



# Master Gardeners Association of Rogers County



[www.mgaroco.com](http://www.mgaroco.com) & Facebook

July 2020



## NO JULY MEETING

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### Co-President's Corner

*Butch Kindley*

I hope everyone had a safe Independence Day.

Last month I mentioned that we were thinking of having a July meeting. That is not going to happen since COVID-19 numbers are increasing and most of us are in high risk categories. As of now we do not know about meetings for the remainder of the year, but we remain hopeful. Regardless of what we would like to do, we must follow state, county, city, and OSU guidelines, as well as common sense.

We still do not know about the Rogers County Free Fair. It has not been cancelled yet. One option is to have everything outside. We may set up a booth, but the thought is to not have volunteers working. I am sorry that I cannot give any more information at this time.

We also do not know about our fall fundraiser. I am an optimist, so I hope we have something but I would not bet on it. We can sell some things at the Farmers' Market. If anyone would like to volunteer for a shift at the Farmers' Market, please let me, John Haase or Jennifer Podowski know.

Thank you to all the volunteers who work in the MG Teaching Garden. It looks good. The City of Claremore has re-hung the rope on our flagpole and our flags are flying again.

Plans for our Master Gardener calendar are still on. Tom has an article in this newsletter giving all the details. The calendar will feature pictures we have taken from our gardens for each month of the year. Honorable mention pages will also be included. If the pictures in the newsletters are any indication, we should have a fantastic calendar. The 2021 calendar will be mostly for Master Gardeners. After a trial run this year, if we do a 2022 calendar, it will be for a fundraiser.

It is still a little early but about time to think about officers for next year. Anyone who would like to be on the nominating committee or would like to run for office please contact Tom Maier or me. The qualifications for office are listed in our bylaws. If we approve the changes to the bylaws (hopefully this year) there will be a small change. The proposed changes, as well as current bylaws can be seen on our website ([mgaroco.org](http://mgaroco.org)).

I have been watching the OSU Master Garden training sessions on You Tube. Those classes I have seen are interesting and informative. The class on grafting vegetables made me think that as a Master Gardener I would like to attend a workshop on grafting and to compare grafted tomatoes to non-grafted in our garden.

Inside the July 2020 issue:

Message from the Co-President  
Calendar Photo Contest Underway  
Blackberry Lily  
Work Day at the Teaching Garden  
Jennifer Podowski moves to Tulsa  
Rattlesnake Master  
Do you know Herb?  
July Garden Tips  
Red Spider Mites  
MG Calendar



## **2021 MGAROCO PHOTO CALENDAR CONTEST**

*FROM TOM MAIER, MGARC CO-PRESIDENT*

Let's have some fun creating a MG Photo Calendar! We can buy them as gifts, and we can sell them during our fall festival (providing we have one!). We will keep it simple this year and if it's successful we can expand on it next year.

Pick your single favorite photo of a plant/flower/vegetable/tree/bush and submit it to me at [tom.maier@att.net](mailto:tom.maier@att.net) between now and August 31<sup>st</sup>. The photo must be one taken from your garden and/or property.

I will assign a random number to it and download that photo and number onto a flash drive. This will be given to our panel of judges on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Each judge will receive an identical flash drive just in case meeting in person is not an option. I will download the name, number, and photo together onto a second flash drive.

Beginning August 31<sup>st</sup> our panel of judges will select the twelve photos to be displayed opposite from each month of the calendar year. They will also select twelve honorable mention photos to be featured on two additional pages to round out our calendar.

When the judges have completed their selections, they will forward the results to Kay Waterman. I will forward the master list to Kay and she will create the calendar by putting the pictures and senders name in each month of the year and add the honorable mention pictures at the end. The photo-ready product will be then sent to a printer for publication.

## Blackberry Lily Flower

Also known as LEOPARD LILY – *Iris domestica*



*See the hummingbird, upper right?*

The Blackberry Lily not only produces lovely flowers, but perhaps the best and most mysterious part of the plant is the seedpod. It opens to reveal what appears to be a large blackberry, but is actually a cluster of bright shiny black seeds. Plants can bloom the first year from seed if planted early, or if started indoors. Zones: 5 – 9. Light Requirement: Sun / partial shade.

*Photo and information provided by Sumathy Vannarth, taken July 12, 2020.*



A recent workday at the MG Teaching Garden—left, Jack Hannah, Tom Maier, Penny Curry, Nancy Baldrige, Paul and Linda Davis and Doris Olson.

**JENNIFER PODOWSKI IS MOVING!**

While Jennifer has announced her move into Tulsa, she said she will maintain our MGARC website [mgaroco.com](http://mgaroco.com) from a distance. She also plans to remain active in MG activities in Claremore. We appreciate all you do, all you have done, and your support, Jennifer!



***BEST WISHES FROM ALL YOUR MG COLLEAGUES!***

**Rattlesnake Master Plant in the Teaching Garden at Will Rogers Park 6/24/2020**

Photo and information provided by Sumathy Vannarth

Scientific Name: *Eryngium yuccifolium*

It is documented in 1700s this plant's sap was used to prevent snake bite during ceremonial rattlesnake dance. The roots of this plant were used to treat rattlesnake bites. It is stated that the Native Americans used fibrous leaves of this plant for weaving baskets and sandals.

Rattlesnake Master plants are perennial, grow in zone 4-8, four to six feet tall. It will grow best in sun and moist soils, but tolerates clay or rocky soil. The plants have yucca-like leaves, a deep tap root and rigid stems which bear thistle-like globular flower heads with greenish white flowers. The honey-like scent attracts bees, wasps, flies, skippers, moths and butterflies. Blooms appear mid- to late summer. The plants work well as an accent in perennial beds. The plant does not transplant well due to deep tap root. The plant is easily propagated from seed. When the seed heads turn brown, seeds may be collected and stored in the refrigerator in a sealed container. After 1-2 months of moisturized cold stratification in the refrigerator the seeds can be planted in spring. Alternatively, seeds can be planted outdoors in fall.

The Rattlesnake Master plant's leaves die back after the blooms and offsets develop. There are no serious insect or disease problems with this plant.

# Do you know Herb?



By Paul James

Horticulturist, Southwood Garden Center, Tulsa

*Beyond their incredible flavors and versatility, I love the fact that culinary herbs are so darn easy to grow, even for folks who don't fancy themselves gardeners. And now that they're actively growing in our gardens, whether in the ground or in containers, here are a few pointers on how to care for them...and how to use them.*

## Basil

Basil is an annual, and it's not very cold hardy. So sadly, we don't get to enjoy it as long as we do many other herbs. But you can always make and freeze a big batch of pesto! Basil (regardless of the variety) needs to be pinched often to keep the plant bushy; otherwise it'll get leggy and may require staking. Most people insist that the developing flowers reduce the flavor of the leaves, so they remove them as they develop.

## Chives

Chives are super hardy perennials that are also super easy to grow. And in addition to their delicious, mild-onion-tasting leaves (hello, baked potato!), their piquant flowers are also edible and bring in the bees. I probably use chives more than any other herb, which is why I have eight plants. If their growth gets a little gangly, feel free to shear them back to about three inches

## Cilantro

Cilantro, an annual, is a bit of a challenge around here because it bolts quickly when temperatures start to warm up. But it's oh-so good while it lasts, unless you're one of the 10% or so of the population that thinks it tastes like soap. If you let it go to flower (queue the pollinators!) and set seeds, it produces the spice known as coriander, which is great both in savory and in sweet dishes.



**Paul James, Herbs continued:****Dill**

Dill is also an annual, although it readily reseeds and comes back year after year. I love it, but so do the larvae of the black swallowtail butterfly, so I plant enough to share. And the flowers it produces are beautiful and — you guessed it — prized by pollinators. Dill goes great with a number of dishes, especially grilled or cured salmon (gravlax), potato salad, and of course cucumbers.

**Lovage**

This lesser-known perennial herb is one of my favorites. Said another way, I love lovage. Its leaves taste just like celery, and they're great in salads. Give lovage lots of room because in the garden it can grow to six feet or more, although in pots it's more tame. Harvest the seeds after it flowers and the bees have done their thing — they taste like mild fennel.

**Spearmint**

This is one perennial herb you'll definitely want to grow in pots because it's extremely invasive in the garden. Pinch the terminal growth to keep the plant bushy, and use it in all sorts of cuisines, from Greek to Middle Eastern to Vietnamese. And of course, it's great in beverages too, from iced tea to mint juleps and Moscow mules.

**Oregano**

Oh, oregano. So earthy. And so delicious. Most commonly sold as Italian or Greek oregano, there's also a Mexican version that's a different plant altogether. There's also oregano's cousin, marjoram, which I like best of all because of its subtle citrusy notes. Oregano is a hardy perennial, and when used fresh its flavor can be assertive, but in a good way. It can get pretty gangly, so feel free to cut back the plant by one-third every few weeks or let it go to flower. Your call.

**Parsley**

I use a ton of parsley, especially the flat-leafed Italian variety. It too is prized by swallowtail larvae, so I plant a lot of it. Parsley is a biennial, meaning it flowers in its second year of growth. In fact, it will sometimes flower in its first year if you plant too early and it's subjected to below-freezing temperatures. And once it flowers, it's time to plant anew, at least after the butterflies have had their fill of nectar.

**Rosemary**

Woody and resinous, rosemary is as fragrant as it is versatile. It's a dependably hardy perennial around here, although it can die back in severe winters. Don't overwater (maybe once a week at the most), and don't bother with fertilizer. Dip stalks in olive oil and brush on grilled meat or use the woody stems as skewers for grilled scallops.

**Sage**

Sage is a hardy perennial, comes in a variety of leaf colors, is easy to grow, and tastes great. So why is it that so many home cooks only use sage at Thanksgiving? I use it when I'm braising fatty meats such as short ribs, chuck roast, and pork shoulder, and I love to quickly fry it and use it to top potato and pasta dishes.

**Tarragon**

Excellent flavor from an underused perennial herb. That's a good way to describe tarragon. It tastes like licorice with a hint of vanilla. But then it also tastes like peppery, minty hay with a splash of eucalyptus. And it makes a number of dishes come alive, especially chicken salad. It's also great in sauces, including the classic French bearnaise. Keep it on the dry side to avoid root rot.

**Thyme**

There are lots of different thymes out there, but my absolute favorite is lemon thyme, which I use on fish, chicken, and just about any recipe that calls for lemon, except maybe pie. Good old English thyme is awesome too, and like all culinary thymes (as opposed to strictly ornamental varieties) is easy to grow. Cut it back hard when it gets shaggy and goes dormant in winter, and it'll return good as new in spring.

Happy gardening, ya'!!

## GARDEN TIPS FOR JULY

*From the Tulsa Master Gardeners e-newsletter July 2020*

### Vegetable Garden

- ☒ Make fall vegetable garden plantings in late July.
- Fact Sheet HLA-6009 gives planting guides.

### Lawn

- ☒ Brown patch disease of cool-season grasses can be a problem. (HLA-6420)
- ☒ Meet water requirements of turfgrasses. (HLA-6420)
- ☒ Fertilization of warm-season grasses can continue if water is present for growth. (HLA-6420)
- ☒ Vegetative establishment of warm-season grasses should be completed by the end of July to ensure the least risk of winter kill. (HLA-6419)
- ☒ Mowing heights for cool-season turfgrasses should be at 3 inches during hot, dry summer months. Gradually raise mowing height of bermudagrass lawns from 1½ to 2 inches.
- ☒ Sharpen or replace mower blades as needed. Shredded leaf blades are an invitation to disease and allow more stress on the grass.



### Tree and Shrub

- ☒ Control bermudagrass around trees and shrubs with products containing sethoxydim, fusillade or glyphosate herbicides. Follow directions closely to avoid harming desirable plants.

### Fruits

- ☒ Continue insect combat and control in the orchard, garden, and landscape. (EPP-7306, EPP-7313, EPP-7319)
- ☒ Check pesticide labels for “stop” spraying recommendations prior to harvest.
- ☒ Harvest fruit from the orchard early in the morning and refrigerate as soon as possible.



### Flowers

- ☒ Divide and replant crowded Hybrid iris (Bearded Iris) after flowering until August.

### General Landscape

- ☒ Water plants deeply and early in the morning. Most plants need approximately 1 to 2½ inches of water per week.
- ☒ Providing birdbaths, shelter and food will help turn your landscape into a backyard wildlife habitat.
- ☒ Insect identification is important so you don't get rid of the “Good Guys.” (EPP-7307)
- ☒ The hotter and drier it gets, the larger the spider mite populations!
- ☒ Expect some leaf fall, a normal reaction to drought. Water young plantings well.

## RED SPIDER MITES ON PLANTS IN THE HEAT

*From the Tulsa Master Gardeners e-newsletter July 2020*

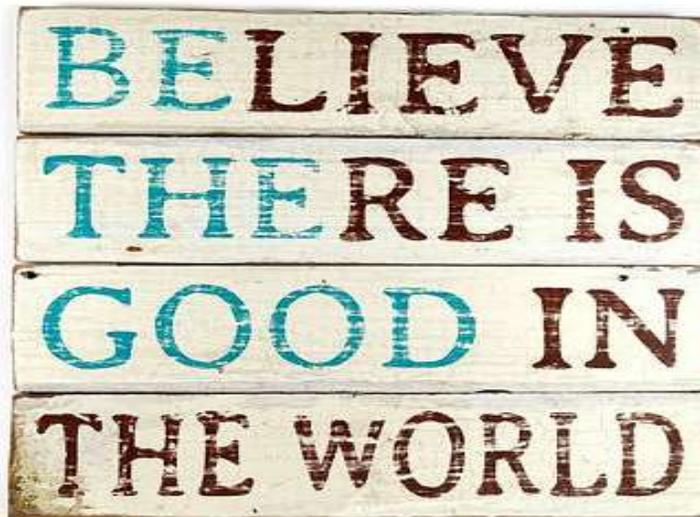
On your daily walk around your garden in the summer, you spy some dark brown burnt spots on the underside of leaves, maybe on your pepper or tomato plants. On closer inspection you may see tiny red or green spots and possibly some webbing covering some or all of the leaves.

This tiny arachnid is a spider mite and infestations occur when the temperatures are above 80 degrees F. Other names for this pest are Red Spider Mite and Two Spotted Mite. These tiny mites suck nutrients, chlorophyll, and moisture out of the underside of leaves for nourishment before laying transparent spherical eggs. Dense, very sticky webbing on the leaves protects the eggs but prevents sunlight and transpiration, thus hindering photosynthesis. Placing a white sheet of paper under the leaves and tapping the mites on to it will reveal the tiny spider mites. Also, wiping the underside of the leaves with a soft cloth will show red streaks. The female mites live about one month and lay hundreds of eggs. Should the temperature fall below 70 degrees F, the females go into diapause or dormancy and their eggs are not fertilized.

Finding the mites at the start of an infestation by observing the garden daily with a walk-about is a great way to prevent damage to plant materials. A strong spray of water on the underside of leaves will wash away mites. There are also several miticides available to the homeowner and label directions should always be followed. Neem oil, horticultural soaps, and predatory insects are sustainable ways to control mite infestations. Note that lady beetles can consume over 5,000 mites per day both in the adult and larval stages of the insect.



Minute Pirate Bugs and Lacewings are also beneficial insects that control spider mites without the need to utilize pesticides which can unintentionally increase populations of the mites. When pesticides are used, they are not targeted on the mites alone but, instead, also kill beneficial insects. When beneficial predators are killed, future populations of mites have no natural controls and can multiply even more abundantly. Keeping plants well hydrated in drought conditions of the summer also make it difficult for spider mites to damage.



6:00 p.m. Fellowship  
 6:20 p.m. Meetings  
 7:00 p.m. Speakers  
 9:00 a.m. Board Meetings

# 2020 Events Calendar

January		February		March		April	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
14	Board Meeting	11	Board Meeting	10	Board Meeting	2-5	Home and Garden Show
21	General Meeting — Pizza and sign up for 2020 Committees (Note: Tuesday night)	18	John Kahre — Program Director Horticulture, Dick Conner Correctional Center (Note: Tuesday night)	16	Jared McClure — Green Valley Nursery, "Creating a Secret Garden"	14	Board Meeting
						18	Spring Plant Sale
						20	Carol Puckett — Tulsa MG and President Hosta Connection, Tulsa, "Hosta Varieties"
May		June		July		August	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	No Meeting		<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
12	Board Meeting	6	Safenet Garden Tour			11	Board Meeting
18	Spring Fellowship	9	Board Meeting			17	Diane Peacock— Philbrook Gardens
		15	Lisa Merrell, Tomato Man's Daughter — "Preserving Seed, Heritage Tomatoes"				
September		October		November		December	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	No Meeting	
8	Board Meeting	TBD	Fall Festival	10	Board Meeting		
14-20	Rogers Co. Free Fair	13	Board Meeting	16	Fall Fellowship		
21	Mark Andrews — Greenleaf Nursery, "Trees for Fall and Garden Debut's Canopy Collection"	19	Deborah Early — Wildbirds Unlimited, "Feeding Birds in Fall and Winter"				

Unless otherwise announced, all general, program and Board meetings are at the Rogers County Building 416 S. Brady in Claremore, OK. For more information call Janice Hensley, Program Director, at 918-638-7149.

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