



# THE GARDEN SPADE



A monthly Gardening Publication of the University of Missouri Extension -- Southeast and East Central Regions

## A Shakespeare Garden

by Donna Aufdenberg

Shakespeare's plays and poems abound with flowers and gardens. Regardless of the setting, English flowers abounded.

Although there is no proof that Shakespeare ever touched a gardening tool, however, it was evident through his writings that he loved gardens!

Many envision a Shakespeare garden enclosed with a brick or stone wall but even a wooden fence will be suitable as a backdrop. This gives a great structure for growing climbing plants such as climbing roses, honeysuckle or clematis. Many of these gardens have a path which need to be brick or gravel - something easy to lay or maintain. Fine gravel mixed with sand can be an easy combination.

As you plan the garden, try to picture a meandering path that will set off areas that depict smaller gardens and remind you of your favorite play or poem. Some of these garden areas can be more formal and tidy while others can be wild and uncultivated. Both kinds are depicted in Shakespeare's writings. A small planted meadow might have English flowers such as bachelor buttons,

poppies, bluebells, primrose and hollyhocks. Around the corner, there might be a formal herb wheel. The herb bed is divided into 6 sections like the slices of a pie - lemon balm, rosemary, lavender, hyssop, savory and mint. Then, a ways down the path, one might encounter a cottage garden having flowers such as lilies, marigolds, pansies, and columbines set off with a small flowering tree amongst the flowers.

Other flowers mentioned in Shakespeare's works that can be planted include violets, pinks, carnations, daffodils, iris, anemone, artemesia, and rue.

Other shrubs and small trees that might be great additions to a Shakespeare garden and work as focal points to garden areas

might include crab apples, boxwood, roses, magnolias, honeysuckle, and hawthorn.

As you plan, think about hardscapes that could be used to reflect Shakespeare's works such as signs with sayings or quotes or concrete benches and bird baths are other architectural components of this type of garden that fit the era.



Illustration from Crane's 1906 book, *Flowers from Shakespeare's Garden: a Posy from the Plays*

August 2011

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# Missouri 10,000 Garden Challenge

by Katie Kammler

The 10,000 Garden Challenge encourages all Missourians to get their hands dirty in the effort to get 10,000 gardens growing across the state.

"The response to the 10,000 Garden Challenge thus far has been outstanding," said Gov. Jay Nixon. "The First Lady and I continue to see the momentum build with more gardeners getting on board to grow local produce, give a boost to the economy and support Missouri agriculture."

The 10,000 Garden Challenge is intended to connect Missourians with agriculture, local foods, the outdoors and healthy eating. The 10,000 Garden Challenge kicked off March 18 with an announcement by Gov. Jay Nixon, First Lady Georganne Nixon and Missouri Department of



Agriculture Director Dr. Jon Hagler encouraging Missourians to connect to agriculture by growing fresh produce, native plants and ornamental flowers in their backyards and communities. Since that time, over 4,000 Missouri gardeners have registered their plots in the 10,000 Garden Challenge. Missourians can register their gardens as individuals or as groups at [AgriMissouri.com](http://AgriMissouri.com). The 10,000 Garden Challenge website offers helpful gardening resources, including tips on vegetable planting, calendars and health and nutrition facts.

After every 1,000th garden is registered, a drawing is held for a \$500 gift certificate from Tractor Supply Company.

## Hot Topic - Ugly Tomatoes!

by Donna Aufdenberg

In the hot summer months, Extension offices across the state receive calls about distorted or cracking tomatoes. Here are some of the tomato disorders and what causes them.

- **Fruit cracking** is common in some tomato varieties particularly when it rains or when watering occurs after an extended dry period. Cracking occurs because the fruit contents absorb more water and expand faster than the fruit wall. The cracked areas are prone to fungal pathogens that cause fruit rots.
- **"Catfacing"** is a term describing misshapen fruit with scars and holes on blossom end. Possible causes are cold weather with night temperatures 58 F or lower at flowering time, high nitrogen levels, and herbicide injury. The



tomato varieties with very large fruits are more susceptible.

- **Blossom end rot** is very common during extended dry periods. It begins as light tan water-soaked lesions on the blossom end of the fruit. The lesions enlarge and turn black and leathery. Fluctuating soil moisture supply during the dry periods, and low calcium levels in the fruit are the major causal factors.
- **Sunburn** occurs when fruits are exposed to too much sun particularly when the leaves were defoliated by insect pests or diseases. The affected areas are light-green (immature fruits)/ red (mature fruits) in color, and soft. The affected areas later on become dry and sunken with a papery tan to white texture. Sometimes these areas act as avenues for fungal attack.

# August Gardening Calendar

By Donna Aufdenberg

## Vegetables

- Vegetable plants should be planted by August 15th to be able to have a fall harvest before the first killing freeze. Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, carrots, turnips—all can be planted again.
- Compost or till under residues from harvested crops.
- A cover crop adds organic material when it is incorporated in spring. Winter cover crops can be planted as early as August 1, but should not be planted any later than November 1.
- Cure onions in a warm, dry place for 2 weeks before storing.
- Pinch the growing tips of gourds once adequate fruit set is achieved. This directs the energy into ripening fruits.

## Fruits

- Prop up branches of fruit trees that are threatening to break under the weight of a heavy crop.
- Continue to spray ripening fruits to prevent brown rot fungus.
- This is a critical time for strawberries. The more favorable the growing conditions now, the bigger the berries are in spring. Remember to cultivate and fertilize them.
- Harvest cantaloupes when the melons pull easily from the stem; watermelons when there is a hollow sound when thumped and the skin loses its shine; honeydews when the blossom end is slightly soft or springy.
- To determine if an apple is ready to pick, hold it up and give it a twist. If it resists, let it ripen a few more days.

## Lawn

- Apply insecticides this month for grub control on lawns being damaged by their activity.
- Zoysia lawns can receive their final fertilizer application.
- Start thinking lawn renovation the last week in August. Have a soil test to determine its fertility needs.
- Plants give a signal for their need for water turfgrass turns a brown cast and lies flat after being walked on.

## Ornamentals

- Annuals may appear leggy and worn now. These can be cut back hard and fertilized to produce a new flush of bloom.
- Roses should receive no further nitrogen fertilizer after August 15th.
- Prune to shape hedges for the last time this season.
- Mulched shrubs may not develop mature stem tissue where they touch the mulch. To harden stems so they can withstand early frost damage, remove about 2 to 3 inches of the mulch from the base of the stems in mid-August.
- Avoid fertilizing shade and ornamental trees until after September to keep them from putting on new growth that will not harden before freezing temperatures in fall and winter.

## Protect Yourself While Gardening This Summer!

Plan to garden in the cooler parts of the day.

Wear Proper Clothing - loose fitting, light weight, breathable fabric.

Protect your skin with Sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher.

Protect your eyes. Wear a wide-brim hat and sunglasses.

Skip the strenuous activities in the garden that could lead to exhaustion.

Drink plenty of water! If you sweat much, sports drinks might be better to replenish salts.

Avoid heavy meals before or while you work. Keep it light!

Take lots of breaks! Rest in the shade.



## Plant of Merit - *Asarum canadense* Wild Ginger

By Sarah Denkler



Picture courtesy of Prairie Moon Nursery [www.prairiemoon.com](http://www.prairiemoon.com)

This perennial has two heart shaped leaves that can reach one foot in height and six inches in diameter. The flower appears throughout spring as a small brown to reddish brown basal flower. The plant is grown as a ground cover for deep shade areas. The foliage produces a ginger fragrance when crushed but should not be eaten. This plant is host to the pipeline swallowtail larvae and is deer resistant.

## Homestead Farms Field Trip

by Sue Miller—Master Gardener

At the end of County Road 611, across Highway EE, there sets a small wooden sign that reads “Homestead Farms.” Down the long, narrow driveway there is a pleasant surprise when you suddenly spot a large field of daylilies in full bloom!

This is breath taking for those of us who are in love with flowers. As you continue around a curve, there is another field of daylilies behind this cute log home setting in the shade of a grove of huge oak trees. The cabin yard is

completely covered with beds of hosta, ferns, and other shade loving plants with rock bordered paths wandering through them. This is a beautiful, peaceful, perfect place for all gardeners to see! (It was a big surprise for me because I grew up in the area and had no idea this nursery was there.)

This is how the Master Gardeners trip to Owensville’s Homestead Farm on June 30 began. The group of eleven was welcomed by the owner, Ron, his wife Imy and his son Kirk. They have been in business since 1987 when they offered 25 select hybrid daylilies. Today they raise over 1200 varieties of daylilies, 350 varieties of hosta, 100

different peony cultivars and about 50 varieties of Siberian iris. They also sell hardy ferns, clematis, and other shade and sun perennials that complement the hosta and daylily plantings. Ron and his sons now operate this family farm.



Ron and Kirk gave the group a tour of the yard, one of the daylily fields, and the hosta house. We also enjoyed homemade refreshments in the shade freshly made and provided by Imy. While we toured and

snacked, several people had questions for them. They were a great source of information and had many experiences to share. Their years of experience came to life as they spoke.

Once they answered all our questions, we had an opportunity to shop. They had a fine selection of hosta and ferns with a variety of other plants that grow in the shade. Everyone was able to leave with something! We completed the day when we met at the Farmers Merchant in Owensville at noon for lunch. There we enjoyed homemade, fresh food created from local, Missouri grown products.

# Water Gardening

by Sarah Denkler

Water gardens continue to be popular perhaps because of the sound they make, their play on colors or how they seem to bring life to a garden. Whatever the reason, once the liner and decorative rock is in many people may be unsure of what plants can be added to enhance and balance the garden in order to keep the water clean.



Of course there are different areas of planting when considering a water garden. Marginal plants need about 3 to 6 inches of water. These include everything from plants that live in saturated soil to bog plants that live in shallow water. Oxygenators (submerged) plants are found under water and help to consume excess nutrients in water and keep algae down. These would be needed to help balance a pond. Floating plants are found in the water but do not have their roots in soil. These help to finish out the look of the garden.

If you have predominantly clay soil that stays saturated, bog or marginal plants would grow well. Iris represent a group that have many cultivars adapted to this type of growth. Japanese iris (*I. ensata*), Red iris (*I. fulva*), Siberian iris and yellow water iris (*I. pseudocorus*) will work in such areas. Other plants include cattail, horsetail, spike rush, thalia, variegated sweetflag, pickerel rush, lizard's tail, arrowhead, water arum, umbrella palm, canna and dwarf bamboo.

Submerged plants are planted in soil but may float on top of the water or stay submerged. Water lily is one of the plants that truly flourish in water. Other plants include: Wild celery, fanwort, anacharis, arrowheads and lotus.

Floating plants are used as one might use a ground cover in a landscape bed. Giant velvet leaf, water hyacinth and water lettuce are examples of floating plants. These may need to be monitored to keep the volume in check.

Keeping the water clean is a matter of balance. If you want a quick fix, such as chemicals or filters, to clear water then you will continue to need quick fixes in the future as your feature will not have balance. If you are willing to put in a few months required to balance the water then your feature may sustain itself. Balance may be obtained with plants, fish and sun. Excess sun and nutrients cause algae to bloom. Fish can reduce oxygen and plants can reduce sunlight. A balance may be achieved with 4 fish and one plant per square yard. If the system is balanced the fish will find food. Adding fish food to water will throw the balance off.

## Repurpose, Reuse, Recycle - Pass It On

By Barb Gray



When those fancy plastic hangers that come 10 for \$1.00 break you can use what is left in your yard. Cut each end off about 4 inches long if possible so that you have a 'V' left. Press the 'V' upside down into the soil to hold your soaker hose in place. And prevent it from turning upside down.

# Pest of the Month: Poison Ivy

by Katie Kammler

I'm not sure what is going on, but recently there have been a lot of calls coming in about how to identify poison ivy. "Leaves of three, leave it be," is the saying I always heard. Poison ivy (*Toxicodendrons radicans*) is easy to identify. It is a perennial that can be found as a low-growing shrub, trailing vine on the ground or vine that can climb to the top of the tallest tree. The leaves are readily identifiable, alternately compound with three leaflets. The leaflets may have smooth, scalloped or irregularly toothed margins. Leaflets emerge in the spring with a greenish-red cast and then turn dark green in the summer before turning red, orange or yellow in the fall. The fruit is a greenish-white cluster of small currant like berries. Wildlife eat and spread the berries. All parts of the plant, including stems and roots, contain and secrete a non-volatile oil which affects the skin, often leaving a blotching and burning water blister with intense itching. If you have contact with the plant wash off with soapy water or rubbing alcohol within an hour, it will remove the oil from the skin, preventing irritation.

There are a few other species that have similar characteristics to poison ivy. Fragrant sumac has three leaflets but has hairy



Virginia Creeper



Poison Ivy



Fragrant Sumac



Box Elder Seedling

fruit and leaves. Seedlings of box elder also have 3 leaves but opposite leaf arrangement. Virginia creeper has the same trailing, vining habit but has leaflets of 5. Poison ivy can be found growing almost anywhere such as fencerows, roadsides, wooded areas, landscapes, etc. In this area we only have poison ivy. Poison oak is only found in a few extreme southern counties in Missouri.

Now that you know how to identify poison ivy, how do you get rid of it (unless you are one of those lucky people who have no reaction to it!) Cultural controls such as hand-pulling, grubbing, or hoe are difficult but can work with small infestations. Always remember to avoid contact with the plant by wearing disposable gloves and clothing that covers all bare skin. Chemical control is my preferred method because I don't want to come into actual contact with the plant! There are a variety of herbicides on the market that are effective at controlling poison ivy but always remember to read the label to determine which option is right for your situation. Also keep in mind that poison ivy is a woody perennial so it may take several applications to achieve control.



# Group News - What's Happening

## August 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Parkland MG, 6:30pm @ Courthouse Annex (3rd floor)	2 Poplar Bluff MG, 6:30 pm @ PB Ext. Center	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 Ste. Genevieve MG Meet- ing, 6:30pm, at the Ste. Genevieve Co. Ext. Center	16	17	18 Cape Girardeau Co. MG, 7 pm, Cape Co. Ext. Center	19	20
21	22 Perry Co. MG meeting, 6:30 pm, Perry Co. Ext. Center	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	<i>Contact your local Extension Center if you have questions about any event on the calendar.</i>		

### Upcoming Events....

### September

- 5 - Parkland MGs 1st Monday at 6:30pm, Farmington Courthouse Annex (3rd Floor)
- 6 - Poplar Bluff MGs 1st Tuesday at 6:30pm, Butler County Ext. Center
- 6 - MG Training begins @ MAC moving to Ste. Gen Ext Office 10/18 to 11/15
- 8 - Delta Area MGs 2nd Thursday at 7:00pm, Medical Arts Building, Sikeston, MO
- 13 - Rain Garden Basics MG Adv. Training. 1-4pm Poplar Bluff, MO. Fee:\$10.00
- 15 - Cape Girardeau County MGs 3rd Thursday at Cape County Ext. Center at 7pm.
- 19 - Ste. Genevieve MGs 3rd Monday, at Ste. Gen. County Ext. Center at 6:30pm.
- 23 to 25 - Master Gardener State Conference in Hannibal, MO
- 26 - Perry County MGs 4th Monday at the Perry County Ext. Center at 6:30pm.
- Insect MG Adv. Training, TBA. Fee:\$15.00
- Disease Diagnostics MG Adv. Training. TBA. Farmington, MO. Fee:\$15.00

### October

- 3 - Parkland MGs 1st Monday at 6:30pm, Farmington Courthouse Annex (3rd Floor)
- 4 - Poplar Bluff MGs 1st Tuesday at 6:30pm, Butler County Ext. Center
- 13 - Delta Area MGs 2nd Thursday at 7:00pm, Medical Arts Building, Sikeston, MO
- 17 - Ste. Genevieve MGs 3rd Monday, at Ste. Gen. County Ext. Center at 6:30pm.
- 20 - Cape Girardeau County MGs 3rd Thursday at Cape County Ext. Center at 7pm.
- 24 - Perry County MGs 4th Monday at the Perry County Ext. Center at 6:30pm.
- Bonsai MG Adv. Training. Farmington, MO Fee: \$20.00

*if you have a horticultural related event for the calendar call 573-686-8064 to add it.*

## Editor's Corner

*The Garden Spade is published monthly by University of Missouri Extension staff for individuals and families living in Southeast and East Central Missouri. This newsletter is provided by your local extension council.*

**Editors:**

***Katie Kammler, Plant Science Specialist***  
255 Market St., Ste. Genevieve, MO 63670  
573-883-3548

***Sarah Denkler, Horticulture Specialist***  
222 North Broadway Street, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901  
573-686-8064

***Donna Aufdenberg, Horticulture Specialist***  
304 High Street, PO Box 19, Marble Hill, MO 63764  
573-238-2420

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We welcome and encourage Master Gardener groups and individuals to submit items to the newsletter. We encourage the submission of any news such as upcoming volunteer opportunities, community events related to gardening, warm wishes or congratulations to fellow gardeners. We also encourage Master Gardeners sharing experiences and writing articles on timely topics.

All entries into the group news sections must be received by 4:30 on the 15th of each month for the following months news.

Email News to: [kammlerk@missouri.edu](mailto:kammlerk@missouri.edu),  
[denklers@missouri.edu](mailto:denklers@missouri.edu), or [aufdenbergd@missouri.edu](mailto:aufdenbergd@missouri.edu)

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Butler County Extension  
222 North Broadway  
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901

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