

# THE GARDEN PATCH



June 2005

Salt Lake Master Gardener Association

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## ALL MY WEEDS ARE WILDFLOWERS,

AND I HAVE THE PICTURES TO PROVE IT!

Stansbury Island Wildflower tour, April 30, 2005

By Lisa Chin

Last Saturday I decided I would make the time to join our retired fearless leader, Wade Bitner, our “new” fearless leader, Maggie Wolf, and my fellow Master Gardeners on a wildflower tour of Stansbury Island. The e-mail I received promised outstanding scenery, wonderful wildflowers, and bugs. Oh well, I could tolerate the bugs if it meant visions of purple, yellow, green and red fields like those I’ve seen in magazines.

Heavenly! I could smell the sweet aroma days before the trip. I prayed the rain would hold off, bribed my older daughter to care for my two younger daughters, and then prepared myself for a day of much needed exercise, fresh air, and enjoyable conversation with fellow Master Gardeners.

The drive out to Stansbury was indeed filled with lively conversation, making the long drive pass quickly. Once we arrived at Stansbury, we picked up Wade Bitner and Sherm Brough and enjoyed an illuminating description of Stansbury Island. We marveled as we learned about the evaporation ponds, and how salt and chemicals were extracted. We were amazed as we spied the multiple beach lines of Lake Bonneville along the mountain sides. The roadsides were sprinkled with cows, rocks, and sagebrush. A few of us wondered aloud about how many of the rocks we could carry home in the van. Maggie, our driver and a remarkable multi-tasker, identified a number of birds and wildlife, while dodging cows in the road. I didn’t manage to make out anything she showed us, as I was too worried about the cows.

When we arrived at our “featured destination” I looked around for the wildflowers. I couldn’t really see anything, and wondered if the fields of flowers were over the hill. When I realized we were here to see the small plants sitting among the rocks I realized what a dim wit I had been. This was the high desert, not the high mountains! (Stop laughing – I’m not from around here, and I don’t get out much.) Papers were passed out to help us in the identification of the wildflowers. There weren’t enough copies so I attempted to stick with Sherm, who had written the key.

The first thing Wade pointed out to us was a juniper tree. As he explained that seven junipers to an acre will use up

all the water in that area, I walked past the cars to take a picture of the juniper, and realized that I recognized a number of plants underfoot. I didn’t know their names, but I knew they were difficult to pull out! They had taken over my new, potentially beautiful, front yard flower bed. The only thing that kept me from following my urge to bend over and pluck every blasted last one of them from the cotton-pickin’ ground, was seeing Sherm down on one knee checking his key to see if he had already photographed the plant. I was taken aback at his interest in this lowly “weed” and then reminded myself that just because it was a weed in my garden, didn’t necessarily make it a weed in Stansbury. I bent down to have a closer look and began a journey of new appreciation for my wildflower weeds. (Even though every last one of them would be yanked from my garden when I returned home!)

We spent the rest of the morning climbing up a small mountain (or maybe it was a hill – it all depends on your perspective). We wandered from plant to plant identifying and photographing each, as well as always looking for Sherm’s illusive albino parasite plant. Despite not finding the parasite, we did find many other treasures including many fascinating rocks, bugs, and a “resurrection moss.” The moss, which is black in normal sunlight, changes to a sage green color after water is applied. Nature really is amazing! I also managed to find more wildflowers which resided in my garden as weeds, as well as a few I wish I had in my garden.

I also have Burr Buttercup in my yard. I believe it is much prettier in the wild than in my yard where it provides an unexpected surprise for bare feet and will tangle unmercifully in my dog’s fur.

Pale Evening Primrose is a wildflower I WISH grew in my garden at home. We also discovered a few red primroses which were just as beautiful. The Milfoil Biscuitroot was also a beautiful fern-like plant from the parsley family with small yellow flowers and some very interesting

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# NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Traci Dahle

We want to thank Mitchell's for hosting our May monthly meeting. We had a good turn out, and they did a good job.

I want to thank everyone who came and helped at the Christmas Box house on such short notice. They have a nice big 24' by 60' space for a vegetable garden that the youth group not only works in but gets to enjoy harvesting and eating the vegetables from.

I just love this wonderful Master Gardener group we have! I was informed that we told the Christmas Box house that we would work with them and it fell through a little, so at late notice I was asked to help out. When I informed our group we needed plants and seeds, they were dropped in my mail box and stuck in my door. Tomato and pepper plants were donated. Friday we had eight Master Gardeners show up to weed and plant with the kids. It was fun to let the kids plant the garden. We had lots of different sunflowers that we put down the middle of the garden, then we planted a pizza, salsa, and spaghetti garden. We put in tomatoes with cages, peppers, onion bulbs, cilantro, spaghetti squash, basil, garlic, tomatillo, basil, and oregano. We had some other seeds donated that we thought the kids would like and enjoy, so we planted lemon cucumber, radishes, dill, lettuce, pumpkins, and zucchini. Thanks to all the wonderful Master Gardener volunteers for their service to the community. The kids at the Christmas Box house have a complete garden. Hopefully it lasts during the summer.

Bonnie is no longer in the office, so there will be a couple of changes that need to take place so the Master Gardener group doesn't fall through the cracks. **WE NEED EVERYONE TO *NOT* PUT THEIR HOURS IN *AT THIS TIME* AND TO PLEASE KEEP TRACK OF THEM SO THEY DON'T GET LOST.** Hopefully by next month I will know a little more on what we need to do. I'm sure we are going to experience some problems during the changeover. Please keep a record of your hours in case something gets lost. If any one has any problems, don't hesitate to call me. I am here to serve you and make sure things go right. I never consider your contacting me a bother. I would rather things get taken care of right away. You can contact me at:

[smoki1@smartfella.com](mailto:smoki1@smartfella.com)

Bonnie wanted me to tell you all thanks for everything you did for her and to let you all know she has liked working with the Master Gardener group and will miss seeing a lot of you she has worked with personally. She has promised me that she will still work with us, lending her experience on certain events until we know what to do. I have told her thanks for all she has done for us in the past. She has been a great help to the Salt Lake Master Gardener Association, and we wish her luck in the future.

Thanks for everyone's hard work! See you soon!

## MANTIS WATCH 2005

By Catherine New

4:00 p.m. May 9, 2005 was a warm, still afternoon of rising humidity portending rain. Crouched deadheading white violas bordering the path on the south side of our house, my peripheral vision alerted to movement near my bent knee. Surprise! On a hunk of broken brick in the sunshine stood a tiny mantis nymph, tan with black markings.

This tiny spring nymph and I enjoyed a patch of sun in our narrow side yard next to the neighbor to the south, a feeding area where large mantises establish themselves in late summer. Since fall there had been an oothecae about nine or ten feet above on the dry skeleton of a multi-headed sunflower; and looking up now I noticed something on the oothecae's surface fluttering in the wind. The first time I observed praying mantis hatch, the nymphs left behind a trail of thready debris that clung fluttering from the oothecae in such a way that I came to think of it as a banner announcing the nymphs' emergence. Thereafter whenever such a banner has caught my eye on an oothecae in the garden, I found tiny nymphs in nearby vegetation. So, I hypothesized this nymph had emerged from the sunflower oothecae.

As many as 200 nymphs hatch from an oothecae. Once their tiny exoskeletons harden, they're ready to begin eating. When hatch is in a honeysuckle vine or other early bloomer, it's easy to imagine prey will be plentiful enough to satisfy the nymphs' voracious appetites. From the oothecae on the sunflower skeleton, the nearest blossoms were six feet below on a bolted yellow-flowered ornamental kale, and then down at ground level on these white violas. In 2005's cool rainy May few insects were out and about anywhere, and I wondered what this little nymph would prey upon.

I watched the nymph take a few steps and a hop, then head west. That reminded me of an early 2004 nymph heading west in this same corridor between the houses; I sat on a cement block for a long observation while it traversed the old chicken wire around the compost pile, clambering on the twisted wires, steadily headed west. I recalled that unless they've settled in to a feeding station, all the nymphs I've found on the south side of the house have been heading west. Perhaps praying mantises actually have a pattern of westward travel? Maybe praying mantis nymphs head west, following the sun's promise of afternoon prey to feed their voracious appetites? When you see a 2005 praying mantis on the move, notice the direction it's headed and let us know.

## LOOKING FOR A FUN VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY?

Maggie Wolf needs help with a variety of tasks, including:

Fitting the stereomicroscope with an adapter so we can take photos through the 'scope! Someone willing to scout out adapters (will need to be ordered) and then figure out how to use it with a digital camera, so that we can start gathering photos of common (and possibly rare) small pests that come into the office.

Phone messages for Master Gardeners not on the e-mail list. We have a machine in our office that can be used to call people automatically and play back a recorded message (such as, "Hello Master Gardener! I just wanted you to know that our general meeting is coming up soon and I hope you can attend...". If someone could take charge of setting up the phone list, recording messages, and sending them out, it would be very helpful to Maggie and the SLMGA, and it will improve meeting attendance!

Utah Native Plant Seed Growing 'Kits' I have a lot of materials left over from the Utah Native Plant Propagation workshops, and I'm thinking about assembling some 'kits' to sell out of the office so I can use up more of this stuff and hopefully break even on the costs! I could use some help planning on how to get all the stuff together.

**Plant Problems Diagnostics Training** for Master Gardeners willing to devote time to diagnostic clinics and site consultations. This training is June 22 and 23 at Thanksgiving Point. Classroom and field trips to learn basic diagnostic skills and common pests. Call me and get your name on the list SOON! A limited number of students are allowed.

Anyone willing to conduct a trial of a new product called 'Messenger' on part of their garden? If so, call me. I have some free samples. This product is not technically 'organic', but it is all natural. It is an enzyme protein that prompts (supposedly) better vigor in all types of plants.

Take a Ziploc and a trowel with you on your next trip outside the Wasatch Front. I can still use some soil samples from around the state for the PlantLab program. Most commonly needed are rich forest soil, white gypsum soil (like around intermittent lakes), other unusual soils from identified locations. I'd like at least one-gallon Ziplocs FULL.

Anything unusual or interesting happening in your garden? Let me know about it - maybe I can write it up for the Salt Lake Tribune! E-mail is most effective, thanks. [mwolf@slco.org](mailto:mwolf@slco.org)

### SLMGA Phone List Update

Please add to your 2005 SLMGA phone list:

Jay and Mary Archibald  
Mark Ward-Rock

## Horticultural Therapy

The Utah Section, Mountain-Plains Chapter of the American Horticultural Therapy Association is meeting Wednesday, May 25 from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. at the Gem Garden of the Veterans Administration Medical Center.

Dr. Steve Haman will give us a tour and speak about the activities happening in the garden. To anyone with interest in horticultural therapy, please come! We are hoping to build a small organization, which meets approximately every other month. All are welcome.

For more information or a map, please contact Cathy Calara at email [ccalara@yahoo.com](mailto:ccalara@yahoo.com)

### VOLUNTEER AT AVENUES TOUR

- The Tour is Sat, June 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Tickets are \$15 per person. Buy 5 get one free... Kids under 11 are free.
- We need 14 volunteers working a full day or 28 working half-day shifts, one at each house.

Volunteers will get a free ticket to the tour, a t-shirt and lunch.

Contact Kim Correa  
Director of Community Involvement  
People Helping People  
Office - 355-5538  
[kim@mentors4women.org](mailto:kim@mentors4women.org)

### PUBLIC RELATIONS: WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Coordinating a garden tour or other event? Interested in telling the community about your garden project? Perhaps you'd like to invite people to visit and enjoy the results of all that hard work...

The Master Gardeners now have a Public Relations Volunteer Team to lend you a helping hand. We'll work with local newspapers and other community calendars to spread the word and invite the general public. We'll even help you write the information. If interested, please contact us!

Email: [news@utahmastergardeners.org](mailto:news@utahmastergardeners.org)  
Or, call Kit Mueller

Has the rain caused any problems in your garden this year? If you waited until spring to till and prepare the soil, you probably found a muddy bog. With all the rain in the last few months, my radishes were the best ever - big, juicy, crisp, and really mild in flavor. The rain affected my Cole crops also. The broccoli has gone wild; we are having a hard time keeping it picked and eaten. The spinach is ready to start cutting and the garden is doing exceptionally well, thanks to the abundance of spring rain.

I was going to take the water walls off the tomato plants on the 16th of May but with a storm coming in I decided to wait. I am glad I did. The wind was really strong from the south, and when the front came in it was worse from the north. The tomatoes were safe in their water walls. I did take them off on the 18th and found two clusters of ripe tomatoes on the glacier plants. Most of my tomatoes have blossoms on them and now with the weather and nights in the mid 50's, it is perfect weather for setting the blossoms. With a gentle squeeze of the pointed end of the blossom, you can set the tomato. I have been through my patch twice so far and have a lot of blossoms showing signs of newly set tomatoes.

The 'Glacier' tomatoes I have planted in five gallon buckets are covered with ripe tomatoes. I have cages on them and have them now placed on the edge of the garden so we can pick them without going into the garden. I set the blossoms on each bracket

## **SOUTH SALT LAKE PROJECT MAN- AGER NEEDED**

We are still looking for a project manager to help us with South Salt Lake City planning. In the past, South Salt Lake has let us use the Columbus Center for our Mini College, Master Gardener classes and meetings. We agreed to help them with their outside work. (Last fall we planted 75 trees for them.) They also want us to have a Master Gardener booth at some of their events.

What we are looking for is someone to work directly with them and get the volunteers when needed. It is not a real big job, and it would be nice for them to have a contact person. If you are interested, please call Traci so we can make the arrangements. Thanks !



**By Wm. Golden Reeves**

all the way to the top of the plant. Some tomatoes are only pin sized, but as the ones on the bottom of the plant ripen up, the others will be able to grow bigger.

The grafts I put on the apple tree seem to be growing. Although the rubber bands have started to rot off, it still seems a little early. Only one of the 14 grafts hasn't showed signs of growing but the graft has not dried out yet, so there is still hope

The garden I planted on the west side of the lot in the space between the sidewalk and the curb has really taken off this year. I have had to do a lot of weeding (just small ones) The grasses can be divided, but I will wait until next year for that. I placed rocks down through the area along with the plants in hopes of keeping the kids on bicycles and the walking traffic out of the garden. It seems to be working. In watching three teenagers go up the sidewalk side by side the one next to the plants had to walk in back so he wouldn't stumble over the rocks. I am happy with the change and have received a lot of comments on how good it looks.

Last year I had a problem with my two peach trees being yellow and needing iron. Last year I decided to solve the problem for this year. I took a pry bar and punched a lot of holes in the ground around the drip line of the tree. Then I put about a tablespoon of granular iron in each hole. This year the new growth has come out nice and green. Iron takes a long time to get to the roots of the plant. By placing it in the drip line and then inserting it two to four inches into the soil, it will get to the roots by spring if placed in the fall. We look for instant solutions to some problems in the garden but most take a full year to solve.

My greenhouse will be shut down by the last week in May. I am happy to have that over with for this growing season. With the changes I made last year, it has really worked quite well this season. It was in need of a paint job, so I have been looking for paint in the Oops! Paint Department at Home Depot. I was able to get a \$24.00 gallon can of paint for five bucks. The only problem is it was not enough to complete the job so I did spend the money to get enough to finish the job. This is a great resource for that project that needs paint. You can find some color that will work for you without spending a lot of money.

I think summer has finally come to the valley. Warm weather! A great start to the growing season! What more could a gardener want?

## **MURRAY PARK**

Tuesday is the day - Murray Park the place for fun in the sun and we are having both - fun and sun! We spent five hours one Tuesday on the Jordan River wrapping newly planted cottonwood trees with chicken wire. The cannas we potted last month are up and 30 were planted into the horseshoe garden in the arboretum. Next Tuesday (May 31st), we will be planting the Costco mural garden on the corner of 53rd S. and State. We meet at 8:00 in the morning on Tuesdays at the Murray Park Office. Starting on June 13th, the time changes to 7:00 am.

If you want more info - call Becky Hansen.

# VOLUNTEER AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

PLEASE NOTE THAT SOME OF THE FOLLOWING ARE ADVERTISED ELSEWHERE AS HAVING A \$5 CHARGE. THAT IS FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC. MASTER GARDENERS GET IN FREE OF CHARGE.

Saturday, June 4 — 9-10 a.m. **Weed Identification and Control.** Learn the most common weeds found in Utah lawns and gardens, and the best way to control them. Demonstration of organic and chemical control mixing and applications. All participants will be given the USU Extension publication "Landscape and Garden Weed Control" as well as a set of weed images. Held at **Wheeler Farm**, 6351 South 900 East, Salt Lake City. Register with USU Extension office, 801-468-3179

Mondays, June 6 – Sept 29 - Plant Diagnostic Clinics - every Monday (except July 4). Bring in a plant or pest specimen for identification and/or recommendations. Daytime session: 1- 4 p.m., USU Extension Training Room. Evening sessions: 5-7 p.m., Red Butte Garden Visitors Center. Check with Maggie on helping at these and getting volunteer hours.

June 21, Tues, 7 a.m. – 8 a.m. **Spring Flowering Perennials and Shrubs Pruning Demonstration.** Murray Park Horticulturist Becky Hansen will demonstrate and discuss pruning of spring-blooming plants. We will put our new learning into practice immediately following the demonstration. Bring hand pruners, shears, or other favorite tools. Meet at the **Murray Park** administration building. We would appreciate knowing how many to expect; please register by calling the USU Extension office at 801-468-3171.

Saturday, July 16, 9 a.m. – 10 a.m. **Herb Gardening: the Aromatics.** Salt Lake Master Gardener Trudy Guest will discuss and demonstrate herb gardening at the **Wheeler Farm** herb garden, just west of the historic farmhouse, 6351 South 900 East, Salt Lake City. Come learn about growing herbs to use in scent-sational potpourris and aromatherapy. Pre-register through the USU Extension office, 801-468-3171. \$5 charge. Master Gardeners free.



## Spotlight

On Nina Johnston



It seems the more people give – or the harder they work - the higher the return. This is especially true of Nina Johnston.

"When we moved in I had a 100-year-old home with all this ground around it," she says. So Nina, husband and kids, cleared overgrowth from the two and a half acres, literally a secret garden. They uncovered plants, hedges and even a privet fence spiraling 20 feet, under shrubbery that had reached tree size. To her delight she discovered surprises like tulips, probably planted 50 years prior. This reminded Nina of her grandmother's lawn. Inspired, she dug up the lawn and before replanting, naturalized crocuses, tulips, daffodils and other bulbs for a burst of spring color.

With the grounds finally manageable, someone suggested Nina could learn to be more efficient by taking Master Gardener classes. The information proved invaluable, but hands-on experience at the State Fairpark and other projects taught her more about everything - from perennials to pruning. Still, what Nina appreciates most about Master Gardeners is the friendship of kindred spirits. To this day Nina looks forward to having Jenny Allgrunn appear at the door with fresh asparagus. And she still smiles in amusement at the give and take between the Sudburys. "They were hilarious," Nina says. Their lives became so intertwined that she approached Bev about arranging the spray for Don's casket. "Joy" is the word Nina uses in connection with gathering from the Sudbury garden and using the legacy of Don's flowers to bring beauty to the day.

Nina's floral arrangements have a unique touch. At one time she turned this talent into a cottage business, known by word of mouth as Jane and Nina's. "Lugging plants around in heavy buckets of water was hard work and we never made much money," Nina said. "It seemed we were always in the hole but we loved it"

Naturally, Nina wouldn't hesitate to host a garden wedding, in spite of a broken arm. She couldn't let anyone down, especially her son. And of course, the neighbors pitched in to help. The more people you have to help the better," Nina says. "And we all just had a good time."

Because summer blooms had faded and fall colors hadn't quite picked up, Nina brought in vibrant blue butterfly bushes, autumn perennials and gave the garden splendor with some secret touches. Her arm healed a week before the wedding – in time to prepare table decorations - planned around fruit, of all things. She made candle rings by nestling peaches, blushing a deep red, in greenery, adding purple Gerbera daisies, berries, and other accents such as lime green.

As if her own garden isn't enough work, Nina always admired the Salt Lake Temple grounds and inquired about helping out. She learned volunteers are always welcome, began to dig and plant, and was eventually called to a service mission. Often traveling in her capacity as a floral designer, her latest assignment was at the Orlando L.D.S. temple. As usual, her silk arrangements appeared so real that people touched them to see if the flowers were fresh - a fitting tribute to her efforts and talent.

**ALL MY WEEDS ARE WILDFLOWERS, Continued**  
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seed pods. I know of at least one MG who wants to go back to collect some of the seeds for her own garden.

Unfortunately, the batteries in my camera started dying as we started up the mountain, and so I had to conserve what battery energy I had left for shots I really wanted. I love landscape shots, and so I saved my battery power for these beautiful shots from the top of the mountain. The view at the top really was splendid and gave me a new view of Lake Bonneville's shoreline.

The threatening clouds blocked out the sun but provided us with a perfect day for photographing wildflowers – and clouds!

In the end I realized that the morning had been very productive because I learned more than I ever expected to. I learned all I ever wanted to know about salt companies and evaporation ponds. I discovered a great deal about the breed of cows which covered the fields with their precious calves. I realized how bad I felt for the cows, living on sage brush and storksbill with no visible sign of water. I thought perhaps I should contact my senator or something, but then

decided I could help them just as well by getting a steak for dinner. I also found out that you can make a purple dye for fabric from the orange lichen which grows on the bottom of the sagebrush (collected it - haven't tried it yet). Most importantly though, I gained an appreciation for the wildflowers we examined. (One of the flowers we examined actually had small spots of blue on the end of the stamen, something which was only visible through a magnifying glass.) This new appreciation caused me to think about the wildflowers which were growing in my own garden. Should I pull them? Should I leave them? After all they are wildflowers. When I returned home I told my husband our weeds really were wildflowers. I expected him to look at me in disbelief and say something about them looking messy, and needing to be pulled or sprayed. (Do not stand in this man's way when he is on a dandelion hunt! He won't carry a gun or hunt on safari, but the dreaded dandelion is one predator he takes no mercy on!) Instead he simply said "oh," and looked pained as he tried to decide how he should react. I'm sure he didn't want to offend me or send me off into a drawn out narration about the value of the wildflowers in our yard. I'm also sure he was thinking that maybe he wouldn't have to feel guilty about not helping me weed this spring. "So... you're going to leave them?" he asked cautiously. I laughed and shook my head, "No dear, a weed is only a plant out of place, and in my opinion these wildflowers belong in the wild, not in my flower garden. It's time to get pulling!"

*Check the website for Lisa's pictures, including the juniper, storksills, burr buttercups, pale evening primrose, Milfoil Biscuitroot, and some beautiful views of the Stansbury Island shore of the Great Salt Lake.*

## DAVE'S BITS AND PIECES

By Dave Kempff

### Back Injuries

As gardeners, we all have to be careful not to hurt our backs.

*Remember:*

- Never attempt to lift until your body is warm and loose. Perform some simple stretching and warm-up exercises if necessary.
- Do not attempt to lift heavy or bulky items alone. Ask for help.
- If possible, slide heavy plants or materials rather than attempting to lift them with your body. Pushing the object is safer than pulling it to the desired location.
- Storing materials at least 12 inches off the ground where possible minimizes the danger of one of the most hazardous movements—lifting directly from the ground.
- Avoid lifting in a situation where the body will be twisted. Avoid jerking or erratic motions.
- Never try to catch falling objects.

*Try to do the following when lifting:*

- Keep the feet parted for greater stability and lifting power.
- Keep the back straight to keep the spine, back muscles, and inner organs in correct alignment. This will minimize the chance of a hernia.
- Tuck the chin in to keep the neck, head, and spine straight.
- Keep arms and elbows tucked in for more gripping power.
- Center your body over your feet for balance and lifting power.
- Bend your legs, then lift the object by straightening the legs. Your leg muscles will now take the load instead of your back.

*Reverse the process to lower an object. If you do suffer a back injury, remember:*

- Assume a comfortable position immediately. Lying down is usually best.
- Apply ice packs to the pain area.
- Get medical treatment.
- Take it easy and don't overdo for a long time. It seems that once you hurt your back, it is never the same.

### Weeds

The recent warm weather and frequent rain showers have made weeds a problem. Let's talk about broadleaf weeds: these are characterized by their growth pattern. Leaves that grow out from the center of the plant are called rosette weeds, while weeds that sprawl along the surface of the ground are known as creeping weeds. Dandelions, plantains, and dock are examples of rosette weeds. Their leaves radiate from one central point on very short stems that barely rise above soil level, making them impossible to pull cleanly from the ground.

Some common creeping weeds are clover and chickweed. They can create the appearance of large unsightly patches in the lawn, especially if several of the weed plants overlap. As the stems radiate from a central point and hug the ground, they can establish roots at multiple points. This can truly make them more difficult to remove, and when they are pulled, they can leave bare spots in poor lawn.

May all your flowers come up and may each bloom bring you a special joy that is only known to a true gardener! See you soon!

# R H U B A R B



By  
Trisha  
Schelble

Rhubarb is a vegetable with a unique taste that makes it a favorite in many pies and desserts. It originated in Asia over 2,000 years ago and was initially cultivated for its medicinal qualities; it was not until the 18th century that rhubarb was grown for culinary purposes in Britain and America. Rhubarb is often commonly mistaken to be a fruit but rhubarb is actually a close relative of garden sorrel, and is therefore a member of the vegetable family. Rhubarb is rich in vitamin C and dietary fiber.

Rhubarb is a cool season, perennial plant that is very winter hardy and resistant to drought. Its crop is produced from crowns consisting of fleshy rhizomes and buds. Following a season of growth the rhubarb crown becomes dormant and temperatures below 40 degrees F are required to stimulate bud break and subsequent growth. The first shoots to appear in the spring are edible petioles and leaves.

Rhubarb tolerates most soils but grows best on fertile, well-drained soils that are high in organic matter. A clean planting site is essential for the cultivation of rhubarb since no herbicides are registered for use on rhubarb.

Plant rhubarb roots in early spring. Planting seeds is not recommended as it may take too long for the plants to become established, and the seedlings would not come true to color and size. Space rhubarb roots 24 to 48 inches apart in rows 3 to 4 feet apart for commercial growing. Plant the roots with the crown bud 2 inches below the surface of the soil. The hole for the crown should be dug extra large and composted manure, peat moss or dairy organic should be mixed with the soil to be placed around the roots. Firm the soil around the roots but keep it loose over the buds. Water the crowns after planting. Give the plant 1/4 cup of 5-10-10 worked in to the top 10 inches of soil at planting time. Good garden drainage is essential in growing rhubarb. For home gardeners, planting in raised beds helps ensure against rotting of the crowns. Crowns will have a longevity of many years, but because of diseases and insects, it is normal to reset a bed after 4-5 years.

Rhubarb responds to good care and watering. Remove the flower stalks as they are seen. During the first year of planting, the stalks should not be picked, since food from the leaves is needed

to nourish the roots for the next year's growth. One light picking may be taken during the year following planting if the plants are vigorous, and beginning the second year following planting, the entire plant may be harvested.

When harvesting rhubarb, the first step is to cut the stalks at the soil line or simply pull them out individually. All of the stalks of a plant may be harvested at one time, or pulled out selectively over a 4-6 week period. After the stalks are cut, the leaves may be removed.

Established clumps will have to be trimmed every 4 to 5 years or when the stalks get small and spindly or when the crown is visibly crowded. This will help the plant to keep growing nice thick stems. This is done by digging around and trimming the crown down to 4 or 5 buds. You can also use this opportunity to divide your plant into more plants. You may encounter some rot in the crowns from excessive water in the crown area. If so, destroy these plants.

Rhubarb or "pie plant" is prized for use in pies, tarts, and sauces. Only the petioles are eaten, although herbal remedies use the leaves and roots. The high levels of oxalic acid and other compounds within the leaves are toxic to humans.

Rhubarb is sold by the "bunch" which is usually 2 to 2-1/2 lbs., 1 lb. cooked yields 3/4 cup. When buying Rhubarb choose fresh crisp stalks, and peel off any stringy covering before use. Stand the stalks in cold water for an hour or so to refresh them before cooking. The stalks can be stored for 2-4 weeks at 32- F. A 1 pound bunch contains 3-5 stalks. Before use, discard any leaves and trim the ends. Completely peeling rhubarb is unnecessary. Rhubarb requires sweetening to minimize the extreme tartness. It can be served as a sauce over ice cream, combined with fresh strawberries, or made into pies, tarts, puddings, breads, jam, jellies, and refreshing beverages.

Rhubarb has many uses. The most common is medicinal. Rhubarb has been used in medicines and folk healing for centuries.

**Cleaning pots and pans:** Use rhubarb to clean your pots and pans (no joke!) If your pots and pans are burnt, fear not! An application of rhubarb over the afflicted area will bring back the shine in next to no time.

**Hair Color:** This is a fairly strong dye that can create a more golden hair color for persons whose hair is blond or light brown. Simmer 3 tbsp. of rhubarb root in 2 cups of water for 15 minutes, set aside overnight, and strain. Test on a few strands to determine the effect, then pour through the hair for a rinse.

**Insecticide:** Rhubarb leaves can be used to make an effective organic insecticide for any of the leaf eating insects (cabbage caterpillars, aphids, peach and cherry slug etc).

#### Recipe 1

Basically you boil up a few pounds of rhubarb leaves in a few pints of water for about 15 or 20 minutes, allow to cool, then strain the liquid into a suitable container.

Dissolve some soap flakes in this liquid and use it to spray against aphids. The unused spray can be kept for a day or two, but keep your kids away. It is still quite harmful.

## GILGAL GARDEN

We finally had a good night May 17th, without any rain. We probably would have planted anyway, but it was nice not to get drowned while we worked. We had some wonderful perennials and annuals donated to us by Lynn Okubo. We were so excited to have a nice variety of plants to put in. Thanks to Lynn and her wonderful husband.

Thanks to the six people who showed up to plant. It went so smoothly. Traci even had time to get 40 more stepping stones to put in. We couldn't do it without our wonderful volunteers doing service to our community.

We hope you will take the time to visit the garden if you haven't been there. It is a quite unique place. If you have been there, and it has been a while, come and see all the new changes even since last year. The new flower garden that we prepared all last year is finally taking shape. We have a lot of different varieties of flowers there. (The irises we got from last summer's picnic and from Harley and Carla Hansen are blooming now.) We have a stone pathway with about 60 stepping stones for the gardeners to use as we work, (still more to go). The back north wall is being all redone but the weather has slowed down the construction on that job. We hope to see you there, if not to work, to come and enjoy.

We work at Gilgal on Tuesday nights starting around 3:00p.m. until 6:00 or 7:00p.m. depending on the night and the weather. Hope to see you there. Feel free to get in touch with us if you have any questions.

Bev Sudbury [beverlysudbury@yahoo.com](mailto:beverlysudbury@yahoo.com) or  
Traci Dahle [smoki1@smartella.com](mailto:smoki1@smartella.com)

We have had several Master Gardeners submit photographs of our projects, activities, and meetings.

Thanks to all of you! As our current printing method doesn't begin to do justice to these photos, they will be posted on the SLMGA web site. Please go there and enjoy!

<http://utahmastergardeners.usu.edu/home/homeMain.htm>  
or  
<http://www.utahmastergardeners.org>

## PIONEER PARK FARMER'S MARKET

The Downtown Farmers Market starts in June. If anyone is interested in earning easy volunteer hours, please contact Karen Shurtz.

## SLMGA WEB SITE

The Utah Master Gardener web site is an ongoing, 12 month a year, project—and yes, it is a project you can earn volunteer hours for. To be viable, a web site must be constantly changing and evolving, and it can only do that with the help of many contributors. If you have any information, photos, drawings, etc. you think your fellow Master Gardeners would be interested in, please e-mail them to Amy Hargreaves Judzis, your friendly WebWench, at:

[slc-info@utahmastergardeners.org](mailto:slc-info@utahmastergardeners.org).

Feel free to call or e-mail me to get more information or pitch any ideas as well. I would really like to start a plant or pest of the month feature, so if you would like to submit your chosen species of fauna, flora or other, please do.

<http://utahmastergardeners.usu.edu/home/homeMain.htm>  
or  
<http://www.utahmastergardeners.org>

## Wheeler Farm Herb Garden

For those of you who need hours or signed up the the herb gardens, we are currently working on Thursday mornings from 8:00 am to 9:30 am starting May 5th. Right now, the gardens need weekly weeding, some deadheading, and edging. If you can't make it Thursdays, anytime you can help is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please call Trudy.

Thanks to everyone that helped divide the ornamental grass and tidy up the large flower bed on April 16th. It looks great!

For those of you who need hours or signed up for the herb garden, we are currently working on Thursday mornings from

## RECENT TOURS A BIG SUCCESS

April 30 was a great day for Master Gardeners. The annual Stansbury Island wildflower tour was held (see page 1) and the Wasatch Rock Garden Society Tour/SLMGA Diagnostic Clinic.

Utah County Master Gardener Lyle Jenkins has posted some nice photos of the rock garden society tour April 30 on his web site:

<http://community.webshots.com/album/335247282kbYRLx>

Several SLMG's yards were featured in the rock garden tour. All were outstanding! One visitor to Dick Hadfield's yard declared that his long driveway, bursting with spring-blooming perennials, was "the happiest driveway in the world."

## STATE FAIRPARK

After quite a few rained-out Wednesday work-days, the Fair Park is looking lush but slightly weedy. The spring blooming perennials are gorgeous--sea pinks, iris, geraniums, poppies, and more. The new pond structure is in but needs some rock plants and some new fish. Although quite a few survived the winter, they don't seem to have survived the barrage of rocks from some mischievous visitors! The tulips are done and need to be pulled out of the annual bed this year. The dahlias have been planted, and the remaining annual beds will be prepped and planted in the upcoming weeks. We will be planting ornamental corn, borage, sunflowers, nasturtiums and ornamental pepper varieties — some from seed and some seedlings. We are still shopping for a new tree to replace the one damaged last year by the heavy snowfall. Following the iris bloom season, we will hold an iris dividing class, date and time to be announced. Come on out to the Fair Park Garden! Call Cathy Miller at 918-0106 for more information.

## WHEELER FARM House gardens

We will be meeting on Tuesdays at 5 p.m. until the days get a little longer and warmer. Hope to see you there. This is a fun project with great working conditions. Wheeler Farm is located at 6351 South 900 East. Contact Marlene if you have questions. 968-5514.

## Rhubarb Dessert

½ c Rhubarb  
1 c Sugar  
3 oz. Pkg Raspberry jello  
Miniature Marshmallows  
Yellow or white cake mix



Cut rhubarb into 1" chunks. Grease pan and put rhubarb in cake pan and sprinkle with 1 cup sugar. Pour over dry jello and cover with marshmallows. Pour on cake batter, made to package directions. Bake at 350 degrees at 45-55 minutes.

## Got Spinach?

Spinach is a versatile green, in that you can add the fresh leaves to other greens in a tossed salad, use them alone in a salad, or cook them.

Easily grown from seed, Spinach is a cool season green. Sow seeds 1/2 inch deep. Thin to about 6 inches apart. They will germinate in 8 to 10 days and harvest can begin as early as 45 days. Succession planting will ensure fresh leaves until the hot weather hits. Be sure to use the thinnings. When you begin harvesting, just pick off the larger leaves. In a few days, more leaves will be big enough to harvest. Even after the flower stalk has begun to shoot up, the leaves will still be good eating if cooked. Pull the plant and toss it in the compost pile, unless there is sign of disease. Spinach usually stays healthy in our climate.

After harvesting, give the leaves a good rinsing to wash off soil particles that may accumulate underneath. They will keep in the crisper of the refrigerator better if you can shake most of the water off first.

Cooking spinach is a quick and easy task. Put a few tablespoons of water in a pot much larger than the amount of servings you want. Fill the pot with fresh leaves and cover. After a few minutes on low to medium heat, the leaves will have wilted down to a fraction of their former volume. (Follow similar procedure for microwaving at a reduced time.) At this stage, the spinach can be served or frozen.

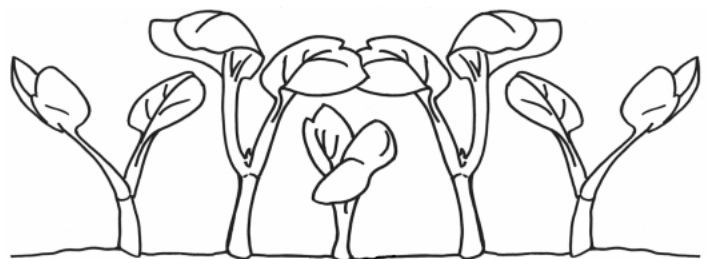
Anyone old enough to have seen the old Popeye cartoons knows that spinach is very nutritious. The dark green leaf is evidence of an abundance of vitamins.

Many of us are harvesting spinach right now from an early spring planting. Bev Sudbury plants her spinach in the fall, so she starts harvesting it starting in February and continues for a longer period. Let's mark our calendars to plant it in the fall this year. Here is the recipe for that great dip she brought to our April meeting:

### Spinach Dip

2 cups sour cream	1/2 cup chopped parsley
1 cup mayonnaise	1/2 cup chopped green onions
1 package cream cheese	1 tsp. dry dill weed
1 package dry onion soup mix	1 tsp. Salad Supreme (or dry Italian dressing mix)
Chopped garlic to taste	
10 oz. frozen spinach or fresh from garden heated to wilt stage well drained	

Combine in food processor. Mix well. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Serve with crisp vegetables or bread chunks.



## HAPPY GARDENING!

# PROJETS

Christmas Box House	Peggy Call - pcall@xmission.com Virginia Sargeant - 363-6557
Fresh From the Heart	Jennie Gibson - gibsongg@earthlink.net JoDene Condrat - condrata@xmission.com
Gilgal Garden	Bev Sudbury - beverlysudbury@yahoo.com Traci Dahle - smoki1@smartfella.com
Magna Elementary	Ann Pixton - apixton@msn.com
Murray Park	Becky Hansen - hansenpollei@mstar2.net
Pioneer Park Farmer's Market	Karen Shurtz
Utah State Fair Park	Cathy Miller - millercb2@aol.com
Utah Aids Foundation	Kay Packard Mike & Ann Cullis - annandmikecullis@comcast.net
Web Site	Amy Hargreaves Judzis - cliz@juno.com
Wheeler Fam Vegetable Garden	Howard Andrews
Wheeler Fam Herb Garden	Trudy Guest - trudyg1@msn.com
Wheeler Fam Pumpkin Patch	Golden Reeves - greeves28@msn.com
Wheeler Fam Home Garden	Marlene Johnson - marlene32936@yahoo.com

## AVENUES GARDEN TOUR COMING UP

People Helping People is sponsoring "The Garden Tour in the Avenues" on Saturday, June 11 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Avenues is one of Salt Lake City's favorite historical neighborhoods. Both large and small gardens will be featured including colorful perennials, native plants, decorative rock, water features, and more.

Horticulture experts will be on hand to answer questions and offer advice on plant selection and grouping, design elements, etc. There will be an Extreme Water-wise Makeover home where you can see the latest in high-efficiency irrigation, drought-tolerant plants, and grass alternatives.

Tickets are \$15 per person. Children under 11 are free. Purchase tickets at Cactus and Tropicals, Millcreek Gardens, Western Garden Centers, Twigs Flower Company, Tulip Tree Floral, and online at [www.phpgardentour.com](http://www.phpgardentour.com). Proceeds benefit People Helping People, a local non-profit organization dedicated to building better futures for single moms and their children by offering the guidance, training, and confidence they need in order to obtain stable, successful employment. Questions? Contact Kim Correa at [Office - 355-5538](mailto:Office-355-5538)  
[kim@mentors4women.org](mailto:kim@mentors4women.org)

## Utah AIDS Foundation

The Utah Aids Foundation work parties will be held every Wednesday from 5 p.m. to sunset (approximately 7 p.m.) unless it is stormy weather. Come when you can during that time.

The gardens are located at 1408 South 1100 East. Please bring gloves, tools, and drinking water.

A special thank you to everyone who has worked at the gardens over the past years!

Questions? Contact Mike and Ann Cullis or Kay Packard. See numbers listed above.

# Calendar

## General Meeting

Thursday, June 16

Dave Rice from **Earth Systems**

will host our meeting at his place of business. He will teach us about bio systems and about ponds, fish, and greenhouses. He was one of our speakers at last year's Mini College. We will also be fishing and cooking the fish along with hamburgers and hot dogs. **The meeting will start at 6:00 p.m.** so we will have plenty of time to have fun and enjoy.

**7230 South 900 East**



Thursday, July 21

**Jim Horrocks will be speaking on outdoor Ferns. We will be having a fieldtrip to his garden to see his 80 varieties of ferns at another date. Watch this space for more details next month.**

The Garden Patch is published monthly by the Salt Lake Master Gardener Association.

Editor: Jenny Allgrunn

Send address changes to:

e-mail: [gardenpatch2@juno.com](mailto:gardenpatch2@juno.com)

# Bulletin Board

## Can We Put Your Yard on a Garden Tour?

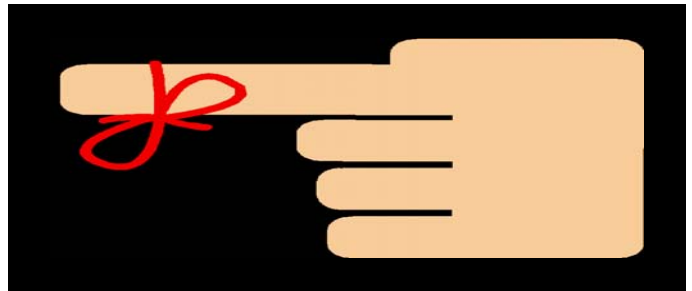
The SLMGA wants to have a series of garden tours featuring the yards of our own Master Gardeners.

These tours will be held throughout the rest of this year's growing season. We want to go to 2 or 3 gardens per tour and have the tours grouped together in close geographic areas so we don't have to spend a lot of time traveling. The tours will occur at the times most suitable for the garden owners - early evenings, weekends, whatever works. We are looking for Master Gardeners willing to open up their gardens for the delight and enjoyment of other Master Gardeners. We want to see it all: greenhouses, flower beds, rock gardens, vegetable gardens, orchards, ponds, container gardens, house plants, whatever you have that might be interesting to the rest of us.

If you are willing to let others come to your garden please contact Fay the or Kevin Adams by email at [ka-damsflk@hotmail.com](mailto:ka-damsflk@hotmail.com), or [fbean@hotmail.com](mailto:fbean@hotmail.com).

**Our June General Meeting starts  
at 6:00 p.m.,  
includes dinner, and is being held  
at a different location. See page 11  
for details.**

**Don't forget !**



**A Handy Hint  
about Feeding  
the Birds**

I hear a lot of people say they don't like to feed birds in their yard because the seed causes weeds. I have four bird feeders in my yard and what I do is cook the seed at about 350 degrees for about 20 minutes. (there are the days I have forgotten and left it longer but we don't want to discuss that) Anyway, this will not hurt the seed for the birds but will keep it from growing seedlings in your yard. Now you have no excuse to not feed the cute little birds.

— Traci Dahle



**PLEASE NOTE:**

**Keep track of your hours  
but do NOT send them yet.  
Bonnie Perfetto is no  
longer in the Extension  
Office. We will let you  
know who to send them to  
when we find out.**