



Backyard Views

The Backyard Gardeners

Spring, 2012

The Backyard Gardeners, Inc. was established in 2007 as a non-profit organization to provide free education to homeowners in the Hampton Roads area on gardening and horticultural practices, designs and techniques in order to encourage conservation of our natural resources, the enjoyment of gardens, garden-related activities and creative garden art.

Calendar of Events

Due to change in library hours
NOTE NEW TIME!!!

Garden Talks, 6-7:30 pm
Chesapeake Library
298 Cedar Road

March 20

"Worm Composting"

Kandy Keith, Chesapeake Master Gardeners

April 17

"Rain Barrels & Conserving H₂O"
Charles Lastinger and Pam Fisher,
Chesapeake Master Gardeners

May 15

"Gardening for Bees"

Frank Walker,
Tidewater Beekeepers Association

Special Events

Virginia Beach Spring Craft Fair, Heritage Celebration

March 16-18

Va. Beach Convention Center

TBG Spring Garden Faire

April 28, 9am-2pm

Chesapeake Central Librar298
Cedar Road

The OTHER Bulbs by Patti McCambridge

When it comes to bulbs, spring blooming bulbs like daffodils and tulips come to mind first, however, summer bulbs are just as beautiful and can play a vital role in the abundant summer garden. Planted in spring, they offer color and impact during the summer and early fall providing a variety of blooms and foliage that can be enjoyed both indoors and out.

Most summer bulbs are more particular about their environment than their spring blooming cousins. They require soil rich in nutrients, sufficient moisture, excellent drainage and most, but not all, perform better if given a site with full sun. The bulbs should be planted when all danger of frost is past and the soil has warmed to 60° F. Optimally, they should be planted 3 times as deep as the diameter of the bulb and kept well watered but not soggy. In areas of clay soil, a 2 inch layer of sand in the bottom of the planting hole promotes drainage and can help eliminate bulbs rotting or becoming diseased. Mulching also helps preserve moisture in the soil and discourage critters from disturbing the bulbs.

Summer blooming bulbs are heavy "feeders" and optimal bloom production is achieved by fertilizing them monthly with a 5-10-10 fertilizer. The supplemental feedings help the bulbs grow, bloom and store energy for the following season. However, use of organic fertilizers in hot, wet summers may retard bloom growth and promote disease.

Summer bulbs are divided into groups but light requirement-full sun, part shade and full shade. Some can perform nicely in varying conditions. A few of the favorite bulbs that prefer full sun in our area are dahlia, oriental lily, acedanthera (fragrant gladiola), canna, gloriosa lily, butterfly ginger, gladiolus, Asiatic Lily, crocosmia and Pineapple Lily. These summer favorites work nicely when paired with perennial favorites like Rudbeckia, Echinacea, Salvia and Phlox in a mixed perennial border.

Calla, oxalis, Elephant Ear and Surprise Lily bloom equally well in full sun or part shade so they offer versatility in use. They create a tropical look when paired with ferns, hostas and bleeding hearts and add color and interesting foliage to areas that may have only morning or afternoon sun or dappled shade. Amazingly, some summer blooming bulbs like tuberous begonias or caladiums offer colorful options in blooms and foliage for shady spots. When paired with coleus, impatiens and hosta, a shady area can become awash with color for the summer.

A variety of resources exist for researching and purchasing summer bulbs. Many online retailers have wonderful photos and information, so doing your homework on these lesser known bulbs is very easy. For local favorites, Brent & Becky's Bulbs have a wonderful catalog that can be viewed online with excellent photos, cultural information and companion planting suggestions. A copy of the chart they include in their catalog listing summer bulbs, their bloom times and cultural information is included in this newsletter.

It's time to think about adding some summer color to your garden with bulbs!



Spotlight on Gardens

Daffodil Time

Spring is daffodil time and in our area and there are a number of places to go to see daffodils by the thousands! Two of the best known daffodil hybridizers in the country, Brent & Becky Heath, live in our own backyard. Not only do they have an extensive catalogue of bulbs for purchase, but their 28 acre farm in Gloucester, VA, contains a number of display gardens open to the public showing how to use bulbs as companion plants in a variety of settings. On selected days a walking tour will be given of their trial fields and display gardens. On **March 7 at 2 pm**, Brent & Becky will present “One Hundred Years of Daffodils and More” a free seminar on the history and development of the farm. Walking tours of the trial fields and gardens will offered on **Saturdays from 1pm-3pm on March 17, March 31, April 7 and April 14** and on **Wednesday from 1 pm-3 pm March 21, March 28, April 4 and April 11**. The cost is \$10 person and reservations are required. For more information, call 804-693-3966 or check [Brent & Becky's Bulbs](#).



In addition to events at Brent & Becky's, several area daffodil shows or festivals take place in the Spring. Visit a few of the shows and enjoy the heralding of Spring.

Northeast North Carolina Daffodil Show, Saturday, March 24 from 1 pm-5 pm at the NC Cooperative Extension Center, 120 Community Way, Barco, NC. For more information, contact Jan Perry-Weber at 252-232-2262.

Gloucester Daffodil Festival, March 24 from 10 am-5pm and March 25 from noon-5 pm on Main Street, Gloucester, VA. For more information, check the [Gloucester Daffodil Festival](#) website.

Chincoteague Daffodil Festival, April 14 from 9 am-4 pm and April 15 from 10 am-3 pm at the Chincoteague Community Center, 6155 Community Drive, Chincoteague Island, VA. For more information, check the [Chincoteague Daffodil Festival](#) website.

Tool Corner *by Gary Bennett*



A bulb auger will help make planting bulbs a little easier. The Radius Garden 207 PRO Ergonomic Stainless Steel Bulb Auger is designed with your comfort in mind. It has a large gripping surface providing room for both hands, an unbreakable resin-encased steel

shaft, a carbon steel blade design with depth indicators and teeth that make use in compacted soil easier, and an extra-wide raised forward step, offset from the shaft for better leverage and comfort. This tool has a lifetime warranty and will save your hands and your back. For more information and other ergonomic tools, check www.radiusgarden.com.

Garden Hints *by Patty Bennett*

- ❁ Squirrels love tulips therefore, plant them with daffodils or in containers, hanging baskets. Bury sharp pieces of **gravel** around the bulbs to prevent critters from digging them.
- ❁ Surround spring flowering bulbs with pansies, violas or phlox. The bulbs push up through the flowers, forming a symphony of color.
- ❁ Bulbs crave great drainage so use organic matter like compost or leaf mold when planting.
- ❁ In pots, heavy bulbs like Amaryllis need sand or tiny pebbles to weight them down as they become top heavy.

You may request to be added to the newsletter mailing list at www.thebackyardgardeners.org or by emailing gardenguru@thebackyardgardeners.org.

Help Us Raise Needed Money!
Bloomin' Bucks
with Brent and Becky's Bulbs

Brent and Becky's Bulbs offers a fundraising project for non-profit groups. If you wish to order from them, click on the logo above and select our group, The Backyard Gardeners, from the list. We will receive a portion of the sales. This a great way for you to help us help you!! For more info on this program, check www.thebackyardgardeners.org.

The Backyard Gardeners, Inc.
Education to help make gardening fun!

Spring Calendar of Gardening Events 2012

compiled by Nancy Radcliffe

March

- 
- 2-4 **McDonald Garden Center Outdoor Show** at the Hampton Location
- 3 **Smithfield Gardens** – Lecture on Propagating Techniques, 10 am, 757-238-2511 for information
- 7 **The Gardens at Brent & Becky's Bulbs**, "One Hundred Years of Daffodils & More" at 2 pm Free
Reservations required 804-693-3966 Gloucester, VA
- 9-11 **2012 Mid-Atlantic Home & Garden Show**, Virginia Beach Convention Center, \$10.00, for information
757-420-2434
- 10 **Smithfield Gardens** – Lecture on Composting for Beginners at 10 am, call 757-238-2511 for more
information
- 10 **Smithfield Gardens** – Lecture on Gardening with Camellias at 2 pm, call 757-238-2511 for more
information
- 10 **Currituck Master Gardeners Arbor Day Tree Give Away**-starting at 9 am at the Moyock Post
Office, and the Food Lion in Grady also at the Ace Hardware in Corolla
- 16-18 **26th Virginia Beach Spring Craft Show/Heritage Celebration** (The Backyard Gardeners will be there)
at the Virginia Beach Convention Center, \$6.00 will take 50 cents off with a can of food for the Food
Bank, for more information call 757-420-2434
- 17, 21, 28, 31 **Gardens at Brent & Becky's Bulbs** – Garden Walks \$10.00 from 1 – 3 pm Reservations
required, for more information call 804-693-3966
- 17 **Smithfield Gardens** –Lecture on Vegetable Gardens, 10 am , call 757-238-2511 for more information
- 17 **Smithfield Gardens** –Lecture on Home Landscape Design, 2 pm, call 757-238-2511 for information
- 24 **Smithfield Gardens** – Lecture on All About Herbs, 10 am, call 757-238-2511 for more information
- 24 **American Camellia Society Regional Show & Sale**, Norfolk Botanical Gardens, 9 am- 5 pm,
- 24 **4th Annual Northeast North Carolina Daffodil Show** 1– 5 pm, NC Cooperative Extension,
Currituck County Center
- 24&25 **26th Annual Daffodil Festival** in Gloucester, VA
- 31 **Smithfield Gardens** – Lecture on Chemical vs Organic, 10 am call 757-238-2511 for more information
- 31 **Mid-Atlantic District Herb Society Show and Sale** at Norfolk Botanical Gardens, 9 am – 5 pm
- 31-April 1st **White's Nursery Spring Kick-off**

April

- 2 **Norfolk Botanical Gardens**, Bike Nights every M, W, Th 4 – 7 pm thru October 15th
- 4, 7, 11, 14 **Gardens at Brent & Becky's Bulbs**- Garden Walks \$10.00, 1 – 3 pm Reservations
required call 804-693-3996
- 7 **Elizabethan Gardens**- Easter Eggstravaganza Gift Shoppe & Plant Sale from 10 am – 2 pm
- 7 **Virginia Native Plant Sale** at the Francis Land House in Virginia Beach 10 am – 4 pm
- 7-8 **White's Nursery Easter Egg Hunt**
- 13-14 **TCC Plant Sale**, Chesapeake Campus, Cedar Road
- 14-15 **Chincoteague Daffodil Festival**, Chincoteague Community Center (14th 10 am – 4 pm & 15th 10 am –
3 pm), for more information call 757-894-2334



- 15 **Herb Society of America, Inc, Tidewater Unit** presents "Potpourri Presentation & Bar" at Norfolk Botanical Gardens at 1 pm in the Holly Room
- 16 **Elizabethan Gardens** "Spring Fever Chirping for Savings" Gift Shoppe & Plant Sale, 9 am – 5 pm
- 20-21 **Fred Heutte Center Herb and Art Sale** at the Fred Heutte Center in Norfolk
- 20-21 **Currituck Flower and Garden Sale** at the Currituck High School in Barco
- 20-21 **Hermitage Museum & Gardens Spring Heirloom Plant Sale** (20th from 10 am – 3 pm, 21st from 9 am – 2 pm)
- 21-28 **Historic Garden Week in Virginia** sponsored by the Garden Club of VA for more information call 804-644-7776 ext. 22 or go to www.vagardenweek.org
- 26 **Historic Garden Week In Norfolk Homes & Garden Tours** 10 am – 5:30 pm
- 26 **Sunsets on the River** at the Hermitage Museum Gardens from 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm
- 27 **Arbor Day in Virginia.** Check your local cities for free trees.
- 28 **The Backyard Gardener's Spring Plant Sale** at the Chesapeake Central Library from 9 am – 2 pm
- 28 **Tidewater African Violet Show & Sale** at Norfolk Botanical Gardens from 9 am – 5 pm
- 28 **Smithfield Gardens** - Lecture on Perennial Gardening at 10 am, for information call 757-238-2511
- 28-29 **White's Nursery** Pets weekend

May

- 5 **Eagle Festival** at Norfolk Botanical Gardens from 10 am – 4 pm
- 5 **Smithfield Gardens** –Lecture on Shade Gardens at 10 am, for more information call 757-238-2511
- 5 **Smithfield Gardens**- Easy Roses in the Garden at 2 pm, for more information call 757-238-2511
- 11-13 **Norfolk Botanical Gardens Spring Plant Sale** from 10 am– 5 pm
- 12 **Virginia Beach Master Gardeners Spring Plant Sale**, Virginia Beach Farmers Market, 9 am – 1 pm
- 12 **Smithfield Gardens** – Lecture on St. Augustine Lawns at 10 am for information call 757-238-2511
- 12 **Smithfield Gardens** – Flowering Gifts for Mom starting at 9 am
- 12-13 **White's Nursery** Mother's are Queen for the Day and Garden Party
- 12-13 **Elizabethan Gardens**- Mother's Day Hummingbird Plant Sale from 9 am – 5 pm
- 19 **Smithfield Gardens** – Lecture on Container Gardening at 10 am, for information call 757-238-2511
- 19 **Smithfield Gardens** – Lecture on Butterfly Gardening at 2 pm for information call 757-238-2511
- 20 **Smithfield Gardens** – Lecture on Small Water Gardens at 2 pm, for information call 757-238-2511
- 20 **Tidewater Rose Society Celebration of Roses** at Norfolk Botanical Gardens from 9 am – 5 pm