



Sandhills
Horticultural Gardens

The Bloomin' News

Sandhills Community College

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Fall 2019

*The Sandhills Horticultural Society - dedicated to the support of the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens since 1987.
Please help the Gardens grow by becoming a Society member.*

Garden Spotlights

Jim Westmen

The Sir Walter Raleigh Garden is a formal English style garden. This garden was designed and constructed in 1984 to commemorate the attempted colonization of Roanoke Island in 1584. This garden exhibits several smaller gardens, including the Holly Maze, Fountain Courtyard, the Sunken Garden, Ceremonial Courtyard and the Herb Garden. It's original design by past graduate Susan Frett still displays the strong bones and influence of the garden today. A new hedge of Oakland hollies are starting to grow in and recreate the enclosed feeling of this garden once again. These replacements are recreating the small maze area of this garden and herb garden as well. In the sunken garden portion, the sheared individual Japanese hollies have been replaced with four formal white obelisks with flowering vines on them. Many newly placed teak benches have also been replaced in this garden as well. In the ceremonial portion of this garden, flowering annual borders have been added to bring in additional color.



Sir Walter Raleigh Garden

The Conifer Garden located adjacent to the Sir Walter Raleigh Garden is on schedule for updating and renovation this fall. This garden displays different conifers from many dwarf varieties to popular ones used in many landscapes today. Conifers that reflect color, form and textures of foliage will be preserved and added to this garden in the near future. We will start culling out the old and declining varieties to make room for new and younger specimens. The longleaf pines that have been the upper canopy of this garden will be pruned and many descending branches removed and limbed up to allow more sunlight and room for the new plantings. This will give this favorite garden of mine a fresh, renovated look and appeal.



Conifer Garden

As always, any contributions to the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens will help us with these upgrades and continued improvement of the Gardens. Thank you for your support.



Fall Vegetable Gardening

Johanna Westman

Asking me to talk about vegetable gardening is like asking me about my child or pet...be careful what you ask for! My love of growing vegetables is very evident. You will soon see that I adore veggie gardening as much as I love perennial gardening and bird watching.

We are going to discuss fall vegetable gardening, similar to what you plant in early spring but with significant differences as far as choices of vegetables. Regardless of the time of year or the vegetables planned, there are general rules of thumb before you plant. Make sure you have plenty of sun! I struggle with this where I keep my garden because of the number of large pine trees. Trying to find a location that can supply at least eight hours of full sun is critical to vegetable production. I manage to get by with less. But, my production would be much higher with more sunlight. Next a veggie garden needs organic matter. I personally believe you can't have too much. It can help provide a steady supply of nutrients as well as help water retention. Last, but not least, is the importance of weed prevention. As much time as I spend in my veggie garden, I can never keep up with the weeds! I would suggest some type of weed control. It can be ground cover fabric or as simple as newspaper covered with your preferred mulch. You won't regret being proactive when it comes to weed control. It can save you time and increase production. Plants won't have to compete with the weeds for sunlight or water needs. After your garden plot is ready to plant, consider some of my favorite crops for Fall production.

Collards - You know you're from the south if you have a love for this fall crop. I plant collards after Mid-August. The hardest thing about growing them is - it seems too darn early to plant anything. To have Thanksgiving collards, you have to plant early. It will take this long for the greens to mature and hopefully have their first frost, which will make them even sweeter. Be sure to allow a lot of room. Space between each plant should be at 2.5-3 feet. Collards get large and need room to grow. There are many cultivars to choose from. My favorite ones are the Vates cultivar.

Garlic - It surprises me that people don't realize how easy it is to grow great garlic in the South. The great thing is, you plant in October, it grows through the winter and you harvest about May. I love anything I can plant and walk away from! Set the bulbs about 6" apart and at least 2" deep. Controlling weeds is important for the size bulbs. Harvesting is one of my favorite things to do with students. We harvest, allow the bulbs to dry and then braid them together for storage. Such a fun project to do with friends, family or students.



Lettuce - I love growing lettuce, just about as much as growing tomatoes. I just need to figure out a way that they can be grown at the same time. I lament when harvesting lettuce that I don't have a fresh tomato at the same time. Lettuces are relatively easy to grow. Deciding on the variety can be the most work. I love the romaine varieties as well as the Bibb varieties. Buttercrunch is my absolute favorite. I eat it right out of the garden! You can plant lettuces after September. Leave at least one foot between plants. You want temperatures to start to cool down before planting.

There are many other vegetables to plant in the fall, such as spinach, carrots, onions, kale, broccoli, beets, cabbage and Brussels sprouts. You have lots to choose from. Our fall season is more productive vs. early spring crops. Temperatures can be somewhat cooler for a longer period of time. We are lucky here in the Sandhills. We have a great growing season that definitely includes the Fall Vegetable Planting Season.



Fall Gardening Tips

- Fall is an ideal time to divide early blooming spring perennials.
- Inspect interior plants for insects and diseases before bringing them in for the winter.
- Plant spring flowering bulbs such as daffodils, crocus and hyacinths.
- Cut back hybrid tea roses for the winter.
- Fall is a great time to plant your trees and shrubs.
- Sow a cover crop such as clover, winter rye or buckwheat in your garden to improve the soil.

Horticultural Society Events & Workshops

Tracye Reiland

Sometimes even the best laid plans go awry and several events at the Gardens this summer had to be cancelled due to low registration numbers and unforeseen speaker issues. We strive to schedule events that will be of interest to Horticultural Society members and the community at large. To that end, we will gladly consider any recommendations for workshops or talks that you would like to see offered. We also request that when you call in to register and must leave a message, please provide a phone number or email address so we will be able to contact you should a change occur.

We did hit homeruns with two of our offerings. Carol Lucas, owner of Carol Lucas Designs and my partner in event programing, instructed 17 participants on how to create miniature succulent container gardens. Everyone had their pick of a wide variety of succulents and accents to personalize their own creation.

Our June Lunch & Learn featured Lisa Thompkins, owner of Carolina Heritage Nursery in Waxhaw, NC. She gave a very interesting presentation on the importance and benefits of incorporating native plants into our landscape. She provided many examples of before and after landscape projects designed with the use of native plants.



Succulent Container Workshop

Upcoming Events... September, October & November

Registration required for all events. Please email landscapegardening@sandhills.edu or call 910-695-3882.

Gardening in the South

September 13 (Friday) 1PM to 2PM – Ball Visitors Center

Dr. Mark Weathington, Director of the J.C. Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh, will give a talk on “Gardening in the South” the title of his latest book. He will have books for sale and will be autographing copies for attendees. The Sandhills Horticultural Society and the Sandhills council of Garden Clubs are sponsoring the event. It’s free, but registration is required. Space is limited, so register early.

Children’s Treasure Trail

September 14 (Saturday) 9AM - Noon – Sandhills Horticultural Gardens

Join us for a free, fun, and educational children’s event for ages 3-8 years old. There will be demonstrations on how to plant and take care of veggies; wonder at the migratory of butterflies; identify snakes of the Sandhills; learn about gems and minerals; analyze your golf swing; and improve your soccer game. Enjoy snacks and face painting!

Lunch & Learn

**September 24 (Tuesday) Noon - 1PM – Ball Visitors Center
Introduction to Vermicomposting**

Master Gardeners Larry Allen and John Bowman will provide a basic introduction to vermicomposting, the process of using worms to recycle food wastes into nutrient-rich soil. The many benefits of vermicompost will be identified and the materials needed will be discussed (a worm bin, bedding, water, food scraps, and composting earthworms). Finally, recommendations will be provided for what to feed your worms, how to harvest worm castings and how to deal with some common problems you may experience.



Fall Plant Sale

October 5 (Saturday) 8AM to Noon – Steed Hall

Woody plants (azaleas, hollies, camellias) pansies and spring flowering bulbs will be available. This is the annual Sandhills Horticultural Society and Student Horticultural Club plant sale. Pre-orders are recommended. Call Johanna Westmen at 910-246-4959. You may also purchase plants the day of sale. Horticultural Society members receive 5% off orders of \$100 or more.

Fall Flower Arranging

October 8 (Tuesday) 2PM - 3PM – Ball Visitors Center

Join Matt Hollyfield of Hollyfield Design as he shares how to create the perfect fall wreath for your home. Using a grapevine wreath and lots of natural mediums, you will make a lovely wreath that can be used through the fall season. Horticultural Society members \$45, nonmembers \$50. Wreath and natural mediums included in price. Other items will be available for purchase to add to your wreath.

Santa in the Gardens

November 17 (Sunday) 1PM - 4PM – Hoad Children’s Garden

Join us for the second year of Santa and Mrs. Claus at the Hoad Children’s Garden in the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens. Bring your children for a visit and storytelling time as well as face painting, a craft to make reindeer food, and of course cookies and hot chocolate! Take your own pictures with Santa in plenty of time for your Christmas cards. Visits with Santa will be from 1:00-2:00. Santa and Mrs. Claus will tell Christmas stories from 2:00-2:30, more time to visit with Santa will be from 2:30-3:30 and then another story time will be from 3:00-4:00. This event is free but registration is required and space is limited. Please indicate when you register how many children you are bringing and which visitation time you plan to attend. In the event of inclement weather the activities will be located inside the Ball Visitors Center.



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Gardening in the South

Sandhills Gardeners are in for a real treat on September 13 from 1 pm to 2 pm at the Ball Visitors Center. Dr. Mark Weathington, Director of the JC Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh will give a presentation on Gardening in the South.

The Sandhills Horticultural Society and the Sandhills Council of Garden Clubs are sponsoring the event.

Mark Weathington is uniquely qualified to discuss gardening in the South. He has spent more than twenty years gaining experience by serving as a horticulturist for the Atlanta Botanical Garden and as Director of Horticulture for the Norfolk Botanical Garden before joining the JC Raulston Arboretum.

His newest book "Gardening in the South: The Complete Homeowner's Guide," is specific to the South. He leaned on his experience living in several distinct regions of the South – the Mountains, the Piedmont, the Coast and the Urban South as well.

The book explores the wealth of plant material for each region from annuals and ground-cover plants to shrubs and trees.

The program is free. Register by calling (910) 695-3882 or email at landscapgardening@sandhills.edu. Space is limited, so register early.



Dr. Mark Weathington

Spring Cleaning

Hilarie Blevins

Summer is nearing its end. The days are growing shorter and often times your garden is growing tired. As we approach those first frost dates many people want to prune their perennials back and tidy up the garden for winter. I implore you to resist this temptation. Save that big cleanup for spring.

It is actually beneficial to your garden and its ecosystem to leave the dead stems and leaves through the winter. I know many of you are already shaking your heads in disgust, but hear me out. The dead stems and leaves often provide a little extra insulation for your plants. If plants happen to have hollow stems, water can settle into the cut stems. The freezing and thawing of this captured water can cause damage or even



death to the plant. Also, this debris is often home to the pupae of butterflies and other desirable garden insects. By removing their winter habitat you are reducing their numbers in your garden and possibly creating an imbalance in our ecosystem. All of this being said, if you do have diseased plants or insect infestations that need management – remove immediately. Otherwise save that cleanup for early spring. It will be a good time to assess the overall health of you garden.