Many gardeners are returning to old-fashioned or “heirloom” varieties of annuals and perennials. They can add charm and intrigue to the garden!

When you enter the garden center or nursery today you will find aisles of plants filled with hybrids and newer varieties. The older varieties are sometimes difficult to find or need to be started from seed at home. In 1936, a botanist, Donald Peattie with Field Museum of Natural History commented on this, “The change in our garden flora is due to several causes. The addition of the best Japanese and Chinese horticulture to traditional English gardening resulted in newer, bigger, brighter blossoms, more continuously in bloom, which naturally superseded old and more modest plants.” Regardless of that influence, there are still, to this day, many older varieties of annuals and perennials that are worth being mainstays in the flower garden.

The word “heirloom” applies to varieties that are over 50 years old and are open-pollinated. Some say that it means that the plant has been saved and passed down through generations of gardeners. Groups such as Seed Savers Exchange and Baker Creek Heirlooms are prime examples of the efforts to save these varieties (no endorsement implied - just examples). Keep in mind that heirloom plants are not the designer plants like you can find in the stores or magazines and catalogs but they do have a uniqueness all their own. They can still add the variation in height, color, and texture—having much charm!

In the last few years, through working with a Master Gardener project, I have had the pleasure of planting and experiencing some heirloom varieties. I have been so impressed and inspired, that I have plans to change much of my garden areas to these types of perennials and annuals.

One good example is the Drummond’s Phlox or annual phlox (Phlox drummondii phlox) that I have planted for the last two years. It was a very popular addition to gardens in the early 1900’s and it was found in most gardens in the U.S. It fell by the wayside sometime later due to new additions from the orient. It is a terrific performer and I would put it up against most of our modern plants.
in performance and beauty. It is great for containers and my girls love it!

Some of the others I have tried in the past include Columbine (Aquilegia), Bleeding hearts (Dicentra), Love-in-a-Mist (Nigella), Carnations (Dianthus), Spider Flowers (Cleome), Grape-hyacinths (muscari armeniacum), Four-o’clocks (mirabilis) and Cockscmb (Clesia cristata). This year I am trying Monkshood (Aconitum napellus), balsam (Impatiens balsamina), Love Lies Bleeding (Amaranthus caudatus) and Foxglove (Digitalis) which I really love!

You don’t have to try something “new” to have something different. “Everything Old is New Again!” Here are some other varieties that you can try: Bellflowers (Campanula), Coral Bells (Heuchera), Dames Rocket (Hesperis matronalis), Sweet Peas (Lathyrus), Morning Glory (Ipomoea), Passion Flower (Passiflora), Job’s Tears (Coix lacryma-jobi), Fritillaria (Fritillaria imperialis), Maltese Cross (Lychnis chalcedonica), Bouncing Bet (Saponaria officinalis), and Money Plant (Lunaria annua).

Stripe Smut on Bermuda

As it was in 2012 many questions have come into the office regarding a gray or black powder that is getting on shoes when moving through the yard. The culprit of this is likely stripe smut or Ustilago striiformis which forms spores on grass inflorescence (seed heads) in spring or fall when temperatures are between 60° and 78°F. Once heat arrives the infected plants may die.

Stripe smut often affects drought stressed turf. Proper watering can really help the health of the turf. Control strategies include:

- Do not water when the grass blades will remain wet for long periods of time.
- Do not over fertilize in the summer. Apply fertilizer in June for warm season grass and in fall for cool season.
- Mow turf at the proper height. For Bermuda grass it is 1 to 1.5 inches, for fescue it is 3 to 4 inches. This will remove the seed heads and the disease spores.
- Clean you mower to prevent further spread.

- Remove thatch.

If turf is killed out by stripe smut reseed with resistant cultivars. Avoid the following Kentucky bluegrass cultivars (Windsor, Merion, Fylking, Pennstar, Galaxy, Geronimo, Sydsport, Baron or Rugby). Avoid the following bentgrass cultivars (Arlington, Cohansey, Congressional, Evansville, Old Orchard, Penncross, Penneagle, Pennlu, Seaside, Toronto, and Washington.

Chemical control is not usually warranted as hot weather and proper management can control the problem.
June Gardening Calendar
By Donna Aufdenberg

Vegetables
- As soon as cucumber and squash vines start to ‘run’, begin to spray treatments to control cucumber beetles and squash vine borers.
- Plant pumpkins mid-month to have Jack-o-lanterns for Halloween.
- Stop harvesting asparagus when the spears become thin.
- Start seedlings of broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower by mid-June. These will provide transplants for the fall garden. Plan to transplant into the garden during early August.
- Soaker hoses and drip irrigation systems make the most efficient use of water during dry times.
- Squash (yellow or green varieties) tastes best when 4 to 7 inches long. Pick before the skin hardens.
- Remove cucumbers by turning fruits parallel to the vine and giving a quick snap. Be careful not to pull and injure the vine.
- Keep watermelon and cantaloupe well watered when the plant and fruit are growing, but on the dry side when the fruit is ripening.
- Keep a close eye on the quality of your spring crops. Hot weather causes lettuce to bolt and become bitter.
- Plant cover crops in the place of harvested early spring crops. It is not wise to allow those areas to go fallow.
- Avoid side dressing tomatoes, eggplants and peppers with fertilizer until they have set their first fruit.

Fruits
- Thinning overloaded fruit trees will result in larger and healthier fruits at harvest time. Thinned fruits should be a hands-width apart.
- Enjoy the strawberry harvest. Renovate strawberries after harvest. Consider starting a new bed with the daughter plants (runners).
- Summer fruiting raspberries will start ripening toward the last part of June.
- Keep an eye open for Japanese beetles. They will be present by the end of the month.
- Keep spraying insecticide and fungicide sprays in a timely manner on apples, pears, peaches and nectarines.

Outdoor flowering plants and Ornamentals
- Prune big leaf hydrangea and weigela after flowers fade.
- Remove dead growth from bulbs in your garden areas.
- Finish any major pruning of ornamentals by the end of the month.
- When spring flowers are spent, replace them with annuals such as nicotiana, portulaca, zinnia or celosia which can handle hot summer heat well.
- Watch for small bagworms feeding on many garden plants, especially juniper and arborvitae.
When using natives in the landscape it helps aesthetically if plants are chosen with time of bloom in mind. Many natives have something of interest happening in spring but now it is June; it is hot and spring flowers are gone. What plants can be chosen to fill the void of summer?

**Black Cohosh or Black Snakeroot or Bugbane, *Actaea racemosa***: Depending on the source some will argue the native status of this perennial. The USDA lists this as a Missouri native. Growing from three to eight feet in height, depending on the location, the plant produces white flower spikes which blooms for two to three weeks in the summer. This is a bright plant for shady areas when blooming. It needs two or three hours of sun, preferably in the morning, each day. It attracts butterflies as well.

**Blue False Indigo, *Baptisia australis var. minor***: A 24 inch perennial which blooms blue for up to six weeks beginning in May. It prefers full sun or part shade and tolerates drought. Butterflies enjoy this bloom. The black seed pods provide summer interest once the blooms are spent. These pods are often used in flower arrangements.

**Butterfly Weed, *Asclepias tuberosa***: This perennial also attracts butterflies and the foliage feeds larvae. At up to three feet in height the plant blooms orange or brick-red in the summer beginning in June. It prefers full sun, growing in shallow soil, fields or waste areas. Although the root is tuberous it does not transplant well as a taproot. The seeds are released and spread by wind, producing new plants in as many as three years.

**Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium***: This perennial usually grows two feet in height from rhizomes with additional expansion by seed each year. It blooms May to November and will dominate the area where it grows, moving through a bed in the direction of the wind. The native form blooms white but the plant is available in many colors. The fine, fern-like foliage provides texture in the landscape. It prefers full sun or part shade and will grow in dry conditions being highly tolerant of drought. This plant can be used for fresh or dried arrangements, is fragrant and attracts butterflies.
Many of the calls that have been coming in the last few weeks have been about black caterpillars either eating all the oak leaves or congregating on decks and patios, leaving rusty red trails behind them. The culprit is the common oak moth caterpillar (*Phoberia atomaris*). The caterpillars are nearly an inch long, thick bodied and hairless. They have black markings, especially paired black triangles down the back, and irregular brown lines down the sides. This is a periodical pest with the last Missouri outbreak in 2001. All oaks are suitable hosts but white oak and post oak in particular are favored. The trees can be completely defoliated but the trees will send out new leaves. This can lead to the decline of the tree combined with recent weather conditions. The caterpillars only have one generation per year and generally control is not recommended. However, if they are causing problems around homes, any insecticide labeled for caterpillars will control them.

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**Master Gardener Approved Recipe!**

by Katie Kammler

**Cranberry Orange Cream Cheese Pound Cake**

2 sticks (1 cup) unsalted butter, at room temperature  
1/2 cups sugar  
1 8-oz pkg cream cheese, at room temperature  
zest of 2 oranges  
1 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract  
4 eggs  
2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour  
1 1/2 tsp baking powder  
2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries, roughly chopped  
1 1/2 tsp salt

1. Preheat oven to 350ºF. Butter and flour two medium size loaf pans, and set aside. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream together butter, cream cheese, and sugar. When mixture is light in color and fluffy, add in zest. With mixer on low, add in eggs one at a time, incorporating well after each addition. Stir in vanilla.  
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With the mixer on low, slowly add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients. Mix until just incorporated. Fold in cranberries. Divide batter evenly between the loaf pans. Place on a baking sheet, and bake for 45-50 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. Remove from oven. Place cakes on a wire rack to cool. After about 5 minutes, lay cakes on their sides, and allow to cool for another 5 minutes. Flip cakes onto their other sides and cool for another 5 minutes. Remove cakes from pans and let cool on the wire rack. While still warm, drizzle with orange glaze (recipe follows). Serve warm or at room temperature.

**Orange Glaze**

3/4 cup confectioner’s sugar  
1 tablespoon melted butter  
zest of 1 orange  
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed orange juice

Whisk all ingredients together in a small bowl. Add more juice or sugar to achieve desired consistency.
For anyone who has been around me, it does not take them long to figure out that I am a bit of a pumpkin nut! I started growing pumpkins as a high school FFA project, worked for a commercial pumpkin grower, and did research on weed control in pumpkins for my thesis. This year I will grow about 140 different pumpkins and squash.

Squash and pumpkins are interchangeable terms, although pumpkins are generally thought of as round and orange. They are native to North, Central, and South America. They have been cultivated for over 5000 years and were first grown for their seeds. They were considered an important food staple until WWII brought refrigeration to homes and now are considered to be more of a symbol of bounty.

There are four species of cucurbits that are classified by their stem structure and the fact that they do not normally cross pollinate. They are *Cucurbita pepo*, *C. moschata*, *C. mixta*, and *C. maxima*. *C. pepo* includes traditional jack-o-lantern type pumpkins and summer squash. *C. moschata* is the pumpkin variety used for commercial canning and is generally tan in color with bright orange flesh. *C. mixta* look like squash and can be striped, solid, or a mix of colors with some edible varieties (ex. cushaw). *C. maxima* are the giant varieties with soft stems that like cooler temperatures and generally have longer maturity dates.

Now is the time to soil test and start preparing to plant pumpkins and squash. Planting dates for a fall crop are from mid-June to around the first of July. The reason for the late planting is so the crop is ready in September and October and will keep longer when they ripen in cooler temperatures. They also need warm soil temperatures and warm weather to grow well. Pumpkins can be planted from seeds or transplants into tilled or no-till ground. Controlling weeds, insects, and disease are an important part as is yearly rotation and sanitation.

Insect problems include squash bugs, cucumber beetles, and squash vine borer. All of these can be very hard to control, even with conventional insecticides. Weeds are a problem until plants become established and vine out, then they can out compete with weeds.

Disease problems include powdery mildew and downy mildew. Planting resistant cultivars and adequate plant spacing help prevent disease. Another problem is poor fruit set which could be caused by the weather. Squash have both male and female flowers and they have to be blooming at the same time for the bees to pollinate them. When the weather is hot and does not cool off at night, the plants only set male flowers. Other critter problems include deer and mice feeding on the plants and fruit.

Overall, pumpkins and squash are a fairly easy crop to grow even though they can take up a lot of garden space. If you would like recommendations on various varieties, please contact me!

**Garden Quote**

“The love of gardening is a seed that once sown never dies.”

—Gertrude Jekyll
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**July**

1 - Parkland MGs 1st Monday at 6:30pm, Memorial United Methodist, Farmington, MO
2 - Poplar Bluff MGs 1st Tuesday at 6:00pm, Carolyn Johnson’s in Dexter
11 - Ste. Genevieve MGs 2nd Thursday, at Ste. Gen. County Ext. Center at 6:30pm
11 - Delta Area MGs 2nd Thursday at 7:00pm, Medical Arts Building, Sikeston, MO
18 - Cape Girardeau County MGs 3rd Thursday at Cape County Ext. Center at 7pm
22 - Perry County MGs 4th Monday at the Perry County Ext. Center at 6:30pm

**Upcoming Events**

July 16 - Starting Fall Garden plants from Seed; Moles, Moles, Moles; Drought Tolerant Landscaping; 4:30 pm @ Rice Hall, Mineral Area College in Park Hills, MO
July 24 - Advanced Training: Creating Flower Displays; 5-8pm; 1st Presbyterian Church, Poplar Bluff, MO Fee: $15
August 13 - Master Gardener Core Training Begins; 5-8pm Butler County Extension Center in Poplar Bluff, MO

If you have a horticultural related event for the calendar call 573-686-8064 or email it to Denklers@missouri.edu.
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.

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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, denklers@missouri.edu, or aufdenbergd@missouri.edu

Disclaimer. No special endorsement of mentioned products is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned.

June 2013 Garden Spade