



The Hoe Truth Newsletter

Helping You Grow!

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Hydrangeas In The South

Hydrangeas have always been an old favorite and are even more popular with the newer hybrids. There are more than 100 different varieties, including the climbing hydrangea, dwarf container plants, large oak-leafed varieties, red-stemmed choices and hydrangeas with pure white blooms. There are too many cultivars to list, but hydrangeas are usually placed in three basic categories: *Hydrangea macrophylla*, also called bigleaf, mop head or French hydrangea; *Hydrangea quercifolia*, oakleaf hydrangea; and *Hydrangea paniculata*, often referred to as PeeGee hydrangea.

The most popular hydrangea is the big-leaf hydrangea, *Hydrangea macrophylla*. This is an older cultivar, usually pink or blue, depending on soil pH. Soil pH affects available aluminum uptake responsible for color change. However, a few white cultivars are available. Acidic soils produce blue flowers and alkaline soils produce pink petals. Cultivars such as 'Endless Summer' and 'Blushing Bride' are touted as ever-blooming plants. When planting, locate big-leaved hydrangeas in a semi-shaded spot where the soil is moist and drains well. Oakleaf hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*, is a dramatic, shrub with four seasons of interest that include fall foliage color, leaf texture and bark interest. They come in white generally then fade to pink and red. It thrives in much drier locations than its cousins.

Hydrangea paniculata types boast blooms that are usually panicle-shaped (somewhat cone-shaped) rather than bell-shaped. Often, in late summer, the blooms develop a pink shade as the blooms age, extending their beauty into the fall. PeeGees are desirable because they tolerate pruning well. Prune at any time except when they begin forming bloom heads in the summer. Some PeeGees can get very large, with some the size of small trees. However, there are compact forms.

Learn more at the americanhydrangeasociety.org. From North Carolina State



June To Do's

- Apply 1 tablespoon of urea near the tomato base in late June for more late tomatoes.
- Plant sweet corn in June for later harvest.
- Water vegetable gardens and flower beds with one inch per week.
- Use mulch to prevent diseases in tomatoes and peppers.
- Start a fungicide program for tomatoes to prevent diseases.
- Mulch is beneficial for both vegetable gardens and flower beds.
- Monitor watering needs for container plants, especially in summer.
- Fertilize annuals in June if they are turning yellow.
- Prune spring-blooming clematis immediately after flowering.
- Plant flowers like beebalm and petunias to attract hummingbirds.
- Feed hummingbirds with clean feeders.
- Allow grass to grow longer during dry spells to conserve moisture.
- Plant sweet potatoes in loose, well-drained soil with mulch.
- Cut back spring bulb foliage when it turns yellow.
- Water and turn compost regularly for proper decomposition.
- Expect "June Drop" in tree fruits as they manage crop load.
- Spray fruit crops with insect and disease spray.
- Protect berry crops from birds with bird mesh.



Welcome Butterflies To Your Garden

Light as air, bright as stained glass or creamy as angel wings, butterflies and moths do the important work of pollinating our plants while bringing joy to our gardens. They don't require a lot from us human caregivers – only a few host plants for the babies, a few nectar plants for the adults, a little water or moist soil, a flat rock for sunning, and they're happy critters.

The best flowers to plant for adult butterflies are nectar-rich classics. Hybrid plants, while beautiful, are often sterile or don't provide the largesse of nectar butterflies need. Plant sun-loving, brightly colored plants of all heights to attract the greatest diversity of butterflies and moths to your yard. Perennial plants such as coneflowers, asters, catmint and liatris are good choices. Some annuals that will attract butterflies and bees are lantana, sweet alyssum, sunflowers, zinnias and snapdragons. Most salvias, either annual or perennial, are pollinator magnets. Night flying moths are especially attracted to white flowers, so moonflower vines, white impatiens and nicotiana are good annuals to plant.

Different butterflies are attracted to plantings of various heights. For instance, tiger swallowtails are attracted to the tall Joe Pye weed and New England aster blossoms. Least skippers enjoy low-growing plants like lavender, dianthus and low-growing asters such as Stokes' aster. Shrubs like viburnum, sweetspire and elderberry are also good options to attract a variety of species.

Welcome Butterflies To Your Garden

You will also need to plant some host plants as nurseries for the insects. If you intermingle host plants with nectar plants, you will improve your chances of seeing generations of butterflies in your garden. Milkweed is preferred by Monarch butterflies, because feeding on the plant as caterpillars builds up the toxins in their bodies that make them unpalatable to their enemies. The Eastern tailed-blue butterfly likes to lay its eggs on sweet peas. The hackberry tree is a host tree to many species of butterfly caterpillars. Larvae of the black swallowtail butterfly frequent garden plants of parsley, carrot, dill and fennel. With practice their striped caterpillars are easy to spot.



Butterflies are cold-blooded and need warmth in the morning. Placing a flat rock in a sunny spot near your flowers can give them the energy they need for a day of foraging. And leaving them a shallow pan of water filled with pebbles or sand or soil will provide them with the water and minerals they need to be healthy. Above all, do not use pesticides in your garden. Most pesticides can harm or kill butterflies and moths, as well as other important pollinators. Even organic pesticides such as neem oil or insect soap can kill them or cause disruptions in their mating or feeding behaviors. The best way to control harmful insects in your garden is to plant for diversity and let nature take care of the problem for you.

Rhubarb Is Prone To Bolting

We humans can be so difficult to please. When plants flower when we want them to, we call it blooming. But when plants flower when we don't want them to, we call it bolting. Flowering is an undesirable trait when growing rhubarb; therefore, bolting describes the event.

Gardeners frequently ask why their rhubarb is bolting. Well, if you think of it from the plant's perspective, it is just a part of the plant's natural life cycle. Flowering is part of the reproductive phase that leads to the production of fruit and seed.

But from the gardener's perspective, the production of flowers, fruit and seed in rhubarb wastes the plant's resources, which could be better spent on producing edible stalks or storing carbohydrates to use for the following season. And if allowed to mature seed, the resulting seedling offspring are often less desirable than the mother plant, which we paid good money to buy as a named cultivar. In fact, seedling offspring are often more likely to bolt than some of the more modern hybrid cultivars. Seedling offspring can also be vigorous enough or just numerous enough to take over the original planting.

It does appear that some rhubarb plants are more prone to flowering than others. Old-fashioned varieties, such as Victoria and MacDonald, are reported to be heavy seed stalk producers.

Rhubarb Is Prone To Bolting



Canada Red and Valentine are less likely to bolt. Plant maturity is also a factor, with more mature plants being more likely to bolt than youngsters. Dividing the crowns every 4-5 years should help rejuvenate the planting. Applying moderate amounts of fertilizer, such as well-composted manure, each spring should also discourage bolting.

Weather no doubt has a role to play as well. Rhubarb is a cool season perennial that can remain productive for 8-15 years, if given proper care. Plant stress, such as temperatures above 90 F, prolonged drought during hot weather, poor nutrition, etc., may also promote bolting.

The bottom line is that rhubarb may bolt for a variety – and likely a combination – of several factors. Many gardeners may not know what cultivar they have, and there's not much we can do about the weather. So, if your rhubarb should happen to bolt, remove the flowering stalks just as soon as they are visible, to which the plant will likely respond by sending up another. If you keep at it, soon the plant will return to the desired priority for foliage production.

Another question that sometimes comes up is whether the flowering makes the leaf stalks poisonous. The answer is no, the leaf stalks remain edible, regardless of whether flower stalks are present. However, the leafy blade portion is always poisonous due to a high level of oxalic acid. By Rosie Lerner, Purdue University

Wheelbarrow Series Classes For June

June 6th Horticulture How To -Living Wreaths

June 13th - Glorious Gladiolas

June 20th - Horticulture How To - Draped Containers

June 27th - Ticks and Tick Born Diseases

June Garden Club Trip

June 25th, this is a **Tuesday not Wednesday!**

Willie's Daylilies Leaving At 9:00 AM From The Extension Office

Please Register In Advanced For Your Seat In The Van!



WASHINGTON COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

AGVENTURES DAY

June 21st, 2024
12 pm to 3 pm

Activities Include:

- FREE Ice Cream
- FREE Popcorn
- Bluegrass Bessie
- Mobile Science Center
at 12:00 and 2:00
- Outdoor Games
- Inflatables
- Health Screenings
- Live Animals
- Free Pollinator
Wildflower Seeds

245 Corporate Dr, Springfield

For more information:

<https://washington.ca.uky.edu/>

Call: 859-336-7741



June Plant Of The Month



Summer Heat
Peruvian Lily

Summer Heat *Alstroemeria* 'Tessumheat'

Perennial

Hardy in USDA Zones 6A - 9B



↑ Height: 3-3½ ft

↔ Space: 2½-3 ft

☀ More than 4 Hours of Daily Sun

💧 Medium Moisture

🕒 Blooms Mid to Late Summer

🦌 Deer and Rabbit Resistant

- A large flowered red *Alstroemeria* with tall stems and a long season of bloom
- Each flower has a prominent yellow central flare
- Summer Heat has overwintered multiple seasons in Zone 6, and should be hardier when sited in well-drained soils with winter protection
- Best in a sheltered area
- Plant by a south or west-facing wall
- Evenly moist, well-drained soils
- Pair with *Buddleia*, *Coreopsis*, *Kniphofia*

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University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

JUNE 18, 2024

LARGEST PUMPKIN *Growing* CONTEST

PRESENTED BY THE WASHINGTON COUNTY COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION SERVICE

GET HELPFUL TIPS AND TRICKS FOR
GROWING THE BIGGEST PUMPKIN, GET FREE
SEEDS, AND JOIN OUR COUNTY WIDE
CONTEST TO GROW THE BIGGEST PUMPKIN!
AT THE END OF THE SEASON WE'LL AWARD
PRIZES FOR THE HEAVIEST PUMPKIN IN
ADULT AND YOUTH DIVISIONS. YOU MUST
USE THE SEEDS PROVIDED. CALL 859-336-7741
TO REGISTER OR USE THE QR CODE BELOW!
CLASS TO BE HELD ON JUNE 18, 2024 AT

5:00 PM



Cooperative Extension Service
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546



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with prior notification.

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Washington County Extension Updates each Tuesday
Morning at 8:30 AM On WLSK 100.9 FM And Extension Tips
Daily After Farm Report



Asparagus Tomato Salad

1 pound of fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
1 small zucchini, halved and cut into ¼ inch slices
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 garlic clove, minced

¼ teaspoon seasoned salt
¼ teaspoon honey mustard
1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
¼ cup sliced green onions
¼ cup shredded fresh mozzarella cheese
¼ cup minced fresh parsley

Place the asparagus and zucchini in a steamer basket. **Place** in a saucepan over 1 inch of boiling water. **Cover** and **steam** for 2 minutes. **Rinse** in cold water. In large bowl, **whisk together** olive oil, red wine vinegar, garlic, seasoned salt and honey mustard. **Pour** over asparagus mixture; **toss** to coat. **Toss** in

tomatoes and green onions. **Sprinkle** with mozzarella cheese and parsley.

Yield: 6 servings

Nutritional Analysis:

110 calories, 7 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 35 mg sodium, 5 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 3 g sugar, 4 g protein.



Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.