



Master Gardener Thymes

www.lakelandsmastergardener.org

July 2010



Attention!!!

Regular meetings will be held only January, March, May, July, September, and December. The meeting time will still be at 6:30 and the meeting place will be announced.

Newsletters are planned to coincide with the months we have meetings. Time sensitive information in between newsletters will be emailed and also will be on the website.

Jamie Peeler and Butch Price from CPW's Bio Solids Processing department are the speakers tonight. Bacteria extracts solid organic matter from Greenwood's two waste processing facilities. The solids are hauled to the Wilson Creek bio solids plant for the addition of lime and heat treatment. The PH of the resulting product is 12. This high PH is the primary constraint as to how much of their product can be used. The product has a fairly strong ammonia smell.

The product is available from 7AM-3PM at the Wilson Creek facility, 482 Wilson Creek Rd. Bed bags are provided for pickup truck beds. Our soil generally takes 4.59 lbs. per 100 sq. ft., or 20 dry pounds, or two five gallon buckets that are ¾ full per 100 sq. ft. Don't use bio-solids on centipede yards. A centipede yard prefers a PH of 5.7 or lower. Also, a supplement may be necessary on Bermuda grass.

Jamie Peeler kindly donated five bags of bio-solid fertilizer as door prizes for the master gardeners in attendance.

Lakelands Master Gardener

PICNIC

Thursday July 8th

6:30 pm

To be held at

Emma Gaskin Memorial Park (formerly Magnolia Park)

Sandy Orr, Secretary

GREENWOOD FARMER'S MARKET OPENING DAY

Once again a great thank you to all the Master Gardeners for their service and dedication to the senior citizens of Greenwood County and the Farmer's Market. The distribution of the vouchers for the Senior Nutrition Program was very successful and completed in record time. With the regular customers and over 800 seniors shopping with the 23 separate vendors, the June 19th opening day at the Market was just remarkable. I understand that the following Wednesday was just as eventful. The last 37 packets went fast on Saturday the 26th. The Board

Minutes of the Lakelands Master Gardeners' Meeting May 13, 2010 at the Genetics Center

28 members were present. Catherine Swindell gave a preview of upcoming events. The Annual Potluck Picnic will be July 8 in Magnolia Park. The September meeting will be open to the public, at which Rick Huffman will speak about Native Plants.

James Hodges is establishing a training schedule for voucher distribution training for the Farmers' Market vouchers.

of Directors does appreciate all the support of each of you as volunteers and as customers. Providing nutritious, local produce benefits so many on so many levels.

Sincerely,
Sharon Alvarez
Chairman

Thanks for the many volunteer activities during 2010

The first half of 2010 is gone, but there have been many programs, projects and volunteerism occurring with Lakeland Master Gardeners.

The topiaries were great and I know many people volunteered long and late hours to make it bigger and better this year. .

I had nearly 20 Master Gardeners help with the voucher distribution at the Farmers Market in June. We helped 1400 seniors get fresh vegetables from the market and this also helps our small local vegetable growers. Food Production and Nutrition are very important to all of us. Many MG's were up very early on Saturday or Wednesday mornings to be at the market at 6:30 AM.

I encourage more people to get involved with our office volunteering as time goes by. We are very short on staff and may get even more work to do as the new budget year arrives.

The Park Seed booth received nearly 200 visitors last week and I appreciate those who worked the booth at the event.

It is getting close to the time when our new class will begin. I need current Master Gardeners to get the word out to friend and co-workers about the program. We need a full class this year. Many of our current Master Gardeners were encouraged to get involved by past Master Gardeners.

Thanks to all those who have contributed over 3000 volunteer hours during the first 6 months of 2010.

James

“Old Florida Gardens”

Part One:

What does the term “Old Florida” mean to you? I envision travel via the Flagler railroad, citrus groves by the mile, and a foreign land of sub-tropical beauty, undisturbed by development. Super theme parks, air conditioning, highways, major airports and growing cities with manufacturing were to arrive decades later.

I had a recent visit with a dear expert gardening friend-she had owned an extensive retail/wholesale greenhouse center in New Hampshire for many years-using mainly Park Seeds, of course! She has spent over twenty years in Florida, and has studied native plants and gardening extensively and now lives adjacent to a 37 thousand acre wildlife refuge in Crystal River, on the northern Gulf Coast.

Arriving in Orlando, we proceeded to parts of “Old Florida” for several days. Our first destination was in Polk County, the area known as Lake Wales. We spent a day visiting the Bok Tower Gardens, created by a former vice president of Bethlehem Steel, Edward W. Bok. Dedicated in 1929, the site was developed on the highest point of land in Florida with the creative genius of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead. (Mr. Olmstead also designed the “Emerald Necklace” throughout the city of Boston and New York’s Central Park.)

Awed by the area’s beauty, Mr. Bok spent years developing a site based on the preservation of natural beauty, enhancing the public’s knowledge and pure enjoyment. It includes a wide variety of garden sites, trails, one of the largest carillon towers in the United States and spectacular surprises along every turn.

Surrounding the tower, on the highest spot in Florida is a decorative moat, filled with a tremendous variety of large koi and a pair of swans-with feeding pellets 25 cents per handful! Multiple concerts are held throughout the day and feature a wide variety of classical music to enhance one’s visit. There are multiple “garden rooms” with many unique sculptures. Trails abound at a wide variety of lengths and surfaces-gravel, paved, or natural clearings. Staff members are

very knowledgeable and eager to share information about the gardens. Visitors may even purchase plants propagated on site! It is family/pet friendly with many areas h/c accessible, as well as trolley transportation, rain shelters and other visitor supports. For an additional modest fee, the estate home of Mr. Bok is open for tours and is filled with many unusual and unique features from craftsmen all over the world. Of particular interest were the tiles and lighting fixtures, as well as the spectacular, multiple “garden room” views from every room.

I strongly encourage anyone to visit this area of “Old Florida”, to experience how one person was so inspired to capture and preserve its natural beauty. It is located at 1151 Tower Boulevard, Lake Wales, FL 33853, telephone number is 863-676-1408, web site www.boktowersgardens.org.

Tours, films and educational opportunities are all available. As a registered Historical Landmark, the mission of the Bok Tower Gardens is: *“Wherever your lives may be cast, make you the world a bit better, or more beautiful because you have lived in it.”*

Next:
“Old Florida Gardens”
Part Two: Rainbow Springs State Park “...the *real* Florida.” Submitted by Kathleen Bradley Kapsalis, Lakelands Master Gardener

Grow a Cold Soup Garden



[Jodi Torpey](#), contributor



Homegrown tomatoes, cucumbers, squash and other tasty vegetables can be blended into a delicious cold summertime soup.

Photo: Jodi Torpey

Summertime Soup Beats the Heat

One of the best parts of planting a vegetable garden is harvesting the bounty and using it for quick summer suppers. An icy cold gazpacho made with tomatoes, onions, cucumbers and garlic is the perfect combination of growing and grazing.

Just about any sturdy vegetable can be blended into a refreshing pick-me-up on a wiltingly hot day. Beets, carrots, broccoli, leeks, asparagus, zucchini and potatoes are all delicious when cooked up and served cold.

Fresh greens, like spinach and arugula, also make an appetizing soup when combined with scallions, parsley, dill, cucumber and garlic. Gazapacho Verde makes a vivid green and chilly soup as featured in “The Moosewood Restaurant Kitchen Garden” cookbook.

A Basic Recipe

The basic recipe for a cold soup consists of a main vegetable that’s sliced or chopped and then sautéed or roasted and simmered in a vegetable or chicken stock with herbs, spices and other vegetables until soft. The mixture is pureed in a blender or food processor until smooth, chilled and served in frosty bowls or cups. For creamy soups, use heavy cream, sour cream, half-and-half, yogurt or buttermilk.

Herbs like chives, dill, parsley, thyme, oregano, and cilantro are also standard fare as a flavoring or a garnish. Because cilantro grows quickly, plant every few weeks to assure a fresh crop all summer long.

Traditional vegetable combinations include red peppers and onion, tomato and basil, leek and potato, and cucumbers and green onions. There are unlimited possibilities for making creative combinations depending on what’s growing in your garden.

Making Gazpacho

Here's a recipe for the cold Spanish soup called Gazpacho, created by Colorado gardener Shirley Pendleton. This recipe takes advantage of many of the fresh vegetables and herbs you already have growing or can find at the farmer's market. The Gazpacho recipe first appeared in "A Thyme For Cooking" cookbook, published by the Pueblo Herb Society in 1994 and is reprinted here with permission.

4 cups cold tomato juice
2 cups fresh tomatoes, finely chopped
1 large cucumber, peeled, seeded and finely diced
1 medium onion, chopped
1 cup green pepper, finely diced
2 green onions, finely chopped
1 cup celery, finely diced (optional)
1 clove garlic, pressed
1 tablespoon tarragon or red wine vinegar
Juice of 1 whole lime
Juice of ½ lemon
2 tablespoon olive oil
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon fresh tarragon, chopped
1 teaspoon fresh basil, chopped
½ teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce (optional)
1 teaspoon sugar (or less to taste)
¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
Dash of Tabasco sauce

Combine all ingredients, cover tightly and refrigerate. Serve cold in chilled bowls with fresh, crusty bread. Serves 4-6.

The Poison Garden

Once upon a time there was a wicked witch. She had a black heart but a very green thumb. The result was a garden to rival that of Eden, but this was a deadly garden because she had filled it with poisonous plants.

But this witch wasn't really a witch. She had once been a beautiful young maiden named Bella. In other words, she was the teenager that every other teenage girl wanted to be. Now Bella had been eagerly awaiting her senior prom because she was going with the handsomest, nicest boy in her

school. But the green-eyed monster of jealousy reared its ugly head in the form of Bella's best friend who enticed Bella to go on a picnic in a glade filled with lovely vines. Yep, poison ivy. The result? Bella got a head-to-toe case of weeping poison ivy sores while her friend got to go to the prom with the nice, handsome boy.

Bella was so hurt by the betrayal and by her hideous condition that she moved out onto the back 40 of the family farm. Luckily she had Internet connection. Using the Clemson Extension and other garden Web sites, she soon became an expert on deadly plants. Thus was born Bad Bella's garden of deadly delights.

The entire garden was bordered by a row of white oleanders with a second row of red oleanders. Take a nibble of those leaves, and it could be your last. She planted buckeye trees whose glossy brown seeds are so enticingly smooth to the touch but whose leaves, branches and seeds contain poison. She under planted the buckeyes with poison ivy, the plant that started all this trouble. For some quick summer greenery, she added castor bean plants, which can grow up to twelve feet in a single summer. Yes, Bella knew that castor bean seeds have a pleasant taste, and she knew that even one or two could prove fatal to anyone who attempted to harvest them.

In a fit of irony, she cultivated mistletoe on her oak trees as a reminder to herself that young lovers kissing under the Christmas mistletoe can have their romance disrupted if they sample the plant's berries. For good measure she added Hellebore, that lovely Christmas rose, which she learned was an ancient poison supposedly used in witches' charms. You can't say Bella didn't have a sense of humor. She even planted belladonna, the deadly nightshade plant that can be fatal to those who sample its roots, leaves or seeds.

Lily-of-the-valley berries, four-o'clock roots and seeds, the milky juice of snow-on-the-mountain — you get the picture. Bella knew her poisons, and those plants were a reminder to her of how a friendship can be poisoned. Now, she wasn't interested in poisoning a lost child or a curious hiker; she just wanted to be left alone. So she encircled her house and garden with a hedge of poncirus trifoliata, which has glossy green leaves

and white flowers followed by velvet-like, round, orange fruit. But what made the shrub perfect for keeping visitors out were its inch-long thorns. It was while surfing the net that Bella learned the shrub used to be planted around prisons to keep the criminals from escaping. She also read that the shrub was planted by the wealthy around their mountain vacation homes to deter would-be vandals.

Most once-upon-a-time stories have happy endings, and Bella's story is no exception. It seems a small plane crashed on her property, and Bella, not being a wicked witch at all, went to see if she could help the passengers. The only crash victim was a young man. Bella took him to her house and nursed him back to health. Lucky for Bella, he was a handsome psychiatrist who was able to convince her that the effects of her bout with poison ivy were not permanent, physically or mentally. They married and lived happily ever after and even invited schoolchildren to come to their garden to learn how to identify poisonous plants.

And yes, there really are poisonous plant gardens. At Cornell University, the W.C. Muenscher Poisonous Plant Garden is used to help veterinary students learn about plants poisonous to livestock. The University of Illinois also has a garden with more than 90 species of poisonous plants. Admission to both is free.

You can also visit the Abbeville-Greenwood Regional Library to read Carol Lerner's books, "Dumb Cane and Daffodils – Poisonous Plants in the House and Garden" and "Moonseed and Mistletoe – A Book of Poisonous Wild Plants." Or like Bella, you can Google poisonous plants.

By Charlotte Cabri



Deadly beauty

Widely grown along highways in the South, the oleander with its showy flowers can prove deadly to anyone who eats a leaf.

Leaves of three

The old adage, "Leaves of three, let it be," is a great admonition when it comes to poison ivy.



Photos by Joe Cabri

Developing Good Gardening and Landscaping Habits

Southern summers test many plants. High temperatures, high humidity and large fluctuations in rainfall amounts will add stress to all our plants. Many diseases, pest infestations, and plant disorders manifest themselves at this time of the year. Often, we look to quick cures, such as pesticides, to solve any problem that appears. Pesticides are, or should be, short term solutions used to reduce severe pest and disease problems until the plant can recover or be replaced, but they are not "cure-alls".

Growing nice flowers, landscapes, lawns or vegetable gardens should not be a war with nature and the elements, but an enjoyable management process. There is no cookie cutter list of activities that will guarantee success. Pesticides and fertilizer are useful in the plant management process, but are minor in their importance compared to other plant requirements. Plants of all types have the same basic needs; good soil, freedom from severe pest damage, proper moisture and sunshine and room to grow and develop. Each plant type may have specific needs or requirements. If you focus on good management strategies or habits then, plants will be healthier and fewer problems will occur. Here are four useful steps or habits to better plants:

1. Allow adequate space for each plant. The number one planting mistake in all types of

gardening is closely spaced plants that become stressed, diseased and less productive. High density plantings are often recommended for small gardens, quick color beds, hedges and commercial agriculture. This practice can be successful if, and this is a large if, additional time, energy and money are invested to insure that adequate space, moisture, light and pest control are provided. For most of us, the best practice is to space plants at recommended intervals. Tightly spaced plants can become moisture stressed much more quickly and are more prone to insect and disease attack and spread.



2. Proper nutrition is also very important. Our soils vary widely in their fertility and plants vary widely in their requirements. It is important to balance a plant's requirement with what is available in the soil. Commercial fertilizers seem to be a quick solution, but which one, how much and when need to be answered before you start broadcasting fertilizer. A soil test is an excellent first step in judging your site quality. Add knowledge of individual plant requirements and then manage plants according to their specific fertility needs. Organic amendments add nutrients to the soils slowly over a longer time period as well as improving rooting conditions and conserving moisture.
3. Water management is critical for year-round productive gardens. Automatic irrigation systems can be a great help to growing plants or a source of many problems associated with soil conditions and disease occurrence. Choose a system that suits the situation.
4. Scout or watch for disease and insects before they become severe. Often, hand picking and removal of infested or infected tissue can help to control problems without heavy spray programs. Use Clemson HGIC bulletins to help identify what pests may occur on your personal set of plants and when they occur. Now would be the time to look for Japanese beetle pests on landscape plants or Chinch bug damage on turf grass as examples.

Over-planting or crowding is not unique to the Lakelands. This conifer garden in Boone, North Carolina has an over abundance of plants. Dwarf cultivars such as the Blue spruce (middle right) will soon be covered by faster growing plants.

Political sign frames=good garden stakes

Political signs of defeated candidates often remain after elections. Gardeners can improve roadside appearances and their own hobby by uprooting the signs, properly discarding the message portion and for years using the wire frames as stakes for medium-height plants such as peppers and eggplants.

He digs digging; rototiller for sale

After a few years of trying to cultivate taste for a rototiller, it just isn't going to happen for me.

My garden bed is too small and my fondness for the crunch of a shovel and hoe into soil is too large to accommodate this mechanical advancement.

I have a 5-6 year-old 5 HP, 24" Craftsman in good condition but needs tune-up dues to sparse use in the past year. Best offer by mid-July.

Call Bob Bentley, 229-0379.