

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)

June 2010

Inside This Issue

- June Garden Chores, p. 2
- Insects to Watch For, p. 3
- The Organic Way, p. 3
- Spotlight: Invincibelle Spirit, p. 4
- Food Preservation, p. 4
- Focus on Flowers, p. 5
- E-News sign-up pg.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.

"To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves" - Mahatma Gandhi

HARVESTING VEGETABLES

Garden fresh vegetables not only taste better, they are also higher in vitamins and minerals than store bought produce. To preserve the most flavor and nutrition harvest vegetables at their prime and store correctly. Most should be refrigerated promptly. The exception is tomatoes, which deteriorate in cold temperatures.

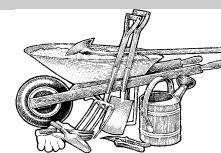
- Broccoli & cauliflower: head tight, before flowers open
- Cucumbers: check daily and pick early in day. Pick small.
- Bush beans: check daily. Pick small for tenderness.
- Yellow squash & zucchini: 4—7 inches, while young & tender.
- Tomatoes: allow to ripen on vine for best flavor & nutrients.

Normal June Weather

Weather Averages

For Asheville, North Carolina

Normal June Average High	81°F
Normal June Average Low	60°F
Normal June Precipitation	3.24"



Hours of Daylight for Asheville, NC

	Sunrise	Sunset
June 1	6:15 am	8:39 pm
June 30	6:17 am	8:49 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 June

Lawns

- Try to mow frequently enough to remove no more than 1/3 of the blade at a time.
- Maintain the mowing height for fescue lawns at 3 inches.
- Practice 'grasscycling'. Use a mulching mower and leave clippings to recycle.

Ornamentals

- If you have moved house plants outside for the summer, this is a good time to repot if you have not done so.
- Azaleas and rhododendrons can be pruned now. Many of these plants have suffered a lot of dieback from the stress of 2 summers of drought. Established plants can tolerate severe pruning if renovation is needed.
- Irises and daylilies can be divided even while in bloom. This is useful if you need to keep flower colors separated. Remove any remaining flowers, cut leaves half way back and replant the divisions as soon as possible.
- It is hard to pull out the pansies when they are in full bloom. But they will soon fade out in the summer heat, so it is best to go ahead and replace them with summer bloomers if you want color in that location all summer.
- Hanging baskets and other plants in containers can usually go a few days between watering. If you are planning a short vacation, water thoroughly before you leave. During hot weather it helps to move plants to a shadier location.

Fruits

- Most tree fruits will need to be thinned to prevent tree damage from too much fruit and to increase fruit size. Apples, pears and peaches should be thinned before the fruit is larger than a nickel. Remove excess fruit until fruits are 4 to 6 inches apart.
- If the strawberry bed is healthy, it can be renovated soon after harvest. For more information see: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/pdf/hil-8205.pdf>
- Peaches and plums will need regular fungicide applications—every 10 to 14 days—to prevent brown rot.

Vegetables

- Some herbs such as basil and parsley are good additions to the vegetable garden. Others prefer drier conditions and little fertilizer. Herbs from the Mediterranean region such as lavender, rosemary, thyme, marjoram, dill and oregano will have greater concentrations of those essential oils if given lots of sun, very well drained soil, and very little fertilizer. For information on herbs see: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/pdf/hil-8110.pdf>
 - A well established asparagus bed can be harvested for 6 to 8 weeks. Stop harvesting earlier if spears are becoming thin. Give the bed another application of fertilizer and allow the ferns to grow. For more information see: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/pdf/hil-8002.pdf>.
 - Once cucumbers, squash and green beans begin to fruit, check them daily. The fruits mature quickly and are best harvested while young and tender.
 - Avoid blossom-end-rot in tomatoes, peppers, squash and watermelons by maintaining uniform soil moisture. Mulch can help.
 - Through the month of June you can still plant tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, green beans, winter squash, pumpkins.
 - Remember to keep a record of what is planted where and what varieties you grew. You will want this information next year for garden rotation and to remember what vegetable varieties you liked—or did not like.
-

Insects to Watch For

Inspect plants periodically so you can tackle pest problems before they get out of hand. Pesticides should never be applied randomly “just in case” there might be some insects in the garden. You may end up killing off more beneficial insects than pests.

Ornamentals: slugs; lacebugs on azaleas, rhododendrons, pieris, pyracanthas; bagworms on junipers, cedars, cypress, arborvitae; spruce mites on spruce, hemlocks, fir; spider mites on many flowers and shrubs; euonymous scale.

Fruits and vegetables: slugs, asparagus beetles, cucumber beetles, cabbageworms, tomato fruitworms, aphids, spider mites.

The Organic Way: Controlling Diseases

In many cases controlling plant diseases can be a challenge even with the use of fungicides. In the humid climate of the Southeast diseases pose the greatest challenge for organic gardeners. The best organic approach is to do everything possible to prevent diseases from getting started.

Select disease resistant varieties. Although some heirloom plants have good resistance to diseases, many do not. Unfortunately resistance is not yet available to many diseases, such as late blight in tomato.

Cultural practices can be important for avoiding, or delaying disease onset. Rotating crops can help avoid soil-borne diseases. Air-borne fungi thrive on wet leaf surfaces. Do not crowd plants. Allow good air circulation between plants for good drying of foliage. Use drip irrigation instead of watering overhead. Or if using sprinklers, water in the morning so leaves dry off quickly.

Also pay attention to details like putting the right plant in the right place. Zinnias, phlox and monarda are more prone to powdery mildew if they are growing in too much shade. Root rot prone plants should not be planted in poorly drained clay. Planting beans too early in cold wet soil is an invitation for root and stem rots.

Practice good sanitation in the garden. When you see diseased plants, remove infected leaves or wilted plants before problems spread. Control weeds and destroy drop residue in the fall, which can harbor disease spores through the winter.

Preventative sprays are pretty limited for the organic gardener. Copper is effective for some bacterial problems, but copper and sulfur are poor fungicides. Serenade is a new “biofungicide” that appears to be effective against some diseases. Tomato growers are having pretty good results spraying a mixture of Serenade and copper every 7 to 14 days.



Spotlight: Invincibelle Spirit Hydrangea



For gardeners craving a pink hydrangea, a new option just hit the market this spring. ‘Invincibelle Spirit’ was developed by Dr. Tom Ranney right here at the Mountain Horticulture Crops Research and Extension Center in Mills River. It is the first ever pink flowered, mop-head form of *Hydrangea arborescens*. Flowers emerge in early summer and it continues to produce new flowers all summer. *Hydrangea arborescens* blooms on new wood, so it will still produce flowers even if killed to the ground by extreme weather.

As with most hydrangeas, Invincibelle Spirit will perform best in partial shade (avoid full afternoon sun). But it will tolerate full sun here in the mountains if given adequate moisture, which means watering during the heat of summer. *Hydrangea arborescens* is adaptable to most soil types as long as drainage is reasonably good. Soil pH will not affect the flower color. The plant grows to 4 to 5 feet and can be cut to the ground in the spring if desired.

Food Preservation Workshops

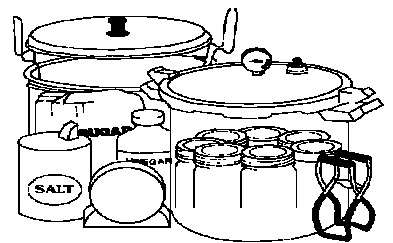
Hands-on canning workshops are great ways to learn the safest techniques for canning and preserving our summertime bounty. This summer we have four hands on classes scheduled. All require pre-registration and registration is confirmed when payment is received. The cost for each class is \$5.00 and all classes will be held at the Buncombe County Cooperative Extension Office, 94 Coxe Ave. Asheville.

Let’s Start with Jams! - Wednesday, June 2, 9am to 1pm

It’s Pickling Time! - Wednesday, July 7, 9am to 1pm

Canning Beans Safely - Wednesday, July 28, 9am to 3 pm

Putting Tomatoes By! - Wednesday, August 11, 9am to 2pm



Call our office to register or for more information.(828) 255-5522.

Focus on Flowers: **My Grandmother's Garden**

In difficult economic times and challenging environmental conditions, gardeners often return to the “old time” gardening techniques and plants—with a modern twist, of course. This popular annual event, sponsored by the Arboretum, N.C. Cooperative Extension and Buncombe County Master Gardeners, returns with a look at how the past can teach us to be better landscape stewards of the future. This promises to be a wonderful program with some great speakers.

The program fee is \$44 for Arboretum Society, \$50 for the general public, and includes lunch and beverage service as well as extensive handout materials. For more information or to register, visit www.ncarboretum.org or call (828) 665-2492.

Focus on Flowers: My Grandmother's Garden **July 17, 2010** **9:30—4:30**

Finding The Common Ground
Favorite Passalong Plants
Propagating Grandma's Garden
Heirloom Roses
The Shade Garden
Arrangements From the Mixed Border

Hunter Stubbs
Amy Fahmy
Dick Bir
Judy Deutsch
Linda Blue
Eve Davis



Sign Up for E-News

Here is an opportunity to sign up for notices of coming events offered by Buncombe County's Extension Master Gardener Volunteers. Extension Master Gardener Volunteers are trained by NC Cooperative Extension to assist with providing educational information to area citizens. They offer gardening information by staffing a Garden Hotline, conducting Saturday Plant Problem Clinics, and staffing Ask a Gardener information tables at many local events, as well as providing Garden Schools and other events. If you would like to be included in periodic email updates of coming educational opportunities offered by Master Gardeners, you can sign up by sending an email with “**ADD**” in the subject line to buncombemastergardener@gmail.com.

Please note that this address is only for signing up for the e-news. For gardening and other questions, please continue to call (828) 255-5522 for the Master Gardener Hotline, which is open M-Th 8:30—4:30 and Friday 8:30—12:30.

EVENTS

- **June 12 & 26** **Plant Problem Clinics**, by Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers' Market, 11:00am -2:00pm in the breezeway between the retail buildings.
- **June 12 & 26** **Backyard Composting Demonstration**, by Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers' Market, beside Israel's' Garden Center, 11:00am -2:00pm.
- **June 16** **Gardening in the Mountains Series: "Gardening around Black Walnuts"**, Presented by Extension Master Gardeners, Extension Office, 94 Coxe Ave., 10:00am, Free. No registration required.
- **July 17** **Focus on Flowers: My Grandmother's Garden**, The NC Arboretum, 9:00am-4:00pm. For more information or to register, visit www.ncarboretum.org, or call the Arboretum at 665-2492.
- **July 21** **Gardening in the Mountains Series, "Roses for WNC"**, presented by Extension Master Gardeners, Extension Office, 94 Coxe Ave., 10:00am, Free. No registration Required.

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