



Country Living

Provided to you by the

OSU Extension Service Columbia County

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The office will be closed Fridays from Noon to 1 p.m.

Website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/>

July 2015

Programs for you . . .

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

- July 1 **OSU Caneberry Field Day**. 1-5 p.m., NWREC, Aurora. Call for Details. Or visit their website: <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/NWREC/programs/berry-crops>
- July 2 **Demonstration Garden and other MG Extension Projects Planning Meeting**. 10 a.m., OSU Extension Classroom, St. Helens
- July 2 **Master Gardener™ Board Meeting**. 10:30 a.m., OSU Extension Classroom, St. Helens
- July 3 **Columbia County Extension Service office closed for Holiday**
- July 7 **Scappoose Bay Watershed Council**. 7 p.m., Scappoose Bay Watershed Council's office, Warren
- July 8 **OSU Blueberry Field Day**. 1-5 p.m., NWREC, Aurora. Call for Details. Or visit their website: <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/NWREC/programs/berry-crops>
- July 14 **Lower Columbia Watershed Council**. 7 p.m., SWCD office-35285 Millard Rd., St. Helens
- July 15-19 **Columbia County Fair**. Columbia County Fairgrounds, St. Helens
- July 15 **Soil & Water Conservation District**. 7:30 p.m., SWCD office-35285 Millard Rd., St. Helens
- July 18 **OSU Day at Columbia County Fair!**
- July 23 **Upper Nehalem Watershed Council**. 7 p.m., Vernonia Grange, <http://nehalem.org/> 503-429-0869
- Aug. 22 **Rural Living Field Day**. Sauvie Island - see flyer inside newsletter

FOOD SAFETY/PRESERVATION HOTLINE - July 13 through October 16, 2015

1-800-354-7319

9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.; MONDAY-FRIDAY, except holidays

Certified Family Food Education volunteers and OSU Extension staff will answer your questions.

You can get the OSU Extension Service publications at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog>, click on nutrition and foods for publications on canning, drying, pickling and freezing too!



Chip Bubl

Chip Bubl, OSU Extension Faculty, Agriculture

Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources, Family and Community Health, 4-H Youth, Forestry & Natural Resources, 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

The gardening year so far

This has been a mostly exceptional garden year to this point with a few exceptions.

Many gardens were planted early and the first crops of broccoli, peas, lettuce, and even beans have already been harvested.

Tomatoes, eggplants, and peppers are thriving. Corn is waist high in some gardens and it still is not too late to plant a second crop of a short season variety.



Small fruit (strawberries, blueberries, and the blackberry types) matured 2-3 weeks early and some fruit, especially raspberries, got sunburned.

It is absolutely crucial that newly planted trees and shrubs be kept watered. There is very little water left in the lower soil profiles. So you have to provide what your plants need. In the current weather, the moisture loss from your plants and direct evaporation is about .30 inches per day. That requires **two inches of water a week** to replenish that loss. Mulching helps, especially around vegetables, but I would still aim to provide the two inches. This probably will not be a year to experiment with “no water” tomatoes. Container plants have to be watered often, perhaps twice a day in the worst heat. Shallow rooted plants like rhododendrons may need more assistance this year. Blueberries need lots of water most years and are really going to be stressed if this weather continues.

I expect to see more cases of sunburned and heat stressed plants. Damage often shows up first on the southwest side of the tree or shrub due to exposure to the direct rays of the sun at the hottest time of the day.

Be careful about the timing of summer pruning (see below) if it is hot when you do it. Some fruit and leaves can easily sunburn when branches that shaded them are removed.

The insect picture is mixed. There have been a lot more cucumber beetles (see below) and especially maggots of the cherry fruit flies in the cherries. Tent caterpillar populations crashed despite their very early start. Brown marmorated stink bugs (and all stink bugs) seem to be more

abundant. Spotted wing drosophila risk is not yet clear.

There are some exceptionally large colonies of bald-faced hornets for this time of year. I have seen nests that are already 18-24 inches long and easily 12 inches across. This is going to make for a very exciting outdoor eating experience. Most of these nests are high up in trees or in the peaks of the eaves on houses. It can be very hard to get close enough to safely spray the nests. I am not a fan of climbing high on ladders around yellow jackets and their kin. The colony will die in the fall and the nest will not be reused.

Be exceptionally careful with the use of broadleaf herbicides that contain phenoxy “esters”. This includes Crossbow™ and many lawn herbicides. In temperatures above 80 degrees, the herbicide can leave where it was sprayed and travel around your garden or that of your neighbors. It will twist and stunt sensitive plants like grapes, tomatoes, green beans, and squash.

Finally, be careful working in the heat. Heat stroke is potentially fatal if not treated promptly. Prevention includes lots of water, working more during the cooler hours of the day, hats, and working in short cycles as it warms up.

Western spotted cucumber beetle numbers high

The eleven spotted cucumber beetle looks a bit like a lady beetle. It is greenish yellow with eleven black spots on its wing covers and is quite common in western Oregon. The pregnant female beetles overwinter in the ground and generally first emerge in



warm cycles in April and May. As we all know, this was an unusual year with many things early including Ms. Eleven Spot. She got very busy early, munched on some bean seedlings or other succulent garden vegetation, laid her eggs at the base of vegetables and seedlings of crops and then died.

The kids have finished their own meals on corn roots and the roots of other crops, pupated, and now are emerging as adults. They are at least three weeks ahead of schedule. These adults are actively feeding on tender parts of plants including emerging new crown and axillary shoot growth, pollen, leaves, flowers, and bean pods among other things. I have seen them decimate a commercial beet seedling field by eating the tender emerging leaves. They also find time to mate and will lay more eggs around the roots of irrigated garden crops.

Then those larvae turn into pupae and then “August” adults which generally become the overwintering population. Normally there

are two generations. Will there be another one this year? California has three.

For gardeners, there is a certain amount of tolerance to 11spot beetle damage. Controls may include a wasp that finds them, birds that eat them, row covers that exclude them, and labeled vegetable insecticides that kill them. On the insecticide front, pyrethrin

products are probably the choice.

As always, read and follow all label instructions. For your information, there is also a western striped cucumber beetle but has three dark stripes down its back. Those larvae feed only on cucumber roots but the adults are generalist feeders.

Weeds and yield loss in corn

We know most vegetable seeds aren't the greatest competitors against garden weeds. Carrots and onions are slow to germinate and when they do, are pretty puny specimens for a long while. They can be easily overwhelmed in the competition for light and water.

But corn is a bit more resilient. Corn seedlings are huskier and grow quickly. However, their canopy is somewhat narrow at first so their ability to suppress weeds by shading is limited. But it turns out that corn has a trick that may help it in some circumstances and hurt it in others. Corn plant leaves measure the reflected light from weeds in the row. In a weedy environment, the corn plant then adjusts its growth pattern to spend its carbohydrates on shoot growth at the expense of root growth. The plant is hoping to keep ahead of the weeds and grab the sunlight for itself and, at the same time, shade and starve the weeds of carbohydrates. But poor root growth, especially if soil moisture conditions aren't optimal, can lead to moisture stressed corn and loss of yield. So weed early and often.

Apple maggot season

There are two insects that cause serious damage to apples. The codling moth lays her eggs singly on the apples. The egg hatches and the emerged larva eat their way toward the core of the apple, leaving behind a rather large tunnel and a damaged core. This is the classic “worm in the apple”. The codling moth started to fly about two months ago. New broods will continue to emerge and lay eggs over the summer.

The apple maggot is the larva of a fly. The fly emerges in late June and continues to emerge for some weeks. The female lays her eggs on the fruit. The eggs hatch into little maggots. They burrow into the flesh but don't leave the obvious tunnels of the codling moth. However, high feeding damage will leave the fruit soft and “pulpy”. It is both unappetizing and won't store at all.



The codling moth has been here since European settlement. The apple maggot arrived in Columbia County from the Midwest about 25 years ago. Codling moth feeding is more common and more damaging than apple maggot injury. However, localized trees or orchards can sustain a lot of maggot damage some years. The most effective product for both pests is one that contains spinosad. It is considered to be organic. Read and follow all label instructions.

Some gardeners have been trapping apple maggot flies with some success. One technique uses red rubber balls smeared with either a commercial product like Tanglefoot™ or 90 weight lubricating grease and hung in the trees. The red, round sphere tricks the fly into seeing an apple and they are trapped in the sticky goo. The balls

need to be scraped and the grease reapplied at intervals.

Another trap uses smell to lure the flies to their death. To make this trap, cut an opening in the side of a plastic milk jug. Leave enough of the side so that the jug will hold 1-2 cups of liquid. Mix one-quarter cup of cider vinegar and two tablespoons of molasses in one-half cup of water. Pour the mixture into the jug. It will smell bad over time but it is said that the worse it smells, the better it works. Periodically pour the liquid through a sieve to remove the dead flies and re-use the mixture.

Summer pruning

Any shrub or tree can be pruned safely in the summer. It is an especially appropriate time to prune if the main reason for doing so is to keep down the size of the plant. Unlike winter and early spring pruning, which tends to stimulate vigorous growth, summer pruning actually has a growth controlling effect.

Removing leaves will slow carbohydrate storage and thus slow down growth next spring and summer. Summer pruning apple trees allows more light into the tree's canopy to produce better-colored and sweeter fruit.

Summer pruning is best done from about mid to late July to the latter part of August. Pruning earlier than this may stimulate a whole lot of sprouts that will have to be removed. Pruning later than August will not give the growth controlling effect.

It is important to follow the rules of proper pruning. Thinning cuts tend to work better than heading cuts unless you want to stimulate branching (and if that is the case, do that in the winter). Don't leave stubs when you remove branches, but try not to cut the branch collar. Cutting in front of the collar will encourage proper healing of the pruning wound.

JULY



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.

Maintenance and Clean Up

- Mound soil up around base of potatoes. Gather and eat a few "new" potatoes from each hill, when plants begin to flower.
- Early morning is the best time to water vegetable and flower gardens to reduce evaporation. Water the soil, rather than leaves to reduce disease. Water deeply and infrequently to encourage root growth.
- Hanging baskets of flowers or vegetable plantings need careful attention to watering and feeding during extended periods of hot weather.
- Weed and fertilize rhubarb and asparagus beds. A mulch of compost or rotted cow manure works well as fertilizer. Water deeply to develop crowns for next year.
- Mulch to conserve soil moisture with paper, plastic, sawdust, etc.
- Stake tall-growing flowering plants such as delphinium, hollyhocks, and lupine. Stake tomatoes, as necessary.
- If a green lawn is desired, make sure lawn areas are receiving adequate water (approximately 0.5 to 1.5 inches per week from June through August). Deep watering less often is more effective than frequent shallow watering.
- Make compost of lawn clippings and garden plants that are ready to be recycled. Do not use clippings if lawn has been treated with herbicide, including "weed-and-feed" products. Do not compost diseased plants unless you are using the "hot compost" method (120° to 150°F).

Planting/Propagation

- Midsummer plantings of beets, bush beans, carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, lettuce, kale, and peas will provide fall and winter crops.
- Dig spring bulbs when tops have died down; divide and store or replant.

Pest Monitoring and Management

- Continue monitoring raspberry, blackberry, blueberry, cherry and other plants that produce soft fruits and berries for Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD). If SWD are present, use an integrated and least toxic approach to manage the pests. To learn how to monitor for SWD flies and larval infestations in fruit, visit <http://swd.hort.oregonstate.edu/gardeners>.
- Control hollyhock rust by sanitation, picking affected leaves, or spraying with a registered fungicide. Read and follow label directions.
- Watch for cutworm damage in garden. (In July, climbing cutworms become a problem and large portions of foliage will begin to disappear on established plants.) Use barriers, remove by hand, use beneficial nematodes when soil temperature is above 55°F, or spray with *Bt-k* according to label directions.
- Late this month, begin to monitor for early and late blight on tomatoes.
- Place traps to catch adult apple maggot flies. You can use pheromone traps to monitor presence of pests.
- July 10: spray filbert trees for filbert worm, as necessary.
- July 10-15: spray peach and prune trees for peach tree borer, and peach twig borer, as necessary.
- July 17-23: third spray for codling moth in apple and pear trees, as necessary.
- Cover blueberry bushes with netting to keep birds from eating all the crop.
- Watch for early and blight on tomatoes. Correct by pruning for air circulation, picking off affected leaves, and/or treat with approved fungicide.
- Monitor camellias, holly, maple trees for scale insects. Treat if necessary.
- Monitor rhododendrons for adult root weevils.
- Check leafy vegetables for caterpillars. Pick off caterpillars as they appear. Use *Bt-k*, if necessary.
- Spider mites can become a problem on ornamental plants, vegetables, and fruit plants during hot, dry weather. Watch for dusty-looking foliage, loss of color, presence of tiny mites. Wash infested areas with water or spray with appropriate pesticides.
- Remove cankered limbs from fruit and nut trees for control of diseases such as apple anthracnose and bacterial canker of stone fruit. Sterilize tools before each new cut.



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



July 2015

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

At the time of this writing, we have had some very hot weather and very little rain. We see the example of California having to go to water rationing, I think we need to think of what watering is necessary and conserve the water resources we have here before we end up in a similar situation.

On another subject matter you have seen some reminders of the upcoming picnic in August. Our previous picnic coordinator, Kathy Johnson, passed the baton to me this year. For our paid members we are looking forward to seeing you and your +1 at Scappoose Bay Marina, 57420 Old Portland Rd, Warren, OR, August 30, 2015 Noon – 3PM. It is a pot luck so bring a dish to share with everyone.

While I am discussing food, the regulars who work at the demo garden were treated to a Taco themed pot luck at Linda and Jon Bainbridges last week, we had lots of lovely food and a good visit followed by a garden tour of Bainbridge Estate. What a lovely setting and wonderful landscaping.

I want to remind the new members from this year's class that you can put in your payback hours by helping in the demo garden and each monthly business meeting counts as payback hours as well. Come and join us in these activities as well as any others that peak your interest.

I expect that many of you, like me, are beginning to harvest goodies from your garden as well as berries and fruit that has begun to ripen. Good luck with your harvest and remember if you have excess the food banks will be happy to receive your items.

Wishing you Butterfly mornings, and Wildflower afternoons

--Wes Bevans

**2015 OMGA Mini-College
 WE GROW GARDENERS!**

August 6-7-8, join the Oregon Master Gardeners Association in its annual Educational Seminar with focus on Gardening educational classes. New this year is a Key Note and several advanced training classes. For Gardeners of all levels!

CCMG Annual Picnic-August 30th

The Annual Picnic for Columbia County Master Gardeners and immediate family is August 30th at the Scappoose Bay Marina, Noon to 3 p.m. Hamburgers, buns, condiments, corn on the cob and water will be provided.



Calendar: At-A-Glance

- July 2 .. Demonstration Garden and other MG Extension Projects Planning meeting, 10 a.m., Extension office
- July 2 .. Board Meeting, 10:30 a.m. Extension office
- July 13. Demo Garden Work Day – 10 a.m. Preparing for County Fair!
- July 15-19 **Columbia County Fair**, St. Helens
- Aug. 6-8 **OMGA Mini-College**, McMinnville OR. Go to <http://omga.org/mini-college/> to find out more info and to register!

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

Please bring your own dish to share and your own eating utensils (plates, silverware, and glasses). Please RSVP to Wes Bevans at 503-543-3725 or weszig@centurytel.net by August 28 - so we know how many to plan for. Parking fee of \$3 at Marina.

Plant a Start for the Food Bank 2016

Seven Master Gardeners collected vegetable starts and distributed them to people coming to the St. Helens Food Bank, June 3 and Judy Thompson distributed extra starts at the Scappoose Food Bank May 28. The events were lively and people we talked to enjoyed learning about vegetables, remembering childhood gardens, and transplanting into containers if needed.

We want to entice everyone to join in the fun next year. Plant an extra row in your flats for the Food Bank. Also, consider purchasing seeds or sharing seeds that are recommended for containers as well as some of the faithful, recognized standards. Plan on a June 1, 2016 distribution date.

We also took starts to Habitat for Humanity and asked for donations for Habitat. We were greeted with equal enthusiasm. The main difference between the events was that people at Habitat for Humanity were relieved to see the vegetable starts because they were late getting their gardens planted and weren't planning on container gardens.

Hopefully, we can make both efforts yearly events.
 - Deb Brimacombe, Chuck Petersen

Rural Living Field Day

Saturday, August 22, 2015

8:30 am-2:00 pm

Howell Territorial Park, Sauvie Island

Get to know your neighbors and learn how to improve your land! \$15 per person/\$20 per family; includes a fabulous boxed lunch. Multiple tracks on healthy woods, birds, soils, orchards, septic systems, invasive weeds, stream restoration, Rainwater and meadowscaping. Sponsored by West Multnomah, Tualatin and Columbia County SWCDs and the Oregon Small Woodlands Association.

***It's easy to register - just click "Events"
at www.wmswcd.org***

The natural world

Attracting native bees with bee rounds

Lona and Al Pierce have been experimenting with bee rounds, chunks of wood with holes of various sizes drilled into them to attract nesting solitary pollinators. In the picture, the largest holes were the supposedly preferred size for the orchard mason bee but they actually chose the next smaller hole. The smallest holes and the mason bee accepted holes were the first and most occupied. There are a lot of solitary bees like the mason bees out there and all play important roles in our gardens and native plant pollination. The Pierces intend to continue to experiment with holes of varying sizes from 2- 8 mm. They are careful observers so I know we will get more reports from them.



The smell of a summer shower

It has been thought for some time that the smell of a summer rain came from the soil but no one understood how it worked. Now, we do. Scientists used high speed cameras to study rain drops. They found that impact created a stream of tiny air bubbles inside the droplet that rose through the droplet like champagne bubbles. They were curious whether these bubbles could acquire and carry the earthy scent we associate with the summer shower. Precise modern technology allowed them to isolate and characterize the volatile compounds in the bubbles and found that, indeed, they did carry the earthy scents. Mystery solved.

Evolution is restless motion

A scientist studying invasive plants noted “What’s interesting about climate change is that humans are effectively manipulating how species experience time”. She has been monitoring first flowering dates of a number of species across North America. She has found a significant difference in how invasive species can easily adjust flowering forward in comparison to the genetic flexibility of native plants in their same landscapes. That early seed production and early growth allows the weedy species to compete for the scarce resources necessary for plant growth, i.e. sunlight, water,

nutrients, and pollinators. Human use of fossil fuels is setting the table for these genetically adaptable species to the detriment of the more complex mix of species in our native landscapes across the country and world.

In another vein, scientists have been interested in

whether the number of genes we share with very primitive species function the same way in each other’s cells. They looked at yeast and human genes. We shared a common ancestor and thus genes about a billion years ago. Time passed and the species both obviously diverged. But we still share thousands of yeast genes (or vice versa). Substituting a human gene for specific defective yeast genes showed amazing common functionality in about 50% of the swaps. There were differences. Genes involved in cellular “garbage disposal” and sterol biosynthesis were swappable but those involved in DNA replication and repair were not. The grunt work was conserved but not at the cost of future adaptability (gene level evolution). I propose a yeasty toast to this most fascinating study. Cheers.

Farm and livestock notes

An excellent hay crop

This has been the best haymaking weather that we have had in the 36+ years I have been here. While yields were down 10-15% with the earlier cutting dates, quality and feeding value per ton should be much higher. Hay can be tested for protein and energy (TDN) cheaply. We have a forage sample corer that attaches to a standard drill to lend out. Normal practice is to core 8-10 bales from the same field, mix the cores together in a bucket, and then pull one composite sample to send to an analytical laboratory. Analysis cost is often less than \$30. If you want to borrow the tool (which can also be used on silage) call our office (503 397-3462) to reserve it.



Hay consumers should appreciate the high quality of this year's crop and be willing to pay for that value. It is an excellent time to purchase your supply of hay if you don't cut your own.

Most of the fields I have seen were cut with 3 to 4 inches of stubble remaining. This is good practice. Tight clipping tends to reduce the ability of the grass to rebound as quickly after cutting and can lead to weakening of the stand.

We usually can't expect much rain until September at the earliest. While cows and ewes can subsist for a while on hay stubble or a dried out pasture grass, young animals will need more feed to keep them growing

and not losing condition. The hay that has just been cut should be an excellent feed supplement for them. By August, start hay feeding your breeding animals as well. Then, with the growth of the pasture after the first rain storms, you can back off on the hay until possibly late October.

Early calf weaning

There is increasing interest in early weaning calves. A calf's rumen is fully developed at about 60 days after birth so it can grow on high quality forage alone. But why would you want to take them off the cow? It is true that the milk the cow gives the calf is an excellent feed along with the grazing the calf does on its own. In the spring, when there is often more forage available than the animals can use, it makes perfect sense to leave them together.

But as pastures dry down, leaving the calf on the cow may require a lot of additional feed to allow the cow to continue feed the calf and not lose too much condition in the process. But if the calf was weaned and put

on the best pasture (with some supplemental hay), the cow would require less feed to improve her condition and she could do alright on the poorer fields

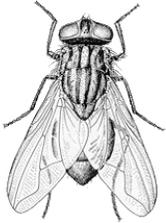


with extra hay supplement.

Fence-line weaning, which separates calves and cows at weaning by a common pasture fence, is a proven tool to reduce calf and mother weaning stress. Providing both with good supplemental feed and adequate water also reduces problems.

Fly control

Fly numbers started out high. It is not clear, with the hot, dry weather we are having, whether the numbers will stay that way. Horn flies, with their piercing and sucking mouthparts (which they employ 20-40 times per day!) are an enormous irritation to your livestock and will lower gains and condition. High numbers warrant control. These flies are generally found on the backs and sides of animals. Face flies don't "bite" but lick secretions from the eyes and nose, spreading pinkeye in the process.



Fly control generally involve the thoughtful use of insecticide ear tags (two for a large animals), pour-on insecticides, insecticide back rubbing bags, and fairly routine breakup of manure piles to reduce larval survival. Rotate the insecticides you use (read the label for the active ingredient and keep good notes) so that your flies don't develop resistance to them. Be sure to remove ear tags in the fall to further reduce insecticide resistance development. Talk to your veterinarian about what will work best in your operation.

How effective is weed mowing?

Mowing is often used to manage pasture weeds. It is often tried where summer fallow tillage and reseeding is not practical. But there are limits to its effectiveness. Done correctly, well-timed pasture mowing can reduce the volume of weed seed produced. But for that to work, the mower has to chop the flower stalk fairly finely. Otherwise, nutrients and moisture in a fairly intact floral stem will allow the seeds to mature anyway.



This is also true with herbicide treatment of weeds that are already well into flowering.

Tansy ragwort will certainly produce viable seed if the stem is just cut and laid down. If you can't chop the stem into a thousand pieces, it would be better to cut off the flower tops and bag them for disposal. Tansy may produce secondary flowers with this treatment but there is some evidence that those late-produced seeds are less viable. Tansy is a biennial so when it is done going to seed, it dies.

Blackberry plants can be controlled by repeated (every two weeks or so) tight mowing over the growing season. This process is called "carbohydrate starvation". Some perennial weeds like blackberries respond fairly well to this treatment, but others like horsetail, buttercup (see below), false dandelion, and Canada thistle do not.

Remember last winter's mud?

Livestock management becomes immeasurably more difficult in a western Oregon winter. Short days limit the time you have to observe your animals and rain increases their nutritional needs. Pasture growth is non-existent so they can't get much feed there. Animals are better taken

off pasture if at all possible.

But if you are planning on running your cattle on pastures in the winter, you need to plan feeding and watering areas that won't turn into a

mud bath. I recently came across a publication from Kentucky that has a lot of good ideas about building these areas using either concrete or geotextile fabric and rock. It is called "[Strategic Winter Feeding of](#)

[Cattle Using a Rotational Grazing Structure"](#)

and is available by clicking this link if you are reading the newsletter on line or by typing in the title into your search engine (Google or other)

Creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*)

Creeping buttercup is an herbaceous perennial non-native species now common in pastures, lawns, and gardens. It needs part

to full sunlight and prefers poorly drained or at least moist soils. It is quite tolerant of soil compaction. The leaves with three (sometimes five) toothed leaflets



are usually on long stalks and have some pale markings on them. Both the stems and leaves have fine hairs. Creeping buttercup spreads by running stems (stolons) that root at the leaf nodes. If soils conditions are favorable, stolons branch considerably, creating a dense stand of daughter plants. If less favorable, they will send out longer stems testing for better conditions. The stolons connecting the daughter plants die in the fall, leaving new individual plants. They over-winter as visible plants (rosettes) or can die back to the soil line and return in the spring.

Creeping buttercup spreads at a prodigious pace. One plant can populate an area of 40 square feet in one season with daughter plants. Growth can be rank and tall on good sites or more flattened if there is grazing pressure or mowing.

Creeping buttercup's bright yellow five (and sometimes ten) petaled flowers appear March through August. Seeds are "hooked"

achenes borne in a round seed head. Grazing animals, birds, rodents, wind, and water spread the 30 -150 seeds per head. The seeds live at least 20 years and 80 in acid, waterlogged soils. Prolonged flooding will not kill either the seeds or plants. Seeds can germinate and grow in waterlogged conditions.

Buttercup can be poisonous. It can produce dermal toxicity, and especially, bloody diarrhea and abdominal distress in cattle and horses. Sheep and goats seem to be able to graze it and get benefits in the early spring but show toxic symptoms by late spring. Horses and cattle will avoid it if there is grass available. But on heavily infested pastures (all too common in Columbia County), they may graze it as a last resort with disastrous consequences. Some animals develop a dangerous taste for buttercup. The poisonous principle in this buttercup disappears when it is harvested with grass in hay. The rule: Don't graze any livestock on buttercup-dominated pastures. If there is a section that is a problem, hot wire it off. If you have a livestock problem, call your veterinarian.

Avoid overgrazing and spreading seeds with equipment. Good pasture management with vigorous grass will slow buttercup. Mowing will not help to control buttercup. Thorough tilling and re-seeding may help. Improved field drainage will make for more vigorous grass and create less favorable conditions for buttercup. The herbicides MCPA and metsulfuron (Ally™ and Escort™) have pasture labels and are effective on buttercup. As always, read and follow all label instructions when using these products.

In home gardens, buttercup can be spot-sprayed with glyphosate (Roundup™ and others) if care is taken not to get it on desirable plants. Otherwise, hand-pulling with no vacations works best.



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 seminars (which begin at 1:00 pm and are free unless otherwise indicated) are as follows

July 5 - *Hydrangea Tour* - with Maurice Horn; **July 12** - *Cuts From the Garden* - with Leslie Gover; **July 19** - *Great Greens, Yellows and Reds in Foliage* - Roger Gossler; **July 26** - *Flying Jewels: Keeping Hummingbirds Happy in Your Garden* - with Ramona Wulzen.



Benny Beaver set to entertain at 2015 Fair

Benny Beaver will be showing his trademark buckteeth and flat tail at the 100th Columbia County fair this year! The OSU mascot will be trotting about the fairgrounds on Saturday, July 18th, starting at 2:30 p.m. with free photo opportunities and other events. He will be on stage with the Hit Machine at 4:30 p.m. and at the Rodeo Grand Entry at 7 p.m. If you are able to stop by the OSU booth near the pavilion, he will be handing out OSU swag for fair-goers.

The public is invited to meet Benny at any time throughout his itinerary, which includes the following stops: 2:30 p.m. – Meet and greet Benny near the gazebo at the Columbia County Fairgrounds; 3:00 p.m. – Join Benny for a welcome reception and cake at the OSU Extension tent near to the pavilion; 4:30 p.m. – Look for Benny with the Hit Machine – stage 1; 6:00 p.m. – See Benny around the Columbia County Fairgrounds; and 7:00 p.m. – Benny opens the Grand Rodeo Entry

The Columbia County OSU Extension Service will have staff at their booth from 1 to 5 p.m. on OSU Day – prizes and cake will be handed out. If you have questions about Benny’s visit, contact Woody Davis at 503-397-3462 or woody.davis@oregonstate.edu.

We encourage all OSU supporters to wear ORANGE on Saturday of fair!

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