

Growing Up



September 2016

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Nebraska Extension In Dodge County
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Hello Master Gardeners!

Hi Everyone!

Where did summer go!?

Wasn't it just August yesterday?

I hope you've all had time to visit friends and family, spend quality time in the garden, and harvest at least a couple ripe tomatoes.

Have a good 'rest' of the summer, as we look forward to fall.

Natalia

Pollinator Gardens

The National Wildlife Federation is encouraging homeowners, schools, communities to create habitat for pollinators through its Garden for Wildlife program.

The Federation's website www.nwf.org is full of information about pollinators and tips to help you attract them to your garden.

To learn more about this program visit www.nwf.org/nwfgarden



International Master Gardener Conference (IMGC) Portland, Oregon July 10-14, 2017, 9:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Wherever your garden grows on this planet, you will find a wealth of new ideas at the 2017 International Master Gardener Conference (IMGC) in Portland, Oregon, July 10-14, 2017.



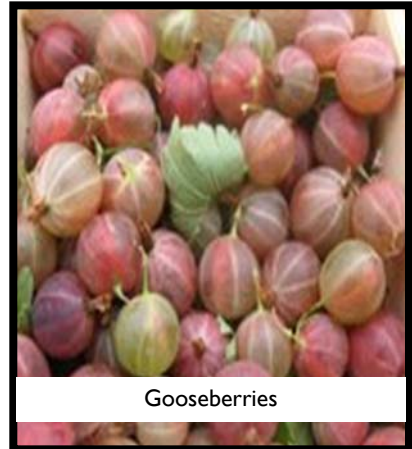
The conference is scheduled at the Oregon convention Center in Portland near the east banks of the Willamette River. If you are on Facebook you can like their page found by typing in the search box "2017 International Master Gardener Conference" here you will find more information about the conference.

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The Forgotten Gooseberry - By Lorraine Urban

When was the last time you picked up some fresh gooseberries at your favorite market? Frozen gooseberries? Never have eaten gooseberries? Don't know what they look like? But you have heard of them...right?

Ribes uva crispa (gooseberry), a cousin of *Ribes grossularia* (currant) is slowly gaining in popularity in the US. Popular for centuries in Europe and Asia, it has waxed and waned in popularity on the American continent, partly due to the discovery that this plant was a host for a disease that attacks White Pine trees (Pine Blister Rust).



Gooseberries

As fruits go they don't need a lot of space...about 3' x 6' for each plant and another couple of feet between plants. Gooseberries tolerate a variety of soil types, just not those that are water-logged. The plants grow best in climates that have humid summers and cold winters, like ours, and are best planted in the fall or very early spring, in a spot that gets morning sun and some afternoon shade.

Gooseberries are relatively free from disease, and insect pests are few and seldom, especially if there is good air circulation among the plants. Powdery mildew, when/if it occurs, can be treated with a mineral oil spray. Applications of Bordeaux mixture can be used to control leaf spot. Some plant varieties are now available that are resistant to both of those diseases. If cutworms become a nuisance, control with Rotenone; if you notice "webbing" on the plants, apply Dipel or Thuricide to control the fruit worms.

But, gooseberries are easy to grow and flavorful and offer health benefits. A 100 gram serving contains only 44 calories and provides more than 44% of the required daily amount of vitamin C, as well as moderate amounts of minerals. They are 88% water and contain only 10% carbohydrates.

Gooseberries do have thorns which can be sharp. Wear gloves when picking the fruit, and lift the ends of the branches up with one hand and pick the hanging berries with the other. Pruning the bushes of the oldest stems, which should begin after the 4th or 5th year, promotes growth and opens the center of the plants up to make picking easier.



Gooseberry Plant

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We have 2 gooseberry bushes which we ordered 5 years ago from a WI nursery. Because it was recommended by the nursery, we bought different cultivars. One mature bush may produce from 8 - 10 pounds of fruit, per season. These are light-weight berries, so that's a lot of fruit! Our bushes began producing substantial amounts of fruit during their second season.

Gooseberries can be eaten raw or cooked. If you want to eat them raw, you should wait until they are pretty ripe/deep pink colored for the best flavor. If you plan to use them cooked, you can pick them before they are fully ripened/still green. They are good in jams, pies, sauces, and mincemeat. They can be used alone or in combination with apples, pears, rhubarb, or other berries. They can also be used to make teas.

We love pie at our house, so we freeze several quarts of fresh gooseberries each year to be used through the winter and spring until we have more berries. Gooseberries are tart, but some sugar and a little nutmeg or orange zest (or both) enhances their distinctive flavor. I like my gooseberry pie a la mode. YUM!

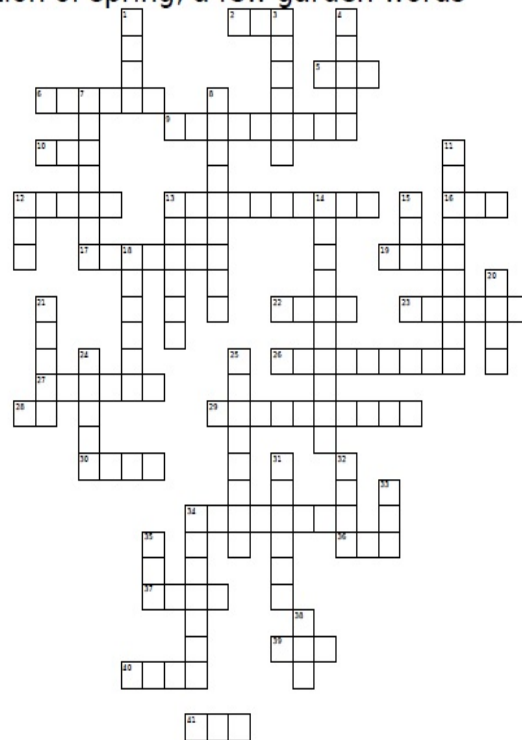
So, if you'd like to try eating gooseberries before you decide to grow them, ask at your favorite market if they can get you some gooseberries.

- - - Lorraine

In the Garden

Librariandoa

In anticipation of spring, a few garden words



- | | | | |
|-----------|---|---------|---|
| 2 Across | Undeveloped flower | 1 Down | Climbing plant |
| 5 Across | Unit of measure | 3 Down | Tool for planting bulbs |
| 6 Across | Bloom | 4 Down | Remove unwanted parts |
| 9 Across | Improve soil | 7 Down | Without chemicals |
| 10 Across | Turn, loosen or remove soil | 8 Down | Large garden of tree varieties |
| 12 Across | A small rock | 11 Down | A plant with edible roots, leaves or stems |
| 13 Across | Multicolored leaves | 12 Down | Tool with a serrated blade |
| 16 Across | Light chatter | 13 Down | Shrinking |
| 17 Across | Decayed organic material | 14 Down | Relocate a plant |
| 19 Across | An undesirable flower stalk on a vegetable | 15 Down | A Collection of wild animals |
| 22 Across | By any other name would smell as sweet | 18 Down | Animal dung |
| 23 Across | The best traits of two different species | 20 Down | Often fragrant bulbous plant with showy flowers |
| 26 Across | Prepare ground for planting | 21 Down | Funkia |
| 27 Across | A small curved tool for lifting plants and soil | 24 Down | The rotating part of a device |
| 28 Across | Sixth tone of a diatonic scale | 25 Down | Remove spent flowers |
| 29 Across | Acclimate to the outdoors | 31 Down | Lives for a single year |
| 30 Across | Tool for gathering leaves or smoothing soil | 32 Down | Above or on top of |
| 34 Across | The flow of excess water away from an area | 33 Down | Earth's star |
| 36 Across | log | 34 Down | A long period without rainfall |
| 37 Across | Spirit | 35 Down | A substance with no fixed shape |
| 39 Across | Plant seeds | 38 Down | Used for This Little Piggy |
| 40 Across | Absorbs food and water underground | | |
| 41 Across | Away from the inside or center | | |

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About Paw Paw Trees . . . - By Rich Apking

First things first, I'm a native Nebraskan, born in Schyuler, raised in Ord. My mom, however, is from the South. Born in Texas and raised in SE Kansas.

Since my Dad was gone a lot, my sisters and I were influenced a lot by Mom, and her Southern stories and experiences. We were exposed to a lot of Southern stories and little songs, one of which was about a place called 'The Pawpaw Patch. I soon found that these songs and ditties weren't so common among my playmates, since, like me, they and their parents were mostly native Nebraskans. So, if you've never heard it, in part, here goes: Pickin' up paw paws, puttin' em in a basket, way down yonder in the pawpaw patch.

This had always been just a little song to me until I found that these things actually existed. So without any research I ordered a couple of small plants and planted them in my backyard. This happened about 7 or 8 years ago, and I don't remember the cultivar. Seems as though they took forever to get going, but now I have two really nice healthy trees that produce fruit every year. In hindsight I decided to do some research on these trees, in typical Richard fashion, plant them and then find out just what they are. Yes, it's just as backward to me as it sounds to you, but sometimes that is how things go.

Sort of like the very first shrub I planted here in Winslow. I just had to have a Burning Bush shrub, I thought they were just beautiful in the fall. So I looked in the catalog, and decided that a dwarf specimen would be just right. Little did I know that the full sized ones were 12 to 14 feet tall, and the dwarf ones turned out to be 8 to 10 feet tall, and if I wanted a reasonable sized one, say 5 to 7 feet tall I should have bought a miniature. Well we (sometimes) live and learn.

Getting back to pawpaw trees, turns out they are native to the Southeast part of the US, ranging as far West as the Missouri River valley and as far North as the Southeast corner of Nebraska. It is supposedly an understory smaller tree, needing sun to part shade, growing up to 30 feet tall and 20 feet wide, depending on cultivar. Some trees are quite triangular, and some almost round and others quite columnar.



Paw Paw Fruit - Photo credit: caseytrees.org

My trees must be strange, because the one planted in an understory area is about 2/3 the size of the one in direct sun. So much for the understory theory. These trees have large, almost tropical looking leaves, and bear kidney shaped fruit, two to six inches long and one to three inches wide; they

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Continued from page 4 typically weigh from a few ounces to half a pound. But under cultivation-and yes, there are pawpaw breeders and growers- fruits that weigh more than a pound and a half are not uncommon. I was pleasantly surprised to find that my Pawpaw trees had few, if any natural enemies, no fungus, insect, or virus infestations, they just grow and produce fruit. Now you'd think that a huge Pawpaw growing and harvesting industry would spring up, but surprisingly it hasn't. I, personally like the taste of the fruit, also called the 'Hoosier Banana'. I've used it with a little sugar and cream to make a really good smoothie, and there are recipes for pawpaw flavored ice cream.

I got interested enough in my trees to do a little research last winter, you know, when there really isn't a lot of gardening going on. Here's some of what I found. Although when you first look at them, the trees seem out of place, like they should be down in Central America in a jungle, they've been growing here for hundreds of thousands of years, long before any humans arrived. They have moved North and South with the advances and retreats of at least two glacial covering of the continent. When the most recent ice sheet advanced 85 thousand year ago, the trees were pushed South again to Mexico and East to Florida. To this day there are varieties of pawpaw that exist only in Florida and Southern Georgia. Perhaps due to their Southern heritage, the common pawpaw is one of the last trees to leaf out in the Spring. This could be a defense against a late frost.

The trees have a rather nondescript purple flower and it turns out that they aren't pollinated by bees, but by flies and beetles. This probably accounts for the sort of nasty smell of the blossoms. That's another lesson learned the hard way, don't smell the pawpaw blossoms. In addition to the relationship with the less

desirable insects, the leaves are the only larval host for caterpillars of the zebra swallowtail. Without pawpaw trees these large, black and white striped butterfly would not exist.

So, in closing, if you are interested in a smaller tree that apparently has no enemies, is rather exotic looking, bears really good fruit, and requires no special care, perhaps there is a pair (like a lot of things it takes two) of pawpaw trees in your future. Look into it, you won't be sorry.

Take care and happy gardening.
Rich



Photo of two Paw Paw Trees

Tree to the left is an understory tree, planted in the shade of a larger tree.
Tree to the right, which was planted at the same time and from the same source, is taller and produces twice as much fruit.

Photo credit: Rich Apking

Opportunities

Fertilizing Plants By Betty Hamata

Just as we all like to eat foods we like or need, so do our plants and vegetables need food to produce beautiful blooms and great tasting vegetables. For the lawn to grow green and healthy the grass needs nutrients found in fertilizers. The three basic nutrients are Nitrogen (N) Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K). For instance 12-24-12 includes 12% nitrogen, 24% Phosphorus, and 12% Potassium.

For lawn fertilizing I use any good fertilizer with crabgrass preventer apply in early May when rain is predicted as it needs to be watered in. I add slow-release fertilizer in late June and a winterizer fertilizer in Nov. I control lawn weeds in the fall with a liquid weed killer.

I prepare my garden beds in early spring and use a slow-release granular fertilizer with a high middle number for blooming plants and incorporate into the soil. If just sprinkled on top and it rains too much all the fertilizer can pool in one area. I also add more fertilizer in mid July to my annual flower beds and work into the soil. Perennials generally like some fertilizer in early spring. I do not fertilize my daylilies or hostas as they get to lush with leaves. The roses enjoy fertilizer with systemic insecticide applied in early spring. Generally the shrubs and trees get some fertilizer if planted near the lawn.

For containers I use a potting soil with fertilizer included. About a month after planting I use a liquid fertilizer every two weeks, and use liquid fertilizer on hanging baskets. I water the containers well and then fertilize them while still damp. If fertilizing a dry plant the roots can get burned. I also try to fertilize on a cloudy and cooler day. Containers and hanging baskets need to be watered so much during the summer that the fertilizer can be leached out from the soil.

For vegetables I use any good vegetable fertilizer in early spring and incorporate into the soil and add more about July 1st. to individual plants.

I grow quite a few houseplants. I fertilize once a month from March to November and not at all during the winter. I have a few orchids and use a orchid fertilizer of 1/4 teaspoon dissolved in one gallon of water and use this every time I water them. This also works well on African Violets.

I like to see beautiful blooms on my annuals and containers and feeding them well helps me achieve this. Beautiful and great tasting vegetables need regular fertilizer.



UPDATES / UPCOMING EVENTS

UNL HortUpdate

First fall fertilizer application - Fall is still the most important time to fertilize cool-season turfgrass. Fall fertilization helps promote recovery, builds roots, and increases sugar reserves going into winter. Here are the current recommendations for fertilizer applications.

- **Newly seeded areas:** Starter fertilizer with higher levels of P2O5 should be applied at or slightly after seeding. A second application of starter fertilizer should then be applied 4 weeks after emergence or mid-October (whichever occurs first). Newly seeded golf or sports turf can also benefit from frequent applications of soluble nitrogen (urea or ammonium sulfate) every 10 to 14 days to accelerate establishment.
- **Newer turf areas (<10 years old>):** New stands of turf require more fertilizer than older turf areas. Additionally, turf areas that are thin or were damaged by a pest will also benefit from additional fall N to accelerate recovery prior to winter. For these sites apply a balanced (50% soluble and 50% slow-release) nitrogen fertilizer in late-August to early-September. Then make a follow-up application of a quick release fertilizer in mid-October. Again, aim to apply 0.5 to 1.0 lbs N per 1000 ft² or buy a fertilizer with your spreader setting on the bag.
- **Established turf (10+ years old):** One application of a balanced released nitrogen source in mid-September. Look for a fertilizer product with 30 to 50% of the total nitrogen as quick release/soluble nitrogen. This will provide even release during the fall. Aim to apply 0.5 to 1.0 lbs N per 1000 ft². If unable to calibrate your spreader, then buy a fertilizer with spreader settings for your particular fertilizer spreader on the bag.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Cultivating Resilient Landscapes

October 5 and 6, 2016

Lauritzen Gardens, Omaha, Nebraska

About the Heartland Native Plant Summit

Periodic drought is a part of life in America's Heartland, putting a strain on the plantings that enhance our residential, commercial and community landscapes. The Heartland Native Plant Summit will explore innovative ways native plants can be used to craft landscapes that are beautiful, sustainable, and naturally resilient to drought.

Summit Highlights

- Presentations by experts in climatology, native plant ecology, and sustainable landscape practices
- Sessions on native plant horticulture (plant selection, propagation, maintenance practices, etc.)
- Sessions on utilizing native plants in the landscape (planning, design, innovative applications, etc.)
- Keynote address by Michael Forsberg, renowned Great Plains conservation photographer
- Opportunities to network with an exciting cross-section of parties committed to water conservation
- Time to explore Lauritzen Gardens on your own or on a guided tour

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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- Tours of local native plant nurseries, natural areas, and real-world landscaping projects

Who Should Attend?

- Nursery, landscape management, and other green industry professionals
- Public garden professionals
- Landscape architects
- Real estate developers and property managers
- Urban and land planning professionals
- Conservation agencies and organizations
- Students
- Native plant enthusiasts

Registration

The registration fee for the two-day conference is \$150/person (student rate \$75/person). Registration fee covers the entire program plus the cost of lunch, networking reception, and dinner on October 5, box lunch on October 6, and refreshments at breaks. Registration deadline is September 23, 2016.

Website: http://www.lauritzengardens.org/Visit/Events_and_Exhibits/Heartland_Native_Plant_Summit/index.asp

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