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# In the Garden

Arkansas County Master Gardeners Newsletter



DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE  
RESEARCH & EXTENSION  
University of Arkansas System



## President's Message

Hello Friends,

This has been a year different from any I've ever experienced. We had to cancel our March 16 meeting, our Plant Sale, and other Master Gardeners events.

Who would have thought that it would get to the point that we could not go to a salon for a haircut, no eating at a restaurant, wear face masks at the grocery store, and be isolated from parents, family and friends. Coronavirus has changed our routines. I have had a chance to read several books, tackle a few things around the house, and work more in the yard since I was basically quarantined. I gave the plants extra TLC. Having had a mild winter, the plants then rewarded me with beautiful foliage and flowers.

We will be easing into a new routine and will try to keep you aware of the things necessary to get to a new normal for our meetings. Until then wash your hands, use sanitizer, wear masks, and practice social distancing. We will make it through this pandemic.

Looking forward to getting together again,

*Jean*



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### CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the **State MG Conference** has been postponed until **June 10-12, 2021**.

**Annual Plant-Nurture-Grow** (PNG) conference, August 24-25 at the Arkansas 4-H Center. Years of Service Awards will be given during the conference. Details will be announced soon.

**Master Gardener Appreciation Day**, October 13, 2020. Ozark Folk Center, Mt. View, AR. Details coming soon.

**Master Gardener Monday via Zoom**, 12 to 1 p.m., (3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month unless otherwise noted). Berni Kurz, Extension Horticulture Specialist, shares information on current gardening issues and Julie Treat updates on MG program events. This can be viewed from a personal computer, laptop or tablet, as well on your phone. Contact our office for instructions on downloading the Zoom app.

Publishing Information  
Ark. Co. Master Gardeners  
Newsletter, *In the Garden*, is  
publishing bi-monthly.  
Submitted material can be  
mailed or emailed to the  
County Extension Agent,  
Attention: Phil Horton

## TIPS & TRICKS AGAINST TICKS

by Phil Horton

Warm weather is tick season just as we are spending more time outdoors in the lawn and garden. Below are some tips to avoid tick bites and potential disease exposure.



1. AVOID tick hideouts such as wooded, brushy areas.
2. IF you are in tick territory: Wear light-colored clothing, long-sleeved shirts, long pants tucked into boots. Walk in the center of wooded trails.
3. USE skin-safe repellents containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535.
4. USE clothing- and gear-only repellents containing permethrin – Repel Permanone or Sawyer gear and clothing repellent.
5. ONCE INSIDE, check your entire body for ticks – parents should carefully inspect their children. Promptly, properly remove attached ticks.
6. TICKS DIE quicker in dry environments, so remove leaf litter, keep lawn mowed, clear tall grass. Create a dry barrier between lawn and woods by laying gravel or wood chips.
7. CLEAN UP food, wood piles to discourage tick-carrying wild animals from yard, use tick control on pets.
8. CONSIDER chemical control in tick-infested yards.

### Proper tick removal

1. USING sterilized tweezers, grasp the tick as close as possible to skin.
2. PULL upward with steady pressure, not jerking or twisting the tick. If mouthparts remain in the skin, remove them with sterilized tweezers.
3. AFTER removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water.
4. RECORD the date of the tick bite.
5. DISPOSE of a live tick by submersing it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container or flushing it down the toilet.



### Gardening To-Do List



- Continue planting warm season vegetables. Heat lovers can now be planted including okra, sweet potatoes, and southern peas.
- Vegetable harvest has begun with cool season crops.
- Move houseplants outdoors, gradually exposing them to sunlight.
- Prune spring blooming shrubs after bloom. Fertilize once a year.
- Cut foliage off your spring bulbs six weeks after bloom.
- Prevent bagworms on evergreens with weekly sprays of Bt or Sevin from mid-May to mid-June.



- Harvest vegetables early in the day for best flavor.
- Blueberries are ripening, along with early peaches and blackberries.
- Keep moisture levels even around tomatoes to prevent blossom end rot. Mulch.
- Plant tropical flowers for heat-loving summer color.
- Deadhead annuals and perennials to keep them blooming. Fertilize annuals regularly.

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Extension Service is still on the job and working for you. The office is open with limited access, but the staff is available to help you with any questions or problems you may have. We are currently unable to conduct meetings or activities. Everyone is encouraged to wash your hands frequently, use hand sanitizer, practice social distancing, and stay healthy.