



2021 Massachusetts Gardening Symposium Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

If you can't find the information you need below,
please email us at SympInfo@MassMasterGardeners.org.

THE BASICS:

Q: Remind me again: What are the lecture dates/times?

A: Sure thing. Here you go.

- Monday, September 13, 7:00-8:15 PM (Eastern Daylight Time): "Gravel Gardening: Gardens That Rock" with Jeff Epping
- Saturday, September 18, 10:00-11:15 AM EDT: "Ecosystem Gardening" with Annie White
- Monday, September 20, 7:00-8:15 PM EDT: "Unusual Bulbs for the Garden" with John Lonsdale
- Saturday, September 25, 10:00-11:15 AM EDT: "The Scentual Garden" with Ken Druse

PLEASE NOTE: We ask that attendees log in 30 minutes prior to the start of each lecture so that we can verify everyone and get started on time. Once you are logged in, you can read a book, check email, or go make yourself a cup of coffee until the lecture starts. Or you may want to stick around to watch our 30-minute "Welcome" slide show.

Q: Why are lectures on different days and times?

A: In past years – when the Symposium has been face-to-face – four back-to-back Saturday lectures weren't a problem; and there were plenty of other activities for you to enjoy during breaks. This year having you sit in front of your screen for six hours straight seemed a bit much to ask. So we've broken lectures up into two Monday evenings (9/13 and 9/20) and two Saturday mornings (9/18 and 9/25). We hope you are able to plan ahead so that this works for your schedule.

Q: Is attendance limited to Master Gardeners? To Massachusetts residents?

A: No! And no! Gardeners of all levels of experience – from beginners to Master Gardeners and Green Industry professionals – are all welcome. In past years when we've met in person, attendees have come from all over New England. (Plus even an occasional New Yorker!) This year, thanks to our virtual format, the world's the limit. While some lecture content may be more appropriate for Northeast gardeners (USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 5, 6, 7, etc.), specialty garden design has universal relevance. And it's always wise to verify all of the requirements of a potential new plant: light, soil, moisture, wind exposure, and cold tolerance.

Q: I know the Symposium is virtual this year. How are you doing that?

A: We'll be using Zoom Webinar, a popular videoconferencing platform that is ideal for large events like the 2021 Symposium. Presentations will be in high quality PowerPoint "slide" format, and you will be able to hear and see the lectures live.

Q: Will there be time for Q&A with the speakers?

A: Yes! We are allowing an extra 15 minutes for Q&A following each presentation. You will be asked to type your questions into a simple Zoom message tool; and one of our volunteers will curate them and aggregate similar ones so speakers can answer as many as possible.



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Q: Will lectures be recorded for future viewing?

A: Unfortunately, no. Lecture content – audio and visuals – is the intellectual property of the speakers, and recording is not permitted.

Q: I'm a Massachusetts Master Gardener. Is the Symposium eligible for MMGA Continuing Ed credit?

A: Yes, and Class of 2021 Interns are eligible, too. Each lecture is worth 1.25 hrs. of CE credit – 5.0 hrs. total when you attend all four presentations.

REGISTRATION & PAYMENT:

Q: I'm excited! How do I sign up?

A: Yay! So happy you will be joining us. Start by going to our website, <http://massmastergardeners.org/symposium/>. Look for the REGISTER button and click. This takes you to our registration form. Just fill in the required fields, click CONTINUE, and choose your method of payment.

Q: The registration form says I need to use PayPal. Can I use a credit card instead?

A: Absolutely. PayPal processes payments for us, but you do not need to have or use a PayPal account. Credit cards are gladly accepted. Complete the 1st page of the registration page (contact info, etc.), then click **CONTINUE**. On the next page, click on "PAY WITH DEBIT OR CREDIT CARD." That should do it.

Q: I'd like to invite a friend. How do I do that?

A: Just tell them to go to our website, <http://massmastergardeners.org/symposium/>, and click on REGISTER.

Q: What if I want to pay for my friend?

A: What a nice idea! Just go to our website, <http://massmastergardeners.org/symposium/>, and click on REGISTER. Complete the form using your friend's name, address, email, etc. On the second page (Payment) enter your own credit card info. If you are paying for multiple folks, you will need to use a different email address for each of them. (P.S. Sorry to spoil the surprise, but our Confirmation Email will go to your friend, not to you. So the catnip [*Nepeta cataria*] will be out of the proverbial bag.)

Q: I have a conflict on the day of one of the lectures? Can I just register for the other three at a reduced price?

A: Sorry. The four lectures are only available as a package. But here's an idea: Invite a friend to stand in for you at the lecture that you can't attend! We'll just need you to contact us at least 10 days in advance of the lecture and provide your stand-in's name and email address. You can still attend the other talks yourself.

Q: If my plans change between now and September, can I get a refund?

A: We are accepting refund requests for the full four-lecture program through September 7. Email us at SympInfo@MassMasterGardeners.org. Individual lectures are not refundable.



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- Q:** Oh darn! I procrastinated, and now the Early Bird price has ended. Is it too late?
- A:** Sorry, Early Bird pricing (\$60) ends July 1. But you can still register up until September 7 at the regular price (\$80). At an average of \$20 per lecture, we like to think that's still a bargain.
- Q:** Yikes! I went to your web page, and it says registration is closed. Help!
- A:** To ensure everyone has a great Symposium experience, we cap attendance and set a registration cutoff date, which this year is September 7. Sorry you missed out. *Note to self:* Register early next year.

ATTENDING THE LECTURES:

- Q:** I received an email confirming my registration. What happens next? Will you send me reminders? Links to the Zooms?
- A:** Good questions. We will be sending all registrants **two email Reminders** prior to each lecture: two days before the lecture and the day preceding the lecture. Emails will include handouts and Zoom links. Make sure to check your email for these Reminders. They should come to your Primary Inbox, but – if they're not there – also check Promotions and Spam. The "sender" will be Massachusetts Master Gardener Association. If you're desperate, email us any time at SymplInfo@MassMasterGardeners.org.
- **9/13 Gravel Gardening lecture:** Look for Reminder emails on 9/11 and 9/12
 - **9/18 Ecosystem lecture:** Reminder emails on 9/16 and 9/17
 - **9/20 Bulbs lecture:** Reminder emails on 9/18 and 9/19
 - **9/25 Scentual Garden lecture:** Reminder emails on 9/23 and 9/24
- Q:** I've never used Zoom before. Is there anything I need to do in advance? Can I join the lectures by cell phone?
- A:** No worries! When you're ready to join, just click the link in our Reminder email. Our host will admit you to a virtual Waiting Room while we verify everyone's registration. Zoom works on desktops, laptops, tablets, and cell phones.
- Q:** What if it's almost lecture time, and I can't find the link or can't get Zoom to work?
- A:** Quick! Send us an email at SymplInfo@MassMasterGardeners.org. Volunteers will be standing by to help you.
- Q:** My friend forgot to sign up. Can I share the Zoom link with her?
- A:** Sorry, but link-sharing is not permitted. The revenue generated by the Symposium is important to the MMGA, which is a not-for-profit organization, so we ask all participants to please pre-register. During the 30 minutes leading up to each lecture we will be verifying all attendees against our registrant list.

Still have questions? We're happy to help.
Email us at SymplInfo@MassMasterGardeners.org