

The Clod-Hopper



Volume 27 Edition 1 Gardeners of Wake County, Inc. – Raleigh, NC

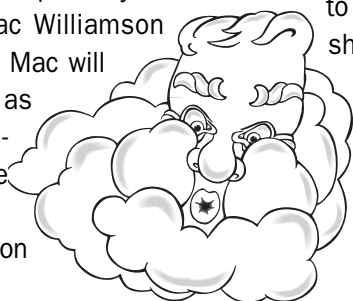
JANUARY 2011

GWC President's Message: Gardeners of Wake County

Happy New Year!

We held the annual Awards Banquet at Manchester Grill and a good time was had by all. If you did not make it this time we will see you the next. New and returning officers were sworn in. I wish especially to thank our president Mac Williamson for his years of service. Mac will continue on the Board as immediate past president. That is a good title to have.

This morning I heard on



Channel 14 weather that so far this December is the coldest December ever for the Wake County area. Since we are going to have northern area weather anyway we might as well settle in and enjoy it with good cheer. We can take advantage of the dormant season

to think about changes that should be made for spring.

Survey your barren landscapes and think about what should be moved around, eliminated or planted.

I am going to move some

things that are "too tall" to the back of the border and get some more dahlias. I also need to install some hardscape, but being an "inartistic person" it is difficult for me to envision anything more advanced than flagstone.

For 2011, our club plan is to offer a series of "outings" for GWC members. These will be in addition to the regular monthly meeting. I hope to have at least one indoor one this winter. There will be more on this later.

See you at the garden gate!
Charles

CLUB MEETINGS

Meetings are at 7:30 pm at the
JC Raulston Arboretum

- Jan 18 Bryce Lane "The History of Greenhouses: A History of Manipulation"
- Feb. 15 Becky Heath "Brent and Becky's Bulbs"
- March 15 Debbie Roos "Pollinator Gardens"

ANNUAL AWARDS

There were 68 members and guests who attended the Awards Banquet on December 14. Ginny Parker presented Beautification Awards to Perry and Pat Grady for the gardens at their home, to Andrew Austin representing Bloomsbury Landscapers and Chatham Hill Winery in Morrisville.

Bloomsbury is a family owned business that started out as York Properties and Landscapers. They maintain 72 commercial properties including Cameron Village, Holly Park Shopping Center, Rex Health Care in Knightdale and High Park Shopping Center. A third award was given to Chatham Hill Winery in Morrisville that donated the blue wine bottles for the bottle trees at the Fair.



Mac Williamson presented three Dogwood awards to NC State Fair employees Eleanor Upchurch, James Gulley and Marie Myrick for their help making things run smoothly for us during the Flower Show. James and Marie managed the parking lot so well that exhibitors, judges and club members did not complain about parking this year. Miss Eleanor worked overtime getting entry and award records corrected and recorded.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- Projects Mark Boone
- Publicity Marcy Hege
- Scholarship Anita Kuehne
- Telephone Jim Wilson

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Annual Awards – continued from page 1

Green Thumb Awards for outstanding service by Club members with less than 2 years membership went to C. J. Dykes, Rick Kemp and Erica Winston. Trowel Awards for outstanding service to the Club by a member were given to Carl Barnett for his work at the Fair, Mark Boone for the Garden for the Hungry and to Leon Lucas for work at the Fair and the Garden for the Hungry.

The Silver Vase for exemplary service by a member was awarded to Spencer Clark for his work over the years improving the competition process and the appearance of the Gardens competition at the Fair. Of special note was his pioneering work to encourage young people in schools and youth organizations to enter the competitions.







WEED CONTROL

The soil is usually moist in January so if you need to work off a few pounds after the holidays you may want to pull weeds on warm days. Chickweed, poa annua and henbit are easy to pull. Wild garlic (wild onions) need to be pulled out carefully so you get the bulb as well as the green top. If you don't get the bulb, the top will resprout. (Your editor uses an old broad-bladed screwdriver to help pry the bulb out.)



Corn gluten is a product often used by gardeners that do not want to use chemicals for weed control. It is a pre-emergent control that became more widely available in the early 1990's after studies were published at Iowa State University. The product becomes more successful after several years of use. It is more expensive than most chemical weed controls.

Corn gluten releases a protein that inhibits root development on seeds. It does not know the difference between grass seeds, flower seeds and weed seeds so do not use it in an area where you have sown seeds for desirable plants. The product can be used in cold weather to keep early spring weeds from germinating in lawns. An application rate of 20 pounds per 1000 square feet is the most frequently published application rate. The product is more effective if it is watered in, either by rain or watering, within 5 days of application.


New Members


Pamela Taheri, Cary, NC




Membership Application

Name _____ Spouse _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
 Phone (h) _____ (w) _____ E-mail _____
 Occupation _____
 Gardening Special Interests _____
 Other Interests/Hobbies _____
 Sponsor (not required) _____

Membership dues are \$15 for individuals and \$25 for families for the calendar year: January – December. Make checks payable to Gardeners of Wake County. Application form and check are to be mailed to: Gardeners of Wake County, Carole Johnson, Membership Chairman
 5346 Lake Wendell Rd., Zebulon, NC 27597

Borax, vinegar and salt are also recommended in some of the organic gardening literature. These can be used safely on pathways or patios and driveways constructed of permeable materials. Boron in high concentrations can make soil toxic to grass and other desirable plants. Vinegar does not kill the roots of plants and it can acidify the soil to damage some plants. Salt also damages desirable plant material and some soil micro-organisms.

Soil solarization is also a good control for weeds. It damages both seeds in the ground and growing plant material. It is a control method for summer gardening because it is the heat build-up beneath the layer of plastic that kills plants.

SEED STARTING

January is a good time to get seedlings started for early vegetables or perennials for the flower garden. Most homes are warm enough to germinate seeds but some seeds germinate more quickly if you use a heat mat under the seedling mix.

Some gardeners pre-sprout seeds before putting them in a seedling or potting mix. If you want only a few plants it will save space on the windowsill. Use a small “clear” plastic container with a lid. Cut a piece of “postage stamp size” paper towel for each seed you want to germinate. Put the bits of paper on the inside of lid to the container and place a few drops of water on each piece to thoroughly moisten them. Place one seed in the center of each paper square then put the bottom of the container in place. The top is the floor of the greenhouse and the bottom of the container is the domed top. Leave the container in a warm, out of the way spot. (The top of the refrigerator works.)

Check it every few days to see if the radicle (seed root) has sprouted. When it does remove the lid from the container and pluck (very carefully using tweezers) the germinated seeds off and plant them in small pots filled with moistened potting soil. Put the potting soil in the pot and make a small indentation in the center to drop the seed root into place. When the seed is in place gently cover the seed with potting soil.

Place the newly planted seedling pots on a tray in a warm, sunny spot. Water as needed and after the seedlings sprout leaves fertilize the plants with a liquid plant food. Seedlings will need light and moving air to become healthy plants.

ROSES

January is a good time to think about planting a few roses for color in the garden. The soil can be worked for a rose bed if it is not wet. If the red clay sticks to shovel wait until it dries out a bit. Rose beds need to be at least 12 inches deep. Add a 4-inch layer of organic material (composted leaves, fine bark, composted manure) and some lime to the native soil. The prepared soil can rest until the roses are available to plant.

Bare root plants can be ordered in January but are usually not planted out until late February in this area. Roses grown in pots may be planted when they are available in nurseries.

If you do not have access to the 2010 Handbook



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WAKE COUNTY**

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Roses – continued from page 3

for Selecting Roses from the American Rose Society you might be interested in what some of the highest rated roses are now. Lady Banks and the Apothecary's rose are two highly rated species roses for this area. Sombreuil (white), New Dawn (light pink) and Altissimo (red) are three climbing roses that grow well here. Some floribundas to consider are Iceberg (white), Sexy Remy (pink), either European or Playboy (red) and Sunsprite (yellow).

The hybrid tea roses are a favorite for cut flowers. Some that do well in this area are Touch of Class and Elizabeth Taylor (pink), Olympiad and Mr. Lincoln (red), Pristine (white), Double Delight (red blend with good fragrance) and Gold Medal (yellow).

JANUARY IN THE GARDEN

With the severe cold temperatures we had in December you may wish to wait until March or early April to do major pruning. Some plants may have cold damage that will not become obvious until then. It is hard to tell the extent of cold damage until new growth begins.

If you are pruning evergreen shrubs such as holly, juniper and arborvitae remember they are shaped to be narrow at the top and broad at the bottom – no little green meatballs please! You may want to prune Nandinas. Cut off the berries if you don't want lots of seedlings. Remove the longest stems to the ground to encourage the new growth from the bottom. For long term shape of the plant cut back one-third or one-fourth of the stems each year. In a 3 or 4 year period the plant will have an established shape of canes at varying heights to produce a full looking plant.

Fruit trees, grape vines and nut trees can be planted in January but wait until February or March to plant figs and strawberries. Make sure you know whether both male and female plants are needed so they will be able to produce fruit. It is also time to spray these trees with oil sprays or lime sulfur. Spray after you have pruned.

