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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Free Gardening Course Targets Backyard Gardeners

Master Urban Gardener at Home program offered by Boston Natural Areas Network

BOSTON, MA, January 28, 2009 – If you have a yard, deck or porch and feel you need a little guidance to grow plants, trees and shrubs, take advantage of the upcoming Master Urban Gardener at Home (MUGatHome) course offered by Boston Natural Areas Network. Available at no cost from April 4 through May 9 at a Boston location to be announced, this unique six-week program includes hand-on workshops, a valuable manual, and the chance to network with other gardening enthusiasts.

The 2009 session of MUGatHome, trains backyard gardeners in sustainable residential gardening techniques suitable for urban spaces. The program is designed for Boston residents with yards, rooftops, decks and other small spaces to garden, and includes techniques for growing ornamental plants and vegetables using environmentally friendly techniques. The program addresses design planning, urban soil remediation, plant selection and placement, composting, and much more.

This comprehensive spring session of MUGatHome will include instruction in botany and plant maintenance by Bruce Roberts of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and information about plant disease as presented by Cheryl Smith, a noted speaker from the University of New Hampshire. Other presentors include landscape designers, garden educators, community gardeners, and nursery owners.

In exchange for 40 hours of *free* master gardening training, participants are required to give 40 hours of volunteer service assisting other backyard gardeners over a period of two years.

This provides a great opportunity for students to solidify their learning while serving the larger community.

Applications for MUGatHome are being accepted now through March 2, 2009. A .pdf format of the application can be downloaded at <http://www.bostonnatural.org/MUGatHome.htm>; the application is also available by mail by calling BNAN at 617-542-7696. Applications should be mailed to: BNAN c/o Stewardship Manager, 62 Summer Street, Boston, MA 02110-1008; email: marlo@bostonnatural.org; or fax: 617-542-0383.

Boston Natural Areas Network is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing together local residents, partner organizations, public officials and foundations to preserve, expand and enhance urban open space, including community gardens, greenways and urban wilds. For further information about the organization, becoming a member or the calendar of events, visit www.bostonnatural.org, or call 617-542-7696.

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