



## Front Range Organic Gardeners, Inc.

*Veteran and novice gardeners who have shared knowledge and enthusiasm since 1987*

January 2017 Volume 29, No. 1

## FIRST MEETING OF 2017

### ELECTION OF NEW BOARD, ANNUAL SEED SWAP and Q & A

7:00 p.m. Thursday, January 24, 2017

Denver Presbytery, 1710 South Grant, Denver, CO 80210

(enter building from parking lot on the south side)

**ELECTION OF NEW BOARD:** Traditional (by-law) fact: only paid-up members of FROG will be eligible to vote in January's election of a new board of directors. Our annual dues for 2017 are \$15. Please pay your \$15 to treasurer Linda Tegtmeier at the January meeting. Another possibility: complete the form that appears on the last page of this newsletter and mail it with your dues.

**SEED EXCHANGE:** We hope there is an abundance of seeds you have gathered and saved. We also welcome open packets of extra seeds from commercial suppliers. The FROG seed swap is a great way to try some new varieties of flowers, veggies --and more!--without the out-of-pocket cost of the gamble.

**Q & A:** With no outside speaker scheduled in January, we'll have time to swap seeds and ask each other questions about gardening challenges and successes.

## OUR LOCATION

Denver Presbytery, 1710 South Grant, Denver, CO 80210

Location is 3 blocks east of Broadway, 4 blocks north of Evans. Free parking in lot south of the building--enter from alley on east side of the building or driveway on the south side of building. The building is between S. Grant St. and S. Logan St. on E. Mexico Ave. The entrance is in the back of the building, next to the parking lot. There is a handicapped ramp available there.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

February 28	Rain Gardens
March 28	What's New for 2017
April 25	Bugs
May 20	Plant Sale
June 27	Garden Tour - 23rd Ave Sculpture Studio
July 25	Garden Tour - DMH
August 22	Garden Tour - Earthlinks
September 26	Hardy Trees and Shrubs
October 24	Landscaping with Native Plants
November 28	Very Low Water Plants and Grasses For Our Area
December 12	Holiday Party (note this is the SECOND Tuesday)

## NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hi Froggers:

FROG could sure use more people involved in our organization. Please consider one of the following opportunities:

**Newsletter editor.** Writes the monthly newsletter with the help of editors and someone else sending the newsletter out to the membership.

**Help with grant applications.** Work with Carol LaRocque to process grant applications that we receive, deal with applicants, and make recommendations to the board as to what groups should receive grants. Carol says its not hard, just needing attention to details.

**2017 board positions.** At our January meeting we will elect five to seven (5-7) people as the new FROG board, our governing body. The board members select officers at their first meeting. Please consider putting your name in the hat in January.

You can contact me about any of these opportunities at 303-232-9105 or [bettyjpage1@comcast.net](mailto:bettyjpage1@comcast.net).

Thanks,

Betty Jo Page, President

## **BOUNTY:** Contributions from FROG members

*From Anne Brinkman: ProGreen Expo*

Don't forget to make it to the ProGreen Expo at the Denver Convention Center from February 7-10. A host of good speakers and topics are lined up and you might even earn some CEU's for that arborist or pesticide certification.

*From Martin Buchanan: The Vertical Farm*

The Vertical Farm: Growing crops in the city, without soil or natural light.

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/01/09/the-vertical-farm>

## **Those Vile Voles**

**Evergreen Garden Club Newsletter**

***Wild Iris – December 2016 edition***

**with Special Thanks to Louise Heern**



## MEADOW VOLES AND PINE VOLES

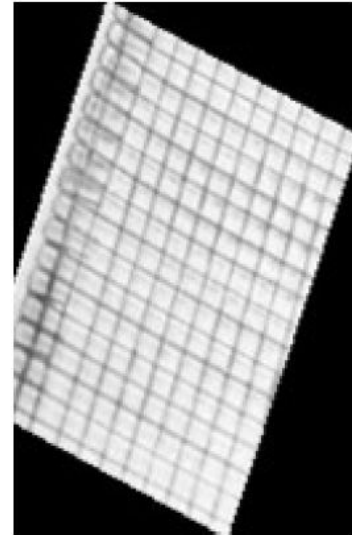
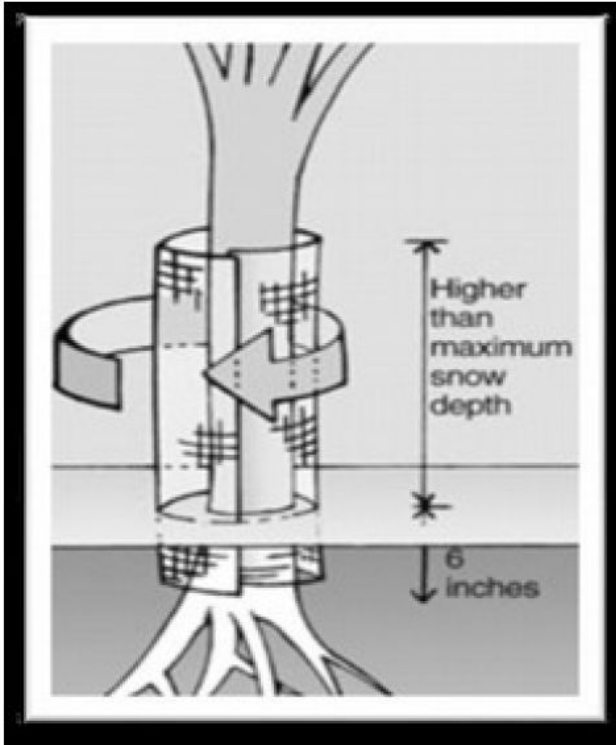
**Meadow voles** are most active above ground. They sometimes live underground where the soil has been cultivated or where a burrow system is already present; for example, an abandoned pocket gopher burrow.

**Pine voles** favor open woodlands and spend most of their time in underground burrows. They usually have an extensive subsurface trail system that is excavated about 1 to 2 inches deep. These burrows open to the surface and often connect to above-ground runways.

***Voles are active day and night and do not hibernate. They have three to six young per litter and have approximately 12 litters per year. Fallen birdseed in winter can attract voles.***

***Both eliminating*** voles and ***preventing*** vole damage is the most effective way to keep things under control. Yellow-tabbed snap traps work great for eliminating voles. Poisoning voles is not recommended as a poisoned vole can sicken natural predators, and poisons are dangerous around pets and children.

Tree damage from voles can be prevented by wrapping the tree trunk with hardware cloth. Ensure the squares are no larger than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch and bury the cloth at least six inches below the ground.



**YELLOW-TABBED SNAP TRAPS WORK GREAT!**

Place traps perpendicular to runways with the trigger end in the runway and bait with small amounts of rolled oats or peanut butter. Set traps in the fall before most damage occurs. Cover the hole with a tent or an inverted flower pot to avoid harming non-target critters.

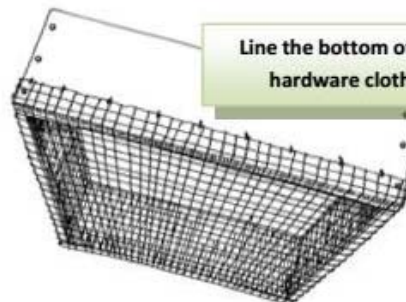


Protect the roots of shrubs and perennials from vole damage by planting the main root-ball in a basket made of hardware cloth or purchase wire baskets from the *Dollar Store* and bury them directly into

the ground. Leave a couple inches of the basket above the surface and hide with mulch if the plant doesn't cover it. Larger wire baskets for plants like rose bushes can be purchased at *Target*. The baskets have an advantage because they have a bottom. Pocket gophers can burrow deeper than voles and can come in from underneath. Below is a picture of a burrowing tunnel that came in from under the fence and completely surrounded the protected plant. Thanks to the basket, this Broom is now twice the size and still growing strong today!



Baskets from the Dollar Store come in two sizes



Line the bottom of raised beds with hardware cloth before filling.



Tips and advice from two local gardeners, Margaret Rode and Rachel Emmer. Did you find something that worked for you? Share it with us by sending to [louiseheern@gmail.com](mailto:louiseheern@gmail.com) Thank you for sharing ladies!

**From Margaret Rode -**

The standard advice nowadays in my circles is:

Eliminate all hiding places - grass, weeds, mulch, everything you can do to create an open space, which scares them and makes them vulnerable to predators

Don't mulch until the ground is frozen

Avoid large areas of mulch in vole-ridden areas

Trap, trap, trap (live or dead)

Avoid poisons, which will travel up the food chain

Vole repellent products that include castor bean oil can sometimes be helpful (not near edibles though)

Flooding their tunnels this time of year (where they are hunkered down) can make them quite miserable

I made a soil drench with hot dried chilies, garlic, onion, and vinegar....it seemed to help and made the garden smell great :)

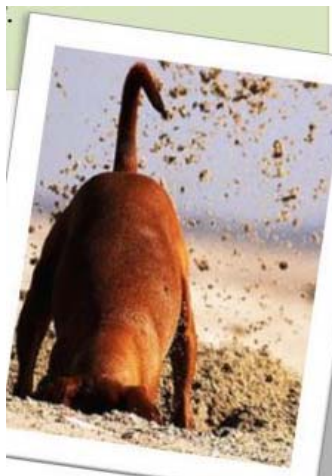
## **MORE GOOD ADVICE**

### **From Rachael Emmer -**

- Look at ways to invite vole predators into the garden....fox, owls, cats. Evaluate current habitat and consider ways to make it more predator friendly.
  - Fox - consider keeping gates open for fox during the winter months so the garden can become part of their winter hunting grounds.
  - Owls - create owl perches and/or nest boxes. Resident cats work wonders on a vole population (personal experience).



- Here's an article on building and placing owl boxes - <http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/beneficial/creating-owl-boxes.htm>
- **And maybe more than you ever wanted to know from the CSU extension website, <http://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/natural-resources/managing-voles-in-colorado-6-507/>.**



## 2017 PLANT SALE

Our ongoing requests for next year's plant sale include:

**PLANT SALE COMMITTEE!** As the saying goes, many hands make light work! The Plant Sale Committee would love help with the many tasks leading up to our sale. We start on those in January. Contact Anne Brinkman, [anneb.brinkman@gmail.com](mailto:anneb.brinkman@gmail.com) or [\(303\) 522-4926](tel:3035224926) to discuss further.

**LONG-TERM GREENHOUSE SOLUTION!** We have been very lucky to use a club member's greenhouse for the past couple sales but we are looking for a long-term solution. Please keep your ears and eyes open for greenhouse space that we can access for 4-5 weeks in April/May. Requirements for the greenhouse space include 300+ sq ft of growing space, open access by a limited number of club members, ready access to water, electricity, and located reasonably central to club members.

Contact [frog.plant.sale@gmail.com](mailto:frog.plant.sale@gmail.com) with any leads!

**CARTONS/CONTAINERS!** Please collect wax/cardboard milk/juice cartons – ½ gallon and quart. Be sure to rinse them before storing them. When you have lots, bring them to a future FROG meeting or contact the Plant Sale Committee ([frog.plant.sale@gmail.com](mailto:frog.plant.sale@gmail.com)) and we'll arrange to pick them up.

**STICKS!** Please start collecting strong straight sticks – 12-24 inches long for staking the tomatoes. Again, bring them to future FROG meetings.

**BLINDS!** We need plant label stakes made from window mini-blinds. Please keep your eyes open for garage or yard sales selling blinds (super cheap and vinyl only, please – metal ones may have lead paint) or if you hear of some being thrown away – snag them! You don't have to cut them up or clean them, just bring them to a FROG meeting or contact [frog.plant.sale@gmail.com](mailto:frog.plant.sale@gmail.com).

## 2016 BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**President** Betty Jo Page 303-232-9105

**Vice President** Rose Ann Bennett 720-933-3764

**Treasurer** Linda Tegtmeier 303-744-7871

**Secretary** Suzanne Walter 720-220-8577

Board Members-At-Large

Meredith Bossert 303-697-4534

Jane Wallace 303-733-7424

Maggie Rice 303-756-1331

**Plant Sale Co-Chairs**

Anne Brinkman 303-522-4926

Trish Griffin, Lee Recca

**Programs** Betty Jo Page 303-232-9105

**Grants** Carol LaRocque 303-912-6894

**Webmaster** Anne Brinkman 303-522-4926

**Refreshments** VOLUNTEER NEEDED

**Newsletter Editor** Mimi Buchanan 720-732-9565

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Mail your \$15 membership check (payable to FROG) and the below information to: FROG, 950 South Milwaukee Way, Denver CO 80209-5125

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #s

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Address (street, city, zip) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

FROG uses e-mail addresses only to send newsletters or special announcements between meetings. We do not sell, swap, or otherwise share your e-mail address with outside entities. However, all of your contact information except your email address will be included on a FROG Membership Roster which will be distributed only to FROG members. Please check here \_\_\_\_\_ if you prefer to not be included on this membership roster.

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**PLEASE NOTE: Submission Deadline for Feb. Newsletter is Jan. 31, 2017**