

Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners Newsletter

2021 SFEMG Intern Training Program



15 weeks beginning March 15
Registration opens Feb. 1 at sfemg.org

**Livestreamed
Classes
Monday Nights**

Registration Opens for 2021 SFEMG Intern Training Program *Newly structured virtual classes scheduled March 15 through June 21*

by Kathy Haq

The SFEMG's annual Intern Training Program begins March 15 using a new format intended to give interns the best learning experience possible in light of COVID-19 public health considerations, says program coordinator Barbara Ellis. This year's class will be limited to 60 new interns.

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2021 SFEMG Intern Training Program — cont. from page 1

The Intern Training Program is geared toward individuals who want to learn more about gardening in Santa Fe’s climate and enjoy sharing what they know with others. “The best thing about the training program is that interns will have an opportunity to be part of a vibrant volunteer organization whose members continue to learn about gardening and nature while sharing their knowledge and skills with each other and the public,” Ellis states.

Classes will be conducted in two phases: a prerecorded session followed by a live webinar offered via Zoom. Prerecorded material featuring subject-matter experts from New Mexico State University (NMSU) and the local community will be made available prior to the live weekly webinars. The subject-matter experts will be available to review the material and answer questions during interactive Monday-night Zoom sessions. The prerecorded material will be available to all new interns as well as any interns from the 2020 class who wish to complete the training program at no additional cost.

Where in previous years the SFEMG offered in-person classes on Monday nights and Tuesday mornings, the interactive portion of this year’s programming will take place from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Monday evenings beginning March 15. Only those registered for the 2021 training program will be permitted to participate in the Monday evening sessions to enable small, virtual break-out discussion sessions with class leaders.

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Editor: Kathy Haq

Art Director: Jannine Cabossel

Contact us at:
news.sfemg@gmail.com

The 15-week program includes virtual classes on:

- Basic Botany and Plant Identification
- Soil Biology
- H₂O and Water Harvesting
- Weeds
- SFEMG Projects and Requirements for Master Gardener Certification
- Integrated Pest Management and Pollinators
- Vegetable Production
- Grapes and Other Fruit
- Roses, Trees and Shrubs
- Wildlife Management
- Xeriscape
- Diagnosing Plant Problems
- Seed Saving
- Composting and Native Plants
- Fruit Trees

For more information and to register, see [Become a Master Gardener](#). The fee for the program is \$200, payable online at the time of registration using a credit card or PayPal. Opportunities for interns to volunteer in SFEMG projects will begin when NMSU determines it is safe to do so.



“I see a garden as basically an emotional and sensual experience as well as something that is filled with surprise.”

— American gardener and horticulturist Frank Cabot (1925-2011), whose 20-acre English style garden and summer estate is featured in the film “The Gardener”

A Message from Santa Fe County Extension Agent Tom Dominguez

Happy New Year, everyone! In saying this, I am certain it will be a much happier and prosperous year for us all. With every New Year comes a time to look forward, plan for future projects, look for new opportunities, forge new friendships and rekindle past hopes and plans.

I read somewhere, “Let’s go invent tomorrow instead of worrying about what happened yesterday.” Those words were never more applicable than today. Though 2020 was plagued with its own problems and challenges, it mostly inhibited us from enjoying what we love best: the spirit of good company and making this world a better place through gardening education.

We gardeners are the eternal optimists. By planting a seed, tree or shrub, we are living in hope — hope for the future when we will enjoy the fruits of our labor. Here at Santa Fe Cooperative Extension and Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners, we are moving ahead with a “business as usual” attitude. Though our format and methods might have changed slightly, we are still moving forward with intern classes and projects. If ever there was a time that Master Gardeners was more relevant, it exhibited itself during these pandemic months by the number of questions and inquiries received.

Despite what happens around us, we continue to evolve — adding or retiring projects, acquiring new members or saying farewell to members wishing to pursue other interests. Master Gardeners remains constant in its mission of non-biased education to the public, and we like to have fun as well!

Last year will be one for the books and one to put behind us. This year is one to look forward to, and because of our exceptional leadership and volunteers I feel confident it will be the best year yet. I am honored to work for and with such an outstanding group of volunteers who remain dedicated to the success of the Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners.

In closing, I’d like to offer a special word of thanks to all of our cooperating partners, especially Friends of Santa Fe Master Gardeners (formerly the Santa Fe Master Gardeners Association) for their continued support for the SFEMG and our mission.

Your dedication and service are inspiring. Let’s continue to move forward in 2021.

Respectfully,

Tom



A Message from SFEMG Board President Wendy Wilson

Well, well, well. We made it through 2020! Happy, healthy New Year to you all! In preparation for the upcoming growing season, an excellent seed-starting guide is available from the [University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension](#). In conjunction, the “Ball Culture Guide: The Encyclopedia of Seed Germination” gives information ranging from seed selection, soil and germination needs (light, water and temperature) to timing, hardening off and planting out.



The Seed Library

Speaking of seeds and seed starting, the Seed Library project is actively collecting seed for distribution to the community. If you have extra seeds you collected from 2018, 2019 and 2020, or if you happen to order extra seeds this spring, the Seed Library would be glad to receive them. Please contact Christine Salem (jcsalem@comcast.com) or Susie Sonflieth (sasonflieth@yahoo.com) for more details.

2021 Priorities

The SFEMG board held its annual retreat Jan. 9 in preparation for the upcoming year. Holly Henry and Karen Browne-Armijo facilitated our discussion. Several topics of importance to our whole membership — Master Gardeners and interns alike — were discussed, more specifically:

1. The need to formulate outreach strategies to expand our reach into the broader Santa Fe County community. We concluded that there are three groups that are particularly underserved by our efforts: Spanish speakers, Indigenous Peoples, and young families with children.
2. We want to enhance our branding and expand our outreach efforts in general. How can we be more visible and accessible?
3. We want to establish a Speaker’s Bureau featuring the expertise of our Master Gardeners.
4. We need to focus on succession planning within the organization. How can we systematically and intentionally recruit volunteers to fill project and board positions?
5. We need to evaluate how we can communicate more effectively and efficiently with our members.

I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish together in 2021.

My best,

Wendy

Help Wanted

We currently have three Board positions open for Master Gardeners, and they are described briefly here:

Treasurer: Manage the organization's funds. Establish and maintain the yearly budget. Track income and expenses. Write checks, deposit funds and maintain appropriate balances. Receive membership dues. Ensure taxes and all required reports are filed and fees paid.

Education Coordinator: Develop continuing education (CE) for the membership. Collect and approve CE events available through outside entities. Develop education events for the public. Work with project teams and the project coordinators to define education activities.

Public Relations Director: Form and chair a Public Communication Committee. Handle publicity and marketing for SFEMG. Advertise public events and revise and print brochures as necessary.

If you are interested or want more information, please contact Wendy or Tom at your earliest convenience: (wendylinneawilson@hotmail.com) or (tdomingu@nmsu.edu).

We Are Here to Help!

If you have a gardening question, Santa Fe Master Gardeners are available to help. Go to our [website](#), click on the Garden Questions? link, and pose your question. Someone will do research and get back to you.





Spectacle pod (*Dimorphocarpa wislizeni*)

by Pam Wolfe

Spectacle pod is widespread throughout the Southwest and northern Mexico. It colonizes desert shrubland and piñon-juniper savanna, favoring dry, sandy, and disturbed areas at elevations below 7,500 feet. The plant recently appeared in the [Xerces Society's Pollinator Plants for the Albuquerque and Santa Fe Region](#) and will soon be on display in a new pollinator patch just east of the Santa Fe County Extension Office. The fragrant, white-to-lavender flowers cluster in racemes that elongate as the plant matures. Smooth, wavy, toothed, or lobed leaves are gray-green with star-like hairs.

The genus name is a composite of Greek words: *di*, two; *morphe*, shape; and *karpos*, seed, describing the distinctive paired silicles (seed pods) that look like tiny eyeglasses, inspiring the common name. The specific epithet is for Frederick Adolphus Wislizenus (1810-1889), a German physician who accompanied fur traders and collected plants throughout the Northwest in 1839, then followed the Santa Fe Trail into Mexico during the Mexican-American war. He collected the first sample of this native mustard (Brassicaceae) in New Mexico in 1846.

The ethnobotany entries on [SEINet](#) and the [Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Plant Database](#) give a long list of uses for the plant including infusions for delirium, decoctions for swelling, and powders for direct application to wounds.

Landscape use: A bit rangy for the formal garden, the plant is well suited to informal settings such as meadows and pollinator patches where self-seeding is welcome.

Planting and care: An annual or biennial, spectacle pod seed can be sown in fall or cold stratified for 30 days and planted in spring. For a faster result plant nursery-grown seedlings.



Silicles forming little eyeglasses

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Spectacle pod — cont. from page 7

Plant type: herbaceous annual, biennial

Bloom time: early spring, summer

Size: 1-2 feet tall, width varies depending on the amount of branching

Sun: full sun, part shade

Soil: deep sand

Water: low

USDA zones: 5-8

References:

Kelly W. Allred, *Flora Neomexicana II: Glossarium Nominum* (Lulu Press, 2020)

Kelly W. Allred, *Flora Neomexicana III: An Illustrated Identification Manual* (Lulu Press, 2020)

Photo credits: Russ Kleinman, Western New Mexico University



Spectacle pod early bloom



Starting Seeds

by Jannine Cabossel

If you have gone through your seeds and find packets that are over three years old, you may want to test them for viability. Are they still good enough to plant again? Many seeds are good for two to three years and some much longer if they didn't get wet or damaged. Look at the date on the package to see if they are still viable.

Three years or older? Test them. To test them, take 10 seeds and soak them in water overnight. Fold the soaked seeds into a dampened paper towel and close them inside of a plastic bag. Place this on a shady, warm windowsill or on top of your refrigerator. Avoid setting the seeds in a sunny place where they might fry. Check back in a few days to see how many have germinated.

After a few days, you'll see some of them have sprouted. If eight out of the 10 show signs of growth, you have an 80 percent germination rate; five out of 10, a 50 percent germination rate; and so on. I would toss seeds with less than a 50 percent germination rate or double up on planting seeds.

You can go online for more information about germinating seeds indoors. This guide from [PennState Extension](#) is a good example. It offers a comprehensive view of germination times, indoor growing times, and optimal growing temperatures for planting outdoors. Happy growing!

New & Noteworthy

Have you recently read a gardening-related article or book, visited a horticultural website or blog, listened to a podcast, or seen a nature show or documentary you think other gardeners would enjoy or find useful? Send a link to the newsletter (news.sfemg@gmail.com) and we'll include the information in the next issue. **Note that some of these sources may have paywalls.**

[“Paris to Revamp Traffic-Clogged Champs-Élysées as a City Garden”](#) by James Hookway, *The Wall Street Journal* (Jan. 15, 2021)

Our View: [“Planting trees: What we need now,”](#) *Santa Fe New Mexican* (Jan. 10, 2021)

[“The Master Gardeners: The cold truth about your garden in winter”](#) by Laurie McGrath, *Santa Fe New Mexican Home Magazine* (Jan. 3, 2021)

[“2021 Trends in Garden Design”](#) by Justine Guidry, *Garden Design*

[“4 Gardening Trends You’ll Want to Dig into in 2021”](#) by Mackenzie Nichols, *Better Homes & Gardens* (Dec. 22, 2020)

[“Revisiting an Ancient Theory of Herbalism”](#) by Amanda Fortini, *The New York Times Magazine* (Nov. 12, 2020)

[“The Disturbances of The Garden”](#) by Jamaica Kincaid, *The New Yorker* (Sept. 7, 2020 Issue)

[“The Therapeutic Power of Gardening”](#) by Rebecca Mead, *The New Yorker* (Aug. 24, 2020 Issue)

[“Natural wonder: Wing ‘clap’ solves mystery of butterfly flight,”](#) by Matt McGrath, BBC News

The Garden Journal Radio Show

**Every Saturday
10-10:30 a.m.**



Tune in to KSFR 101.1 FM on Saturday mornings from 10 to 10:30 to listen to a lively, entertaining, and informative gardening show. Show host: Chris Salem

Feb. 06: Slow Food Santa Fe edition

Erika Newman, membership engagement and outreach specialist, La Montañita Co-op Food Market, discusses food distribution and supply chain issues faced by the Co-op during the pandemic.

Feb. 13: SFEMG edition

Master Gardener Susie Sonflieth discusses the Santa Fe Seed Library.

Feb. 20: Food, Farms & Friends edition

“Soil Stories” with host Carrie Core

Feb. 27: Home Grown New Mexico edition

Jannine Cabossel, The Tomato Lady, discusses March in your vegetable garden.

More info at [Giant Veggie Gardener](#)

Schedule subject to change. To listen to previous broadcasts, click [here](#).

February Calendar of Events

We do not know when face-to-face events will be viable again, but please continue to check the SFEMG website and the websites of other organizations to see what's being offered. Note that "phc" stands for "per hour of class time."

Feb 10	Tree and Shrub Pruning (CSU)	1 CE
Feb 11	Native Bee Conservation in Urban Areas (USU)	1 CE
Feb 13	Greenhouse Design and Operation (SFCC)	3 CE
Feb 13	Beekeeping for Beginners (USU)	2 CE
Feb 18	Polinizadores: Quiénes Son y Cómo Conservarlos (Xerces Society)	1.5 CE
Feb 25	Starting Your Garden From Seed (DBG)	2.5 CE
Feb 26	Buying Bee-Safe Plants: How You Can Help (XS)	2 CE
Feb 27	Basics of Hydroponics (SFCC)	3 CE

DBG: [Denver Botanic Gardens](#)

CSU: [Colorado State University Extension](#)

SFCC: [Santa Fe Community College Continuing Education](#)

USU: [Utah State University Extension](#)

XS: [Xerces Society](#)

Members Only: For a complete list of Master Gardener projects and to sign up, please visit SignUpGenius, a link to which is in the Members Only section of the SFEMG website. To log hours worked and to see year-to-date totals, visit Track It Forward in the same location.



Mission Statement:

Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners is a nonprofit volunteer organization whose mission is to learn, teach, and promote locally sustainable gardening through reliable, current research-based practices

New Mexico State University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and educator

