



Sandhills
Horticultural Gardens

The Bloomin' News

Sandhills Community College

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*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 Fruit and Vegetable Garden has always been one of my favorite gardens. Located down the hillside behind the Ball Visitors Center and the Hackley Woodland Garden lies this wonderful space. This garden is designed with many different edible plants that can be grown in most landscapes with good results. This garden exhibits several structures such as the grape arbor and a white picket fence surrounding the Bea O'Rand children's veggie garden. The deer fencing surrounding the main vegetable area has proven to discourage many unwanted guests. Rows of many fruit trees are planted in beds with lawn walkways between. Different pruning and training techniques are also displayed.



The grape arbor has the southern muscadine grapes growing on it. The original vines from the older wooden structure were protected, supported and reattached to the current structure many years ago. They are always great producers in late summer for many to enjoy and the students learn the process of pruning them each January.

The Bea O'Rand Children's Veggie garden is surrounded by a picket fence and has many small raised beds with drip irrigation and vegetables growing in them. There is also a face cut out area for you to take pictures as a pea or a carrot. This area has a metal praying mantis sculpture and trained espaliered fruit trees along one side of the fence. Each year during the Children's Treasure Trail event many small children get their hands dirty and help plant some edibles in

this area. It offers a great experience for a young green mind.

A recent upgrade to the main vegetable garden was laying down black cloth to reduce the amount of hand weeding needed. It has proven to be a time saver. A future addition in this area will be a high



tunnel structure for extending the growing seasons of both warm and cool season vegetables.

During this year's International Plant Propagators Society Conference we acquired 14 different young fig trees to plant in a renovated area of the vegetable garden. We're hoping that they will perform well in their new home.

There are many different things grown; collards, garlic, onions, shallots, fennel, lettuce, carrots, radishes, peas, corn, beans, tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, eggplant, squash, strawberries, blueberries, kiwi and many more depending on the season. Stop - I'm really getting hungry!

We are not always successful, but we keep at it each and every season. That is always an important lesson to teach and learn. And when we are rewarded with fresh bounty the hard work is all worth it. Please be sure to stop and visit the Fruit & Vegetable Garden when you visit.

"Tell Me and I Forget, Teach Me and I May Remember, Involve Me and I Learn" Benjamin Franklin.

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.



Oh Deer!!!

Hilarie Blevins

As a landscape professional, I get asked for gardening advice all the time. One of the most frequent questions is, "What do you do about deer?". There is truly no simple answer to this query. There is a palette of plants that deer do not browse on. There's another group that they don't prefer, but will eat when times get tough or they get lazy. There's a final group, let's face it, that's just deer candy. In my garden, I've given up on Hosta and *Hydrangea macrophylla* – these are deer candy. A couple of summers ago, I was working in my front garden when a neighbor stopped by. To my horror, she asked if I fed the deer because they are always hanging out in my front yard. First, I'm obviously failing at screening my home from the street. Second, the deer are way too comfortable in my garden. I have eliminated most of the deer candy. Unfortunately, I have quite a few ornamentals that my lazy herd likes enough for them to take up residence.

Deer are creatures of habit. They have regular routes that meet their needs for food, water, shelter and safety. Disrupting their routs can help save your garden. For many years I was able to have a summer vegetable garden and my neighbors could not. The difference – I had a dog. His presence was well enough known that they didn't venture into our garden. Now they have become more brazen and I've had to up my game.

Smells and tastes are a big deal for deer. **Liquid Fence** is a great tool. This product is composed of putrefied egg solids. It is available in a spray and a granular. I have only used the spray but have had great results. The downside is that it must be reapplied after every rain or irrigation cycle. After a few weeks of constant control I've been successful in changing the herd's travel pattern.

I Must Garden is another brand of animal repellents available in spray and granular. They are available in a spice or mint scent. We use the granular in the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens with excellent results. It is important to note when you apply and when you need to reapply. The granular lasts longer than sprays but does deteriorate over time.

My personal favorite is the **Havahart Electronic Deer Repellent**. This product has a small electronic coil at the top that you bait with an attractant. Deer are lured to the attractant. If their nose comes in contact with the electronic coil they receive a mild shock. It's important to change the type of attractant every couple weeks and move it around your garden. Attractants are available in acorn, sweet corn and apple flavors. There are some downfalls. The plastic gets brittle with age and UV exposure and can crack causing the unit to fail.

Each of these products has strengths and weaknesses. The constant is that none of them are a one-time application. To deter deer from your garden you must be persistent . . . just as persistent as the deer are!!



Spring Bulbs

Johanna Westmen

The emergence of spring bulbs in the Sandhills is a wonderful time. It's sometimes the first sign of spring and can bring welcome color after a cold winter. It's easy to enjoy this color in your garden every year with a little planning and thought.



Spring blooming bulbs that appear as early as February are planted in the Fall. Here in the Sandhills, we can plant from the beginning of October all the way to the end of November. The key is to plant the bulbs before the ground is frozen. Anytime

you are planting a new bed, it is always recommended to either till or turn over your soil and to incorporate some type of organic matter. Our sandy soils are lacking in organic matter and thus they have very few nutrients available to our plants. That said, I have been guilty of directly planting bulbs into unamended and untilled native soil many times. For best results, take the time to properly prepare your

soil. Bulbs can also be planted directly into existing beds, with great results. Most spring blooming bulbs, require as much sun as possible so try to choose locations that are full sun if possible.

Planting the bulbs is fairly easy - particularly in a bed that has been tilled and prepared. The size of the bulb, will determine the depth of your planting. The general rule is to plant them at least two to three times the height of the bulb itself. For example, a tulip bulb which is two inches tall would need to be planted at least four to six inches deep. Another idea we utilize here at the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens is to plant bulbs in groups, rather than individuals. We generally place at least twelve to fifteen bulbs together and have them planted in one large hole vs. individual ones. When the bulbs emerge in the spring, they resemble bouquets of flowers emerging from the soil. This also helps when you are planting large numbers of bulbs. It can make the task less daunting. You can see this affect at the walkway to the Ball Visitors Center with plantings of Asiatic Lilies and throughout the gardens with areas of daffodils.

As with any planting, watering them in is critical to their success. We generally do not apply fertilizer to our bulbs. But, you can do so with bulbs that come back year after year by applying some type of organic fertilizer in the fall, such as bone meal. The trick is remembering where they are located. Their foliage has generally died back by then!

We plant a lot of daffodils and tulips in the Gardens. Be aware that tulips don't generally come back year after year. For us they are treated as annuals. However, they provide such beauty in our plantings, that we don't miss a chance to include them. Tulips come in an amazing
Continued on page 3

Horticultural Society Events & Workshops

Tracye Reiland

The hot and humid days of summer have finally given way to the crisp and refreshing days of autumn! Even though we don't get the striking change of colors here in the Sandhills as up north and in the mountains we can enjoy the beautiful red and pink blossoms of the camellia sasanqua, clear blue skies, and the many fall festivals and other celebrations that herald the change of the season.

In September, John Bowman and Larry Allen presented the final Lunch & Learn of summer on Vermicomposting. Along with demonstrating how to build a worm farm, they provided a very witty explanation of how earth worms are master recyclers and how their decomposition activities result in beneficial soil.

During October, Matt Hollyfield, owner of Hollyfield Designs, Inc. of Southern Pines, taught a class on "Making a Fall Wreath from Naturals". Nineteen people completed an array of original wreaths using magnolia leaves. It was definitely an enjoyable experience for everyone.



Matt Hollyfield

Upcoming Events... December, January & February

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

Holiday Greenery Workshop

December 4 (Wednesday) 10AM to Noon – Ball Visitors Center

Maggie Smith of Maggie's Farm designs returns to give another of her popular holiday workshops. This is one of our most popular workshops so sign up early. You'll go home with a gorgeous holiday arrangement and have lots of holiday cheer while learning how to put it together. Horticultural Society members \$30, nonmembers \$40. Space is limited to 24. Registration Deadline is December 1.

Pruning Workshop

January 21(Tuesday) Noon – Ball Visitors Center

Taylor Williams, Moore County Extension Agent, will be giving his always popular pruning talk and demonstration. Learn pruning basics then take a walk in the Gardens to see how proper pruning is done. FREE – but reservations are necessary.

Abstract Art – Fluid Acrylic Pouring Method

February 4 (Tuesday) 10AM to Noon – Ball Visitors Center

Local artist Meredith Markfield will teach you how to paint in the newest abstract style – fluid acrylic pouring. Each student will take

home a 10X10 inch original abstract painting. Learn how to mix paints to the right consistency for pouring to create your choice of two styles of an abstract painting. To explore this method of painting and see examples of what you can create, see the instructor's website: www.artbymeredith.com or our Facebook page. Students should wear old clothing and bring an apron for further protection. Paintings require a week to dry. Space is limited and registration must be made by January 27. Horticultural members \$45, non-members \$50.

Beneficial Insects

February 28 (Friday) Noon – Ball Visitors Center

Taylor Williams will return to give a talk on beneficial insects. He will discuss how to identify them and why we should encourage them as an important natural pest control in the garden. You don't want to miss this program. Taylor is an expert on insects. FREE – but reservations are necessary.

Spring Bulbs Continued from page 2

array of colors and forms. There are early, mid-season and late season varieties, so you could have them blooming all spring!

Daffodils perform very well for us and are pretty reliant about coming back year after year. They come in various colors and forms with varieties that bloom as early as February. Speaking of February don't forget about crocus! These small diminutive beautiful flowers are some of the first bloomers to appear. Because of their size be sure to place them in the front of your beds. I have grown other spring bloomers such as common hyacinth and grape hyacinth with success. Others such as Checkered lily, Spanish bluebell and Snowdrop, I have not tried but am now seriously considering adding to our fall plantings for spring color.

No matter which bulbs you choose. You will not be disappointed with the results. In the Spring, come to the Gardens to see what we have been up to this Fall with bulbs. Happy planting!

Winter Gardening Tips

- Clean and oil all hand garden tools before storing for winter.
- Inspect interior plants for insects and diseases before bringing them in
- Plant spring flowering bulbs such as daffodils, crocus and hyacinth.
- Take a soil test. The extension office will provide boxes and instructions.
- Winter is the best time to prune most deciduous shrubs and trees.
- Don't forget to feed and water the birds.



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A Gift That Keeps On Giving

Your gift of a Sandhills Horticultural Society membership includes a FREE subscription to Better Homes and Gardens magazine. In addition to BH&G a membership includes many more on-going benefits. Such as . . .

- Free Garden Seminars
- A discount at the student's spring and fall plant sales
- Access to Horticultural Trips
- Bloomin' News quarterly newsletter
- Use of the Ball Garden Visitors Center for garden related events
- Reciprocal admission to over 200 gardens throughout North America
- A member discount on Horticultural Society workshops and programs
- Continuing educational opportunities

The most important benefit of membership is support of the Sandhills Horticultural Gardens. Membership dues and Society sponsored programs provide the funds required for the planned development and maintenance of the Gardens.

Gift Membership Information 2019-2020

Name of Membership Recipient _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email Address _____

Please make checks payable to: SCC – Sandhills Horticultural Society.

____ Individual \$25.00 ____ Family \$45.00 ____ Individual Life \$350.00

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Enclosed is a check in the amount of _____

We will send a card to acknowledge your special gift. Message you want included:

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