

Robilee Smith – Class of 2015 – Northwest Chapter



Robilee with volunteers @ Horticultural Therapy project – flower arranging with seniors

***What is your favorite area of gardening to learn about?**

Oooh....I love them all! Can't choose a favorite because new developments in all fields are constantly drawing my attention.

***What is your favorite pest to manage?**

With reluctance: Jumping Worms. I really DO NOT like them! But I believe I'm contributing to the battle against this invasive pest. I drafted the VT Invasives page for Prof. Josef Gorres and also spotted a serious VT commercial vector distributor via a Helpline call and I continue to perform outreach on this topic.

***What would you consider to be your pride and joy in your home garden?**

Another question too hard for me to answer....my home garden is an on-going learning experiment. Yes, I do have favored plants and joys...but these, too, evolve. Right now I'm actually rather excited about how well my composting and green cone solutions are working out. (I'm also a Master Composter). Am also currently excited about several young trees I've nurtured along, some new fairly rare native shrubs and also biennial moneyplant seedlings that I patiently allowed to spread last season that should give a great spring flowering display.

***What is your favorite gardening "go to" book or other resource (educator, column, magazine, etc.) for research and learning on horticulture topics?**

This one's easy: Ask Extension's Search site. I do love Horticulture magazine and I read other source books and periodicals; but when I need to look up a gardening answer, I've learned to rely on Ask Extension.

***Do you have a favorite garden you like to visit? Favorite nursery to buy plants?**

I have a long list of gardens I want to visit....and a shorter list of ones I've enjoyed already. But locally: I love Shelburne Farms' gardens at the inn and Shelburne Museum's gardens. I also love supporting local nurseries and Red Wagon Plants is one of my favorites.

***What Master Gardener projects do you/have you worked on?**

Since graduating in 2015, I've worked consistently on two projects: our Master Gardener Helpline and our Horticultural Therapy project for seniors with memory and other challenges in S. Burlington. The last two years I was also a regular participant on the Shelburne Museum EMG project. I've also enjoyed taking on several one-time EMG projects giving presentations and answering gardening questions. Last year I had a great time serving as the EMG judge the Orleans County Fairs' herbs/flowers/vegetables and other plants competitions. (Fortunately, they had lots of blue ribbons to give out!)



Waste Warriors Composting

***What has changed about gardening since you first became a Master Gardener? What hasn't changed?**

Amazingly, quite a lot has changed in seven years! Staffing and organization for the EMG program. The course itself is now online and we can answer home gardeners' questions remotely. Some of this is due to great staff work, some to technological advancement, and some (I believe) is due to pandemic challenges. I love the film & speaker series – what a wonderful source for education and inspiration.



UVM Extension Master Gardeners

UVM EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2019

Volunteering @ the Horticultural Therapy project.



Volunteering @ the EMG Helpline

Robilee has contributed 1,159 volunteer hours (May, 2022)