



# Blount County Master Gardener Gazette

Summer 2022  
Volume IV, Issue 2

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Summer brings its own joys and challenges for gardeners. We watch as the seeds, seedlings, new plants, and established plants grow, bloom and fruit through the season. We watch the weather every day wondering is it too wet or too dry or too hot or too cold? We are ever alert to pests and diseases that might attack our plants while being ever mindful of the interrelationships of the wildlife with many of those said insects. Check out our Book Nook for a review of an excellent reference book [The Organic Gardener's Handbook of Natural Pest and Disease Control](#) by Fern Marshall Bradley, Barbara W. Ellis, Deborah L. Martin.

In our Summer 2022 issue. Elin Johnson gives us advice and beautiful photos on one of my favorites—hostas. Robert Hollmann provides useful information on ridding your yard of Bermudagrass. Be sure to check out Rosemarie Cirina's experience with hydroponics plus some yummy recipes. Nan Taylor's use of Keyhole Gardens saves labor and water while providing wonderful veggies.

As Blount County Master Gardeners, we are here to assist with gardening questions. Please call 865-982-6430 to have them answered. If you want to learn more about the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener training and volunteer program, visit our website at: [bcmgtn.org](http://bcmgtn.org)

You can also engage with us on our Facebook page at :

<https://www.facebook.com/BlountCountyMasterGardeners/>

The Blount County Gazette is published quarterly. Our Summer issue will be published in June. If you would like to suggest topics or contribute to our next issue (June-August), please contact Louminda Torbett at Blount County Master Gardeners.

*Pond photo by Louminda Torbett*



# Hosta Blossoms

Elin Johnson, Master Gardener



Apparently, when hostas produce their buds, some on long stems, some people cut them off and think this improves the appearance of the foliage on their plants. Not me. I love hosta blossoms and consider hostas to be blooming plants like all the other perennials that bloom in my yard.

The height of the flowers varies on different varieties. Many lift their flowers high over the crown—a lot of the big hostas hold their flowers on long stems. This type is shown in the above picture. However, a lot of the mini hostas bear their flowers closer to the foliage. I tend to appreciate this type of flowering. The mini hosta, 'Blue Mouse Ears' has flowers that bloom close to its leaves, and most of its descendants bloom this way, too. And some recently developed hostas have petioles (stems) that are purple.

Another difference is color. A lot of hostas have white blossoms, especially those that are descended from *H. plantaginea*, the species from southern China that blooms in late summer with tall, white, fragrant blossoms. Here are a few of the different types.



H. 'Guacamole'



H. 'Biscuits & Honey'



H. 'Green Thumb'



H. 'Snow Mouse'

Here are some visitors. There are many sizes of bees all the way down to the tiny “sweat bees”. All of them adore hosta flowers. It’s so much fun to watch a bee disappear into a hosta blossom. I’ve even seen hummingbirds come to hosta flowers. I don’t know why the Blue Dasher dragonfly or the wasp stopped by—they are not supposed to drink nectar.



H. ‘Lemon Snap’



H. ‘Biscuits & Honey’



H. ‘Lakeside Paisley Print’

These are some of my all-time favorites.



H. 'Blue Mouse Ears' and 'Lakeside Ninita'



H. 'Lakeside Neat Petite'



H. 'Lakeside Paisley Print'

Many hostas will produce a lot of seeds, especially the large varieties. They are easy to grow, but most will not result in a plant that matches the mother plant. In particular, seeds from a variegated plant will produce many seedlings that will revert to a solid color. Years ago, the ETHS visited the Ooltewah, Tennessee display garden of Mary Chastain, a hybridizer who developed many hostas with the first name 'Lakeside'. Many of her hybrids have been favorites of mine. She told us that of a thousand seedlings, she might have one that she would decide to keep.

Here are seed pods on H. 'Guacamole'. Of course, the pods on smaller hostas are also smaller, but almost all hostas will produce some seed pods.



Another way new hostas are developed is that a plant with different characteristics might develop in a hosta clump. They are called "sports".

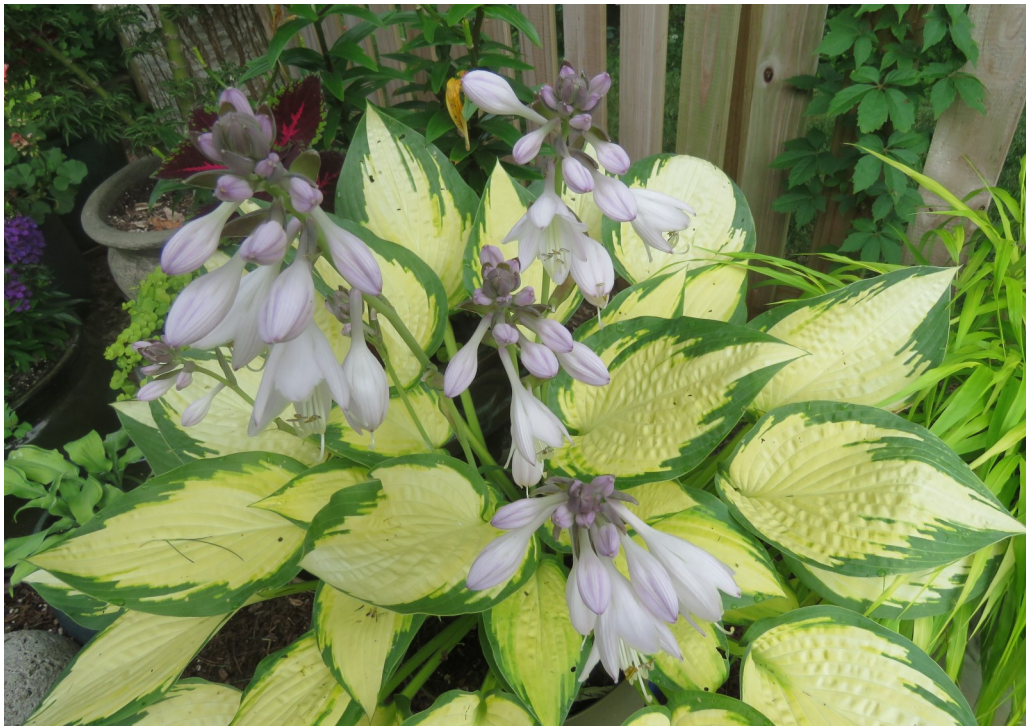


This is my pot containing 'Lakeside Dimpled Darling'. A sport with lighter color and less dimpling showed up in 2021. Can you see it in this picture? I have moved it to another pot to see how it behaves. If I think it deserves attention, I might register it as a new named variety. (Maybe "Green Darling"???)



H. 'Lakeside Dimpled Darling' and closeup

Today, a lot of the new hostas are developed through tissue culture mutation. Hostas are now prepared for sale by a laboratory procedure called "tissue culture" whereby tiny pieces of a particular variety are developed into clones of the original. Sometimes a mutation will appear that is different, and many new varieties are showing up now because of this procedure.



H. 'Orange Marmalade'

I think my most beautiful variety since I moved into my condo is H. 'Orange Marmalade'. This one was developed by Bob Solberg, the North Carolina hosta guru. Many of my hostas were purchased from him.

The other major source of my hostas is my good friend, Brian White of White's Nursery. I think he has been the single major reason the East Tennessee Hosta Society has remained a viable club for so long!

And the variety that blooms latest is H. 'Twist Tie' (below). That picture was made in mid-September. Hostas bloom in my garden all summer long, and I sit in my swing and watch the bees check them out.



H. 'Twist Tie'



Consider the wrens  
My noisy good friends  
Searching for bugs in the garden.

And see how the bees  
Examine the trees  
And flowers—for bright yellow pollen.

Watch butterflies flit  
Then sip a bit  
Of nectar in every bright blossom.

And I just observe  
As they hover and swerve—  
A panoply of nature happening!



# Summer Garden Tasks

UT Extension Institute of Agriculture Calendar

## GARDEN TASKS FOR JUNE

- It is not too late to plant annuals. Plants such as sunflowers, zinnias, Mexican sunflower, cosmos, basil and dill can still be direct-seeded.
- Mulch your vegetable garden as well as your ornamentals. The mulch conserves moisture and prevents the splashing of water, thereby reducing the spread of disease. It also adds organic matter to the soil and prevents many weeds.
- Trim back catmint (Nepeta) after its first flush of flowers to promote new growth and a second flush of blooms.
- Harvest most herbs just before flowering when the leaves contain the maximum essential oils.
- Daylilies are in peak bloom in June. Plant in full sun for the best flower production.
- Once daffodil foliage has turned yellow, you can mow or cut it down.
- To keep squash, cucumber and bean plants abundantly producing, harvest them frequently.
- Water your plants in the morning, to conserve water and reduce evaporation. Infrequent, deep watering is better than frequent, shallow watering, since deep watering promotes deep root growth. For best results, deep-water trees and shrubs once or twice a week and flowers two to three times a week. Most plants need one inch of rainfall per week
- Be on the lookout for mosquitoes! Avoid standing water. Make sure your gutters are draining properly, and change the water in birdbaths every three to four days. In areas where standing water cannot be avoided, use environmentally friendly mosquito dunks. These dunks are made from a naturally occurring bacterium called Bti (*Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*). Dunks can be purchased at nurseries and most home improvement stores.
- Powdery mildew is also more likely to be a problem if we are receiving abundant rainfall. Keep an eye on plants like yarrow, asters, azaleas, coreopsis, dogwoods, euonymus, gaillardia, gerbera daisy, honeysuckle, hydrangea, lilac, monarda, phlox, pulmonaria, roses, rudbeckia, scabiosa, spirea, verbena and zinnias for powdery mildew. (For more information on powdery mildew: <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/sp370b.pdf>)

## GARDEN TASKS FOR JULY

- Layering easily propagates many plants. Hydrangeas, viburnums, weigela, trumpet honeysuckle, jessamine, and climbing roses are a few plants that will root if the stems are fastened down and covered with soil.
- Cut old flower heads off *Hydrangea arborescens*, such as 'Annabelle,' to get a second but smaller flush of flowers.
- Crape myrtles should not be fertilized after mid-July to allow them time to properly harden off by fall.
- Keep birdbaths clean and filled with water throughout the summer.
- Start planning your fall vegetable garden. Late July is the time to start seeding your winter broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts to be transplanted into the garden in mid-August.
- Raise the height of your mower to reduce stress on your lawn and to conserve moisture in the ground. For best results mow 2" for Bermuda grass, 1-2" for zoysia and 2.5-3" for fescue.
- Pinch back chrysanthemums and asters one last time no later than mid-July.
- Keep perennials deadheaded to keep them flowering. Remove fading flowers down to a leaf node or new bud.
- Cut back by one-third early-planted annuals that are getting leggy or out of control to keep them looking good into the fall.

# Summer Garden Tasks

UT Extension Institute of Agriculture Calendar

## GARDEN TASKS FOR AUGUST

- Begin collecting seeds of annuals and perennials for next year's garden or your local seed library. Cut seed heads and place in a brown paper bag to dry, labeling each bag with the name of the plant.
- Avoid fertilizing most trees and shrubs from August to November. Fertilize roses one last time to encourage new growth and late summer/early fall flowers.
- To reduce the number of pests on your fruit trees, pick and destroy all fallen fruit.
- Control your weeds before they go to seed and do not add weeds with mature seeds to the compost pile.
- Gather herbs and flowers for drying and preserving mid-morning, just after the dew has dried off but before the sun causes them to wilt.
- Many trees and shrubs are now setting fruit and flower buds for next season, so it is important for the plants to have sufficient water at this time. A lack of water now will reduce next season's crop of fruit or flowers. Use mulch to help conserve moisture and keep the soil temperature cooler during the dog days of August. Also, use soaker hoses to water deeply and minimize water loss due to evaporation.
- Sow pansies, ornamental kale and cabbage, and Swiss chard seeds in a good quality potting medium. By late September or early October, they should be ready to transplant into the garden.
- For late crops of beets, carrots, collards, kale, lettuce, spinach, turnips, mustards, and radish, sow seeds before the middle of the month. Transplants of broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and onions can be planted mid- to late-August.
- Divide and transplant bearded iris during the month of August. Cut back the foliage by two-thirds, dig and divide rhizomes, and remove any dead portions. Check for iris borers and replant in a sunny, well drained location with one-third of the rhizome above the existing soil level. Water well.
- August is also a good time to dig and divide daylilies, using a sharp shovel to split the clumps into desirable sizes. Cut back foliage to 5 inches and replant in a sunny location.
- Order spring-flowering bulbs in August and September to be planted in October and November.
- Avoid pruning trees and shrubs starting in late August, particularly hedging plants such as boxwood, hemlock, and hollies, as doing so this late in the season can stimulate new growth that will not harden off before frost. Delay pruning any tree or shrub until the plant is dormant. Any major pruning should be done in late winter.
- Source: <https://ag.tennessee.edu/utg/Pages/monthlytasks.aspx#AnchorTop>



You can download the entire 2022 Calendar at <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W436.pdf>

# Early Detection of Rose Rosette Disease

by Alan Windham, Mark Windham, Frank Hale

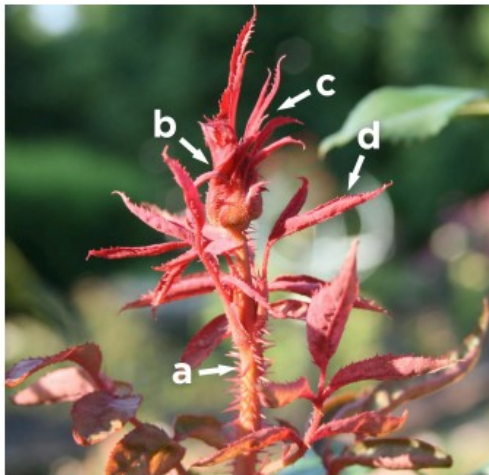
The following publication #SP806 was written by Dr. Alan Windham, Professor and UT Extension Specialist; Dr. Mark Windham, Distinguished Professor; and Dr. Frank Hale, Professor and UT Extension Specialist Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology .

SP 806

## EARLY DETECTION OF ROSE ROSETTE DISEASE

**Alan Windham**, Professor and UT Extension Specialist  
**Mark Windham**, Distinguished Professor  
**Frank Hale**, Professor and UT Extension Specialist  
Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology

Rose rosette is a serious virus disease of roses. It is spread primarily by a microscopic mite. Successful management of rose rosette disease (RRD) involves early detection of symptoms.



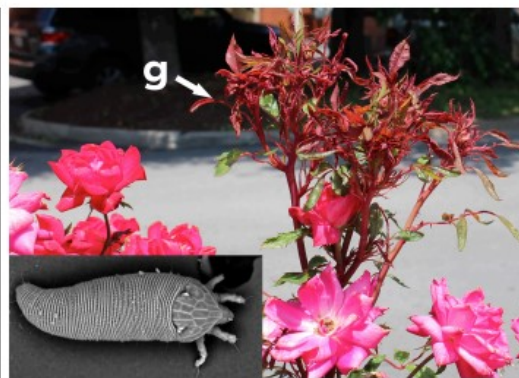
### EARLY SYMPTOMS OF RRD INCLUDE:

- a. Hyper (excessive) thorniness.
- b. Distorted flower buds.
- c. Affected tissues may be red, but they are sometimes green.
- d. Strapped (thin) leaves.
- e. Thickened stems.

### YOU MUST ACT QUICKLY TO MINIMIZE IMPACT OF RRD:

- f. Plants should be inspected at one- to two-week intervals for symptoms during the growing season.
- g. Do not wait until the plant has multiple symptomatic shoots or a rosette before digging, removing and bagging the plant. Delayed action could jeopardize other roses in your garden as the microscopic mites\* that vector RRD are more numerous on symptomatic tissue.

*\*Eriophyid mite courtesy: Gary Baughan, USDA-ARS*



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#### WHAT CAN BE CONFUSED WITH RRD SYMPTOMS?

- h.** Herbicide damage may appear as strapped, bunched or dwarfed leaves but not as swollen canes or hyper-thorniness.
- i.** Shoots damaged by chili thrips may have dwarfed, distorted leaves. Leaves may become blackened as they mature.
- j.** Fasciation of stems has not been associated with RRD. Fasciation may be found in many herbaceous and woody plant species. It is the result of several flattened stems growing together. The cause of fasciation is unknown.

#### ACTIONS IF RRD IS SUSPECTED:

- If multiple symptoms are present, even one shoot, remove the plant; losing one plant is preferable to losing the rose garden.
- Send a sample of live, symptomatic foliage to your Extension office for positive confirmation. This will aid you with future diagnoses.
- For more information on rose diseases, see *A Guide to Rose Diseases and their Management* at [rose.org](http://rose.org).



[AG.TENNESSEE.EDU](http://AG.TENNESSEE.EDU)

SP 806 03/19 19-0165

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

# Ridding Your Yard of Bermudagrass

By Robert Hollman, Blount County Master Gardener

Maintaining a vibrant fescue lawn in Eastern Tennessee can be a challenge for many people who have to contend with the infiltration of bermudagrass particularly in the summer months when fescue grass tends to be stressed by the summer heat and dry but humid conditions. Bermudagrass thrives in these conditions and can easily outcompete fescue and over time become the predominant grass in your yard.

As a Master Gardener who continues to battle the intrusion of bermudagrass, I can tell you that you can be successful in minimizing its spread but it requires perseverance and some work. Here are the steps that I have taken to increase the likelihood of success.

1. First and foremost, promote a healthy dense fescue lawn by following proven techniques for fescue lawn care which include routine fertilization beginning in early March with a pre-emergent weed preventer through the Fall season. I recommend testing your soil every 3-4 years to ensure that you apply the correct nutrients where and when needed. Second, a routine watering schedule is needed for your lawn particularly in the summer when fescue is heavily stressed. Third, mow your lawn above 3 inches when needed and in the summer increase the mowing height to 3.5 or even 4 inches. **A dense lawn is much harder for bermudagrass to infiltrate.**



Figure 1: A healthy fescue lawn

2. Now on to the hard stuff which is eliminating unwanted bermudagrass. Walk your lawn every couple of weeks in order to spot whether some bermudagrass has taken root. If you identify the problem early, it is much easier to treat using a selective herbicide (**see 4a below**) that will kill the unwanted grass but not the fescue grass. Manual removal of bermudagrass is not practical in most cases as bermudagrass spreads via underground roots (rhizomes) which are difficult to remove, and overground runners which can spread very rapidly under ideal conditions. **When you use any herbicide follow the instructions on the herbicide container.**
3. If you have large areas of bermudagrass you will need to take a more intensive approach unless you want to remove the entire lawn including your fescue grass and start from scratch. Ridding your lawn of all bermudagrass will often take you more than one growing season because bermudagrass is a tenacious grass. Bermudagrass is a worthy opponent to any homeowner, so be patient and not discouraged if your first efforts do not eliminate all of the unwanted grass.

4. The steps I recommend are as follows:

a. In mid-May after the bermudagrass greens out and becomes active, apply a selective herbicide that specifically kills bermudagrass to the infested area only. Look for an herbicide that contains the active ingredient **fluazifop** or **fenoxaprop**. In 2 to 4 weeks the bermudagrass will turn yellow and weaken to the point where further growth will be diminished or eliminated. This initial application will retard further growth. The steps I recommend are as follows:

b. In late July apply the same herbicide to the bermudagrass a second time. This should kill most if not all of the bermudagrass which survived after the first treatment and increase your overall success in restoring a healthy fescue lawn. In 2-3 weeks the remaining bermudagrass should die in preparation of re-seeding the lawn.



Figure 2: Lawn after herbicide treatment #2

c. In mid-August cut the dead grassy area to 2.5 inches and rent or purchase a grass de-thatcher to remove the dead bermudagrass. You will need to either rake the area afterwards or use the bagger attachment to a mower to clear the area of the dead grasses. Don't be concerned if some of your fescue grass is removed. The fescue grass will recover in a few weeks. Note: If your lawn is heavily compacted you can rent a lawn core or spike aerator to loosen the soil and create a favorable environment for the grass seed that you will shortly apply.



Figure 3: Lawn after mowing and de-thatching

d. After you have prepared the area, you need to re-seed your lawn with a high quality fescue seed for the best results. A lawn fertilizer spreader will work fine for re-seeding. If you are able, cover the seeded area lightly with straw. The straw will diffuse the warm sun in the daytime and help keep the soil moist enabling effective germination of the seed. Water the lawn lightly twice per day in early morning (7:00-8:00 am) and again in the late afternoon (4:00-5:00 pm) in order to keep the ground moist until the seed germinates which will take about 2 weeks. By mid-September your renovated lawn should be established and by the end of September you should be able to mow the area lightly. Your new lawn should mature well in October and November with no additional care required until Spring when you apply your initial fertilization.



Figure 4: The renovated lawn in early October

**Final Thoughts:** Renovating your existing lawn to remove bermudagrass is not a complicated process but it does take some manual labor and requires perseverance. Often times, some bermudagrass grass will survive. If this is the case, you will need to follow a similar process in year two, but hopefully you will have reduced the infested lawn to a smaller area which should reduce your workload.

# Hydroponics

Rosemarie Cirina, Blount County Master Gardener

In January, I experimented with planting herbs and vegetable seeds using a method called Hydroponics with an AeroGarden® that I bought. I planted Basil, Thai Basil, Italian parsley, Mint, and Thyme. I kept it by my sink so I was able to use the fresh herbs in my cooking this past winter. In the second AeroGarden® I planted the seeds for Cauliflower, Broccoli, Cabbage, and Swiss Chard.

**Hydroponics** is a growing method that doesn't use any soil. It is a type of horticulture which involves growing plants, herbs, and crops by using mineral nutrient solutions in an aqueous solvent. Instead of soil, it uses a medium that helps hold the plant in place. There are many mediums including Rockwool, expanded clay balls, perlite, and coco coir just to name a few. You then supply the plant with all the elements it needs through the water. There are many different methods to supply the water and elements to the plants.

**Kratky:** In this method, you have a vessel of water with nutrients. The plant is suspended slightly above the water. As the plant absorbs the water, the water level drops, allowing more room for oxygen.

**Deep water culture:** This is similar to the Kratky however you oxygenate the water the roots are sitting in.

**Nutrient Film:** In this method you recirculate the water from a reservoir down a channel, creating a film of nutrients and oxygenated water to feed the plants.

The indoor herb AeroGarden® uses an LED grow light, 6 seed pods, and grow domes that are removed once the seedlings start their growth. The temperature indoors is best at 65-76°F after they start to grow and then you remove the domes. The different seeds are unique and have a mind of their own, some sprout early in a few days and some take longer.

The AeroGarden® that the vegetable seeds were planted in to propagate has the same concept. All you do is add nutrient water to the level as directed.

The grow light is adjustable. You keep it low and then raise it as the herbs grow. It eventually reaches the lights and you can prune the herbs if you want to. The basil grows faster than the other herbs. It is important to keep pruning so that the plants stay around the same height, otherwise (in my case for example) the basil takes over and the other plants will not thrive.

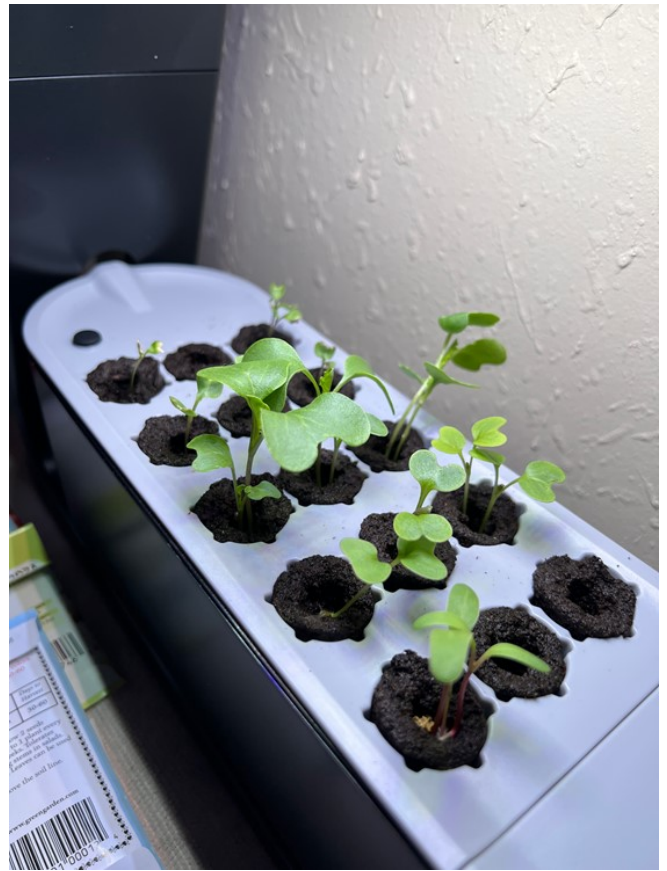
Pruning does not hurt the plant, it helps them. It brings greater health and encourages dense, compact growth for bigger yields. This is true whether you use an Aero system or an outdoor herb garden. However, you should never prune more than 1/3 of your plant. In this stage, I use some of the herbs for cooking and dry the rest that I do not need for later.

Furthermore, you can now take the herbs, vegetables, or plants from the AeroGarden® and transfer them to one of the other hydroponic systems described above and they will continue to flourish.





AeroGarden® herbs



AeroGarden® vegetable seed starting

Recipes using fresh herbs from my AeroGarden® :

### Salmon and Asparagus Packets



Preheat oven to 400°F

Lay a large piece of aluminum foil on a flat surface. Place 4 spears of asparagus on the foil and top them with 1 salmon fillet, 1T butter, 2 lemon slices and a sprinkle of pepper. Garnish with dill. Close the foil to seal and bake 20 minutes.

### Spaghetti Squash Lasagna

Follow your regular recipe for lasagna but replace the spaghetti squash for the pasta.

How to cook spaghetti squash in the microwave: I cook mine in the microwave. Cut the squash in half and remove the seeds. Place flat side down in a microwave dish, cover with plastic wrap, microwave on high for 8-12 minutes.



# Is a Keyhole Garden Right for You and Your Yard?

Nan Taylor, Blount County Master Gardener

## History of Keyhole Gardens

Shaped like a skeleton key lock, Keyhole Gardens began in the 1990's in Africa. Designed by C-SAFE (Consortium for Southern Africa Food Safety) in Zimbabwe and Lesotho, the small gardens enable families to have fresh vegetables close to their homes. Previously, women would plant outside the enclaves where they would garden in long rows much like we do in the States. However, wild animals like elephants, monkeys and hooved beasts would ravage the gardens overnight and destroy the crops.

The keyhole gardens were developed inside the enclosures away from animals. People could not only keep their vegetables safe from animals, they could also keep the soil from erosion and enrich it with their own compost. In addition, keyhole gardens use much less water.

A keyhole garden is a raised garden that is sustainable. By constantly feeding its compost cage and watering the compost, the nutrients spread through the soil. It needs little or no added fertilizer. The gardener continually adds compost to the mound and waters it so the compost is continually breaking down and the nutrients soak into the soil. The height of the bed insures proper drainage and less strain on the gardener's back.

## Advantages of a Keyhole Garden

A keyhole garden is only 6 feet in diameter but can hold many plants. The height should be about waist high and the soil should slope down from the central compost ring to the outer edge of the garden. This enables the nutrients from the compost to trickle downward into the soil thus eliminating the use of a lot of extra fertilizers. It is an excellent garden for a small space. I start in early spring with radishes and various greens and by late April I have a delicious home-grown salad mix that I don't have to bend down and pick! Then I put in eggplants, beets, kale, collards, basil, dill, etc. You really can grow most anything in a keyhole garden with the exception of corn which takes up a lot of room. I can't grow tomatoes to save my soul so I buy them at the farmers' market or at local farms, as I do my corn. I also don't grow potatoes although you could easily in a keyhole garden; they just seem to take up a lot of room. I do grow various squashes.



## How to Make a Keyhole Garden

The shape of a keyhole garden is round with a wedge cut out to allow easy access to the center compost area. It is no more than 6 feet in diameter so the gardener can reach easily to the center. In Africa people use rocks to build up their walls, or stakes in the ground, or they make their own bricks with mud and straw. I had the thought of using cinderblocks but my husband didn't want to go to that trouble. So, he ordered a keyhole garden kit off the internet. It took about an hour to put together. Go online and you can find many ideas and wonderful photos of keyhole gardens. It doesn't matter what materials you use to set up the garden; you can make it as plain or as fancy as you like. The important part is building up the layers within the walls.

Once you have the outer boundary wall built, create your compost circular cage. We made ours with chicken wire (actually, the kit we bought had the wire in the kit). Ours extends about a foot above the soil level and down to the ground beneath. We attached it to the ground with landscape staples. Then begin to layer inside the boundary wall area with compostable items.

Start with a layer of sticks, not large limbs, but several inches in diameter is good. Make a good thick layer. Then add a layer of cardboard. I soaked down each layer really well. The next layer can be newspaper, telephone books, grass and leaves then watered again. I used a lot of newspapers and more cardboard and soaked it well. I continued building layers, adding some soil in between as I built up, always wetting down layers. The top foot should be soil, whatever you have on hand.



It is important to build up your soil to a higher elevation at the compost cage, then slope downward to the outer boundary of the garden. This enables the compost nutrients to trickle outward and downward as the compost breaks down, seeping into the soil and to the roots. About two inches of slope is recommended. When I take my kitchen scraps out to the garden, I toss them in the compost cage and add a milk jug full of water. Unless the weather is really hot and dry, I seldom water the entire garden area.

I have a real problem with squirrels getting in the bed and burying their nuts. This spring I put garden netting over it to keep out the rascals. I also attached a wire top to the compost cage in case a traveling opossum, raccoon or crow wanted a taste of the compost. I weight it down with a rock or brick.

I have another raised bed as well but my favorite is the keyhole garden. Since I have stenosis in my lower back, the keyhole garden is the ideal height for me. And with the wedge cut out I can walk right up to the compost cage easily. It is ideal for intensive planting, planting crops close together to maximize production. Lettuces, kale, collards, radishes, spinach, herbs, onions, carrots, beets, container size squash plants, eggplant, cherry tomatoes, cabbages and green beans all do very well. Please go online and take a look at all the wonderful ideas people have used to create their keyhole gardens. As our planet heats up, the keyhole garden is ideal for saving water, utilizing kitchen compost, and rewarding small gardeners with delicious vegetables.



Compost Cage

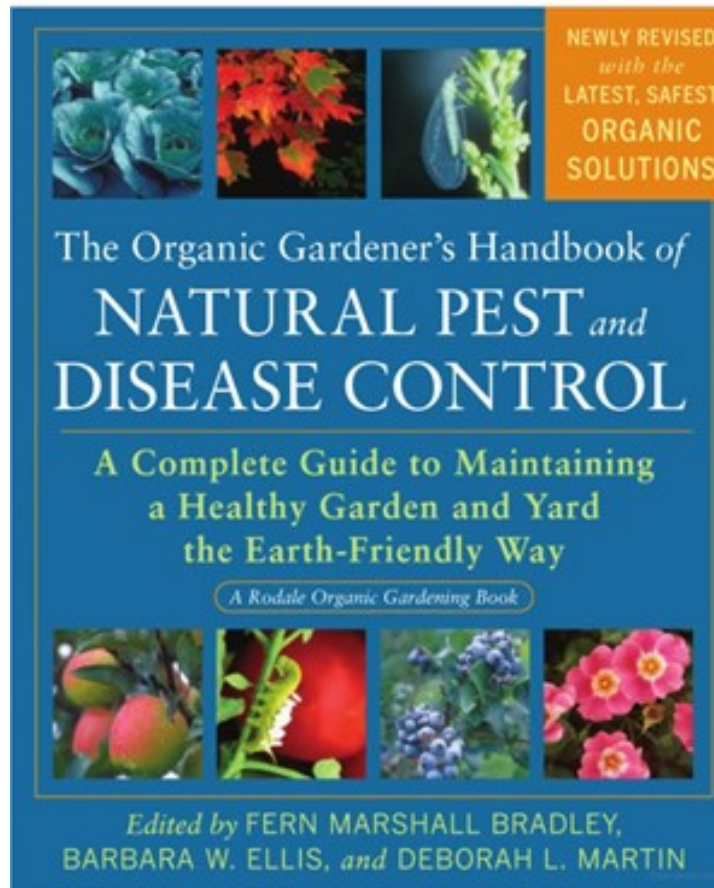
# The Book Nook

*The Organic Gardener's Handbook of Natural Pest and Disease Control* by Fern Marshall Bradley, Barbara W. Ellis, Deborah L. Martin

“Everything you do in your garden to encourage healthy plant growth helps to prevent pest and disease problems. It’s common sense—backed up by scientific research—that healthy plants are less likely to be attached by insects or infected by disease. Promoting plant health is an integral part of organic gardening. From the moment you sketch out a planting scheme, prepare a bed for planting, or buy a pack of veggie seeds or a potted perennial, pest prevention should become part of your gardening practices.”

“Prevention starts when you’re paging through seed and plant catalogs: Look for cultivars that are described as pest tolerant or disease resistant.”

Recommended by UT Extension Agent, Celeste Scott, this reference book is a plant-by-plant guide of symptoms and solutions for 200 popular plants including flowers, vegetables, trees, shrubs, and fruits. The insect and disease section includes a photo identification guide and detailed descriptions of damage that might be observed.





# June

- 9-11** Tennessee Extension Master Gardener State Conference, Kingsport, TN
- 11** Master Gardeners of Roane County Lunch and Learn: Bodacious Daylilies 12:00-1:00 p.m. in person or via ZOOM [tiny.utk.edu/MGRCLNL](https://tiny.utk.edu/MGRCLNL)
- 14** UT Agriculture Field Day: Fruits of the Backyard
- 21** Tennessee Native Plant Society native plant seminar “Flowers for Nashville” (for link see note below)
- 28** *Blount County Master Gardeners Monthly Meeting - 6:30 pm via ZOOM or in person at the Blount County Public Library*

# July

- 9** Master Gardeners of Roane County Lunch and Learn: Integrated Pest Management 12:00-1:00 p.m. in person or via ZOOM [tiny.utk.edu/MGRCLNL](https://tiny.utk.edu/MGRCLNL)
- 19** Tennessee Native Plant Society native plant seminar TBD (for link see note below)
- 26** *Blount County Master Gardeners Monthly Meeting - 6:30 pm via ZOOM or in person at the Blount County Public Library*

# August

- 13** Master Gardeners of Roane County Lunch and Learn: 12:00-1:00 p.m. in person or via ZOOM [tiny.utk.edu/MGRCLNL](https://tiny.utk.edu/MGRCLNL)
- 24** *Blount County Master Gardeners Monthly Meeting - 6:30 pm via ZOOM or in person at the Blount County Public Library*

**TEMG Friday Focus Series** Live Talks and Tours via Zoom for Master Gardeners. Sign up at <https://forms.gle/bg6HaoSDSGHE5Dc4A>

**The Tennessee Native Plant Society** hosts monthly Native Plant Seminars via Zoom on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Eastern time. The link to join the seminar is <https://www.tnps.org/events/category/calendar/>

\* Items in *italics* are for Master Gardener members only.\*



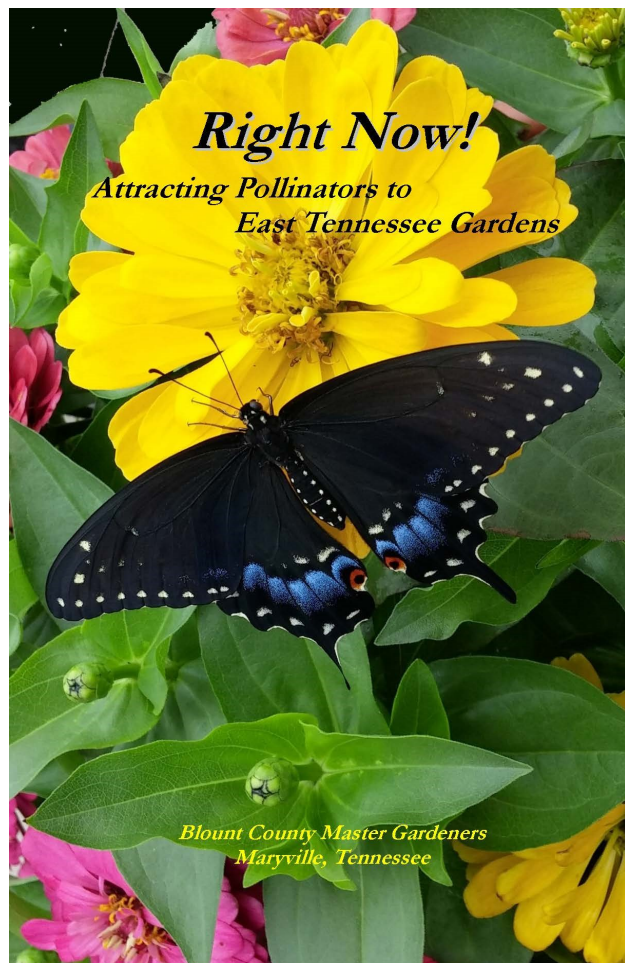
## BCMG Note Cards For Sale

Susan Daffron, Membership Director, Blount County Master Gardeners

A fun thing BCMGA did in 2020 was the photo contest. We asked our members to photograph their gardens and submit pictures. One photo was selected each month to be the photo of the month. Many wonderful photos were submitted. Eight photos were selected to create a collection of note cards. We had them printed and they are now available for purchase at a cost of \$10 per set. The note cards are blank inside making them perfect for all occasions: birthdays, thinking of you, etc. They also make wonderful gifts for family and friends. To place your order, please go to <https://bcmgtn.wildapricot.org/Flower-Theme-Note-Cards>



***Right Now! Attracting Pollinators to East Tennessee Gardens*** is a publication of the Blount County Master Gardeners, with all articles written by our members. It features descriptions of 81 plants, about 2/3 of which are native to Tennessee, and photos of all those plants, most of which were taken by our members. In addition, there is an extensive chart of plants attractive to pollinators, including bloom time and whether the plant is a pollen source, a nectar source, or a host plant for butterfly larvae. Finally, there are website and book recommendations, and native plant, nursery, garden center, and online plant resources. *Right Now!* is available at these locations in Maryville: AG Central Co-op, Ginger's Flowers (seasonal), Out of Eden Garden Center, and Southland Books; in Knoxville at Wild Birds Unlimited and Stanley's Greenhouses; and by mail order through the BCMG website, [bcmgtn.org](http://bcmgtn.org).



## Blount County Master Gardeners

*Blount County Master Gardeners Extension Office*  
 1219 McArthur Road  
 Maryville, TN 37804  
 Phone: (865) 518-2520  
 email: [info@blountcountytnmastergardeners.org](mailto:info@blountcountytnmastergardeners.org)

We're on the Web at <http://bcmgtn.org>  
 Like us on Facebook, too.

*Blount County Master Gardeners (BCMG) is a volunteer service organization with the goal of training volunteers who can provide the public with research-based information on a variety of horticultural topics. It is built upon solid visions, values, and community support.*



**BLOUNT COUNTY  
 MASTER GARDENERS**

**MASTER GARDENER  
 UF EXTENSION  
 INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE  
 THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE**