



# THE SEVIER COUNTY AREA MASTER GARDENERS NEWSLETTER

www.SCAMGA.org

August, 2009

**SCAMGA Field Trip Saturday, August, 29th, 8:00 a.m. We will leave from the Extension Office. Details on Page 4. Contact Janet Banks at 774-8410 or email at [jbanks98@bellsouth.net](mailto:jbanks98@bellsouth.net) to sign up.**

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*Submissions: If you have information, articles, CEU or volunteer opportunities you would like published in the SCAMGA newsletter, please send to Alison Stokes at P.O. Box 5767, Sevierville, 37864 or [lysnwolf@yahoo.com](mailto:lysnwolf@yahoo.com). Deadline is the 26th of each month. Thank You!*

## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT CALENDAR FOR AUGUST

*excerpted from an article by Craig Harper, UT Professor, Wildlife Management for the FWF Update Newsletter*

### Wildlife Notes

- Bluebirds are hatching their third nests
- Young bats learn to fly
- Chipmunks are bearing their second litter
- The bobwhite population is probably at its annual peak in August
- American kestrels begin migrating into Tennessee by late August

### Habitat Management

- Prepare new cool-season plots for fall planting:
- spray existing sod with glyphosate herbicide (such as Roundup—2 quarts per acre)
  - amend soil according to soil test recommendations
  - incorporate (disk or plow) lime and fertilizer into root zone of plot
  - Spray and/or mow perennial forage food plots for weed control if necessary
  - refer to [A Guide to](#)

Successful Wildlife Food Plots: Blending Science with Common Sense, PB 1769, for additional information

Top-sow winter wheat in late August to attract doves and provide forage for white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, and other wildlife through fall and winter

Burn old-fields to stimulate forbs and reduce grass dominance (late August)—

*continued on page 3*

## OKRA!

By Roger Simpson

To many of us in the South, a garden is not complete unless there is a row of okra. However, the world is divided into several camps; those who do not like okra (it's slimy), those who like okra fried (Tennessean), those few who like it stewed with tomatoes, and finally those who like it anyway they can get it. Aside from that, people do not give okra much thought. If they did, they would discover that this vegetable from Africa

has spread around the world and become a major food source to many people.

As anyone who has looked closely at an okra flower can see, okra belongs to the mallow family along with the hibiscus. It is known as gumbo in parts of the southern USA and the Caribbean. Gumbo is a corruption of a Bantu word, "kingombo" and okra is similar to a Nigerian word, "okuru". Okra originated in the Ethiopian Highlands, and still grows wild along the upper Nile River. Okra was brought to the New

World by slave ships, and Thomas Jefferson noted that it was an established crop in Virginia by 1781.

The reason for its spread is obvious when you look at the qualities of okra. It is very high in vitamin C, vitamin B9, magnesium, and calcium. It is low in fat while also containing protein. But more importantly, okra is among the most heat- and drought-tolerant vegetable in the world. It will tolerate poor soils with heavy clay and infrequent rain. However, it is a African plant, so



*Okra Flower and Pod- Okra is a relative of the hibiscus as can be seen by its flower.*

*continued on page 2*

**Plant Swap for  
Sevier County  
Master Gardeners**

When:  
**Saturday, September 12**  
10 am to Noon

Where:  
*Dub & Glenna Julain's*  
*home*  
766 Pollard Road  
Kodak

Please bring your plants and  
seeds and enjoy the pleasure  
of sharing plants!

meat sauce. Toward the end of the 20th century it became popular in Japan where it is served with soy sauce and katsuobushi or as tempura. And of course it is used as a thickening agent in our own southern gumbo.

Other parts of the plant are useful as well. The leaves may be cooked like dandelions, or eaten raw in salads. They are also an excellent soup thickener. During the American Civil War in the south, okra seeds were roasted and

ground to form a non-caffeinated substitute for coffee. There are newspaper reports of how good it was, but somehow I don't believe them. There is also okra oil, a pressed oil, extracted from the seeds of the okra. The edible oil has

a pleasant taste and odor, and is high in unsaturated fats such as oleic acid and linoleic acid. The oil content of the seed is high at about 40%. Oil yields from okra crops are also high and only surpassed by that of sunflowers. And there is more, because its stems are strong and fibrous, they are used in Africa as a cheap source of cordage.

To grow okra, wait until all danger of frost is over and the ground is warm,

usually the middle of May around here. It is recommended that the seeds be soaked overnight prior to planting. But I never understood this if you planted before a rain. Do not plant the seeds over an inch deep. Except for the dwarf varieties, expect the plant to grow at least head high. The plants should be thinned to at least two feet apart, and because of the rank growth, rows should be four or five feet apart. Okra can do well in poor soils, but like any other crop will do better in good soil. The smaller the pod is when harvested, the more tender it will be. Small pods cooked whole also produce less goo than larger pods which have been cut. Other ways to avoid this is to stir fry okra, so the moisture is cooked away. Or it is cooked with acidic ingredients, such as citrus or tomatoes.

If you have never eaten locally grown okra, do not judge the flavor



*Okra Blossom and Immature Pods- Okra comes in many different varieties. This is Bowling Red.*

or texture of okra pods. While Burpee and Parks Brothers Seeds each had four different types of okra for sale, Baker Creek Heirlooms Seeds has twenty-one varieties. I get my okra seed, Bowling Red, from Baker Creek. This is a heirloom seed which has been in one Virginian family since the early 1920's. I like it because it has a great flavor, the pods stay tender for a long time, and besides that I think it is pretty.



*Okra Patch- Okra grows large and rank. Its leaves cause me to itch, I usually plant a single row to avoid standing between two plants*



*Okra leaf- Although it is coarse looking, okra leaves can be eaten as salad, cooked like dandelions, or used as a thickener in soups.*

*Okra, continued from page 1*  
severe frost will damage it.

A list of the cultures that eat okra and the different ways that it is prepared is a recipe list. In societies in the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East okra is widely used in a thick stew made with vegetables and meat. Okra is very popular in North India and Pakistan where it is sauteed or added to gravies. In western India, okra is often cooked in daily meals, there it is stir-fried with spices and some sugar. In the Caribbean Islands okra is an ingredient in fish soup, while In Haiti, it is cooked with rice and corn. It is also served with a local

*Wildlife Mgmt continued from page 1*

Smokey Bear is 65 years old this month. Let's pray he will retire!

Don't mow native grass hayfields past mid-August

- winter cover provided by native grasses is the primary usefulness of native grass hayfields for wildlife

- if you hay past mid-August, there will not be enough regrowth to provide sufficient winter cover

- refer to Native Warm-Season Grasses: Identification, Establishment, and Management for Wildlife and Forage Production in the Mid-South, PB 1752, for additional information

#### Wildlife Damage/ Population Management

If bats are in your attic, don't close them up now

- young are still present,

but will be flying soon

- if you close them up, they will die and produce a terrible odor
- maternal colonies will be leaving for hibernation before too long
- close all outside openings to attics as soon as the bats leave

Blackbirds begin flocking later in August

- don't allow them to roost in the trees in your yard; if they start, they'll form a habit
- repel them with noise makers consistently until they stop returning in the evening (shotguns, firecrackers, banging metal pans together)
- be persistent!
- Refer to Managing Nuisance Animals and Associated Damage Around the Home, PB 1624, for additional information on wildlife damage management.

## SCAMGA EVENTS AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**Ask the Master Gardener Hotline Needs More Volunteers!** Volunteers needed Mondays and Wednesdays or Fridays through September. There is a sign-up book in the MG Office. Time slots are typically 8am-noon or 2pm-5pm, although we can work with your schedule. Any help is appreciated and it's a great way to build volunteer hours!

**UT Gardens Volunteers:** Volunteers are an essential part of the UT Gardens and are involved in a variety of activities such as assisting the garden staff, serving as tour guides, working with special events and programs, and assisting in plant records and labelling. For more information contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (865) 974-7324 or visit <http://utgardens.tennessee.edu/volunteers.html>

#### **UT Arboretum Society**

The UT Arboretum Society always needs help in many ways. Opportunities include:

- Plant Sales
- Arboretum Plant Collections

- Special Event Planners
  - Fund Raising
  - Administrative Support
- To learn more about how you can help email [utarboretumsociety@gmail.com](mailto:utarboretumsociety@gmail.com)

#### **Great Smoky Mountains Association**

Through sales, labour, donations, and volunteer efforts, GSMA provides the National Park Service with additional tools for fulfilling its mission. (865) 436-7318 or toll free 1-888-898-9102 [Carolyn@GSMAssoc.org](mailto:Carolyn@GSMAssoc.org) [www.smokiesinformation.org/aboutus.htm](http://www.smokiesinformation.org/aboutus.htm)

#### **Discover Life in America**

All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory Volunteer assist with the search for new species in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, including collection, sorting and identification. For more information, call DLIA's Executive Director Todd Witcher at (865) 430-4757 or e-mail him at [todd@dlia.org](mailto:todd@dlia.org) [www.dlia.org/dlia/volunteer/index.shtml](http://www.dlia.org/dlia/volunteer/index.shtml)

## VOLUNTEER HOURS DUE

A reminder that time to earn those volunteer hours is drawing to a close.

If you are still short on volunteer hours to meet your Master Gardener Requirements for 2009 you have until the end of September to get them done.

For Master Gardener Interns you need 40 hours and for all others you should have at least 25 hours to maintain your active status. Don't wait until the last to try and get your time. One good way is to volunteer in the Extension Office. The air conditioning is working great and it's a cool place to volunteer during the summer! Volunteers are always welcome to come and assist staff with projects they are working on or to work the "hot line" answering gardening questions.

If you have completed volunteer hours and have not turned them in please do so ASAP! This will help prevent Leo from being covered up at the last minute.

If you have a question about your current status of volunteer hours you can contact Leo for those hours. [lhlubke@aol.com](mailto:lhlubke@aol.com)

#### **Gardening Reminders: August is the time to...**

- \*Plan and plant your fall garden
- \*Divide and transplant Daylilies and Shasta Daisies
- \*Begin planting fall blooming bulbs
- \*Propagate outdoor herb plantings for a winter indoor garden
- \*Plant garlic for harvest early next summer
- \*Test your soil so you have time to improve it by next year!

### Master Gardener Volunteer Opportunity

*When: December 5, 2009*

*Where: The UT Gardens*



Get involved with the Dogwood Arts Festival's Bazillion Blooms!

Bazillion Blooms is a dogwood tree planting program to beautify East Tennessee communities, improve the health of our environment and foster community support and pride in our beloved native dogwood.

The goal of the program is to have a bazillion dogwood blooms in the next three years and to restore dogwoods to their former vitality in Knox and surrounding counties. Over the years, dogwoods have died out due to disease, development and neglect. Our dogwoods are battling to survive.

With the Dogwood Arts Festival's Bazillion Blooms and your help, Dogwoods will thrive again. If you would like to volunteer to help with the community Day of Planting on December 5, 2009 at the UT Gardens, please call the Dogwood Arts Festival Office at 865-637-4561.

# CEU CALENDAR

MGs are required to complete a min. of 8 CEUs (Continuing Education Units). Before completing any CEU Courses, be sure that you get approval from Alan Bruhin. Below is a list of CEUs that have been approved by Alan for use by the Sevier Co. Master Gardeners:

## August:

**8th (Sat) 10am-4pm: Open House** Ijams Nature Center, 2915 Island Home Ave, Knoxville, 37920. Join naturalist Jennifer Moore and get a sampling of the educational opportunities we offer. We'll have four different programs throughout the day including a live animal presentation, a hands-on project, plus a field activity. Open to everyone and it's free.

**8th (Sat) 10:30: How to be a Frugal Gardener** Erin's Meadow Herb Farm, Clinton. Learn new green gardening ideas and techniques that will save you money while supporting the planet. Free. To register call 865-435-1452

**15th (Sat) 8pm: Bat Night** Ijams Nature Center, 2915 Island Home Ave, Knoxville, 37920. Join Ijams naturalists and learn the truth about bats and go on a bat hunt outside after dark. \$5 for non-members. To pre-register call Sheila at 577-4717 ext. 10.

**21st (Fri) 7pm: Life in the Muck** The pond at Ijams, 2915 Island Home Ave, Knoxville, 37920. \$5 for non-members. Call 577-4717 ext. 10 to register.

**29th (Sat) 1pm: Living Clean & Green! Urban Wildlife** Ijams Nature Center, 2915 Island Home Ave, Knoxville, 37920. Free. To register call Sheila at 577-4717 ext. 10.

**29th (Sat) 9am-4pm: Photography for Naturalists** Smoky Mt Nat'l Park, meet in conference room at Park Headquarters Bldg. \$49, register course #09FA907 (865) 974-0150 or [www.outreach.utk.edu/smoky](http://www.outreach.utk.edu/smoky)

**29th (Sat) 9:30am-4pm: Incredible Edibles and Traditional Medicinals** Smoky Mt Nat'l Park, meet on porch at park headquarters. \$49, register course #09FA881 (865) 974-0150 or [www.outreach.utk.edu/smoky](http://www.outreach.utk.edu/smoky)

**30th (Sun) 7am-2pm: Intermediate Photography for Naturalists** Smoky Mt Nat'l Park, meet in parking area at Cades Cove

Loop Road. Do not enter the Cades Cove Loop Road. \$49, prerequisite Photography for Naturalists or equivalent experience, register course #09FA907-1 (865) 974-0150 or [www.outreach.utk.edu/smoky](http://www.outreach.utk.edu/smoky)

## September:

**26th (Sat) 9am-5pm: A Day with a Naturalist** Meet in the training room at Sugarlands Visitor Center. Spend a day with an experienced field naturalist exploring the natural heritage of the Great Smokies. \$49, register course #09FA915 (865) 974-0150 or [www.outreach.utk.edu/smoky](http://www.outreach.utk.edu/smoky)

## SCAMGA Field Trip - Tentative Details

We will plan to leave on the trip at 8:00 A.M., August 29th from the Extension Office.

Our trip is to Overhill Gardens, a landscape nursery specializing in native plants, located in Vonore. Owner Avi Askey was one of the educators at last year's Master Gardeners' Regional Conference at UT.

If 30 people sign up, the cost per person will be approximately \$11.50. For 40 people, the cost per person will be approximately \$9.50. This is for the cost of transportation, only. Cost of lunch is the sole responsibility of each person.

For those who want to go on the field trip, they should phone me at 774-8410 or email me at [jbanks98@bellsouth.net](mailto:jbanks98@bellsouth.net)

## Urban Forestry Workshops

August 2009

*Urban Forestry Workshops: Municipal, Utilities and Planning*

Register:

[http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu/Training/urban\\_forestry\\_09.pdf](http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu/Training/urban_forestry_09.pdf)

The University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) is pleased to announce our schedule for the August 2009 MTAS Utility Workshop series. This is a three (3) hour continuing education class designed to provide an overview of the purpose and importance of both municipal and utility urban forestry programs. Topics covered include an overview of the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program administered by the State of Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry; an overview of urban forestry programs, benefits and values; utility pruning concepts, and an introduction to Interface Forestry and the problems and opportunities urban growth and expansion present.

The times and locations for the four (4) 3 hour workshops which begin at 8:30 am and ends at 11:30am are as follows:

- 1) **August 4, 2009:** Germantown Athletic Club, 1801 Exeter Rd. Germantown, TN 38138
- 2) **August 5, 2009:** TN State University School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, AG IT Building;
- 3) **August 6, 2009:** Pulaski City Hall 203 South First Street, Pulaski, TN 38478; and
- 4) **August 10, 2009:** Morristown City Hall 100 West First North Street, Morristown, TN 37816

The workshop fee will be \$25 for any interested participant in urban forestry. Refreshments will be provided.

Contact [warren.nevad@tennessee.edu](mailto:warren.nevad@tennessee.edu) for more information.

## GROWING DEGREE DAY UPDATE:

Leo Lubke says: "The Growing Degree Day information is now showing that the bulk of our growing temperatures is "behind us." As of July 27th we were at 2,378.7 Accumulated Growing Degree Days. Given typical weather data, the weather console states that we've got about 2,121.3 GDD's to go this year. Oh yes—Japanese beetles arrived at 1,029 and leave (left?) on 2,154—they should be gone (for another year).

If you have questions on pests soon to arrive, those already here or those that have "packed their bags" and left, look at the "Using Growing Degree Days for Insect Management" chart, or call Alan or me for more information."

**Farmer's Markets****ANDERSON CO: Oak Ridge Farmers Market**

Jackson Square at Georgia Avenue, Oak Ridge, TN

Contact: Jo Ann Wilson (865) 947-1449

E-mail: cww2@worldnet.att.net

Web: <http://www.easttnfarm.org>

Wednesdays, 3pm-sellout thru 10/28 &amp; Saturdays 8am-Noon thru 11/28

**BLOUNT CO: Maryville Farmers Market**

201 South Washington St., Maryville, TN

Contact: Blount County Agricultural Extension, (865)980-9911

Web: [www.MaryvilleFarmersMarket.org](http://www.MaryvilleFarmersMarket.org)

9am-Noon from 5/5-10/6

**COCKE CO: Newport Farmers Market**

Cosby Hwy across from CVS Pharmacy, Newport, TN

Contact: (423) 237-5187 or UT Extension: (423) 623- 7531

E-mail: terry@chcinc.org

Saturdays, 9am to sellout from 5/23-9/12

**JEFFERSON CO: Dandridge Farmers Market**

Parking Lot Corner of Hwy 92 &amp; US Hwy 25/70

Contact: Barbara Garrow (865) 368-9097 or (865) 397-7420 Ext. 17

Web: <http://www.mainstreetdandridge.com>

Saturdays 9am-1pm

**KNOX CO: Farmers' Association for Retail Marketing**

Laurel Church of Christ on 3457 Kingston Pike @ Cherokee Blvd, Knoxville

Contact: Jo Ann Wilson, (865) 947-1449

E-mail: cww2@worldnet.att.net

Web: <http://www.easttnfarm.org>

Tuesdays 3pm-6pm thru 11/24 &amp; Fridays 3pm-6pm thru 11/27

**KNOX CO: New Harvest Park Farmers Market**

4700 New Harvest Park Lane, Knoxville 37918

Contact: Neal Denton, UT Ag Ext Agent: (865) 215-2340

E-mail: wdenton1@utk.edu

Web: <http://www.knoxcounty.org/parks/index.php>

Thursdays 4pm-7pm thru 11/20

**SEVIER CO:****Sevier Farmers Co-Op**

hosts a farmers market on Wednesdays and Saturdays during normal store hours. Space is free, produce must be locally grown. Liability release form must be signed by vendors. Contact Mark Williams or Chris Beeler @ 453-7101 for more information.

**Seymour Farmers Market**

1st Baptist Church, 11621 Chapman Hwy, Seymour

Contact: (865) 453-0130 Lucy Henighan (865) 573-3579

E-mail: creekhappy@ntown.com

Saturdays 7:30am-10:30am June—August

*The Weather Rock*

July 2009

Greetings from the Weather Rock!

There were three thousand record lows set in the United States for July, 2009. This is the first time for me...ever... that I did not run the air conditioner on July 4th...and that was not the only day! South America, New Zealand, and Australia are having record Winters. For only the second time in one hundred and forty years, New York's Central Park failed to hit 90 degrees. The EPA squashed a report by its own department about falling global temps; only to be trumped by NASA with a full report about the unusually extended solar minimum and the resulting fall of global temperatures, despite the continued rise in CO2. Who said CO2 caused temperature rise?...?... It wasn't me!!!...and why is it getting colder?...because the solar minimum is getting deeper and deeper. 73% of 2008 was "spotless." 87% of 2009 has been spotless. Let me refresh your memory...there should be

one hundred to two hundred spots per month. Last month had one sunspot!...the result...FALLING GLOBAL TEMPERATURES...already into the realm of the past two extreme minimums...The Maunder Minimum (1640) and the Dalton Minimum (1780). This is something to worry about because (and I am only the messenger, here) our food supply will suffer. 60% of all crops planted in the U.S. have suffered some level of damage this year. If the Sun doesn't take off soon, it will get worse...believe me, I'll send out a celebration e-mail if the Sun kicks in!!!!!! Have you had problems in the garden this year?...I have, too!...in my garden and my orchard...in fact, I talked with U.S.D.A., last week, and my estimate of a 60% apple crop was "above average" for the state of Tennessee. Remember, just two years ago, 2007, the crop load in at least six local states was ZERO...sixteen degrees F. for four nights in April!

I WILL get to the forecast, but one more word (or two... LOL). It has been quite a

journey for me. I came upon the first of several points of information about this whole issue in the early nineties. It had its focus on a solar minimum occurrence, beginning sometime, at the end of the first decade of the new millennium... now. Then...to sit and watch this occur has been, in my opinion, quite remarkable... and now, I watch with cautious curiosity, with questions of just how deep this will go. I will keep you informed.

Now "what about that forecast?"...(sorry I made you read all that 'science' stuff!)

Hurricanes...the effects that we get from them!...any hurricanes, coming along, this year will probably occur from off the East coast...this is the only water that might yet get warm enough to sustain one. Why haven't there been any so far?...the waters have been too cold to sustain them and a constant flow of shearing winds from the west have kept all storms small. I don't think we have even had a tropical storm named yet, this

year.

The first three weeks will be warm, near ninety, with lows in the upper sixties. Standard summer thundershowers. There was no signal, I was aware of, at the beginning of last month, that there would be five (yes, I had five!) inches of rain the last week. I don't know about rain at the end of the month, but I believe Fall will be felt, before Sept. 1st. If you want to keep things growing, be thinking of ways to keep soil temps high. Hot box/high tunnel techniques will work!

Fall and Winter are being predicted as being early arrivers...and they are predicting much more SNOW this year for the Southeast, specifically... because of the weak El Nino...and less for the Great Lakes. Let's count the fogs in August...that's a sure sign!

From the Weather Rock... I am watching the apples get big!

See you soon,  
Jack Bailey