North Country Gardening

I don’t even want to think about it being August already. It seems like summer is still trying to get here and I’m already seeing ads for back to school items. I remember reading long ago that the older we get the faster time seems to go by. When you’re 10, a year is one-tenth of your life. When you get older the fraction is much smaller so seems to pass more quickly. I’m nearing warp-speed I think..... Jolene

Dragons and Damsels

By Jolene Wallace

Some of the most fascinating insects that we are now seeing in great number are the dragonfly and damselfly. In the insect order Odonata, (from the Greekodon-o meaning tooth), they have three main body parts- a head, thorax, and abdomen. They have two front wings and two back wings which can be operated both independently in a flapping motion as well as in a rotating forward and back motion. The dragonfly is larger and a stronger flyer than the damselfly and is able to fly forward at about 30 miles per hour, can fly backward, make sharp turns, and hover. The wings of the damselfly are hinged where the dragonfly’s are not so at rest the damsel folds her wings above her back either held together or in a V-posture while the dragon extends its wings to the side.

Dragonflies have large heads relative to the size of the rest of their bodies, and their eyes cover most of it. Their mouths are adapted for seizing and holding, and paired with their extraordinary vision and speed in flight, they are voracious predators, feasting on mosquitos, mayflies, caddisflies, gnats, and flies. They themselves fall prey to birds, fish, water bugs, frogs, and even larger dragonflies but the same attributes that make them good hunters also help when they are the hunted.

Dragonflies are most vulnerable as nymphs and newly emerged adults. Did you know that they spend most of their lives in water? After female dragonflies lay eggs in or near a lake, pond, or slow-moving stream and they hatch, the nymph, called a naiad in the case of dragonflies and mayflies, lives in the water for a long time, at least one year and as many as six. The naiad is as much a predator as the adult and feeds on mosquito larvae as well as other aquatic insects. During this time, the naiad molts from six to fifteen times as it develops and grows larger. The time between each molt is called an instar. When it finally crawls out of the water, the adult dragonfly emerges through a

Continued on page 5.....
Hanging Baskets and Planters

By August, hanging baskets of flowers are nearing their limit. They are filled with plants early in the summer to provide instant color but by the hot days of August they are crowded and tired. Some may be ready for the compost pile. Don’t feel bad, you had several weeks of beauty from them. Those ten inch baskets can only last so long.

Depending on their size and how much room for root growth they have, planters, tubs and window boxes will need some extra attention now as well. Check them for water, chances are the smaller containers will need a daily soaking while larger ones may last a couple of days. This also depends on if they’re located in sun or shade, or in a windy location. If you’re going away for even a long weekend, make plans to have someone water them.

By August any fertilizer in the potting mix will have been used up so start weekly feedings of a liquid fertilizer if you haven’t already to help keep those beautiful flowers and leaves coming.

Rearranging Perennials

Perennial flower gardens come in and out of bloom all summer and avid gardeners enjoy the challenge of trying to have something in bloom throughout the summer. August is not a good time to divide or replant them but I do find it’s when I get the most ideas of where I’d like to move certain plants later on.

Keep on Deadheading

A lot of gardeners are ready to take a break by mid-August, after having spent the previous 3 months diligently weeding, mulching, and watering. But don’t give up on your annual flowers yet! Zinnias, calendula, cosmos, ageratum, snapdragons, marigolds and more will stop flowering if you let them go to seed. Keep snapping off the faded flowers or better yet, keep cutting the flowers for bouquets to keep them from going to seed. Calendula thrives in the cooler temperatures of September, so I often prune them back quite hard in August in order to push out lots of new growth that will flower well into the fall. They can easily take a light frost. Zinnias and ageratum are some of the most sensitive to frost, so keep making bouquets of these to enjoy as much as possible this month while they are at their peak.

Amy’s Tips for August

Take photos of your garden every couple of weeks and make notes of where you need a different color, something taller or wider, a different leaf texture, and so on. It’s surprisingly difficult to remember where those spots were come next spring when you’re ready to do some digging and moving! Some gardeners have luck moving early summer blooming plants in early September when the plant is in a quieter state, not busy producing its annual flower show.

Amy Ivy is a regional vegetable specialist with the Eastern NY Commercial Horticulture Program of Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE). Home gardening questions are handled by each county’s CCE office. Office numbers are: Clinton Co 561-7450, Essex Co 962-4810, Franklin Co 483-7403.
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TO THE THIRD ANNUAL
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SPONSORED BY THE CLINTON
COUNTY FARM BUREAU

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KIDS BOUNCE HOUSE
LOCAL AGRICULTURE EXHIBITS
BBQ AND RAFFLES
AND MORE...

This year’s host farm is
MAPLE GRAND FARMS
139 JARVIS ROAD IN PERU, NY

11:00 AM TO 3:00 PM

Donation: $5/person or $10/family

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO BENEFIT THE CLINTON COUNTY
FARM BUREAU

JOIN US!
Plattsburgh PAR partners with various organizations throughout the area who are willing to accept and distribute extra produce. To help ensure that participants are treated with the same level of dignity and respect we expect of our food retailers, make sure your product is “market quality” — meaning that it’s washed, ripe, and fresh.

While it is not required, it helps the donation sites if produce is bagged in quantities appropriate for families of four and placed in shallow cardboard boxes.

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**JCEO FOOD PANTRY**: 29 Durkee St. (back door next to Maui North)

**SALVATION ARMY SOUP KITCHEN**: 4804 South Catherine St.

**ST. PETER’S CHURCH SOUP KITCHEN**: 23 St. Charles St. (behind Seton Academy)

**ST. JOSEPH’S CHURCH SOUP KITCHEN**: 1349 Military Turnpike

**INTERFAITH FOOD SHELF**: United Methodist Church, 127 Beekman St.
split in the back of its last ‘skin’ and leaves it behind. This skin is called exuvia.

The new dragonfly, called a teneral adult, has a soft body and although it has wings, is a weak flyer and for several days is extremely vulnerable to birds and other predators. It is thought that the majority of newly emerged dragonflies are consumed within a few days.

For all that, fossils indicate that the dragonfly has been with us for over 250 million years. A beautiful and amazing insect!

DID YOU KNOW?

- There are more than 5000 known species of dragonflies.
- Dragonflies belong to the order Odonata, which means “toothed one” in Greek.
- Modern dragonflies have a wingspan of two to five inches. Fossilized dragonflies have been found with a wingspan of almost two feet.
- Dragonflies catch their prey in the air with their legs. In a Harvard University study they caught 90 to 95 percent of the prey released into their enclosure.
- They only eat what they catch when flying so if they can’t fly they starve.
- Dragonfly eyes are extremely close together. Damselflies have a larger space between their eyes.

Information from Smithsonian Magazine-Smithsonian.com

blogs.lt.vt.edu

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North Country Gardening
New York State Symbols

By Jolene Wallace

I was perusing the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation website for information about invasive species and came across their pamphlet on New York State Symbols. I don’t know if you have ever seen it, but they have a beautiful, full-color brochure that you can print copies of. There were some interesting things in this brochure that I want to share with you.

To become a state symbol, a subject needs the approval of the Legislature. Any group of citizens or organizations, even school children, can propose a symbol and do the research in support of their request for a bill. Fifteen official state symbols have been approved and adopted since 1955. Some of them are what you might expect: the state tree, adopted in 1956, is the sugar maple, the state fruit is the apple. But did you know there is a state beverage? Milk, of course. Perhaps you could enjoy a cold glass while nibbling on the state muffin—the apple muffin.

Speaking of nibbling, in 1975 the beaver was adopted as the state mammal. Did you know that the front teeth the beavers use to gnaw down trees continue to grow their entire lives? That constant gnawing as they fell trees for building and for food keeps them from getting too long.

Another nibbler is our state reptile adopted in 2006, the snapping turtle. The snapping turtle will often bury itself in the mud with only its eyes and nostrils above water, waiting for prey to come by. Then SNAP! Its jaws are made for cutting, so keep your hands away from these fellows. There is no really safe way to pick one up, especially not by the tail, so watch from a distance and let them be. They are too big to tuck themselves into their shells like other turtles do and it’s thought that their jaws developed like this to give them a way to protect themselves. They can be aggressive if they feel threatened, so take heed.

Let’s see if you can come up with the official New York State Symbols for the following categories. Some are pretty obvious, others took me by surprise. The answers can be found on page 11.

What is...
1. The state flower adopted in 1955?
2. The state insect adopted in 1989?
3. The state fossil adopted in 1984?
4. The state shell adopted in 1988?
5. The state saltwater fish adopted in 2006?
6. The state gem?
7. The state bird adopted in 1970?
8. The state fish adopted in 1975, then re-adopted in 2006 as the state’s freshwater fish?
9. The state bush?
10. Here’s bonus question for you. What is our NY state motto?
Help—My Tomatoes are Rotting!

By Jim Cayea, Master Gardener Volunteer

The Master Gardener Volunteers hear the above refrain frequently in July through early September. Blossom end rot is a physiological disorder that affects tomatoes and, less frequently, peppers. Several factors cause blossom end rot throughout the United States; however, failure to regulate the soil’s moisture and the sudden lack of water are the most common factors in northern New York.

I have personally experienced this problem. For many years I grew tomatoes in five-gallon buckets, and tomatoes and peppers in other types of containers. I was not careful about watering these plants during hot spells. I allowed the containers to dry out frequently. This caused blossom end rot on an epic scale (to me). I lost one-half to three-fourths of my plants to this problem. Thanks to an article in the Press Republican that Amy Ivy wrote in the past, I am much more careful with controlling my containers’ moisture. The result is more tasty tomatoes and peppers to enjoy and share with other people.

The principle problem is that the plant does not have enough water to transport the calcium from its roots to its furthest part—the fruit. (Yes, tomatoes and peppers are fruits but federal law defines these plants as vegetables.) Without the water to bring calcium to the fruits, the green fruit will begin to have a water-soaked area near the blossom end of the fruit that signals the beginning of this disorder. The next stage produces a lesion of the fruit that darkens and enlarges constantly until the fruit begins to ripen. Opportunistic fungi may grow in the black area. The decay may be only a small spot on the fruit or may involve a much larger area.

Use the following management strategies to prevent blossom end rot: (1) Make sure that your plants have adequate moisture at all times, (2) Drip irrigation should be used if possible, (3) Cultivation or hoeing should be shallow and no closer than one-foot from the plants to prevent root pruning, (4) Use a fertilizer high in superphosphate and low in nitrogen (1-3-1 ratio), (5) Do not grow your plants too quickly since this can be a cause of blossom end rot (caused by excessive nitrogen), (6) Mulch with black plastic or grass clippings (from lawns NOT treated with herbicides), and (7) Transplant your tomatoes and peppers about your last average frost date and with air temperatures near 70°F. The following tomato varieties show some resistance to blossom end rot: Jet Star, Burpee VF, Better Boy, Early Girl, Flora-Dade Floramerica and Walter.
By Jordy Kivett, Nutrition Educator

Well it is the height of summer and eating fresh is easier than ever, but if you have a CSA, a vegetable garden or have an issue with impulse buys at farmer’s markets, you may be wondering how to use all of that beautiful fresh produce.

Are you wondering what you will do with that kale that keeps showing up in your farm share each week, even though you are two weeks behind?...Planted 12 zucchini plants, since you had the room, not realizing you’d be knee deep in cukes by August?... Bought fennel at the market because it was so exotic looking, but now it is just sitting pretty in the fridge, like a chilled lost puzzle piece? Use me!

I love food and cooking and it is my job to help answer such questions. Through the grant I am working under, a webpage blogs.cornell.edu/clintoncountyeats has been created and I have even joined facebook in an attempt to spread the word about local food. Check to see if there is a recipe or tutorial that is right for you, or contact me and I will try to help you find something you’d like to try.

I will also be out in the community doing taste tests, so you can try a new food before you buy it, or find a new way to use a familiar food before you get more of it.

Here is a sample from the tutorial section of the website...

10 Ideas for Using Greens
1. Sauté greens, like kale or chard with fresh garlic for a tasty side.
2. Rub kale leaves with oil and bake for kale chips.
3. Add greens to pasta dishes or soups.
4. Briefly cook greens and add them to omelets or a quiche.
5. Add a layer of greens to a pizza crust, then top with cheese and other toppings, bake as usual.
6. Add few leaves of spinach or kale to a banana smoothie for a fun green color.
7. Layer greens into a lasagna.
8. Toss spinach or kale with vinaigrette dressing and enjoy a raw salad.
9. Make pesto with half fresh basil and half spinach, chard or kale.
10. Add greens to your stir fry.

CCE blog: blogs.cornell.edu/clintoncountyeats or like Cornell Cooperative Extension of Clinton County on Facebook or give me a call at 561-7450.

And a recipe......

This newsletter is also available on our website: http://blogs.cornell.edu/cceclintoncounty/ under Gardening: News

North Country Gardening
Raw Kale Salad

This is a very simple salad that is easy to modify to your liking. Raw kale can be “chewy”; massaging the kale with the dressing or allowing the salad to sit for a few hours or overnight will help the kale become tender.

Ingredients:

Dressing
½ cup of lemon juice
1 tbsp of olive oil
1-2 tsp of honey or maple syrup

Salad
1 bunch of kale, rinsed, dried, and torn or chopped into bite sized pieces (about 5 cups)
½ to 1 cup of finely chopped or grated carrots
½ cup of craisins

Ideas for modifying:
- Try using chopped strawberries or whole blueberries or raspberries in place of the craisins if available.
- Add other fresh vegetables, such as diced peppers, cucumbers or tomatoes for a different flavor.
- Add toasted nuts, chick peas or other legumes, or cooked meat to add protein to this dish.


Have a garden or agriculture related business? This space is available for your business card! Contact us at 561-7450

Are you curious about all that’s going in our 4-H program? Check out the Clover Express at the link below! Call our office if you’d like to find out more about how you can get involved.

http://www.ccecc4hce.blogspot.com/
Late Blight Could Arrive Early

By Paul Hetzler, Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County

The term ‘blight’ strikes fear into the heart of anyone who grows tomatoes and potatoes, but it actually has no strict definition. It can refer to any number of plant diseases, from the innocuous to the truly pernicious. For example, early blight, also known as Alternaria, is a soil-borne pathogen that kills the lower leaves of tomatoes and progresses up the stem throughout the season. Every garden has early blight, and while it’s usually not serious, it can be bad in wet years or if a lot of disease spores have built up in the soil.

Late blight, however, is a completely different kind of pathogen. Of all the plant maladies, I think the only one that deserves the fearsome moniker ‘blight’ is late blight, Phytophthora infestans. Its Latin name, roughly translated, means “highly contagious plant-destroyer.”

Late blight is airborne, so you can’t protect against it through crop rotation and other management practices the way you can with early blight and other garden-variety (so to speak) diseases. It affects leaves anywhere on the plant, not just the lower ones. It also infects stems and fruit, and can kill entire stands of tomatoes and potatoes in just a few days.

Weather plays a big role in the spread of this disease, and this year has been, well, the perfect storm for late blight. Sunlight kills late blight spores in less than an hour, but if it’s cloudy they remain viable for days, travelling long distances. Also, late blight needs moisture to germinate—it won’t infect a dry leaf. What have had in abundance this summer? Yeah, clouds and rain.

Late blight does not overwinter in New York, although it could potentially survive on an infected potato tuber. With the exception of that latter scenario, late blight spores get here from the far south on storm fronts. But once here, every infected plant becomes one of its spore factories, hastening its spread exponentially. This is why it’s so important for gardeners and farmers to destroy infected plants by bagging them up promptly.

Typical symptoms of late blight are large dark watery lesions (similar to lettuce that has been frozen and then thawed) on leaves, and dark brown lesions on stems. Brown, very firm lesions with a “greasy” look and feel will appear on tomatoes. In damp conditions some grayish “fuzz” may grow on the margins of these lesions.

As of late July, late blight has been confirmed in six NY counties, and two in western Vermont. Essentially we’re surrounded, and the weather continues to favor late blight’s spread. If you think you may have it, don’t destroy your plants until you get confirmation. Bring a sample of leaves, and fruit if it’s tomatoes, to your Cornell Cooperative Extension office for diagnosis.

To protect tomatoes and potatoes, organic growers can use copper-based sprays to protect their plants, and home gardeners can use products containing chlorothalonil. Neither of these will cure late blight or even halt its spread, but are only meant to protect against initial infection.

For daily updates on late blight, visit http://www.usablight.org/

PESTICIDE DISCLAIMER: Every effort has been made to provide correct, complete and up-to-date pesticide recommendations. Nevertheless, changes in pesticide regulations occur constantly, human errors are still possible. These recommendations are not a substitute for pesticide labeling. Please read the label before applying any pesticide and follow the directions exactly.
Events

DAY ON THE FARM
Saturday, August 29th from 11:00 am-3:00 pm Maple Grands Farm in Peru is hosting the 3rd annual Day on the Farm event sponsored by the Clinton County Farm Bureau. See page 3 for details.

LOCAL FOOD TASTING
Jordy Kivett, our nutrition educator, will be handing out samples of dishes made from locally produced foods at various venues around the county.

Here is her schedule for August:
- August 5th—Keeseville Farmers’ Market
- August 9th —Saranac Farmers’ Market
- August 12—Shields’ Farm Stand
- August 13th—Fledgling Crow Plattsburgh pick-up site
- August 20th—Juniper Hill’s CVPH pick-up site

Jordy will also have recipes using local foods and ideas to share. For specific times and topics contact Jordy at 561-7450 or follow us on Facebook: Cornell Cooperative Extension Clinton County

There’s Still Time to Plan a Special Day at...
AN AFTERNOON TASTE OF ENTAYANT GARDENS
SUNDAY AUG.30 Tour ENTAYANT GARDENS featuring several thousand new plants, an over 13,000 gallon water course, fountains, water falls & lily pond, a rebuilt 170-foot boardwalk with addition of seating areas over the new pond. Visit a store full of Christmas garden art gifts from paintings to black fly houses & Adirondack chairs. Plus garden movies, musical entertainment, & of course, Yvonne’s Taste of Entayant. For information, e-mail or call: Dons2dy4@gmail.com or 518 891 3690.

Swimming Pool Owners: WE NEED YOUR HELP
The New York Department of Environmental Conservation is asking swimming pool owners to participate in a monitoring program for the invasive Asian Longhorned Beetle, which has destroyed tens of thousands of trees in New York City and in Massachusetts. It now threatens New York’s forests. You are being asked to help with the monitoring by participating in a pool filter survey. If you are willing to help, contact DEC by emailing:

foresthealth@dec.ny.gov

For more information about the Asian Longhorned Beetle and the pool survey:

http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7255.html

Our office, located at 6064 State Route 22, Suite 5, is open from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. 561-7450

North Country Gardening

Answers from page 6
1. "Excelsior," which means "ever upward"
2. Lady bird beetle
3. Eurypterid
4. Bay scallop
5. Striped bass
6. Garnet
7. Bluebird
8. Brook trout
9. Lilac
10. "Excelsior," which means "ever upward"
North Country Gardening

August 2015

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