As a kid, my mom would have a hard time getting me into the house if it was nice weather outside and that remains true to this day. If it’s nice outside, I want to be outside and preferably with Tessa, my Golden Retriever. However, in the summer heat, be sure to keep in mind not only your safety, but also your pet’s well-being. Hydrate often and seek shade when it’s hot and humid. Tessa and I take a daily early morning walk, and she enjoys “helping” in the garden. She’s discovered that waves can be scary at the shore, but it’s so worth it once you make the leap! There’s a good article on safety in the sun for your pet at https://vetmed.illinois.edu/pet_column/hot-weather-hazards/.

Rutgers Fact Sheet 1122, Jersey Summer Shore Safety: Be Safe Out in the Sun, provides common sense recommendations on how to protect yourself from harmful UVA and UVB rays. This fact sheet also reminds us that being outdoors has happy benefits of providing a source of Vitamin D, elevating our moods and increasing our physical activities with our love of gardening.

Of course, we also realize that being outdoors can come with other health risks from insects, like ticks and mosquitoes. I have been diagnosed with Lyme's, and have shown high on titer results for babesiosis and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. I have a dear gardening friend who contracted west nile virus. So, how do we balance our love of being outdoors, and trying to remain healthy?

Good question, and it’s a real struggle for balance. Rutgers Fact Sheets are available with information on ticks, including the free Fact Sheet 443, Prevent Tick Bites: Prevent Lyme Disease, which mentions other tick-related diseases as well. For information on tick-related diseases in your pets, please consult your veterinarian.

Be safe this summer!

And so it goes,

Pam Burton
How Does Your Garden Grow

It’s not too late to plant some vegetables in your garden, including by seed or transplant. Rutgers Fact Sheet 129, *Planning a Vegetable Garden*, provides a useful listing of those plants that can be planted in the garden in June. Consider succession planting by planting crops into the spaces where other crops have been harvested. It’s advantageous to plant the same crop with some time planned in between so that you have a steady supply of that vegetable without an overabundance at any one time. For instance many beans can be planted in May, June, and July, giving you an extended harvest.

https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/plants/succession-planting-vegetables

If you are harvesting plants in your garden in August and find some available space, try succession planting. Rutgers Fact Sheet 129, *Planning a Vegetable Garden*, provides a user friendly chart on what plants can be started by seed in August, and the list may surprise you! Broccoli, swiss chard, endive, kohlrabi, leeks, leaf romaine, bibb lettuces, mustard greens, and radishes can all be planted in August as transplants or by seed for a bountiful fall harvest.

**Garlic:** Rutgers Fact Sheet 1223, *Growing Garlic in the Home Garden*, indicates that the scapes, or the stalk from the hardneck garlic, can be harvested and used for cooking which will produce a milder taste than the bulb itself. Hardneck garlic bulbs are the preferred choice of most chefs. Although, most markets tend to carry softneck garlic, which does not produce a scape. If you are interested in making a pesto from garlic scapes, enter “garlic scape pesto and pasta” into the search engine on the njaes.rutgers.edu website for the recipe and a short video. Bon appetite!


Go for the Gold

An article written by Dr. Allan Armitage in the July 2018 Greenhouse Grower publication is entitled *The Midas Touch: The appeal of gold foliage*. A quote from Dr. Armitage states “Gold has become the darling of designers and landscapers because it brightens the shade and is one of the first colors in the landscape that draws your eye.” He focuses on foliage in this article because flower colors come and go, but the foliage is there for much of the season. Gold foliage is readily available and can be seen on many annuals, perennials, and shrubs so it won’t be difficult to add a bright spot to your home landscaping.

Summer Solstice

June 21st is the summer solstice, which marks the longest day of the year. People have turned this day into a celebration of sorts, taking advantage of the daylight hours. Several universities offer nature inspired programs that include a combo of wine and jazz in the gardens, activities like designing your own summer crown with seasonal flowers and garden greens, or creating a Mesopotamian sun medallion. Whatever activities you chose to do, let’s hope it’s a beautiful day so you can enjoy the weather on the longest day of the year!

https://hmsc.harvard.edu/summer-solstice
**Birds and Berries**

Rutgers Fact Sheet 1011, *Landscaping to Create Backyard Bird Habitat*, indicates that there are some summer-fruiting plants that produce fruits or berries from May through August, such as chokecherry, raspberry, blackberry, and blueberry. These can all provide soft mast or fruit for many birds. Several others to consider are persimmon, common spicebush and varieties of *viburnums*. Be sure to request the fact sheet for information about all of the seasons.

https://extension.psu.edu/landscaping-for-wildlife-trees-shrubs-and-vines

**Mother Hens and her chicks**

The question posed was, can I keep my hens and chicks in a container? The client was not talking about the birds, but in fact, plants. Some succulents are hardy perennials outdoors and some are not. In Zone 7a, hens and chicks, *Sempervivum tectorum*, do well in both a container and in a garden with well-drained soil and at least 3-4 hours or more of sun per day. *Sempervivum* means “always living” in Latin and *tectorum* means on roofs. This is interesting because in Europe these plants were used on roofs to help reduce the likelihood of fire by lightning on thatched roofs, given the excess water that these succulents store in side of them. The common name, hens and chicks, comes from the large rosette which is the hen and the smaller rosettes are the chicks. Once the hen flowers, it dies leaving plenty of chicks in its place.

https://www.ndsu.edu/pubweb/chiwonlee/plsc211/student%20papers/articles11/hbarrett/planting%20instructions.html
https://www.ndsu.edu/pubweb/chiwonlee/plsc211/student%20papers/articles11/hbarrett/origins%20of%20hens%20and%20chicks.html

**Garden Labels**

While our gardens are lush and full of life, we are all certain that we will remember what we had planted where. However, if you have not already labelled your plants, it’s wise to give some consideration to that now, before yet another season of winter hibernation takes them to the ground and we wonder what exactly is where? Labelling plants can be daunting and time consuming. If you don’t have that extra time poke some golf divots into the perennials. You will be glad you did so come next spring.

http://extension.msstate.edu/news/southern-gardening/2013/homemade-plant-tags-give-gardens-personality

**Seed Dispersal**

When a plant starts growing and we know we didn’t plant it there, we often call it a volunteer. So how does the plant get there? Seed dispersal strategies include wind, animals, fire, water, and ballistic. Ballistic occurs when the seed bursts open spewing seeds. Each strategy has its own adaptations that have enabled them to be dispersed successfully. Wings that catch the wind or burs that allow them to get hooked on an animal’s fur is an example of seed dispersal.

http://calscomm.cals.cornell.edu/naturalist/Naturalist-Outreach-Seed-dispersal.pdf
Pest Control Schedules for Fruit Trees

For those hardy homeowners who have decided to have some kind of fruit orchard on their grounds, that decision comes with some work and perseverance in following spraying recommendations. Rutgers offers several Fact Sheets of pest control schedule for intrepid New Jersey homeowners. Request numbers 112 for apples, 114 for peaches and nectarines, 115 for cherries, and 116 for plums. Remember any time you spray a pesticide the label is the law. Read and follow the directions carefully.

Turf’s up!

There have been a few reports of brown patch in bluegrass, ryegrass, and tall fescue this spring. Rutgers Fact Sheet 814, Managing Diseases of Landscape Turf, describes the symptoms of brown patch as 1 to 3 foot patches of thinning turf and tan leaf lesion with dark border. The recommendations are to avoid high nitrogen, leaf wetness, and excess thatch. Rutgers Fact Sheet 740, Thatch Management in Turf, provides recommendations on minimizing and management of thatch in your lawns.

Rutgers Fact Sheet 122, Tree Problems Caused by People in the Suburban Landscape, recommends keeping grass away from tree trunks to avoid the all too often injuries that occur by lawn mowers or weed-eaters. If you don’t care for bare ground, consider using a mulch as a “mower buffer.” However, Rutgers Fact Sheet 099, Problems With Over-Mulching Trees and Shrubs, recommends that the standard mulch depth be no more than 3 inches. The mulch needs to be 3 to 5 inches away from young plants, and 8 to 12 inches away from mature tree trunks making sure that the root collar is exposed to air.

Rutgers Fact Sheet 102, Your Lawn and It’s Care, recommends mowing your lawn at a height of 2½ to 3½ inches, particularly during the summer. Continuous mowing at 2 inches or lower tends to weaken the turf and increase pest and other stress problems. Frequency of mowing is best determined by the rate of growth of the lawn. As a guide, mow as frequently as necessary to remove no more than ⅓ of the leaf height in a single mowing. Removal of clippings imparts a neater appearance to the lawn; however, returning clippings to the lawn will recycle nutrients to the soil and grass and also reduce waste.

A client brought in a sample of a grass for identification because he did not want this particular grass in his lawn. Grasses are easiest identified by their seed. However, most people do not want to wait until the grass that they are considering a weed to go to seed since they are trying to eradicate it quickly. In that case, we can turn to a number of other identifying characteristics such as the ligule, auricle, collar type, sheath, vernation, growth habit, and leaf tip and width. Even given these identifying characteristics, we often have to advise the client to let it go to seed, or give them the option to send it to the lab, but at a minimum cost of $50.00.

Attitudes have changed about what people want their lawns to look like since our early colonists settled this land. What some people consider weeds were used for culinary and or medicinal purposes by our ancestors. One such plant is the broadleaf or buckhorn plantain, plantago species, that most people consider a weed. However, this plant is also a host plant as food by caterpillars of the buckeye butterfly, Junonia coenia which is easily identifiable by its beautiful and conspicuous target-shaped eyespots. One more reason not to have to weed! It’s just a different way of thinking!

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/broadleaf_and_buckhorn_plantain_two_common_perennial_weeds_with_redeeming_c
http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/bfly/common_buckeye.htm
https://buckeyeturf.osu.edu/pdf/01_turfgrass_identification.pdf
https://extension.psu.edu/identifying-common-pennsylvania-grasses
Diagnostics:

**Anthracnose on peppers:** Dr. Andy Wyenandt writes about controlling pepper anthracnose in Plant & Pest Advisory on July 27th, 2016 and explains that the pathogen overwinters on infected pepper fruit left in the field. It starts as a hot spot which fans out directionally according to wind and driving rain. Unlike tomatoes, pepper anthracnose can infect the pepper fruit at any growth stage and control measures include crop rotation and removal of all infected plants and peppers.

https://plant-pest-advisory.rutgers.edu/controlling-pepper-anthracnose/

**Asters Yellow:** A client called in with a question about aster yellows on her coneflower. She subsequently sent pictures showing deformities on the top of her coneflowers and the petals of the flowers themselves. Unfortunately, I had bad news to deliver to her because the recommendation is to destroy the affected plants. Aster Yellows are transmitted by the aster leafhopper which is extremely difficult for a homeowner to effectively control. Aster yellows can affect a large number of ornamentals and vegetables. There are no disease resistant cultivars readily available.

http://wimastergardener.org/article/aster-yellows/

**Cucurbit Downy Mildew:** Past history has shown that summer is the season in which cucurbit downy mildew may be found on a variety of crops including cucumber, cantaloupe, acorn squash, summer squash, watermelon, and butternut squash. Rutgers Fact Sheet 1124, *Vegetable Disease Recommendations for Home Gardens*, states that downy mildew is blown in on air currents from the Southern U.S. each growing season. Control of this important disease begins with scouting and proper diagnosis. There are several cultural practices recommended in the fact sheet. Be on the lookout!

**Dodder:** Along the lines of “learn something new every day”, a client had a parsley plant covered in what was identified as dodder, *Cuscuta pentagona*. According to the weed gallery on the NJAES Rutgers website, Dodder is an annual with a colorless flower which produces very small, light seed. It is tolerant of a wet environment so the seed often gets into irrigation water and is carried to the fields. It is a nuisance for ornamental flowers such as petunia, geranium, and blueberries. The dodder plant is yellow because it has no chlorophyll, which means it cannot produce its own food. So it penetrates the desirable plant with haustoria and derives it’s food from the host plant. It is difficult, if not impossible, to control culturally, and the infected plants must be removed before dodder goes to seed.

https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/dodder

**Giant Hogweed:** You may have seen giant hogweed, *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, in the news lately for it’s ability to cause the skin to be highly sensitive to ultraviolet light. Signs of exposure include swelling, lesions, and blistering of the skin which may lead to permanent scarring, dependent on severity. Contact of sap in the eyes can cause temporary and sometimes permanent blindness. The skin may remain hyper-sensitive to sunlight for years. This import forms a dense canopy and each plant can produce 20,000 seeds which may be viable for seven years. The result is the ability to crowd out and displace both native and non-native plants. It prefers streambanks and has been found in states as close as Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York.

https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/anr-35
http://chautauqua.cce.cornell.edu/environment/invasive-nuisance-species/invasive-plants/giant-hogweed
**Herbicide Injury on Tomatoes:** Tomatoes are highly sensitive to herbicide injury. Signs include a gnarly looking plant with leaves that curl upwards, are spindly and stunted with guttation at the leaf margins, and display discoloration. Herbicides that are used for broad leaf weed control, like dandelions, can virtually spread hundreds of yards away onto an unsuspecting and vulnerable tomato plant. There is no guarantee that the plant will actually recover enough to produce fruit. Replanting should be considered if this occurs early in the season.

**Hydrangeas Not Blooming:** The question came into the helpline: Why didn’t my hydrangeas bloom this year? There are several reasons that hydrangeas may not bloom including; plant age, time of pruning, drought exposure, untimely frost, nitrogen levels, or deer interference. Additionally, check your site. Hydrangeas prefer morning sun with some afternoon shade. Planting them close to the house for some protection from winter winds can also make them happy. Rutgers Fact Sheet 1152, *Hydrangeas in the Garden*, gives some tips on the various cultivars site preferences and recommended pruning practices.

http://ccetompkins.org/gardening/publications/hydrangea-q-a

**Winter Kill on Figs:** Winter damage on figs can show up in the summer. Rutgers Fact Sheet 1198, *Figs in the Home Garden*, recommends that fig trees be insulated to prevent winter kill. That can be done by wrapping the trees with burlap or tar paper, or by building a cage around the tree with chicken wire and filling the space with hay, composted mulch, or leaf compost. If you are just planting your figs this year, plan ahead and give some consideration to your planting site by choosing a space close to your house or a backyard wall to protect and insulate them from drying winds as well as extremely cold temperatures.

**Root Rot:** Despite the spring that felt like the rain would never stop, eventually we will encounter a hot dry period. There is little doubt that many of our trees and shrubs will start to show symptoms of wet feet. This may show up as scorched leaves and branch dieback, and ironically can look much like drought symptoms. When the soil is saturated, the roots can’t breathe and absorb the oxygen and nutrients that they need to grow, eventually causing the roots to turn black or brown and die off. Dig around the base of the plant to expose some roots and have a look to see if the symptoms have occurred.

http://hyg.ipm.illinois.edu/pastpest/200314a.html

**Yellow Iris:** I’ve had the chance to take note of many wetlands along the eastern seaboard and kept seeing what looked like yellow iris in clumps along fresh water, brackish water, and salt waterways. In my research, I learned that this yellow flag, *Iris pseudacorus*, is an import from the 1700’s and has become invasive in many states, no doubt due to its tolerance of many conditions including an ability to stay viable for 3 months even if dried out. Once used for erosion control and absorption of heavy metals, it has been found to change entire eco systems outcompeting the growth of native irises, sedges, and rushes. Unfortunately, these plants are incredibly difficult to eradicate.

http://erie.cce.cornell.edu/resources/article-1-invasives-yellow-flag-iris

**Self Heal:** A specimen was brought in to the helpline and it was identified as self heal along with many other common names, with the latin name of *Brunella vulgaris*. It’s square stem was a clue that it is in the mint family, but oddly it has no odor when crushed. It does however spread like mint and is found in a variety of habitats including dry to swampy, open to shady, and disturbed to undisturbed. Like mint, management of self heal is very difficult.

http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedguide/single_weed.php?id=52
**Mugwart:** A client came in with a plant for identification which was determined to be Mugwort, *Artemisia vulgaris*. Mugwort can have a case of mistaken identity and is often referred to as wild chrysanthemum because of the similarity in the shape of the lower leaves. One good identifying characteristic is the white wooly underside of the mugwort weed, whereas the chrysanthemum is the same color green on both sides. Control of this highly invasive weed is critical and may require a combination of cultural and chemical methods. Tilling is not recommended as each root piece of the rhizome produces a new plant.

https://njaes.rutgers.edu/weeds/weed.php?mugwort
https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/mugwort
http://ccenassau.org/resources/mugwort

**Chameleon Plant:** A client brought in a plant to be identified. It turned out to be a Chameleon plant, *Houttuynia cordata*. This is a groundcover that prefers wet soil or shallow water, and full sun. The heart shaped variegated leaves are edged in red and there are red edges on the stems, as well. One of its defining characteristics is the pungent smell of diesel oil when it’s crushed. However, buyer beware, this plant has an aggressive growth habit. It’s recommended to plant it in a 1 or 2 gallon container or in an area of restricted root zone.

https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/houttuynia-cordata/
https://hvp.osu.edu/pocketgardener/source/description/ho_rdata.html

**Leaf Spots:** What affect can this cool rainy spring have on our plants? The answer is quite a bit. Bulletin E160, *Common Spring-Time Diseases of Woody Ornamentals in the Landscape*, indicates that abundant moisture and cooler temperatures are the ideal conditions for the development of leaf spots, particularly when the moisture remains on the leaves for prolonged periods of time. The bad news is that fungicides are only affective if they are applied prior to the leaf spots. The good news is that most leaf spotting is cosmetic. Be certain to clean up any dead leaf litter on the ground, since that is where the spores are produced.

**Codling Moth:** A client brought in a flowering quince with small and deformed fruit and when we cut into the fruit we found a larvae specimen which was light pink in color with a dark brown head. We identified this as the larvae of the codling moth, which is also a pest of apples, pears, and English walnuts. It is possible to keep these under control with nonchemical management strategies. Begin with an early and active sanitation practice by removing infested fruit before a new generation can be started and by cleaning up dropped fruit. A more labor intensive, more effective option is to bag the fruit, if possible. Several other options such as pheromone traps, trunk banding, and biological control have been used as control with limited commercial success, but are not recommended for homeowners.

University of California; http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7412.html

**Slugs:** Every so often I get a question at the help desk that surprises me. Such as do slugs like marigolds? Since marigolds have been known to have few pest problems, I was surprised to find out that the answer is yes. In fact, one source suggested planting marigolds to keep slugs off of other plants as a trap crop. Apparently, slugs also like beer. Rutgers Fact Sheet 397, *Slugs and Snails in the Vegetable Garden*, recommends to bury a pie tin just below the surface and fill it with beer where they will drown. You will have to empty the slugs every morning and refill the pie tin every 3 to 4 days.

http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/landscape/flowers/hgic1168.html
The Spotted Lanternfly: The spotted lanternfly was accidentally introduced into Pennsylvania and feeds on over 70 plant species including cultivated grapes. The spotted lanternfly has to feed on the tree of heaven to survive and lays its egg masses on flat surfaces including vehicles and campers. Both of which are easily transportable. Experts are still learning about this threat to agriculture in Pennsylvania and the United States, and how to combat it. Anne L Nielsen and George C. Hamilton, Rutgers Department of Entomology, wrote in the July 18th Plant & Pest Advisory that the spotted lanternfly has been found in NJ. This insect is an invasive planthopper species that could be very devastating to some NJ crops including host plants such as tree of heaven, black walnut, red maple, and agricultural crops such as grape, apple, and hops. Direct yield losses have been reported in PA due to sooty mold and reductions in plant health and canopy coverage. While insecticides may be effective, this insect is highly mobile. The adults are very colorful with a black head, grayish black spotted forewings, and reddish black spotted hind wings. If you think you have seen or collected a spotted lanternfly, please report it by emailing slanternfly@njaes.rutgers.edu http://extension.psu.edu/pests/spotted-lanternfly For more information refer to The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture’s website. http://plant-pest-advisory.rutgers.edu/spotted-lanternfly/

Squash Vine Borers: Rutgers Fact Sheet 229, Squash Vine Borers, describes the injury, description, life cycle, and the management options of squash vine borers. The borers will enter a vine and feed in the stem of the squash, pushes masses of greenish yellow excrement out through the holes of the vine. It’s not surprising that the infested vines often rot and die. One management strategy recommends if you see small holes combined with castings, slit open the stem lengthwise to find and destroy the borer. Heap moist soil over the stem joints and the leaves for the purpose of starting new roots along the vine.

Beneficial Insects: Integrated pest management is the practice of using environment friendly methods to control plant insects and diseases. Rutgers Fact Sheet 930, Natural Pest Control—Using Beneficial Insects to Control Landscape Plants, identifies several common beneficial insects found in New Jersey, such as lady beetles, green lacewings and hoverflies along with some of the plants used to attract these beneficial insects. Some of those plants include daisy, black-eyed susan, sunflower, ornamental goldenrod, yarrow, aster, and Queen Anne’s lace. Herbs include parsley, dill, fennel, catnip, spearmint and thyme.

Bagworms: Rutgers Fact Sheet 1144 on bagworms indicates that in late summer the larvae stop feeding and enter the bag to pupate for about 4 weeks when the adult male moths leave their cases and fly to the female bags to mate. Meanwhile, the females release a sex pheromone to attract the male moths. As one form of natural management and control, mating disruption can be used with the proper placement of sex pheromones to lure and trap male moths. For this to be effective on reducing the infestation below threshold levels, it is recommended to combine mating disruption with the attraction of beneficial insects and reduction of plant stress.

Carpenter Ants: A client called and said she has carpenter ants. Rutgers Fact Sheet 1101 on carpenter ants and their control states ... “The first and most important step to control existing carpenter ant infestations is to locate their nests. The presence of sawdust indicates the presence of a nest nearby. Ant nests can also be located by placing diluted honey with 25% sugar water on a cotton ball or in a small container. Crushed insects at several spots around the house or beside large trees after sunset. Inspect the bait after 1-2 hours. Once the ants find the bait, large numbers usually emerge near the bait. When they do, follow the ant trails to locate the nest sites..."
Solitary Wasp: A client brought in a stem of elderberry thinking it had the larvae of an insect. Under examination through the microscope, it turned out to be a cocoon of a solitary wasp which used the elderberry branch to lay it’s eggs. Inside several of the cocoons were the solitary wasps. Solitary wasps are not aggressive, and as per Rutgers Fact Sheet 1134, Bees and Wasps, they are valuable to the environment as pollinators to native plants and crops. There are over 300 bee species native to New Jersey.
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/the_grass_carrying_wasp_a_solitary_wasp_that_builds_nests_in_unusual_places

Black Swallowtail: Sure enough we already have the larvae of black swallowtail munching on the bronze fennel located in the pollinator garden here at the Extension Education Service. The black swallowtail is the state butterfly for New Jersey. One of the defenses that nature has provided for black swallowtails are the bright orange yellow horn-like organs located behind the head which are known as osmeteria. When the black swallowtail larvae feel threatened they will rear up and extrude the osmeterium in an attempt to smear the potential predator with a chemical repellent. From personal experience, I can attest that when this happens there is a horrific smell that permeates the air, so it does work on some level!
http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/bfly/bfly2/eastern_black_swallowtail.htm

Flower Power

Black eyed susan: Black eyed susan, Rudbeckia hirta, is a summer blooming perennial which sports yellow or orange flowers with a purplish brown domed center. These easy to grow plants prefer full sun and well-drained soil and can reach heights of one to two feet which work well in a summer in flower arrangements. Take your bucket of water to the garden with you and cut the stems on a slant for best results. Rutgers Fact Sheet 1140, Incorporating Native Plants in Your Residential Landscape, lists this as a native perennial.
https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/rudbeckia-hirta/

Globe Thistle: Globe thistle is an easy to care for herbaceous perennial flower that offers steely blue flowerheads June through August with spiny dark green leaves. It works well for the back of a border at it’s 2-4 foot height. It’s a great choice for hot, dry climates in full sun and tolerates drought. The flowers attract bees and hummingbirds and it is a host plant for painted lady butterflies. The flowers are great for drying and using in everlasting bouquets.
http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/homegardening/scenebb82.html
http://ifplantscouldtalk.rutgers.edu/plantmaterial/plant.asp?id=122

Blackberry Lily: The blackberry lily plant used to be known as Belamcanda chinensis but underwent a name change in 2005 as a result of DNA sequence evidence to Iris domestica. Under any name, it’s a delightful perennial that produces beautiful yellow to orange flowers that have a tropical look and bloom in the summer over a succession of several weeks. Pear shaped seed capsules follow the bloom with black seed clusters that resemble blackberries, hence the common name of blackberry lily.
https://wimastergardener.org/article/blackberry-lily-belamcanda-chinensis-or-iris-domestica/

Blue-eyed grass: The foliage of blue-eyed grass, Sisyrinchium angustifolium, looks like a clump of grass, but the plant is actually in the iris family and spreads by rhizomes. This native has a sweet little blue star shaped flower with a yellow center that opens during the day and closes at night. While not a commonly used perennial as an ornamental, it does have potential to be used in rock gardens or a woodland setting, particularly if you happen to like fairy gardens.
https://wimastergardener.org/article/blue-eyed-grass-sisyrinchium/
**Cup plant:** The pollinator garden at the Extension Center has a cup plant, in the Silphium family which can reach height of 6-8 feet tall, so it’s best planted in the back of beds and borders. This showy perennial boasts yellow composite flowers from early summer through late summer. It’s called a cup plant because the large leaves without petioles are attached to the stem and form a perfect cup to contain rain water providing small birds with their own natural water feeder. This plant is known to attract bees of all kinds, butterflies and birds and look beautiful paired with black eyed susans, salvias, Joe-Pye weed, milkweeds, and hyssops.

https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/ornamentals/cornell_herbaceous/plant_pages/Silphiumconnatum.html
http://www.caes.uga.edu/newswire/story.html?storyid=6296&story=Cup-Plant

**Bearded iris:** Late July is the time to plant and transplant bearded iris, *Iris germanica*, which grows by rhizomes. This old garden flower enjoys a sunny well drained garden spot. If your patch is producing fewer flowers, then it’s time to divide them. First, cut back the foliage to one-third their height and lift the entire plant out. Use a knife to separate the rhizomes and discard the old ones or any that show rot or insect damage. Choose the younger smaller rhizomes that have a root system intact and have a fan of foliage. Do not plant them too deep. In fact, it’s recommended to have the rhizome slightly exposed to prevent rot. Bearded iris make the best display when planted in mass.

https://web.extension.illinois.edu/cfiv/homeowners/000722.html
https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/iris-germanica/

**Purple lovegrass:** Purple lovegrass, *Eragrostis spectabilis*, is one of those plants that qualify as a weed to one person but a desirable plant to another. It is a native grass that is perfect for roadside management with rhizomes that are good for erosion control. Purple lovegrass has wonderful reddish purple inflorescences that bloom in July and August, and it provides ecosystem benefits for ground birds, butterflies, moths, and wildlife. It’s a warm season grass that prefers full sun and well-drained soils.

http://www.umces.edu/sites/default/files/Purple-lovegrass-summary.pdf

**Money plant:** Money doesn’t grow on trees, but there is a plant called the money plant. Funny enough it’s also called the honesty plant and the Latin name is *Lunaria annua*. In Rutgers Bulletin E271, *Landscape Plants Rated by Deer Resistance*, it is rated as seldomly severely damaged. This biennial grows best along the edge of woods in dappled sunlight and fertile well-drained soils and produces fragrant magenta flowers. However, it is best known for it’s silvery translucent seed pods that resemble a coin and are often used in dried flower arrangements. Hang it up to dry and the seeds pods will come off easily with just a bit of coaxing.

https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/money-plant/

**Lavandula allardii ‘Meerlo’:** An article in the January 2018 magazine, written by Dr. Allan Armitage, who is a professor in the Dept of Horticulture at University of Georgia, identifies *Lavandula allardii* ‘Meerlo’ as a drought tolerant perennial that attracts birds and butterflies. This lavender is a hybrid cross and is known as a giant lavender reaching 5 feet in height with a spread of 4 feet. Of particular interest are the indented or scalloped leaves. The leaves of the variety ‘Meerlo’ are also variegated, however, in our zone 7a, *Lavandula allardi* is considered a tender perennial.

Lavendar Oil: The lavender oils that are sold in the marketplace are most likely derived from English lavenders, *L. angustifolia* which are the most fragrant of lavenders. Oils from lavandins, hybrids of English and spike lavenders may be blended for lavender oil production. Oils can be produced on a small scale cottage industry basis, but a still is needed along with an understanding of the complex process. Harvesting lavender can be time consuming especially if it is done by hand, and it is necessary to remove the flower buds before the distillation process. These are all factors that result in the high cost of quality lavender oil.


Loosestrife: A common name of a plant can lead to confusion and misinformation. One example is loosestrife. Purple loosestrife, *Lythrum salicaria*, is a noxious and invasive weed, whereas gooseneck loosestrife, *Lysimachia clethroides*, is a perennial plant that can be used for erosion control and makes a lovely cut flower. The two plants are in different plant families, which are the loosestrife family and the primrose family. We have gooseneck loosestrife at the Extension Education Center in our rain garden. You are welcome to come visit.

https://extension.psu.edu/purple-loosestrife-a-noxious-weed
http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/weedguide/single_weed.php?id=66

Sunflowers: Most of us conjure up an image of the annual sunflower when we think of them, however there are several perennial varieties of helianthus, as well. We have a variety in the pollinator garden at the Extension Center which offers up smaller flowers, but many are in a cluster and the beauty of this plant is that some of them reach 8 feet tall, so they are perfect as a backdrop to your garden. Given their height, you may want to consider staking them especially if they are exposed to winds. Sunflowers look great paired with tall grasses, salvias, asters, and solidago. As their name implies, plant them in the sun and enjoy the show as the pollinators visit the flowers.

http://sonomamg.ucanr.edu/Plant_of_the_Month/August,_2007--Helianthus/

Trees & Shrubs

American Elder: The American Elder, *Sambucus canadensis*, is an underused fruit crop that actually offers more than just edible fruit. The late June blooming flower clusters are beautiful and have a pleasant scent. The berries mature in late August and are tart and full of seeds, so they are generally used for making jelly or pies. It’s recommended to cut the clusters and strip the berries from the stems to be processed quickly. elderberries are rich in vitamin C, phosphorous and potassium.

https://extension.psu.edu/home-fruit-plantings-elderberries
http://www.hort.cornell.edu/fruit/mfruit/elderberries.html

Japanese Aucuba: Japanese aucuba is grown primarily for it’s leathery lustrous foliage which is sometime variegated with gold spots. This is a dioecious evergreen bush and you want to make sure you at least one male amongst the females so you can enjoy the bright red berries which mature in the fall. Rutgers Bulletin E 271, *Plants Rated by Deer Resistance*, puts *Aucuba japonica* in the shrubs that are seldom severely damaged. Be careful of this plant around animals and children as the leaves are poisonous if ingested. Put this plant in the shade in well-drained soil and let the variegated types brighten up a dark corner.

https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/aucuba-japonica/
http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/landscape/shrubs/hgic1057.html
**Roses:** Rutgers Fact Sheet 944, *Roses and Their Care,* recommends that in general, roses require evenly moist soil and if we are in a drought, give them a deep watering once a week. You can use a fertilizer that is specific for roses or a water soluble fertilizer. In either case be certain to apply it at the rate and interval recommended on the label. The last fertilization should be at early August and stop fertilizing for the summer. You should also check the pH periodically and add lime as needed. Roses prefer a pH of 6.0 to 6.5.

**Heathers:** It’s a common site to see rhododendrons and azaleas in the landscape, but if you are looking for something a bit different as a good companion plant try planting some heathers. Heathers are in the Ericaceae plant family and enjoy acid soil and can tolerate partial shade. They are available in a wide range of habits, and flower color. there can be confusion with labeling so make certain you are not purchasing the south African ericas, also known as cape heathers, which are tender and need to be brought in overwinter. Beware, however, once you start collecting, this can become addictive! https://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/v46n3/v46n3-knight.htm

**Wild Black Cherry:** A client came in with a specimen and after some research it was determined to be a wild black cherry tree. This is not a tree that is loved by everyone and is difficult to find for sale in nursery catalogs. If you are songbird or upland game bird looking for a fruit source in mid to late summer, you are in luck. Take particular care to keep them away from horses and cattle as the acids in the plant tissue and the acids in their stomachs combine to release cyanide. Black cherry heartwood has a lovely reddish brown color with hard close-grain and is highly prized for furniture, tool handles, cabinets, and the production of boats. http://sfrc.ufl.edu/extension/4h/trees/Black_cherry/index.html

**Spicebush Swallowtail:** The instars of the spicebush swallowtail butterfly spin make their own leaf shelters where they hide during the day so predators and birds won’t see them. The first instars chew a slit on the leaf’s edge near the tips of the leaf toward the midribs and then spin silk across the leaf so it forms a shelter as it dries and contracts. Older larvae spin silk mats to curl the leaves upward and form a shelter. The northern spicebush, *Lindera benzoin,* is a native plant mentioned in Rutgers Fact Sheet 1140, *Incorporating Native Plants in Your Residential Landscape,* and it’s always fun to check out the leaves on a hunt for spicebush swallowtail larva. http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/bfly/spicebush_swallowtail.htm

**Sassafras:** The sassafras tree, *Sassafras albidum,* has three leaf shapes that may be present on the same branch. The leaves may be unilobed, 2-lobed, often referred to as a mitten, or even 3 lobed resembling a trident. The bark is brown with a cinnamon-brown inner bark that has a spicy aroma when cut and the roots were a new world export used for soaps and teas and the extracts are still used in root beer although there are current concerns about the safrole oils in the sassafras. Native Americans used to carve out the tree to make canoes. It is a host plant for the spicebush swallowtail butterfly. http://dendro.cnre.vt.edu/dendrology/syllabus/factsheet.cfm?ID=84 http://dendro.cnre.vt.edu/dendrology/landowner_detail.cfm?ID=84 https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/sassafras-albidum/

**Empress Tree:** The empress or princess tree, *Paulownia tomentosa,* is so fast growing you can almost see it grow. For that reason it is considered a highly invasive and competitive tree. It’s huge leaves produce a dense shade, making it difficult for anything else to grow under it. The fruits are messy and it’s recommended to pull young seedlings, including the root system, when the soil is moist. If young trees are flowering cut them off at the base to prevent seed formation. The tree bears clusters of light purple fragrant flowers in the spring. https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/paulownia-tomentosa/ https://naturewalk.yale.edu/trees/paulowniaceae/paulownia-tomentosa/empress-72
Japanese dappled willow: The Japanese dappled willow, *Salix integra 'Hakuro Nishiki*', is grown for its foliage which produces new growth that is light pink and changes to white. This gives the bush a cloud like appearance. With pruning in late winter this shrub can be kept to a manageable size for a homeowner and looks lovely as a specimen plant with delicate arching branches, or when planted in mass. It likes full sun and wet feet. The Japanese dappled willow can tolerate a range of soil types but prefers the soil to be well drained. https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/salix-integra-hakuro-nishiki/

White fringetree: I was kayaking this summer and found a wonderful specimen tree with dark bluish drupes overhanging the waterway. In researching this tree, I found it is the native *Chionanthus virginicus* or the white fringetree, which is also known as grancy gray-beard. It is a dioecious tree, meaning there are male and female plants. The female bears these awesome drupes. This may be why I wasn’t as taken with the flowers as much as the fruit. It seems that the male has showier flowers which sport ivory white fleecy fringe-like flowers in clusters which bloom in spring. http://gardenseeds.swarthmore.edu/gardenseeds/2011/05/plantofthemonth-chionanthus/ http://www.hort.uconn.edu/plants/detail.php?pid=110

Dogwoods: Dogwoods are among one of the favorite trees that homeowners have in their landscaping, but do you know what kind you have? One clue to start with is observe the tree when it flowers. The native *Cornus florida* blooms first and then leafs out whereas *Cornus kousa*, a non-native, blooms a couple of weeks later than *Cornus florida* but after it already has leaves. Either way, a dogwood is always a good choice for your homescaping and is a relatively easy tree to care for with seasonal interest in spring, summer, fall and winter. https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/the-flowering-dogwood

Summersweet: Rutgers Fact Sheet 1140, *Incorporating Native Plants in Your Residential Landscape*, lists summersweet, *Clethra alnifolia*, as a 5-8 foot shrub which prefers acidic moist soil and full sun to partial shade. The numerous white late summer flowers stand out on racemes that are 3 to 5 inches long and have a nice fragrance. They are relatively easy to grow and are happiest planted in moist, acidic soil, with full sun to partial shade. They tend to colonize so keep that in mind when choosing your site location. http://www.hort.uconn.edu/plants/detail.php?pid=117

Oregon grape holly: *Mahonia aquifolium* or commonly known as Oregon grape holly is a shrubs that admittedly is not for everyone. I happen to really like the waxy bluish clusters of fruit in the summer that could remind you of grape cluster, though they are not. This is a specific site plant in that grows best in light shade with moist, well drained acidic soils. Put it in full sun and you will see the color of the gnarly leaves bleach out. Be careful holly is in the common name for a reason, although this is not in the holly family, but those leaves have some sharply spined teeth that will reach out and bite if you get too close. It could be used as a hedge if you don’t particularly care for your neighbor, but like birds. https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/mahonia-aquifolium/ http://dendro.cnre.vt.edu/dendrology/syllabus/factsheet.cfm?ID=422
Garden Tips for June:

- Allow the tops of spring-flowering bulbs to completely wither and turn brown. FS1220
- Plant more gladiolus corms for a succession of bloom.
- Stake perennials as needed.
- Pinch established chrysanthemums to develop fuller and stockier plants.
- Apply a labeled fungicide every 7 to 10 days to protect roses from black spot. The label is the law.
- Prune climbing roses after they have bloomed. Remove dead and older canes. FS944
- Fertilize roses during their first bloom.
- Remove spent flower clusters or forming seed pods from azaleas, lilacs and rhododendrons.
- You can move houseplants outside to the deck or patio and enjoy them outdoors for the summer. It is best to gradually introduce them to more direct sunlight to prevent the leaves from being burned.
- Feed houseplants with a good quality slow-release granular indoor plant food
- If needed, re-pot root bound houseplants to a larger pot. Use potting mix when repotting houseplants.
- Hibiscus, Jasmine, Oleander and Mandevilla are just some of the flowering tropical plants you can add to your deck, patio or balcony.
- Protect ripening strawberries from birds with netting or row cover fabric. FS97 & 98
- Make plans to pick locally grown strawberries.
- Thin developing fruit on fruit trees if there seems to be an excessive amount. This will result in larger fruits. FS1180
- Prune fruit trees to eliminate suckers and watersprouts. FS1180
- Fruit trees should be on a regular spray program. See your local extension website for tree spray program bulletin
- Cross striped Cabbageworms can be controlled with Bt. The label is the law. FS287
- Be sure to thin vegetables, particularly root crops, so they’ll have room to grow properly.
- Tomatoes that are supported with stakes or cages tend to have cleaner and larger fruits. FS678
- Harvest established asparagus beds through the end of the month. FS221 & NE221
- Plant vegetables in a container and grow them on decks, patios or other small spaces. FS055
- Apply mulches around shrubs, perennials and annuals to maintain soil moisture and an even soil temperature
- Use bark mulch around young trees to protect them from lawn mower damage. FS099 Raise the mower blades to a height of 2 to 2½” and mow frequently. Remove no more than one third of the total length of the grass blade. FS102
- Lawn areas need a minimum of 1” of water in the form of rain or irrigation each week. FS555
- Fertilize zoysia lawns. FS555
- Various pest problems can occur in June. If you have plants that you suspect may be facing a pest problem, bring in a representative sample to your local county agricultural extension agent and they will help diagnose the problem and recommend the appropriate control.
Garden Tips for July:

- Pinch established chrysanthemums to develop fuller and stockier plants early in the month, but stop pinching chrysanthemums by mid July.
- Remove spent flowers from annual flowers to keep them continuously flowering.
- Fertilize heavy bloomer perennials such as ever blooming daylilies & mums
- Divide clumps of crowded rhizomatous iris.
- Perennials that provide interest in the month of July include Daylilies, Rudbeckia, Phlox, Veronica, Ligularia, and Tickseed
- Cutting flowers is best done with sharp shears or a knife which will help avoid injury to the growing plant. A slanting cut will expose a larger absorbing surface to water and will prevent the base of the stem from resting on the bottom of the vase. It is best to carry a bucket of water to the garden for collecting flowers, rather than a cutting basket.
- Apply a labeled fungicide every 7 to 10 days to control black spot on roses. FS 1158
- Fertilize your roses. FS944
- Plant cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli as transplants in the garden for fall harvest. FS 129 & 787
- Plant seeds of ornamental kale, and broccoli in cell packs early in the month for transplanting to the fall garden in mid August. FS129 & 787
- Make another planting by seed of snap beans, beets, carrots, cucumbers and zucchini. FS129
- Sidedress rhubarb with well-rotted manure or humus from the compost pile.
- Harvest vegetables regularly for continued production. FS988
- Control slugs and snails on hosta and other plants with diatomaceous earth
- Start a compost pile. Continue pulling weeds & add them to the compost pile. FS811
- Thoroughly water your newly planted trees and shrubs. FS786
- Apply mulches around trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals to maintain soil moisture and an even soil temperature. Cover the soil 2 inches thick. Keep mulch away from the trunks of trees and shrubs. FS122
- Many plants are easily propagated by layering. Verbenas, euonymus and climbing roses are a few plants that will root if the stems are fastened down and covered with soil.
- Plants and trees that provide color in the month of July include Crape Myrtles, Spireas, Hydrangeas, Summersweet, Hypericum, Butterfly Bush and Golden Rain Tree.
- Do not prune Azaleas and Rhododendrons after the second week of July when they will begin setting their buds for next year’s blooms.
- Prop branches of heavily loaded fruit trees.
- Fruit trees should be on a regular spray program.
- Time to control aphids FS 077 & spider mites FS 235
- Continue to mow the lawn at 2½ inches. FS 102
- A thorough watering of a lawn more than twice per week is probably excessive FS555
- Check the soil moisture of container grown vegetables and flowers daily. As the temperature rises, some plants may need water twice a day.
- A brown or grayish cast over a lawn can be caused by a dull or improperly adjusted mower blades that shred grass rather than cut it. FS102
- Control mosquitoes by eliminating all sources of stagnant water
Garden Tips for August:

- Fertilize your roses the first week of the month and then don’t fertilize them any more this year. FS944
- Clean up fallen rose and peony leaves. They can harbor disease and insect pests over the winter if allowed to remain on the ground.
- Deadhead annuals to keep them blooming.
- Divide overcrowded spring-flowering perennials.
- Divide and transplant garden lilies and lilies-of-the-valley.
- Sow seeds of California poppy, columbine, delphinium, gloriosa, and Shasta daisy.
- Take cuttings of begonias, coleus, and impatiens for winter houseplants.
- Colorful plastic golf tees can be stuck in the ground to mark the location of dormant plants such as spring bulbs or perennials.
- Plant ornamental grasses such as Miscanthus, Pennisetum and Hardy Pampas Grass for motion and contrast.
- Control weeds before they flower and produce seeds
- Collards, kale, leaf lettuce, mustard, spinach, radishes, and turnips are good crops for your fall garden. FS129
- Pick summer squash and zucchini every day or two to keep the plants producing.
- Remove melon blossoms at the end of the month that won’t have time to set fruit. Ripening melons will then be larger.
- Remove old plants which have stopped producing to eliminate a shelter for insects and disease organisms
- Water the garden early in the day so plants can absorb the moisture before the hot sun dries the soil. Early watering also insures that the foliage dries before night. Wet foliage at night increases susceptibility to fungus diseases.
- Check all plants, especially newly planted ones, for water on a regular basis. Water deeply and thoroughly as needed.
- Do not add weeds with mature seed heads to the compost pile. Many weed seeds can remain viable and germinate next year when the compost is used.
- Make plans for your fall planting of trees, shrubs and perennials.
- Plants and trees that provide color in the month of August include Crape Myrtles, Pee Gee Hydrangeas, Viburnums, Hypericum and Butterfly Bush. Visit your local nursery and see these beautiful plants in bloom
- Fruit trees should be on a regular spray program, again, check with your county extension office.
- Since container-grown plants have a limited area from which to absorb water, plants in a sunny location may require watering several times a week. Check plants often to avoid water stress.
- Check on water needs of hanging baskets daily in the summer. Wind and sun dry them much more quickly than other containers.
- To reduce the number of pests on your fruit tree for the coming year, pick up and destroy all fallen fruit.
- Apply one inch of water to your lawn and gardens weekly during dry periods.
- Apply broadleaf weed control in cool season turfgrasses in early August if you want to seed in late September or early October. FS385
Rutgers Cooperative Extensions Fact Sheets

Call 856/451-2800 x4 ask for Pam Burton. When calling to request a fact sheet refer to the Fact Sheet by FS# or by name. All fact sheets are free unless otherwise noted.

Fact Sheets are also available on-line at https://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/

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What's Growing On is prepared by Pam Burton, Horticultural Assistant, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cumberland County.

Sincerely,

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http://Cumberland.njaes.rutgers.edu

If you have any questions concerning the website, please call our office at
856-451-2800 x1 for agriculture and
856-451-2800 x4 for Home Horticulture and Master Gardeners

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