

The Leaflet

~ August 2022 ~



Gardeners Know All the Dirt

Is it fall yet? I told a friend the other day it felt like sweater weather. With these slightly cooler temps I'm adding lots of new plants to my flower beds. I'm getting great deals at the nurseries and it's not so miserable outside when it comes to planting them.

Now that the temps are cooling off a little bit, we'll start working on some of the community installations we have planned: the White House Library Memorial Garden (waiting on concrete), Larry the Lizard (swing by the WH Library and check him out!), the Robertson County Board of Education Memorial Garden (be on the lookout for a work day notification), landscaping the McKendree Arbors sign, and the upcoming reworking of the Greenbrier Historical Society Museum. What a wonderful way to share our knowledge and love of gardening with our community. And we're learning a lot along the way!

May all your weeds be wildflowers,

Karen House, President

RCMGA

ASSOCIATION MEETING

August 25, 2022

7:00 p.m.

(Social time:

6:30-7:00 p.m.)

Highland Rim Research and EduCenter

Program:

Fruit Trees!

Apple & Peach

Speaker:

Shade Tree Orchard

The Robertson County Master Gardener Association meets the fourth Thursday of every month

■ Summer Celebration 2022

by Holly Bayer

The West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center presented their 32nd annual event on July 14. This year's theme was The Power of Plants. Thirty-two Robertson County Master Gardeners rode to the event



in style on a very comfortable bus. We were joined by gardeners from Cheatham and Davidson, as well as the White House Garden Club.

I personally started my day at the plant sale, and it did not disappoint. The selection was outstanding with over 230 different types of plants for sale. Most of the plants were grown by Proven Winners or Select Editions in gallon size. The prices were half of what one would typically pay. Dawn and I tied for most plants purchased at 16 each.

Now it was time to learn about plants and all the perils that can befall them. The first event I attended was Insects: Good vs Bad. The speaker was engaging and answered all of our current pest problems. I was able to find out that my dahlia blooms were not opening because of thrips and relieved to find out that they are easily eradicated. He also talked about the most common insect problems and how to control them as he passed around preserved insect samples. Ending on a high note, he discussed the beneficials and left us with several handouts.



Next, I headed over to the Common Diseases of Home Garden Fruits and Vegetables event. This talk discussed viral, fungal, and bacterial plant diseases. An important take-away was that if you've diagnosed the disease to be viral, just remove the plant. Some specific plants he discussed were strawberries, apples, peaches, grapes, tomatoes, and cucurbits. Again, he left us with a handout to refer to later in the unhappy event we have a problem.

After that, I was able to take Trial Tours. The gardens were about All American Selections. This is an opportunity for those who have developed a hybrid to submit their plants for trial.

One of the last sessions I attended was Edible Landscapes. This was a presentation about all the ways we can incorporate edibles (including herbs, fruit,



vegetables, and, of course, natives) into our ornamental gardens. The presenter discussed specific plants that work well. The results were stunning.

There were many other events to choose from, but impossible to attend them all. It was now time to board the bus for our trip home. My only regret was that I missed my chance to go back to the plant sale. Maybe next year. What is *the power of plants*? I believe it is the power to nourish our bodies and our souls.

A Trip to Gibbs Gardens

by Karen House

One of the benefits of celebrating your 36th wedding anniversary, and a week later your husband's birthday, and having a "I love to drive my Tesla" husband (or is it driving him?) is that you can visit some pretty interesting places. Last month, we went to Gibbs Gardens in Ball Ground, GA. It took Jim Gibbs 6 years to find this property, and then he spent the next 32 years developing the gardens. He opened it to the public in 2012 for all to enjoy.

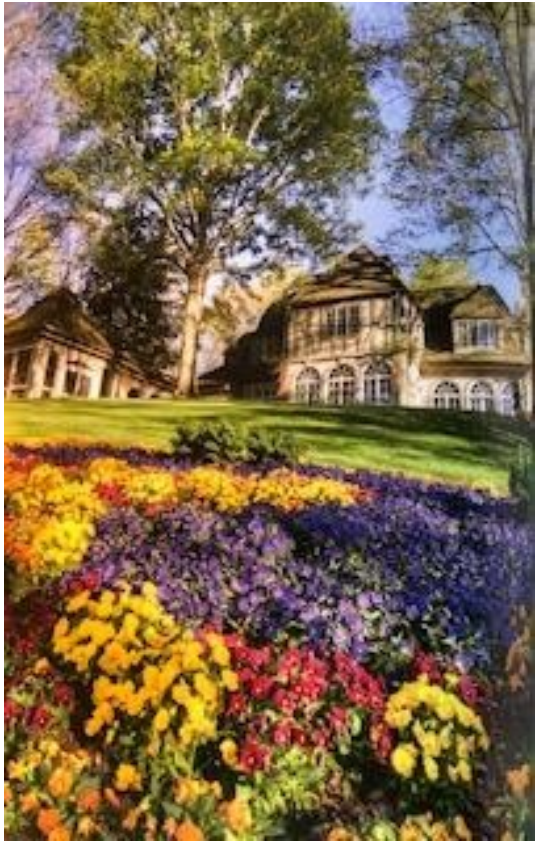
It is a 300-acre estate with 220 landscaped acres of beauty. There are 16 themed gardens -- think Monet's water lilies with a copy of the famous Giverny bridge, a stunning Japanese garden, ponds, waterfalls, and a sculpture garden depicting each of his 11 grandchildren.

His mother had a huge influence on his career as a landscaper. Her favorite flower was the daffodil, and each year he plants 50,000 to 100,000 new daffodils. The daffodil display is a huge draw with early-, mid- and late-blooming varieties.

Rather than try to describe it, enjoy a few photos from his book *Gibbs*

Gardens, Reflections on a Gardening Life. You really should add this to your list of gardens to visit.







Hiking the Pacific Northwest... and Lavender Fields

by Stacey Haag

Each year, my husband, daughter, and I participate in the 52 Hike Challenge, an annual pledge to get out in nature and hike at least once per week. During our hikes, we always photograph flora and fauna, excited by the possibility of encountering new species and adding it to our Seek (an app by iNaturalist) observations. In July, on a trip to Olympic National Park in Washington, we checked all the boxes: completed our fifty-second hike twenty-four weeks ahead of schedule, photographed species endemic to the Pacific Northwest, and added to our Seek observations.

We spent nine days making a counterclockwise loop around the Olympic Peninsula. Much of our time was spent hiking trails within ONP, but we also spent some time on Makah, Quileute, and Quinault Reservations. On our way to the Makah Reservation, we found a remote beach at low



tide after a short hike through dense vegetation. We spent some time discovering what the sea had left behind: fuchsia sheets of Turkish towel seaweed (*Chondracanthus exasperates*), thick whips of bull kelp, rockweed isopods, and thousands of yellow shore crabs. Once on Makah land, we hiked through the rain and mist (and mud) to the most northwestern point of the contiguous United States, Cape Flattery. There, we watched hundreds of pelagic cormorants nesting in pockets on the cliff walls as violent waves crashed below. Standing on those cliffs, you can feel the earth shake beneath your feet. It was during that hike that we also found our first banana slug (several more followed in the week). We observed species such as devil's club, salal, salmonberries, western skunk cabbage, and endless seas of foxglove.





After a few days of hiking, we spent a recovery day in Sequim during their annual Lavender Festival. Sequim is considered the Lavender Capital of North America. The festival founders began with “a vision of rolling purple fields to replace fallow dairy pasture, restoring the agricultural base of the fertile Sequim Prairie.

Since then, cultivation of lavender in the Sequim-Dungeness Valley has grown into a strong, environmentally sound, agri-business. Over 110,000 lavender plants are grown each year in the area. With its myriad uses beyond sheer fragrance – cosmetic, culinary, medicinal, craft, decorative – the magical herb has fostered dozens of small, creative ventures across the Olympic Peninsula and beyond. The Lavender Festival has expanded the lavender industry in the Sequim-Dungeness Valley and increased agri-tourism, cultural tourism, and culinary tourism on the North Olympic Peninsula.” (<http://www.lavenderfestival.com/lavender-festival-history>)

We selected our first lavender farm based on the fact that they also grow berries and we needed some more trail snacks! Approaching the farm, we were immediately overwhelmed by the relaxing fragrance and beautiful, rolling sea of purple. We began by picking our own raspberries, loganberries, and strawberries before heading into the lavender fields. We took our time wandering the



rows of French and English lavender. We admired dozens of varieties with their varied colors, blooms, and growing patterns.



Generally speaking, French lavender contains higher levels of camphor, the organic compound that gives lavender its strong, medicinal, herbal, and spicy smell. Camphor is also found in certain tree species and gives products like Icy Hot, Bengay, and Tiger Balm their distinctive smell.

French lavender is used more for its aromatic properties. On the other hand, English lavender typically has a sweeter smell due to its lower concentration of camphor. English varieties are often used for culinary purposes. During our visits to additional farms, we were able to see even more varieties, learn about distillation for essential oil production, and take a behind-the-scenes tour to learn the processes used by a family farm in their annual production.



After our lavender intermission, we were back on the trails. To mark the occasion of our fifty-second hike, I planned a backcountry hike in the Queets Rainforest, ONP's most remote temperate rainforest (one of four within the park) since a major landslide cut off access to much of the area almost twenty years ago. The

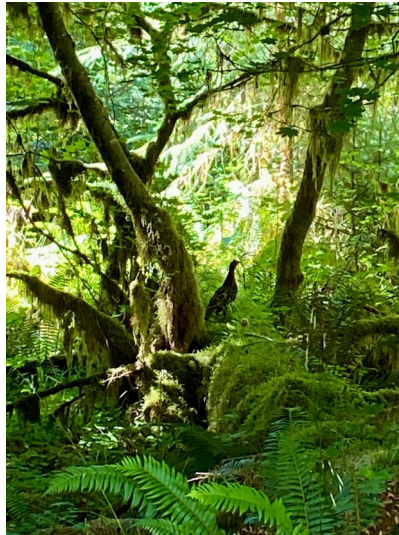


long drive to our trailhead down dirt logging roads full of steep inclines and potholes brought us to an abandoned ranger station many miles away from civilization and utilities. The area is considered a primitive wilderness, full of solitude and void of sound pollution. We didn't see another human all day. Faded warning signs were mounted to the abandoned ranger station, advising hikers that they were in the heart of cougar and black bear country. We secured our packs and headed off into the wilderness.



We hiked through a rainforest dense with huge fern species, some as tall as us. We had to pay close attention to our maps and compass to stay on track as the area is so rarely visited that the understory can quickly cover the trail. We were in awe of our surroundings: moss-draped bigleaf maples and towering Sitka spruce trees, ferns growing out of every imaginable surface. About two hours into our hike we got to check off another milestone. We heard loud rustling and the sharp snapping of huge branches or small trees coming towards us as dozens of ruffed

grouse were flushed out of their tree-base nests and into the tree branches hanging heavy above us. And then we saw what the grouse already knew: a large black bear was swiftly heading towards us, about 100-feet ahead, and quickly closing the gap. He was an awesome sight, and even though we knew what we were supposed to do, it took us a moment to collect ourselves and do it. We began speaking, identifying ourselves as human, not prey. The large bear stopped in his tracks, turned tail, and quickly ran off in the direction from which he came. I'm assuming the grouse appreciated our intervention, but their manners left much to be desired. We continued on our way and finished our hike, without seeing a cougar, thankfully. I mean, we've got to leave something for the next trip, right?! We actually saw two other adult bears and three cubs during our time in ONP, but those sightings were from the safety of our rental car.



We had a wonderful trip to Olympic National Park. We hiked the subalpine region of Hurricane Ridge where black-tailed deer casually sauntered by, explored the primeval temperate rainforests that thrive in solitude, and looked for (and found) treasures along the Pacific coastlines. We watched bald eagles nesting high above the rugged shores of Rialto Beach where entire Canadian trees become walls of deposited driftwood, drank in endless miles of wildflowers along the coastal highways, and admired manicured farms bursting in mounds of lavender.

We flew 3,944 miles, drove 976 miles, hiked 34 miles, and made lifelong memories.





Meet Larry the Lizard! Some of our Master Gardener volunteers recently installed this special project for the White House Library. Beneath the library sign is now a figural hens and chicks succulent planting modeled after the real Larry who lives inside the library. Special thanks to S&W Greenhouse and White House Ace Hardware for the discounts given for this project. Next time you're in White House, swing by and check him out!

Members' Summer Blooms Show-Off

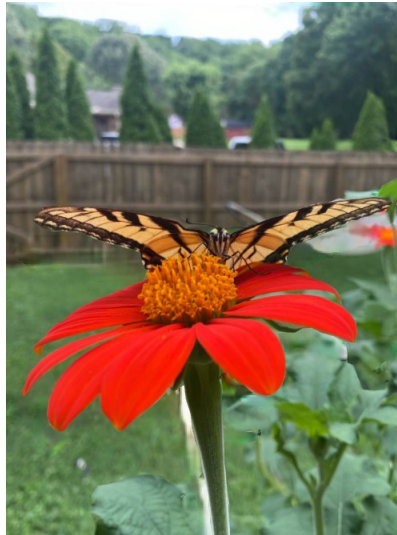
Karen House's Hardy Hibiscus...



Sandy Williams' Texas Star Hibiscus...



Shawn Herman's Mexican Sunflower and a Visiting Tiger Swallowtail...



Stacey Haag's Native Rose Mallow

Help kids learn... about the importance of pollinators by introducing them to Polli, the Bee from Tennessee! Interactive lessons and videos teach kids about the important role pollinators play in our ecosystem, arming them with the information and tools they need to become environmental stewards. Visit Polli's lessons... [here!](#)



Check out Tennessee's county-specific Pollinator Database

& Map Tool... [here!](#)



***Now is the time to prepare your entries
for the County Fair!***



Upcoming Events

August 30: [Fall Gardeners' Festival](#)

UT Plateau AgResearch and Education Center

September 20-24: [County Fair](#)

Robertson County Fairground



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Robertson County Master Gardener Association

