SEE YOU AT THE FAIR!

If you are planning to visit the NC Mountain State Fair, September 5-14 at the WNC Ag Center, be sure to visit the Flower and Garden Tent. Drop by the “Ask A Gardener” table to talk to the Master Gardener Volunteers about your gardening questions.

While you are there, pick up soil test boxes, purchase a Gardener’s Almanac, and visit the educational exhibits.

Also remember that entry days for the flower shows are September 4 and 9, and entries for fruits and vegetables should be delivered September 1 and 2.

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CHORES FOR SEPTEMBER

LAWNS

- Fertilize fescue and bluegrass lawns. Use slow-release fertilizer to reduce risk of nutrient run-off.
- Fall is the best time to core aerate the lawn. Aerate before fertilizing or reseeding if soil is compacted.
- When reseeding a fescue lawn, consider using a blend with two or more hybrid varieties. Use a rate of 6 pounds per 1000 square feet when seeding bare areas, about 3 or 4 pounds when over-seeding a thin stand of grass.

ORNAMENTALS

- Do NOT fertilize shrubs. Late season nitrogen can reduce cold hardiness of woody plants.
- If peonies have not flowered well and have not been divided in many years, it may be time to divide them. Leave several “eyes” on each division and be sure to replant them with the eyes are no more than 2 inches below the soil surface. Keep them watered this fall.
- Check needled evergreens for bagworms. If you can remove them, you will prevent reinestation next spring.
- If some of the summer annuals are spent, go ahead and pull them out and replace them with pansies or ornamental cabbage.
- Start checking house plants for signs of insects so they can be treated a few times before moving back indoors.

FRUITS

- Tend to the strawberry bed. Remove weeds and fertilize as the plants are forming next spring’s flower buds now. Also water if September rains are lacking.
- Practice good sanitation in the orchard to reduce carry-over of disease and insect problems. Remove fallen fruit from the ground and any left hanging in the trees.

VEGETABLES

- Remove vegetable plants as soon as they have finished producing to reduce carry-over of insect and disease problems.
- Transplant broccoli, cabbage, lettuce, and leafy greens and plant seeds for lettuce, kale and spinach.
- Keep an eye on cabbage family crops that may need insect control. A weekly application of B.t. bacteria spray will prevent cabbageworms. Use insecticidal soap for aphids if needed.
- Consider planting a cover crop on vegetable beds to build organic matter for next year’s garden. This is a good time to plant clover, vetch or Austrian winter peas. Mow and turn under in February or March before next summer’s planting.

OTHER

- Continue to tend the hummingbird feeder. Migrating birds will appreciate the food supply during their long journey.
SPOTLIGHT: JAPANESE ANEMONE

Just when much of the perennial garden has begun to fade, Japanese anemones will start to fill the garden with colorful blossoms. Blooms can often be enjoyed from early August until frost. They stand 2 to 4 feet tall on plants that grow in large clumps. Plants will tend to spread more in light, loamy, rich soil.

It is difficult to know what the true botanical identification is for the plants most commonly called Japanese anemone as they have been variously referred to as *Anemone japonica*, then *Anemone x hybrida*, and now *Anemone hupehensis*. There are many varieties available including double flowers and old-fashioned singles, and colors of white and various shades of pink.

Anemones are hardy perennials which will grow best with some afternoon shade. In the western North Carolina mountains they can tolerate afternoon sun as long as they receive plenty of water, which means paying attention to summer irrigation. They do not seem to thrive in heavy clay soil, so amend before planting with plenty of pine bark soil conditioner or compost if needed.

Japanese anemones will spread if soil conditions are to their liking. If desired, they can be divided in spring.

HEMLOCK WOOLLY ADELGIDS

If you have hemlock trees, fall is a good time to inspect trees and treat with organic sprays or systemic insecticides.

Trees small enough to spray can be treated with horticultural oil or insecticidal soap. The period from September through November is a good time to spray. Be sure to spray thoroughly to cover all the insects.

Fall is also the best time to apply systemic insecticides. Products containing imidacloprid (Merit, Bayer Advance Garden Tree and Shrub Insect Control, some generic brands) can be applied as a soil drench at the base of the tree. Follow label directions carefully for calculating mixing and application rates.

Trees that can not be treated with a soil drench because of proximity to a stream, or sloping or rocky soil, can be treated by trunk injections. This method would need to be handled by a professional arborist.

INSECTS TO WATCH FOR

**Ornamentals:** Spruce mites on hemlock, juniper and spruce; lacebugs on azaleas, cotoneaster and pyracantha; bagworms on junipers and Leyland cypress; hemlock wooly adelgids on hemlock.

**Vegetables:** Cabbage worms and aphids on cabbage, greens, broccoli; squash vine borers in squash and pumpkins; pickleworms in squashes and pumpkins.
SUCCESSFUL SEED SAVING

If you collect seeds to save for next year, or even save leftover seeds from year to year, storing the seeds properly will improve your chances of success. Most seeds will last one or two years with no special packaging if conditions are adequate. However, all seeds will keep best if cool and dry. Preferred temperature is 35 to 50 degrees. Store seeds in air-tight containers to keep out moisture. Screw top jars are probably best. A number of seed packets can be stored in a large wide-mouth jar in the back of the refrigerator.

If you are collecting seeds from the garden, it is important that the seeds be thoroughly dry before storing. Before storing seed heads, pods, or beans, spread the seeds out on an old window screen in a dry, well ventilated location for a few days.

To absorb excess moisture put some desiccant in the jar such as small packets of silica gel or powdered milk. Dry the desiccant in the oven on low setting before use.

FALL GARDEN SCHOOL

Saturday, November 1
Folk Art Center
Blue Ridge Parkway, Asheville

This year’s garden school, presented by Extension Master Gardener volunteers of Buncombe County, will be held at the Folk Art Center, near Asheville. The fee will be $10. You must pre-register by sending your check made out to: Master Gardener Project Fund, 94 Coxe Ave. Asheville, NC 28801.

- 9 - 9:30                Registration
- 9:30 – 10:30        Bulbs for Spring and Fall
- 10:30 – 11:30      Winter Interest for Your Garden.
- 11:30 – 12:30        Lunch on your own
- 12:30 – 1:30        Everything You wanted to Know About Pruning But Were Afraid to Ask
- 1:30 – 2:30          Four Seasons Container Gardening
- 2:30 – 2:45          Wrap Up

TACKLING PERENNIAL WEEDS

Many perennial weeds are most effectively controlled by glyphosate (Roundup and others) in late summer or early fall. When deciduous plants are getting ready to go dormant, they are translocating sugars from the leaves down to the root system, so good movement of the herbicide to the root system occurs. Unfortunately, when plants are drought stressed they do not absorb herbicides well through the leaves. However, cut stump treatments should be effective. So if you have invasive plants such as Oriental bittersweet, kudzu, honeysuckle, multiflora rose, privet, Paulownia, etc., the best treatment would be to cut the stem close to the ground and immediately treat it (within minutes) with concentrated glyphosate. Refer to the label for “cut stump treatment” for mixing.
Tips for the Water Wise Landscape

When every drop counts, it’s a shame to let water flow down the drain. Apparently the North Carolina State Legislature is still discussing lifting some of the regulations that prevent the use of “gray water”. So for now water that has been “used” – whether for bathing, cleaning or cooking – is still considered sewage. But there are some things you CAN do to save water.

The water that runs while waiting for the hot water to get to the shower or sink is clean. So put a bucket under the shower or sink and don’t let it run down the drain. Now you’ve got a couple of gallons of clean water to water plants or even to flush with.

Once you start paying attention to the water use in your home; you become aware of a lot of ways water is wasted. For example: turn off the water while you brush your teeth or shave. Take shorter showers or turn off the water while lathering. Collect kitchen scraps for composting rather than using the disposal. Fix leaky faucets or toilets. Install low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators. Run fewer loads of laundry.

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2009 Extension Master Gardener Training

Applications are now being accepted for the Extension Master Gardener volunteer training program for 2009.

Classes will be held on Thursdays, 12:00 noon until 4:00 from January 15 through April 16. The deadline for applications is November 21. The training fee for 2009 is $85 (though that could change) Interviews are generally scheduled during late November or early December.

For an application call 255-5522 or email joyce.plemmons@buncombecounty.org

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Introduction to the Master Gardener Program

Wednesday, October 22
1 – 3 pm
Buncombe County Extension Center
94 Coxe Ave.
Asheville, NC

If you think you might be interested in becoming an Extension Master Gardener volunteer, this is your opportunity to come and learn more about this popular program in Buncombe County. Learn about the training requirements, volunteer activities, class schedule, and meet some current volunteers. You may fill out an application form and even schedule an interview if you like. No pre-registration required.
COMING EVENTS

Sept. 5-14  NC Mountain State Fair, WNC Ag Center

Sept. 13  Extension Master Gardeners Plant Clinic, WNC Farmers’ Market (Breezeway)
& 27
11 am to 2 pm.

Backyard Composting Demonstrations, by the EMGs at WNC Farmers’ Market
11am to 2 pm

Sept. 6  Botanical Gardens at Asheville Fall Plant Sale, 9 am to 3 pm, in the gardens.

Sept. 9  Gardening in the Mountains: “The Not-so Dormant Season”. Presented by
Extension Master Gardeners at the North Carolina Arboretum at 10:00 am. Tuesday
is free admission. No pre-registration.

Sept. 9-23  Analyzing Your Mountain Homestead, at the Botanical Gardens at Asheville.
Tuesdays, 9:00 – 12:00. for more info: http://www.ashevillebotanicalgardens.org

Oct. 7  Gardening in the Mountains:”Native Alternatives to Exotic Invasive Plants”
Presented by Extension Master Gardeners at the NC Arboretum at 10:00 am

Oct. 21  “Firewise Landscaping”, 10:00 – 12:00 at the Botanical Gardens at Asheville. For
more information: http://www.ashevillebotanicalgardens.org

Oct. 22  Introduction to the Extension Master Gardener Program. 1 to 3 pm at the
Buncombe Co. Cooperative Extension Office, 94 Coxe Ave. Asheville

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.