



Coming Events



Workshops and Demonstrations

- Thurs., July 10, 10:00a
Preserving Your Bounty—see Page 6
- Thurs., July 24th, 10:00a
Fall Vegetable Gardening
- Thurs., Aug. 7, 10:00a
African Violets
- Thurs., Aug. 21, 10:00a
Fall Lawn Care

All classes will begin in the auditorium at the Agricultural Building and are free unless otherwise indicated. Registration is required. Phone, visit or e-mail.

Contact us :

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Extension Service
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All that Flutters



Buckeye on Rudbeckia

Butterfly watching is growing in popularity and North Carolina is fortunate enough to have a diverse landscape that supports over 100 species of butterflies. Unfortunately, development has reduced the availability of some of the food sources for butterflies, but it is possible to incorporate some plants that attract butterflies or add a butterfly garden into your existing landscape.

The first requirement is to have a sunny spot for the butterfly garden. Butterflies are most active in the sun and many of the nectar and host plants also like sunny places. One of the main goals is to plant a variety of plants that will provide nectar for the adults as well as host plants for the caterpillars. Ideally, the selection of plants will have something that is blooming throughout the summer since there are multiple generations of adults in most butterfly species.

The design for a butterfly garden is very similar to most perennial gardens. Taller plants in the back and shorter plants in the front provide the best visibility of flowers as well as butterflies. Plants that bloom at different times of the year add interest to the perennial garden and attract a more diverse group of butterflies.

The Host With The Most

The most important factors in choosing plants for the butterfly garden are flower color, shape and fragrance. Butterflies have a long proboscis (tongue) that enables them to get nectar out of deep flowers. Purple, pink and lavender flower colors are butterfly favorites, but a wider variety of colors will attract a wider variety of butterflies. It is also important to plant these flowers in groups. Just like in perennial garden design, mass plantings have more visual appeal than one plant by itself.



American Painted Lady on Tibonia



Red-Spotted Purple on Buddleia



Monarch on Liatris



Question Mark on Viburnum

I won't go into the details of the butterfly life cycle in this article, but it is important to think about the larval stage, the caterpillar. While there are many caterpillars that are plant pests, only a few of the butterfly larvae cause significant plant damage. Always be sure to properly identify any insect before deciding if a control method is necessary. If you are not sure if the insect is a cause for concern you can send us a picture or bring a sample to our office. We (mostly Chris) can identify the insect and make recommendations.

Many times the plant damage is only cosmetic and doesn't really hurt the plant. New leaves will grow after the caterpillar stops feeding and everything is fine. It is important to remember that the butterfly and the host plants have worked together for many years. If the butterflies ate up all their host plants, there would be no more butterflies.

The list of butterfly nectar and host plants is quite large and includes trees, shrubs, perennials and annual flowers. You most likely have some of them in your landscape already. Please consider adding more butterfly plants to your garden this summer. They will add color to your garden and increase butterfly habitat. The following article has more information on butterflies and butterfly plants.

Butterflies in Your Backyard:

http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/forestry/pdf/ag/ag636_02.pdf



Black Swallowtail caterpillar on Parsley



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail on Zinnia



Eastern Black Swallowtail on Lantana

If you have any questions about butterfly gardening or any other gardening topic, please give me or Chris a call.

July Garden Tips



Anual bedding plants will benefit from a summer haircut. Stagger your pruning by cutting back one-third of a bed or container each week. By the third week, the first group of pruned plants will be blooming again, assuring some color during the entire pruning period.

nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. Unlike fescue, which should be kept tall – at least 3 to 3-and-a-half inches, warm-season lawns need to be maintained at a height of only $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1". This promotes dense growth and discourages many weeds.

Mature vines of poison ivy, trumpet creeper, English ivy and wisteria that climb your trees can be killed at this time. Cut a chunk from the vine near the base of the plant, being careful not to cut the resident tree. Apply brush killer to the cut. The cut must be fresh – no more than 15 minutes old. Bag vines and dispose of in the trash. Never burn poison ivy!!!



Remove water sprouts and weak new growth from apple trees, crapemyrtles and others. Summer pruning is less likely to produce weak growth. Discontinue pruning by August 1st so any new growth will harden off before frost.

Even moisture at the root zone of tomatoes may help prevent blossom-end rot. Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation rather than overhead watering and keep plants mulched.

Believe it or not, there was an up side to the drought conditions we experienced a few years back. The super dry summer weather apparently interrupted the growth cycle of Japanese beetles. Unfortunately, the down side to last year's abundant rainfall is that Japanese beetles are making a comeback. One strategy for reducing the damage is to hand pick the bugs in early morning when they're sluggish. Just toss the beetles into a jar of soapy water. If you must spray, remember to spray at dusk after the bees have retired and avoid spraying open flowers as the pesticide residue can cling to fuzzy bee bodies and poison them when they groom themselves. Call Cooperative Extension for recommendations. 336-570-6740



Try rooting softwood cuttings of your favorite crapemyrtle or rose. Remove all but the top-most leaf, dip the cut end in rooting hormone and place in a moist mixture of sharp sand and perlite or your favorite medium. Root semi-hardwood cuttings of many other shrubs, including aucuba, azalea, buddleia, camellia, nandina, gardenia, holly, kerria and weigela.

Plant Brussels sprouts, carrots and rutabagas from July 1st to the 15th. Mid month begin planting beets, broccoli and collards. Keep vegetables picked to encourage production.

If you are willing to keep them well-watered all summer, roses may be fertilized every four weeks until mid-August. This will keep them blooming well into fall. However, if deep watering is not an option, roses can be rested this month. Keep blossoms cut to encourage further bloom, too!



Fertilize established warm-season (Zoysia or Bermudagrass) lawns at the rate of one pound of



Plants of the Month

This month, we depart once again from our usual routine in order to learn how to build a Hummingbird Garden, courtesy of Extension Master Gardener Volunteer, Sharon Yarbrough.



*Rose Campion
Lychnis coronaria*



*Celandine Poppy
Stylophorum diphyllum*

A Rest Stop for Unique Aviators

words and pictures by Sharon Yarbrough, EMGV

After attending a hummingbird class at Big Bloomers in Sanford, I was inspired to create a small woodland flower garden to attract hummingbirds. Using rocks from the farm, I made a raised circular bed and added lots of organic matter. My goal for this garden was to add plants so there would be continuous flowers from early spring into fall.



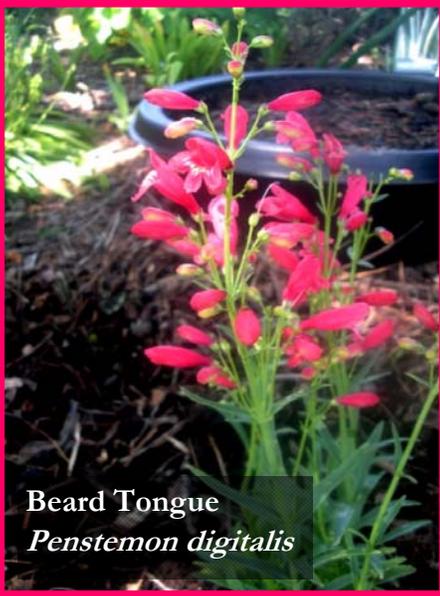
*Salvia Guaranitica
'Black and Blue'*

The first plants that I added to the garden were Black and Blue Salvias on the back border. This is the hummingbirds' favorite flower. Generally, they love red and brightly colored flowers with tubular shapes. There is lots of space among the plants so the hummers can navigate from plant to plant to gather nectar with their long, slender beaks. In the center of the garden, I placed a birdbath and a sprinkler for the hummingbirds to practice their aerobatics. Plants around the birdbath include Rose Campions, a Celandine Poppy, an Osteospermum, a Bleeding Heart and lots of bright orange Crocosmias. Nearby is a clump of Penstemon and Salvia 'Cherry chief' along with several clumps of native red Columbines. Two clumps of Turks Cap Lilies also attract the hummers. Three bright red clumps of daylilies are dispersed throughout the garden. These include 'Seductor', 'Prince Redbird', and 'Wispy Rays.' I planted Indian paintbrush and a red Cardinal Flower, but these died. I think they needed more moisture than what I provided.



*Hemerocallis
'Prince Redbird'*

If You Build It, They Will Come .



Beard Tongue
Penstemon digitalis

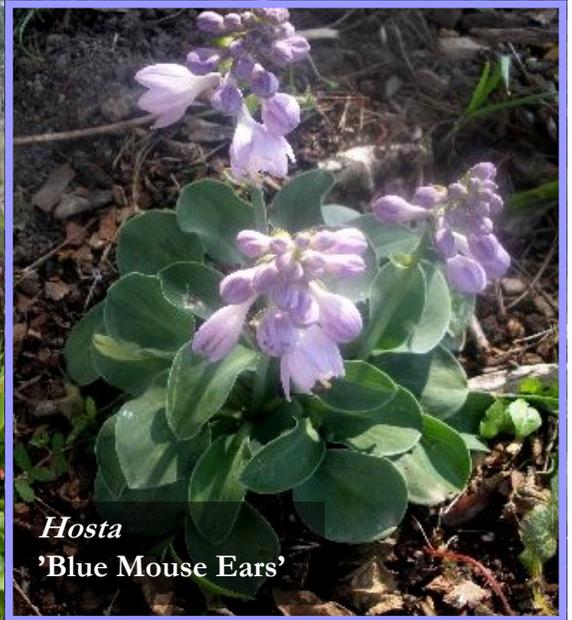
There are several other clumps of flowers at focal points in the garden to entice the hummingbirds. One of these is beard tongue. Other plants include Ginger, Hellebores, Tall-bearded Iris, Toad lilies, Lewesia, and Wood Hyacinths. I also added Bee Balm because it flowers after the native Columbines. However, it is in a container because it can become invasive.

Along the front border of my woodland garden, I planted several hosta minis. These minis include 'Ruffled mouse ears' with blue-green leaves, 'Blue mouse ears' which will produce tubular lavender flowers, 'Frosted mouse ears' with blue leaves and bluish yellow margins that become white in part shade, 'Holy mouse ears' with a bluish yellow center and my favorite hosta 'Mouse trap' with a white center and scattered green flecks. I also added 'Cherish' which has a cream center with wide blue-green margins. The hummingbirds love the purple flowers in June.

I enjoy watching hummingbirds hover in mid-air, flying backwards and forwards and up and down like helicopters sipping nectar to keep their motors running. Planting an assortment of flowering plants is also more fun than sterilizing bottles and mixing formulas every few days for these unique aviators. It's also fun to visit nurseries and buy plants that might attract hummingbirds.



Salvia
'Cherry Chief'



Hosta
'Blue Mouse Ears'



Turk's Cap
Malvaviscus arboreus

THINK GREEN THURSDAYS



From the Garden to the Pantry

LEARN HOW TO PRESERVE THE BOUNTY FROM THIS SEASON'S GARDEN

Thursday, July 10th, 2014

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Alamance County

Cooperative Extension Service

209 North Graham Hopedale Road

Class is free, but you must register. Don't delay; space is limited.

Call Alamance County Cooperative Extension

(336)570-6740

