

The Seed Pod



The Official Newsletter
of the
Men's Garden Club of Asheville

Founded 1940



Brent Russell

July 2019

Upcoming Events

July 2 Monthly Meetings
First Baptist Church
10:00 am Board Meeting
11:30 am Lunch Meeting
(see p. 4)

Seed Pod of the Month
(see p. 2)



Columbine

Welcome to July and the soon to be "Dog Days of Summer", those most oppressive days of summer between July 3rd and August 11th. Although many of us think that this phrase is associated with heat, not fit for a dog, it actually is a reference to the Sun occupying the same region as the brightest star Sirius, part of the constellation Canis Major, also known as the Greater Dog. In the summer, this star is so bright, the ancient Romans actually believed it gave off heat and added to the sun's warmth. (Believe me, I had to look all of that up on Google).

We are fortunate to have some altitude that helps to keep our nights cool and at a lower humidity; therefore, if we do feel the 'Dog Days', they just don't seem as hot and sultry as other parts of our region. I spend a good deal of time in Greenville and I am amazed each time as I return to Asheville how the temperature drops all along the way, thankfully. Even still, we must watch, water and sometimes shade parts of our gardens or plants that are prone to sunburn and heat exhaustion. The key factor here, as all of you know, is to get out and garden in the early morning. I take a stroll before 7:00 a.m. many mornings to add a little water, pull a few weeds and enjoy the beauty of the landscape, tamed and untamed!

I hope you are enjoying your summer and it is filled with travel, family, friends and perhaps some vegetable results from your garden. The Club continues to attract new members and fulfill our commitments to maintaining garden spots around the city and the Horticultural Center. Please watch for opportunities to join in.

ALSO...the nominating committee for 2020 leadership of our club will be active very soon. Please do volunteer and answer the call of nominations to help lead our club. We have remarkable talent in members and need everyone to pitch in to keep our club growing and fun.

See you in the garden,
Brent

Seed Pod of the Month

Columbine is a favored perennial of many gardeners. It comes back regularly and produces prolific amount of viable seeds, which gives one a chance for many, similar plants. The seeds sprout without any gardener effort. Thus it puts me in the quandary of whether to pinch back seed pods to extend the blooming or to let them ripen and go for more plants. This overwhelmed gardener usually takes the latter approach.

A few years ago I found a columbine with deep red, highly double flowers. I watched for it to return each year until finally it wasn't there anymore, and I was saddened. However, this double, pink columbine showed up near the former plant this year, and I'm guessing it's a daughter of the original one. I'm collecting the seeds to see what can be done to get more, similar ones. I've had great luck getting lots of deep blue or purple, sometimes double, seedlings in the past.

Tom Mills

Horticulture Center News

Changes are coming to the horticulture center in an effort to provide a facility that includes the many and varied interests of our members. Details of the plans will be presented at the July meeting and in subsequent emails. In the meantime we are attempting to source many of the materials needed for building raised beds, repair and maintenance of existing structures, and building some new facilities.

Perennials are of a major interest of late and we are being gifted more and more plants this fall. Keith Shanty is giving us a starter batch of daylilies and we may be receiving some nursery rescues. As a result we need raised beds and some tilled beds, tree areas, a wet garden area and whatever else peaks the club's interests.

Look around your properties for materials you may not have a use for, as our needs will be significant. Here is a list of some needs: 4x4's, landscape timbers, 1x6's, 2x4's, soil, mulch, fencing, landscape fabric, etc. If you have anything you think may be of use, please call or email Ray Geiser.

Thank You, Phil Roudebush!

Our June 4 monthly meeting speaker had to cancel due to illness a few days before the meeting. With little advance notice, Phil Roudebush agreed to speak in her stead and gave an exceptional presentation on "Cover Crops." In addition to being a Club member, Phil is also an Extension Master Gardener for Buncombe County and has made presentations previously for both our Club and them. When you next see Phil, give him a great thanks from the Club!

The program committee is always looking for presenters for luncheon meetings. If you have a topic you'd be willing to speak on, let Claude Williams know. As President-elect, he is head of that committee. Or if you could put together a presentation on short notice, please tell Claude.

New Member



Eron Skelton has moved 31 times in the past 30 years, but no matter the state or country he resided in, he always returned to Asheville to spend Christmas with his grandparents. He now lives in their old home. Eron is currently employed at Home Trust Bank, but has studied sports medicine, firefighting, culinary, and recently studied to become a priest for the Anglican Church. Eron enjoys being in nature and tending a small garden of medical herbs and fig trees as well as a vegetable garden. As his work schedule permits, he looks forward to participating in a variety of Club activities. Martin Gibson is Eron’s sponsor.

Plant Labels Anyone?

Often a visitor to your garden may want to know what plant he is looking at. And for those of us who are overenthusiastic gardeners, that person wanting to remember the plant may be us. Labeling plants helps solve these questions.

Labels may be complex or simple, expensive or cheap. Here are some examples noted recently.



At the high end, artwork or labels on stones are an option – these were noted at the recent Master Gardener tour.

Of course, labels from vendor are a free option. This was from the recent Master Gardener sale.

Woody plants can be labeled with much information using commercial aluminum tags and a ball point pen. Pruning and attraction of shiny metal to wildlife may be an issue. A hundred can be purchased for perhaps \$20 on the internet.



And you can be creative – an aluminum soda can, a scissors, and a permanent marker can make a nice sign. This is by your editor's wife. It's all a matter of personal taste and energy.

July Members' Meeting

Our July luncheon meeting will be held on July 2 at 11:30 am at the First Baptist Church. The speaker will be Alison Arnold, the Agriculture Extension Agent - Consumer Horticulture in Buncombe County. Alison also leads the Extension Master Gardener program in Buncombe County. Her talk was rescheduled from June to July.

Alison will be speaking and answering the question, 'What is wrong with my plant?' She states that this isn't always straightforward given the many factors that can affect plant health. Plant problems can be made by humans, environmental or caused by insects or diseases. In addition, problems often start with the wrong plant in the wrong place, improper planting or tough site conditions. Please join us for this presentation to learn the various steps to diagnosing plant problems.

We will assemble for fellowship at 11:30 am, eat lunch at noon, and have the program following lunch. Club members will be contacted regarding luncheon reservations. Cost of the meal will be \$12. Contact Gerry Hardesty at gerry327@charter.net if you have not been contacted.