



Brunswick County Master Gardener
Volunteer Association

NEWSLETTER

July 2006

At our July 27 General Meeting

...our speaker will be David Nash, Area Specialized Agent for Coastal Management from the New Hanover Cooperative Extension Office. He will give an overview of the dunes and dune vegetation in Brunswick County. He has co-authored a book on this subject.

Go to www.ncmastergardeners.org and click on "Events" for information on the **State Master Gardener Conference – "Gardening on the Edge."** The conference will be October 2 - 4 in Kill Devil Hills and will feature great speakers and workshops - including grafting, healing powers of herbs, native plants, tough plants for tough places and a ½ day bonsai workshop - plus pre-conference tours. Invitations were mailed in June. The registration fee will be discounted if you register by August 1.

The 4-H Summer Youth Program will offer three classes at the County Extension Center. We will work with 4-H to provide a version of the "Life on the Farm" series. The first class, for kids ages 6 to 8, will be from 9 – 11 AM on July 25 at the Extension Center. The second, on August 1, for 9 – 12 year olds, and the third

on August 15, for kids over 12, will be from 9 AM to Noon, at Extension and in the Greenhouse. Most of the information is already assembled so other than a short meeting before each session, there shouldn't be much extra work involved. Charlie is looking for volunteers – please call him at 253-2610 if you can help at any of these sessions.

- **The Hardscape Team** is making progress on the tasks to be accomplished. They have already completed repairs to the irrigation system. Hilton is still looking for members to join the Team – you don't need previous experience to participate in this group. Let Hilton know if you can help.
- The **Reunion Committee** is planning a Garden Party for November 10. All current and former Master Gardeners will be invited to this get together. We are compiling an up-to-date list of all our MG class graduates and making good progress **except for the 1996 class** – we have not been able to find a class list for that year. If you graduated that year and have a list filed away somewhere, we need a copy! Please call Shirley Waggoner-Eisenman (754-4148) if you have a list or know where we can get one. And Mark Your Calendar for November 10.

Trim yourself to suit everyone else and you will soon whittle yourself away.

Beach Rock Available for Home Gardens; Contest Gives Oak Island MG a Chance to Shine!

Master Gardeners from throughout the county are invited to the shores of Oak Island this summer to gather beach rock deposited in the sands during the 2001 Sea Turtle Habitat Project, in an environmental initiative sponsored by Oak Island Beach Preservation to rid the beach of the stone to provide an unobstructed strand for beachgoers and turtle nesters.

At the same time, Oak Island MGs have the opportunity to shine by gathering the rock and using it creatively in the Beach Preservation group's first ever Beach Rock Landscape & Design Contest, which runs from July 1 to Aug. 31 and seeks to reward Oak Island residents who use the unwanted rock in gardens or landscaping projects, for example to outline planting beds or walkways, or to build structures or artistic projects, integrating the rocks with trees, shrubs, flowers and other decorative materials.

The most unique and creative project will be awarded a \$150.00 Grand Prize of \$100 towards pavers or flagstone materials from Bianchi's Brickyard Supply plus \$50 cash from Beach Preservation. 2nd Prize is a \$50 Gift Certificate from Stewart's Hardware & Garden Center. 3rd Prize is a \$25 Gift Certificate from Bridgers Landscape & Garden Center. All entrants will be mailed a coupon for 10% off up to \$200.00 in garden merchandise from Lowe's Home Center, Southport.

Composed of a mixture of limestone and clays and some embedded shells, the naturally beautiful beach rock ranges from the size of golf balls to foot-long boulders. It surfaces mainly between 20th and 50th streets SE, accessed by turning left towards the beach at the second traffic light at 58th Street. It is easiest to collect at low tide and is especially abundant following tropical storms.

Complete contest rules and entry blanks are at OI Town Hall and OI Recreation Center. Judging will be held in September with awards made October 14 at "Celebrate Oak Island." Entrants do not need to be present to win.

For more information, call Fred or Elizabeth Mina at 278-6205 or visit www.oakislandbeachpreservation.org.

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The International Master Gardener Conference will be held May 2 – 5, 2007 at the Peabody Hotel and Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. Watch future newsletters for information as it becomes available.

2006 Southern Region Master Gardener Conference

held June 8 - 11 in Chattanooga, TN; report by Shirley Waggoner-Eisenman.

The conference was hosted by the Tennessee Master Gardeners at the Chattanooga Convention Center. The theme was "Cultivating Ideas." I was the only Master Gardener from North Carolina in attendance.

I arrived at the conference site on Thursday. I was told approximately 200 MGs were registered. Each morning, we received a copy of "The Daily Buzz," which contained the day's activities along with changes and other information about the city. It was a great idea and I am sure it saved the host MGs from answering the same question many times during the day. In the evening we were welcomed by Tennessee University and Hamilton County (Chattanooga) MGs. We were in for a treat - both the fresh water and salt water aquariums at the Tennessee Pavilion were ours alone until 10:30 pm. Being able to tour the two aquariums was worth the trip.

Welcome was by the Mayor with dinner served outside the pavilion or inside the fresh water aquarium. By this time I had met MGs from other states and was enjoying exchanging information about our respective states and local chapters. As you know MGs are not bashful.

Friday morning, many MGs went to the waterfront and created a hummingbird and butterfly garden on a small piece of land between the two aquariums. Also in the offering was a tour "Gardens of the River" or a workshop on the Junior Master Gardener Program. A silent auction began at 11 am and closed on Saturday at 3 pm. It was a great money maker for the conference. Our luncheon speaker was Carol Reese, U of TN, "Gaudy, Brazen Picks for the Rowdy Gardener". She showed all the various things people use in

their landscape from indoor plumbing to old cars and trucks. She was very funny. The afternoon sessions had a variety of different subjects, including: Organic Options, Gardening with Naive Plants, CSI - Plant Diagnostics, Cool Season Gardening and Xeriscape. At dinner we heard from the U of LA and the U of MS on the tragedy and triumphs from Hurricane Katrina. It was very sad to see what has happened to both public and private gardens in these two states.

Saturday started with a networking breakfast. Each table was assigned a networking topic - some of the topics were fund raising, newsletters, getting out the word, continuing education, keeping MGs interested in the program, etc. However at my table, we were more interested in exchanging phone numbers, e-mail addresses and in general getting to know one another. We discussed quite a few of the topics. Workshops were held in the concession area on Lawn, Southern Gardens, Humming Birds and Butterflies, and Perennials just to name a few.

I had a great time meeting MGs from other states, and came home with lots of new contacts. I mailed invitations for our state conference to MGs who had expressed interest in attending and seeing how we do things. We as a local Association and the State Association are at the forefront of Master Gardener associations. Each state and county is different in their requirements and how the program is operated.

In 2008 the Southern Region Master Gardener Conference will be held in Oklahoma. The International Master Gardener Conference will be held May 2 - 5, 2007 at the Peabody Hotel and Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock, AR. This Conference should have MGs from all over world. I hope some you will choose to attend. I am looking forward to attending.

Shirley

Recipe from the Recognition Banquet, from the Hamilton County (TN) MG cookbook, submitted by Shirley Waggoner-Eisenman.

Fresh Vegetable Marinade

4 stalks broccoli, cut into flowerets
8 fresh mushrooms, sliced
1 medium green or red pepper, sliced
1 head cauliflower, cut into flowerets
1 small purple onion, chopped (optional)

Marinade:

1 cup sugar ½ cup vinegar
2 tsp dry mustard 1½ cup veg. oil
1 tsp salt 2 tbsppoppy seeds

Place vegetables in a large bowl. Combine all ingredients in marinade and mix well. Pour over vegetables and toss well to coat. Chill at least 3 hours, but not longer than 12 hours (over-chilling will make the vegetables soggy). Remove from marinade to serve.

Gardening Tips for July

-From David Barkley

Lawns:

- Irrigate warm season grasses at this time of year as needed. Most lawns will need 1½" of water each week. It is best to apply all at one time or split the application to make two ¾" applications several days apart.
- Be prepared to apply pyrethroids in St. Augustinegrass for chinch bug control.
- Weeds are really adaptive to the harsh conditions that prevail in the summertime. Check on your weed population, get the weeds identified, and control with the appropriate weed control product. The best weed control

strategy is to have a well established turfgrass that prevents weeds from establishing.

- Fertilize the warm season grasses with ½to 1 pound of actual nitrogen.
- Continue to mow at the proper heights for the various grasses:

Centipedegrass	1.0 - 1.5"
St Augustinegrass	2.5 - 3.0"
Bermudagrass	.75 - 1.25"
Zoysiagrass	.75 - 1.0"
Tall Fescue	3.5 - 4.0"
- Watch for mole cricket activity - small tunnels at the soil surface. Fipronil may be used for mole cricket control.

Pruning:

The appearance of many shrubs can be improved with a general pruning at this time of year. With new growth averaging 6-8" long, many evergreens are getting slightly out-of-bounds. Now is a good time to take hand pruners and shears to shape them. Individual branches and stems need to be cut to back inside the plant. This will reduce the overall size of the plant and also reshape it.

Continue to shear formal hedges.

Rejuvenation Pruning: If the shrubs have turned into small trees over the years, now would be an appropriate time to get the big saw out and take them back to 12-15" stems. The other professional approach is to limb up from the ground and accentuate the `tree look'. If all else fails....remove the entire plant and start over again. Before replanting, evaluate the space to determine what type of plant, if any, is needed. This is often the best solution to overgrown plants.

Powdery mildew on Crape myrtles:

If you have been paying close attention to your crapemyrtle foliage lately, you've

probably noticed that the disease may have already started. Banner or Bayleton may be used to control this disease.

Consider using resistant cultivars, such as "Byers Standard Red", "Byers Wonderful White", "Miami", "Osage", "Seminole", "Tuscarora", "Tuskegee", "Yuma" and "Zuni". *Lagerstroemia faurei* is becoming a popular choice as a mildew resistant crapemyrtle.

Now is a good time to stroll around the landscape and be observant. Look at the new growth on the trees and shrubs as an "indicator of progress". There should be foliage all the way to the tips. If the ends are bare, this may indicate some serious root problems. New growth should be apparent on liriopse, English ivy, periwinkle and pachysandra. If new growth from this spring season is not visible, or is less than normal, then investigate the problem - environmental stress, poor drainage, low nutrient availability, pH problem, construction damage to the root zone area or possible chemical injury. Be sure to check for insects. Aphids, mites and scales are serious problems.

Summer Bedding Plants: Finish planting summer color beds. Don't take shortcuts in preparing the soil. Good root establishment will maximize top growth and flowering performance.

July is a good time to trim the "bleeders" in the landscape. Maples, birches and dogwoods can be lightly pruned and reshaped. This is also a good time to prune water sprouts from crabapples, Crapemyrtles and all fruit trees.

Crapemyrtles are some of North Carolina's favorite summer landscape trees. They

provide great color and interest in the landscape and they are also adaptable to numerous stressful landscape situations. Several tips to consider for enhancing their performance are:

- Take care of Japanese beetle problems immediately. Use appropriate insecticides (Sevin) to control the generous population of beetles.
- As the flowers begin to fade, keep the limbs trimmed back. You will also notice that many of the limbs will be drooping under the heavy load of blooms. They should be trimmed periodically to maintain an upright form.
- Now is a good time to prune lower growing branches back to enhance the tree form of the plant. Stored energy reserves are low at this time and regrowth will be minimized.
- Help your crape myrtles lose weight this summer. As the flowers fade, tip prune them. This will encourage new, dense growth and more flowers for late summer.

Boxwoods are great landscape plants, especially if they are planted correctly and given routine maintenance. Designers find them very helpful in solving design problems. This is the time of year to address possible insect infestations. The four insects which can cause damage are boxwood leafminer, psyllid, mite and Japanese wax scale.

The most destructive pest is the boxwood leafminer. The larvae feed on the tissues between the outer surfaces of the leaves all summer. This results in blotch shaped mines on the foliage. The infested leaves appear blistered from late summer through the following spring. By fall you can expect premature leaf drop. The insecticide

recommended to control leafminers is Orthene.

The boxwood psyllid causes a characteristic cupping of the leaves followed by a general grayish, dingy, unhealthy appearance. Japanese boxwoods are the least susceptible to this mite. Control with dimethoate.

A severe infestation of Japanese wax scale detracts from the overall appearance because of the numerous white scales and honeydew that is excreted causing a black fungus called sooty mold. Malathion may be used to control wax scales.

Old, established plantings can have a multitude of problems. Aside from the insects and diseases associated with old plantings, one needs to evaluate the overall health, size and shape of the planting. As boxwoods get older, especially American Boxwood, they can get rather large.

Severe pruning on an unhealthy, non-vigorous plant can destroy it and recovery may be slow (death may result) after severe pruning.

Don't Forget the Perennial "Jungle"

There is no group of plants more versatile, durable and attractive than herbaceous perennials. Sometimes they get too versatile and durable. Many of the herbaceous perennials will need cutting back or staked, as the growth since spring may be getting too large.

Unpruned plants are good candidates to be blown over in a thunderstorm. Also a good summer trim will encourage new growth and possibly more flower buds for late summer or fall. Several plants to consider for midsummer clean-up are: Tansy,

Hollyhocks, Mexican Bush Sage, Santolina, Comfrey, Catnip, Queen Anne's Lace, Fennel and Thyme. Remember to keep a 3-4 inch layer of an organic mulch throughout the perennial border. Also keep any insect pests under control and fertilize if necessary.

Summer Watering Practices in the Landscape:

One of the first signs of drought stress in ornamentals and turf is wilting. This is the case for plants in non-irrigated areas. Many of our favorite plants show drought related symptoms differently. The leaves of some plants may exhibit marginal leaf burn or leaf scorching while others will simply wilt. An extended period without moisture can become a permanent, non-reversible situation.

There are several plants that are typically grown in many landscapes that we can use as indicator plants. These plants wilt readily and are usually the first ones to show drought stress. They are azaleas, dogwoods, hydrangeas, most annuals and turf.

When these plants begin to look thirsty, you should have a plan to get water to the roots. A hand-held hose is probably the fastest plan of action but may not be the best method.

If you are growing summer color plants in containers, it will be to your advantage to keep a water saucer under the pot. Pots will not dry out so quickly. It will also help to add peat moss and soil to the pine bark media to hold moisture. Be sure to mix the amendments together thoroughly before planting. Watering frequency will be greatly reduced.

Be sure to check the MG Office Procedural Manual

located in the MG Office if you have any questions on procedures or if you need to find any of the various forms we use. Look through the Manual and become familiar with its contents.

If you have an item for the newsletter, be sure to submit it to both Becky Dus (rcd@nfcexperts.com) and Lisa Miner (webmaster@bcmastergardener.org)

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