

## **Rules and Resources for SJC Master Gardener Authors**

Master Gardeners have the education and credibility to provide science based, best gardening practices to interested gardeners. Articles for community online news, neighborhood newsletters, gardening advice blogs, social media posts, garden club newsletters and articles for other master gardeners are excellent ways to educate ourselves and fellow gardeners.

The proliferation of online “gardening advice” which is often based on minimal analysis, coupled with the tendency for many gardeners desire a quick chemical or natural fix, illustrates the importance of readily available safe and effective gardening advice. Master gardeners can play an important role in researching and presenting this information in an accessible way.

However, writing articles as a WSU master gardener comes with rules that protect the intellectual property of other authors. We hope you find the following guidelines to be helpful. We encourage you to consider authoring a gardening article yourself. You can start with an article that goes to fellow master gardeners in our Master Gardener newsletter. You will learn about the topic you choose to write about and help to educate fellow gardeners, and protect our gardens and the environment.

### **Guidelines for authorship**

-Researching a topic is best done with university and science-based articles. Often the most helpful are from universities in the region in which you live and garden.

-Be careful not to use similar titles. Create your own title which is directed at the audience likely to read your article.

-Be careful to summarize the information in your own words rather than using those of the author/authors who wrote the original article. Read the articles, put them aside and begin to write in your own words what you have just learned.

-If you use text, illustrations, tables, graphs or charts you must ask the author or publication for permission to use them and then be sure to give the author/authors credit.

-Photographs are particularly difficult since they are used in their entirety, not just text from an article. It is best to use your own or photos from others you know who can give you permission. There are free photos you can use on the following websites. You must give credit to the photographer and site even if the site states this is optional. If you must use a photo from another photographer or site and you are not sure about the copyright restrictions you must ask for permission from the individual or the publication.

### **Sites for free photos:**

[bugwood.org](http://bugwood.org)

Flickr commons

Pexels commons

Pixabay commons  
[upsplash.com](https://www.pexels.com/)  
Wikimedia commons

### **How to write an email to request permission to use material:**

-Address the recipient (the person who holds the rights to the material being requested. For example, the author, photographer, or publisher.)

-Identify yourself. For example, "I am a Washington State University Master Gardener in the San Juan County chapter."

-State the purpose of your email. For example, "I am writing an article for the chapter newsletter about (brief description of topic of the article). May I have permission to use the photo of the bluebird to illustrate the article?"

-Make completely clear what material you are requesting. Be as specific as possible. The information may include the publication name, date of publication, article title, web address or link, relevant page numbers, paragraph information, description of photos, graphics, tables, or figures.

-Describe how the material will be distributed. For example, "The newsletter is sent to chapter members and to others who have requested it via email. It is also posted on the chapter website."

-Thank the recipient for considering your request and identify yourself with your full name.

### **Example of a successful email request for a photo:**

Hello Dr. Tallamy,

Our Orcas Island Garden Club, in San Juan County, WA, is featuring the YouTube of the presentation you gave to the National Wildlife Federation in May, 2020, in our monthly newsletter. The newsletter goes to members via email and is also posted on the club website.

May we use your wonderful picture of the bluebird carrying the insect in its beak in the newsletter? I saw the photo on the web in a review of your book Nature's Best Hope. It is the picture with the caption beginning "A bluebird brings to its nest ...". Here is the url: <https://vnps.org/book-review-natures-best-hope-by-doug-tallamy/>

The bluebird has particular meaning in this county. One of the neighboring islands has successfully reintroduced bluebirds in recent years. They had been absent for 50 years. Of course, the local birds are Western Bluebirds, but still the image seems appropriate.

Thank you for your work and for considering this request.

8/2022