

Mountain Gardener

Buncombe County's Extension Newsletter for Home Lawn & Garden Enthusiasts

Buncombe County Center, 94 Coxe Avenue, Asheville, NC 28801-3620 (828-255-5522)

August 2012

Inside This Issue

- August Garden Chores, p. 2
- Insects to Watch, Emerald Ash Borer, p. 3
- Spotlight: Hostas, p.3
- Canner Testing, Canning Workshops, p.4
- Fair, Flower Show, Tomato Blight p. 4
- Veg. Wilts, Raspberries p. 5
- Coming Events p. 6

Contact Us

Buncombe County Center
94 Coxe Avenue
Asheville, NC 28801

Linda Blue

Extension Agent
Agriculture-Urban Horticulture

Check out Buncombe County Center's website at:

<http://buncombe.ces.ncsu.edu>

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

Helping gardeners put knowledge to work.

"Weather means more when you have a garden. There's nothing like listening to a shower and thinking how it is soaking in around your green Beans." - Marcelene Cox

"God made rainy days so gardeners could get the housework done." - Author Unknown

LET'S GO TO THE FAIR

It is hard to believe it is almost time once again for the Mountain State Fair. Start evaluating your flower and vegetable gardens now for possible entries. Entry forms should be submitted to the fair office by August 24 to ensure your space. Pre-registering also significantly speeds up your entry process when you deliver your specimens to the show as your tickets will already be prepared. The 2012 Fair will run Sept 7 through 16. For a Fair catalog and forms contact the NC Mountain State Fair office at 687-1414. Or to access the catalog on line at: <http://www.mountainfair.org/mountain-state-fair/competitions.html>.

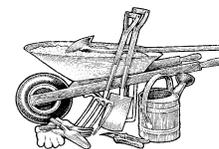


Normal August Weather

Weather Averages

For Asheville, North Carolina

Normal August Average High	83.1 °F
Normal August Average Low	62.9 °F
Normal August Precipitation	4.4"



Hours of Daylight for Asheville, NC

	<u>Sunrise</u>	<u>Sunset</u>
August 1	6:38 am	8:35 pm
August 31	7:02 am	7:59 pm

Persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency may request accommodations to participate in activities mentioned in this newsletter. Please contact Linda Blue at 828-255-5522 during business hours at least 3 days prior to the event to discuss accommodations.

NC State University
A&T State University
**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

Empowering People · Providing Solutions

Garden Chores for August

Lawns

- Do not fertilize or seed fescue or bluegrass lawns until the very end of August. Hold off longer if the weather is hot and dry.

Ornamentals

- Weeds of all kinds have been especially plentiful this year. Stay on top of removing them before they go to seed.
- Dahlias will perk up with cooler temperatures. This would be a good time to do a little fertilizing, pruning and reinforcing supports on tall varieties.
- Don't forget about those trees or shrubs planted the last year. They still need a deep watering once a week.
- By now a lot of perennials probably need deadheading. Removing the spent flowers will improve the appearance of the flower bed and may encourage some late blooms.
- Container gardens are also probably in need of some sprucing up. Give them a dose of liquid fertilizer if you have not done so in a few weeks. Cut back leggy stems.
- Have you sprayed the rose bushes for black spot recently? Hybrid teas can also have one last dose of fertilizer early in August to encourage some fall blooms.



Fruits

- This has been a bad year for black rot on grapes and brown rot on peaches. Regular fungicide sprays are the only way to prevent these infections.
- Peach tree borers can kill peach, cherry and plum trees. To prevent infestation, spray the trunks of the trees in late August and early September with an insecticide labeled for borers (usually a type of pyrethroid) For more information see: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/trees/note141/note141.html>.

Vegetables

- Frequent rain showers invite fungus diseases like early blight and late blight on tomatoes and mildews on squash and cucumbers. Apply fungicides every 1 to 2 weeks to maintain healthy plants. Organic gardeners may want to try Serenade (*Bacillus subtilis*) or copper.
- You can start planting fall vegetables anytime in August. Garden centers will be supplied with transplants for cabbage and broccoli. Plant seeds for lettuce and leafy greens.
- Practice good sanitation. Remove spent plants from the garden as soon as harvest is complete. Also remove diseased plants as soon as possible.
- Remember that surplus produce can be donated to the Plant A Row For The Hungry collection. Fresh fruits and vegetables, in good condition are always welcome. Deliver to MANNA Food Bank at 627 Swannanoa River Rd., M-F, 8:00 - 3:30.

Other

- Be alert for yellow jacket nests while mowing and doing other yard work. This is the time of year they become very aggressive in defending their nest. For more information see: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/Urban/horn-yj.htm>

Recommendations for the use of chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact an agent of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension.

Insects to Watch For

Ornamentals: Bagworms on all needled evergreens. It is too late to spray, so remove bags by hand. Thrips on roses and other flowers; spider mites on flowers and shrubs, lacebugs on pyracantha, pieris and azaleas. All may need to be treated with appropriate insecticide if significant damage occurs.

Vegetables: Bean beetles, squash beetles and squash bugs can be especially prevalent this time of year. Control measures include hand removal (drop them into a bucket of soapy water), or spraying with carbaryl (Sevin), malathion, pyrellin or pyrethrin. Several species of caterpillars become troublesome on cabbage family crops. Bacteria sprays should be effective.

Emerald Ash Borer

Another non-native invasive pest is knocking at North Carolina's borders. The emerald ash borer was first found killing ash trees in Michigan in 2002 and has spread quickly. Most recently it was identified in Tennessee and Virginia.

This small emerald green beetle bores under the bark of the ash tree and eventually kills the tree. As with most insects that bore into the wood, it is difficult to successfully treat an infestation.

One of the common ways these, and other invasive insects, are spread is by transporting the wood. So one of the most important things you can do is not bring in firewood from outside of your immediate area.

For more information see: http://ncforestservice.gov/forest_health/pdf/FHN/FHN-10EAB01EAB80310.pdf

Spotlight: Fragrant Hostas

Hostas have been popular garden plants, especially in the South, for more than 100 years and it would be rare to find a shady garden without them. But how many of the hostas in your garden have fragrant flowers?

Many years ago some of the most popular hostas were known as "August lily" because they produced large white fragrant flowers in late summer. These belong to the species *Hosta plantaginea*. Most garden hostas are hybrids of *Hosta sieboldiana*, which produce lavender, non-fragrant flowers.



You can still purchase *H. plantaginea* but you can also find hybrids with fragrant flowers. A good old standby is 'Royal Standard'. 'So Sweet' is a smaller plant with leaves trimmed with white. 'Guacamole' has green and yellow leaves and flowers that I think smell like sun tan lotion.

Although some hosta varieties are more tolerant of sun than others, most will perform best with some morning sun and shade in the afternoon. The more sun they receive, the more important it will be to water during dry weather. Most people remove the flower stems as soon as the flowers fade to keep the garden tidier. Fragrant or not, flowers can be used in cut arrangements

Pressure Canner Testing

Pressure Canner Testing is done only by appointment this year. To have your pressure canner tested please call the Extension Office at 255-5522 and make an appointment.

Hands-On Canning Workshops

All held at the Buncombe County Center, 94 Coxe Ave. Asheville

Canning Beans Safely! - Fri., Aug. 10, 2012 - 10am to 2pm

One of the most popular foods to can is beans, but it can also be one of the riskiest to eat if not canned safely. Can beans with us and learn the latest recommendations for canning your beans. This class will cover using weighted and gauge pressure canners as well as the importance of adjusting time for canning at higher altitudes. **Cost \$10.**



Putting Tomatoes By! - Thurs., Aug. 16, 2012– 10am to 2pm

One of the best foods for learning how to can is tomatoes. In this hands-on class we cover canning tomatoes with both a water bath canner and a pressure canner. We will also discuss freezing and dehydrating tomatoes. **Cost \$10.**

Saving Those Apples! - Thurs. Sept. 20, 2012—9am to 2pm. **Cost \$10.** Call Extension office to register 255-5522.

See You At The Fair



This year's North Carolina Mountain State Fair runs September 7 through 16. The Flower and Garden exhibits are in a new "Expo Building" toward the back side of the fair grounds, below the livestock barns. We hope you will find us so you can stop in and visit the Master Gardeners' information tables and view the wonderful flowers. Volunteers will be available to answer your gardening questions.

Enter The Flower Show

With two flower shows at the Fair, how can you resist the opportunity to show off your prettiest flowers? There are more than 150 categories for entries! For a Fair catalog and forms contact the NC Mountain State Fair office at 667-1414. Access the catalog on line at:

<http://www.mountainfair.org/mountain-state-fair/competitions.html>.

Tomato Late Blight

If you grow tomatoes in your garden, hopefully you know by now that the late blight fungus was found in western North Carolina earlier than usual this year. This disease can kill a tomato or potato plant within a few weeks of infection, so this would be a good year to be keeping the preventative fungicide sprays on your plants. The best garden fungicide for this is chlorothalonil (Daconil). Copper sprays are also helpful and would be the only option for the organic gardener.

Vegetable Wilts

This summer we have seen a number of samples of wilt diseases in vegetables. Several common problems can cause vegetable plants to suddenly wilt. Often only one out of a number of plants in the same garden will be affected.

Squash: Probably squash vine borers, a worm that bores into the center of the stem, eating away the stem tissue. Look for a hole in the stem with "stuff" coming out. If caught early, gardeners are sometimes successful in splitting open the stem with a razor blade, removing the worms, closing the stem, and then mounding soil up around the stem.

Cucumbers: Probably bacterial wilt, which can also affect watermelon and cantaloupe. This disease is spread by cucumber beetles when they chew on the plants. These beetles were out early this year and some plants succumbed quite early in the season. Once a plant is infected, it cannot be saved. Remove it from the garden to reduce likelihood of spread to other plants

Tomatoes: If plant wilts suddenly, without turning yellow, it is probably another bacterial disease, Southern Bacterial Wilt. In this case the bacteria is in the soil. Do not plant crops in the same family (pepper, eggplant, potato) in that spot for a few years.



Tomatoes and other plants: Look for a walnut tree nearby. The roots of walnut trees secrete a chemical that is toxic to many plants. When tomato plant roots come into contact with walnut roots, the plant will wilt and die.

Various plants: Tomatoes, beans, peppers, eggplant and many other vegetables can be affected by a soil borne fungus, Southern Blight. Check the base of the stem, often below the soil level, for white cottony fungus growth on the stem. Corn is about the only vegetable not affected, so would be a good choice for planting in the location next summer.

Pruning Raspberries

The trickiest part of growing brambles (blackberries and raspberries) is probably pruning. All bramble canes live 2 years. The first year the stems (primocanes) come up from the ground and grow. The second year (floricanes) they flower and produce fruit. After fruiting the cane dies.

For most varieties of blackberries and raspberries pruning is done twice a year. In the summer, after harvest, the spent canes are removed. Then in spring the tall canes are cut back and some excess stems removed.

In western North Carolina many gardeners grow the everbearing red raspberry 'Heritage'. This variety will produce 2 crops on each cane: a spring crop on the floricanes and a fall crop on the primocanes. However, there is another option for managing this variety. Many growers simply cut all the canes close to the ground in the fall. This will eliminate the spring crop, but will produce a larger fall crop in August and September. You may miss the early berries, but the pruning is certainly faster and easier.

For more information on growing raspberries see: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/pdf/hil-8204.pdf>

COMING EVENTS

- **Aug. 4** **Downtown City Market**, Extension Master Gardeners have an info table set up to answer questions, 8:30 - 12:30.
- **Aug. 9** “ **Bat Day**,” WNC Nature Center Heirloom Garden Info table, 10:00am-4:00pm
- **Aug. 11 & 25** **Plant Problem Clinics**, by Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers’ Market. 11:00am—2:00pm in the breezeway between the retail buildings.
- **Aug. 11 & 25** **Backyard Composting Demonstration**, by Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers’ Market, beside Israel’s Garden Center, 11:00am - 2:00pm.
- **Aug. 15** **Gardening in the Mountains Series**, “*The Eco-Friendly Garden*”, presented by Extension Master Gardener Volunteers at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Buncombe County Center at 10:00 am. No pre-registration, Free.
- **Sept. 7 - 16** **North Carolina Mountain State Fair**, Visit Extension Master Gardeners in the Flower and Garden Department in the Expo Building
- **Sept. 19** **Gardening in the Mountains Series**, “*Trees, Planting and Care*”, presented by Extension Master Gardener Volunteers at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Buncombe County Center at 10:00 am. No pre-registration, Free.

PRSRT STD
 U. S. POSTAGE PAID
 ASHEVILLE, NC
 PERMIT NO. 122

