

Horticulture Tips

April 2009

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Oklahoma State University

GARDEN TIPS FOR APRIL!

David Hillock

Fruit and Nut

- Don't spray insecticides during fruit tree bloom or pollination may be affected. Disease sprays can continue according to schedule and label directions. ([EPP-7319](#))
- Control cedar-apple rust. When the orange jelly galls are visible on juniper (cedar), following a rain, begin treating apple and crabapple trees with a fungicide. ([EPP-7319](#), [EPP-7611](#))
- Fire blight bacterial disease can be controlled at this time. Plant disease-resistant varieties to avoid diseases.
- Continue spray schedules for disease prone fruit and pine trees.

Tree and Shrub

- Proper watering of newly planted trees and shrubs often means the difference between success and replacement.
- Remove any winter-damaged branches or plants that have not begun to grow. Prune spring flowering plants as soon as they are finished blooming. ([HLA-6404](#), [HLA-6409](#))
- Control of powdery mildew disease can be done with early detection and regular treatment. Many new plant cultivars are resistant. ([EPP-7617](#))
- Leaf spot diseases can cause premature death of foliage and reduce plant vigor.

Lawn

- Warm-season grass lawns can be established beginning late April from sprigs, plugs or sod. ([HLA-6419](#))
- Fertilizer programs can begin for warm-season grasses in April. The following recommendations are to achieve optimum performance and appearance of commonly grown species in Oklahoma.
 - Zoysiagrass: 3 lbs N/1,000 sq. ft.
 - Bahiagrass: 3 lbs N/1,000 sq. ft.
 - Buffalograss: 2 - 3 lbs N/1,000 sq. ft.
 - Buffalograss/grama mixes: 3 lbs N/1,000 sq. ft.
 - Bermudagrass: 4-6 lbs N/1,000 sq. ft.
 - Centipedegrass: 2 lbs N/1,000 sq. ft.
 - St. Augustinegrass: 3-6 lbs N/1,000 sq. ft.

When using quick release forms of fertilizer, use one pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 sq. ft. per application; water in nitrate fertilizers. ([HLA-6420](#))

- Mowing of warm-season lawns can begin now ([HLA-6420](#)). Cutting height for Bermuda and zoysia should be 1 to 1½ inches high, and buffalograss 1½ to 3 inches high.

- Damage from Spring Dead Spot Disease (SDS) becomes visible in bermudagrass ([EPP-7665](#)). Perform practices that promote grass recovery. Do not spray fungicides at this time for SDS control.
- Grub damage can be visible in lawns at this time. Check for the presence of grubs before ever applying any insecticide treatments. Apply appropriate soil insecticide if white grubs are a problem ([EPP-7306](#)). Water product into soil.

Flowers

- Most bedding plants, summer flowering bulbs and annual flower seeds can be planted after danger of frost. This happens around mid-April in most of Oklahoma. Hold off mulching these crops until spring rains subside and soil temperatures warm up. Warm-season annuals should not be planted until soil temperatures are in the low 60s.
- Harden off transplants outside in partial protection from sun and wind prior to planting.
- Let spring flowering bulb foliage remain as long as possible before removing it.

Vegetables

- Wait a little longer for it to warm up before planting cucurbit crops and okra.
- Plant vegetable crops in successive plantings to ensure a steady supply of produce rather than harvesting all at once.
- Cover cucurbit crops with a floating row cover to keep out insect pests. Remove during bloom time.
- Watch for cutworm damage and add flea beetle scouting to your list of activities in the vegetable garden.

Landscape - General

- Hummingbirds arrive in Oklahoma in early April. Get your bird feeders ready using 1 part sugar to 4 parts water. Do not use red food coloring.
- Keep the bird feeder filled during the summer and help control insects at the same time.
- Lace bugs, aphids, spider mites, bagworms, etc. can start popping up in the landscape and garden later this month. Keep a close eye on all plants and use mechanical, cultural and biological control options first.
- Be alert for both insect pests and predators. Some pests can be handpicked without using a pesticide. Do not spray if predators such as lady beetles are present. Spray only when there are too few predators to be effective.
- Schedule a group tour of the *Oklahoma Gardening*TM Studio Gardens in Stillwater between the first of May and late October!

Pruning Spring-Flowering Trees, Shrubs and Vines

David Hillock

Exceptions to summer and fall pruning include all spring-flowering trees and shrubs. Spring-flowering trees, shrubs and vines should be pruned as soon as the flowers have faded. Spring-flowering plants form their flowers during the summer and fall. Thus, summer, fall or winter pruning will remove flower buds destroying the spring flowering display. Often, the flowers are the main reason for growing the plant. Plants that fall into this category include crabapple, flowering quince, forsythia, viburnum and wisteria.

Garden Planting Guide for Warm-Season Vegetables

<u>Vegetable</u>	<u>Time to Plant*</u>	<u>Days to Harvest</u>	<u>Method of Planting</u>
Bean, Lima	April 15-30	90-120	Seed
Beans, Green or Wax	April 10-30	50-60	Seed
Beans, Pole	April 10-30	60-90	Seed
Cantaloupe	May 1-20	80-100	Seed or Plants
Cucumber	April 10-30 or later	50-70	Seed or Plants
Eggplant	April 10-30	80-90	Plants
Okra	April 10-30 or later	60-70	Seed
Pepper	April 10-30 or later	90-110	Plants
Pumpkin	April 10-30	90-120	Seed
Southern Pea	May 1-June 10	85-100	Seed
Squash, Summer	April 10-30 or later	40-60	Seed or Plants
Squash, Winter	May 15-June 15	110-125	Seed or Plants
Sweet Corn	Mar. 25-April 30	80-100	Seed
Sweet Potato	May 1-June 10	100-120	Plants
Tomato	April 10-30	70-90	Plants
Watermelon	May 1-20	90-120	Seed

*These dates indicate planting times from southeast to northwest Oklahoma. Specific climate and weather may influence planting dates. For Cool-Season Vegetables, the soil temperature at the depth where the seeds are planted should be at least 40°F.

Fruit Elimination

Kimberly Rebek

With the trees leafing out and starting to flower, we receive a number of calls regarding fruit elimination on Sweet Gum Trees or *Liquidambar styraciflua*. American Sweet Gum is a deciduous tree native to the southeastern United States. Like many trees, it produces fruits that some people find undesirable. One of the best ways to avoid unwanted fruits is to select sterile cultivars when purchasing trees and shrubs. There are ways to eliminate fruit from established trees.

Florel[®] brand Growth Regulator is a product registered to reduce or eliminate undesirable fruit development on many ornamental trees and shrubs such as apple, cottonwood, crabapple, flowering pear, sweet gum and sycamore. It also works on many other species that produce nuisance fruit.

Application must be made prior to fruit set; apply at the mid to full-bloom stage in sufficient water to wet (do not spray to run off). Good spray coverage is essential for complete fruit elimination. Application made too early or too late will also not be effective. Apply at 1 quart per 10 gallons of water (3 oz./gallon). The amount of spray used will depend upon the size of the tree. Temperatures at the time of application should be between 65 degrees Fahrenheit and

95 degrees Fahrenheit for the best results. Do not apply to trees that are under stress from disease, high temperatures, drought, etc.

Florel[®] brand Growth Regulator is the only product registered in the U.S. to control mistletoe. It can be used on ornamental deciduous trees to control leafy mistletoe and on conifers for dwarf mistletoe control. On deciduous trees, the ideal time to apply is in the spring just before leaf-out. Daytime temperatures must be above 65 degrees Fahrenheit for good results. Spray only the individual bunches of mistletoe, not the entire tree. Complete kill will not be achieved, but it should be about four years before you will have to retreat. On conifers for dwarf mistletoe, apply in early summer prior to seed dispersal.

Florel[®] costs around \$59 per gallon, so it can be rather expensive. Good coverage and proper timing are essential to effective control. It may be best to just deal with the spiky balls. They also can be rather useful. Use them to decorate wreaths, fill the bottom of planters or chip them up and mix with mulch. Some gardeners use them whole around the base of plants to deter diggers.

Ten Frequently Asked Turfgrass Questions in April

Dennis Martin

1. Where can I find out when and where the next Oklahoma Pesticide Applicator Testing Sessions will be held?

Response: The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry is the state agency responsible for pesticide applicator testing, certification and licensing in Oklahoma. The locations and dates of upcoming applicator testing are posted at this website: <http://www.oda.state.ok.us/forms/cps/testsession.pdf>

2. What does pre-emergence herbicide and post-emergence herbicide mean?

Response: A pre-emergence herbicide is a product that is applied to a turfgrass area with intent of being put in place before the germination of a certain target weed or weeds such that the product kills those specific targets at the time when their seed germinates and attempts to put out a small root or shoot. A post-emergent herbicide is put out after the target weed or weeds are already visible to the applicator and the intent is that the herbicide kills an already germinated or emerged weed.

3. Is it too late to apply a pre-emergent herbicide for crabgrass in April?

Response: If you intend to control crabgrass in a turfgrass area then it is not too late. Even if crabgrass has already started germinating in your area, by applying a pre-emergent herbicide early in the month as per label directions and activating the product by watering it in with two split applications of ¼ inch of water; you will still get the benefit of some pre-emergence crabgrass control. If crabgrass has already started to germinate, you will probably need to apply a post-emergent product to kill the crabgrass seedlings once you can see the plants and before

they produce more than 4 tillers. Not all crabgrass seed on a site germinates on the same day or even the same week. Use of a pre-emergent on a site where some germination has already started will still help reduce the severity of the infestation. Also, once you apply a post-emergent herbicide for killing existing crabgrass, a small opening in the turf stand occurs and you need a pre-emergent in place to suppress more germination in the opening. Due to dry conditions over most of the state, even though soil surfaces are warm and conducive to germination, the dry surface has largely suppressed germination over much of the state. Note, if you have been irrigating then you have eliminated dry surface as a restriction on germination and you may have some seedlings present.

4. I had crabgrass in my lawn last year, how do I know if crabgrass has already started to germinate in my lawn?

Response: If you know that you had crabgrass last year go to the spots where it was located. Although killed by freezes you can probably see how even dead crabgrass leaves and stems look different than those of bermudagrass and obviously different than those of tall fescue. In the case of a bermudagrass lawn, the dead crabgrass plants usually have a wider leaf width, a different foliage color and plant growth habit even looks different than bermudagrass shoots killed by freezes. Part the dead or live canopy of the turf near the outskirts of the “crabgrass skeletons” from last year and see if you see rather broad bladed grass seedlings emerging from the soil. Each crabgrass plant usually sets hundreds of seed so you will most assuredly find it where the skeletons are present from last year. This is the best method. This method of examining the site for presence of a weed is called “scouting”. In this case you are scouting for a specific weed, crabgrass.

5. What herbicides are used for pre-emergent crabgrass control in turfgrasses?

Response: The most commonly used pre-emergent herbicide active ingredients and one of the most widely available product names associated with these active ingredients (in parentheses) in the trade are pendimethalin (Pendulum), prodiamine (Barricade), oryzalin (Surflan) and dithiopyr (Dimension). Additional trade names for these products can be found. Remember to read and follow all label directions of a pesticide. The mention of trade names does not constitute an endorsement of a product nor does the lack of listing of a trade name mean any bias or discrimination against a product.

6. I have heard that the organic arsenicals post-emergent herbicides are being removed from the market, what do you know about this?

Response: The most common of the organic arsenical herbicides are those with active ingredients abbreviated as MSMA, DSMA and CMA. Reregistration of these herbicides has not been allowed in turfgrass areas at present, although this may change in the future.

All use of the organic arsenical herbicides, except MSMA use on cotton, will be canceled in two phases. In addition to products used on cotton, MSMA products with uses phasing out over several years will include new restrictions, summarized below, to protect water resources.

Phase 1 – Many existing uses will be canceled as of December 31, 2009, with use of existing stocks permitted through 2010. These uses include among others residential turf, forestry, non-bearing fruit and nuts, citrus (bearing and non-bearing), various grasses, and drainage ditch banks, certain rights-of-way, fence rows, storage yards and similar non-crop areas.

Phase 2 – MSMA use on golf courses, sod farms, and highway rights-of-way will be canceled as of December 31, 2012, with use of existing stocks permitted through 2013. The following new use restrictions will apply:

For golf courses:

- Spot treatments only (100 sq. ft. per spot), not to exceed 25 percent of the total golf course acreage per year
- One broadcast treatment for newly constructed courses only

For sod farms:

- 1-2 broadcast applications
- 25 foot buffer around permanent water bodies

For highway rights-of-way:

- Two broadcast applications ONLY on highway rights-of-way
- 100 foot buffer around permanent water bodies

7. Is it okay to seed or sod cool-season lawns of tall fescue, Kentucky bluegrass and/or perennial ryegrass in April?

Response: The answer is two-fold. 1. Yes, but the spring is the distance second choice as opposed to the fall. An April seeded lawn only has the months of April and May before it starts to face non-optimal growing temperatures in most of June through the early portion of September. Seedlings stands often succumb to heat, drought, disease or insect feeding during the summer. By far the fall is much better time, with an early through mid-October seeding time being preferred. Refer to *OSU Fact Sheet [HLA-6419: Establishing a Lawn in Oklahoma](#)* for details. 2. It is okay to lay cool-season turf sod in April? Usually there is no problem in getting it properly established in April in time for tolerating the summer. Again, see the fact sheet referenced above.

8. Is it okay to fertilize my cool-season lawn in April?

Response: If you want to have a higher quality cool-season lawn, then the March-April time frame is appropriate for a fertilization. Also the April-early May time frame is appropriate. Often times, two separate applications, one in March and one in early May is suggested for optimizing cool-season lawn quality. Generally, cool-season lawns are not fertilized in late May through early September. See *OSU Fact Sheet [HLA-6420: Lawn Management in Oklahoma](#)* for details on lawn fertility programs.

9. Can warm-season lawns of Bermuda, Buffalo or Zoysia be fertilized in April?

Response: In general, April is the first month of the year when fertilizing warm-season lawns can be suggested. Depending upon the individual year, warm-season lawns have come out of winter dormancy and are attempting to put on growth. Once the competitive winter annual weeds have

been controlled, generally warm-season lawns can be fertilized in mid-April and onward until no later than September 15. Every year is slightly different with variable warming trends, rainfall, late frost, etc. See *OSU Fact Sheet [HLA-6420](#): Lawn Management in Oklahoma* for details on lawn fertility programs.

10. Can I seed a warm-season lawn in April?

Response: Certainly one can seed a lawn in April but the real question is “*How early is it advisable to seed a warm-season lawn?*” Provided that one has excellent erosion control measures in place, it does not hurt the warm-season turfgrass seed to be properly seeded in the month of April. Excellent erosion control measures include but are not limited to drill seeding into stubble or other dead cover, hydro seeding/mulching, broadcast seeding followed by light raking for incorporation and mulching with either clean wheat straw, shredded mulch, spun bound polyester seed cloth or other mulch. Even though the soil may be a bit cool for germination of warm-season grass seed, the seed primes and imbibes water, meaning it takes up moisture from the soil and this starts key enzymatic processes, but the seed won’t germinate (having a root or shoot emerge from the seed) until conditions are warm enough to do so. While there is a risk of late frosts or hard freezes killing early germinating warm-season turfgrasses from seed, complete stand loss from early seeding is really rare. What is more of a problem is flash hard rains (in some years) washing the soil and seed into puddles such that too low of seed amounts remain in some areas and grossly overage amounts are present where seed was puddled. So the question is not whether seeding in April is okay, but rather, if you are going to seed and wait on the seed to germinate do you have excellent erosion control measures in place to keep the seed from washing while one is waiting for it to germinate and establish? This question is important regardless of when one is planning on seeding, but more risk of seed puddling is present the longer the seed is laying in the soil waiting to germinate. Refer to *OSU Fact Sheet [HLA-6419](#): Establishing a Lawn in Oklahoma* for details.

Spring Lawn Aerification

Justin Quetone Moss

Spring is a great time to aerify a bermudagrass yard. Core aerification is the process of removing small cores of soil and organic material from your lawn. One can typically hire a lawn care company to perform this service or rent an aerification machine from a local equipment rental facility. The aerification equipment typically is setup to pull cores ranging from 0.25 to 0.33 inches in diameter from the top 3-6 inches of the soil. The cores are removed and left to decay on the lawn surface. Bermudagrass has both aboveground stems (stolons) and belowground stems (rhizomes). Over time, these dead stems and roots can create an organic layer just above the soil surface called thatch. While a small thatch layer less than 0.5 inch is acceptable, thatch layers greater than 0.5 inch can cause problems in your lawn. Aerification helps to reduce the thatch layer and can also help to reduce soil compaction and increase water infiltration into the soil. To prevent future excessive thatch buildup, one can employ the following turf management cultural practices as described in the OSU Cooperative Extension Service Fact Sheet [HLA-6604](#) titled “*Thatch Management in Lawns*”:

- Moderate and regular fertilization of the turf to maintain vigor without excessive growth.
- Regular mowing that does not remove more than one-third of the shoot growth in a single mowing.
- Watering as deeply and as infrequently as possible to encourage a deeper root system. Try to moisten the soil to a 6-inch depth when watering. Wait until the turf just begins to wilt before watering again.
- In situations where thatch has been a problem, dethatch annually before the new flush of growth begins.
- Core aeration of compacted areas in order to improve penetration of air, water and nutrients.

Apple Twig Borer Damages Stressed Plants

Eric T. Stafne

Apple Twig Borer (also called Grape Cane Borer) is an elongated, cylindrical beetle. It measures from 1/4 to 1/2 inch long and 1/16 to 1/8 inch wide. The color is usually a brown to dark brown in the mature stage. The adult overwinters in living twigs and emerges in the spring. After emergence, the female deposits eggs in bark crevices. The young larvae that follow then burrow into twigs and tunnel through the stem. The larvae mature inside the stem and pupate in the fall.

The Apple Twig Borer breeds only in injured, diseased, dying and recently dead plants. New growth that does break bud from these plants may wilt, droop and die back due to the damage caused by the insect. In grape vines, a small hole can be seen on canes or the trunk, sometimes with a hard, crusty exudate covering the hole. The entrance holes are small and round, roughly 1/8 inch in diameter.

Extreme stress caused by winter injury or drought can lead to an infestation of these insects. Damaged plants will emit a chemical that attracts the Apple Twig Borer. This borer will attack any woody plant that has been damaged, but seems to be especially problematic on grapevines. Control of this pest is not well understood, but sanitation and pruning out affected areas will help reduce the problem in future years.

For more information and photos of the insect and the damage it causes, follow this link to the Plant Disease and Insect Advisory from the OSU Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology: <http://www.ento.okstate.edu/pddl/2007/PDIA6-5.pdf>

Plant a Row for the Hungry

Kimberly Rebek

Oklahoma Gardening is promoting the *Plant a Row for the Hungry* program. *Plant a Row for the Hungry* is a people-helping-people approach to addressing hunger and malnutrition. Gardeners are notorious for growing more produce than they can consume. *Plant a Row for the Hungry* encourages gardeners to plant an extra row of produce and donate their surplus to food banks, soup kitchens and other service organizations in their communities.

According to the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma's Web site, Oklahoma ranks seventh in the nation at 13 percent in the number of people who are food insecure. The USDA defines food insecure as being hungry at times during the year due to lack of money for food. In 2008, the CFBEO received more than 5,000 pounds of food through the *Plant a Row for the Hungry* program.

Plant a Row for the Hungry began in Anchorage, Alaska, in the garden column of Jeff Lowenfels, former Garden Writers Association (GWA) president. He asked his readers to plant a row of vegetables for a local soup kitchen. The program was so successful he introduced it to GWA as a national program.

It took five years to reach the first million pounds of donated produce. The next million was reached in only two years, and in the next eight years, more than a million pounds of food was donated each year. This is a significant contribution considering that each pound of produce supplements four meals. Since 1995, more than 14 million pounds of produce providing more than 50 million meals have been donated by American gardeners.

The *Oklahoma Gardening*[™] team is adding a web page to the *Oklahoma Gardening*[™] website devoted to *Plant a Row*. The page includes information on *Plant a Row* as well as a list of food banks around Oklahoma involved with the *Plant a Row for the Hungry* campaign. These include:

Lawton Food Bank accepts donations Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. or by appointment. Contact Jeri Mosiman at 580-353-7994 for more information

Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma, visit their website (www.cfbeo.org) or contact Ken Bacon at 918-585-2800 ext. 122 for more information on donating to that organization.

Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma serves the western portion of the state. Look for information on their website (www.regionalfoodbank.org) or call 405-972-1111.

The web page will also list donation locations for each county as this information is gathered. We would like to add donation locations for **every county** in Oklahoma and can use your help. Feel free to share information on soup kitchens, food pantries and other donation sites in your area that accept fresh produce by contacting Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or stephanie.larimer@okstate.edu.



Start a Campaign in Your Own Community

For more information about the program and to find out how you can start a campaign in your own community, visit the Garden Writers Association *Plant a Row for the Hungry* website <http://www.gardenwriters.org/gwa.php?p=par/index.html>.

Every one of us can make a difference to a hungry family by simply planting one extra row of vegetables in our garden.

Resistance, Our First Defense to Pests

David Hillock

One of our best defenses to common pest problems in the garden and landscape is plants with natural resistance. By selecting varieties of plant species, or species that are inherently resistant to common pest problems, the use of pesticides needed to keep our plants looking good can be reduced. When buying seeds or plants, try to choose those with built-in resistance to diseases, insects and nematodes. Sources for this information include OSU Extension Fact Sheets, seed catalogs and plant and seed packages. It may be better to forego some production capability in favor of the increased pest resistance, if you must make such a choice. During the growing season, stressed plants can lose their resistance to pests, so be sure the crop has the water and nutrients it needs. When shopping for seeds and plants, check the labels for indications of pest resistance. For example, many garden phlox and crapemyrtles are susceptible to powdery mildew fungal disease; however, several varieties are available that are resistant to powdery mildew. When purchasing vegetables, check labels or packaging for abbreviations similar to these, used to designate various types of pest resistance or tolerance:

A—*Alternaria* stem canker
ALS—angular leaf spot
ANTH—anthracnose
CMV—cucumber mosaic virus
DM—downey mildew
F—*Fusarium* (race 1)
FF—*Fusarium* (races 1 & 2)
L—leafspot
MDM—maize dwarf mosaic
N—nematode
NCLB—northern corn leaf blight
PM—powdery mildew
SCLB—southern corn leaf blight
St—*Stemphylium* (gray leaf spot)
SW—Stewart's wilt
TMV—tobacco mosaic virus
V—*Verticillium*

Gardening with Kids

Shelley Mitchell

April 15th is usually the last day we can expect frost in Oklahoma, but you don't have to wait until mid-April to get started on a garden. You can start seeds indoors. Young children love to help plant seeds and watch them germinate. If you want to watch roots develop on a plant, plant seeds in clear glass containers filled with water crystals (also known as hydro gels, polymer crystals or water gels). When it's time to transplant to the garden, the water crystals will help the soil hold moisture.

You can also watch roots grow by planting seeds near the edge of a clear glass container or next to a 'window' cut in the side of a milk carton and covered with clear plastic. Watching roots grow brings many teachable moments. You can talk about why roots grow first on a plant (for anchorage), how plants 'know' which way their roots should grow (geotropism) or why the roots are "fuzzy" (the root hairs increase surface area for absorption of water).

To keep a child's interest, plant seeds that germinate quickly like radishes, lettuce, watermelon, zinnia, cosmos or corn. You can plant other seeds that are slow to germinate as long as you also plant something that will sprout fast enough to hold a child's interest. For young children, large seeds are easiest to handle--try pumpkin seeds, corn or beans.

For children's enjoyment in a garden, grow plants that stimulate kids' senses. Grow big plants (sunflowers, corn, watermelons), small plants (kid-size cherry tomatoes, miniature pumpkins), plants to touch (snapdragons, lamb's ear, mimosa, cotton), plants to smell (mint, roses, four o'clocks), plants to eat (especially cultivars in unexpected colors, like red carrots, yellow tomatoes, or purple potatoes), plants to use (aloe vera, birdhouse gourds, even grow your own luffa!) or unusual plants (zebra plant, cacti, Chinese lanterns).

For children's maximum enjoyment, give them a patch of garden in which to plant anything they choose (with guidance – no poisonous plants, please!), and then let them maintain it as much as possible. Kids can transplant, label, water, weed, add compost, thin and harvest. Children are more likely to try foods they have grown themselves, and are more likely to appreciate and enjoy a garden they help care for.

To incorporate more garden learning and fun into a child's day, take a look at the Junior Master Gardener curriculum. Children can choose from hundreds of year-round gardening activities, and even work toward recognition or certification. Visit www.jmgkids.us for more information.

Oklahoma State Beekeepers Association Spring Conference

David Hillock

The public is invited to attend the Spring Conference of the Oklahoma State Beekeepers Association which will be held Saturday, April 4, 2009 at the Kiamichi Technology Center, 301 Kiamichi Drive, McAlester, OK 74501. There is no charge to the public to attend. The meeting will be Saturday from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (registration begins at 8:00 a.m. and the speakers will begin their presentations at 9:00 a.m.)

Nancy Gentry, Vice President of the Northeast Florida Honey Bee Association, will be the main speaker. She will give an update on the Florida Standard of Identification for Honey and explain the importance of states adopting a uniform standard for defining "honey." (Have you ever looked at the labels on the jars labeled as "honey" in the grocery store? Many products called "honey" contain substances that did not originate in a bee hive.) Florida was the first state to adopt honey standards in the United States.

Africanized bees will be discussed, along with ways to increase the size of your bee hives.

With the increasing problems facing our honey bees as pollinators, the public is invited to come and learn more about honey bees and talk to experienced beekeepers who can answer their questions about getting started in beekeeping.

Donuts and coffee will be available from 8 – 9 a.m. during registration. There will be a potluck luncheon on Saturday. The State Association will provide the fried chicken and everyone is encouraged to bring a side dish of some sort.

For additional information, contact Maribeth Snapp, Treasurer of the Oklahoma State Beekeepers Association, email maribeth@okbees.org. Also, there will be additional information on the Oklahoma State Beekeeper's website the week before the conference at www.okbees.org.

Master Gardener Corner

David Hillock

State Master Gardener Continuing Education Conference – June 5, 2009.

This year the Washington County Master Gardeners will host the State Master Gardener Continuing Education Conference. The theme for the conference is *Gardening at the Edge of the Prairie*. The conference will be held at the Tri County Technology Center in Bartlesville. The conference will include a keynote speaker, breakout sessions and a community gardens tour.

Dr. Alan Stevens will be our keynote speaker. Dr. Stevens is the Director of the K-State Horticulture Research Center in Olathe and leads the Extension Horticulture program for the State of Kansas. His research focuses on the evaluation of flowering plants for our always-challenging transitional climate. Alan's research plots provide the basis for the "Prairie Star" (annuals) and "Prairie Bloom" (perennials) lists of star performers for our prairie climate and soils. Alan's speaking style imparts his knowledge in a form that is easy to understand and in a way that makes you want to sit and listen. Dr. Stevens will talk about considerations in planning and planting public display gardens.

Breakout session include: ***Kansas Plant Trials and Public Gardens***, Dr. Alan Stevens; ***All American Selection Trials – Confessions of an AAS Vegetable Judge***, Ms. Julia Laughlin, Associate Professor and Department Head of Horticulture at OSU-OKC; ***The Living Soil – Micro Animals and Pest Suppressors***, Dr. Carmen Greenwood, Assistant Professor and Undergraduate Coordinator, Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, OSU Stillwater; ***How To Understand The Chemicals We Find on the Shelves of the Garden Centers***, Mr. Brian Jervis, OSU Extension, Tulsa; ***Go Easy – Go Native***, Ms. Maureen Turner, Chief Horticulturist,

City of Tulsa; Vegetables: Putting More Food on the Table and in the Pantry, Ms. Sue Gray, OSU Extension, Tulsa; High Level Tree Care, Mr. Ken Preaus, Preaus Landscaping of Tulsa; Can This Tree Be Saved?, Mr. Richard Bewely, AEP-PSO; Making an “IPM Master Plan” Furnish Your Tool Box or put your “Plan” into Action!, Dr. Tom Royer, Professor of Entomology and Integrated Pest Management Coordinator, OSU Stillwater; Lawns, Lawn Problems & Diagnosing Them, Dr. George Driever, OSU Extension.

Community Ornamental Garden Tour

The “sidewalk” beds at the Public Library and Price Tower (Frank Lloyd Wright’s only skyscraper) are two Bartlesville gardens where Master Gardener’s expertise and creativity meet the public! Come see and hear about the challenges and rewards of starting and maintaining plants in a public garden—where the gardener uses someone else’s money—may have little control over the water—might have plants “borrowed”, etc.. *The tours will be conducted rain or shine.* Please come prepared!

A preconference social will be at the Frank Phillips Mansion on Thursday evening from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. for those who arrive early.

Registration will be \$40.00 and include lunch and all educational sessions and tours. The conference is open to all certified Master Gardeners. Program and registration forms will be mailed to all Master Gardeners soon!

Hope to see you all there! For more information contact David Hillock, Master Gardener Coordinator, Oklahoma State University, Department of Horticulture & Landscape Architecture, 358 Ag Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078; email: david.hillock@okstate.edu; phone: 405-744-5158.

Upcoming Horticulture Events

Sustainable Blackberry Production Workshop

April 8, 2009, Cimarron Valley Research Station, Perkins

IPM Conference

May 21, 2009, OSU Botanical Garden, Stillwater

For more information about upcoming events, please contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or stephanie.larimer@okstate.edu.