

Pulaski County Master Minutes

September, 2004

<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org>, <http://www.uaex.edu/pulaski/>

Volume 15, Issue 8

Miscellaneous Tips By Betty Deere



Basil

Harvesting Herbs

TIMING: Picking the best time to pick your herbs is important. So if you're going to dry/store your herbs, pick them just before they flower, because that's when they are the tastiest and most flavorful. Otherwise, the best time to pick them is just before you eat them or cook with them.

The best time of day for picking is mid-morning, except for basil. Basil stores better after a day in the sun. If you're not going to store it, just treat it like the others.

CLEANING: Washing is actually not good for herbs, as it bruises their leaves and leaches their delicate flavor. This means you cannot spray them with pesticides or anything else you wouldn't want to put in your mouth. It also makes sense to keep their soil mulched well, so dirt doesn't splash up on the leaves when you water. You can clean any little specks of dirt or the occasional aphid off with a little soft brush (like a baby toothbrush).



Coriander

CUTTING: To cut branching-type annuals like basil, cut halfway to two-thirds down their stem, just above a joint where you see little new leaf buds starting. But for base-branching herbs (like parsley) cut the outer stems right down at the ground. If you want your annuals like coriander, chervil, dill and borage to self-sow, let a few flowers form just before fall comes on. Then you'll have a nice crop again next spring from the fallen seeds.

You treat perennial herbs the same way as the annuals, except you want to allow them time to toughen up before winter. So don't trim them for about six weeks before winter because it will cause them to be vulnerable to freeze, with their fragile new leaves. Not that you can't take a sprig or two, just not so much that the plant starts putting out lots of tender new growth.



Borage



Dill

*Photos courtesy of the West Virginia Cooperative Extension Service Website
Adapted from Pub. NE 208 published by the Cooperative Extension Services of
the Northeast States. For more information, visit:
www.wvva.edu/~agexten/hortcult/herbs/ne208hrb.htm*

Dividing

1. When should you divide your plants? It's time to divide when your plant gets so congested that the flowers grow smaller, then tinier, or it quits blooming completely.
2. Bigger is hardier. The closer to winter it gets, the bigger your divisions need to be to make sure they survive through winter.
3. If you suspect a disease problem, wash the roots good and whack off the sick part...or just throw the whole thing away if it looks really bad.
4. Slice the root into sections, making sure each section has some growing parts (roots, eyes, buds, tubers) on it.
5. As for iris, cut the rhizomes with a big sharp knife (I use a serrated bread knife). For daylilies, jiggle the tangled clumps apart using two garden forks stuck into the clump, facing opposite directions--jiggle, yank, and pry gently on the handles. (I used to do the same thing with my hands and fingers but it's a lot easier using garden forks!)
6. Replant a divided section/root/tuber at the same depth it originally grew.
7. Water, water, water!

And Adding...

- My yard is full of rocks of all shapes and sizes, and I haul them all over the place. I outline beds with them, pile them up in certain areas just to add diversity to the grass and flowerbed landscape. Also the small smooth ones make good plant ID's--just write plant names on them with waterproof markers. They look natural in the flower beds, they won't blow away or disintegrate, and they can be props for frail plants just getting started.
- Gardening gurus say to plant perennials in the fall...the cool air, warm soil and less strident rains are ideal growing conditions and you don't have to coddle them so much--if at all. Also, I find fall is much easier on the gardener...the cool air is more pleasant and the gardener's back is more rested since the weeding and mulching is done!

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The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

After Hours: Carlee Adams By Lorraine Hensley



Most of us either have or would like to have a quiet place to simply sit and reflect. It doesn't have to be really special--but it does have to evoke a feeling of peace that enables one to relax and commune with an inner self. And perhaps find a measure of spiritual peace in an often troubling and harried world. Carlee Adams (2002) has helped fashion this kind of space for the rest of

us.

It all began when Carlee took a stroll around the grounds of Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock. He noted the grounds were in a sad state of neglect. So with the encouragement of a friend who shares his interest in upgrading the church grounds, and a very receptive church administrator, began the planning process. Before anyone picked up a gardening tool the landscape design needed definition and research done regarding the various plantings that might do well under somewhat adverse growing conditions.

Areas needing fresh landscaping were three courtyards all surrounded by tall buildings. There is a large courtyard (70' by 40') and two smaller ones across from the church day care and nursery. Landscaping the main courtyard presented a special challenge for Carlee as it's used for special events and is viewed by a large number of church members and visitors. It is especially suited for a quiet personal meditation. The sanctuary also has planting areas on both sides of the walkway and a planting area (3' by 20') in the walkway's middle. Another major undertaking was to plant an elevated brick enclosure (24' by 16') enclosing the JFK church sign.

As every master gardener knows it's first things first--collecting soil samples. Results were not encouraging for a good bit of soil amending was in order. About 3-4 inches down the remains of an old gravel parking lot made its presence known. The area is also in shade most of the time. The sprinkling system required extensive repairs and a large fountain had to be disassembled, repaired, and repainted and is a now focal point in the landscape. Landscape lighting was also upgraded and many new plants were added: azaleas, yaupon hollies, hostas, impatiens, vinca, dusty miller, petunias, lantana, Kimberly palms, majestic palms, caladiums, ferns, verbena and numerous hanging plants.

Although there is no specific work schedule Carlee can be found working on the grounds for a few hours about every 3 days. He usually works alone but has several church friends who help with the really difficult tasks. These friends also maintain the grounds when he is out of town or otherwise unable to be there. The large inner courtyard is quite special for Carlee. With the sound of gently flowing water and surrounded by beautiful plants it's the perfect spot in which to just be quiet, a place to seek inner peace. This, for Carlee, is well worth the effort required to provide it. In his own way he enriches the lives of others. He considers this work as his ministry for God.

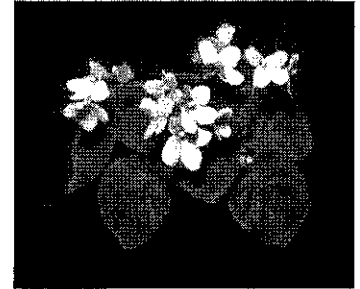
African Violets

Some people can grow these things and some people can't. That conclusion is drawn from personal experience and it's true for me. Little pots sitting on the window sill with fuzzy leaves and wonderful colorful blooms form my first memories of this plant. My mother put them there and they behaved properly for her: they grew, they bloomed, and they actually prospered. To this day I have not been successful in keeping one alive much less duplicating her efforts.

Now I understand, according to the experts, African violets, *Saintpaulia*, will grow just about anywhere there is sufficient light for them to grow. Soil must also be "light" for air and drainage purposes. Suggestions are made to use equal measures of regular potting soil, fine peat moss, coarse vermiculite, and perlite. I know they get much of their needed moisture through the fine hairs on their leaves and thrive on humidity. These hairs take in moisture from the air, like miniature roots, and also trap raindrops which are then separated so the leaves don't suffocate. The roots stay pretty dry and the caregiver must be careful not to over-water the plants. They can be propagated by rooting a single leaf although some African violet lovers do say there is a definite knack to successfully using this method.

Seems pretty simple, and I suppose it is. But it has never worked for me. My mother stuck African violets in anything she could find filled with whatever soil mixture she thought was "about right" put them on that kitchen windowsill and they bloomed their little hearts out. Everything I did was by the book and my poor plants literally sighed and gave it up. They just plain died no matter what I tried.

So--we have now come full circle. Some people can grow these things and some people can't. The best part is that whether you can or can't grow them everyone can enjoy the easily recognizable blooms even though they may not be responsible for their care.



Saintpaulia diplotricha
Grown by Karen Cichocki

Photo is copyright by Ron Myhr



Saintpaulia confusa
Grown by Maryjane Evans
Photo is copyright by John Evans

Both African violet photos are reprinted with permission from <http://www.gesneriads.ca>



Calendar By Ruth Jones

September, 2004

- 9 Getting Ready for Fall, Janet Carson, Garvan Woodland Gardens. 800-366-4664.
- 11 Hot Springs Daylily Sale at the Farmers' Market/ Transportation Depot in Hot Springs. 8:00 a.m. until noon. For more info, contact Gene Lichliter (501-922-6694) or Yvonne Becker (501-922-3296 or ylbecker@ipa.net).
- 16 Vertical Gardening with vines, The Dixon Gallery and Gardens in Memphis. 901-761-5250.
- 21 Pulaski County Master Gardener Meeting. 1130 a.m. at St. James United Methodist Church, 321 Pleasant Valley Dr.
- 21 Turf Management and Soil Testing, Darrin Henderson, Garvan Woodland Gardens, 800-366-4664.
- 26 Arkansas Orchid Society's annual orchid auction from 1:30 - 4:30 at the North Little Rock Community Center (2700 Willow Street). For more info call Jerry Brown (753-7407) or Yvonne Becker (922-3296).
- 30 Herb Harvest Dinner, Ozark, Folk Center State Park, Mountain View, AR. 870-269-3851.

October, 2004

- 1-2 Herb Harvest Fall Festival, The Ozark Folk Center State Park, Mountain View, 879-269-3851.
- 5 Green Thumb Gardening: Custom Border Basics (AELC) Call 666-0759.
- 7 Fall Bloomers: Mum's NOT The Only Word. (AELC) Call 666-0759.
- 10 Central Arkansas Rose Society Show, University Mall.
- 12 Green Thumb Gardening: Custom Border Basics (AELC) Call 666-0759.
- 15- Unusual plant sale and seminars, Garvan Woodland Gardens 800-366-4664.
- 17 Pulaski County Master Gardener Meeting. 11:30 a. m. at St. James United Methodist Church, 321 Pleasant Valley Dr.
- 19 Green Thumb Gardening: Custom Border Basics (AELC) Call 666-0759.
- 26 Green Thumb Gardening: Custom Border Basics (AELC) Call 666-0759.
- 30 Fall Foliage River Cruises, Pinnacle State Park. Advanced payment required. 501-868-5806.

November, 2004

- 2 Green Thumb Gardening: Custom Border Basics (AELC) Call 666-0759.
- 4 Bulbs with Janet Carson at Garvan Woodland Gardens 800-366-4664.
- 6 Mushroom Workshop 10am to 4pm. Pinnacle state Park. \$10 advance payment required. 501-868-5806.
- 16 Pulaski County Master Gardener Meeting. 11:30 a.m. At St. James United Methodist Church, 321 Pleasant Valley Dr.

February, 2005

- 8 Spring Planting Frenzy! (AELC). Call 666-0759.
- 25 - 27 Arkansas Flower and Garden Show

Arkansas Home Grown Markets

Tuesdays - YWCA 12th and Cleveland
 Thursdays - Lakewood Village
 Saturdays - Second Presbyterian Church
 Markets open at 6:30 am

Master Gardener Training

- Wed., September 28th - Tour of Master Gardener Projects
- Wed., October 6 - Basic Plant Science, Soils and Pesticide Safety
- Wed., Oct. 13 - Plant Diseases, Composting, Herbs and Pruning
- Wed., Oct. 20 - Turfgrass, Weed Control, Small Fruits and House Plants
- Wed., Oct. 27 - Trees, Shrubs, Vines, Annuals, Perennials and Bulbs, Wildlife
- Wed., Nov. 3 - Tree Fruits, Vegetables
- Tues., Nov. 9 - Insects and Insect Control, Fertilizers, the Final Reminder and Graduation

If you are an experienced Master Gardener and plan to attend a session, please call or e-mail Beth by noon on the Monday of the week you plan to attend. Also, if you plan to join the new class for lunch, let Beth know. Cost of Lunch is \$6.50.

Thanks, Beth Phelps. (340-6650 or bphelps@uaex.edu)

**The Botanical Garden Society of the Ozarks'
 3rd Annual Harvest Festival Flower/Garden Show
 "From the Ground Up"**

4000 block of Crossover Road/Hwy 265 in Fayetteville.
 Saturday, September 18, 9:00-5:00, and Sunday, September 19, 11:00-5:00. Activities for children and adults. Prices are \$5.00: adults, \$3.00: students and free: children 6 and under.
 Programs: Ask the Master, Native Plants, Daylilies, Butterfly Gardening, Heirloom Vegetables, Water Gardening and Heirloom Roses, Daylilies and Tropicals
 Area artists will be creating items "From the Ground Up" including digging their clay and making it into a beautiful piece of pottery. Butterfly release, "Just for Kids"- coloring, fire truck (Sun. 12-2), free popcorn and ice cream for the children!
 Vendor booths on site.
 Contact Maryetta Carroll at 479-443-6638 or maryetta@dicksonstreet.com and/or web site www.bgso.org

Classifieds

Sunshine Board

If you have information about Master Gardener members who have concerns to be shared please contact the Retention Committee, Jane Gulley, Chair, 225-2072.

City Beautiful Nominations

Little Rock and North Little Rock are recognizing homeowners with exceptional and publicly visible landscapes. Nomination forms are available in the County Extension Office, and the City Beautification Commission of each city.

Pulaski County Master Gardeners' Memorial Fund

Donations to the PCMG Memorial Fund may be made "In Memory of" or "In Honor of" anyone. Gifts may be specified for a particular use (i.e. trees on public property; garden books for library; Master Gardener projects: benches, birdbaths, statues, or other hardscape); or for General Master Gardener program support. Donations should be sent to:
PCMG Memorial Fund
2901 W. Roosevelt Road,
Little Rock, Arkansas 72204



Master Gardener Lynn Winningham, shown here on the LRCGC Spring 2004 Tour, provided the photos used in the Curran Hall Brochures. Check them out next time you visit Curran Hall. They are awesome!



Dig In Here...

For answers to your gardening and horticultural problems, try these helpful resources:

- Master Gardener Website:
<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org/mastergardener/mastergardeneronly>
Username: mastergardener,
password: compost
- PC Cooperative Extension Service
Website:
<http://www.uaex.edu/pulaski/mastergardeners/default.asp>
- U of A Cooperative Extension Service
Website:
<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org>
- Pulaski County Cooperative Extension Service
2901 W. Roosevelt Road,
Little Rock, Ark. 72204
340-6650

Read 'em and Reap...

Miscellaneous Tips	1
After Hours	2
African Violets	2
Calendar	3
Classifieds	4



Pulaski County Master Gardeners are trained volunteers working with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Service and Pulaski County Government to provide demonstration gardens and horticultural - related information to the residents of the county. In 2003, these volunteers gave more than 10,000 hours of service.

Elisabeth J. Phelps, County Extension Agent,
Staff Chair

News & Notes

Everyone is encouraged to submit interesting information, committee reports, newsworthy photos, etc. to the newsletter.

Bring your information to the Master Gardener meeting, or send it to:
Libby Thalheimer
5005 Crestwood
Little Rock, Ark. 72207
Smell34@aol.com
663-1151

The deadline is the third Tuesday of each month. For late breaking news after the deadline, send information to:

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340-6650



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