



Country Living

Provided to you by the
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June 2009

Programs for you . . .

Listen to the **Gardening Spot** on KOHI (1600 am) radio - **Every Saturday, 8:05 to 8:15 a.m.**

June 9..... Lower Columbia Watershed Council. 7 p.m., Extension Conference room, St. Helens

June 17..... Soil & Water Conservation District, 7:30 p.m., SWCD office, St. Helens

June 25..... Master Gardener™ Chapter Meeting. 6:30 p.m. **Speaker, Maurice Horn, from Joy Creek Nursery; Topic, "Great Plant Picks."** Held in the OSU Extension Conference room, St. Helens. **The public is invited. Free.**

June 27..... Hazardous Waste Disposal. 8 a.m. to Noon. Waste Transfer Station, St. Helens. Columbia County is offering free household hazardous waste disposal the last Saturday of each month at the waste transfer station in St. Helens (paints, cleaners, automotive chemicals (though not waste oil), pesticides, fluorescent lights, and many other items). If you have any questions about what is acceptable, call 503 397-1501.



Joy Creek Nursery Seminars

We are fortunate to have such an exceptional nursery like Joy Creek in our county. They have an outstanding series of seminars most Sundays throughout the summer. You can visit their website www.joycreek.com for a complete list. The June seminars (which begin at 1:00 pm and are free unless otherwise indicated) are as follows:

June 14: Easy Clematis, Maurice Horn; **June 21:** Attracting Our Winged Friends to the Garden, Nadine Black; **June 28:** Ground Covers, Ramona Wulzen.

Chip Bubl

Chip Bubl, OSU Extension Faculty, Agriculture



Agriculture, Family and Community Development, 4-H Youth, Forestry, and Extension Sea Grant Programs. Oregon State University, United States Department of Agriculture, and Columbia County cooperating. The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.

In the garden

Protecting fruit from birds

Birds love the ripening blueberries, cherries, gooseberries and the other luscious fruits in our gardens. Convincing birds that the fruit wasn't grown expressly for their meals isn't an easy task. Robins consume a lot of fruit. The steady increase in starlings makes matters much worse.

Control tactics aim to do one of three things:

1. Physically exclude the birds. This is an expensive technique and often difficult to do on cherry trees and other larger fruiting plants. It is also the most secure. Permanent houses for blueberries and other small fruits can be set up using hardware cloth. Temporary netting can be put up each year.

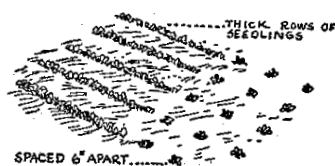
2. Startle the birds. Starlings have a well-honed startle reflex. If you can constantly invoke that reflex, the starlings may decide the fruit isn't worth the effort. However, birds do adjust, so constant changes in the environment will help. What can you use to startle? Years ago, people hung pie plates in the trees. The plates moved and reflected the sun. A modern variation on the subject is using those promotional computer cds. They have a shiny side that can be very effective when hung on the branches. Mylar shiny ribbon has also been effective. The stuff needs to be put out there before the birds start to gorge. Also, no guarantees.

3. Startle the birds with hawks. Put up hawk perches and if they are used, they will keep the robins and starlings feeding down the road. Don't try this if you have chickens as well.

4. Taste repellents. This is a tough one. Few options are available. There is

evidence that a sugar solution sprayed on blueberries will deter robins. The formula is ten pounds of sugar dissolved in one gallon of water. This will make about two gallons of solution. It needs to be reapplied fairly often. However, it may draw yellow jackets. Clearly a mixed blessing.

Thin, thin, thin



Thin out seedlings to permit good growth. — Thinned out plants can be cooked and eaten too.

Gardeners hate to thin. Your precious seeds have struggled to the surface and now you are asked to rip them out. You feel their pain. You won't do it.

You must. Most vegetables and flowers will not develop normally unless they have room to grow. If plants are crowded they can be stunted.

In the plant world, whoever gets to the light first wins. Adequate light will produce healthy leaves and vigorous roots. Weeds compete for light. That is why early weeding is crucial. It is also why vegetables need to be thinned.

Carrots need to be well-spaced. Allowed to develop too close together, no one carrot can grow enough leaf area to capture enough sunlight to build that wonderful root we all like to eat. Instead, you get runty little excuses for carrots. So thin, thin, thin.

Corn is seeded with an ultimate "between" row and "within" row spacing in mind. A common practice is to seed the rows 30" apart and to thin within the row to 9-12" between plants. If you have a 36" row spacing, you might be able to thin down to a plant every 6". It is all about each plant getting enough "sunspace". I have seen corn seeded in rows 12" apart. The corn may grow tall but only the plants on the outside of the corn

plot get enough sun to produce ears. So put enough seed in the row (since all of them won't come up) and thin, thin, thin.

It is worth noting that you will always have to thin beets and chard. Their seed is "compound", meaning that there is more than one seed in each seed.

Sometimes, the thinned plants can be eaten, as in the leafy greens. Thinned corn can be transplanted to give a later crop since it will be set back a bit by the transplant process.

Read the seed packages for instructions on thinning. As a last resort, therapy for shy thinners may be available.

Pinching and pruning: A perennial primer

Deadheading, pinching, cutting back, deadleafing - perennial plant care sounds more like martial arts than gardening. These terms refers to an important activities in the flower garden. None of them are all that complicated but knowing when and how to do them will result in more flowers, healthier, less floppy plants and a better looking garden.

Many people are familiar with pinching mums to make them branch. The plants grow more compact and produce more flowers. Just like pinching a cute kid's cheek, pinching is done with the thumb and forefinger. Unlike a cute kid's cheek the new growth is removed. Pinching may be the removal of just the new emerging leaves or it could be down several inches to a side bud.

Pinching encourages branching because it removes the dominant bud. Consider

the top new growth as the "queen" bud. Normally the "queen" bud gets the majority of the food and growth hormones. She grows and thrives. All the side buds are the "ladies-in-waiting". When the "queen" is removed, dominance spreads out to the "ladies-in-waiting". The side buds now get more food and growth hormones and they grow. Since it takes time for the side buds to get moving, pinching usually delays flowering. This delay can be to your advantage. Judicious pinching can extend the flowering season.

Are there other perennials besides mums that would benefit from a good pinch?

Asters can be treated much like mums and pinched several times before 4th of July. Pinching after mid July may delay

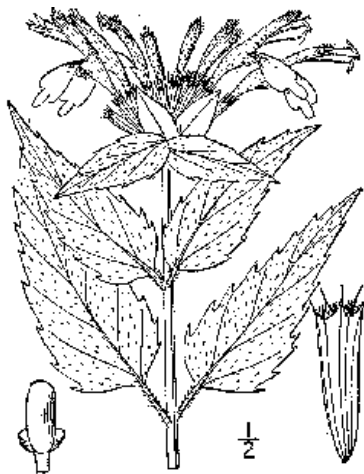
flowering. Or just cut asters back by one half in early to mid June. Asters can get tall and floppy so pinching or cutting back may reduce the need for staking.

Beebalm can be cut back by one half in early May to promote more compact growth. Bloom will be delayed about two weeks. Cut back just the front half of the clump of beebalm to develop

staggered height and extend bloom time.

The uncut portion will bloom at its usual time and 2 weeks later the pruned front half will bloom. Phlox plants can be pinched or cut back to one half at the end of May or in early June.

'Autumn Joy' sedum planted in too much shade or in high fertility soils can flop open to reveal its inner underbelly. Not a pretty



site. Pinch sedum when plants are eight inches tall to develop compact plants. Flowering will be delayed a bit and there will be smaller but more numerous flowers produced.

Additional plants that respond to pinching include yarrow, Russian sage, artemisia, balloon flower, dragonhead, veronica and Culver's root. Try pinching a few and see if you like the results.

Some plants do not respond well to pinching. Often these are plants with one terminal flower spike or plants with leaves in a low rosette rather than a long stem. The unpinchables include columbine, astilbe, delphinium, daylily, coral bell, hosta, iris, foxglove and dianthus.

A couple of excellent references for perennial flower care include *The Well-Tended Perennial Garden* by Tracy DiSabato-Aust and *Caring for Perennials* by Janet Macunovich.

From Sandra Mason, Extension Educator in Horticulture, U. of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana

Why I am not enamored with rain barrels

There is a lot of interest in rain barrels. It seems soooo green to capture the rain for garden watering or other uses. There is a regular cottage industry that has sprung up around this concept.

People often think that they will be able to collect much of the rain hitting their roofs. Unfortunately, a lot of rain hits our roofs. A roof of 1000 square feet (a small house) will funnel about 24,000 gallons to your rain barrels each winter! How many barrels do you plan to have? Equally distressing is that the pattern of rainfall and the garden needs do not coincide. We get our water in the winter

and have summers that are quite dry. Without a very large cistern or pond, you won't be able to make a significant dent in your watering requirements. With a few barrels, you still have to figure out where to discharge the remaining 23,900 gallons.

I do like rain gardens, which are seasonal ponds that hold water and allow it to percolate into the soil. This recharges the groundwater. Call me for more information on this topic.

From Garden to Table King Gumbo



Of all the vegetables that I grow in my summer garden, nothing evokes more mystery, curiosity and yes, even disgust, than do my okra plants. Why I've seen folks wrinkle up their noses at the mere mention of it until their faces resemble those of a dried apple doll. Their disdain, I suppose, comes from an experience of eating okra in a mucilaginous state, an effect that can be eliminated by frying it so that the moisture is cooked away or pairing it with a slightly acidic ingredient such as tomatoes or red wine vinegar. A plate of okra that has been rolled in cornmeal and fried to a crisp golden brown makes a delightful and addictive dish. So as a Southern expatriate, I strive to bring to the table many of the foods that bring home the comfort of my culinary heritage.

Regardless of how you feel, this member of the mallow family is a visually stunning plant, sometimes standing as tall as six feet (although generally not the varieties that do well here) with hibiscus-like flowers of cream to yellow and deep mahogany throats that just seem to beckon to the bees. In fact many members of the mallow family are grown for

their showy flowers, but few are grown for food crops. Roselle (also known as Jamaican sorrel whose flowers are dried and used for making tea) and okra are the two that come to mind.

Okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus*; aka *Hibiscus esculentus*) is cultivated for its long slender seed pods which need to be harvested when young, about 2 to 3 inches in length, less they become tough and woody, and eaten as a vegetable. Cut them daily to maintain plant vigor but make sure you wear gloves as the plants are quite prickly. If you grow it strictly as a specimen plant, let the pods mature and dry. They add interest to dried arrangements and floral crafts of all kinds. I grow it, however, with one purpose in mind – to cook it and consume it with the gusto of a hound dog!

Although okra's origin is obscure at best, it probably began in the Ethiopian Highlands and Upper Nile where numerous wild varieties have been found. First spreading to the Arabian Peninsula, it then made its way to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea and eastward through Asia. In the 12th and 13th century okra was well known to the Egyptians and Moors. First introduced to the Americas by ships plying the Atlantic slave trade by 1658, it was commonplace in the southern United States by 1800. The first mention of different cultivars was recorded in 1806. Thomas Jefferson noted that okra was well established in Virginia by 1781.

The name "okra" is derived from the West African Igbo word "ókùrù", a language

spoken in Nigeria. In various Bantu languages spoken in West Africa, okra is called "kingumbo" or variant thereof, and this is the origin of its name in Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch and French. Some food scholars believe that this is the origin of the word gumbo, the popular soup/stew of the Carolina and Georgia Low Country and South Louisiana. (There are many variations of gumbo, but not all of them contain okra.)

I have researched through many gardening books that tell us that we simply cannot grow okra in the Maritime Pacific Northwest nor can it be grown as a transplant. From my experience, I beg to differ. There are some things to consider, however, if you want to grow this lovely plant.

As a heat loving, tender annual, okra will not germinate in cool soils, needing a minimum soil temperature of 65° F. It doesn't like to have its roots disturbed either. Choose a site that gets full sun and prepare a raised bed of light, fertile soil amended with garden compost or well composted manure. Cover the bed with black or clear plastic for several days prior to planting or transplanting to warm up the soil. Select an early maturing variety for Northern gardens such as "Cajun Delight" (my preference), "Annie Oakley" or "Blondy". They begin bearing in 60 to 70 days and will continue to bear up till frost.

I prefer to start plants in the greenhouse about mid-April so they will be ready to



transplant in the garden in early June, the same time that I transplant peppers. Soak the seeds in warm water for 2 hours to soften the hard seed coat and hasten germination. Using individual 3-inch peat pots filled with moist, sterile seed starting mix, plant 2 or 3 seeds ¼ inch deep and cover. I place the pots in seed starting trays, cover them with a plastic dome and place them, under light, on a heat mat set at 70° F. In less than a week the seedlings emerge. Once the seedling develops a true leaf, thin each pot to one seedling. Keep them moist, but not wet.

After hardening off, transplant the pots into your prepared bed, 12-18 inches apart, 36 inches between rows, with the pots being completely submerged in the soil. Put a handful of bone meal and kelp meal (or ½ cup 6-5-3) into each hole before planting. The use of row covers will improve growth if the June weather is unseasonably cool and wet. If you choose to direct seed, cover the bed with row cover after planting. This will help keep in the moisture and warmth, aiding in germination success. Provide the plants with at least 1 inch of water a week, avoiding overhead watering.

Keep a watchful eye out for aphids on the underside of the leaves, especially early in the growing season. They can just suck the life out of the plants. You can try spraying them off with water or using an insecticidal soap, but I find a weekly regimen of spraying with Rotenone-Pyrethrin to be the most effective deterrent. Flea beetles can also be worrisome. **(Use the least toxic methods first. Follow package directions. Consult your local extension agent.)**

Okra is susceptible to Verticillium, Fusarium and several other kinds of fungal

diseases in wet weather. This causes yellowing, wilting and death of plants in midsummer. Okra varieties, unlike certain tomato varieties, are not resistant to these wilts. Rotate crops to prevent buildup of crop-specific strains of these diseases in your garden and observe good garden sanitation practices.

“This all sounds like an awful lot of trouble and effort to go through” you might be saying. Not so if you like okra as much as I do. Even if you don’t it’s still a magnificent specimen plant for the garden given great adoration by the bees. With all the hard work these little creatures do for us, it is only fitting that we do something for them. Besides, it’s fun to bring a little mystery, curiosity, and yes, even evocations of disgust to the garden. Given the population of world from Asia and Africa to Europe and the America’s that relish it, those that don’t are in a minority.

Robert Hammond
Columbia County Master Gardener™





That's the Way it Grows

Slowing Down

Aching muscles. Calloused hands. Doan's back pills. Some days gardening really takes it out of you.

In my enthusiasm to get my yard looking great, I often overdo it and end up sore and exhausted. This last month, I've pulled several all-day weeding-digging-planting sessions, even though I always tell myself I won't do it. And I always regret it the next day, when my muscles are screaming. But the hard work is paying off, and things are coming along nicely.



I finally got my vegetable seeds in the ground. I could have planted most of them a month ago, but I was so taken with gazing at the explosion of bloom, that I didn't get much done besides pulling up weeds. But I'm okay with that. It seems everything we do these days is dictated by time constraints. We have to do this, we have to do that. Sort of takes the fun out of everything. So I'm making an effort to slow down.

Sometimes, I just forget to take it easy and do a little at a time, to enjoy the process of gardening, instead of making it an all-out battle between me and nature.

So I've been watering in the evenings. Why? I already have a great watering system in the vegetable garden and flower beds. All I have to do is connect the hose and turn it on. I even have a timer. But getting out the old fluorescent green watering can and doing it manually is almost therapy.

I like the relaxing process of walking from one plant to another. It allows me time to take a good look at all my plants, to check

on their health, look for any pests, yank a few weeds, and sniff lots of flowers. I also find my mental state improves greatly.

And each of those things is very important. I don't want to just see my flowers as I'm driving in and out of the garage. I want to be out among them, get some fresh air, maybe soak up some vitamin D, listen for the hummingbirds.

I forget to take the time to enjoy what is right in my garden, instead of dwelling on what needs doing. Nature has a miraculous way of doing just what it pleases, taking what you give it and adapting, good or bad. Just ask the colony of morning glory thriving in the now competition-free areas I sprayed.

So I remind myself to take the time, to slow down and really look at the beauty unfolding—the small leaves poking up in my veggie patch, the tiny asparagus shoots, the little fuzzy peach-lings clinging to the new young tree.

Oh, and I think I talked my husband into yet another construction project: replacing the deck with a larger stone patio. While it sounds like a cut and dry project, construction projects rarely are. I figure he'll be out of the building mood about the time we rip the last of the deck off. So my terraced planting beds are on next year's list of projects.

But that's okay. I'm taking it slow



—Lisa M. Long
Columbia County Master Gardener™
Compost, rock and bark dust delivered;
397-2989

JUNE 2009

Garden hints from your OSU Extension Agent

Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices. Always identify and monitor problems before acting. First consider cultural controls; then physical, biological, and chemical controls (which include insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, organic and synthetic pesticides). Always consider the least toxic approach first.

All recommendations in this calendar are not necessarily applicable to all areas of Oregon. For more information, contact your local office of the OSU Extension Service.

- ❖ First week: spray cherry trees for cherry fruit fly and brown rot if fruit is ripening.
- ❖ First week: spray for codling moth and scab in apple and pear trees. Continue use of pheromone traps for insect pest detection.
- ❖ Apples and crabapples that are susceptible to scab disease will begin dropping leaves as weather warms. Rake and destroy fallen leaves; spray with summer-strength lime sulfur, wettable sulfur, Immunox, or Captan.
- ❖ Learn to identify beneficial insects, and plant some insectory plants (Alyssum, Phacelia, coriander, candytuft, sunflower, yarrow, dill) to attract them to your garden. Check with local nurseries for best selections.
- ❖ Lawn mowing: set blade at 0.75 to 1 inch for bentgrass lawns; 1.5 to 2.5 inches for bluegrasses, fine fescues, and ryegrasses.
- ❖ Spray with Orthene to control adult root weevils in rhododendrons, azaleas, primroses, and other ornamentals. Or, use beneficial nematodes if soil temperature is above 55°F.
- ❖ Remove seed pods after blooms have dropped from rhododendrons, azaleas.
- ❖ Prune lilacs, forsythia, rhododendrons, and azaleas after blooming.
- ❖ Harvest thinnings from new plantings of lettuce, onion, and chard.
- ❖ Construct trellises for tomatoes, cucumbers, pole beans, and vining ornamentals.
- ❖ Use organic mulches to conserve soil moisture. An inch or two of sawdust, barkdust, or composted leaves will minimize loss of water through evaporation.
- ❖ Pick ripe strawberries regularly to avoid fruit-rotting diseases.
- ❖ Blossoms on squash and cucumbers begin to drop: nothing to worry about.
- ❖ Control aphids on vegetables as needed by hosing off with water or using insecticidal soap or a registered insecticide.
- ❖ Watch for cabbage worms, 12-spotted beetles on beans and lettuce, flea beetles in lettuce. Remove the insect pests or treat with labeled pesticides.
- ❖ Spray peas as first pods form, if necessary, to control weevils.
- ❖ Late this month, begin to monitor for late blight on tomatoes.
- ❖ Last week: second spray for codling moth and scab in apple and pear trees.
- ❖ Birch trees dripping means aphids are present. Control as needed.
- ❖ After normal fruit drop in June, consider thinning the remainder to produce a larger crop.
- ❖ Control weeds by pulling, hoeing, or mulching.
- ❖ If indicated, spray cherries at weekly intervals for fruit fly.
- ❖ Fertilize vegetable garden 1 month after plants emerge by side-dressing alongside the rows.
- ❖ Move houseplants outside for cleaning, grooming, repotting, and summer growth.
- ❖ Make sure raised beds receive enough water for plants to stay free of drought stress.
- ❖ High elevations, central and eastern Oregon: fertilize lawns, late June to early July.
- ❖ Apply fertilizer to lawns.
- ❖ Plant sweet corn, other tender vegetables.



The Grapevine
 News for Columbia County Master Gardeners™
www.columbiacountymastergardeners.org



June 2009

Deadline for THE GRAPEVINE - All materials will need to be into the OSU Extension office no later than the 20th of each month.

President's Corner

OH MY GOD! Remember these words from Last years Spring Fair? Well this year those words didn't fit what I witnessed. In all the years of working Spring Fair in one capacity or the other, I have never seen a line to the door of the High School Commons, like I witnessed on Saturday, April 25th. It took 50 minutes for that initial line to get into the building! When I heard this statement from our out side cashier, then my mouth was open and agog.

Tomato sales were hot and furious; in fact some tomatoes were sold out in just 10 minutes. This next statistic is impressive: we sold out of all the tomatoes we had, 6, 167 tomatoes in less than six hours!

Many of the Vendors did as well as we did and will be returning next year. The Vendors were as astonished and excited at the crowd size as I was.

How does one say THANK YOU when these words just don't seem adequate?

As Spring Fair Coordinator, words absolutely escape me for all the wonderful help that was given in setting up and running the Spring Fair this year. If it weren't for this wonderful help there would be no Spring Fair. Thank You, Thank You. (And the help this year from husbands and wives - OH my Goodness.) One person who helped us all keep on track with Spring Fair was Kathryn Phelan, who took the minutes for me. Thank Goodness she was able to keep up with us when we were all talking at once.
 --Kathy Johnson

Calendar: At-A-Glance

Jun. 4...	Demonstration Garden and other MG Extension Projects Planning meeting, 9 a.m., Extension office
Jun. 4...	Board Meeting, 10 a.m. Extension office
Jun. 25.	Chapter Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Extension office Conference room. Speaker: Maurice Horn from Joy Creek Nursery, topic will be "great plant picks."


Don't forget that each Monday from 10 a.m. to Noon work is done at the Demo Garden.

Coming August 23rd – the Annual Picnic – Mark your Calendars!

From the Garden

We have been busy out at the Demo Garden getting things cleaned up and ready for the new season. Dale Johnson built a trellis for a clematis Nancy Harness donated and LeRoy Schmidt build a raised box to plant it in.

All of the raised beds have been spoken for: tomato staking, butterfly garden, victory garden, snake gourds, sunflower project and melons. We are planning on replacing broken pickets and doing some needed repainting.



Again this year, we have registered the demo garden with the Great Sunflower project and will be doing some bee counting later this summer. For more information and if you would like to participate in this project at home, check out their website at www.greatsunflower.org.

The herb beds are undergoing a major renovation by the "herb crew" and will be better categorized this year by use. The pond has been cleaned out and we found the Gambusia fish didn't survive the harsh

winter. They will be replaced to help keep the mosquito larvae under control.

Hope to see you all out at the garden on Mondays from 10 a.m to Noon.

--*The Demo Garden Crew, Kathy and Andy*

PS: You're cordially invited to join the demo garden work crew on Monday, June 1, at 1 p.m. for a garden tour of Kathy & Dale Johnson's home in Portland, bring your sack lunch and join us!

Volunteer Payback

LOG YOUR HOURS, and turn them into Extension office. Hours worked by veteran as well as new Master Gardeners™ accumulate to justify continuance of our program through OSU.

To get a form off the web:



<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/master-gardener-volunteer-program> choose Master Gardener™ Volunteer Log Sheet – word document or to get an electronic form go to: www.columbiacountymastergardeners.org, choose Chapter News, Select a Topic, and then choose either the electronic file or printable form.

Winters Over?

What a strange year it has been. First we go through a winter that was colder than we have experienced for a number of years, but the cold also hung on for longer than normal.

Many of the plants that survived the past 10 winters didn't make it this year. Many of the Hebes, eucalypus, New Zealand flax and acacias failed to survive. Many gardeners (my wife and I included) push the envelope a bit on which zones we are in. Plants that are good in zone 8 may survive most winters with some protection, but not this past one.

Now we have to endure a wet chilly spring - with some warm days. As they say - timing is everything. I have been very apprehensive about the fruit trees pollinating.

What I am finding is some apples have an excellent set of fruit while others not well at all. The pears will need a ton of thinning, while in my peaches, the Mary Janes have a good set and the Avalons are quite sparse. Just a few days difference in bloom time makes a world of difference.

I have been very happy to see blooms on our hardy Kiwi. This is their third year and are blooming for the first time.

For those of you not familiar with the hardy Kiwi - they are smaller than the regular Kiwi - about the size of large grapes and they have no fuzz on the fruit. You pick them and eat just like grapes. There are a number of varieties with different flavors and we are looking forward to our first picking. I'll let you know how they turn out.

Lastly - I want to thank Ross Carter, Betty Werschkull and Gail Martyn for all the help with the outside plant sale at the Spring Fair. Thanks to their help it work very smoothly. --*Dennis Snyder*

Master Gardeners Contacts	
Officers for 2009	
Title	Name
President.....	Kathy Johnson
Vice President	Curtis Nelson
Past President	Dennis Snyder
Secretary.....	Diane Schnur
Treasurer	Jacqueline Kennedy
Historian.....	Doris Hale
OMGA Rep	Chuck Petersen
OMGA Alt. Rep.	John Salmon
Demo Garden	Jane Allen
Spring Fair.....	Kathy Johnson
CCMG website:	www.columbiacountymastergardeners.org
Webmaster	Larry Byrum
OSU Extension Service:	
Extension Faculty	Chip Bubl
Secretary.....	Vicki Krenz
Guide to Plant Disease Control:	
OSU.....	http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu

Landscape notes

Plant a block for the bees

An interesting study done in 2002 looked at flowers in urban gardens in the San Francisco Bay area for their bee attractiveness. Flowers were monitored twice a week for their bee visitors, both native and domestic. The researchers looked at about 700 flower species and cultivars within species. They found that only 5-10% of the flowers attracted measurable bee numbers. One interesting fact was that attractiveness of individual flowers increased if the flowers were found close to other flowering plants. Flowering blocks needed to be about three feet by three feet or more to see this effect.

Not surprisingly, native bees preferred native plants, though there were some significant exceptions. There are lots of options for taking waste ground and making very attractive bee habitat.

For more information, go to urban bee gardens :
<http://nature.berkeley.edu/urbanbeegardens/>
or the Xerxes Society, an international group headquartered in Portland:
<http://www.xerxes.org/>

Water and energy

There are lot of links between water consumption and energy. Whether you live on a rural property with a well, on a community water system, or you are served by a municipal system, it costs energy and thus money to pump water. Large systems treat water after it is drawn prior to consumption which also

requires some energy. As electrical rates rise, those water cost rises. In an urban setting, once the water reaches the house it must be re-pumped to the sewage treatment facility, cleaned up and pumped back to the river. Again, involving significant costs in both dollars and energy generation.

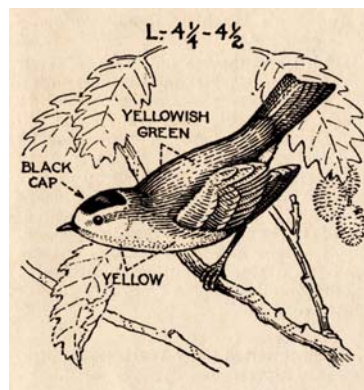
The biggest direct savings for homeowners come from energy efficient appliances or devices that reduce the volume of water that needs to be heated for bathing or washing dishes and clothes. Contact your PUD or Co-op for incentives on these appliances.

Caterpillars & bird conservation

Birds like caterpillars. Caterpillars don't move fast and they become easily digested, nutrient-filled meals. Birds are rewarded with a lot of energy in comparison with the energy spent acquiring the larva. Caterpillars are also rich in calcium in comparison to other insect stages. So caterpillar-stuffed birds are happy and they prosper.

In our conifer forests, more than half the caterpillar species and about two-thirds of the total caterpillar biomass are associated with the deciduous trees and shrubs of our native landscape. These include alder, maple, cascara, serviceberry, oceanspray, native cherry, wild roses and wild hazel. Forests that contain less than 35% cover by these deciduous species show significantly less use by a number of birds. Some of these birds are now rare in much of the region.

Conservation practices could include planting key species, perhaps after the timber species are "free to grow" and a lighter hand with herbicides.



Farm and livestock notes

Selling lambs



Selling lambs should be simple and sometimes it is. If your lambs are tipping the scales at 110-130 pounds, it is time to move them. But when you enter June/July with lambs weighing 60-85#s and your hill pasture is drying up, you have to make a few decisions.

Your instincts and experience will probably tell you that your lambs won't make much gain on dry pastures after about mid-July. In addition, the June lamb price is generally better than in the fall. Furthermore, the ewes will probably do better without the lambs, who may still be suckling and also compete with the ewes for the best pasture.

On the other hand, it may be possible to make good money by purchasing feed for a couple months and grazing the lambs on the fall pasture before selling. With sixty pound lambs, you can potentially add 50-60 pounds to them before you sell. You will have to have a way to feed. Usually, sheep raisers use a creep feed system near the barn. In some cases the lambs are dry-lotted. Cost of feed per pound of gain is the crucial calculation.

If you decide to feed, you must have a good worming program to get maximum benefit from those feed dollars. Sharpen your pencil and see what will work for you (or ewe) and your markets.

Evening cut hay is sweet

As I write this, there has been some good haymaking weather. With any luck, there will be many good days to come. It is clear that maturity of the forage (the older it is the lower the protein, digestibility and sugars) and the mix of forage species (legumes have more



protein than grass) have a lot to do with hay quality. There is now evidence that time of hay cutting can affect forage quality.

This makes sense. Plants spend the day capturing sunlight and turning it into sugars. They spend the evenings in respiration, converting those sugars into structural products for plants and energy to power plant processes. When hay is cut, rapid moisture loss slows respiration. When hay is cut in the evening, the sugar production of that day is stabilized in the hay.

It also appears that domestic and wild animals prefer to graze forage in the early evening, probably due to the improved sugar status of the forage that time of day. Some farmers put animals into new pastures in the evening and report larger gains from the livestock.

But is this hay good for horses?

I was recently asked to review some of the issues surrounding high-fructan feed, especially forages for horses. I am not an expert on this issue nor am I thoroughly versed in the metabolic issues that seem to throw some horses into cycles of colic and laminitis.

After reviewing some literature, these are the conclusions I came to:

- ❖ Early cut hay can be higher in fructans but this varies widely between species and within varieties of a given species.
- ❖ Hay cutting practices, seasonal weather, and pasture management greatly affect the amount of fructans and other “non-structural” carbohydrates.

- ❖ Sheep dairy and beef farmers think this kind of hay/forage is great.
- ❖ Horses do not all respond to the same hay/forage (or other feeds for that matter) in the same way. Genetics has to play a significant role in the response. Careful attention to a horse's history combined with conservative feeding practices pay benefits.
- ❖ The horse community should cull from breeding lines animals and their offspring that are laminitis prone.

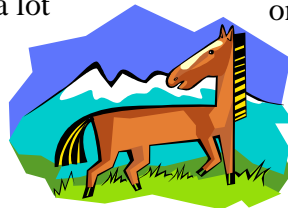
For more information, see a somewhat confusing Colorado State publication “*Sugar Content in Feed and Forage Affects Horses’ Health*”

(<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/livestk/01818.html>) and a pasture management publication from OSU “*Nonstructural Carbohydrates in Cool-season Grasses*” <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pdf/sr/sr1079-e.pdf>

What is the condition of your pasture?

Western Oregon pastures produce about 60% of their yearly forage in the period from April 1st to June 30th. That is a lot of dry matter that shows up all at once. As the rains stop, the pasture dries down and little growth develops in August and September. Then fall rains give a nice little bump heading into the winter.

This is the time to look carefully at your pasture. Is the pasture is composed of mainly desirable species? How much bare or degraded ground is present. This is



sometimes referred to as the percent of plant cover. Finally, is the pasture responding well after being hayed or rotationally grazed?

Secondary concerns are soil compaction and the diversity of desirable species. Compaction is the inevitable result of poor grazing management in the winter when soils are wet. Improved grazing management (i.e. no grazing at all from November through March) can, over time, reduce compaction. Compacted soils won't grow good pastures.

The issue of species diversity is a little more complex. Anyone growing pastures for meat animals knows the value of legumes in the mix. The high protein content of those species (clover, alfalfa, and trefoil/lotus) produce nice rates of gain and the deep rooted nature of these plants both opens up the soils and provides more summer pasture since the roots reach moisture “banks” deeper in the soil. Some horse owners are less comfortable with legumes, seeing them as “hot” feeds that can cause laminitis. I think that concern is overblown, especially with trefoil, but the prejudice against legumes is there.

Reseeding or overseeding a pasture is expensive and somewhat risky. It should only be undertaken when other management options are tried. First, hold off grazing after November 1st to allow the grass a chance to rebuild over the winter. Second, fertilize in late February a month before you start grazing. This practice will provide more spring forage and will thicken the existing stand. Third, start using electrified poly tape to rotationally graze, leaving good rest periods between more intense grazing

OSU Launches New Website

Money and work are two of the top sources of stress for almost 75 percent of Americans, according to the American Psychological Association's 2007 Stress in America survey.

With rising consumer debt, falling housing prices, rising costs of living, and declining retail sales, many people are worried about how they will get through this recession.



Oregon State University Extension Service has compiled information to help you find the help you need during these tough times.

This new website offers advice on how to stretch your food dollars, write a resume, or find help paying for college. To locate these resources and more, visit us at:

http://extension.oregonstate.edu/emergency/tough_times.php

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