

# The Leaflet



July 2015

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### NEXT MEETING July 23, 2015

Native Plants by  
Caroll Marrero,  
Preview at youtube  
caroll marrero  
hillside garden

### MEETING INFORMATION

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

Meetings are at 7 pm  
at the UT Extension  
Office, 408 North Main  
Street, Springfield, TN

## Master Gardener Training Course Scheduled

By Paul Hart

The Master Gardener Training classes begin on August 31<sup>st</sup> and conclude on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015. This year we will be conducting the course with Cheatham County as both counties did not have enough applicants to have a class in 2014. The classes will be held during the day and begin at 9am. There have been requests in the past for daytime classes; so we felt it would be worth trying this timeframe. Trying to find a suitable location for both counties was not easy. Sierra Knaus, Cheatham County Agent, was able to secure a meeting room at the Joelton Baptist Church. We could possibly have a few applicants from the northern section of Davidson County participate as well. David Cook, Agent in Davidson County, is aware of the class and is assisting in promoting this to potential applicants in that area.



*RCMGA Class held in the fall of 2011.*

The deadline for registration is August 21<sup>st</sup>. Please forward the application packet to any interested persons. You can download the application packet, including a cover letter, from our RCMGA web site: [www.rcmga.org](http://www.rcmga.org). The schedule of classes is included in the packet. If you missed a class or need to review materials in a session, you may attend the appropriate 2015 class session.

## Planning for our Robertson County Fair Booth Underway

We will meet Thursday, August 20<sup>th</sup>, 7pm at the Fairgrounds for our August RCMGA meeting (in lieu of our customary date) to prepare for the 2015 fair. The theme is "Turning frowns upside down". Please collect and dry seeds as you deadhead your flowers this month; we will package and label them to give away at the our RCMGA booth. We still have a few slots available for working at the booth. You can signup at the meeting or contact the project chair, Jeanne Protsman at [Jeanneprotsman@comcast.net](mailto:Jeanneprotsman@comcast.net).



*Seed packing for 2014 Fair*

# Summer Celebration at UT Gardens



Welcome to the UT Gardens West Tennessee Research and Education Center



Bottle wall



Bottle tree



Patsy and Judy browse plants for sale



Wanda and Karen shop



Fairy gardens for sale in vendors' tent



Glass art for sale in vendors' tent



Dr. Frank Hale presents a lecture titled "Know Your Native Bees"



Local radio station broadcasts live from the Summer Celebration.



Janice and Lynn await pickup with their plant sale purchases.

# Take-Aways from Summer Celebration

“Add sugar to your veggie garden soil.”—Wanda Cohea

“I learned not to hate all wasps. Some of them eat spiders and other pests.”—Janice Derby

“Dragonflies eat more mosquitoes than birds and bats.”—Patsy Morris

“When you clean out your bluebird house, dispose of the old nest somewhere other than the ground below your box. Predators will be attracted to the scent from the nest.”—Karen Sweatt

“Attract butterflies to your garden by providing their needed minerals with rotting fruit.”—Lynn Stenglein

“Honeybees cannot pollinate tomatoes.”—Trina Fulton

We asked our RCMGA members who attended Summer Celebration share something that they learned at Summer Celebration. Items listed above. Questions of “how much?”, “how?” and “huh?” ensued and the following information seeks to clarify.

**Add sugar...to soil.** Really? How much? Sugar will feed micro-organisms, indirectly enriching the soil with beneficial microbes. A sprinkle of sugar over the soil may also be used to help deter weed growth. After sprinkling the sugar on the soil, water well. Give the sugar and microbes a week or two to do their work. There are no standard directions on how much white sugar to use. Try adding a small amount. With both sugar and molasses in gardening there is a lot of reference to positive results, but there may be too much of a good thing.



Ref. [www.brighthub.com](http://www.brighthub.com)



**Wasps** are insects many people fear because of their sting, but not all wasps sting and parasitic wasps do not generally harm humans, but they do harm other insects. Many wasps rely on nectar for survival and may inadvertently distribute pollen among flowers. Wasps, unlike bees are not drawn to flowers by color and rely on a few plants for nectar.

Ref. [www.saferbrand.com](http://www.saferbrand.com)

**Dragonflies eat mosquitoes.** . . . How do I attract them? A pond as small as one-half a wooden barrel can attract dragonflies to a garden and provide a habitat for these beneficial insects. Dragonflies can eat their own body weight in mosquitoes and flies in 30 minute; they don't sting or bite; so they pose no danger to people. Water plants provide somewhere for dragonflies to lay their eggs and places for dragonflies nymphs to hide, rest, and hunt. Rocks and



nearby shrubs also help attract dragonflies. Don't introduce fish to a garden pond where dragonflies live. Fish eat dragonfly eggs and nymphs. And, get rid of your bug zappers.

Ref. [www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org)



**Attract butterflies to your garden.** . . . While most butterflies prefer nectar from flowers; some prefer nectaring from rotting fruit. You can hang a bird suet or flat feeder or plant saucer from a tree branch. Beware that you will attract bees and wasps as well as some flies and ants, raccoons and opossums. Butterflies also love mud puddles; fill a watertight sauce with sand, rocks, and water. Add some compost (or a little manure) to provide needed minerals.

Ref. [www.joyfulbutterfly.com](http://www.joyfulbutterfly.com)

**Honeybees cannot pollinate tomatoes.** . . . Recent studies demonstrate that tomatoes pollinated by native bees produce larger and more numerous fruits. Honey bees do not pollinate tomatoes because they cannot get the pollen and the flowers do not produce nectar. With no reward, honey bees will not visit the flower. To achieve the most effective pollination, the flower must be vibrated at a specific frequency to release the pollen. Honey bees are unable to vibrate the tomato flower in this way, but bumble bees and other native species can.



Ref. *Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation*, [www.xerces.org/fact-sheets](http://www.xerces.org/fact-sheets).

## Profiles in Gardening:

### Karen Sweatt

A few years before Robertson County had a Master Gardener program, Karen completed the 2002 training program in Montgomery County with her sister, Wanda Cohea. Even so, gardening was not a new interest for Karen. She grew up on a farm in Robertson County and was always involved in whatever crop was being grown. Karen says that "as an adult, Wanda was always planting new flowers and that sparked an interest for me."



Janet Reed, The Corbin Girls (Wanda Cohea and Karen Sweatt), and Bobbie Jean Drake visiting a N.C. Daylily farm

Karen became a Master Gardener because she wanted to learn more about plants and their care. She likes flower gardening best; she counts daylilies and "any plant that attracts birds or butterflies" as her favorites.

Karen lists the education programs as what she enjoys and appreciates most about the Master Gardeners. She worked on the Christian Care Center project this spring. Along with gardening, Karen enjoys scrapbooking and is an active member of Mt. Denson Cumberland Presbyterian Church. She always has lived in Robertson County. Karen is the fourth of five girls in her family. "Daddy didn't have a chance!" She lives in a condominium but still finds soil to grow a few plants and feeders for the bluebirds and butterflies.

## Plan Now for Your Fall Vegetable Garden

by Dorothy Briggs

The key to successful fall gardening is knowing the approximate date of the first killing frost. For Robertson County the average first killing frost is October 15. In order to be sure to harvest a crop, use October 1 in your planning. Using the approximate days to maturity on the seed packages your planting, count back the number of days from October 1 in order to be sure the vegetables reach full maturity before the first frost.

You're probably going to plant where a previous vegetable had already been growing. It's a good idea to add a bit of compost to give your fall crops the best growing conditions. One of the most difficult things to overcome when starting seeds and putting out new plants during the summer are insects. The organic garlic spray may work—the recipe is available upon request. Since the days are still going to be hot, make sure to add some mulch to your Fall crops such as grass clippings or straw to keep moisture in the ground. Make sure to keep your seedlings moist especially if you are trying to germinate seeds directly sown into your garden. One tip, soak your seeds and leave them in the refrigerator overnight. The next day sow them in your garden. This should speed up germination.

A fall vegetable garden plan can include: beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, bush beans, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard greens, onions, garlic, peas, radishes, spinach, Swiss chard, turnips and more. Two varieties to consider for your fall garden are Egyptian Walking Onions and Winter Density a Romaine lettuce. These are available from Territorial Seed Company and the web address is: [www.territorialseed.com](http://www.territorialseed.com). Pictures of Dorothy's fall garden plants are on the RCMGA web site, [www.rcmga.org](http://www.rcmga.org).

## Upcoming Garden Events

<b>Jul 23, 7pm</b>	RCMGA Open Meeting	Extension Office
<b>Aug 1, 8:30-Noon</b>	Outreach at Farmers Market	Robertson County Fairgrounds
<b>Aug 20, 7pm</b>	RCMGA Meeting at Fairground	Robertson County Fairgrounds
<b>Aug 22</b>	Make Herbal Oils and Vinegars	Diann's G.H.
<b>Aug 23-29</b>	Robertson County Fair	Robertson County Fairgrounds
<b>Aug 25</b>	Fall Gardeners Festival	Plat. Res. & Ed. Ctr.
<b>Aug 31- Nov 16, 9am</b>	Master Gardener Classes	Joelton
<b>Oct 12</b>	Making Herbal Breads	Diann's G.H.
<b>Oct 17</b>	Plant Swap	Henry Horton

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