

the SCOOP



 **LIKE PUZZLES?**
TURN TO PAGE 2



"Hermie" is here to remind you to take special note of an item. He will appear regularly, so keep an eye out!

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MULCHING TREES & SHRUBS

By: A. P. Tuggle

Extension Agent II — Rutherford County

Mulching trees and shrubs is a good method of reducing landscape maintenance and keeping plants healthy. Mulches help conserve moisture in the soil. They also reduce water runoff and soil erosion. Mulches also reduce or prevent soil-borne diseases by not allowing fungi to splash on the foliage of plants. They also help maintain a more uniform soil temperature and promote the growth of soil microorganisms and earthworms.

Mulches eliminate mowing around trees and shrubs and provide a physical barrier that prevents damage from lawn mowers and weed trimmers. A two-to-three inch layer is adequate to prevent most weed seeds from germinating. Mulch should be applied to a weed-free soil surface. Simply covering perennial weeds such as bermuda grass or nut sedge will not prevent their growth.

The mulched area should include as much of the root zone as possible; for beds, mulch the entire area. For individual plants, such as trees, the mulched area should extend at least 3 to 6 feet (depending on plant size) out from the base of the plant. It is advisable to pull the mulch 1 to 2 inches from the base of the plant to prevent bark decay, boring insects, etc.

Mulch can be applied anytime of the year. However, the best time to mulch is late spring after the soil has warmed. Early spring application will delay soil warming and possibly plant growth. It is not necessary to remove the mulch when you fertilize. Apply the fertil-

izer over the mulch; nutrients will move with water to the roots below.

There are many materials that can be used as mulches, each has advantages and disadvantages, but there are only two general types of mulches, organic and inorganic. Both will reduce the growth of weeds, retain moisture and reduce the need for irrigation. Organic mulches will decompose with time, releasing small amounts of nutrients and organic matter to the soil. The layer of mulch should be renewed as needed to maintain a two-to-three inch depth. On previously mulched areas, apply a 1 inch layer of new material.

Geotextiles and landscape fabrics are also available as mulches. These materials prevent the growth of most weeds (sedges and some grasses will grow through them) and will allow normal water and oxygen exchange. The material should be applied on bare soil before or immediately after planting. The material is cut to fit around shrubs. Avoid getting soil on top of the material. Some of the best results have been obtained when using a combination of landscape fabric covered with an organic material.

Rocks, gravel, pebbles, lava rock, or crushed rock are some of the upcoming trends in inorganic mulch materials. They seem like a good choice as mulch since they will not decompose. They are well suited for a rock garden, herb garden, or Japanese design but may not be appropriate for a perennial flow-

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Mulching

(Continued from page 1)

erbed or a foundation planting. A border of some type should be applied to keep the material in place.

Black plastic is not recommended as a mulch material for landscape plants. While plastic will help control most weeds and conserve water, it does not allow water, nutrients, and air to move to the roots of the plants.

Mulch can pose some problems because some gardeners feel that if some mulch is good then more the better. Excessive application of mulch can result in a situation in which roots are growing in the mulch and not in the soil. Over mulched plants are easily damaged when herbicides and fertilizers are applied and during periods of drought stress. Mulching an area that is poorly drained can bring on problems.

In over-mulched areas, slugs are the most likely harmful pest but can be controlled by using a slug bait or pellets. In some cases, mice and voles may tunnel under mulch and cause damage by chewing on the roots or the plant bark. Pull the mulch back 6 inches from the stems or base of the plant. Ω

PROJECTS & COMMITTEES

PROJECTS 2006 Volunteers Needed

1. Garden Basics 2006
2. Brown Bag
3. Diagnostic Clinics
4. Senior Citizen Center
5. Demonstration Garden
6. Bellwood Elementary School Discovery Garden
7. Grape Vines at Lane Agri-Park
8. Orchard at Lane Agri-Park
9. Rain Garden at MTSU
10. Sam Davis Home in Smyrna



COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS for 2006

- ❖ Phone: Waites, Gibson, Becker
- ❖ Community Projects: Anderson, Chair; R. Gutherz
- ❖ Speakers' Bureau: Richardson, Chair
- ❖ Refreshments: Fladung, Hollingsworth, Dill
- ❖ Special Events: B. Fedorowicz
- ❖ Historian: McCary
- ❖ Public Relations: Miller
- ❖ Web Site Coordinator: Ellis
- ❖ Newsletter: K. Smith, Editor

NEW FEATURE

PLANT WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

H	R	D	O	Z	T	S	T	V	K	M	H	D	A	Y	L	I	L	Y	U
S	G	G	M	F	T	C	R	E	E	P	I	N	G	P	H	L	O	X	N
X	P	I	A	C	F	R	C	H	R	Y	S	A	N	T	H	E	M	U	M
S	L	M	R	G	P	D	G	X	J	Q	D	A	H	L	I	A	B	O	B
H	N	P	I	K	F	O	X	G	L	O	V	E	Q	S	X	W	C	N	L
O	J	A	G	D	A	F	F	O	D	I	L	G	I	B	Y	J	O	K	E
S	J	T	O	P	E	O	N	Y	J	J	F	A	O	H	A	S	L	C	E
T	P	I	L	G	R	M	L	G	O	M	P	J	K	Y	R	U	U	O	D
A	M	E	D	F	B	H	H	N	W	U	B	D	H	D	R	N	M	S	I
P	L	N	T	J	A	X	M	C	O	R	E	I	I	R	O	F	B	M	N
E	I	S	Q	I	D	A	I	S	Y	C	G	A	D	A	W	L	I	O	G
T	G	A	R	T	E	M	I	S	I	A	O	N	P	N	E	O	N	S	H
U	C	A	L	A	D	I	U	M	M	P	N	T	U	G	F	W	E	X	E
N	V	I	B	U	R	N	I	U	M	A	I	H	P	E	P	E	L	L	A
I	R	I	S	E	O	W	W	H	G	U	A	U	G	A	Y	R	I	Q	R
A	N	A	R	H	A	L	C	J	Y	H	V	S	P	I	L	V	I	X	T

- Artemisia
- Caladium
- Cosmos
- Dahlia
- Dianthus
- Hydrangea
- Marigold
- Sunflower
- Begonia
- Chrysanthemum
- Creeping Phlox
- Daisy
- Foxglove
- Impatiens
- Peony
- Viburnum
- Bleeding Heart
- Columbine
- Daffodil
- Daylily
- Hosta
- Iris
- Petunia
- Yarrow

Minutes of Meeting—April 17, 2006

Minutes for this particular meeting were suspended as it was a “potluck” meeting. Calvin Owen of Blooms Nursery & Landscape Company in Nashville spoke on butterflies. Calvin has developed a unique butterfly habitat named “The Oasis” as well as a separate environment for turtles. He has a 65 lb. snapping turtle among others. The Oasis was developed to protect the butterfly environment, which is being displaced by new construction. A trip was planned for the next day, Tuesday, to include members of the on-going Master Gardener Class. If you plan to visit, admission is \$4.00 which goes to the upkeep of the butterflies. Mrs. Cheap recently published an article in *The Tennessean* relative to *The Oasis*. Ω



Calvin Owens of Bloom Nursery & Landscape Company, Nashville, TN



Calvin Owens and his Assistant introducing little known plant which is excellent for butterflies.



Calvin Owens explaining upkeep of the butterflies at *The Oasis* the morning following the Master Gardener monthly meeting.



Butterfly at *The Oasis*—Blooms Nursery

*Make plans to attend the
Secret Garden Tour June 10-11, 2006.
The Mike and Amy Blanton
&
The Don and Wanda Richardson
Gardens will be among those presented on this tour.*



LANDSCAPE DESIGN - Developing A Base Plan

Third In A Series

By: J. Smith, President

In order to start any project from making a cake to building a house there has to be some sort of plan. It may be a recipe for a cake or a blueprint for a house but there has to be a plan of some sort. In order to draw a plan for a landscape the designer must have some basic information including the following:

- All property lines
- Any streams or ponds
- All construction setback lines
- **All** Buildings & improvements
- All walls, fences, poles, etc.
- Roads, driveways, walks, pools
- Existing trees, shrubs, gardens, etc.
- **All** utility easements
- Compass directions
- Slopes and drainage
- And any other features or facts that may influence your plan.



ing trees and shrubs will have to be noted on site.

In the event no survey is available you may be able to start by going to the local property tax assessor's office and requesting a copy of the property tax map they have. This will give lot dimensions, compass directions, streets, and possibly major easements. Other easements can be obtained by calling your local "call before you dig" organization. Should all else fail, you may have to make an educated guess by taking measurements along fence lines, hedges and driveways and then measuring your house and other improvements.

Once you have all of the physical characteristics drawn on paper and to a convenient scale, you have a base plan. This base plan should never, ever be drawn on again, unless some major changes take place (for instance an addition to the house). This plan becomes what you will use as a base for overlays. Go to an office supply store and buy some tracing paper or onionskin paper and place over the base plan and draw on the overlay. You will want to make several overlays of different situations, which we will get to at a later time. But you now have a base plan. Ω

The most logical beginning point for most of us are the papers in the closing documents when we bought our property. In the majority of cases, closing attorneys will require a survey to be completed before the final papers are signed. This survey will include almost all of the listed items, while others such as exist

PLANT WORD SEARCH SOLUTION

H	R	D	O	Z	T	S	T	V	K	M	H	D	A	Y	L	I	L	Y	U
S	G	G	M	F	T	C	R	E	E	P	I	N	G	P	H	L	O	X	N
X	P	I	A	C	F	R	C	H	R	Y	S	A	N	T	H	E	M	U	M
S	L	M	R	G	P	D	G	X	J	Q	D	A	H	L	I	A	B	O	B
H	N	P	I	K	F	O	X	G	L	O	V	E	Q	S	X	W	C	N	L
O	J	A	G	D	A	F	F	O	D	I	L	G	I	B	Y	J	O	K	E
S	J	T	O	P	E	O	N	Y	J	J	F	A	O	H	A	S	L	C	E
T	P	I	L	G	R	M	L	G	O	M	P	J	K	Y	R	U	U	O	D
A	M	E	D	F	B	H	H	N	W	U	B	D	H	D	R	N	M	S	I
P	L	N	T	J	A	X	M	C	O	R	E	I	I	R	O	F	B	M	N
E	I	S	Q	I	D	A	I	S	Y	C	G	A	D	A	W	L	I	O	G
T	G	A	R	T	E	M	I	S	I	A	O	N	P	N	E	O	N	S	H
U	C	A	L	A	D	I	U	M	M	P	N	T	U	G	F	W	E	X	E
N	V	I	B	U	R	N	I	U	M	A	I	H	P	E	P	E	L	L	A
I	R	I	S	E	O	W	W	H	G	U	A	U	G	A	Y	R	I	Q	R
A	N	A	R	H	A	L	C	J	Y	H	V	S	P	I	L	V	I	X	T

2006 EVENT & MEETING CALENDARS

EVENT CALENDAR FOR 2006		
Free Plant Swap 1601 East Main St. Murfreesboro, TN	April 29 College Heights Chapel	8:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.
Wildflower Hike 697 Barfield Crescent Rd. Murfreesboro, TN	April 29 Barfield Crescent Park	11:00 a.m.
Household Hazardous Waste Collection Murfreesboro, TN	April 29 Old Fort Park	8:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
GroWild, Inc. Native Plant Nursery Open House Fairview, TN	May 5-6 For information call Terri Barnes	8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m. 615-799-1910
Mid-State Iris Society Show Suntrust Bank Bldg. — Murfreesboro, TN	May 7	1:30 p.m. — 5:00 p.m.
Middle Tennessee Daylily Society Spring Sale — The Mall at Green Hills	May 6	10:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.
Master Gardener Field Trip to Huntsville, AL Botanical Gardens TENTATIVE—DETAILS TO FOLLOW	May 20	DETAILS TO FOLLOW
Secret Garden Tour Murfreesboro, TN	June 9-11 Tickets may be purchased at The Discovery Center	
Southern Region Master Gardener Conference Chattanooga, TN	June 8-10 For more information visit: www.srmgc.Tennessee.edu	
Mid-State Iris Society Rhizome Sale Cannonsburgh Village—Murfreesboro, TN	June 24	9:00 a.m. — 12:00 N

MEETING CALENDAR FOR 2006			
MONTH	DAY	PROGRAM	REFRESHMENTS
January	23	Agent Tuggle—Projects	Fladung, Hollingsworth, K.Smith
February	20	M.Vehr—Colorburst Nursery	Miller, Gibson, Dill
March	20	Agent Tuggle—Diagnostics Labs	Gutherz, Jones, Hines
April	17	C.Owen—Blooms Nursery NOTE: plant swap cancelled	POT LUCK
May	15	B. Smith—Landscape Architecture	McCrary, Fedorowicz, Arnold
June	19	P. Rowelette—Valley Growers	W.Richardson, Ellis, Norfleet
July	17	C. Holloway—M'boro City Horticulturalist	Selby, Massquoi
August	21	TBA	POT LUCK
September	18	TBA	W.Richardson, Gutherz, Fladung
October	16	TBA	Ellis, Fedorowicz
November	18	M.Nevills—Edu. Dir. Oaklands Mansion	Arnold, Dickson, P.Richardson
December	19	TBA	POT LUCK

Featured Photos of the Month

Beth Fedorowicz, Event Chairman, reports on the trip to "The Oasis" in Nashville, TN.

Immediately following the Master Gardener's Class April 18th, eight Master Gardeners, Interns and Guests drove to **The Oasis** butterfly house at Blooms Nursery & Landscape Company in Nashville. It was a lovely day for a trip. We enjoyed seeing the butterflies and turtles that Calvin Owen had talked about the previous evening at the monthly Master Gardener meeting. The butterflies were everywhere! Lucky for us the 65-pound "Earnie" (snapping turtle) stayed in the pond. Calvin has some healthy stock for sale, and we purchased plants. He had tomato plant varieties I had never seen before. It is a short drive of approximately 27 miles located at 610B Thompson Lane (near the Sears Outlet). The self-guided tour is a good deal at \$4.00.



Butterflies at "Oasis Butterfly House" - Blooms Nursery & Landscape Co.-Nashville, TN. Master Gardener Trip April 18, 2006. Photos by Beth Fedorowicz



BE SURE TO ATTEND THE MAY MEETING TO RECEIVE YOUR
MASTER GARDENERS OF RUTHERFORD COUNTY
MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY!

MASTER GARDENERS OF RUTHERFORD COUNTY

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Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, county governments cooperating, UT Extension, and Tennessee State University provide equal opportunities in programs and employment.

"**The SCOOP**" is the monthly newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Rutherford County, Tennessee and is published the fourth week of each month by email. Those members without email and who are not able to attend meetings may receive the newsletter by U.S. postal mail. The deadline for articles, pictures, events, etc. to be included in the newsletter is the third Friday of each month.

Meetings are held on the third Monday of each month at the Lane Agri-Park at 6:30 p.m., unless specified. Membership is \$25 for a single, or \$35 for a couple residing at the same address. All memberships are valid January through December and are prorated.

Memberships in the Master Gardeners of Rutherford County are open to those interested in learning, teaching, and volunteering for the purpose of educating the community in all phases of gardening.

PLEASE NOTE: MASTER GARDENER CERTIFICATION REQUIRES 40 HOURS OF TRAINING PLUS 40 HOURS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE. RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS ARE 25 VOLUNTEER HOURS, PLUS 8 HOURS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION PER YEAR. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS COUNTS AS 1.5 HOURS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION AND 1.5 HOURS FOR ADMINISTRATION.