THE GARDEN PATH

ROSE TIPS FOR THE MONTH
By: Heidi Moore, Kerr Lake Master Gardener

MAINTENANCE

We have now entered the time of year in North Carolina that requires diligence in the rose garden in order to keep your bushes strong and healthy. Watering each plant with a garden hose, soaking the root area directly, will ensure a good quantity of water reaching the deeper area of roots to help keep your bushes hydrated. It is very important to provide enough water when the temperatures remain above the 90 degree mark. The ground dries quickly and your plants will begin to show stress. As rose bushes are heavy feeders, supplying liquid fertilizer every three weeks with a garden hose attachment or directly to the roots with a watering can will also benefit your plants and keep them strong. Insects and diseases can become a problem as well. Continue your spraying routine, especially fungicide every 7-10 days and use insecticides when plants show evidence of insect damage.

Continue to deadhead all spent flowers and keep the garden free of all debris.

ROSE VARIETY:
SPECIES ROSES OR “WILD” ROSE

If you are looking for a slightly “wilder” look to your landscape, consider the Species rose. These are roses that were given to us naturally throughout the Northern Hemisphere. These roses are an enormously varied group of plants. They are vigorous, thriving on minimal maintenance, and tend to be extremely hardy and disease-resistant. There is, however, variability among the species. Some may be more tolerant than others. They range in size from ground cover types to very large upright growers and climbers. Their flowers can be very large and single or small and in clusters. Colors range from white to pink to crimson. Species roses often have relatively simple, 5-petaled flowers followed by very colorful rose hips that last into the winter, providing food for birds and winter color. Almost all are once-blooming in early summer. Perhaps the most familiar species available today is Rosa rugosa because of its superior hardiness, resistance, and extremely easy maintenance. This species has been widely hybridized. Species roses may not be for everyone. Rose enthusiasts like to include them into their collection for historical purposes as well as ease of maintenance. They are extremely useful as a property border or for providing privacy for an outside patio area.

ROSE TERMS

Dieback – When tips, shoots or canes die, due to disease or damage.
**Biennial** – A plant that completes its life cycle in two growing seasons.

**Annual** – A plant that completes its life cycle in one growing season.

**Perennials** – A plant that flowers and lives for many years, sometimes dying down in the winter and coming up again in the spring.

**Self-sowing** – Plants that propagate themselves by dropping seeds to produce new plants the next year.

**Sport** – An unusual change in growth or color that can occur on an established variety, usually the result of a natural mutation. A climbing rose is an example of a growth sport.

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**PLANT OF THE MONTH**

**Rain Lilies**

*By: Marty Finkel, Kerr Lake Master Gardener*

There are two species of plants, Zephyranthes and Habranthus, that are commonly called rain lilies since they both bloom within a few days of a summer thundershower. The most commonly one seen in the south is the Atamasco Lily, (Z. atamasco), but it blooms in the spring. It is the earliest Zephyr lily, with pure white, fragrant flowers, and is the most robust. They are often seen along roadside ditches in April and May.

In addition to the common name of rain lily, zephyr lily and fairly lily are used for both genera. They range from South America to the southeastern part of the U.S. and vary in hardiness, all being fairly tender in severe winters. In general, plant the bulbs 2 inches deep and 3-4 inches apart in well-drained soil in full sun to light shade. The bulbs can be planted year-round. Propagate by dividing the bulbs or by seed (from seed, flowering usually takes up to 2 years).

Zephyranthes has over 20 species, and Habranthus around 10. They are often confused with one another since they are around the same height and both have tubular flowers with the same colors, that is, ranging from white to yellow to red, with shades in-between. The leaves vary from dark green and linear to several millimeters broad and can be strap-like or twisted. The leaves may or may not be present during flowering. They are small plants, usually up to about 12” tall but making very showy carpets as they multiply. Use them in front of the border, along paths, in a rock garden, or among ground covers.

There are a couple of distinguishing characteristics: Zephyranthes flowers are borne straight up on the flower stalk and the stamens are equal in length, while Habranthus flowers are borne at an angle on the stem and the stamens are unequal in length. Depending on the species, bloom periods may last from 2 months in the summer to most of the frost-free growing season. The flower lasts a couple of days, but the bulb can flower several times during the warm months of the year.

Some bulb catalogs supply rain lilies, as do some area nurseries, with great photographs online.

**Photos from the JC Raulston Arboretum collection:**

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(2)  
(3)  
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GARDEN TO DO
By: Carl Schafer, Kerr Lake 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. 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. See article in the July 07 issue or pick up Horticulture Information Leaflet 8001, Growing A Fall Vegetable Garden: www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/hil-8001.html.


If you are not planting a fall garden or if you have extra unused space, plant a cover crop. See article in the August 07 issue and/or see: www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/pdf/hgic1252.pdf. Also check above fall garden web sites.

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.

For lawn questions see Turf Files.

HERB OF THE MONTH
By: Ladybug aka Edna Gaston, Kerr Lake Master Gardener

It’s hot. . . we need relief. Time for some shade. But bare ground beneath trees can be boring. So herbs to the rescue!

There are many herbs that grow well in filtered light or shady conditions. If there is a path through the wooded area, then thyme between the pavers works well. It looks great and emits a wonderful fragrance with each passing step. Or thyme can be used as a border plant and as the “spiller” in a container or hanging basket. Some of my favorites for walkways are Thymus minus, Corsican, Elfin or Doone Valley as all of

http://urbanext.illinois.edu/hortihints/0402c.html
these are low growing and have small leaves. Brighten up the area with mints – grown in containers. Apple Mint is especially nice as its leaves provide some variety from the usual shape of mint leaves. There are many exciting “flavors” from which to choose – Orange, lemon, Lavender in addition to Peppermint and spearmint. Of course don’t forget my favorite – Chocolate. Lemon balm brings great scents to the shady area but again this is best grown in a container.

Another good border plant is Pennyroyal. Slightly taller is Germander, often called “poor man’s boxwood”. Nice specimen plants include Rosemary, Sage, Hyssop, Angelica, Costmary and Santolina.

Keep in mind that most herbs prefer a sunny area so those growing in the shade will be slower growing and remain smaller. Since they are growing in a woody area there is much competition for water. These plants will need more irrigation while getting accustomed to the new home and more frequent watering in time of drought after becoming established. While fertilizer is usually not necessary, it is beneficial due to larger roots fighting for nutrients.

So pick a shady spot, dig a few holes or arrange a few containers, grab a glass of ice tea, add an herb for flavoring, relax and enjoy yourself!


**CHECKLIST FOR THE MONTH**

*By: Mary Jane Bosworth, Kerr Lake Master Gardener*

- August is the time of greatest stress for container plants. Move them to shaded areas and water them daily.
- Plant your fall garden. Sow seeds of radishes, carrots, lettuce, spinach, kale mustard and turnips. Transplant squash, cabbage, broccoli and cucumbers.
- Encourage the growth of good root systems by watering thoroughly.
- Transplant Iris and Daylilies.
- Late August and early September is the optimal time to control grubs with soil insecticides.

**INTERESTING TID-BITS**

*By: Marty Finkel, Kerr Lake Master Gardener*

Ambrosia beetles made headlines in the B section of the July 18 Raleigh News & Observer. The comprehensive article reported that there are two species of tiny Asian beetles, the granulate ambrosia beetle (which has been around for decades), and the redbay ambrosia beetle, which was found in the state for the first time in Bladen Co. this April. The latter kills ecologically important trees such as sassafras, redbay and the endangered pondberry. It has ravaged avocado orchards in Florida. The granulate ambrosia beetle attacks peach, plum, pecan, dogwood, Japanese maples, and crape myrtles, and many others. Ambrosia beetles don’t eat the wood of the tree – they bore into the tree and plant fungus in the tunnels. The fungus extracts nutrients from the tree, and the beetles eat the fungus. In their native habitat, the beetles plant the fungus
in dead or dying trees only, but when they are in a new environment (after having been shipped across the ocean, for example), they get confused. Live trees in their new location smell like dead wood to them, and they begin boring into live trees. Three *Styrax* trees in nursery pots at my home in Oxford, as well as one that had been in the ground for about 5 years, were killed by ambrosia beetles several years ago. The frass from the boring stuck straight out from the tree like toothpicks, just like the photo in the paper.

University of Georgia Professor Allen Armitage recently retired, and unfortunately the Athens Select program of plant trials and recommendations is shutting down. Armitage worked tirelessly to promote great garden plants and originated the Athens Select line of proven performers.

Plant breeder Jack Roberson is best known for his work in daylilies, especially when his introduction, ‘Black Eyed Stella’, was chosen in 1994 as the first All-America Daylily. He continued breeding and introducing daylilies, and in 2005 his ‘Miss Mary Mary’ was an All-America choice, as was ‘Lady Elizabeth’ in 2011. He began working with lantana, a genus in which no real breeding work had been done in more than 15 years. He introduced the Patriot Series which has an entirely new palette of colors and five different growth habits, including weeping, upright and petite. His work with cleomes resulted in an entirely new color, royal purple, as well as pastel colors. He tamed the tall, lanky nature of the plant to one that is self-branching and compact at just over two feet tall, the Spirit cultivars.

The former Horticulture Department head, Dr. Julia Kornegay, is establishing a Eucomis breeding program at NCSU for the floriculture industry. Pineapple lilies are typically fragrant and when cut for arrangements, last for weeks. Look for new hybrids to show up down the road.

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