Summer is in full swing and landscapes and gardens are definitely showing it. Take a well-deserved break from your gardening chores and the extreme temperatures to grab a few tidbits of gardening information. As always, if you would like more information about anything in this newsletter or if you have questions about something not in the newsletter, feel free to contact me at the Robeson County Center of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service at 671-3276 or E-mail me at Missy_Hoggard@ncsu.edu.

Happy Gardening!

Melissa R. Hoggard
Extension Agent
Agriculture - Urban Horticulture

MRH/dp

### In This Issue
- Plant Spotlight (Wax Myrtle)
- Pest Focus (Pecan Weevil)
- Catching Rain
- Growing a Fall Vegetable Garden
- End of Summer Lawn Care
- Meth and You
- Upcoming Events

### Plant Spotlight

**Common Name:** Wax Myrtle  
**Scientific Name:** Myrica cerifera  
**Plant Type:** Shrub  
**Height:** 10 to 15 feet  
**Spread:** 8 to 10 feet  
**Flower/Fruit:** Non-showy flowers; clusters of small, gray round berries.  

**Foliage:** Alternate, simple leaves that are a glossy olive green color. Leaves are 1.5 to 3 inches long and have a bayberry candle fragrance.

**Light/Moisture:** Sun to partial shade; tolerates a range of soil types: sand, clay, poor fertility.
Comments: Wax Myrtle is drought and salt spray tolerant. This plant is a good screening plant because of its dense growth habit and fine/medium texture. Wax myrtle is native to the southeastern United States, including North Carolina, and tolerant of damage caused by deer. This plant spreads by suckers but will tolerate severe pruning. Wax myrtle also fixes atmospheric nitrogen.

**Pest Focus**

**Common Name:** Pecan weevil  
**Scientific Name:** Curculio caryae  
**Appearance:** Adult pecan weevils are 3/8 inch long, brownish beetles with snouts as long as the body. Larvae, or grubs, are legless, creamy white and have reddish-brown heads and can grow to 3/5 inch long.

**Life Cycle:** Adult weevils and full grown larvae overwinter in the soil. Adults emerge from the soil from late July to October. Most emerge between August and September. When immature pecans reach what is called the dough stage of development, mated females lay 2 to 4 eggs in separate pockets within the kernels. Larvae feed for about 35 days inside the nuts. Most grubs leave the nuts between late September and December, drop to the ground, and enter the soil to a depth of 4 to 12 inches. They remain in the soil, in earthen cells, for 1 to 2 years. After that time, they pupate into the adult stage in these cells. This stage lasts about 3 weeks. They remain in the soil as adults until the following summer.

**Damage:** Pecan weevils cause 2 types of damage. They feed during the water stage prior to shell hardening, which causes the nuts to drop from the trees. Nuts damaged by weevils feeding have a tiny, pin-sized hole penetrating into the nut which may show “bleeding.” The most serious damage is caused by weevil larvae feeding on developing kernels. They feed on the kernels for several weeks, destroying the interior of the nut. Damaged nuts can often be recognized by circular emergence holes through which the grubs exited the nuts.

**Control:** Weevil treatments are timed based on adult emergence. Emergence should be monitored starting in early August in order to properly time your treatment. There are 2 ways to monitor for pecan weevils using traps. First is by placing cone cage traps under tree drip line and recording the number of adult weevils collected. A second way is to use trunk band traps. Burlap bags can be wrapped around tree trunks of several trees in an orchard or single trees in a home setting. Daily collections and destruction of weevils indicate when to spray as well as provide some physical control.

**Chemical:** Pecan weevils can be controlled with weekly sprays of carbaryl (Sevin) made every 7 days from mid-August through mid-September. Be careful to watch for aphids where Sevin is used.

**Catching Rain**

Have you ever really thought about where our rainwater goes? We all know that it falls to the ground and goes into the soil, but what happens to all that water after it falls to the ground? Water is one of the most valuable resources on Earth. About 97% of the water on the planet is salt water in oceans, seas, and bays. The other 3% is fresh water. About ½ of that fresh water is tied up in glaciers, permanent snow, and ice caps. The other 1.5% is groundwater, held in lakes and streams, or is water vapor in the atmosphere. That water vapor eventually becomes rain which then goes into the ground. Groundwater is our largest source of drinking water, but how often do we think about the rain before it becomes drinkable groundwater?
In most urban environments, rain falls on roofs, roads, and parking lots. These are impervious surfaces where water cannot soak in. Water runoff from paved areas carries leaves, grass, soil, oils, fertilizers, and anything else that might be on those surfaces. These water pollutants can lead to sedimentation of rivers and lakes which can smother insects and fish eggs, destroying the habitats of many animals. The rich source of nutrients, from fertilizers, can cause tremendous growth of weeds. When these weeds die, bacteria feed on the dead weeds and use up the oxygen in the water. The lack of oxygen in the water can lead to fish kills. Pollution is not the only problem with rain runoff. Think of the volume of water that rushes off paved surfaces. Picture the “rivers” of water running to the storm drains in parking lots and on streets. This large amount of water can cause flash floods when there is more water than the storm drains can handle.

Another reason for all this water runoff is the new construction of homes. When new houses are built, the landscape is graded and designed to get rid of water quickly. This protects the home and landscape but sends the problem downstream. Detention ponds are one solution to the runoff problem. They collect the water and send it downstream more slowly. However, these ponds can be expensive to construct, frequently look unsightly, and can be difficult to maintain.

Here is another solution that is easy for homeowners to do. Create a slightly depressed garden full of native plants where rainwater can soak into the ground, replenishing groundwater and protecting our surface water. These are called rain gardens. They help protect and restore natural hydrology by allowing rainwater to soak in instead of running off, and they also trap pollutants that might be in runoff. Rain gardens aren't just for people in the city. They can be located beside a barn to catch runoff from the roof or anywhere the amount of water running across the ground is a problem. Rain gardens also attract birds and butterflies. These gardens don't have to be unsightly but should be attractive additions to property, not only in summer but in winter too.

What exactly is a rain garden? It is a sunken garden, typically 4 to 6 inches deep with a flat bottom. Any size will do some good. They are normally ⅓ the size of what is draining to it — usually a roof, yard, or driveway. When constructing the rain garden, soil is dug out of the selected rain garden area and set to the side. If water needs to be redirected to another water source, such as a pond, lake, or river, a layer of gravel with a drain with an outlet is placed in the bottom of the area that is dug out. Well-drained planting soil, usually the soil that was initially dug out, is placed on top of the gravel. This is the layer in which plants are planted. The design can be natural or formal depending on the plants selected and the desires of the homeowner.

Native wildflowers and grasses are great choices for these gardens, because they typically have roots that go twice as deep into the ground as they are tall, while turfgrass roots are the same depth as the grass is kept. Therefore, native plants tend to absorb much more water. Native plants are well adapted to their habitat and rarely need fertilizer. They will use up any fertilizer in the runoff water. These plants also usually have few, if any, pest problems and should not need pesticides. Maintenance of these plants is similar to maintenance of perennials. They should be divided when needed and should need little extra water once established.

GROWING A FALL VEGETABLE GARDEN

Spring and summer are not the only times we can enjoy garden fresh vegetables. Many vegetables are well adapted to planting in the summer for fall harvest. Fall vegetables extend the season of fresh produce after the earlier crops have finished. Providing protection from early frosts can extend
this season even further. Many cool-season vegetables, such as carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts, produce their best flavor and quality when they mature during cool weather. Spring temperatures in North Carolina heat up quickly and can cause cool-season crops to bolt or develop bitter flavors when they mature during hot summer weather.

Growing a productive fall vegetable garden requires thoughtful planning and good cultural practices. July and August are the main planting times for the fall garden. Vegetables that have a 60- to 80-day maturity should be planted around mid-August in eastern North Carolina. Use the following table for days to maturity for fall vegetables. For a more accurate planting schedule, use Figure 1 to determine the average date of the first killing frost in the fall (typically around the end of October in Robeson County, give or take 12 days). Count backwards from the frost date, using the number of days to maturity to determine the best time to plant in the fall.

Before planting, prepare the soil for your garden. If you have a spring/summer garden, you first need to decide what to do with the remains of this garden. Remove any plants that are finished - no longer producing fruits or vegetables - and any weed growth. Till the soil to a depth of at least 6 to 8 inches. If no soil sample is taken for testing and no fertilizer was previously used, 1 to 2 pounds of a complete fertilizer, such as 10-10-10, may be applied per 100 square feet of bed space and incorporated.

Direct seeding, instead of transplants, for crops, such as broccoli, cabbage, and collards, is often used in the fall. However, adequate moisture is needed for success of this planting method. If no irrigation source is available, transplants should be used. Mulch, such as wheat straw, may be used to keep the soil surfaces cool during the hot summer months when seeds would be germinating.

Most vegetables require 1 inch of water per week. Deep, infrequent water applications are more effective than frequent shallow applications. Young seedlings and new transplants may, however, require more frequent waterings. Many fall vegetables benefit from sidedressing with nitrogen just as spring vegetables do. Most leafy vegetables will benefit from an application of nitrogen 3 and 6 weeks after planting.

It is not uncommon for insects and diseases to be more abundant in the fall. Keep fall vegetables healthy and actively growing. Healthy plants are less susceptible to insects and diseases. Check plants frequently for insect and disease damage. Use approved pesticides only when needed.

Frost protection may also be needed to extend the vegetable season further. Cover growing beds or rows with burlap or a floating row cover supported by stakes or wire to keep the material from directly touching the plants. Individual plants can be protected by using milk jugs, paper caps, or water-holding walls. Most of the semi-hardy and hardy vegetables will require little or no frost protection. Semi-hardy vegetables should be harvested before a heavy freeze. Root crops, such as carrots and radishes, should be harvested or mulched heavily before a hard freeze.
## Fall Vegetable Planting Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Suggested Planting¹</th>
<th>Suggested Cultivars</th>
<th>Inches Between Plants</th>
<th>Planting Depth (inches)</th>
<th>Cold Tolerance²</th>
<th>Days to Maturity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asparagus (crows)</td>
<td>Nov 15 to March 15</td>
<td>Mary Washington, Jersey Giant, Jersey Gem</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beets</td>
<td>July 15 to Aug 15</td>
<td>Ruby Queen, Early Wonder, Red Ace, Pacemaker II</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
<td>Semi-hardy</td>
<td>55 to 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>July 15 to Aug 15</td>
<td>DeCicco, Packman, Premium Crop, Green Duke, Emperor</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>70 to 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage (plants)</td>
<td>Aug 1 to 15</td>
<td>Round Dutch, Early Jersey Wakefield, Red Express, Red Rookie, Sweetbase</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>70 to 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>July 1 to 15</td>
<td>Danvers Half Long, Spartan Bonus, Little Finger, Thumbelina, Scarlet Nantes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.25 to 0.5</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>85 to 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collards</td>
<td>July 15 to Aug 15</td>
<td>Vates, Morris' Improved Heading, Carolina, Blue Max</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>60 to 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers, Pickling</td>
<td>Aug 1 to 15</td>
<td>Carolina, Calypso, Liberty (mtns.), County Fair '83</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.0 to 1.5</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>40 to 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers, Slicing</td>
<td>Aug 1 to 15</td>
<td>Poinsett 76, Sweet Slice, County Fair '83, Salad Bush, Fanfare</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.0 to 1.5</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>40 to 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kale</td>
<td>Aug 15 to Sept 1</td>
<td>Green Curled Scotch, Early Siberian, Vates, Dwarf Blue Curled Scotch, Blue Knight</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>40 to 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce (leaf)</td>
<td>Aug 1 to Sept 1</td>
<td>Grand Rapids, Salad Bowl, Buttercunch, Red Sails, Romulus</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.25 to 0.5</td>
<td>Semi-hardy</td>
<td>40 to 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce (head)</td>
<td>Aug 15 to 31</td>
<td>Great Lakes, Ithaca</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.25 to 0.5</td>
<td>Semi-hardy</td>
<td>70 to 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustard</td>
<td>Aug 1 to Sept 15</td>
<td>Southern Giant Curled, Tendergreen, Savannah</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>30 to 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions (sets or plants)</td>
<td>Sept 1 to 15</td>
<td>Ebenezer, Excell, Early Grano</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>60 to 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radishes</td>
<td>Aug 15 to Sept 15</td>
<td>Early Scarlet Globe, Cherry Belle, Snowbells, White Icicle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>25 to 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rutabagas</td>
<td>July 1 to Aug 1</td>
<td>American Purple Top, Laurentian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
<td>Semi-hardy</td>
<td>70 to 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinach</td>
<td>Aug 1 to 15</td>
<td>Hybrid 7, Dark Green Bloomsdale, Tyee Hybrid</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>50 to 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnips</td>
<td>Aug 1 to 31</td>
<td>Purple Top White Globe, Just Right, Tokyo Hybrid</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5 to 1.0</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>55 to 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Dates shown are for the upper coastal plain and lower piedmont. In western North Carolina, delay planting 10 to 20 days in spring. In eastern North Carolina, plant 7 to 14 days earlier in the spring and 7 to 10 days later in the fall.

² At these temperatures, germination and emergence should be rapid. Planting at lower soil temperatures would delay or prevent germination.
**END OF SUMMER LAWN CARE**

The mowing season will be slowing down and coming to a close, and it will be time to put those mowers away for another winter. Before you go in for the cooler months, take a little time to prepare your lawn for the fall and winter. September is a great time to help get your turf ready.

Centipede lawns should be kept mowed to 1 inch and should be cut before grass reaches 1½ inches tall. Raise mowing height to 1½ inches several weeks before expected frost. Fertilize centipedegrass with 1 pound of potash (K2O) per 1,000 square feet 4 to 6 weeks before expected frost using 1.6 pounds of muriate of potash (0-0-60) or 2 pounds of potassium sulfate (0-0-50). You do not need to lime centipedegrass unless recommended by a soil test. Continue to water centipedegrass to prevent drought stress. Centipede needs about 1 inch of water per week. Now is a good time to check for white grubs and treat if necessary.

St. Augustine lawns should be kept at a height of 2½ inches. Remember to keep your mower blades sharpened to decrease stress on the lawn. Mow before the grass reaches 4 inches and leave the clippings on the lawn as a natural mulch. Apply ½ pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet in August using a complete (N-P-K) fertilizer with a 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio. Several fertilizers for St. Augustine are widely available. Actively growing St. Augustine requires 1 inch of water per week. Irrigate if rain is insufficient. If weed problems, such as crabgrass and goosegrass, are problems, make a note to apply a preemergence herbicide in the spring.

**METH AND YOU**

Provided by Susan Noble, Family and Consumer Science Extension Agent

What? You don't know what meth is? Keep reading, because it could be hiding on your property creating a very real danger for you and your family.

Meth is short for methamphetamine, a very addictive illegal drug. Meth is also called speed, crank, ice, or crystal. Unfortunately, meth has invaded our area and is becoming a major problem for North Carolina law enforcement.

Robeson County's rural areas are especially at risk, because the people who make meth like to set up their “labs” and “cook” in out of the way areas where they are less likely to be found. Abandoned tobacco barns and chicken houses are favorites along with vacant houses and mobile homes.

Many of the chemicals used in making meth are very flammable, combustible, and/or toxic. Examples are mineral spirits, rubbing alcohol, drain cleaner, and mercury. If a lab is set up in an abandoned barn on your property, these chemicals could easily explode and start a fire. These chemicals could get into your ground or well water and make your family sick.

Last, but not least, the people who make meth are dangerous and could easily harm your family.

So - as you're out on your land - be alert for and check out:

- trash piles
- burn sites
- abandoned barns and chicken houses
- vacant houses and trailers
with containers of chemicals like:

- cold tablets
- rubbing alcohol
- nail polish remover
- mineral spirits
- drain cleaner
- fertilizer

and cooking tools like:

- funnels
- turkey basters
- clear glass jars
- hot plates
- propane tanks with tape over valves
- measuring cups
- coffee filters, especially if stained red

and other signals of meth production:

- thermometers
- matches
- batteries
- the odor of rotten eggs, ammonia, or cat urine

Report these findings to law enforcement immediately. Do not open or smell containers of any chemicals you find. If you find these items in an old house or mobile home, do not turn the lights on or off as this could cause a fire. Just run!

Also, if you keep an outdoor fertilizer tank on wheels, remove the wheels to reduce the chance of the tank being stolen. This chemical is used to make meth.

For more information, call Susan Noble at 671-3276.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WHAT'S BUGGING YOU ?!

Are you plagued by insects, weeds, and diseases in your landscape? Have you tried to get rid of those Japanese beetles and just can't seem to shake them? Do you have brown spots in your lawn and have no clue what's causing them? Would you like to have a few clues to help you figure out what to do? If the answer is yes to most of these questions, we have just the answers you're looking for.

Due to the rising gas prices, we're bringing the Extension Service even closer to you! During the months of August and September, there will be a series of workshops throughout Robeson County that will focus on the proper identification and management of several of the most common pest problems in the home lawn, landscape, and garden, including insects, weeds, and diseases.

Workshop Dates and Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August 29</th>
<th>Red Springs Community Bldg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>218 South Main Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Next to the Police Station</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August 31</th>
<th>St. Pauls Courtroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St. Pauls Municipal Bldg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>210 West Blue Street</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>September 7</th>
<th>Fairmont Fire Hall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>412 South Main Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adjacent to Town Hall</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>September 12</th>
<th>O. P. Owens Agriculture Center</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>455 Caton Road (Hwy 72 West)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lumberton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>September 14</th>
<th>Pembroke Courthouse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1st Street just off 3rd Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Hwy 711)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All workshops will be held from 7 - 9 p.m. Individuals with disabilities and/or special needs interested in these meetings should call so proper arrangements can be made.

ROBESON REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL FAIR

Fair time is almost here! The Robeson Regional Agricultural Fair will be here before you know it. Not only is the fair a place for fun and games, it also includes educational exhibits and provides the opportunity to showcase your best home-grown
fruits; vegetables; crops; cut flowers; or homemade crafts, quilts, woodwork, art, needlework, and canned and baked goods.

There are many categories listed for entries in the Home and Agricultural Exhibits. If you have something you think would be a good entry for the fair, but it isn't listed in one of the categories, a new category may be named. There are adult and youth divisions for exhibits. Entries for the Home and Agricultural Exhibits will be taken on Sunday, September 24, from 1 - 6 p.m.; Monday, September 25, from 4 - 9 p.m.; and Tuesday, September 26, from 4 - 9 p.m. It is suggested that cut flowers and baked goods be entered on Tuesday. For more information about categories offered or if you have questions about entering items, call Becky Parnell at 910-738-9568 or me at 910-671-3276.

Also, if you have a business or nonprofit group you would like to advertise, the fair is a great place to set up a booth to get the word out. For more information about setting up a booth, call Buddy Jones at 910-739-7111 or 910-739-0080 or me at 910-671-3276.

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**Newsletters and Web Pages**

If you would like to receive newsletters from us periodically, give us a call at 671-3276, and we'll add you to our mailing lists.

Check out the endless amount of information you can find on our web site at:

http://robeson.ces.ncsu.edu

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Recommendations for the use of chemicals are included as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services does not imply endorsement by North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, or North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact an agent of North Carolina Cooperative Extension.