NE NC Daffodil Society Meeting and Design Class

The NENCDS Membership Meeting will be held on February 23, 2013 at 10:00 am at the Currituck County Center of NC Cooperative Extension. American Daffodil Society members Clay Higgins and Katherine Beale will demonstrate how to enter single stem, three stems, and larger exhibit entries into the 2013 Daffodil Show.

An Artistic Design Class will be held at 1:00pm on February 23, 2013 at the Currituck Extension Center. Lee Snyder, an outstanding experienced artistic designer, judge and member of the National Garden Club, 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. Anyone interested in attending the Artistic Design Class should contact Clay Higgins (252) 491-9268 (clayhiggins@centurylink.net) or Debbie Kelso (252) 232-2262 deborah_kelso@ncsu.edu for additional information.

Arbor Day Tree Give Away

The Master Gardener Volunteers of Currituck County will be giving away trees on March 9, 2013 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm in celebration of Arbor Day. County residents can come to Moyock Foodion, Grandy Foodlion or Corolla Ace Hardware to pick up Crape Myrtle, Pin Oak, Coastal Maple and River Birch seedlings. For more information contact Debbie Kelso (252) 232-2262 deborah_kelso@ncsu.edu

Coastal NC Daylily Society

The Coastal North Carolina Daylily Society will meet on March 12, 2013 at 10:00 am at the Currituck County Center of NC Cooperative Extension. 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. For more information contact Debbie Kelso at 232-2262 or deborah_kelso@ncsu.edu
**Plant Spotlight**

Plants adapt to winter in various ways. Many plants go completely dormant, when freezing temperatures stop their growth. Some plants remain active and prevent freezing by increasing the sugar concentration in their sap. Others remain mostly at rest but can open previously formed flower buds.

Last week, the Currituck Master Gardener Volunteers and I braved the snow to attend the Virginia Flower and Garden Expo in Virginia Beach. While I was there, two plants in particular caught my eye. These two plants are particularly noteworthy because of their winter blooms and delightful fragrance. Japanese Flowering Apricot (Prunus mume) is a winter flowering tree that fills the air with fragrant flowers from December through March. They are an ideal size for small gardens reaching 12 to 25 feet and prefer to be grown in full sun to part shade in zones 6 to 9. The different varieties have single or double blooms in white, pink or red.

![Paperbush flower](image)

The paperbush plant (Edgeworthia chrysantha) provides superb winter interest and fragrance as well. The individual florets are small, but come together to make a 1 ½ to 2 inch cluster that is quite beautiful. The flowers begin to open in January and last until early April. Edgeworthia thrives in partial shade and prefers rich, moist soil. In spring, after the blooms are gone, it has bluish foliage that turns yellow in the fall. This plant reaches 6 feet high and wide and grows in zones 7 to 9.

If you are looking for something unique to put in your garden that will put on a show when everything else is resting, plant a paperbush plant or a Japanese Apricot and shine a spotlight on these exceptional plants.

**Fertilizing Trees and Shrubs** - A nitrogen fertilizer application will have its greatest effect three to four weeks after application. Woody plants can absorb nutrients as long as the soil temperature is above 40°F. Root growth occurs during cool weather even when the foliage appears dormant. Root growth of woody ornamentals is most active in fall and late winter/early spring but slows during hot, summer weather.

Fertilize trees and shrubs in the spring or fall. Spring fertilizer application should be made before new growth starts. Fall fertilization should be made approximately one month after the first killing frost. Many gardeners are reluctant to fertilize in late fall for fear it will stimulate new growth if a period of unseasonably warm weather occurs. Fertilizer applied in late fall is more effective in promoting plant growth than spring applied fertilizer.

Fertilization in late summer (mid August) should be avoided since it may stimulating late growth that will not harden off before frost. Remember when applying slow-release fertilizers around trees or shrubs to not apply late in the season (after July 15) because they may keep the plant growing rapidly late in the summer. The late season growth may not “harden off” completely, and winter damage may occur.

The best answer to how much fertilizer to apply is to use the amount recommended by a soil test. Have the soil tested before planting and every two to three years thereafter. For trees and shrubs take a sample from around the drip line to a depth of 6 inches. Forms and boxes are available from NCDA or your Extension center.

For more information on fertilizing trees and shrubs go to [ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/factsheets/trees-new/text/fertilizing.html](ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/factsheets/trees-new/text/fertilizing.html)

**Fertilizing Pecan Trees** - A rule of thumb for fertilizing nonbearing pecan trees is to apply 1 pound of 10-10-10 fertilizer per year of tree age, in late February or early March, not to exceed 25 pounds per tree. For bearing trees, apply 4 pounds of 10-10-10 fertilizer per inch of trunk diameter measured just below the scaffold branches. Broadcast the fertilizer in a broad band around the drip line of the tree. It takes 5 to 10 years for a pecan tree to start bearing depending on the variety being grown.

**Pruning Roses** - Pruning could be one of the most important and necessary steps in growing roses. Correct pruning will improve the overall shape, promote new, healthier growth, and eliminate dead, broken, or diseased canes. Most of the annual pruning in North Carolina should be done in the spring, just as the buds break dormancy (late February to late April). The most important thing is to look at the buds. The gardener who prunes too early will gamble future growth to frost, and one who prunes too late will have a plant weakened by loss of sap. So watch for the buds, when they begin to swell, go ahead and prune. Spring pruning also allows for removal of wood which was damaged by the winter. This is helpful in the overall shaping of the rose. The height of the plant can be controlled by pruning, and even after a severe pruning new canes will usually grow to the desired height. For more information on Roses go to [ces.ncsu.edu/hil/hil-641.html](ces.ncsu.edu/hil/hil-641.html)
Pruning Calendar

February is a good month to prune ornamental grasses, fruit trees, muscadine grape, Abelia, Boxwood, Butterfly-bush, Chastetree (Vitex), Cotoneaster, Crape Myrtle, Euonymus, Gardenia, Nandina, Red Tip Photinia, Pittosporum, Privet, Roses, summer blooming Spirea (S. japonica, S. bumalda), and Yew.

Winter Fruits and Seeds for Birds

Birds have three basic requirements in life – food, water and cover. The types of birds in our area and their food requirements change seasonally. In the spring, both migrant and resident birds feed on caterpillars and other insects present on new plant growth. During the late spring and summer, breeding birds continue to feed on insects but also eat fruits as they become available. Insects and spiders are especially important to young songbirds born in the spring and summer because these foods fill the bird’s protein and calcium needs for bone and tissue growth. As migrant birds fly south in the fall, they seek out fruits which are high in energy. Winter residents, including cardinals, chickadees, juncos, robins, and sparrows, primarily eat fruits and seeds that persist on plants or on the ground. Yellow-rumped warblers, also known as myrtle warblers, eat the fruits of wax myrtle in the winter. When choosing plants for your yard, be sure to include early and late-fruiting varieties along with plants that produce seeds for late summer, fall and winter. Some soft fruiting trees and shrubs that offer food for birds from August to February are Beautyberry (Callicarpa americana), Winterberry (Ilex verticillata), Persimmon (Diospyros virginiana), Hawthorn (Crataegus spp.), Passumhaw (Ilex decidua), Yaupon (Ilex vomitoria), American holly (Ilex opaca), and Eastern redbud (Juniperus virginiana). Seed producing plants that offer food for birds in the fall and winter include Panicgrass (Panicum spp.), Sunflower (Helianthus spp.), Black Eyed Susan (Rudbeckia fulgida), Aster, Purple coneflower (Echinacea purpurea), Indiangrass (Sorghastrum nutans), Tickseed (Coreopsis spp.), Goldenrod (Solidago spp.) and Bluestem (Andropogon spp.).

For more information on Managing Backyards and Other Urban Habitats for birds go to ncsu.edu/goingnative/ag636_01.pdf

6th Annual Northeast North Carolina Daffodil Show

The NE NC Daffodil Society invites the public to come and view the vast diversity of locally grown daffodils as well as to enter their own flowers in the 6th Annual Northeast North Carolina Daffodil Show on Saturday, March 23, 2013 from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. The daffodil show is co-sponsored by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Currituck County Center and the Master Gardener Volunteers of Currituck County. The show will be held at the Currituck Extension Center, 120 Community Way in Barco. This event is open to the public free of charge. An award ceremony will be held at 2:00 pm.

The Horticulture Division will showcase daffodils representing many of the more than one thousand varieties of blooms. Daffodils are not just “yellow”. No prior registration is required to enter daffodils. Entries by exhibitors shall be accepted from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm Friday, March 22, 2013 and from 7:00 am until 9:30 am on Saturday, March 23, 2013.

In the Artistic Division, beautiful arrangements of daffodils will depict “Life on the Outer Banks at the Turn of the Century”. Registration is required for the Artistic Division. Anyone interested in entering floral arrangements should contact Sharon Huttemann (252) 261-5317 or thuttemann@aol.com to register. Contact Clay Higgins (252) 491-9268 (clayhiggins@centurylink.net) or Debbie Kelso (252) 232-2262 deborah_kelso@ncsu.edu for additional information.

Other Extension Events:

Poultry & Rabbit Show – For Youth and Adults - Registration deadline March 15; Show date November 9, contact stephanie_minton@ncsu.edu for more information
**Weed Watch** - Common chickweed is a low-spreading winter annual or perennial weed with a weak, shallow root system. Its spreading growth covers adjacent turf and seriously impedes turf growth. Chickweed often forms extensive, dense patches. Small white flowers are borne in clusters at the end of the stems. Flowers have five deeply notched petals and, though small, are quite noticeable. Common chickweed is similar in growth habit (spreading) and appearance to mouseear chickweed, but mouseear chickweed leaves are covered with soft hairs, and are dark green or gray-green, whereas common chickweed leaves are less hairy and are light green. Chickweed will survive under close mowing, forming dense patches which crowd out the desirable turfgrass. This weed quickly invades thin turf areas especially where there is good soil moisture. Shade and frequent watering encourage chickweed growth. Chickweed may be controlled in two ways. A pre-emergent herbicide can be applied in September which will keep the seeds from germinating. Pre-emergent herbicides may be used to control chickweed in areas where reseeding or overseeding of turf is not planned. Post-emergent herbicides should be applied after the weed is up and actively growing. The target application time should be from October to early March. These herbicides may be applied anytime in the winter when temperatures are above 50 degrees. Mouseear chickweed is more easily controlled with post-emergent herbicides applied in the fall compared to the spring. For more information on Chickweed, go to [turffiles.ncsu.edu/Keywords/chickweed.aspx#IS004101](turffiles.ncsu.edu/Keywords/chickweed.aspx#IS004101)

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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Deborah E. Kelso  
Agricultural Technician

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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.