

The Green Patch

Plant Fair History

By Kathy Hayes, Master Gardener

In looking back these last 16 years of our Plant Fair, it was a leap of faith that a few people took to help organize our first annual fair. My first initial contact was with Chris Carlson, Extension Educator, when I took Master Gardener training in 1991. Later that year, I called Chris and talked to him about having some kind of plant fair here in Norfolk that people could attend. They could listen to speakers and buy good quality plants. We didn't always need to go to Omaha and Lincoln to attend something of this nature. Chris took it upon himself to call a few people from different gardening organizations to meet and start planning. As I remember, we had Rene and Virgil Halsey from the Wildflower group, Carolyn Lingenfelter from the Elkhorn Valley Iris Society, Jerry Arkfeld, Karen Zierke, and Phyllis McCain graduates of the Master Gardener training, Harlan Hammernik from Bluebird Nursery, just to mention a few. We would meet every few weeks at Double K restaurant in Norfolk, have coffee and go over plans for our new project.

Our show was called Spring Plant Extravaganza and so we started. The Elkhorn Valley Iris Society hosted an iris show; we had five local and area nurseries who supplied plants and seeds for sale. We had six educational workshops. At that time, we were small enough that we only used half the Northeast Community College gym. Mary Pat Finn-Hoag's headline in the Norfolk Daily Newspaper said "First-ever Plant Show Rip-Roaring Success". The second Plant Fair held May 7, 1994, had two detailed workshops in a classroom setting as well as the main speakers. Chris Carlson was quoted as saying, "The Plant Fair is for the gardener who wants to know more". He also said it will enhance anyone's horticultural expertise. Again the Iris Society held an iris show.

We now use the full gym and have quite a few vendors, varying from selling garden décor, twig furniture, plants, pottery, and herbs. We haven't had an iris show for a few years, since the weather hasn't been very cooperative. We've had a lot of wonderful speakers

Special points of interest:

- Plant Fair—May 1 & 2
- Herbs
- What is it??

2006 Plant Fair



Inside this issue:

Children's Garden	2
Creative Containers	2
Plant Fair flyer	3
A Word From a Volunteer	3
Herbs	4
How to Grow Gladiolus	5
Recycle the Rain	5
Lemon Verbena	5
Sweet Potatoes	6
Pruning Primer for Small Trees and Shrubs	7
What Is It?	8

through the years and have learned a lot about gardening. One of our favorite speakers has been Kent Stork of Fremont who also sold his African Violets at the fair. Another favorite has been Gladys Jeurink of Lincoln whose practical advice has been great. Harlan Hamernik always brought some of the latest and newest flowers when he spoke.

For a few years, the Senior Center had a food booth at the show. We were very fortunate to have them providing good food for the people and gave everyone a chance to sit down and visit with other gardeners. As the years have gone by, the Master Gardeners now have the food booth, so we're cooks as well as gardeners.

We've been very fortunate to have had Bluebird Nursery providing plants for us throughout the years of the Plant Fair. Also, the Master Gardeners, Chris Carlson and many other organizations who have contributed a lot of time and effort to make this endeavor a success. Without all of these things, it wouldn't be the successful Plant Fair it is today.

Thanks everyone!

Children's Garden a Big Hit with the Small Set

By Jill Heemstra, Master Gardener

One unique corner of the annual Plant Fair not only encourages children to come in, but expects them to touch—everything. The Children's Garden offers hands-on activities for "budding" gardeners including: planting seeds or transplants, coloring, stories, and exploring the textures, smells and sights of natural materials.

The original idea came from [the late] Nancy Lang, an Extension Educator and Master Gardener who was passionate about gardening as a family activity. Nancy prepared for the children's garden for weeks in advance, growing plants to transplant, preparing hands-on activities, and developing information for parents on gardening with children. After Nancy's health declined, Ellen Glanzer, a retired school teacher took over the project. Ellen has continued to emphasize one-on-one interaction with children and planting the "seeds" for a lifetime love of gardening.

The theme and most activities change from year to year, but the 'garden in a cup' remains the perennial favorite. Each child reviews a selection of seeds and transplants then picks one to plant in a plastic cup. The child is supervised, but encouraged to complete all the steps themselves. They punch a hole in the bottom of the cup, and learn about the importance of drainage. Then they fill the cup with soil and plant their seeds or transplant. Lastly, they water their 'garden', label it, and review instructions on caring for their plant. Children can also create a personalized label that fits over their cup.

More than 70 children visit this booth each year at the Plant Fair. Many families have become regular visitors—making this corner their first stop. Several Master Gardeners volunteer their time to ensure that each child has an enjoyable and educational introduction to nature and gardening. For more information about the children's garden, contact Ellen Glanzer at 402-371-1907 or Jill Heemstra at 402-748-3909 or curtjill@huntel.net.



Children enjoy searching the sandbox for buried pine cones, acorns, and other items.

Creative Containers

By Connie Kava

It's that time of year when signs of Spring are all around us. Birds are migrating back, and gardeners are planning their gardens; both in beds and in containers. How about shake things up this Spring? Go beyond normal, generic containers that are perfectly functional, but a bit bland. Be open to expressing your personal style; maybe even shock a few passersby on their daily walk.

Once you get started, the ideas will pop out at you everywhere you go. There are "containers" just waiting to be used again. Items from a decluttered garage, attic, or basement; garage sales, and thrift shops make great places to find your containers. Have fun in your quest, or treasure hunt, as I refer to it. Be open minded; looking at old things with new eyes.

The possibilities are endless depending on the space you are working with. On an acreage corner, or large yard, you could make a full fledged "garden room" complete with what used to be indoor furniture: bed, night stand, sink, table and chairs, dresser, spring doors, even a piano!

You don't have that kind of space? Well, how about little containers like a tiny shoe that will always

remind you of your, now, 6 foot tall son! Or your deceased husband's boot filled with Hen and Chicks that will add to his presence on your patio while watching the sun set. See the difference already? Instead of just a pot with your favorite flowers, they now have sentimental meaning around them. Much more interesting than plastic pots.

Other fun ideas are transparent aquariums, especially where children can watch the roots spread underground, and green plants appear right before their eyes on top! For purse lovers, how about a pretty flowering plant inside an old purse not functional anymore as a purse? Kitchens are fun places to display kitchen related items like an old mixer with the bowl below spewing out a gorgeous plant. Tea pots, long put away percolator coffee pots, old coffee cans, canister sets, crocks, and your old lunch box from grade school make great containers. Talk about memories all around you no matter what age your home is. A mix of old and new is always a great way to add interest.

Garages are great places to find tool and tackle boxes that have been replaced with more

(Continued on page 4)

Northeast Nebraska Master Gardener

2009 Plant Fair

Saturday, May 2
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Early Plant sales: Friday, May 1
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Northeast Community College
Cox Activity Center
801 E Benjamin Ave, Norfolk

Free Admission!
House Plant Sales!
Great Vendors!
Children's Activities!
Door Prizes!
Lunch Stand Provided
by Master Gardeners!

**On-Going
Demonstrations**
Cooking with Herbs

Educational Presentations!

Friday	6:00pm	"Easy Care Hybrid Teas" Don Swanson, Noted Rosarian, Omaha
Saturday	9:00am	"Outstanding Shrubs for Northeast Nebraska " Robert Henrickson, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, Lincoln
	10:30am	"Perennials in the Garden" Rod Hamernik, Bluebird Nursery, Clarkson
	12:00pm	"Mushroom Mulching and Compost" Diane Dickes, Diane's Greenhouse, Fordyce
	12:30pm	"Planting & Pruning Bareroot Roses" and "Easy Care Hybrid Teas" Don Swanson, Noted Rosarian, Omaha
	1:30pm	"Rain Gardens & Landscaping" Sarah Browning, Extension Educator

Sponsors:

University of Nebraska- Lincoln Extension
Northeast Nebraska Master Gardeners
Northeast Community College, Norfolk

Avon – Jeanne Ballantyne, Norfolk
Diane's Greenhouse, Fordyce
Earl May Nursery & Garden Center, Norfolk

HyVee Food Store, Norfolk
Mulch 'N More, Plainview
West Point Garden Center, West Point

A Word From a Volunteer

By Kristine Zachmeyer, Master Gardener

I am ashamed to confess that I lived in Norfolk for 10 years before learning of the gem right here: the Norfolk Veterans' Home (NVH). I needed about 20 volunteer hours to complete the requirements of becoming a Master Gardener. I wandered into Jenny's office with dirt on my knees after a morning of pulling weeds. It was her warmth and hospitality that calmed my fears of this new adventure I was about to embark upon.

It may have been the second or third time at NVH that I met Inez Griffin. At first I was taken aback by this smiling woman in a wheel chair, who didn't speak, with one piercing blue eye open observing all around her. I sat next to her and told her she had the bluest eyes, just like the sky that day. She grabbed my hand and didn't want to let go, tears swelled in my eyes, as I realized that volunteering some times is just greeting someone and holding their hand. So began our friendship. The sweetest compliment I ever received while at NVH, was someone miss took me as Miss Inez's granddaughter. She didn't seem to mind the comment either.

I always feel like a bull in a china shop when I come bouncing in from gardening with a bouquet of flowers

to share. One summer day, as was typical, I waltzed in, my pony tail swaying this way and that, shattering the silence with a smile and a "Hello, how are you?" to everyone I met. I knew Miss Inez's favorite color was red, so I was making a special delivery. She was in line for lunch and in I twirled, bending down to share God's perfect red rose for my sweet friend. A fragile hand with manicured red nail polish, slowly reached for my gift. She inhaled deeply the sweet heavenly scent with eyes closed and immediately tears poured. No words were spoken by Miss Inez, but I knew of all the thousands of blooms I had in my garden, this single rose was the only one that mattered.

We lost Miss Inez a few years back and still miss this cherished lady who loved people and roses most. I can attest that the NVH is full of workers who care for the members as if they were their own family. The most important lesson I've learned from volunteering is that no matter what your gift, God will use it.

If you are interested in volunteering at the NVH, contact Jenny Last 402-370-3102. A wide variety of volunteer options are open to anyone.



Pick up any magazine and you will find mention of some herb, be it one for beauty, health, home, or cooking. Many herbs can be used in all of these categories and their benefits will certainly enrich your life. The use of herbs is as old as the development of mankind and throughout history people have utilized herbs in their daily lives. Growing and buying fresh herbs is becoming more popular as people look to more natural methods to improve their health and the flavor of their food. They are classified as other plants and are annual, perennial and biennial.

Herbs are easy to grow and will enhance your vegetable and flower gardens. They are naturally resistant to disease and insects rarely bother them so they are great companion plants. They contain chemicals in their flowers, fruits, leaves, roots or seeds that enhance their aroma or flavor. Because herbs are so adaptable they require little care and if planted among other plants they will improve the health of the garden. Nothing is more calming or satisfying than working in a garden that has been planted with a variety of herbs.

To learn more about the many uses of these beneficial plants, all one has to do is Google "Herbs" or search for an individual plant and you will be inundated with many web sites including several State Extension Sites. However, if you are not comfortable searching on the Internet there are a number of good reference books available in most bookstores or libraries. I would also recommend the Reader's Digest Home Handbooks for two excellent books: Herbs and Magic and Medicine of Plants.

I have been cooking with herbs for a number of years and can say that some of my best results have been discovered by experimentation. Not only do they flavor food, thereby eliminating the need for salt, they also will provide a better source of nutrition. For example, all parsleys have more B-carotene than carrots as well as many other vitamins and minerals.

The Greeks and the Romans held parsley in high esteem and even fed it to their horses. It is used medicinally to freshen breathe and promote healthy skin and cosmetically as an infusion for a hair tonic and conditioner. Its leaf is used many ways in cooking either fresh or dried. My favorite use for it is to stuff the inside of a whole chicken with parsley and 2 heads of garlic that has been divided into cloves and mixed with the parsley. Bake the chicken and when done remove the parsley/garlic stuffing before the bird is carved.

Rosemary is another of my favorite herbs. Historically it was used as a strewing herb to make ones' home smell better and it is a wonderful insect repellent. It stimulates circulation, eases pain by increasing the blood supply and it aids in the digestion of fats. I use it extensively to season all meats and it is especially delightful in potatoes, vegetables and herbal butters.

Don't be hesitant to plant herbs among your flowers and vegetables as you will discover many delightful ways to use them.

A great resource for herbs online is the UNL Extension in Lancaster County website:

<http://lancaster.unl.edu/food>

In the "Search This Site" box, type in herbs.

Creative Containers

(Continued from page 2)

modern ones. Old watering cans can sport draping plants like spider plants and petunias. You may have a hard, baseball cap that's since been outgrown. Turn it into a desk planter, for a thoughtful birthday gift. The old stand byes of wicker are still a favorite. Baskets of all sizes and shapes, and even chairs with worn out seats can have new life with flowers blossoming and overflowing.

My personal favorites are antique toys. I have them inside and out. First, I line it with a black garbage bag just a bit larger than the toy. I mix quality potting soil, including slow release fertilizer, then plant whatever plants that match the color of the toy. I use toy wagons and wheelbarrows.

Remember to drill holes in the base for water to drain. You can slow down too much drainage, by adding crushed pop cans, styrofoam "peanuts", or gravel. An added benefit to using these "fillers" is less soil needed to fill large containers. Saves you money, so you can buy more plants!

Once your creative containers are planted, you must take into consideration placement. Some plants thrive in wind and sun, whereas some can only survive in shady, protected areas. Most containers need daily watering, sometimes twice a day if the day is really hot, and windy.

There are many beautiful ceramic containers, of many colors, you can buy at retail stores as well. If it just doesn't "say" what you want once finished planting it, maybe consider grouping a number of pots together to add importance to your new "garden."

I hope I've sparked your interest, and given you the freedom to think outside the box to express your individuality. Have fun, but most of all be creative!



"There are containers just waiting to be used again."

Gladiolus do well in most garden soil types provided drainage is good. If the soil will produce a good crop of vegetables or grow weeds, it will also grow gladiolus with little or no fertilizer. Gladiolus prefer full sun but will do well with a little high early morning or late afternoon sun. Good air circulation is desirable so stay away from buildings or other obstructions which could impede air flow.

Plow, rototill or spade the soil.

It is best to move your gladiolus to another area each year to prevent disease carry over in the soil. A balanced fertilizer such as 5-10-10 may be used. Avoid over fertilizing. Composted animal manure or leaves should be worked into the soil in the fall.

Gladiolus bulbs are called "corms". Plant only clean plump corms that have been purchased from a reliable source such as mail order catalogs or a garden center. The corms are of excellent quality from these sources. Once the corms are purchased, keep them in a cool area, such as a basement, until planting time. Your first planting should be when the sweet corn is planted provided the soil is warm. Corms planted in cold soil are apt to rot before they grow. Planting may follow every two to three weeks to ensure that there are blooms over a long time. Plant corms three to five inches deep and four to six inches apart. Insecticide spread in the trench before covering discourages underground insects.

Before gladiolus bloom, hill the soil six inches up around the stock to prevent them from tipping over during wind and storms. Gladiolus need plenty of water but will not tolerate wet feet.

Weed by cultivation or hand weeding. Avoid packing the soil. If available, a light mulch of straw, grass clippings and etc, between the rows will discourage weeds and conserve moisture. Insect control is important. Pests include thrip which is by far the most damaging. Thrip are tiny insects tan or black in color and less than 1/8 inch long. They can be controlled by different kinds of sprays and dusts including organic products. More frequent applications of organic products will be needed.

Gladiolus should be lifted from the soil before freezing weather. Corms may be harvested by loosening the soil with a spade or digging forks so the plants may be pulled by hand. The plant should be removed from the corm as close to the corm as possible either by hand, breaking, or cutting with pruning shears. Remove the old tops from the garden to prevent carryover of disease. Rinse or clean the corms with water then spread out to dry for two to



"Planting may follow every two to three weeks to ensure that there are blooms over a long time."

three weeks. Make sure temperature in this area is above freezing. After the corms have dried, break it away from the mother corms and discard the old corm.

After cleaning, corms should be lightly dusted with a combination of fungicide/insecticide. Place on shallow trays, mesh bags or paper bags to be stored in the winter. Do not cover. A well ventilated root cellar is an ideal storage area but any room with good circulation in your basement should be OK if the temperature is between 38° - 58°. The lower temperature is best.

Lemon Verbena

By Kristine Zachmeyer, Master Gardener

What is one thing that Laura Ingalls Wilder and Miss Beadle have in common? Lemon Verbena is their favorite scent. As a little girl I read and reread the books of Laura Ingalls Wilder always wondering about Lemon Verbena. I could smell it when Laura dabbed some of the precious scent for special occasions. Never seeing Lemon Verbena in person, the smell was still in my head since I discovered "Little House on the Prairie" back more years than I'd like to admit.

Lemon Verbena (*aloesia triphylla*) is native to Chile. It will not survive in temps below 40 degrees. Zones 9 and 10 are a long way from Northeast Nebraska's zone 4. Don't be discouraged because it can be brought inside and kept in a sunny window over the winter. The leaves will fall off, but it will return to its glory in the spring. It is a very versatile herb and recipes can be found online.

The wonderful lemon scented leaves can be eaten in salads, dried for tea or potpourri, or added to homemade soap to name a few uses.



Recycle the Rain

By Kelly Feehan, Extension Educator

A new trend in gardening is recycling rain and is referred to as rain harvesting. Rain harvesting methods for home landscapes range from diverting down spouts away from paved areas and onto planted areas to installing rain barrels or cisterns to designing and installing rain gardens that will capture and infiltrate rain water in less than 24 to 48 hours. Rain harvesting is beneficial because it conserves water and reduces run-off from residential properties which is wasteful or can transport pollutants to surface water.

If you've been hearing about rain gardens and have some concerns about them, be assured they are not water gardens, bogs, or ponds. Most of the plants planted in a rain garden are perennials and ornamental grasses commonly used in water-wise gardens. The main difference is rain gardens are slightly shallow depressions and are located where rainwater from a roof top or driveway can be diverted to them. They should not be located where water tends to stand after rainfall due to a poorly drained soil.

If you would like to learn more, check out the three new NebGuides on rain gardens available on the UNL Extension publications website at ianrpubs.unl.edu. In the search box, type in the words "rain garden" and you will be directed to the three rain garden publications on designing, installing and selecting plants for rain gardens.

Sweet Potatoes By Deb Daehnke, Master Gardener

After reading the title, did you turn up your nose and think – no way? I hope not since sweet potatoes are wonderful to grow, and power packed with vitamins. Sweet potato, *Ipomoea batatas*, is a tender, warm-weather vegetable that requires a long frost-free growing season to mature large roots. Most varieties are now orange-fleshed but other colors are available, just more difficult to find. I have grown sweet potatoes twice and had no problems harvesting outstanding crops. Remember though, sweet potatoes are not yams. Though their names are often used interchangeably, they are completely separate species.

Sweet potatoes are related to the morning glory. They grow on

trailing vines rooting at the nodes along the way. Bush varieties are available if you have space limitations. Last summer I planted six regular plants, which I think were Beauregard, but am not certain. They spread to approximately a 15'x20' patch and probably would have spread more if I had not dug them in September.

Plant in spring when the ground is warm or use black plastic to warm the soil. The plastic will capture and store some of the sun's heat in the soil allowing you to plant earlier. The plastic will also cut down on weeds early in the season. However, remember to remove it as temperatures rise. Set the plants about 12 to 18 inches apart preferably on a wide, raised ridge about 8" high. A ridge will dry better in the spring and warm up more quickly as well. Allow 3-4 feet between rows. I have planted my sweet potatoes at the very end of May and had bountiful crops. As the sweet potato vines spread, they will cover the ground and choke out most of the weeds. Irrigate if an extended drought occurs. But do not water the last 3-4 weeks prior to harvest to protect the developing roots.

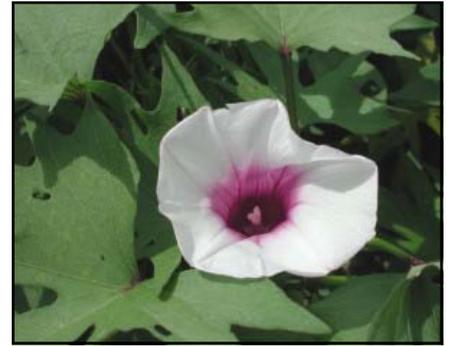
When harvesting, ideally the roots should be allowed to dry on the ground for a few hours. Be careful to not bruise, nick, or handle the sweet potatoes too much. Try to cure them in a room at 85°F with 85% humidity if possible. I have cured mine in the garage on window screens or in wheelbarrows. Do not allow the vines or roots to freeze. If the vines freeze, cut them off immediately to prevent decay spreading from the vines to the roots, and then dig them as soon as possible. Cold soil temps can lessen the ability of the roots to keep in storage. As I am writing this at the end of February, the remainders of my sweet potatoes are just fine and I am still using them. I have had very little spoilage to this point.

The sweet potato is a power-packed food. They are excellent sources of vitamins like A, C and B6. They are high in antioxidants, are an excellent source of dietary fiber, and potassium and iron. Recent research has con-

firmed that sweet potatoes are a low-glycemic (GI) index food, which could be good news for diabetics. Researchers are now trying to determine if the GI index can survive high temperatures required for cooking and baking.

When purchasing sweet potatoes to plant, buy from a reputable source. Local nurseries generally stock varieties that will grow in our area. Check for resistance to disease and the number of days needed for maturity.

Sweet potatoes are not just for Thanksgiving. If you think there is no room on your plate for a sweet potato, check out the many new recipes. My husband was an avowed sweet potato hater and had probably never eaten two bites of a sweet potato in his life. With several new recipes I've found, he now thinks they are delicious. Try one or two plants. Your health will appreciate it.



Sweet Potato in Flower
(rarely flowers in Nebraska)

"My husband was an avowed sweet potato hater and had probably never eaten two bites of a sweet potato in his life. With several new recipes I've found, he now thinks they are delicious."

Sweet Potatoes and Coconut

4-6 medium peeled sweet potatoes (about 2 lbs), baked or boiled
1 tsp cinnamon
2 Tbls. Low-sugar marmalade (no sugar marmalade works also)
½ cup rum (or orange juice)
Dash of salt (I have never added the salt)
2 Tbs. butter, melted (I use no-salt margarine)
1/3 cup coarsely chopped almonds
1/3 cup sweetened coconut flakes
½ cup miniature marshmallows

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mash potatoes. Stir in cinnamon, marmalade, rum (or orange juice) and salt until thoroughly combined and spreadable (add more liquid if needed). Spread in a 9-by-9-inch baking dish. Combine butter, nuts and coconut; spread over potatoes. Sprinkle on marshmallows. Bake for 20 minutes or until browned.

Serves 8 * Per serving: 198 calories, 29g carbohydrates, 3g protein, 6g fat (3g saturated), 8mg cholesterol, 4g fiber, 86mg sodium

Cinnamon Roasted Sweet Potatoes and Apples

¼ cup Promise Buttery Spread (I use a no-salt margarine)
2 tsp. cinnamon sugar**
¼ tsp. ground black pepper
3 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and cut into 1-inch wedges
3 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch wedges

Preheat oven to 450°F. In small bowl, combine Promise Buttery Spread or margarine, cinnamon sugar and pepper. In medium bowl, toss apples with 1 tsp. cinnamon sugar mixture. In 15½" x 10½" x 2" jelly-roll pan, toss potatoes with remaining cinnamon sugar mixture; arrange in one layer. Bake potatoes for 10 minutes. Stir in apple mixture and bake, stirring once halfway through, for 25 minutes or until potatoes and apples are tender. Toss gently before serving.

**To make cinnamon sugar, mix 1 ½ tsp. sugar with ½ tsp. ground cinnamon.

Serves: 6 Nutrition Information Per Serving. Calories 140, Calories From Fat 35, Saturated Fat 0.5g, Trans Fat 0g, Total Fat 4g. Cholesterol 0mg. Sodium 480mg. Total Carbohydrate 26g, Sugars 9g, Dietary fiber 2g, Protein 1g. Vitamin A 230%. Vitamin C 25%. Calcium 0%. Iron 2%

Pruning Primer for Small Trees and Shrubs

Small trees and shrubs are an important part of most landscapes. While foliage can hide problems through the growing season, this is a good time of year to take a close look at branching patterns. It's also a good time to prune most woody plants. An easy rule of thumb is to "prune any time but leaf on or leaf off" -- in other words, when the plant's energy is focused on new growth or hardening off for winter.

Safety is an important issue for large trees, and pruning a good-sized tree can be expensive and require specialized skills and equipment. Fortunately, though, even large-maturing trees that are carefully pruned when small will be stronger and require very little pruning once mature.

Small and young trees are pruned primarily for plant health and for aesthetics. But even the smallest woody plant can quickly turn into a mass of tangled branches. Where to begin?

- Start by removing branches that are dead or injured from disease, insects, winds, etc. The pruning cut should be angled from the base of the trunk about an inch or so out (a slightly elevated ridge of bark may be visible).
- Eliminate branches that are rubbing against other branches.
- Remove branches with weak or narrow angles of attachment, which are likely to crack or break off. Branches that are angled 60-70 degrees out from the trunk are much stronger.
- Prune to encourage and not interfere with flowering, usually immediately after flowering: lilac, magnolia, chokeberry, chokecherry, serviceberry, clove currant, forsythia, early-blooming spirea, viburnum, etc.
- Shrubs grown for foliage -- burning bush, dogwood, honeysuckle, ninebark, sumac -- should be pruned before leafing occurs.
- Prune to increase air flow, or to allow sunlight for plants underneath the tree.
- Remove sprouts and suckers in early summer to minimize re-growth.

With newly planted trees, avoid excessive pruning while the plant is developing its root system. Cut back only dead or injured branches to limit plant stress. The main trunk will develop more quickly if lower branches are left on for several years. A few months after transplanting, prune to maintain a central leader and to space branches out around the trunk and vertically.

Deciduous shrubs can be improved in a number of ways: thinning them out from near the base will result in a more open plant and won't stimulate excessive growth. For gradual renewal or rejuvenation, remove older, longer branches near ground level over a period of several years.

With narrow-leaved evergreens like arborvitae, pfitzer junipers and yews, remove dead branches as they occur. To encourage compact growth, the tip ends of new growth can be trimmed each year.

Pines and most other evergreens require very little pruning, although it may be necessary to remove multiple leaders to encourage the growth of a central leader.

Well-shaped deciduous hedges require some effort. To induce low-branching, it's best to select small shrubs with multiple stems and cut them back to 6-8 inches at the time of planting. Prune off half the new growth the following season, and again the following year. It's best to trim when new growth is less than 1 foot long. Evergreen hedges can be shaped as they grow, but not as severely as deciduous since new growth is less likely to occur. Keep the top of the hedge narrower than lower branches. Rounded shapes require less trimming than straight sides and the more natural the pruning, the more likely it is to maintain its shape.

To avoid disease and insect problems, avoid pruning elms from April to October; oaks from April to June when they may be susceptible to oak wilt; and birches in June, when weeping from the cuts may attract insects or diseases.



Red-twigged dogwood is an ideal candidate for some late-winter pruning. (Nebraska Statewide Arboretum photo)

The Green Patch Contributors

Publisher	Pam Greunke
Editor	Deb Daehnke
Contributors	Deb Daehnke Kelly Feehan Rosie Frey Kathy Hayes Jill Heemstra Connie Kava Dorrine Liedman Wayne Ohnesorg Kristine Zachmeyer

Name the Newsletter Winner—ViAnn Stange

3/4/09-KL/DM Source: Karma Larsen, communications associate, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, (402) 472-7923, klarsen1@unl.edu, itgMar09.4 Editor: Dan Moser, IANR News Service, (402) 472-3030, dmoser3@unl.edu



Do you have a favorite tool, plant to trade, "Go Green" idea, "What Works for Me" tidbit or a question for other Master Gardeners?

Please get to Pam Greunke (pgreunke2@unl.edu) to be included in July's *The Green Patch* publication.

Northeast Nebraska Master Gardeners

Meetings held at:
UNL Extension - Madison County
601 E Benjamin Ave, Suite 105
Norfolk NE 68701

Phone:
402-370-4040 Madison County
402-329-4821 Pierce County
402-563-4901 Platte County
402-375-3310 Wayne County



Master Gardeners are people who love plants, gardening, landscaping, and teaching others.

We're on the web at

<http://madison.unl.edu/mastergardener/>



UNL EXTENSION—WAYNE COUNTY
510 N PEARL ST, STE C
WAYNE NE 68787

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

ADDRESS LABEL

What is It?? By Wayne Ohnesorg, Extension Educator

I love finding these types of columns in the magazines and newsletters that I read. It presents a challenge to me, and I love a good challenge. That is especially so with insects. So, in order to test your knowledge of the insect realm, each quarterly newsletter will feature a picture of an insect, plant damage from an insect, or plant damage with an insect present. There will be accompanying information with the photo. Information that may be included, but not limited to, is location, plant/host, time of day, and time of year. Your challenge will be to correctly identify the insect and/or plant. The first Master Gardener to contact me with the correct answer will be the winner. And what do you win? Good question. The winner will receive the bragging rights for that quarter and have their name posted in the next installment of the column as the winner along with the correct answer.

This quarter's picture comes from Cedar County. The damaged leaves are from rose bushes in an individual's yard. What insect causes this characteristic damage pattern? If you think you know, you can give me a call at (402) 329-4821 or shoot me an email wohnesorg2@unl.edu.

