Master Gardener Volunteer Training Classes

It is not too late to complete an application for the 2013 Currituck County Master Gardener Volunteer program training classes. These classes provide a broad scope of horticultural training in areas such as plant identification, organic gardening, landscape design, pest management and more. The Currituck Master Gardeners are very active in the community and offer great volunteer opportunities. Anyone can apply regardless of past gardening experience. Classes begin Tuesday, January 15, 2013 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm and will continue for 13 weeks. Cost for the classes is $95.00. They will be held at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Currituck County Center in Barco. If you are interested in becoming a Currituck Master Gardener call the NC Cooperative Extension office at 232-2262 to receive an application or e-mail Debbie Kelso at deborah_kelso@ncsu.edu

Coastal NC Daylily Society

The Coastal North Carolina Daylily Society will meet on January 22, 2013 at 9:30am at the Currituck County Extension Center. The Daylily Society 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.

Northeast North Carolina Daffodil Society

Come enjoy a day of daffodil and artistic design on Saturday, February 23, 2013 at 10:00am at the Currituck County Extension Center. At the NENCDS membership meeting at 10:00am, American Daffodil Society members Clay Higgins and Katherine Beale will be making a presentation with demonstrations on how to enter single stem, three stems, and larger exhibit entries into the 2013 Daffodil Show.

An Artistic Design Class will be at 1:00pm presented by Lee Snyder an outstanding experienced artistic designer, judge and member of the National Garden Club. Ms. Snyder will demonstrate how to build Creative Vertical, Transparency, and Still Life Designs. There is a minimal charge of $5 per person to attend the class. Persons interested in attending the Artistic Design Class should contact: Show Chairman: Clay Higgins (252) 491-9268 (clayhiggins@centurylink.net) or Tommy Grandy tommy_grandy@ncsu.edu (252) 232-2261 for additional information.

The Northeast North Carolina Daffodil Society was formed in 2006 and is associated with the American Daffodil Society with over 1300 members across the United States and foreign countries. The NE NC Daffodil Society has 31 members and is co-sponsored by Currituck County Cooperative Extension. The 2013 NENCDS Daffodil Show will be in Barco on March 23, 2013. Everyone interested in gardening, arranging flowers, and the beauty of nature, is invited to come and enjoy this remarkable exhibition. Entrance to the Daffodil Show is free!
**Brighten A Winter Landscape**

Hollies can brighten a winter landscape with fabulous foliage and beautiful berries. They come in many shapes and sizes and the berries will attract birds to your garden. When you buy a holly, ask if it needs a pollinating mate to produce berries. The female has berries but needs a male for pollination. Hollies should be planted or transplanted between November and March. Hollies like an acidic soil and benefit from yearly fertilization in the early spring. The American holly (*Ilex opaca*), Chinese holly (*Ilex cornuta*) and Foster’s holly (*Ilex x attenuata ‘Fosteri’*) are among the most common producers of red berries.

Other trees and shrubs with red berries are nandina, pyracantha, hawthorn, chokeberry and viburnum. Two hawthorns noted for their excellent fruit displays are the Washington hawthorn (*Crataegus phaenopyrum*) and ‘Winter King’ hawthorn (*Crataegus viridis ‘Winter King’*). The Chindo viburnum (*Viburnum awabuki ‘Chindo’*) and Nandina domestica ‘Town and Country’ have bright red fruit in large clusters. Chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia ‘Brilliantissima’*) and Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) are both deciduous native shrubs with red berries. Pyracantha coccinea has orange-red berries that persist into winter.

**Poinsettia Care**

Plant breeders have introduced many new, longer lasting cultivars making it possible for a properly cared for poinsettia to remain beautiful in the home for 2 to 3 months. Since poinsettias are tropical plants, temperatures below 50°F will cause chilling injury. Chilling injury causes the bracts to have a blue or white discoloration and possibly result in leaf drop. Water the plants so that the soil is slightly wet, but not soggy. Poinsettias do not like “wet feet”. If the pot is covered with decorative foil, remember to punch a few drainage holes in the bottom. Pour off any water which collects in the saucer. Poinsettias cannot tolerate drying out, which can cause premature leaf drop. If the plant has been in your home for over 30 days, a half strength fertilizer solution should be applied monthly. The optimal daytime temperature for maintaining poinsettia quality is 70° to 75°F. Avoid temperatures above 75°F because this will cause premature bract fading and leaf drop. Also avoid placing the plants in cold, drafty locations, by heating vents, or on top of appliances. Place the plant in a well lighted area of the house. Plants can be placed in direct sunlight (south, east, or west exposure), but a sunny location increases the water demands of the plant.

If you plan to keep a poinsettia plant, care for it as you would any houseplant. After the last chance of frost has past, cut back the stems to 3 - 4 inches to promote new growth. Repot the plant in a slightly larger container. Initially place the plant outdoors in a semi-sunny location for 2 weeks so it can become acclimated to the higher light conditions before moving it into full sun. Fertilize the plant with a complete-analysis, water soluble fertilizer (such as 20-10-20) every 2 weeks. Move the plant indoors before the weather turns cool in the fall (night temperatures below 60°F). Long nights (short days) promotes flowering of poinsettias. Starting the last week of September or the first week of October, provide the plant with at least 13 hours of uninterrupted darkness. Exposing the plant to any light (car lights, turning on the room light, etc.) during the night’s darkness period will cause a delay in flowering. Be certain, however to place the plant in a sunny location during the day. The plants should bloom after 9 to 11 weeks of the long night treatment.

To learn more about poinsettia plants see the publication at: [ces.ncsu.edu/hil/pdf/hil-8508.pdf](ces.ncsu.edu/hil/pdf/hil-8508.pdf)
**Weed Watch**

Henbit is a common winter annual or biennial weed with greenish to purplish four-sided stems, commonly referred to as the square stemmed weed. Leaves are rounded, coarsely toothed, hairy, and deeply veined. The flower petals are purple and fused into a two-lipped tube. They are commonly mistaken for purple deadnettle due to the similar appearance. The difference between the two is that henbit doesn’t have petioles on the upper leaves. Purple deadnettle also has upper leaves that are distinctly red or purple-tinged. Purple deadnettle and henbit both have distinctive four-sided (square) stems, and flower in early spring.

![Henbit flowers](image1) ![Henbit on the left. Purple deadnettle on the right](image2)

**Things to do in the garden . . .**

- Keep tree leaves from collecting on your lawn.
- Now is the time to put out lime if needed. It takes about three months for lime to change the soil’s pH.
- Hardwood cuttings of many landscape plants like Forsythia, Flowering Quince, Weigela, Crape Myrtle, Juniper, Spirea, Fig, Grape and Hydrangea can be taken this month.
- Prune Grape vines, Nandina, Red Tip Photinia, summer blooming Spirea (Spiraea japonica, Spiraea bumalda), Yews, Abelia, Boxwood, Butterfly-Bush, Cotoneaster, Crape Myrtle, Gardenia. Pruning deciduous trees now that the leaves are gone makes it easy to see where cuts need to be made.
- Pruning calendars can be found at: [pubs.ext.vt.edu/430/430-462/430-462_pdf.pdf](pubs.ext.vt.edu/430/430-462/430-462_pdf.pdf)
- Water all evergreens during periods of drought. They lose water steadily through their foliage in winter, especially during strong winds. Roots cannot replace lost water quickly enough when it’s cold outside.
- Take advantage of mild days when the ground is not frozen to plant trees and shrubs. In our area, we can plant all winter. Mulch newly planted shrubs with a 2 to 4 inch layer of mulch and keep them well watered.
Go Green!

To sign up for the Currituck Extension E-news please notify donna_keene@ncsu.edu to be removed from the US postage mailing list and added to the email list.

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

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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.

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