SEE YOU AT THE FAIR

This year’s North Carolina Mountain State Fair runs September 10 through 19. 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! Entry dates are September 8 and 14th. You can find all of the information at: http://www.mountainfair.org. Find it under the “Mountain State Fair” tab as “Competitions”.

Normal August Weather

For Asheville, North Carolina

Normal August Average High     81.7°F
Normal August Average Low      61.8°F
Normal August Precipitation     4.3”

Hours of Daylight for Asheville, NC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Sunrise</th>
<th>Sunset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 1</td>
<td>6:37 am</td>
<td>8:34 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>7:01 am</td>
<td>8:00 pm</td>
</tr>
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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.
Garden Chores for August

Lawns

• As soon as the rain gets your grass growing again, remember to maintain the 3 inch mowing height.
• Wait until the grass is green to apply the fall fertilizer to the cool season lawn. Fertilizer can be applied starting in late August, but can be done any time through November.

Ornamentals

• This is not a good time for general pruning of shrubs. Restrict trimming to removing a few stray shoots.
• Do not apply nitrogen fertilizer to shrubs.
• Some plants will bloom until frost if you keep the spent flowers removed. Deadhead butterfly bush, purple coneflowers, phlox, and roses.
• If you still have hemlock trees in the landscape, check them for signs of hemlock woolly adelgid infestations. Fall is an excellent time to apply soil drench treatments or to spray with insecticidal soap or horticultural oil. For more information see: http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/trees/note119a/note119a.htm.
• To keep those beautiful container gardens going, give them a dose of liquid fertilizer every 2 to 3 weeks. Don’t be afraid to trim plants back if they have gotten leggy.

Fruits

• Early apples will be appearing at the Farmers’ Markets. Look for varieties like Gala, Jonagold, Paulared and Granny Smith.
• Black rot has been a problem on grapes this year. Regular fungicide sprays are the only way to prevent this infection.
• Prune blackberries and raspberries after harvest.

Vegetables

• In the heat of August it may be difficult to think about fall crops. But this is the time to start setting out transplants for cabbage and broccoli and planting seeds for the leafy greens.
• The biggest challenges with fall vegetables are insect control and watering in August and September. Regular applications of B.t. (Bacillus thuringiensis) will prevent the caterpillars from devouring everything in the cabbage family
• Practice good sanitation. Remove spent plants from the garden as soon as harvest is complete. Also remove diseased plants as soon as possible.
• Harvest basil when the plants begin to flower. Cut stems back to a set of lower leaves to get a flush of new growth.

Other

• 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 Road, M-F, 8:00—3:30.
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.

Pickleworms

In August a particularly frustrating insect that can attack the vegetable garden is the pickleworm. This insect can be devastating to most crops in the cucurbit family—cucumbers, squash, melons and even pumpkins. It’s bad enough to go to pick a cucumber or zucchini only to find it full of worm holes. But if it is that pumpkin you have been watching develop all summer……

Pickleworms bore into sides of fruits and continue to feed there causing internal damage. Both young and old fruits are attacked, but they prefer young fruits before the rind has hardened. After the rind has been punctured, the fruit soon rots, or, in the case of cantaloupes, becomes “sour”.

Obviously, once you see holes in the fruit it is too late to save that fruit. Preventive sprays can be applied on weekly basis to prevent damage. Labeled insecticides include esfenvalerate (Ortho), spinosad; an organic product, and B.t. (Bacillus thuringiensis).

Lawn Seeding Time

If you plan to plant or reseed a cool season lawn, mid-August through September is the best time to do it. Part of the success of planting grass can depend on the quality of the seed you buy. North Carolina has a seed label law that requires all seed to have a label on the package that contains an analysis of the seed. It pays to read the label.

Start by knowing how much seed you will need. If you are seeding a new area with tall fescue, you will want to use 5 to 6 pounds of seed per 1,000 square feet. Kentucky bluegrass has very tiny seed and only requires 1 1/2 to 2 pounds of seed. Or you can use a blend of 4 to 5 pounds of fescue and 1 pound of bluegrass. You can purchase a good blend that includes 80 to 90 percent fescue (preferably at least 2 varieties) and 10 to 20 percent blue grass by weight.

PURE SEED: Each type of seed is listed by percentage of total weight. Look for improved cultivars. Be careful of products that list “variety not stated”.

GERMINATION: The higher the germination percentage, the better. The minimum should be 85%. Also check for the test date somewhere on the label. It should be less than one year ago.

OTHER CROP SEED and WEED SEED: These should be very low.

NOXIOUS WEEDS: This category includes weeds that are extremely difficult to control. Avoid purchasing seeds that contain any noxious weeds.
Growing in the Mountains
Tuesdays
August 3 – 31, 2010
5:30 – 7:30 PM
NC Cooperative Extension
94 Coxe Ave, Asheville

August is the time to plant those healthy fall vegetables. Maintain an environmentally friendly landscape by learning the basic steps to selecting and growing healthy plants. This series will include the steps to designing your home landscape, evaluating your site, selecting good trees, shrubs and perennials for your site, best planting and maintenance practices, and planting and maintaining a home lawn.

August 3   Planting A Fall Vegetable Garden
August 10  Six Steps To Landscape Design
August 17  Selecting The Right Plants
August 24  Planting and Maintenance
August 31  Home Lawn Care

Pre-registration required due to limited seating. $5 per class, pay at the door

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.

Basic Home Maintenance

As extra money continues to disappear from our pockets, our homes still need to be kept in good condition. Neglecting the minor repairs will only lead to more expense and lessen our homes value in the future. Have you wanted to make those basic home repairs but didn’t know where to start? The Buncombe County Cooperative Extension Center is offering a five-series Basic Home Maintenance Course beginning Monday August 2 from 5:30—7:30pm. The remaining dates for the course are the Mondays in August: August 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th. Some of the topics to be covered are: saving on your heating and cooling bills, basic plumbing repairs, interior and exterior maintenance, landscaping and lawn care, indoor air quality, common household pest, etc. The course will be held at the Extension Center, 94 Coxe Avenue in Asheville.

Registration fee is $20 and includes all materials and handouts for the five series course. Space is limited so pre-registration is necessary. To register please call the Buncombe County Center at 255-5522.
SPOTLIGHT: JOE- PYE WEED

You can’t miss the Joe-Pye-Weed along the roadsides this year. It towers above roadside ditches with huge clusters of mauve-pink flowers atop 7 to 10 foot plants. There are always spectacular plants arching above the entry steps at the Botanical Gardens at Asheville. If you have room for something big and bold it can make a great garden plant. Perhaps that is why I prefer the other common name. Queen-of-the-Meadow. Joe-Pye Weed goes by *Eupatorium fistulosum* or *E. purpureum*, depending on which text you consult.

As you might expect from its natural habitat, Joe-Pye prefers a site with moist to wet soil and plenty of sun. But around my house there are wild plants on a dry bank that manage to reach 5 to 6 feet without supplemental water. It appears that once they are established, they are pretty tough.

If you like the pinkish flowers in August and September, but don’t want a plant quite so tall, you can cut it back by 1/3 to 1/2 in June. It will branch below the cut and produce a 4 to 5 foot plant with smaller, but more flowers. Do not fertilize or over water this plant if you don’t want it to get gigantic. There are also some named varieties such as ‘Gateway’ and ‘Little Joe’ which are supposed to only grow to 4 to 5 feet.

You may also notice that the swallow tail butterflies are particularly attracted to Joe-Pye Weed, as are the migrating monarchs. It is often a good idea to remove the spent flower heads before they begin to drop seeds if you don’t want it to live up to the “weed” part of the name.

Scolid Wasps

A common sight in many lawns in August is numerous blue-black wasps flying low figure-eight patterns over the lawn. Although their presence may appear frightening, they are actually harmless beneficial insects.

Scolid wasps are dark in color, often metallic, relatively large, robust, slightly hairy insects with light yellow spots or other markings. One of the most common Scolid wasps in North Carolina is *Scolia dubia*. It is sometimes referred to as the blue-winged wasp.

The female wasps search out grubs, especially those of green June beetles. They lay their eggs on the grubs, which eventually kills them. Therefore they are important natural agents in the control of green June beetle grubs in the soil.

Adult Scolid wasps feed on nectar and pollen of flowers. Sometimes these wasps are quite abundant and conspicuous as they fly their mating dances. They will not sting unless greatly aggravated or captured in the hands, so control measures are not warranted.
COMING EVENTS

- Aug. 14 & 28  **Plant Problem Clinics**, by Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers’ Market. 11:00am—2:00pm in the breezeway between the retail buildings.

- Aug. 14 & 28  **Backyard Composting Demonstration**, by Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers’ Market, beside Israel’s Garden Center, 11:00am—2:00pm.

- Aug. 18  **Gardening in the Mountains Series**, “Ground Covers”, presented by Extension Master Gardener Volunteers at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Buncombe County Center at 10:00 am. No pre-registration, Free.

- Sept. 10-19  **North Carolina Mountain State Fair**, Fletcher.

- Sept. 15  **Gardening in the Mountains Series**, “Selecting and Caring for Trees in Your Landscape”, presented by Extension Master Gardener Volunteers at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Buncombe County Center at 10:00 am. No pre-registration, Free.