



Master Gardener Thymes

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GARDEN FEST RETURNS TO APPY FAIRGROUNDS

Be sure to attend the 7th annual Garden Fest at the Appalachian Fairgrounds this weekend, Friday April 30 and Saturday May 1, 2010. The gates are open from 9:00 to 4:00 each day and an exciting variety of gardening opportunities will be offered.

Sponsored by NETMGA, Garden Fest is a chance to make connections. Attendees will be able to talk with local, small, independent growers, greenhouse owners, and local craftspeople in one central location. Garden Fest is about exchanging ideas & helping people learn more about gardening.

A series of gardening seminars will be offered on Saturday. In addition, there will be live music, a blacksmith, petting zoo, food vendors, plant sales by local gardeners and nurseries, treasures for the home, and a silent auction. Master gardeners will be available to answer gardening questions.

Those attending are asked to bring used plastic mini-blinds and plastic plant pots for re-cycling.

BECOME WATER-WISE AT THE NETMGA MEETING

On Monday June 7 at the regular NETMGA Meeting, Master Gardener Joy Stewart will present a program on Water-wise Gardening. Participants will learn how to use various landscape techniques to control storm water runoff and conserve water. In addition to the presentation, Joy will conduct a tour of her own gardens. The program will take place at 449 Springfield Drive, Bristol TN. Directions below.

Please carpool if possible as parking will be on the street. Also, please bring a finger food to share and a lawn chair for your comfort.

Food and Fellowship start at 6:00pm. The presentation will begin at 6:30. In the event of rain, the meeting will be held in Joy's garage.



Directions to 449 Springfield Drive, Bristol, TN

From I- 81 exit 69: Take TN 394 east through Blountville toward the Bristol Speedway.

From the crossroad of 19 - 11E (at the Speedway), continue on 394 east for about 3.3 miles.



GOT PLANTS? WATER-WISE PROJECT NEEDS THEM!

The Water-Wise Gardening Committee is moving ahead quickly. Chaired by Joy Stewart, the group is ready to break ground for its first demonstration project located at the Appalachian Fair Grounds. As part of the project, the group will be planting two rain gardens. MGs are asked to help by donating any plants you may have from the list below. Please contact Joy to let her know what plants you have. She may be reached at joylarry@btes.tv or at 423-573-2376.

Plants that are needed include:

Glossy abelia
Common Bugle
Little King River Birch
Canna
Dwarf red-osier dogwood
Purple Coneflower
Siskiyou Pink Gaura
Hibiscus x Fantasia
Rose of Sharon
"Blue Star" Kalimeris
Blue Lily-turf
Nepeta "Candy Cat"
"Sensation Rose" Sage

Common Yarrow
"Blue Ice" Blue Star
Butterfly Bush
"Ice Dance"
Crococsmia
Dwarf Fothergilla
"Gerwat" Roxanne
Thunberg Spirea
Plaintain Lilly
Redhot Poker
Maidenhair Grass
Fountaingrass
Goldenrod

Bumalda Spirea
Red Beauty Achillea
"Short Stack" Blue Star
Jethro Tull Coreopsis
Plumbago, Leadwort
"Firewitch" Dianthus
Blanketflower
Daylilly
Primroses
Siberian iris
Creeping liriopie
Pink Muhly Grass
Beardtongue
Japanese Spirea

"Peve Minaret" or "Hulsey Park"

Siberian Bugloss Heartleaf Brunnera

"Forest Pansy" and others

Coral Bells (Purple Petticoat or Rave On)

Black-eyed Susan (Goldstrum or City Garden)





Chris' Corner

CHRIS RAMSEY
SULLIVAN COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT
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We are looking for volunteers to assist with the 2010 MG Class Planning Committee. The purpose of this committee is to select topics, meeting location, time, assist with promotion and class implementation. Choose the date that works best for you and I'll let you know which date we select. Let me know if you have any questions.

Please Select Date and Respond if You Are Interested.

Date: **Friday May 14, 10:00 AM** or **Friday May 21, 10:00 AM**

Place: **UT Extension Office,
3258 Hwy 126, Suite 104,
Blountville, TN 37617**

You can respond through email to Nina Hedrick at Hedrick@chartertn.net or to me at chris.ramsey@utk.edu or call my office.

CHECK OUT THE OFFERINGS AT THE NC ARBORETUM

May 1-2 - American Rhododendron Society, SE Chapter Annual Show: This SE Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society event features hundreds of blooms. Spring and summer blooming rhododendrons and azaleas are favorites of the weekend.

May 8 and May 11 - Dahlia Tuber Sale & Mum Plant Sale: A wide variety of dahlia tubers and chrysanthemum rooted cuttings featuring cultivated varieties are available. Learning from Dahlia and Mum Society experts, visitors can uncover the secrets of producing plants with show quality blooms. Varieties include traditional favorites plus the latest cultivars to start the growing season.

May 29 & 30: Asheville-Blue Ridge Rose Society Exhibit: The annual Asheville-Blue Ridge Rose Society Exhibition features award-winning roses of every color and size. Experts will be on hand to answer questions and provide resources about selection, care and history of these beautiful garden plants.

June 19 - WNC Daylily Club Show and Sale: Prize-winning daylilies will be on display and a wide variety of daylily plants will be on sale. Daylily club members will be available to answer questions.

ROAN MOUNTAIN RHODODENDRON FESTIVAL

The 64th Annual Rhododendron Festival will be held at Roan Mountain State Park Amphitheater June 19 & 20, 2010. Activities begin each day at 10:00 am. The festival features crafters, folkway demonstrators, musicians and food. The festival is sponsored by the Roan Mountain Citizens Club.

For more information you can visit their website at <http://www.roanmountain.com/festival.htm> .

www.RoanMountain.com

Roan Mountain, Tennessee
Nature's Beauty At Its Best





Warriors' Path Work Day Is Big Success

Submitted by Harold Burns

Saturday April 24 was a day to remember at Warriors Path State Park. Master Gardeners arrived at the park early in the day to work on Darrell's Dream Park and the Braille Trail. Some MGs planted trees and plants along the path to the new tree pavilion. Others stayed busy weeding the various gardens around "Darrell's Dream Park." MGs used concrete to hold signs identifying various plants. There was also a big push to remove invasives along the Braille Trail. All the workers agreed it would be a day to remember for a long time.





DO MORE THAN HUG A TREE..... ATTEND THE URBAN FORESTRY CONFERENCE

The 19th annual conference of the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council will be held Oct. 28 – 29, 2010 in Chattanooga, TN. This Conference is a perfect opportunity to network, get updates from urban forestry experts, and learn more about industry trends and solutions.

Who should attend? Arborists, foresters, consultants, tree board members, landscape architects, developers, builders, city planners, urban foresters, and tree lovers.

Affordable pricing puts the conference within the reach of any budget. If you only go to one urban forestry event this year, this is the one to attend. You'll take home the tools you need for environmental, educational, and planning issues, along with resources and technical advice to help you put your plans in place. Watch your email for registration information.



The Conference Cost is \$110 before Oct 1 and \$125 before Oct 22. (Save \$15 with TUFC membership) CEUs will be offered in Pesticide and ISA for landscape architects, planners, nursery professionals and engineers. Extend your stay and attend the Tree Climbing Championship on October 30 at East Lake Park.

ADOPT A GOAT AND HELP PRESERVE THE BALDS

Submitted by Brenda Warner



A unique conservation practice has been gradually developing on Roan Mountain – the use of goats to maintain the mountain's distinctive bald areas. Since 2008, a volunteer-based Baa-tany Goat Project has operated on Roan Mountain's western balds. These treeless areas are important habitats for many rare and endemic species such as Gray's Lily, as well as species at or near the southern ends of their ranges. The goats browse selectively on invasive woody plants, particularly the Canada Blackberry.

These are Angora goats, a fiber rather than a meat goat. A goat owner in northern Virginia donated the first 19 goats to the project in 2008 so that the goats might have a retirement plan rather than be sent to the meat market. Prior

to being moved to the balds, the goats are sheared, treated for parasites, confined, and fed a seed-free food to flush their intestines of unwanted and potentially invasive plant seeds. The goats spend approximately four months at the summer feeding grounds. In late September they are transported back to their home pasture in Shady Valley, TN.

Volunteers are in charge of caring for the goats. In order to provide funding the volunteers encourage groups or individuals to adopt an animal. The animals may be adopted for the entire summer (4 months) for \$50 per goat, or for one month for \$20 per goat. Adoptive "parents" are given a picture of their goat, a certificate of adoption, and the naming rights.

Volunteers may also help by carrying water to the goats during the summer, by camping near the goats on weekends to guard them, and by helping with the goat transportation from Carver's Gap to the summer paddocks and back again.

Volunteers hope to have mohair for sale in the near future under the "Roan Grown" label for weavers, knitters and spinners. For more information on the Baa-tany Project go to the following websites: www.friendsofroanmtn.org, and <http://baatanygoatproject.blogspot.com> Information on the "Friends of Roan Mountain" site will give details on how to donate to this worthy project.



Rare Gray's lily on Roan Mountain's open grassy balds.

Photo by Ken Moore

Spend Some Time on the Back Roads of NE Tennessee

Submitted by Brenda Warner

Northeast Tennessee has been blessed with the beautiful Appalachian Mountains, clear running rivers and creeks, crystal clear blue sky, and one of the most diverse populations of native plants and animals anywhere on earth. Equally important is the fertile farmland found in every county in NE Tennessee. The fruits, vegetables, plants, plant products, cut flowers, meat, and meat products this land produces provide a wealth of good foods to this region.

I have had the distinct fortune



over the past 3 months of discovering these things as I have worked with The Quilt Trail and the Century Farm Program with the Appalachian RC & D Council coordinated by Roy Settle. Traveling The Quilt Trail I discovered Aunt Willie's Wildflowers in Blountville and Still Hollow Farm in Greene County, an AgriTourism business run by Anne Birdwel. Many of these farms have value added businesses in hopes that they can preserve the rich cultural family traditions they hold so dear.

While making this journey I have met the kindest people who are willing to share their lives to help me have a good experience. I have made a bird's nest wreath, purchased plants that are normally sold only for wholesale, bought homemade honey and visited with llamas.

So, if you want to do something different on a weekend- or during the week - take your family - kids, grandkids, spouses, mothers, fathers, etc - to one of these farms. By doing so you will help to preserve the farmland of NE Tennessee.

For more information contact roy.settle@tn.usda.gov or www.QuiltTrail.org. When desiring to buy local products use www.LocalGoods.org for businesses that grow, craft and manufacture products in the area.

CONSIDER GROWING VERONICA THIS SPRING

By Hugh Conlon



The Chicago Botanical Garden (CBG) has released the results of a 10-year study of speedwells (Veronica and Veronicastrum) in its 33rd issue of Plant Evaluation Notes, "A Comparative Study of Veronica and Veronicastrum."

Veronica, known commonly as speedwell or bird's-eye, is a large genus in the figwort family (Scrophulariaceae). There are approximately 250 herbaceous species of *Veronica* native to temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere, found in such diverse habitats as alpine meadows, grasslands, oak forests, and riverbanks.

Although speedwell flowers may be white, pink, violet, or purple, it

is the sumptuous shades of blue which are particularly coveted by gardeners. The small, five-petaled blossoms feature a pair of conspicuously protruding stamens and may be loosely or densely clustered in vertical inflorescences in leaf axils or at the tips of stems.

Speedwells are generally easy to grow and prefer sunny locations in moist, well-drained soils. Plants grown in less light will not bloom as profusely and may become lax or open in habit. Speedwells can be long-lived provided that garden soils drain freely, which is especially important during winter months.

Many speedwells drop their lower leaves in summer, resulting in bare stems and spindly habit. A mid-summer shearing after the first bloom promotes healthy new basal foliage and encourages late summer flowering. Deadheading throughout the bloom cycle produces many new, albeit shorter, floriferous spikes later in the season. Taller speedwells may require staking, especially in overly moist or fertile soils.

Dividing crowns in early spring is beneficial for plants that have lost vigor with age. A number of foliar diseases may affect plant health, including powdery mildew, downy mildew, leaf spots, and foliar rust.

Seven speedwells received good-excellent ratings for their overall performance, including *Veronica* 'Fairytale', *V.* 'Giles Van Hees', *V. austriaca* 'Ionian Skies', *V. longifolia* 'Blue John', *V. spicata* 'Baby Doll', *V. spicata* 'Ulster Blue Dwarf', and *V. wormskjoldii*. These top-rated speedwells exhibited strong habits and excellent flower production throughout the evaluation period. The lack of any serious pest or disease problems, along with good winter survivability, contributed to their high ratings. Additionally, 18 taxa received four-star good ratings for similarly strong performances.

Among the top-rated plants were outstanding ground-hugging speedwells such as: *Veronica* 'Blue Reflection', *V. gentianoides* 'Pallida', and *V. prostrata* 'Mrs. Holt'; as well as exceptional upright clumpers such as *V. austriaca* 'Ionian Skies', *V. longifolia* 'Blue John', and *V. spicata* 'Baby Doll'.

Notes and Credits: East Tennessee and Chicago do not share a similar climate and soils. However, CBG continues to be a valuable source for perennial plant evaluations. Generally, plant disease pressure is more severe here in Tennessee compared to the Midwest region. This is a summary of the 8 page CBG report (Issue 33, 2010) authored by Richard G. Hawke. Go to the Chicago Botanical Garden website to read the full report and for other great gardening information.

IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE LAVENDER



Pat Osborne, owner of Scott County Lavender, is organizing a festival celebrating herbs, lavender, and everything organic. The fun begins on Saturday May 22, 10:00 to 5:00 and continues on Sunday May 23, Noon to

5:00. The festival will be held at the Gardens at Eureka Inn and First Ave, 127 Main Street in Jonesborough.

Seminars will be offered on the following topics: The Lavender Cooking Class, Medicinal Uses of Lavender, and Getting Started with Herbs. Other activities include Learning to make Lavender Wands, Live Music in the Gazebo, and Organic and Green Vendors

A special Herbal Luncheon will be offered at Bistro 105 showcasing the talents of award winning Chef A. Todd Dawn. The luncheon features an herbal salad, choice of sandwich, Lavender Tea and Lavender Cheesecake. The luncheon is all inclusive and reservations are requested. Call 423-788-0244.

For more information contact: Pat Osborne 423-753-2351, 1-888-222-3715, or pat@scottcountylavender.com

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2010 DATES TO WATCH

April 30 –May 1	Spring Garden Fair at Appy Fairgrounds
May 1-2	American Rhododendron Society Annual Show - NC Arboretum
May 8 and 11	Dahlia Tuber Sale and Mum Plant Sale - NC Arboretum
May 22 – 23	Lavender Fest – Jonesborough
May 29 – 30	Asheville – Blue Ridge Rose Society Exhibit - NC Arboretum
June 7	NETMGA Meeting at Joy Stewart's
June 19	WNC Daylily Club Show and Sale - NC Arboretum
June 19 – 20	Rhododendron Festival at Roan Mountain
Oct 28 – 29	Urban Forestry Conference - Chatanooga