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Editor: Sarah Chappelow

Green Thumb Gazette

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Update from the Chair

I hope you enjoyed the first edition of the *Green Thumb Gazette* and found it informative. Sarah did a wonderful job with the presentation which, I trust, caught your eye. Plans call for the *Green Thumb Gazette* to be available to all on the 'new' town website as soon as the site is up and running. That way, you can view it anytime as well as tell your friends and neigh-

bors where to find timely and reliable gardening information.

The 2015 gardening season will bring several of other changes that I will preview here and then provide addition information in later editions. At long last, the Garden Committee will have a kiosk erected near the water hydrant. It will provide a locale for community garden related news such as education

programs, planting hints and the like. There will be a new delivery system for the water. With this change the water will be available when and where the individual gardener needs it, not a 'one size fits all' approach.

John Keegan, Chair
Boscawen Agricultural
Commission

Recipe Corner: Baby Spring Greens Salad

Ingredients: 3 to 4 cups spring greens, either edible wild or garden (lambs quarter, sorrel, lovage, chives, ramps, dandelion greens before flowering, spinach, baby lettuces, mescalun, swiss chard, baby kale, baby bok choy or what have you).

Cook and crumble 2 slices of bacon or more

or none -- or use any leftover cooked meat.

Combine a scant half cup of olive oil with a scant quarter cup of your favorite vinegar (red wine or cider is what I use), add a couple of tablespoons of honey or maple syrup, and add one small crushed clove of garlic or garlic powder to taste in a blender -- add

an ounce or so of blue cheese, a couple of grindings of pepper and about 1/4 tsp of salt; buzz it up.

Put thoroughly washed and dried greens in your salad bowl, toss with the dressing and crumbled bacon, and garnish with hard boiled egg, and/or any of: toasted almonds, pecans, or favorite nuts, dried

fruit, croutons, and/or fresh orange sections. Sometimes I add other salad ingredients that are hanging around.

Submitted by Elaine Clow



Grow Your Own Pest Control: Integrated Pest Management Practices with Companion Plantings by Ann Lacroix

The Xerces Society (www.Xerces.org) is an organization dedicated to invertebrate conservation (so named after an extinct blue butterfly). As part of its mission, Xerces participates in research about pollinators and beneficial insects. Xerces has partnered with the NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service (www.NRCS.usda.gov)) to provide a technical guide this year called Farming with Native Beneficial Insects. This guide explains how to integrate biocontrol into productive farm environments as well as home gardens. "Providing natural habitat directly influences insect abundance... and provides breeding habitat and food (pollen and nectar) sources for beneficial insects."¹

Growing a hedgerow of cover crops such as buckwheat, mustards, or flowering herbs such as dill in large patches pro-

vides food, shelter and protection for insects to lay eggs, and thereupon boosts natural insect control on the surrounding crops you want to protect.



"Examples of insect predators include: 1) Syrphid flies which eat hundreds of aphids in a week; 2) Lady beetles or ladybugs that can consume 5000 aphids in a lifetime; 3) Fireflies, a type of beetle which like to feed on slugs and caterpillars; 4) Soldier beetles which feed on aphids, slugs, insect eggs; 5) Ground beetles that are known to kill more prey than they eat and are remarkable predators of slugs and other beetles; 6) Assassin bugs, large insects with front grasping raptorial legs which use a "sit and

wait" hunting pattern to ambush bugs; 7) Ambush bugs, masters of camouflage that can capture prey 10 times their size; 8) Minute pirate bugs; 9) Lacewings, aphid eaters found in grassy habitats; and 9) Tiny parasitic wasps such as tachinid flies, perhaps the most abundant and most beneficial insect on Earth."²

"Most predators are generalists...they'll attack anything smaller than them-including other beneficial insects."³



In your planning for this summer's garden, try adding annual or perennial plants that would serve as habitat for biocontrol of pests in a garden. Planting with inter-



mingled rows or groups of quick growing flowering annuals such as yellow flowered mustard, nasturtiums, heliotrope, borage, sweet alyssum, calendula marigold, flat petal French marigold, annual buckwheat, sunflowers, or pink alsike clover will provide the pollen food and breeding habitat for predator insects to lay eggs in close proximity to crops. Around your own home you could integrate perennial mountain mint or spotted bee balm in groups of 5-9 plants to serve as habitat for parasitical wasps that prey on brown marmorated stinkbugs that can be a major pest on squash or melons.

Footnotes 1-3 Source: Country Folks Grower Magazine, March 2015 Pages 31-33

NRCS.usda.gov article #PLT 15: Plant Enhancements- Ilinator/Beneficial Insect Habitat

Speaker Series

Twilight talks and First Monday workshops will be hosted by Ann La-Croix and other knowledgeable community members at the Community Garden and Boscawen Municipal Complex.

Give Bees A Home – Part II: Creating Nesting sites for Native Pollinators

Saturday, April 25, 2015, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Rain date May 2) Boscawen Community Gardens, first right off of Corn Hill Road, Boscawen

To register for this free workshop, contact Mary West at 796-2151 or mary.west@unh.edu (pre-registration required so we can have enough supplies available).



Recipe Corner: Honey Herb Sauce for Vegetables

Ingredients:

Quarter cup honey

Quarter cup butter or margarine

2 tablespoons onion, minced

Half teaspoon thyme, crushed

Salt and pepper, to taste

Combine all ingredients in a small saucepan and bring to a boil; cook 2 minutes.

Toss with vegetables of choice such as: peas, zucchini, spinach, broccoli, green beans, etc. Serve over couscous as a vegetarian entrée or alone as a side dish.

Submitted by John Keegan



Contact Us

General Community Garden Inquiries: agriculture03303@gmail.com

Newsletter Inquiries: Sarah.Chappelow@gmail.com