

Currituck Garden News



April 2013

PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER

The Garden News is published to provide you with educational information, upcoming programs and opportunities on gardening issues. Feel free to share with others.

EXTENSION TEAM

County Extension Director:
Cameron S. Lowe

County Extension Agents:

Family & Consumer Education:
Olivia Jones

Agriculture:
Tommy R. Grandy

4-H Youth Development:
Ellen H. Owens

Program Assistants:
Sheila R. Gregory
Latoria Moore
Stephanie Minton

Currituck County Rural Center:
Timothy Kirkpatrick,
Director
Tracy Hale, Manager
Terry Lynn

Agricultural Technician:
Deborah E. Kelso

Extension Secretaries:
Donna M. Keene
Sherry L. Lynn

Hummingbirds



Hummingbirds help pollinate more than 160 native North American plants and are easily attracted to a backyard with a diversity of native plants. Ruby-throated hummingbirds are the only species of hummingbird that breeds in North Carolina. They build small nests of lichens and spider webs on the top of horizontal tree limbs 10 to 30 feet off of the ground. Ruby-throated hummingbirds feed on small insects and nectar. To attract hummingbirds, include a variety of flowering plants that provide nectar throughout the warmer months (March to Frost). Ruby-throated hummingbirds prefer the nectar from bright, tubular flowers, such as crossvine, Carolina jessamine, and coral honeysuckle. Hummingbird feeders are good artificial sources of nectar and should be filled with a boiled solution of four parts water and one part white sugar. Honey and red food coloring are not recommended for hummingbirds. Ruby-throated hummingbirds are neotropical migrants that will migrate even if feeders are left up late in the

season. Most ruby-throats leave North Carolina and other southern states by mid October and don't return until late March. If bees, wasps, or other insects are a problem at hummingbird feeders, try a five-to-one water-to-sugar mix, and avoid feeders with yellow in them (insects are attracted to the color yellow). Make sure you purchase a feeder that can be cleaned thoroughly with a toothbrush and mild detergent each week to prevent the spread of bacteria or disease. Some other hummingbird favorites are Buckeye, Azalea, Lyreleaf sage, Iris, Passionflower, Phlox, Mallow, Beard-tongue (Penstemon), Liatris, Hardy Gloxinia, Bee Balm, Trumpet Vine, Cardinal Flower and Morning Glory.

Vegetable Garden Planting Guide

Mid April is a good time to start planting many of our garden favorites like snap and pole beans, cantaloupe, watermelon, cucumbers, pumpkins, squash, tomatoes and corn.

To find specific planting dates for these crops see

ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/quickref/vegetable/plantingguide.html

Composting

Now that the weather is getting warmer many of us are returning outdoors to start our spring cleaning chores in the yard. So what do we do with all of the leaves, pine straw and limbs in our yards ... try composting. Finished compost can be used as a soil amendment or as part of a potting mix (1/3 compost, 2/3 sand, vermiculite, perlite or bark). If you start a compost pile this spring, it should be ready by next spring. Assemble a pile in a level, well drained, convenient location that is near a water source. Piles should be no more than 3' high and 5' wide. Try to mix high carbon materials such as leaves, hay, bark, paper, and sawdust with high nitrogen materials such as grass clippings, manure (cow, horse, poultry), fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, and egg shells. The pile should roughly be two parts nitrogen to one part carbon. Never add dog or cat manure, meat, fat, grease, bones or dairy products to your compost pile. Also avoid adding any diseased plants, invasive grasses or weeds laden with seeds. Throw in a few shovels of garden soil to get things started. Keep your pile moist but not wet and water the pile when needed. Turning the pile will help speed up the process but isn't required. When your compost is dark brown or black, crumbly and earthy smelling, it's done.

For more information on composting see <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/pdf/ag-467.pdf>



Pruning Calendar

April is a good time to prune Bayberry, Boxwood, Eleagnus, Evergreen Euonymus, Mugo Pine, Pittosporum, Privet, Pussy Willow, Witchhazel and Hemlock. You can also prune Forsythia, Camellia, Daphne, Serviceberry, Winter Jasmine and Quince after the flowers have faded and dropped.

For a more comprehensive list of plants and the best time to prune them, see <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/430/430-462/430-462.html>

Container Vegetable Gardening

Can't keep the wildlife out of your garden? Are you short on space? Then maybe container gardening is for you. Snap Beans, Lima Beans, Beets, Lettuce, Onions and Radishes can all be grown in 5 gallon window boxes. Broccoli, Cabbage, Cucumbers, Egg Plant and Tomatoes can be grown in 5 gallon pots or buckets. Squash and Peppers do just fine in a 2 gallon pot and even Carrots can be container grown as long as the pot is 12" deep. Some recommended varieties for container grown Tomatoes are Tiny Tim, Small Fry, Sweet 100, Burpee's Pixie, Early Girl and Better Boy VFN. Some good varieties to try for cucumbers are Patio Pik, Spacemaster, and Pot Luck. For container grown Carrots try Short and Sweet, Danvers Half Long or Tiny Sweet. If you want to give Snap Beans a try, grow Bush Romano, Bush Blue Lake or Tender Crop.

For more information on Container Vegetable Gardening see

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/hil/hil-8105.html>



Pest Patrol : Burweed

Lawn burweed, also known as spurweed (*Soliva sessilis*), is a common turf weed easily identified by its low ferny foliage and sharp, spiny seed pods that ripen in late spring. Now is the time to spray this weed to prevent these prickly pods from forming. For best results, complete your spraying by April 5 in

Northeastern NC. Currently many winter annual weeds are still fairly small and burweed has not started to produce its sharp, prickly seed pods. Even though they are not very noticeable at the present time, now is the right time to treat lawns infested with burweed and other winter weeds. Once late April arrives it will be too late to control burweed and all winter annuals because their seeds will already have ripened, ensuring a new crop of weeds next winter. The best way to deal with burweed and other winter annual weeds is to spray a herbicide on your lawn during a week when daily high temperatures are expected to reach at least the low fifties. Which herbicide to use depends on your lawn type. In Zoysia and Bermuda lawns, most winter annual weeds can be controlled with herbicides containing a combination of the active ingredients 2,4-D, mecoprop and dicamba. Brand names for these products include Weed-B-Gone Max, Broadleaf Weedkiller, and Weed-Free Zone Southern. Centipede and St. Augustine lawns are sensitive to 2,4-D. In these lawns instead apply Image, with active ingredient Imazaquin, or atrazine or metsulfuron. For burweed control, Image is more effective, though atrazine controls a wider range of winter weeds. Atrazine is sold as Purge II, Image for Centipede and St. Augustine, and Hi-Yield Atrazine. Please note: Brand names are included in this article as a convenience to the reader and do not imply endorsement by NC State University nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned.

For more information about burweed see

http://www.turffiles.ncsu.edu/Weeds/Burweed_Lawn.aspx

Coastal North Carolina Daylily Society

The Coastal North Carolina Daylily Society will meet on
May 14, 2013 at 10:00 am
at the Currituck County Extension Center.

The CNCDS promotes and encourages interest in, and proper cultivation of, the genus *Hemerocallis*, and provides various programs of horticultural interest for its members and the general public. They also encourage membership in the American *Hemerocallis* Society. Membership is open to the public.



Burweed

Lawn Care

Don't be in a rush to fertilize warm season lawns. Warm season grasses should not be fertilized until 3 weeks after the grass has turned green. Thatch removal should also wait until after the lawn is completely green. In Fescue lawns, check for and control white grubs in April and May. (See White Grub Control in Turf, AG-366 <http://www.turffiles.ncsu.edu/articles/ff00506.aspx>)

For more information about lawn care see <http://www.lawncare.ncsu.edu/>

Currituck Home, Flower & Garden Show

For additional information on any of the contents of this newsletter call or e-mail Debbie Kelso at 232-2262, deborah_kelso@ncsu.edu

464 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$.18 per copy or \$83.52.

Deborah E. Kelso
Agricultural Technician

MISSION, VISION AND GOALS

North Carolina Cooperative Extension partners with communities to deliver education and technology that enrich the lives, land and economy of North Carolina.

For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact the Currituck County Center at 252-232-2262 no later than five business days prior to the event.

NC Cooperative Extension, Currituck County Center, and the Currituck County Master Gardeners are delighted to announce its annual Home, Flower and Garden show which will be held on Friday April 19th and Saturday April 20th. Doors will open to the public on Friday at 1:00 pm and close at 6:00 pm. Saturday's hours are 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. The show's theme this year is "Water Wisdom". There will be garden exhibits, children's activities and demonstrations designed to enhance your gardening skills. The Currituck Master Gardeners and several other vendors will have plants for sale. Hanging baskets, annuals, herbs, daylilies, and vegetables will be among the many plants that will be available for purchase. Our vendors will offer an extensive array of garden and household items, from garden furniture to garden art, birdfeeders, and much, much more. This event will be held at the Currituck Extension Center, 120 Community Way, in Barco, just off Highway 158 (Short Cut Road).

For more information on the show call 252-232-2262 or e-mail deborah_kelso@ncsu.edu.

**NC Cooperative Extension
Currituck County Center
120 Community Way
Barco, NC 27917**

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BARCO, NC
PERMIT NO. 12

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED