

NC STATE

EXTENSION

Master Gardener | Stanly County

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Stanly Gardener Quarterly



Carpenter-mimic leafcutter bee on purple milkweed in late May. Photo by Debbie Roos
Read more at: <https://growingsmallfarms.ces.ncsu.edu/growingsmallfarms-garden-snapshots/>

Introduction

Welcome to the premiere edition of *Stanly Gardener Quarterly*, a newsletter supplying gardeners with unbiased, research-based information on gardens, lawns, and landscapes. Our readers are

mainly Stanly County gardeners interested in a variety of gardening types, landscaping design, and permaculture.

Written by Stanly County Extension Master Gardener Volunteers (EMG), who have been trained and certified by NC State University and NC A&T State University horticulture faculty. Our goal is to offer informative and timely articles on plants, gardening, garden design, pest management and gardening products.

Stanly Gardener Quarterly reports on Upcoming Events so you and your family can check out garden ideas, exhibitions, and instructions. The calendar will update throughout the year as events become known.

EMG Community Projects are gardens around the county where we are either engaged in exhibition gardens or learning gardens so folks will know how to care for their own gardens.

In this issue...

- We have an article on Edible Landscapes where Cynthia Housel suggests several plants that are truly garden worthy, as well as being yummy.
- Who knew that an interest in Native Plants would lead to a new friendship. Laura Krug shares her story.
- Our product review article is by Anne Houck, who recently built her own greenhouse. But, she made many improvements as she went along. Read her article to find out how she improved a greenhouse kit.
- "What's Blooming in the Piedmont" is a list of nectar producing plants from the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association so you can enjoy seasonal blooms while our pollinators enjoy the nectar
- Honey bees could use every gardener's help. Pat Allen has compiled a list of eight things you can to to help them.
- Garden Journaling is the hallmark of an efficient garden. The last article is an excerpt from the North Carolina Extension Handbook.

We hope you enjoy our premier edition of *Stanly Gardener Quarterly* written by your Stanly County Extension Master Gardeners for you, Stanly County gardeners.

Pat Allen, Editor

Upcoming Events

- April 17-18th from 8:00 a.m. to noon: West Stanly High School is holding an Ag Day. No rain dates. EMGs will be making 10 to 15 minute presentations from 9:00 a.m. to noon.
 - April 27th Spring Garden Show
 - October 22-24th Ag Awareness Days
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EMG Community Projects

Stanly County Historical Society and the Snuggs and the Freeman-Marks Houses

The Stanly County Extension Master Gardeners (EMG) are engaged in a project to renew and renovate gardens surrounding the historic Snuggs House and Freeman-Marks House. Built in 1852 the Snuggs House is Albemarle's oldest residential building standing in its original location. The Freeman-Marks House, on the other hand, is the oldest public building in Albemarle. It was relocated from the family farm to its current site and had been used throughout history as a general store and doctors offices. More information about these historical buildings can be found at the Stanly County Historical Society's website.

Junior Master Gardeners program at the Oakboro Choice STEM School, Oakboro, NC.

This is a 4-H project but EMGs are working closely with students on their garden. Last year the students had their first vegetable and wildflower gardens. Richard Morton is the EMG Chair and Kacie Hatley Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development, is the 4-H Chair.

Extension Master Gardener Learning Garden located at the Agri-Civic Center is in its early planning phase.

Adding Edibles to your Landscapes

by Cynthia Housel, Extension Master Gardener

Winter months are a great time to plan your garden and landscape space for the coming season. Have you considered adding edibles to your landscape?

Many of us want to lead a healthier lifestyle and we also want to know where our food comes from. Why not get them from right outside your front door?

There are many advantages to adding edibles to your landscape. It reduces your food cost and reduces your dependence on over-processed, mass-produced food. Fresh fruits and vegetables always taste better. Growing your own fruits and vegetables allows you to control the pesticides and additives in your food. This also contributes to a healthier environment and lifestyle. Growing your own fruits and vegetables also gives you the opportunity to try new varieties that may not be found at the local market.

Winter months are a great time to look around your landscape and plan where to add edibles. Be mindful of sun and shade when the trees leaf out.

Blueberry bushes are a great early -blooming shrub. Strawberries can be planted as a ground cover. Vegetables add color and variety to the landscape. Herbs are a great addition and are often low maintenance. Fruit trees are great alternatives to flowering ornamentals; some require more care than others so choose wisely. Blackberries and vines can also provide a beautiful hedge to control traffic flow in select areas.

Anyone can add edibles to their landscape no matter the size space they have. Start small and add something new each year. Get the family involved. Let the kids grow their favorite vegetable. Imagine stepping out your front door to gather fresh tomatoes, basil and oregano for your homemade pizza!

Native Honeysuckle

by Laura Krug, Extension Master Gardener

I made a new friend this past year. Her name is Barbara Tuset. She earned her designation as a Master Naturalist when she lived in Virginia. We love to talk about plants. Barbara knows the scientific name of many, many plants; but, I've decided to be her friend anyway.

She told me about native honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) while on a hike at Morrow Mountain State Park where we discovered we were well matched to hike together since my pace is slow due to physical limitations and she likes to stop and study everything.

We saw some native honeysuckle while hiking. It has a beautiful orange/pink/red trumpet shaped flower and is a good source of nectar for hummingbirds. It is not invasive like the nonnative (Japanese) species (*Lonicerna japonica*) which has a yellow flower and also has sweet nectar.



Lonicera sempervirens

Interestingly, I learned from Barbara that the vines of native and non-native honeysuckle grow in opposite directions. The nonnative *Lonicera japonica* grows in a clockwise direction, whereas, the native *Lonicera sempervirens* grows in a counter-clockwise direction.

When I got home I couldn't help myself; I needed to know more. So, I looked up these references. I thought you'd enjoy them, too.

Thanks to Barbara Tuset for her knowledge and resources for this article.

Honeysuckle References

[Native Honeysuckle](#)

[Japanese Honeysuckle](#)



Lonicera japonica



Harbor Freight Greenhouse (HFGH)

A First-Hand Review of the Harbor Freight Greenhouse (HFGH)

by Anne Houck, Extension Master Gardner

After first thinking I would make a greenhouse out of old windows, I saw the 10x12 HFGH on sale and decided to go with it. It currently sells for \$649, but if you use a discount coupon on the sale price you can get it for just over \$400. The size is a little bigger than I had planned, but at that price I couldn't resist. (The smaller, 6x8 HFGH retails for \$299.)

It has a double-extruded aluminum frame, 2 ply 4mm UV-coated polycarbonate panels, two sliding doors, and four roof vents. The inside height is 10' at the peak if set directly on the ground. The inside dimensions are slightly less than 10x12.

If you aren't ready to spend thousands of dollars on a greenhouse, and are good at DIY, I think this greenhouse, with a few enhancements, is a great choice.

If you research on the internet, you'll find the 10x12 HFGH has a reputation among some for being lightweight and unstable in high winds, but this is only if built as the manual specifies, without reinforcements. Other reports showed this greenhouse withstanding winds up to 90 mph when anchored correctly. Some reported the panels being blown out, but there is a way to fix that too. Most of the reviews I saw were from desert areas and places with hurricane speed winds.

It took me about a week to erect my HFGH after building a concrete block foundation, but then, I'm just an ambitious girl with a lot to learn, and I had to read all instructions and tips on the internet from folks who had enhanced their GH. Someone with experience can probably do it faster.

Here are the modifications I made to reinforce the greenhouse.

Foundation

The manual shows the metal base plate sitting on the ground, with dirt packed around it. I didn't think this would be enough to anchor the GH against high winds. I used concrete blocks, with anchor screws in the GH



base, and self drilling screws with washers to anchor the frame to the base. Some people have used concrete pads, landscape timbers or railroad ties.

It is critical to build a square and level foundation in order for the panels to fit correctly in the aluminum frame. Check for squareness frequently as you assemble the frame. Trust me on this.



Reinforcements

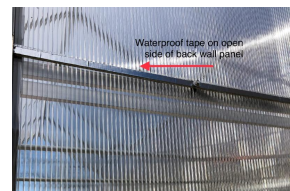
To prevent the two side walls from pulling away from each other or the frame from warping, I added horizontal braces, made out of 1/2" conduit, that go from side to side at the top of the walls.

I braced the front and back walls with 1/2" conduit bolted to the frame.



Seal Open Sides of Panels

I sealed the ends of each panel with Nashua Waterproofing Repair tape to help keep dirt, condensation, and bugs out of the channels. I used rolls of 1 1/2" wide aluminum tape (not duct tape) and cut it in half. (Don't tape the door panels. They won't fit if you do.)



Weatherstripping

The clips that hold the panels in the frames are not enough to keep the panels from flexing in the frame in a strong wind. I reinforced the panels by adding self-adhesive weatherstripping to the frame, then secured each panel to the frame using a self-drilling screw with a rubber washer. I used two rubber washers between the panel and the frame to account for the space.

If you decide to go with the HFGH, I'll be glad to give you more details.





What's Blooming in the Piedmont

AVERAGE BLOOMING SEASON

Plant Name	Scientific Name	Starts	Days	Ends
Red Maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	1-Feb	40	12-Mar
Sugar Maple	<i>Acer saccharum</i>	5-Mar	25	30-Mar
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	15-Mar	60	14-May
Sumac	<i>Rhus spp.</i>	3-Apr	151	1-Sep
Alsike Clover	<i>Trifolium hybridum</i>	4-Apr	102	15-Jul
Blackberry	<i>Rubus spp.</i>	10-Apr	20	30-Apr
Crimson Clover	<i>Trifolium incarnatum</i>	10-Apr	25	5-May
Ladino, White Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	14-Apr	102	25-Jul
Tulip Poplar	<i>Liriodendrum tulipifera</i>	25-Apr	29	24-May
Black Gum	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	26-Apr	14	10-May
Black Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	27-Apr	10	7-May
Vetch	<i>Vicia spp.</i>	28-Apr	46	13-Jun
Holly	<i>Ilex spp.</i>	30-Apr	15	15-May
Raspberry	<i>Rubus spp.</i>	30-Apr	20	20-May

- [List of pollen sources](#)
- [Pollen Chart](#)
- *Garden Plants for Honey Bees*, P. Lindtner. Wicwas Press, Kalamazoo MI, 2014.
- <https://www.ncbeekeepers.org/resources/flowering-plants>
- [Flowering Plants in the Piedmont](#)

What You Can Do To Help Honey Bees

by Pat Allen, Extension Master Gardener

As gardeners we're often asked what we can do to care for honeybees. As you may have heard, honeybees are under threat worldwide because of virulent viruses against which they have no natural defenses.

Many colonies in the wild have died out and without gardeners to care for them, honeybees could disappear quickly. Below is a list of eight things you can do to help honey bees.

1. Become a beekeeper. Beekeeping is an enjoyable, fascinating and interesting hobby - and you get to eat your own honey.
2. Find space for a beehive in your garden, if possible. Many would-be beekeepers, especially in urban areas, find it difficult to find a safe space for their colony of bees. If you can't keep bees then;
3. Buy honey prepared by local beekeepers. This helps the beekeeper recover costs and supports local honey beekeepers who must comply with all food standard requirements.
4. Ask your political officials to finance research in honey bee health. Beekeepers are concerned that we do not have enough information to combat diseases that affect honeybees.
5. Help protect swarms. Swarming is a natural process when honeybee colonies increase their numbers. Honeybees in a swarm are usually very gentle and present very little danger, if left alone. Wait for the beekeeper to arrive.
6. Throw used honey containers away. Most honey brought in from overseas contains bacteria and spores that are very harmful to local honeybees. If you leave a honey jar outside it encourages honeybees to feed on the remaining honey. This could infect local honeybees and in turn the bees would infect the rest of the colony resulting in death of the colony.
7. Invite a beekeeper to speak at a local group. Honeybees have been on earth for about 25 million years and have adapted to their environment.
8. Bee aware of your bee-havior. When kept properly, bees are good neighbors and only sting when provoked. If a bee hovers inquiringly in front of you do not wave your hands. Stay calm and slowly move to a shaded area. The bee will soon lose interest.
9. Limit your use of pesticides that could be harmful to bees. By law, pesticides must have a label stating if they are harmful to bees. Follow label instructions on how to apply any and all pesticides.

Resource: Dr Ivor Davis, master beekeeper and past president of the British Beekeepers' Association.

Appendix A. Garden Journaling

The Garden Journal - A Tool for Success

Gardening provides exercise, stress relief, enjoyment, beauty and a satisfaction that continues to grow as plants do. To maximize the benefits, keep a garden journal and record information and observations about plants, weather events, soil conditions, and wildlife encounters. A well-used garden journal is a powerful resource for any gardener.

Garden journals are as varied as plants in a garden. They may be a simple hard bound or spiral notebook, recorded on graph paper notebook, collected in a three-ring binder, or come in scrapbook form. If traditional paper formats do not appeal to you, consider recording data and observations in one of the countless digital formats available online for free or purchase- or develop your own document. Selecting a style is a matter of preference, choose a format you are comfortable with and committed to using on a regular basis. By recording information over a long period of time, you will create an invaluable source of information about your yard and garden that will guide you in making any future decisions about plants, problems, or design.

Capturing information about the site, seasonal factors, plants, pests, projects, and expenses will provide the data necessary to make informed decisions and have a successful thriving garden now and in the future.

To learn more about journaling select the link below.



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