

# THE GRAPEVINE

New River Valley Master Gardener Association Newsletter

Fall 2017

## Fall Planting: The Stinking Rose

by Lisa Lloyd

Garlic (*Allium sativum*) has been given this honorary common name, though there doesn't seem to be a clear answer as to why. Of course the "stinking" adjective is appropriate! But the rose part can be misleading. Garlic is an allium, which is part of the Liliaceae family. So, garlic is actually closer to a lily than a rose! The closest explanation I found is that if looked at from underneath, a garlic bulb can resemble a white rose with the large ends of the cloves forming the petals. Definitely evidence that we should use proper nomenclature!

If you've never grown garlic before, here's my top seven list of why you should:

1. It's easy to grow!
2. Deer, rabbits and other critters don't like it.
3. The majority of garlic you buy in the grocery store comes from China. Why not grow local?
4. It doesn't take up a lot of space in your garden.
5. For each bulb harvested in July, you'll have 6-7 cloves to plant in the fall.
6. There are a lot of different varieties that are fun to try.
7. Besides the flavor they add to food, garlic has great health benefits: anti-lipidemic, antimicrobial, antiasthmatic, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antiplatelet, antidiabetic & potential anticancer.



Now, to the actual how-to of planting!

**Seed Garlic:** For best results, buy high quality seed garlic. It's a bit of an investment, but worth it as far as yield and quality. There are two major types of garlic: Hardneck garlic (*Allium sativum* ssp. *ophioscorodon*) and softneck garlic (*Allium sativum* ssp. *sativum*). Most of what you buy in the grocery store is the mild flavored, softneck garlic.

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Softneck garlic grows best in climates with mild winters, such as California. On the other hand, hardneck garlic is more hardy and so grows well here in the NRV climate. As an added bonus, hardneck garlic produces a flowering scape in late spring. In order for the bulbs underneath the soil to receive the maximum energy they need, the scape is harvested and is edible!

*Where to buy your garlic?* There are a number of online suppliers of seed garlic. We've had success purchasing from Territorial Seed Company and The Maine Potato Lady. If you're looking for a recommendation of what kind to buy, my husband (who is a serial foodie!) likes Premium Northern White as a good overall culinary garlic that has a nice sized bulb.

Territorial Seed carries this variety. For a really intense flavor for cooking, try Georgian Fire. It's a smaller bulb but packed with flavor. Not as many companies carry this variety but we've bought some from The Maine Potato Lady.

*Where, When and How to Plant:* Garlic likes lots of sun. It grows well in loose, rich, well-drained soil with a pH of 6.4-6.8. Add a couple of inches of compost and well-rotted manure to the soil before planting. The best time to plant is the fall. We usually like to plant the seed garlic in October but have known growers to get it into the soil as late as early December (as long as the ground isn't frozen). Fall planting gives the garlic a chance to get a head start on growing before going dormant in the winter.



You will need to separate each garlic bulb into individual cloves before you plant. Try to keep the skins on the cloves as you separate.

Wait until you are ready to plant before doing this so the cloves don't dry out. You'll want to place each clove pointed side up, about 3 inches into the ground 6 – 8 inches apart. We used plastic when we grew our garlic on a large scale. The plastic protected against severe winter cold and weeds. In our raised bed here at Brush Mountain, we'll cover our planted garlic with several inches of leaf mulch. Keep in mind that too much water is not good for garlic, so you may need to pull away some of the leaf mulch if there's too much moisture, especially in the spring.

Now....wait and let it grow! During the fall you'll get green stalks sprouting up to about 4-6 inches. The garlic will go dormant during the winter and then once the warm weather begins you'll see it start to grow again. Be patient, you won't harvest the bulbs until July! You will be rewarded, though, with green scapes you'll harvest and eat around Memorial Day.

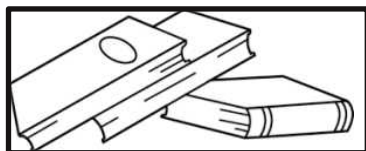
I'll cover garlic harvest and curing in a newsletter next spring. In the meantime, if you see any locally grown garlic at your farmer's market, get some to enjoy its intense flavor. Or, if it's organically grown, buy it to use as your starter seed. Good luck with your planting!



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*"Let-tuce admire the pristine salad greens!"*  
*Gwen Douglas*

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## VISIT TO THE EDEN PROJECT by Liz Swinfen

England is full of beautiful gardens, from formal ones at stately homes to cottage gardens in private homes. Many of the towns and villages compete for awards, so it is always a rewarding and colorful experience to visit, especially in spring and summer.

There was one garden that had been on my bucket list for some time. Finally, while visiting friends in Cornwall in May, I had a chance to see the famous Eden Project.

In the 1990's, Tim Smit led a group of people to design a garden interwoven with stories of people and how plants impact lives. Their vision was to transform an old clay pit into a vibrant living laboratory garden. The pit was carved into a flat-bottomed bowl and 83,000 tons of soil, made from reclaimed waste, was added. A plan to capture water was incorporated so they could be self-sustaining. Then they built some amazing structures. It was opened to the public in 2000 and has been a hit ever since.

The huge dome-like structures (like enormous greenhouses) house the Rainforest Biome, the world's largest indoor rainforest, and the Mediterranean Biome. Both are stunning. There are outdoor gardens growing colorful plant displays, as well as wild and cropped landscapes. The final element is "The Core", the Exhibition and Learning Center. They also have two great cafes (cream tea anyone?) and a fabulous gift shop. It is all easily accessible and so interesting.

The Rainforest Biome highlights plants used extensively by man, like natural rubber and coffee. A visit to the biome takes you an hour or more, depending how often you stop. It is all fascinating.

The Mediterranean/Desert Biome features plants from all the deserts in the world. There is a Corpse Plant like the one at the Hahn, but it was not doing anything very interesting while I was there. The outside gardens include some themed gardens such as a Garden of the Senses, a Prehistoric Garden, a Pollinator Exhibit, and many others. It is wonderful to walk around. To learn more, visit [www.edenproject.com](http://www.edenproject.com)

While you're there, I would highly recommend a visit to the West Country (Devon and Cornwall), which is a beautiful part of England. The coastline has some dramatic scenery and the inland villages are lush and gentle.

Book Review by Erica Jones

**Rodale's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Perennials**  
**Ellen Phillips and C. Colston Burrell (1993 Edition)**

This is a very attractive book with many excellent color photos that give a good idea of the plant's form. For some gardeners, seeing the plant's form is more useful than seeing photos of individual flowers. Given the publication date, this issue will not have the latest varieties. For example, the garden mum is listed as *Chrysanthemum*.

The front section of the book has some general information and then presents a four-season garden, a fragrance garden, a shade garden, a rock wall, and border gardens. I think these sections were added to appeal to beginning gardeners who are interested in pre-defined solutions.

The second part of the book canters briskly through propagating, plant diseases and tools. It is titled "Growing Perennials" (short & sweet!).

The last, largest, and best section of the book is the encyclopedia. Plants are listed by genus, and then individual species are discussed within that genus. The text does not get overly involved in particular selections (varieties), which makes this a good book for the beginning gardener and those with a moderate amount of perennial experience. Each section has a color photograph, a description of the species, directions on how to grow the species, and ways to use the species in the landscape.

Used copies of the 1993 edition are available, and the 1999 edition is still available new.



# A Visit to a Beautiful and Eclectic Garden

By Sharon Eifried



In July, members of the NRV Master Gardener Association visited the garden of John and Any Ogburn in Blacksburg. The Ogburn's welcomed us warmly and graciously shared their gardens with us. John led us on a tour of the property and enthusiastically described the many plantings and spaces that he has developed over several years. At one time many of the spaces were home to children's play areas, but now are filled with many varieties of perennials, shrubs and trees.

Visitors can enjoy English-style gardens, a rock garden, a pond, an orchard, a vegetable garden, an orchid area and woodlands. A tall fence surrounding the property keeps the deer from wondering into the garden.

Much thought and care has gone into planning and maintaining this beautiful garden.

Gwen Douglas, our Association Vice President and Program Planner, very nicely summed up our visit in her note to Amy and John: "To see so many facets of your landscape, sensitively developed over years of experimentation and passion - and hard work! - has surely influenced each of us who made time to visit you. The woodland sanctuary was one of my favorites... as well as the abundance of ornamental conifers, and your willingness to let the "volunteers" pop up wherever they liked, to flourish and add to the intricate tapestry of color and texture. It was a treat indeed!"



## The Land of Smiles & Orchids: Brief History of Orchids in Thailand

First article written by your intrepid international NRV MG reporter, Sarah Smiley, from her current post in Bangkok, Thailand



When you see orchids in your local supermarket or florist, chances are very good that they came from Thailand. Thailand not only contains the most recorded varieties of orchids, but is also the world's largest orchid exporter with the US as its second largest market (Japan is first). The industry contributes \$60 million to the Thailand economy and is a very important rural employer.

As seems to be the case in most of history, the orchids of Thailand were not really noticed by the world until 1779 when a Danish student came through and collected many specimens, which can still be seen in the Botanical Museum at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark. The Thai orchid got a big push in 1899, E.J. Schmidt, a Danish oceanographer and naturalist, collected plant specimens from Koh Chang in southeastern Thailand. He collected around 400 species and they can be seen in the Botanical Museum in Copenhagen.

An orchid hobby industry soon began and it was determined to be an expensive hobby suitable only for the rich and the elite in Thailand. In 1917, Prince Krompranakomsawanvorapinit (*yes – that is the correct spelling of his name. Both Thai first and last names can be very long – most Thais go by nicknames as the formal name is more symbolic than functional*) translated and published "Orchid Growing", as the first book on orchids in the Thai language.

After this brief excitement, the enthusiasm for orchid growing faded with the abrupt change in the country's political system in 1932 (from a singular monarchy to more of a democracy - and if you ever read the history of Thailand, the government changes have been many and pronounced. Currently, the government is led by the military who are big supporters of the growth of the orchid trade – interesting twist!)

To note the international development of the trade: in 1922, the formula for germinating orchid seeds was finally discovered. American plant physiologist Lewis Knudson found that seeds could be germinated on agar and sugars produced by the fungi, not the fungi themselves, as well as some mineral nutrients. This led to the mass-production of orchid hybrids in the laboratory and the creation of many new hybrids, which continues today.

But the winning variety was Dendrobium Pompadour, introduced in 1934. This proved to be a landmark that brought broad popularity for orchid cultivation in Thailand. This particular species is easy to grow and propagate by division, and it produces high yields and had a long vase-life. This is normally the variety you will find in your supermarkets and florist shops.

The Orchid Society of Thailand was founded, under the Royal Patronage of the Queen Somdet Phra Nang Chao Sirikit Phra Borommarachininat in 1957. (*Besides being the mother of the new King, who will be crowned later this year after the October funeral ceremony of the most recent King, the Queen's other official titles and duties are: Field Marshal, Admiral of the Fleet, and Marshal of the Royal Thai Air Force.*) The Royal Patronage of orchids was an ingenious environmental conservation move on the part of the King and Queen - who were very interested in reviving the rural economies that were being overrun with heroin production and poppy field cultivation which contributed to massive deforestation. Given that orchids originally thrived in forests/on living trees, the development of the orchid industry encouraged reforestation and provided different employment opportunities for rural villages.

As with everything in Thailand, any project under Royal Patronage is taken very, very seriously by the entire country. Since the early '60s, the public has been encouraged, through regular classes, radio and television broadcasting and introduction of orchidology courses to embrace orchid growing. For the Queen's 86th birthday this August, every park in Bangkok, and throughout city centers in Thailand, were surrounded by large military trucks with soldiers, in official fatigues, tying tens of thousands of orchids to trees for the celebration.

Orchids are readily found around Bangkok, with small plants selling for the equivalent of US 40 cents. Orchids are no longer the fragile plants for the elites of old.

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This is a photo of the "living wall" in front of my apartment building – orchids are the plants of choice for many landscaping projects in Thailand. They take full sun and are watered every other day.

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### ***Interesting uses for orchids – think it is all about decoration? Think again!***

- Did you know that most orchids are edible? The most common type is the *Vanilla planifolia*, which produces vanilla oil.
- Some orchid flower varieties can add a savory flavor to stir fries and salads – the taste is said to be a cross between cucumber and endive.
- Chinese Emperor Shen Nung, the “Father of Chinese Medicine”, mentioned a *dendrobium* species and *bletilla striata* in his medical writings in the 28th century BC. The Chinese continue to use orchids for medicinal purposes most commonly in the form of medicinal tea. Dried *dendrobium* is believed to possess medicinal properties that can help treat cancer, strengthen the immune system, and improve eyesight. The Singapore TWG Tea brand sells an orchid tea that is quite tasty.
- Other types of orchids that may possess medicinal properties include *orchis latifolia*, *eulophia campestris*, *vanda tessellate*, and *vanda roxburghii*. It is believed that these orchids have certain antibacterial substances and phytochemicals that can help in the treatment of certain illnesses.



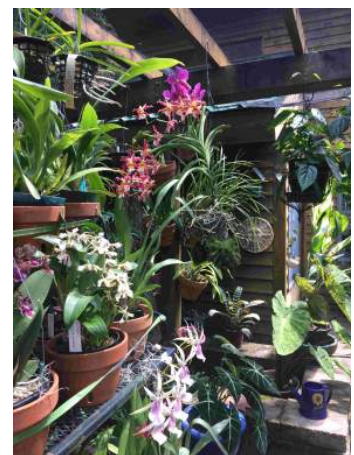
## **Visit to Stonewood Botanical Garden**

by Sharon Eifried

In August, the Master Gardener Association sponsored a wonderful visit to Stonewood Botanical Garden in Blacksburg. This is a beautiful two-acre private garden developed and maintained by Mary LaLone and Kim Knight. Their tender loving care of all the plants and the space they occupy can be appreciated immediately upon one's visit to the garden. Examples of the plantings that one can enjoy include tropicals, succulents, perennials, lemons, apples, and various trees and shrubs.



Mary's expertise centers on the tropicals which include many types of gorgeous orchids, some carnivorous plants, different types of splendid alocasia, lush banana plants and several other species. When cold weather sets in, all the orchids and potted tender plants are transferred to a greenhouse adjacent to their home. Banana and other hardier plants are cut to the ground and will resurface in the spring.



Kim has designed and built the gardens throughout the property. The terraced gardens are beautifully designed and landscaped. The artful hardscape is appreciated immediately. Strolling through the gardens allows one to visit the Santa Fe Court Yard, an Italian Garden with the Tuscany Court Yard and a Japanese Garden with the Japanese Court Yard, a Tea House and Koi pond.

Of course this area abounds with Japanese maple trees. Throughout, there are many places to rest and reflect. Kim cares for the non-tropical plants in the many garden areas, including many succulents and cacti that winter over in a second greenhouse that Kim gleefully refers to as the “orangery”! There is a vegetable garden along the lowest level of the garden.



The Master Gardener Association thanks Mary and Kim for inviting us to tour the garden and to so generously take the time to share their knowledge and experience with us. Stonewood is usually included in the garden tours that are available for attendees of Master Gardener College. If you ever get the opportunity, please don't miss a chance to visit this lovely space in the New River Valley.



## Call for Grant Applications: Help Spread the Word

The NRV Master Gardener Association is now accepting grant applications for spring 2018 gardening projects. Grants will be awarded based on merit to any educational, care-giving, or community-based organization located in the New River Valley counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, or Pulaski and the City of Radford. The grants are intended to support programs seeking to educate, involve, and/or improve the quality of life for participants through a gardening related project.

The call for Community Grant Applications with information and guidelines can be downloaded here <http://www.nrvmastergardeners.com/nrc-master-gardener-association/grants-available/>

Applications are due by November 1st, 2017 and monies will be awarded by January 31, 2018. To request information on the application requirements, contact Donna Fern at [vafern3@gmail.com](mailto:vafern3@gmail.com) or Gwen Douglas at [gwendouglasdesigns@gmail.com](mailto:gwendouglasdesigns@gmail.com). Phone messages may be left with Gwen Douglas at 706-340-0900.

## Rain Barrel Update

The MGA is having great success with their rain barrel project. Stan Stanley, our rain barrel project leader, recently conducted a rain barrel workshop for ten enthusiastic participants. In preparation for the workshop, Stan trekked to South Carolina to pick up pickle barrels which were then washed and cleaned by master gardeners. A smelly project that is well worth the effort!

Stan assembled the barrels that were not sold at the workshop. We are selling those for \$75.00. A few assembled barrels will be saved for artists who wish to volunteer to decorate the barrels for our Spring Plant Sale. At the present time, we have one painted rain barrel with a green leaf design (see photo) for sale for \$100.00. Please spread the word! If you or someone you know wishes to buy a rain barrel, please contact Stan Stanley 540-250-4861 or [glstanle@juno.com](mailto:glstanle@juno.com).





# Visit to Keukenhof

by Sharon Eifried



On a recent trip to the Netherlands, I was fortunate to be able to visit Keukenhof Gardens, a beautiful park exhibiting 800 varieties of tulips and other spring flowers. The Gardens are located in the town of Lisse, about an hour from Amsterdam, and are open from mid-March to mid-May. If you go, allow plenty of time to stroll the 9 miles of walkways across 79 acres to see a gorgeous display of 7 million flowering bulbs.

Keukenhof literally means “kitchen garden” and is named after the herb garden that was outside the kitchen of Countess Jacoba van Beieren at her nearby castle in the 15th century.

Keukenhof’s mission is to be a showcase for Dutch floriculture with a concentration in flowering bulbs. The park is redesigned and replanted every year with bulbs donated by 100 growers who wish to exhibit their products. Bulbs are selected and planted in such a way that visitors can enjoy bulbs in full bloom throughout the season.

Many of the areas in the gardens boast themes such as an English landscape, a Japanese country garden, a naturalized garden with shrubs and perennials, a historic garden with old varieties of tulips, seven inspirational gardens, children’s gardens and a sculpture garden. Of course, tulips abound in all of the gardens. Actually, there are more than 600 varieties of tulips to see! In addition, there is a whole building dedicated to orchids and another to lilies.

Every year the leaders at Keukenhof decide on a theme to be displayed in a flowering bulb mosaic. This year, Dutch designers, such as Mondriaan and Rietveld, were the source of inspiration for the 2017 theme of “Dutch Design.” This design can be described as minimalist, experimental, innovative, quirky, humorous, and unconventional. This year’s mosaic is composed of a representation of a Mondrian composition, combined with Rietveld’s famous Red and Blue Chairs. The mosaic is planted in two layers with 80,000 blooming tulips, muscari, and crocus.



Pictures of mosaics depicting themes from past years can be seen at this web site:  
<http://blog.iamsterdam.com/en/places/look-back-10-years-keukenhof-themes/>



Keukenhof is closed until March 22, 2018 when it will reopen and stay open until May 13, 2018. In autumn 2017, approximately 40 gardeners will begin planting tulips, daffodils, grape hyacinths, fritillaria and every spring bulb imaginable. All planting of the 7 million bulbs is done by hand. “Romance” is the theme for the 2018 flower mosaic which will be in full bloom when the park opens in March. If you are going to Europe, make Keukenhof a stop. You will not be disappointed when you witness the sea of spectacular colors that the blooms present.



# The Best Tomatoes I've Ever Grown

by Susan Perry



"Best" is such a challenging word. I guess most people would think about the best-tasting tomatoes they've ever grown. To give that perspective justice, you'd have to be the type who tries new varieties every year. That's never been me .... I find something I like and stay loyal. Of course, this approach has its pros (always a known, enjoyable quantity) and cons (maybe I've missed out).

Take ice cream. From childhood, it's always been mint chocolate chip for me. I've tried other things but mint chocolate chip has remained my favorite. Fast forward to

when Coldstone opened: the mint was too minty, so I branched out to coffee with heath bar bits on top. YUM YUM!

Back to tomatoes. For years, it was Early Girl -- they consistently produced. Then, it seemed something went wrong every year. A few years ago, my neighbor (Carrie) gave me some Brandywine and Cherokee Purple plants she started from seed. We tried them, loved them, and both survived a nasty whitefly infestation that decimated everything else. Both were great for BLTs, so they became my number one for pure flavor. (Remember, I haven't tried hundreds of varieties so they seem perfect to me). But they were too juicy for canning, so one year we also planted Roma tomatoes.

But it really wasn't just flavor that made Brandywine and Cherokee Purple "best" for me. "Best" was that, thanks to Carrie, I branched out and started growing my own tomato plants from seed. Collecting seed in summer, starting seedlings in March, transplanting outside over Memorial Day weekend, and watching them grow all summer is what has made for the "best" experience. First, it reminded me that things are often far less daunting than one might imagine. Growing from scratch also gave me the satisfaction of knowing everything that happened to my tomato plants every step of the way. No more hoping that the store where I bought the plants knew to bring them in when nighttime temps were below 50 degrees. No more waiting till Memorial Day so that all the plants that had been exposed to cold nighttime temps had already been sold. And last, I learned a bunch of new things -- exactly how to collect the seeds, when to start my seeds inside, how to pot-up the seedlings to prevent them from becoming too leggy, and when to harden them off. Which all goes to prove that you can teach an old gardener some new tricks!

When growing open-pollinated and heirloom tomatoes, I could collect seeds from tomatoes I loved, save them, and use them the following year. This worked well with the Brandywine, Cherokee Purple, and Roma. Collecting seeds from hybrid varieties will not produce the same hybrid, but it will work on heirloom and open-pollinated varieties. And because tomatoes usually self-fertilize before flowers open, the chance of accidental cross pollination is small.

This year, I tried 3 new plum varieties for canning and 2 new beefsteak varieties. And even though I've narrowed my favorites via repeated taste tests, I'm collecting seeds from all the open-pollinated and heirloom varieties that I grew. Just in case. Because there's no such thing as too many tomatoes! (Picture patient husband rolling his eyes ....)

*Here's a way to collect seeds that's quick and has always worked for me: before eating your sliced ripe, healthy tomato, remove about two teaspoons full of gel and seed, and place in a small container. Add ½" of water and leave on your counter for a few days until mold starts developing. Then, pour the seed and water mix into a fine mesh strainer and completely rinse the seeds. Put the seeds on a piece of waxed paper or the top of a Tupperware container -- anything with a waxy coating. Allow the seeds to dry for several days. Gently brush the seeds into an envelope & label. Easy!*



## Flower (Seed) Mixes

By Erica Jones

I am old enough to remember when folks at Virginia Tech were just coming out with the idea of planting road medians with annual flowers. Early on, mixes seemed to be the way people were leaning (unlike North Carolina's plantings of what seems like acres of monocrops).

There are lots of problems growing mixes. As with all seeds, your problems start with different germination times. Then it is on to "so which of these are weeds"? And then onto "boy some of these really crowd out their neighbors." At one talk I attended, the fellow commented that growing the plants together as a mixed clump made for a less finished look when compared to planting species individually. However, the latter requires lots more work.

Almost all mixed seed packets I've seen have said "do not start inside." Well, that's fine if you are very patient and can remember to keep them quite damp. So, I compromise and start the seeds not more than four weeks before they can be planted outside. Even if the individual cells are of good size, try to sort by seed size which may correspond to finished plant size.

Many of the species that end up in mixes have a certain amount of frost tolerance, so you may want to shove them out rather than let them get leggy. Leggy is a seedling malady that can be hard to fix.

Regardless of the shortcomings, mixes can be quite fun. I have used one mix named "Old Fashioned Garden Mix" (which does not narrow the field much!) The mix has all three types of seeds – annual, biennial (totally neglected I think), and perennials. Only one of the 21 species of seeds contained in the package is weighted at 7% of total seed; the vast majority are listed at "less than 5%."

Particularly in the annual and biennial departments, these mixes can yield some plants that are easy to grow from seed, but not easily purchased as plants. Many of the annuals in mixes tend to be species that mature, flower their socks off, and then should be cut down – such as bachelor buttons, Love in a Mist and larkspur. This is where the "mix" idea tends to even things out. This particular mix has soapwort and malope, both of which I had seen growing before, but did not know what they were. So, you may end up with something totally new to you.

Two fun biennials are Wallflower and Sweet William. For me, Sweet William has almost evergreen foliage and Wallflowers retain their foliage for a long period. And for reasons unknown, my Sweet William has been blooming all summer without deadheading.



Malope photo from [www.seedman.com/malope.htm](http://www.seedman.com/malope.htm)



Soapwort photo from [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saponaria\\_official](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saponaria_official)



Love in a Mist photo from [www.seedsavers.org/love-in-a-mist-flower](http://www.seedsavers.org/love-in-a-mist-flower)

Biennials just plain suffer from the lack of a cheering committee. Planted early, some will even "annual." Planting in late summer gives you something fun to play with the following year.

This year I had some *Ratibida Columnifera*, a perennial (also known as Mexican hat plant or upright prairie coneflower), bloom for the first time. They must have avoided my not-very-vigorous-weeding, or had announced themselves as flowers by blooming the first year. Alas, my Mexican hat specimen did not make it into the Newport fair – it is a little hard to find a class for it and I already had one in the "misc." class (the NRV Fair has a "most unusual class" – hint hint).

At some point, it would probably be best to totally take down the bed and start over. This depends on how much you can stand the re-seeders, like Love in a Mist, popping up in odd places (think gravel driveway). Consider, also, the few perennials you might get in your mix, chugging along in their same spot.





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## New River Valley Master Gardeners

The purpose of the New River Valley Master Gardener Association is to provide service to the community by promoting good horticultural practices in accordance with standards approved by the Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) and its Master Gardener Program, and to foster communication, education, and fellowship among its members.

Web site: [www.nrvmastergardeners.com](http://www.nrvmastergardeners.com)



NRVMGA 2017 Board and Committee Chairpersons: Standing L-R: Olin Whitener, Beth Kirby, Darlene Smith, Steve Hale, Ruth Ann Whitener, Gwen Ewing, Evelyn Melia, Sharon Eifried, Carol Cox, Dianne Blount, Gwen Douglas. Kneeling L-R: Deanna Reid (MG Coordinator), Donna Fern, Valerie Kinzey. (Photo by Kelli Scott, 1/21/2017)

*A special thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition of the newsletter: Gwen Douglas, Sharon Eifried, Erica Jones, Lisa Lloyd, Susan Perry, Sarah Smiley, and Liz Swinfen.*