



# The Spade & The Hoe

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## September Meeting

Our regular meeting will be on September 11th, Thursday, at 7:30 pm in Room 102 at the Park Center. This month's program will feature Charlotte Adelman of Wilmette who co-authored the *Prairie Directory of North America*. Her program will be on Visiting Prairies in Illinois and Beyond. After having visited a section of virgin (unplowed) prairie in LaFox last month, this promises to be a special treat.

## Program Survey

Program survey sheets will be passed around. Kindly fill them out and return them before the end of the meeting. The program committee will need to review the results in order to plan next year's programs.



The Program Committee consists of Joan Ruehrmund, Charles and Marina Wynn, and Gloria Tralmer. They'll review the survey results, plan and schedule for the year 2004.

**Did you know** that you can make a delicious tea from *Monarda didyma*, otherwise known as bergamot? Simply pour boiling water on to 2 teaspoons fresh flowers, stir well, cover and leave in a warm place for 10 minutes. Strain the tea and sweeten with a little honey. Serve with a slice of lemon.

Many herbal teas are associated with old-fashioned medicinal remedies. Basil was said to ease gastric troubles, borage, parsley, dandelion and sage were used as a tonic, mint helped relieve colds, headaches, and heartburn, and rosemary was good for insomnia.

'Here are sweet-peas, on tip-toe for a flight:

With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white,  
And taper fingers catching at all things,  
To bind them all about with tiny rings.'

## Through the Garden Gate

With all the rain we have had the garden has just exploded in blooms. The flower beds have never looked so grand. And the vegetables! Tomatoes, beans, cucumbers, zucchini, potatoes, peas, eggplant! What a glorious harvest. Even, I might add, the peppers are doing their best, just to spite me. After the first flush of poppies, I left the seed pods to dry, so I will have more poppies next year. The added benefit is that more flowers have emerged from the nook where leaves attach to the stem. My neighbor was given numerous poppy seedpods & promptly scattered the seeds in his beds. Those poppies were over 5 feet tall! Very impressive...I have begun, on cooler days, to transplant certain things. I put some artemisia in front of the kitchen window as a lovely foil against the different shades of green. I have a list of about 4 other plants that will need moving to better locations.

## Mice Be Gone

I read in *Companion Planting* by Richard Bird that if you plant artemisia near your back door you will never have mice and other rodents. It deters slugs and snails, and is a general insecticide.



## Plants that repel insects

Onions and carrots planted in rows next to each other keep each other free of flies. French marigolds kill destructive nematodes. Basil controls a number of pests while nepeta (catnip) deters ants, aphids, Japanese beetles and other beetles. Chives cures blackspot on roses, deters Japanese beetles while garlic is a general insect repellent that also deters Japanese beetles. Asclepias and nasturtium deter aphids. For a complete list, see *Companion Planting* by Richard Bird.

## Why Did My Plant Die?

by Geoffrey B. Charlesworth  
You walked too close. You trod on it. You dropped a piece of sod on it. You hoed it down. You weeded it. You planted it the wrong way up. You grew it in a yogurt cup but you forgot to make a hole; the soggy compost took its toll. September storm. November drought. It heaved in March, the roots popped out. You watered it with herbicide. You scattered bonemeal far and wide, attracting local omnivores, who ate your plant and stayed for more. You left it baking in the sun while you departed at a run to find a spade, perhaps a trowel, meanwhile the plant threw in the towel. You planted it with crown too high; the soil washed off, that explains why. Too high pH. It hated lime. Alas it needs a gentler clime. You left the root ball wrapped in plastic. You broke the roots. They're not elastic. You walked too close. You trod on it. You dropped a piece of sod on it. You splashed the plant with mower oil. You should do something about your soil. Too rich. Too poor. Such wretched tilth. Your soil is clay. Your soil is filth. Your plant was eaten by a slug. The growing point contained a bug. These aphids are controlled by ants, who milk the juice, it kills the plants. In early spring your garden's

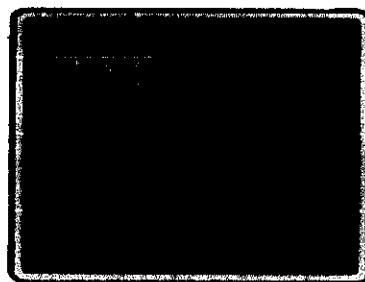
mud. You walked around! That's not much good. With heat and light you hurried it. You worried it. You buried it. The poor plant missed the mountain air; no heat, no summer muggs up there. You overfed it 10-10-10. Forgot to water it again. You hit it sharply with the hose. You used a can without a rose. Perhaps you sprinkled from above. You should have talked to it with love. The nursery mailed it without roots. You killed it with those gardening boots. You walked too close. You trod on it. You dropped a piece of sod on it.

(courtesy of Gloria Traimer)

## In September, remember to:

start bringing in the most tender houseplants and annuals you want to keep over winter; be sure to soak them first to kill all bugs they may be harboring and spray the plants with a solution of 1 tsp. liquid dish detergent to 1 qt. of water;  
harvest herbs for cooking, drying, and freezing and to make fresh bouquets;  
mulch the garden to rebuild the soil; begin a compost pile, or add to one already going;  
mulch, mulch, mulch!!!

*The autumn equinox is September 22. This month the full moon is called the harvest moon.*



## Calling all Helpers!!!

We are in great need of a Hostess Coordinator. The duties involve scheduling 1 or 2 hosts/hostesses for refreshments for each month's meeting. The job goes from now until December 2004, at which time you may continue if you so wish. I can no longer take on this duty, and, if no one volunteers, we will have to eliminate refreshments.

### Another useful remedy:

In a 16-ounce spray bottle, mix 1 cup rubbing alcohol, 2 table-spoons liquid dish detergent, and fill the remainder with water. This solution works on virtually all (I have been assured) insects: squash bugs, wasps, ants, roaches, flies, and earwigs. This master gardener, who lives in New Mexico), said it also comes in handy when he needs to clean his windshield. Now, does anyone have a sure-fire remedy to keep those blasted chipmonks out of my potted plants!!!! If I have to sweep the porch one more time...



"A gardener's work is never at an end; it begins with the year and continues to the next."

- John Evelyn  
(1620-1706)

**Has anyone tried using** potent ingredients such as 1 peeled onion, 2 garlic cloves, and 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, mixed up in the blender, then add 3 cups water and mix again? Let sit overnight, strain into a spray bottle and spray generously on plants to wipe out the slug and aphid population. What about the chipmonk population??? This stuff will keep 1 week in the refrigerator. BUT, does it work?

### Banana Skins

Laid down just below the surface of the soil, banana skins rot quickly, providing a considerable quantity of calcium, magnesium, sulfur, phosphates, sodium, and silica.

## A Gardener's Creed

by Diana E. Beatty

I look to the east in the rosecolored dawn to witness the rising sun: the start of a new day untarnished and glimpse moments of beauty as nature unfolds to me petal by petal her rosery of wonders to behold Although I stand on a steep and slippery slope at the edge of harm's way I till the soil, begin again, I give each morning a fresh start; it rewards me with fruit from my labors I seed it with my best intentions and genuine interest filled with care and even temperament to eradicate the pernicious weeds, anger and worry, to dispel the buzzing little pests, anxiety and insecurity.

By the end of each day I gather the harvest: the best and tender moments to give me a rejuvenating night of rest.

- courtesy of Gloria Tralmer

### Questions, comments, payment of dues?

Esther Behnke, president & editor 498-4178

eabehnke@earthlink.net

Joan Ruehrmund, treasurer 729-1383 dieterrueh@aol.com

Jane Prentis, circulation 729-3230 jrprentis@msn.com

**ggardeners@earthlink.net**

(new email address!!!)

www.NorthStarNet.org, then click on Community, then on Glenview Gardeners.

