“One man’s weed is another man’s Wildflower.”

-old adage

Water Wisely

No matter whether you are concerned about the status of your well, or are watching your water bill rise, you don’t want to use any more water for the garden than necessary. Here are some steps for watering wisely:

1. Determine water needs by feeling the soil. Probe or stick your fingers at least an inch into the soil to determine if the soil is dry.
2. Mulch to retain moisture. In ornamental beds use 3 inches of bark or pine needles. In the vegetable garden, 2 inches of straw or chopped leaves.
3. Soaker hoses, drip irrigation, pots sunk between vegetable plants, are efficient methods to apply water around plant roots without losing water to evaporation or throwing it onto areas that don’t need watering.
4. Don’t water lawns unless just planted this spring. For established lawns an inch of water every 3 weeks won’t keep the grass green, but will prevent the roots from dyeing.

Normal July Weather
Weather Averages
For Asheville North Carolina
Courtesy of Wikipedia

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal July Average High</td>
<td>80°F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal July Average Low</td>
<td>58.3°F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal July Precipitation</td>
<td>4.38&quot;</td>
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Hours of Daylight for Asheville, NC

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunrise</td>
<td>Sunset</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1</td>
<td>6:02 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 31</td>
<td>6:21 am</td>
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Inside:

Garden Chores for July

- Be Careful of Phytotoxicity
- Get Your Canner Gauge Checked
- Design & Maintain a Healthy Landscape
- Focus on Flowers
- How to Prepare for a Flower Show

Events
CHORES FOR JULY

LAWNS

- Mow fescue and bluegrass lawns at least 3 inches high, shorter grass will become drought stressed sooner and will be more subject to weeds.
- Do not fertilize cool season grasses until September.
- Weed control should be limited to pulling, digging, and spot treating with herbicides if needed. Herbicides may not work on drought stressed plants so you may have to wait for weeds to start to grow again.

ORNAMENTALS

- Check newly planted trees and shrubs at least once a week for water needs. In the absence of 1 inch of rainfall, soak each plant with a couple of gallons of water.
- Protect young trees from damage by mowers or trimmers by keeping them mulched or putting tree guards around them.
- Check needled evergreens for bagworms early, while the caterpillars are still small enough to kill with B.T. bacteria spray.
- Finish any pruning or fertilizing of shrubs before the end of the month.
- Prune rhododendrons within 4 weeks after the blooms fade.
- Divide irises and daylilies after they have bloomed.
- You can still seed fast blooming annuals for late season color. Try cosmos, zinnias or sunflowers.
- Deadhead spent flowers to encourage continued flowering.

FRUITS

- Trees not carrying fruit this year may produce a lot of watersprouts. Prune them out now to reduce excess regrowth.
- Prune blackberries and raspberries after harvest.

VEGETABLES

- For best flavor and nutritional value, harvest vegetables when young and tender. Refer to the publication on Harvesting Vegetables: [http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/hil-8108.html](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/hil-8108.html)
- If you will be away for more than a few days, have a neighbor harvest vegetables. Most plants will continue to produce better if the fruit is not left to mature.
- To prevent blossom-end-rot on tomatoes, mulch and maintain watering. Drought stress or water fluctuations are the most common cause of this malady.
- Protect honeybees. If you must use an insecticide (even organic) spray late in the evening when few bees are active.
- Plan the fall garden. Brussels sprouts should be planted in July; most other cool season crops in August.
- You can also still plant late crops of squash, bush beans or cucumbers.
- Surplus produce can be donated to the Plant A Row for the Hungry collection at MANNA Food Bank. Take fresh fruits and vegetables to MANNA at 627 Swannanoa River Road, Monday – Friday between 8:00 am and 3:30 pm.

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
**SPOTLIGHT: ROSEMARY**

Rosemary, *Rosemarianus officianallis*, makes a nice small shrub for the herb garden or the shrubbery border. Plant it near the patio for regular “aromatherapy” and for quick access to the kitchen. Keep it handy to toss a few green stems on top of the barbecue coals to add flavor to chicken or fish.

Rosemary is a small evergreen shrub. From late winter through spring, the plant displays blue flowers. There are many varieties available, ranging from upright forms to prostrate trailers. Some varieties can grow into large shrubs, but you will rarely see one in this area more than 3 feet tall.

You can always grow rosemary in a pot and move it indoors for the winter, but I think it is worthy to be in my garden, even if it does not always survive the winter in western North Carolina. It can always be replaced inexpensively if needed. The most cold hardy variety is ‘Arp’ but I don’t find it readily available. ‘Provence’ is widely available and seems to do well here.

Native to the Mediterranean area, rosemary will grow best in very drained soil in a hot, sunny location. Don’t pamper it too much with lots of fertilizer or water. And prune it as much as you like. Just don’t prune it back hard in the fall as this can reduce it’s winter hardiness.

**VISIT OUR DEMONSTRATION SITES**

You can also learn more about gardening by visiting our demonstration sites. Extension Master Gardeners of Buncombe County maintain three demonstrations in Asheville.

On Thursday mornings, between 9:30 am and 11:30 am, you can visit the Master Gardener Volunteers at the Plant A Row Demonstration Garden at MANNA Food Bank. They will be happy to answer your questions or explain their vegetable growing techniques while they take care of the garden. Of course you can drop by to take a look and pick up a leaflet at any time.

If you are visiting the WNC Nature Center don’t miss the Heirloom Garden. Inside the picket fence you’ll see old fashioned varieties of herbs, flowers and vegetables and can pick up a leaflet while you are there. These volunteers also usually work on Thursday mornings.

The Composting Demonstration, located at the WNC Farmer’s Market, contains several different types of compost bins as well as informational signs and leaflets.

**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; spidermites on many flowers and shrubs; euonymous scale.

**Fruits and Vegetables:** slugs, asparagus beetles, cucumber beetles, cabbageworms, tomato fruitworms, aphids, spider mites.
THE ORGANIC WAY: Identify Your Bugs

Last month’s article addressed attracting beneficial insects to your garden. It can be quite useful, as well as fascinating, to identify the insects you find in your yard.

For example, when you find an aphid infestation on your ornamental honeysuckle, start looking on the same plant for ladybugs and their eggs and larva. Can you identify a baby ladybug (larva)? Other aphid predators include green lacewing larva and syrphid fly larva.

If you find caterpillars such as cabbageworms or tomato hornworms with little white cocoons on them, leave them alone. The caterpillar is being killed by the larva of the Braconid wasp and you want them to hatch out to go on and kill more caterpillars. You won’t see the adult wasp as they are only the size of a gnat.

To learn to identify these and many other insect predators and parasites visit these web sites:

http://cipm.ncsu.edu/ent/biocontrol/

http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/chatham/ag/SustAg/insects.html

Be Careful of Phytotoxicity

Reprint from Ask A Gardener
By: Glenn Palmer, Extension Master Gardener Volunteer

Ladybug Larva

Q: Wasps from a nest on a dwarf hemlock in our garden stung a family member. This person then emptied a hornet spray into the nest. Now a large dead area is showing up at that spot. How can that happen from an insecticide?

A: Too much of any good thing can become a problem, for plants as well as for people. In plants it’s called “phytotoxicity”, “phyto” meaning, “plant”. The problem is that either the amount of chemical or the type of chemical in the insecticide was toxic to the plant tissue it contacted.

Sadly, phytotoxicity is quite common but often the cause and effect is not as evident as in your case. It often goes undetected because the symptoms are similar to those caused by natural disease or insect injury.

Typically, phytotoxic damage occurs when a gardener:

- Decides that if the instructions call for 2 ounces of a pesticide per gallon of water, then twice as much would be twice as good. That’s not always true.
- Mixes chemicals that aren’t compatible, resulting in a stronger concentration than intended.
- Uses a pesticide on a plant not listed on its label. Or, like many household sprays, not labeled for plants at all, which is the case of your hornet killer.
- Applied a pesticide when the plant is already under stress, perhaps because of high temperatures or dry weather.
- Allows a spray to drift off-target, maybe due to unexpected breezes or tank pressure being too high.

Two simple rules would avoid most phytotoxicity problems. First, READ THE LABEL! And follow it precisely. Second, consider the weather before applying any chemical, organic or otherwise. Don’t spray when there’s a measurable wind or when the temperature is expected to go over 85 degrees.
GET YOUR CANNER GAUGE CHECKED HERE!!!!

Canning season is just around the corner and it’s time to get prepared. You want to check your equipment to make sure it is ready for use. Buy new lids to replace the lids used last year. Check your bands and jars to see that they are in good condition. Check your gaskets and pressure gauges as well. If you would like to have your gauge tested, call our office to set up an appointment. We will be testing most Friday mornings but may be able to fit in testing at other times.

FOCUS ON FLOWERS – Gardening with Native Plants

NC Cooperative Extension, Extension Master Gardeners and The North Carolina Arboretum are once again teaming up to offer this special day-long symposium on July 14. This year’s theme will be all about using native plants in the landscape. For registration information call the Arboretum at 665-2492. $ 40 Arboretum members, $ 46 non-members.

FLOWER SHOW DEMONSTRATION – How to Prepare for a Flower Show

The Extension Master Gardeners are sponsoring a demonstration on how to enter, prepare and design your entry for the North Carolina Mountain State Fair Flower Show. This demonstration will be held at the Youth Building, Gate One of the Agricultural Center on July 28 from 10 to 12. No charge, but call 255-5522 to reserve your spot.

DESIGNING AND MAINTAINING A HEALTHY LANDSCAPE

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00 to 8:00 pm
NC Cooperative Extension Center, 94 Coxe Ave. Asheville, NC

Everyone wants a home landscape that not only looks good, but also is low maintenance and environmentally friendly. Start 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; soil preparation, planting correctly and best maintenance practices. Cost: $ 20 for the series.
Paid pre-registration is required

Program Agenda

August 21
Six Steps to Landscape Design
August 23
Selecting the Right Plants
August 28
Planting it Right
August 30
Maintaining the Landscape
September 4
Home Lawn Planting and Maintenance

The Mountain Gardener is a newsletter produced by the Buncombe County Center of North Carolina Cooperative Extension. The purpose of this newsletter is to inform and educate Buncombe County residents about issues related to home lawns and gardens.

Editor:
Linda G. Blue
Extension Agent – Agriculture – Urban Horticulture

Check out Buncombe County Center’s website at…..
http://buncombe.ces.ncsu.edu
COMING EVENTS

July 10  Satellite Plant Clinic – Robinson Hall – UNCA, 10:00 am

July 10  Gardening in the Mountains Series, “Growing Small Fruits”, presented by Extension Master Gardeners, at The North Carolina Arboretum, 10:00 am.

July 14&28  Plant Problem Clinic by Extension Master Gardeners at the WNC Farmers Market, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm in the breezeway between the retail buildings. If you can not bring plant problem samples to the Extension Office during the week, Extension Master Gardeners staff a Plant Problem Clinic at the WNC Farmer’s Market the second and fourth Saturdays each month.

July 14  Focus on Flowers: Gardening With Native Plants. NC Arboretum 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

July 28  How to Prepare for a Flower Show – Free demonstration – NC Ag. Center 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. To register call 255-5522

Individuals with disabilities who would like to participate in any program mentioned in this newsletter, but who need special assistance to do so, should call the Extension Center at 828-255-5522 at least five days prior to the event.