



Master Gardener Thymes

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Summer! How Is Your Garden?

Vegetable, herb, and pollinator/decorative gardens are in full swing! Going along with that are the beetles and insects that we prefer would stay away. Yesterday I “gathered” at least 2 dozen Japanese Beetles from my hibiscus; and I counted at least 4 dozen “June Bugs” (the green ones) flying around in my yard! I could do without both of these. Luckily my tomatoes are flourishing and insect-free!



Still need 2023 continuing education hours? Check out the calendar at the end of this newsletter for learning opportunities.

NETMGA JULY BOARD MEETING

The next NETMGA Board meeting will be on **July 10**, 6:30pm, at Washington County Extension Office, 206 W. Main St, Jonesborough.

NETMGA AUGUST MEMBERSHIP MEETING

August 7 5:30pm. Ron Ramsey Ag Center, 140 Spurgeon Lane in Blountville. Details about this event at in this newsletter.

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- NETMGA General Membership Meeting Info
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Mark Your Calendar!

NETMGA August General Membership Meeting

NETMGA Meeting will be on Monday, **August 7**, at the Ron Ramsey Ag Center, 140 Spurgeon Lane in Blountville. Doors will open at 5:30pm with dinner beginning about 6:15pm.

Bring a dish made from what you've harvested from your garden. Meat will be provided. If you don't grow food, you can buy something — (no one will be turned away if you don't grow food!).

7:00pm - Speaker Joy Moore will present "Growing herbs in cooking, and preserving herbs."

After the Speaker, we will have a swap. Bring a jar of jelly, what you've canned, or some fresh produce. Go home with something you've swapped. Again, if you don't grow food, you can bring a plant to swap.

See you there!!

No SAPS Program in July and August.

Hamlett-Dobson Farm Fest

Hamlett-Dobson Farm Fest will provide old-fashioned family fun on Sunday, **July 16**, from 2-5 p.m. at Exchange Place Living History Farm, 4812 Orebank Road in Kingsport. Farm Fest celebrates the pleasures of country life as visitors step back into the nineteenth century and enjoy fresh summer food like watermelon, join in activities from bygone days like sack races, hay rides, and cakewalks. Listen to music on traditional instruments, pet the farm animals, and try your hand at old time crafts.



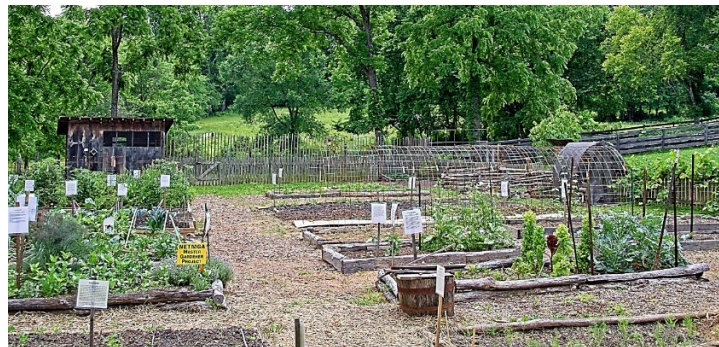
The event is part of Kingsport's Fun Fest and is free with no ticket or registration required. This is a fun, family-oriented community event and we always need volunteers to help with garden related activities. For Master Gardeners your time counts as volunteer hours. For more info or to volunteer, contact Joy Moore at 423-348-6572 or jemoor@gmail.com.

“Featured Project” – Exchange Place Living History Farm

Master Gardeners volunteer at Exchange Place Living History Farm on Orebank road in Kingsport for maintaining various gardens, the general grounds and some maintenance projects. The gardens currently being serviced by Master gardeners are the Demonstration vegetable garden and the pollinator garden. The other gardens that are available to be service are a wildflower garden and a small garden adjacent to souvenir store. Currently the gardening and grounds maintenance volunteers work on Wednesday mornings. However, if some gardeners want to work on the grounds, wildflower or souvenir store garden they could do so on days and times that would work for them. Another opportunity for master gardeners is to do lawn cutting using the riding mowers on the property, which has traditionally been done on Mondays. Additionally, gardeners regularly volunteer to help in various ways at the festival events including the Spring Garden Festival the last weekend of April, the Farm Fest event held the second Sunday of July and the Fall Crafts festival held the last weekend of September.

If you are interested in volunteering for any of these projects contact Earl Hockin at ehockin@yahoo.com.

Those who volunteer get to share the various vegetables that are harvest during the spring, summer and fall gardening seasons. If the vegetable production exceeds what the volunteers can use the extra vegetables are given to a food bank. In the demonstration vegetable garden, each year in addition to vegetables that are commonly grown by gardeners locally, we always grow one or two varieties of vegetables that are not commonly grown locally. Some recent examples include black peanuts, Yacon, yard long beans, climbing squash, and fava beans.



Exchange Place Living History Farm (Continued)



“Featured Project” – Unicoi County Hospital

The Unicoi County Hospital (Ballad Health) is one of the newer projects for the NETMGA. The new Unicoi County Hospital was completed in 2018. Our Unicoi County Hospital is a 10 bed hospital that also houses an ER, as well as a variety of outpatient services and a primary care office. It is located along the banks of the Nolichucky River and nestled against the Unicoi Mountains, right off of I-26. The Unicoi County hospital was built with locally sourced materials and decorated with works from the local community to honor the region’s rich heritage. There is a lovely courtyard and green space for both staff and patients to enjoy.



Through a grant with NETMGA, we were able to purchase fantastic planters. The master gardeners currently involved in the project plant seasonal flowers for the courtyard planters. We have planted several flowering bushes and perennials at the entrance at the road as well as the main entrance to the hospital. We are in the process of planting a pollinator garden adjacent to the courtyard. This will complement the existing phases of beautification for all to enjoy.

We would love to have more volunteers involved with the Unicoi County Hospital project. Help is always needed with maintaining the current phases as well as assisting in the planning, coordination and planting of future phases. If you want to help please contact Gina Clark at 423-956-2426 or gclarkx4@gmail.com.

Chris' Corner



CHRIS RAMSEY

SULLIVAN COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT

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Wow - our summer is almost half over! Just wanted to give you a heads-up about the Eastern Region Master Gardener Meeting. The meeting will be in Chattanooga on September 8 and 9. This is always a great meeting to meet other Master Gardeners in the region and learn something new. Also, Chattanooga is a great place to visit! Hope you'll consider joining up with a MG friend and making the trip to the Eastern Region MG Meeting this fall. More information will be available soon on registration. If you have any questions, call our office at 423-574-1919.

[Editor's Note: I recently facilitated a seminar about pollinator gardening. Several people have asked me for the information covered, so I thought I'd put it in our newsletter.]

What's the Buzz About Pollinators?!

Pollination Basics

Flowers have both male and female parts. Pollination is achieved when the pollen from the male part, the stamen, is transferred to the female part, the stigma. This is called fertilization and it's what helps the flower make seeds. This can happen between the male and female parts of one flower (self-pollination) or between separate flowers of the same species (cross-pollination). Flowers can't do it themselves. What in the natural world can help move the pollen? Animals, wind, or water! We call the animals that visit flowers pollinators.



Basically, a pollinator is anything that helps transport pollen from one flower to another. This can include many types of insects: butterflies, moths, bees (native bees as well as honey bees), beetles, flies, and wasps. Pollinators can also be other small animals, such as birds, bats, or rodents.

Most feed on the nectar of a flower. Since the nectar is usually located deep in the middle of a flower pollinators have to brush against the anthers, and then the stigma to get to the nectar. When this happens, the pollinator helps carry pollen from one part of the flower to another. Some pollinators, like bees, need pollen in addition to nectar. Some pollinating insects (e.g., flies) are attracted to flowers by scent but gain no reward when

they visit. The insects try to leave quickly but the flowers may have traps to slow the insects down.

Pollinators are **important in our ecosystem**. Plant communities depend on pollinators to maintain genetic diversity for healthy plant populations. We all depend on plants for clean air, clean water, and the oxygen we breathe. Many plants rely on pollinators to produce seeds and fruits, which are then eaten by animals. Much of the food we eat depends on pollinators. Providing a patch of habitat that helps pollinators benefits everyone!

Why Have a Pollinator Garden

By creating a pollinator garden, you are **creating wildlife habitat**. Your pollinator garden can provide valuable sources of food, nectar, water, protection, and larval host plants. Many plants can provide for multiple pollinator needs, such as being a food source for both adult and larval insects, or providing both nectar for insects and seeds or fruit for birds.

Pollinator friendly perennials are the foundation of a well-rounded pollinator garden. They help increase pollination rates of native bees, honeybees, and other pollinators, plus their foliage and flowers provide food and shelter for beneficial insects that help keep harmful plant pests under control.

The key to attracting butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds to your garden is to provide pollinator-friendly plants that offer a steady supply of nutritious, delicious foods throughout the entire growing season.



Keep in mind...you don't have to plant a huge area to attract pollinators. Depending on where you live, you can use a backyard, a curb space, a small 4' X 4' space, or even just a few spots throughout your existing beds. Remember to pay attention to the sun your space provides and if that fulfills the needs of the plants you select. For example, shade instead of sun could reduce the amount of blooms and shorten bloom time.

Many places sell plants to attract pollinators, some focus on native plants and others offer both native and non-native plants or seeds.

Another important part of planting a pollinator garden is to include plants with different bloom times, so beginning in early spring through fall there is always something in bloom.

The plant varieties (annuals & perennials) you see listed below should be considered essential elements of any successful pollinator garden, but it is by no means a complete

list of pollinator friendly plants. They produce an abundance of colorful blossoms that pollinators thrive on, and they will attract their fair share of human admirers, too.

Don't Forget Wildflowers! Why are wildflowers important?

A significant contribution made by native wildflowers is to modern medicine as certain wildflowers contain compounds used in medicine such as self-heal which has antibiotic properties and foxgloves which contain chemicals used in the treatment of heart disease. These are just two examples, there are many more examples available and still more to discover.

A big job that wildflowers undertake is to provide bees, butterflies and other pollinators with food sources throughout the seasons, and that is why a wide range of wildflower species are required.

Wildflowers provide pollinators and insects with food from leaves, pollen, nectar, shelter and places to breed. Pollinators then return the favor by transferring pollen, enabling the wildflowers to develop seeds that produce more flowers.

Wildflowers are beneficial during the winter also. As food is scarce in the countryside, wildflower seeds become an important food source for birds and small mammals.

Our favorite fruits and vegetables such as apples, strawberries, raspberries and more, rely on pollinating to produce a good crop. This job carried out by pollinators that depend on wildflowers; without them, we would require artificial pollination, which is time-consuming and very costly.

Pollinators also help fight against crop pests, which are insects that cause damage to crops and plants. Without pollinators carrying out those battles, farmers would have to rely on pesticides even more, which would yield negative consequences for everyone.

Finally, wildflowers provide the countryside with beauty and memories as wildflowers bring back fond childhood memories and certain species such as poppies remind us of the fallen soldiers that lost their lives in combat.

There are also wildflower seed mixtures available at several online sites (see Resources); some mixtures contain all native plants specifically for the SE United States and/or mixtures with both annual and perennial plants.

The website www.pollinator.org also provides extensive information and regional guides to help find the right pollinator garden plants for our area.



Pollinator Plant List

Allium (Ornamental Onion)/*Allium* spp.
Anemone (Windflower)/*Anemone* spp.
Anise hyssop/*Agastache foeniculum*
Aster/*Aster* spp.
Astilbe (False spirea)/*Astilbe* spp.
Bachelor's Buttons (Cornflower)/*Centaurea*
Balloon Flower/*Platycodon grandiflorus*
Bee balm/*Monarda* spp.
Bellflower/*Campanula* spp.
Black-eyed Susan/*Rudbeckia* spp.
Blanket flower/*Gaillardia*
Blazing star (aka Gayfeather)/*Liatris spicata*
Borage/*Borago officinalis*
Butterfly weed/*Asclepias tuberosa*
Calendula/*Calendula officinalis*
Catmint/*Nepeta* spp.
Chrysanthemum (Hardy)/*Chrysanthemum* spp.
Clematis/*Clematis* spp.
Clovers (Red or Crimson)/*Trifolium* spp.
Columbine/*Aquilegia* spp.
Common poppy, red poppy/*Papaver rhoeas*
Common yarrow/*Achillea millefolium*
Coral bells/*Heuchera* spp.
Coreopsis/*Coreopsis* spp.
Cosmos/*Cosmos bipinnatus*
Cranesbill/*Geranium* spp.
Dead Nettle/*Lamium* spp.
Delphinium/*Delphinium* spp.
Dianthus (e.g., Pinks)/*Dianthus* spp.
Echinacea (Coneflower)/*Echinacea* spp.
False Sunflower/*Heliopsis* spp.
Foxglove/*Digitalis* spp.
Globe thistle/*Echinops ritro*
Goldenrod/*Solidago* spp.
Great Blue Lobelia/*Lobelia siphilitica*
Guara/*Guara* spp.
Heliotrope/*Heliotropium*
Hibiscus (Hardy)/*Hibiscus* spp.
Hollyhock/*Alcea* spp.
Hosta/*Hosta* spp.
Hyssop (naturalized in North America)/*Hyssopus officinalis*
Ironweeds/*Vernonia* spp.
Jacob's Ladder/*Polemonium* spp.
Joe Pye Weed/*Eutrochium* spp.
Large-leaved aster/*Eurybia macrophylla*
Lavender/*Lavandula*
Lemon balm/*Melissa officinalis*
Lobelia (Cardinal Flower)/*Lobelia cardinalis*
Lupine/*Lupinus* spp.
Milkweed/*Asclepias* spp.
Mountain Mint/*Pycnanthemum* spp.
New England Aster/*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*
Obedient Plant/*Physostegia virginiana*
Penstemon (Beardtongue)/*Penstemon* spp.
Peony/*Paeonia* spp.
Phlox (Creeping or Garden)/*Phlox* spp.
Pincushion flower/*Scabiosa caucasica*
Purple coneflower/*Echinacea purpurea*
Red Hot Poker (Torch Lily)/*Kniphofia* spp.
Rosemary/*Rosmarinus officinalis*
Russian sage/*Perovskia atriplicifolia*
Salvia (Sage)/*Salvia* spp.
Sea holly/*Eryngium maritimum*
Sedum/*Sedum* spp.
Shasta Daisy/*Leucanthemum* spp.
Sneezeweed/*Helenium*
Stokes aster/*Stokesia laevis*
Speedwell/*Veronica* spp.
Sunflower/*Helianthus*
Swamp milkweed/*Asclepias incarnata*
Turtlehead/*Chelone* spp.
Verbena/*Vervain* spp.
Yarrow/*Achillea* spp.
Zinnia/*Zinnia elegans*

Resources/Links:

www.americanmeadows.com

www.prairiemoon.com

www.gardensoftheblueridge.com

www.pollinator.org/guides

<https://xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/pollinator-friendly-plant-lists>

<https://appalachianhighlands.wildones.org>

<https://www.whiteflowerfarm.com/pollinator-friendly-perennials>

Projects List

Boundless Playground at Warriors' Path State Park Kingsport
Gwyn Duncan 423-239-0460 geduncan@charter.net

Branch House Family Center Blountville
Pat Mazurkiewicz 423-323-1644
robmazur@chartertn.net

Carver Peace Gardens Johnson City
Nancy Shilling 423-833-1420 nancyshilling@gmail.com

Church Hill Senior Citizens Center Garden
Marcia Vandermause chscgarden@yahoo.com

Discovery Garden at Gray Fossil Museum
John Hitchcock 423-525-8587 jhitchcock25@gmail.com

Exchange Place Living History Farm Kingsport
Earl Hockin 423-817-5473 ehockin@yahoo.com

Harvest of Hope Community Garden Kingsport
Dave Rogers 423-502-2459 dave_carla@chartertn.net

Johnson City Hospitals Johnson City
Barbara Voigt 423-467-2013 voigt7b@comcast.net

Rocky Mount Living History Site Piney Flats
Don Davis home 423-854-0152, cell 423-943-2392
donfdavis@aol.com

Steele Creek Park Bristol, TN
Robin Feirabend 423-764-3336 Feierabe@ETSU.edu

Sycamore Shoals State Historic Site Elizabethton
Carol Ludiker 423-707-0026 jaxlud26@gmail.com

Tipton Haynes Historic Site Johnson City
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Unicoi County Hospital Erwin
Gina Clark 423-956-2426 gclarkx4@gmail.com

NETMGA Yearly Projects List:

Johnson City Home Show and Women's Expo
Penny Rutledge 423-612-4785 pennyrutledge2@aol.com

Farm Expo
Wes Walker 804-824-5308 wes.walker@me.com

Kingsport MeadowView Home Show
Doug Hilton 423-239-9433 dh535651@gmail.com

Bristol PepperFest
Wes Walker 804-824-5308 wes.walker@me.com

Kingsport Tomato Festival-TBD

**Master Gardeners:
Report your hours each month!!**

Horticultural information and resources for Tennessee gardeners
<https://www.uthort.com/>



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Feed the birds!



JULY and AUGUST 2023 Calendar of Events

Covid-19 is still affecting events. Please note that some programs, events and tours may require masks for participants. Before going you might want to confirm that event has not been cancelled.

CHECK THE SITES BELOW MONTHLY FOR CLASSES, SEMINARS, WORKSHOPS:
Melody's Monday Musings with Melody Rose, Greene County TN Extension
Information and Registration: <https://sites.google.com/utk.edu/mondaymusings/home>

Knoxville Botanical Garden and Arboretum Classes/Workshops:
<http://knoxgarden.org/classes-events/workshops/>

North Carolina Arboretum Classes Schedule:
<https://www.ncarboretum.org/education-programs/adult-education-classes/>

Asheville Botanical Gardens: <https://ashevillebotanicalgardens.org/events-classes/adult-classes/>

Tennessee Native Plant Society Seminars: <https://www.tnps.org/tnps-speakers/>

Appalachian Highlands Chapter of Wild Ones:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/783213076410695/about>

Tennessee Valley Chapter of Wild Ones/Programs and Events:
<https://tnvalleywildones.org/programs-events/public-programs/>

Wild Ones Webinars: <https://wildones.org/webinars/>

JUL 10-16 Summer in the Park-Warriors' Path State Park
Come enjoy a week full of outdoor fun! You and your family can wander park habitats, meet trees & birds, create wildlife feeders, and much more. And it's all free! Information: 423-239-6786 or [Event Details — Tennessee State Parks \(tnstateparks.com\)](https://tnstateparks.com)

JUL 11 NETMGA Board Meeting
6:30pm. *Washington County Extension Office, 206 W. Main St., Jonesborough.*

JUL 16 Hamlett-Dobson Farm Fest
2:00-5:00pm. Exchange Place in Kingsport. Information:
<https://www.exchangeplace.info/festival-details>

JUL 16 Nature Walk with a Ranger-Rocky Fork State Park
2:00-4:00pm. Join Park Ranger Cory Franklin for a nature walk through the beautiful Rocky Fork Gorge. The hike will be roughly 2 miles up the Flint Creek Trail where we will see several species of trees, ferns, flowers, and shrubs. Information: 423-443-6429 or [Event Details — Tennessee State Parks \(tnstateparks.com\)](#)

JUL 17-23 Summer in the Park-Warriors' Path State Park
Come enjoy a week full of outdoor fun! You and your family can hike remote places, enjoy nature stories, meet wildlife and wild plants, create varied nature crafts, and much more. And it's all free! Information: 423-239-6786 or [Event Details — Tennessee State Parks \(tnstateparks.com\)](#)

JUL 21 Moonlight Gardening
8:00pm. Evergreen of Johnson City. Registration is highly recommended. Call: 423-282-3431. NOTE: the date and time on Evergreen's website is incorrect; this post has the correct date and time.

JUL 21-23 NC Herb Association's Wild Herb Weekend in Vale Crucis
Information and registration: <https://www.ncherbassociation.org/whwregistration>

JUL 22 Edible and Medicinal Plant Walk-Rocky Fork State Park
2:00pm. Join Seasonal Interpretive Ranger Connor at the interpretive campfire area for a short stroll up the Flint Creek trail in search of medicinal and edible plants! Learn about some key identifying features of the plants and what uses they have to us! Information: 423-443-6429 or [Event Details — Tennessee State Parks \(tnstateparks.com\)](#)

JUL 24-31 Summer in the Park-Warriors' Path State Park
Come enjoy a week full of outdoor fun! You and your family can hike wet & dry, use all your senses, create nature crafts, meet bones and fungi, and much more. And it's all free! Information: 423-239-6786 or [Event Details — Tennessee State Parks \(tnstateparks.com\)](#)

AUG 5 20th Annual Elizabethton Butterfly Count
9:00am. Meet naturalist Don Holt at Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park, Elizabethton, for this day-long winged adventure across town. Come for all or part of the day. Contact: 423-543-5808

AUG 5 Fall Gardening Seminar with Ben Hunter
9:00am – 12:00pm. at Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park, Elizabethton. Master Gardener Ben Hunter will join us to share his experiences and techniques for growing the garden of your dreams! Meet in the Visitor Center Gathering Place. Contact: 423-543-5808

AUG 6 Orchid Society of East Tennessee – 2 pm Gray Community Center.

AUG 7 NETMGA Membership Meeting
5:30pm doors open; dinner at 6:15pm. Guest Speaker: Joy Moore. Ron Ramsey Ag Center, 140 Spurgeon Lane, Blountville. More details in this newsletter.