup:

Saturday, April 30, 2011, 9:00 a.m. at Tri-River (rain date Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>). Bring your families! Bring your friends! All help big and small is needed to help us get the Tri-River garden in shape for the season. Please bring your shovels, heavy pruners, hand/limbing saws and rakes. Refreshments will be provided.

## May Plant Sale:

Save the date: May 14, 2011 at the VFW Hall, Route 140 in Upton. Start thinking about dividing your overgrown perennials and cleaning up your gardens in early spring. Bring a truck load! The plants will have a better survival chance if we can get them growing in pots early.

## BVG Website:

Hey garden photographers...we'd love some pictures of your beautiful gardens. We're looking for the **grand entry** to our website! Check out Sutton Garden Club's website as an example:

<http://www.suttongardenclub.typepad.com/>



(photo above from Tina Mustachio)

Please forward your photos to:  
Paula [thompsonp@hotmail.com](mailto:thompsonp@hotmail.com)

## 2011 – 2012 Blackstone Valley Gardeners:

We will have membership slips for 2011-2012 at our March meeting and in the newsletter starting in April.

Reminder...We have the following Executive Board openings for next year: President, Vice President, Program, Hospitality, and Community Outreach.

The nominating committee, consisting of Renate Milgroom, Annie Smith, and Jean Verrier, will be soliciting candidates...if anyone is interested in a Board position, please see a member of the nominating committee.

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## Benefits of Green Roofs:

- Green roofs can reduce heating and cooling costs.
- By reducing energy demand, green roofs reduce the air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy production.
- By reducing roof temperatures, green roofs slow the formation of ground-level ozone. The plants in a green roof can remove certain pollutants from the air: particulate matter and gaseous pollutants including nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and ground level ozone. Green roofs can remove carbon dioxide and produce oxygen.
- Green roofs can improve stormwater management. The plants and growing medium of a green roof absorb water that would otherwise run off.
- Green roof can reduce noise from machinery, traffic, and airplanes compared to conventional roofing materials.

Green Roofs can be found at schools, commercial buildings, hospitals, airports, residential complexes, etc. Here are a few examples in Massachusetts:

- Cambridge Center, Kendall Square, Cambridge
- Ikea, Stoughton
- Boston City Hall, Boston
- Healing Garden at Mass General, Boston
- Addison Gallery of Art, Andover

Green Roofs are generally used for commercial or large residential buildings, but we can still do some things at home to reap some of the benefits :

Instead of completely impervious areas like patios, balconies, driveway, or decks: add planters, pots or baskets with annuals, vegetables, or even trees and shrubs. All types of vegetation will keep your hardscapes cooler and will reduce rainwater runoff. Unless your roof has been designed by a professional for the added weight of plants and water, do not attempt to add a green roof to your house.

## Don't Miss the Spring Flower Shows:

Worcester Flower Show March 4-6  
Boston Flower Show March 16-20

