

THE GARDEN PATH , AUGUST 2013

A publication of Kerr Lake Extension
Master Gardeners

PLANT OF THE MONTH FOR AUGUST

By Marty Finkel,
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener

Peacock Orchid, Peacock Lily, Abyssian Gladiolus
(*Gladiolus murielae*)



Photo used with permission from Brent and
Becky's Bulbs

The Peacock Lily, or Peacock Orchid, or Abyssian Gladiolus, is a species *Gladiolus* with a wide distribution from northeastern Africa southwest to Mozambique and is most commonly found in northern Ethiopia. Lucky for us, it can be found in catalogs and garden centers. The Pacific Bulb Society gives its botanical name as *Gladiolus murielae* with synonyms of *Acidanthera bicolor*, *Gladiolus callianthus*, and *Acidanthera murielae*, so if you look it up you may find it under any of these names as well as under the common names.

Species gladiolus are quite different from the hybrid garden and florist types we are used to seeing in that generally the species have smaller flowers, and some are intensely fragrant. In the late 19th and early 20th century they were used by hybridizers to produce many species.

Over 100 different species of gladiolus are found in the Cape region of South Africa where the climate is similar to Southern California, so they will tolerate some frost. These are summer



blooming (winter there). Many more species are found in the inland areas of South Africa and tropical Africa.

Our Plant of the Month is a gorgeous, very fragrant late bloomer, flowering for up to a month in mid to late summer (sometimes into early fall) with the blooms alternating up and down the 12” to 24” stalk. The flowers are white with a purple center blotch. It dates to 1896 and is considered an heirloom plant.

It likes full sun and well-drained average to dry soil. When planting, use 5 to 10 bulbs per square foot.

CHECKLIST FOR AUGUST

By Mary Jane Bosworth,
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener

I perhaps owe having become a painter to flowers. Claude Monet

- ✓ August is the time of greatest stress for container plants. Move them to shaded areas and water them daily.
- ✓ Encourage the growth of a good root systems by watering thoroughly. Give a thorough soaking to plants and water early in the day so moisture does not remain on leaves to encourage disease growth.
- ✓ Transplant Iris and Daylilies giving them time to become established before winter.
- ✓ Late August and early September is the optimal time to control grubs with soil insecticides. Read and follow directions carefully.
- ✓ Check garden centers for fall blooming bulbs to add to your garden.
- ✓ Take soil samples now. Avoid the spring rush.

GARDEN TO DO –AUGUST

By Carl Shafer,
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener

Strawberries set fruit buds for next spring in the fall, so now is the time to fertilize with a complete fertilizer like 10-10-10, unless you have a recent soil test to follow. Water if the ground is dry.

Blueberries are also setting fruit buds in the fall. If you have not been fertilizing earlier in the year, do so now and keep plants watered.

The week of September 1st is the recommended time to spray for peachtree borers. Get prepared now. Spray the trunk and major branches, paying particular attention to ground level. Follow label instructions. Note some products will recommend multiple applications. Peachtree borers may also attack apricot, cherry, nectarine, and plum trees. For more information on peachtree borers with a link to a list of “Homeowner Products Listed for Borers” see:

www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/trees/note141/note141.html.

Clean up spent crops in the garden and plant your fall garden. Web links for HTL 8001, *Growing A Fall Vegetable Garden* and Central NC Planting Calendar were given in the June 13 Garden Path. Also see:

<http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/426/426-334/426-334.pdf>, and

www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/pdf/hgic1256.pdf. Also some seed sources have growing guides and other information on their web sites.

If you are interested in extending your vegetable gardening season past the first frost, see:

www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/426/426-381/426-381.pdf

or

<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/hortihints/0402c.html>

or Jabbar, Niki. *The Year-Round Vegetable Gardener*. North Adams, MA.: Storey Publishing, 2011. Also see:

<http://wimastergardener.org/sites/wimastergardener.org/files/FloatingRowCover.pdf>. For a more comprehensive coverage of season extension with a resource list, see:

<http://growingsmallfarms.ces.ncsu.edu/growingsmallfarms-seasonextension/>.

If you are not planting a fall garden or if you have extra unused space, plant a cover crop. See: www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/quickref/soil/covercrops.html. Also check above fall garden web sites and below.

Note that NCOrganic (www.ncorganic.org) in the Organic Production section has individual sections on: Production Guides, General Organic Growing Resources, Pests & Disease Control, Season Extension and Greenhouse, Cover Crops, and Sources of Organic Seed and Organic Farming Supplies.

If you have areas in your garden that do not produce well, take soil samples of those areas and areas that produce well for comparison to determine if it is a soil problem.

Make notes of successes and failures in the garden this year so that as you plan next year’s garden you can remember what to change and what to expand on. Note any diseases that require treatment before symptoms appear, so that you can take preventive measures next year.

If you are interested in better broccoli varieties for east coast conditions, see “Cornell scientists quest for perfect broccoli”.

www.nytimes.com/2013/07/10/dining/a-scientist-helps-to-reinvent-broccoli.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

About halfway down is a link [the project’s seeds](#) which will take you to a Cornell site that gives their current recommended varieties for spring, summer, and fall harvests. At the end of this is a link [report](#) to a2012 NC State organic broccoli trial in western NC.

If you have not been reading the Extension Gardener (www.successfulgardener.org), the Summer 2013 issue are now posted. All editions have articles on: Deer-resistant plants, ‘Fireball’ hibiscus, Malabar spinach, Proper mowing, and Drip irrigation. The Piedmont edition has in addition: Create a pollinator paradise, Blueberries, and Kudzu bug. I find the Coastal Plain and Mountains editions also have some interesting information.

HERB OF THE MONTH- AUGUST

By Edna Lovelace Gaston
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener



Stevia rebaudiana - Stevia

Height: 16 to 24 inches tall

Flowers: small white flowers. But to contain the plant it should be frequently harvested / pruned so few flowers are produced.

Propagation: Cuttings

Growing conditions: full sun, well-drained soil. Plant benefits from some afternoon shade during extremely hot weather. It grows well in the ground or in a container. It is not hardy in our Zone 7. Therefore keep in a container, grow it in the ground then dig up before frost or take cuttings late in the growing season for new plants. The leaves begin to lose their effectiveness after a year or so. Therefore plants should be replaced.

Uses: sweetener. Leaves can be used either fresh or dried

History: This plant has been used in many other countries as a natural sweetener for centuries.

This is my first year growing Stevia. It has not grown large enough for me to harvest any leaves. I am not recommending its usage. As with anything care should be taken. But the appearance is attractive and it's fun to say I'm growing my own sweetener.

Happy Summer Gardening,
Ladybug

INTERESTING TID-BITS FOR AUGUST

By Marty Finkel,
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener

□ You may have heard that a 100-year tradition was broken this past May when Great Britain's Royal Horticulture Society allowed garden gnomes to be displayed at the Chelsea Flower Show. This heretofore unheard of decision was greeted with cheers and great satisfaction by friends of the gnomes and with horror by proponents of good taste. The official explanation of the ban was that these ornaments might distract from horticultural displays, but the suspicion has always been that they were considered too tacky.

They have not always been looked down upon, though; in fact, they were expensive collectors' items when first introduced to Britain. In 1867 gardener Sir Charles Isham brought 21 earthenware figurines to Britain from Germany to be used on the grounds of Lamport Hall in Northamptonshire. Sir Charles, who was a spiritualist, believed they had protective powers. They became objects of snobbery when they were manufactured from plastic. Other items will remain on the prohibited list of the Chelsea show, including fairies, pixies, balloons, and flags.

At the May show, 100 gnomes were decorated by celebrities (including Elton John and Downton Abbey writer Lord Fellowes), reviewed by the Queen, and were sold to help support the RHS campaign to add more gardens in schools.

Before you rush out to populate your garden with gnomes (who knew they could become pests with a tendency to infestation?), you MUST watch this YouTube video produced by the Utah State University Extension service titled "Gnome Management in the Garden."

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D0foMKAxCww>

□ About 150 species of firefly inhabit the territory east of a line drawn from Wisconsin to Texas. Some are rare and some common, and each species has its own distinctive flash rate which changes greatly with temperature (the rate can double in

frequency from 55 degrees to 75 degrees F.). Amid all this flashing confusion, each species has to find a mate of its own kind to produce eggs and viable larvae, and the *rate* of flashing is a signal for who is who. The female typically does not fly but hunkers down near the base of plants and looks for the male flashers flying above.

Sometimes it's not an invitation to mate but on the part of the female, a lure with a different outcome: a female belonging to the *Photuris pennsylvanica* genus gives an accurate imitation of the mating code of the female belonging to *Photinus sintillans* in order to lure a male belonging to the latter genus so she can seize and eat him. This and other fascinating information about fireflies (including how they make the light they flash) is found in an article titled "Fireflies" by Jeff Cox in the 2013 July/August issue of *Horticulture* magazine. Online it's hortmag.com.

□ This information about the emerald ash borer was released June 17 with the contact person listed as Phillip Wilson, plant pest administrator, NMCDA&CS Plant Industry Division, 919-707-3753

First detection of the emerald ash borer made in the state; quarantine established for Granville, Person and Vance counties

RALEIGH -- Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler signed an emergency quarantine order today restricting the movement of hardwood firewood, ash nursery stock and other ash materials from Granville, Person and Vance counties following the confirmation of the emerald ash borer in trees there. This marks the first time emerald ash borer has been found in the state.



Emerald ash borer found in Granville County..

North Carolina is the 20th state in the country to

confirm the presence of the destructive pest, following the discovery of an adult beetle and other signs of borer activity in trees in Granville County by staff with the N.C. Forest Service. Additional surveying found signs of emerald ash borer activity in the bordering counties of Person and Vance.

"The detection of this pest is not unexpected, especially given the presence of the beetle in Virginia and Tennessee," Troxler said. "We have been surveying and trapping sites along the state borders for several years for any signs of the movement of this pest. A federal quarantine will be coming shortly, but I am invoking this emergency quarantine to take every step possible to restrict the movement of emerald ash borer any further."

The beetle was first detected in the United States in Michigan in 2002. It is responsible for the death or decline of tens of millions of ash trees across the country.

Under the state quarantine, all hardwood firewood and plants and plant parts of the ash tree -- including living, dead, cut or fallen, green lumber, stumps, roots, branches and composted and uncomposted chips -- cannot be moved outside the three counties.

The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' [Plant Industry Division](#) and [N.C. Forest Service](#) are working in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

"Detecting and preventing the human spread of the emerald ash borer is a huge undertaking," said Deborah Stewart, USDA state plant health director for North Carolina. "We need everyone's cooperation to minimize the impacts of this pest."

Symptoms of emerald ash borer in ash trees include a general decline in the appearance of the tree, such as thinning from the top down and loss of leaves. Clumps of shoots, also known as epicormic sprouts, emerging from the trunk of the tree and increased woodpecker activity are other symptoms. The emerald ash borer is not the only pest that can cause these.

Emerald ash borers overwinter as larvae. Adult beetles begin to emerge from May to June and can be found in the summer months. The adult beetle is one-fourth to a half-inch long and is slender and metallic green. When the adults emerge from a tree, they leave behind a D-shaped exit hole. The larvae can also create serpentine tunneling marks, known as feeding galleries, which are found under the bark of the infested trees.

Home and landowners are encouraged to report any symptomatic activity in ash trees to the NCDA&CS Plant Industry Division hotline at 1-800-206-9333 or by email at newpest@ncagr.gov. The pest can affect any of the four types of ash trees grown in the state. (The link to this article was found on NCSU entomologist Dr. Steve Frank's website: ecoIPM.com The complete article was copied and pasted. For more information on the emerald ash borer, go to Dr. Frank's website.)

*Editor: Fern Boyd,
Kerr Lake Extension Master Gardener*

Extension Agent: Paul McKenzie
305 Young St., Henderson, NC 27536
252-438-8188 or 252-257-3640
paul_mckenzie@ncsu.edu
<http://vance.ces.ncsu.edu>
<http://warren.ces.ncsu.edu>

Recommendations for the use of agricultural 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 North Carolina Cooperative Extension nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use agricultural chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conform to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact your county Cooperative Extension Agent.

North Carolina State University and North Carolina A & T State University commit themselves 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 their sexual orientation. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A & T State University, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

Pictures courtesy of Edna Gaston, Brent and Becky's Bulbs and NCSU.